

Grade 8 Student Argument Writing Sample

We Need the League	
Introduction	<p>Great people of North Dakota,</p> <p>I, Senator McCumber, [an actual Senator from 1919 in the League of Nations debate], have just participated in a debate regarding whether or not America should sign the Treaty of Versailles, and in doing so, join the League of Nations. The League of Nations is a unified group of nations dedicated to the preservation of peace. It is designed to deal with international issues, adjudicating differences between countries instead of them going directly to combat.</p> <p>In the interests of the great state of North Dakota, I voted in favor of the treaty with no reservations. We need a fair treaty to prevent future wars as horrible as the Great War. After the war, the central powers composed the Treaty of Versailles to create the League of Nations in an attempt to ward off future conflicts. We cannot have another war as devastating as this one. Therefore, I believe we need a fair treaty, equal to all its members, to restrict the use of new weapons and prevent future wars from breaking out.</p>
Body Paragraph	<p>First, the treaty and the league will control the use of new weapons. As stated in Article VII, "One of its (the league's) jobs will be to come up with a plan for reducing the number of weapons around the world (arms reduction)." Therefore, the league will be in charge of weapons issues. This will cause heavily armed countries to demilitarize and make it less possible for war to break out. Because heavily armed countries generally end up using those arms in some way, this is a positive change.</p> <p>Additionally, I believe we need to sign the Treaty with no reservations since we need a treaty that is fair to all its members. Reservations [proposed by the league's opponents] would give America too much power within the league, thus allowing America to bend the rules of the league to suit its own will. This would cause unrest in the league, possibly resulting in America making enemies that could lead to another war. The treaty should be as fair as possible.</p> <p>America should also sign the treaty since it would prevent future wars from occurring. The way the league is designed, it would give plenty of time for the league to settle the countries' differences with a fair and equal compromise. If war were to take place, the council members in the league would all help in defending each other, thus ending the war as quickly as possible with as few deaths as possible. The treaty would prevent war from happening or end the fighting as quickly as possible.</p>
Body Paragraph: Counterargument	<p>Some people say that we shouldn't join the league because we would be intervening in foreign affairs and that it would cause another war. How can you not intervene when eight million people died in the last war? How can you stand there with a clear conscience when you know you could have prevented all that carnage from ever happening? The league will help countries settle their differences with plenty of time to talk it over. Six months for the countries to listen to the council's advice, and after that another three months before they can mobilize. If we join the League, we will keep anything like the Great War from happening again.</p>
Conclusion	<p>In conclusion, the Treaty of Versailles needs to be signed so the league will be put into affect. The League of Nations will prevent war from breaking out, restrict weapons development and militarism, and keep us from the horrors of another Great War.</p> <p>Thank you.</p>

Source: Adapted from *Achieve the Core*, 2016a.