

Earth Science

Activity 16: Write an Opinion Essay

Topic 16: Earth Chemistry

General Instructions:

- Use a computer to complete your essay/document.
- Write a “five-part” 250-400 word essay in a single 40-minute session.
- Include an introduction, three key supporting paragraphs, and a conclusion.
- Correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar errors prior to completing work.
- Submit or share your final document with your instructor.

Suggestions and Tips:

1. Read the background and context provided to familiarize yourself with the subject area.
2. Select either A or B as the basis for your thesis.
3. Plan the essay prior to writing it.
4. Make the essay organized. Avoid placing multiple points in one paragraph.
5. Use only Times New Roman font 12 with double-spacing to format your document.
6. Discuss only one perspective in each of the body paragraphs.
7. Conclude with a summary.
8. In the summary, rephrase the introduction and thesis. Emphasize key supporting rationale.

Background and Context:

Most of the Earth is made up of just a handful of elements. For example iron and nickel are the primary elements of Earth's core. Further, Earth's crust is mostly made up of only a few elements: oxygen, 47%; silicon (27%); aluminum (8%); iron (5%); calcium (4%); magnesium, potassium and sodium, (2%). Some might argue that Earth Science students should focus only on their understanding of these specific elements. Others might argue that having a broad understanding of all known elements - *even if they are rare* - provides a better way to learn Earth Science.

Position A: Earth Science topics should focus only on the most-common elements on Earth.

Position B: Earth Science topics should include the entire Periodic Table - including elements which are rare and even synthetically produced.