

Mexican-American War Essay

Released from any previously assigned perspective regarding a potential war against Mexico, you're now a member of the Senate who must examine all of the facts and circumstances presented and decide according to your conscience (not your constituents) whether to vote *FOR* or *AGAINST* President Polk's war resolution.

Because your decision will be controversial, once you've decided you must write an open letter to your constituents. This letter should explain the rationale underlying your *FOR* or *AGAINST* vote. Again, the specific question is **should the United States, in 1846, declare war on Mexico?**

This letter to your constituents should begin with a traditional salutation (Dear Citizens of ?), end with a common gesture (Sincerely, *your signature*) and in-between include the following four paragraphs:

Paragraph 1: Summarize the relevant events surrounding a possible war with Mexico in 1846. Include many facts and circumstances that you think should be considered in answering the question. DO NOT reveal your answer to the question or your reasons for it here; that is what paragraph 4 is for.

Paragraph 2: Make the strongest argument you can that the United States SHOULD go to war against Mexico in 1846. Clearly state this position and support it with two or three different, good reasons. THIS PARAGRAPH SHOULD READ AS THOUGH YOU ARE TRULY TAKING THIS SIDE.

Paragraph 3: Make the strongest argument you can that the United States SHOULD NOT go to war against Mexico in 1846. Clearly state this position and support it with two or three different, good reasons. THIS PARAGRAPH SHOULD READ AS THOUGH YOU ARE TRULY TAKING THIS SIDE.

Paragraph 4: Now describe your actual decision; are you voting FOR or AGAINST the war?

- (1) Be sure to explain *why* you voted the way you did and support it with three or four different, additional, good reasons.
- (2) Be sure that your decision shows you have considered the arguments *of the other position* (the one you did not choose) as well as arguments for your position.
- (3) Be sure to include what reasons and/or circumstances need to exist in order for the United States to be justified in declaring war against *any nation* and then describe why you believe those reasons