

Task Prompt: What community, state, national or international problems would you like to raise newspaper readers' awareness of? Write a newspaper op-ed piece or magazine op-ed piece in which you persuade readers to see an issue from your perspective. Define the broader issue and explain how it manifests concretely in society. Identify facts, details, and implications to persuade your reader to agree with your point of view and use both logical and emotional appeals. To strengthen your argument, provide a counter argument in which you present the other side of the problem and then refute it. End with a call to action, explaining to readers what they can do about this problem if they have been persuaded by your argument.

### Baltimore Breakout.

2 months ago, I was in the peaceful city of Baltimore eating fish and looking out to the ocean. Only to find out, 2 months later the city would be in chaos because of one death of a citizen. This is due to the death of Freddie Gray. Gray was arrested by the Baltimore Police Department for the possession of an illegal switchblade. Gray fell into a coma while in transport to the police department and injured his neck and spine. On May 1, 2015, Gray's death was ruled to be a homicide and charges were issued against the six officers involved in the incident, including that of second-degree murder. Protests were organized after Gray's death went public. Civil unrest and hooliganism continued and as of April 28, at least twenty police officers have been injured, at least 250 people have been arrested, thousands of police and Maryland Army National Guard troops have been deployed, and a state of emergency was declared in the city limits of Baltimore. Police need to enforce safety and calm the riots in the city of Baltimore because the city is getting chaotic and more people will end up injured in result of the mistake by the officers.

There are certain events that took place during this time of distress but some are more important than others. Police Commissioner Anthony Batts discussed in a news conference this statement. "All are going to be OK but sustained heavy damage to their bodies," he said, adding that he believes that the tensions were easing. Still, authorities ordered a 10 p.m. curfew for Tuesday night. Jamal Bryant, a local activist and pastor of Empowerment Temple, announced

Amy 6/14/2015 11:01 AM

**Comment [1]:** Writer uses alliteration to gain the reader's attention with the title.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:07 AM

**Comment [2]:** Writer attempts to use a dramatic anecdote to lead into the story.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:07 AM

**Comment [3]:** Relevant news story at the time of publication.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:08 AM

**Comment [4]:** Writer provides background on the issue he will argue.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:09 AM

**Comment [5]:** Writer's debatable claim includes an opinion about the event and reasons why he believes that. He also includes a statement about what should be done to remedy this.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:10 AM

**Comment [6]:** Writer gives the credentials of this expert before giving the evidence.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:10 AM

**Comment [7]:** Writer give the credentials of this expert before giving the evidence.

that he would open his church for teens with no place to go due to the school closures. He promised to conduct training on how to protest without destroying the city.

My feelings from the reaction by the citizens is I think they went too far. The citizens of Baltimore turned a peaceful protest into a violent riot. This was a 100% unnecessary action by the citizens and only made the problem worse. The BPD (Baltimore Police Department) is doing everything they can to calm the riots, even punishing the officers involved in the act. Essentially, the police department should give a full apology and if the citizens continue protesting, let them. The riots will have to die down eventually.

The protests weren't violent throughout. The protests started peacefully with signs and quiet hollers and escalated to rocks being thrown and screaming throughout the city. Police union president Gene Ryan expressed concern that the crowds might turn into a "lynch mob". Ryan said the crowds were "calling for the immediate imprisonment" of the officers "without them ever receiving the due process that is the constitutional right of every citizen, including law enforcement officers." The citizens shouldn't have acted so ignorant in proposing for an unconstitutional act.

What the policemen did was wrong, but it's in the past. It is obvious that the citizens are protesting because of what the cops did. The policemen unnecessarily injured the victim who later ended up dying in the city of Baltimore. The death was ruled homicide and the six policemen were charged with second degree murder and more charges. What happened was in the past and you can't change that. The policemen were punished and that's the end of that. As much as the citizens want to avenge the death of a citizen, they will just get punished.

Government officials are giving professional and informing reactions to the riots.

President Obama gave his opinions on the protests, "When individuals get crowbars and start

Amy 6/14/2015 10:11 AM

**Comment [8]:** In the topic sentence the writer states his opinion.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:12 AM

**Comment [9]:** Writer give reason for his opinion.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:11 AM

**Comment [10]:** Writer explains an acronym that he will use throughout the essay.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:22 AM

**Comment [11]:** Writer includes the opposing side which acknowledges that the unrest in Baltimore wasn't always a problem.

Amy 6/14/2015 11:02 AM

**Comment [12]:** Statement that there may be some reason for the escalation in violence.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:24 AM

**Comment [13]:** The writer argues that this unrest is unnecessary because the necessary actions were previously taken to solve this problem.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:25 AM

**Comment [14]:** Uses a well-known expert's opinion on the subject to add to the his argument.

opening doors to loot, they're not protesting," Obama said in response to a query at a White House news conference. "They're not making a statement. They are stealing. When they burn down a building they are committing arson. And they are destroying and undermining businesses and opportunities in their own communities."

An official apology should be distributed throughout Baltimore. The citizens of Baltimore are acting out because of the actions by the cops in an accidental death of a Baltimore citizen. The cops have done a scattering of small acts that haven't pleased the citizens in result of the death. With all of this, the BPD has done nothing to calm the citizens. There will be more damage done to the city if they are not stopped so the police department has to do something. The police have to do something, but what? I think they should have a gathering in downtown Baltimore and have the police department officially apologize to the citizens.

We don't need to calm the riots, they will die down eventually. Many people say that calming the riots is a waste of time, a risk for police officers in getting injured, and it will only make the riots angrier. It is true that the riots will eventually die down, but it is the job of the BPD to calm the people down, and if they don't, they have permission to use physical contact. So they should go out into the streets and at least try to calm the riots.

Maybe this isn't the BPD's fault, maybe it's our own fault for being out of line. We need to better ourselves as a nation. The better people we are, the less we get ourselves and others in trouble.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:27 AM

**Comment [15]:** This paragraph includes a call to action to solve this problem presented in this argument. The writer also includes evidence to support this opinion.

Amy 6/14/2015 11:02 AM

**Comment [16]:** Writer acknowledges the opposing side.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:26 AM

**Comment [17]:** Evidence for the opposing side.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:26 AM

**Comment [18]:** Writer acknowledges the truth in the opposing side and then brings the reader back to his main argument.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:28 AM

**Comment [19]:** Writer speaks to a larger concern that this riot could instill.



Works Cited

George, Justin. "Five Things to Know after Baltimore Riots." *USA Today*. Gannett, 28 Apr. 2015. Web. 01 June 2015.

Amy 6/14/2015 10:29 AM

**Comment [20]:** Writer did a good job throughout of naming the expert and the context for the evidence, but little evidence is on the Works Cited page and should be.

## Op-Ed Rubric

Element	Advanced	On-Target	Novice
<b>Content</b>	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Begins with a compelling and unique lede.</li> <li>· Provides a debatable claim that makes clear the focus of the op-ed.</li> <li>· Makes a strong, multi-point argument:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Analyzes each point thoroughly and discusses the connections between and across points.</li> <li>○ Provides strong evidence to support each point.</li> <li>○ Sources are credible and evidence is presented persuasively.</li> </ul> </li> <li>· Includes multiple counterarguments.</li> <li>· Effectively refutes the counterarguments.</li> <li>· Employs a variety of evidence types: factual, anecdotal, statistical, authorities in the field.</li> <li>· Provides a conclusion that is a call to action for the reader and makes clear what will happen if this issues goes unaddressed.</li> </ul>	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Begins with a lede.</li> <li>· Provides a debatable claim that makes clear the focus of the op-ed.</li> <li>· Makes a strong, multi-point argument:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Analyzes each point thoroughly.</li> <li>○ Provides strong evidence to support each point by pulling from credible sources and presenting it persuasively.</li> </ul> </li> <li>· Includes a counterargument.</li> <li>· Effectively refutes the counterargument.</li> <li>· Provides a conclusion that is a call to action for the reader.</li> </ul>	<p>The writer:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Skips the lede.</li> <li>· Makes an initial claim that is not debatable.</li> <li>· Provides an argument that contains only one or two points.                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Does some analysis of points but could delve deeper.</li> <li>○ Provides little or inadequate evidence to support point.</li> <li>○ Does not make the connection between key points and evidence clear.</li> <li>○ Has not used credible sources.</li> </ul> </li> <li>· Did not include a counterargument; or included a counterargument but does not refute it.</li> <li>· Concludes the op-ed without providing an action plan for the reader.</li> </ul>
<b>Organization</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The chosen structure consistently reveals the writer's line of reasoning in the presentation of the issue.</li> <li>· Transitions also make clear the line of reasoning and create a logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The chosen structure usually reveals the line of reasoning for the writer's stance on the chosen issue.</li> <li>· Transitions also make clear the line of reasoning and create a logical flow between sentences and paragraphs.</li> <li>· There are only occasionally misplaced paragraphs or sentences.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· The chosen structure does not make clear the line of reasoning for the writer's stance on the chosen issue.</li> <li>· The arrangement of paragraphs and sentences lacks logic.</li> </ul>
<b>Style &amp; Mechanics</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Voice is persuasive, authoritative, and consistently appropriate for the intended audience.</li> <li>· The word choice is interesting, reflects the intended audience, and is specific to the chosen topic.</li> <li>· Sentence structures are varied and complex.</li> <li>· The essay contains no errors in punctuation.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Voice is appropriately persuasive and a good tonal choice for the intended audience.</li> <li>· The word choice usually reflects the intended audience and is specific to the chosen topic.</li> <li>· Sentence structure is varied.</li> <li>· Sentences are properly punctuated in most cases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>· Voice is not appropriate for the intended audience; or shifts in tone throughout the op-ed.</li> <li>· The word choice is simplistic and/or general and is not specific to the topic or intended audience.</li> <li>· Op-ed employs subject/verb sentence structure with little variety.</li> <li>· Contains numerous punctuation errors that affect meaning and fluidity.</li> </ul>

This is an high-average 8<sup>th</sup> grade Argument Essay. The writer chose a topic that he has a clear opinion on which he presents consistently throughout the essay. This writer maintains the traditional essay structure while utilizing the elements of op-eds such as lede and call-to-action. This paper could have been improved with more consistent transitions to move the reader with the argument and a more specific call to action that is specific to this argument.