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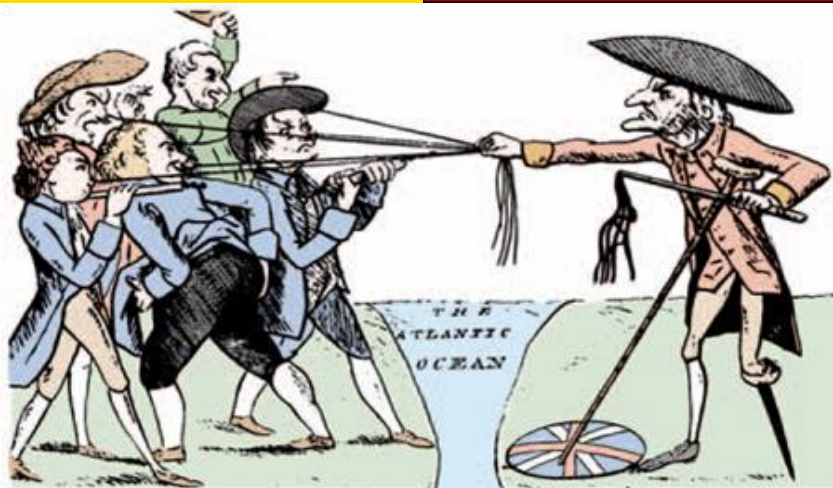
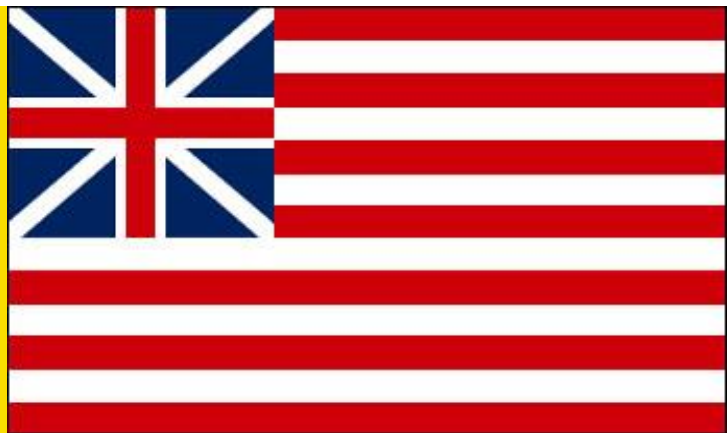
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Patriot/Loyalist Debate: To Declare Independence or Not?



DONT TREAD ON ME



• *Loyalty and Patriotism in the American Revolution* •

On July 2, 1776, the American colonists voted to separate for good from Great Britain. Two days later, they approved the Declaration of Independence. Thirteen British colonies in North America had declared themselves to be a new nation.

By that day, the American Revolution had actually been underway for some time. Fighting between British soldiers and colonial militias began at Concord and Lexington near Boston, on April 19, 1775. On that day, some colonists clearly favored a final break with Great Britain. Yet, even by July 4, 1776, more than a year later, many colonists still could not accept the idea.

In other words, the American Revolution was not a simple thing. Those who fought the British called themselves “Patriots.” They were, in fact, rebels. By the laws they themselves had accepted, they were outlaws. And not everyone in the colonies agreed with these “outlaws,” not even all those who were angry with Great Britain.

For years, the colonists had protested specific British acts—acts to tax them in certain ways, to limit their settlement of the western lands, and to control their colonial assemblies. Yet until 1776, the colonists protested as British citizens. They directed their anger at Parliament or at King George III. But their loyalty was still to Great Britain. They still felt they were simply defending rights long due to them as members of that nation. Their deepest sense of identity was British.

The American Revolution forced such people to make a painful choice—either hold to their British identity and loyalty or cross the line and join with the rebels. In the end, most colonists did join with the rebels. Yet a large share of them did not. They were “Loyalists,” Americans who

remained true to older, more traditional notions of patriotism and loyalty.

This split into “Loyalist” and “Patriot” sides means the American Revolution was also a civil war. That is, it was a war between groups of colonists. It was a war that often divided former friends and close neighbors.

It was a war of ideas as well, for loyalty to Great Britain was not necessarily unthinking loyalty. It was often based on an age-old tradition of beliefs about Parliament, the King, and the rights of all British subjects. At the same time, those who turned against Great Britain also did so in the name of noble ideas, the ideas of liberty and equality described in the Declaration of Independence.

Learning about this great split may lead you to feel more sympathy for those who chose to remain loyal to Great Britain. Some Loyalists did act for personal or selfish reasons. Yet others acted on firm beliefs about their highest duty. They often acted with great courage as well.

Yet studying this split may lead you to realize how big a risk the leaders of the Revolution also took. They had to go against everything they had been taught. And their choice, also, was full of dangers. When they pledged “our lives, our fortunes, and our sacred honor” to the Revolution, men like George Washington and John Hancock could easily have lost all three.

The primary sources in this booklet will help you better understand both sides in this civil war and this war of ideas. You will get a better understanding of the Revolution itself. And you will have a chance to debate the meaning of loyalty and patriotism in a time of dramatic and confusing change.

Opposing Viewpoints

LOYALIST (TORY) POINTS OF VIEW

Why Risk Independence?

Depend upon it, you can never place yourselves in a happier situation than in your ancient constitutional dependency on Great Britain. No independent state ever was or ever can be so happy as we have been, and might still be, under that government...

But remember, Gentlemen, that I now tell you, that should they [the patriots] (contrary to all probability) accomplish their [harmful] purpose, yet their government will not be lasting. It will never suit a people who have once tasted the sweets of British liberty under a British constitution.

-Governor William Franklin's letter to the New Jersey Legislature, 1776.

One King or Many?

As long as government subsists [exists], subjects owe... obedience to the laws of the supreme power, from which there can be no appeal but to Heaven... To what, or whom, shall we [turn to]? Shall we appeal to the King of Massachusetts Bay, to the King of Connecticut, to the King of Rhode Island, against the King of Great Britain?...

-Letter from a Virginian to the Continental Congress, 1774

Trust the Mother Country

...It can hardly be imagined, that the mother country has formed the least intention of reducing these provinces [colonies] to a state of abject servility [slavery], by the force of arms... She will be more just – more tender to her offspring – the force of reason will prevail – our grievances will be redressed [satisfied] – and she will be found to the end of time, a kind – a fostering parent!

-Letter of William Eddis of Maryland, Feb 14, 1775

PATRIOT POINTS OF VIEW

All Tories are Cowards

... What is a Tory? Good God! What is he? I should not be afraid to go with a hundred Whigs [Patriots] against a thousand Tories, were they to attempt to get into arms. Every Tory is a coward; for servile, slavish, self-interested fear is the foundation of Toryism; and a man under such influence, though he may be cruel, can never be brave.

-Thomas Paine, 1775

Tories are a Threat

Rouse, American! [sic] Your danger is great – great from a quarter where you least expect it. The Tories, the Tories will yet be the ruin of you!... Who were the [cause] of this war? The Tories! Who persuaded the tyrant of Britain to [wage war] in a manner before unknown to civilized nation, and shocking even to barbarians? The Tories! Who prevailed on the [Indians] to join the [troops] of the enemy? The Tories!

-Letter from William Hooper to Robert Morris, Feb. 1, 1777

Loyalist (Tory) Beliefs

Below is information that will help you to think like a Loyalist. They are ideas that have come from previous debates on Independence. Use this information when planning your key debate/persuasive writing ideas from a loyalist's perspective.

1. King George III is doing the best he can with a difficult situation. He is not a cruel or unjust ruler.
2. Since the colonies are separate from one another, they are not capable of governing themselves.
3. The Patriots are hypocrites. · They object to taxes so they don't have to pay them. · If they really wanted equality and freedom, they would have established it in their own colonies first. · They just want to keep the lower class down and kick the British out.
4. We should pay our fair share to England. We have wealth, religious freedom, and opportunity for all. We are far better off than other countries.
5. To separate from England would cause big problems. · Our society would fall apart: The value of our property would drop. · There would always be conflict between big and small colonies. · In order to win the war we would have to have help from Spain and France. What's to keep these countries from trying to take over after the war?
6. England and the colonies all have the same roots. A war against England is like having a war against our own family. We all share the same games, traditions, religion, literature, dress, educational system, and language.
7. We need the protection that England can give us. They protected us in the French and Indian war. They can also protect us in future conflicts.
8. We do not have the power to fight against England. They are one of the most powerful nations in the world.
9. We must have a way to control the mobs. The revolutionary leaders don't follow the laws. They injure people and destroy property.
10. England has been fair. The trade acts do more good than harm.

Patriot Beliefs

Below is information that will help you think like a patriot. They are ideas that have come from previous debates on Independence. Use this information when planning your key debate/persuasive writing ideas from a patriot's perspective.

- 1.** A government run by kings and queens doesn't work. It is too corrupt.
 - 2.** The politicians in England are only concerned with England. They do not care about the colonies best interests.
 - 3.** No one should have to pay a tax unless they choose the representative who helps determine that tax.
 - 4.** Since England does not have the right to tax us, then they also do not have the right to make other laws that affect us.
 - 5.** England has refused us our God-given rights. · They've made arrests based on their own wishes instead of laws. · They've limited our rights to freedom of speech, of press, and of assembly. · They've taken away our rights to property by making us quarter and house troops.
 - 6.** Morally, we are better than England. We know the difference between right and wrong. England's government is corrupt. · King George III is incompetent. · Bribery and corruption is everywhere. · The government pays no attention to its people. · Seats in government are bought and sold.
 - 7.** The British government has humiliated and dishonored the colonies. · They have unfairly taxed us.
- *****They have taxed us without representation. · They have stopped us from spreading further west. · They haven't helped us with our Indian problems. · They have forced us to keep British soldiers in our own homes. · They have hurt our economy by taking control of our trade. · They refuse to let us have a trial in front of our peers. Instead, we are taken directly to the Admiralty Courts for trial.

Reverend Charles Inglis-Loyalist

Reverend Charles Inglis of the Church of England came to America in the 1750s. In 1766, he served at Trinity Church in New York City. During the build-up to the Revolution, Inglis came to feel that the colonists had too much liberty, and that the Church of England in America needed more authority, such as it had in England itself. In 1776, New York was occupied by British forces. As a result, Inglis was able to be openly loyalist in his views. With the end of the war, he returned to England. Later he became the first bishop of Nova Scotia. The passage below is an appeal Inglis made in 1777 asking other American colonists not to join the rebellion but to take up arms in support of Great Britain.

Never ... was a more just, more honorable, or necessary cause for taking up arms than that which now calls you into the field. It is the cause of truth against falsehood, of loyalty against rebellion, of legal government against usurpation, of constitutional freedom against tyranny. In short, it is the cause of human happiness of millions against outrage and oppression. Your generous efforts are required to assert the rights of your amiable, injured sovereign [that is, the King]. They are required to restore your civil constitution which was formed by the wisdom of the ages, and was the admiration and envy of mankind —under which we and our ancestors enjoy liberty, happiness and security— but is now subverted to make room for a motley fabric, that is perfectly adapted to popular tyranny. Your bleeding country, through which destitution and ruin are driving in full career, from which peace, order, commerce, and useful industry are banished—your loyal friends and relations groaning in bondage under the iron

scourge of persecution and oppression—all these now call upon you for succor and redress.

It is not wild, insatiable ambition which sports with lives and fortunes of mankind that leads you forth, driven from your peaceful habitations for no other cause than honoring your King, as God has commanded. You have taken up the sword to vindicate his just authority, to support your excellent constitution, to defend your families, your liberty, and property, to secure to yourselves and your posterity that inheritance of constitutional freedom to which you were born; and all this against the violence of usurped power, which would deny you even the right of judgment or of choice, which would rend from you the protection of your parent state, and eventually place you ... under the despotic rule of our inveterate Popish enemies, the inveterate enemies of our religion, our country and liberties. [Here, Inglis means Catholic France.]

Instructions: Take Notes on these questions, use your notes to discuss the document

1. **Main Idea or Topic:** In your own words, explain what key points Inglis says here. Try to get across all of his main points.
2. **Author, Audience, Purpose:** You have some information about Charles Inglis. How does this information affect your view of what he says and the value of this passage as a primary source?
3. **Background Information:** Inglis talks of the British “civil constitution which was formed by the wisdom of the ages.” What do you know about Great Britain’s form of government in the 1700s? Can you explain what Inglis means by “constitution” in this case?
4. **Bias:** Choose three sentences in this document that most clearly express Inglis’s bias, or point of view. Can you find a sentence that is a simple factual statement without any bias? If so, write it down here. Why might Inglis’s comment be useful to a historian despite its very strong bias?

John Jay- Patriot

John Jay, a lawyer, was a key figure in the American Revolution. He went on to a long political career in the early years of the new nation. For example, he helped James Madison and Alexander Hamilton write The Federalist. This was a famous series of essays backing the U.S. Constitution during the battle for its ratification from 1787 to 1788. He was the first U.S. Chief Justice. Later he was governor of New York. He was a moderate in the Revolution, often uneasy about more radical Patriots like Sam Adams. Peter Van Schaack was a college friend who could not fully support the colonists in the revolution and who spent seven years in exile in Great Britain. The passage below is from a letter Jay wrote to Peter Van Schaack in 1782.

Your judgment and consequently your conscience differed from mine on a very important question; but though, as an independent American, I considered all who were not for us, and you among the rest, as against us, yet be assured that John Jay did not cease to be a friend to Peter Van Schaack. No one can serve two masters. Either Britain was right and America wrong, or America was right and Britain was wrong. They who thought Britain right were bound to support her, and America had a just claim to the services of those who approved her cause. Hence it became our duty to take one side or the other, and no man is to be blamed for preferring the one which his reason recommended as the most just and virtuous.

Several of our countrymen left and took arms against us, not from any such principles, but from the most dishonorable of human motives. Their conduct has been a piece with their inducements [that is, their actions have been as bad as their motives] for they have far outstripped savages in perfidy and cruelty. Against these men every American must set his face and steel his heart. There are others of them, though not many, who, I believe, opposed us because they thought they could not conscientiously go with us. To such of them as have behaved with humanity, I wish every species of prosperity that may consist with the good of my country.

Instructions: Take Notes on these questions, use your notes to discuss the document

1. **Main Idea or Topic:** In your own words, explain what key point John Jay most wants Peter Van Schaack to understand.

2. **Author, Audience, Purpose:** You have some information about John Jay and his friend Peter Van Schaack. How does this information affect your view of what Jay says and the value of his letter as a primary source?

3. **What Else Can You Infer?** What is suggested or implied in the document? For example, what does Jay's letter seem to suggest about the different reasons some people had for becoming Loyalists? What can you infer about the Revolution's impact on friends and neighbors?

4. **Bias:** In his letter, John Jay expresses this opinion: "No one can serve two masters." Charles Inglis would probably agree. Yet each of these men choose a different "master" to serve. Why? From what each has to say, try to explain their different points of view about the American Revolution

Great Britain Not Intimidated

Loyalist Samuel Seabury, 1774

What then is the American, this new man? He is either an European, or the descendant of an European, hence that strange mixture of blood which you will find in no other country. I could point out to you a family whose grandfather was an Englishman, whose wife was Dutch, whose son married a French woman. . . . He is an American, who leaving behind him all his ancient prejudices and manners, receives new ones from the new mode of life he has embraced. . . . He becomes an American by being received in the broad lap of our great *Alma Mater*. Here individuals of all nations are melted into a new race of men, whose labours and posterity will one day cause great changes in the world. . . . This great metamorphosis has a double effect, it extinguishes all his European prejudices, he forgets that mechanism of subordination, that servility of disposition which poverty had taught him.

- Explain the main idea of Loyalist Samuel Seabury's letter, "**Great Britain Not Intimidated**."

“Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death”

Patriot Patrick Henry, 1775

**In front of the Virginia House of Burgesses March 23, 1775*

"...There is no longer any room for hope. If we wish to be free-- if we mean to preserve inviolate those inestimable privileges for which we have been so long contending--if we mean not basely to abandon the noble struggle in which we have been so long engaged, and which we have pledged ourselves never to abandon until the glorious object of our contest shall be obtained--we must fight! I repeat it, sir, we must fight! An appeal to arms and to the God of hosts is all that is left us!...

...The battle, sir, is not to the strong alone; it is to the vigilant, the active, the brave. Besides, sir, we have no election. If we were base enough to desire it, it is now too late to retire from the contest. There is no retreat but in submission and slavery! Our chains are forged! Their clanking may be heard on the plains of Boston! The war is inevitable--and let it come! I repeat it, sir, let it come.

It is in vain, sir, to extenuate the matter. Gentlemen may cry, Peace, Peace-- but there is no peace. The war is actually begun! The next gale that sweeps from the north will bring to our ears the clash of resounding arms! Our brethren are already in the field! Why stand we here idle? What is it that gentlemen wish? What would they have? Is life so dear, or peace so sweet, as to be purchased at the price of chains and slavery? Forbid it, Almighty God! I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!"

- Explain the main idea of Patriot Henry's, “***Give Me Liberty or Give Me Death,***” speech.

Common Sense

Thomas Paine's "Common Sense," became a sensation throughout the colonies and is credited with helping to start the American Revolution. The following is an excerpt, January, 1776

In the following pages I offer nothing more than simple facts, plain arguments, and common sense: and have no other preliminaries to settle with the reader, than that he will divest himself of prejudice and prepossession, and suffer his reason and his feelings to determine for themselves that he will put on, or rather that he will not put off, the true character of a man, and generously enlarge his views beyond the present day ...

The Sun never shined on a cause of greater worth. 'Tis not the affair of a City, a County, a Province, or a Kingdom; but of a Continent — of at least one-eighth part of the habitable Globe. 'Tis not the concern of a day, a year, or an age; posterity are virtually involved in the contest, and will be more or less affected even to the end of time, by the proceedings now. Now is the seed-time of Continental union, faith and honour. The least fracture now will be like a name engraved with the point of a pin on the tender rind of a young oak; the wound would enlarge with the tree, and posterity read in it full grown characters.

- Explain the main idea of Patriot Thomas Paine's, "**Common Sense**".

Reconciliation Better than Independence

Anglican clergyman and educator William Smith wrote a series of public letters in 1776 under the name "Cato" in reply to Thomas Paine's Common Sense and the growing sentiment for Independence.

We have already declared ourselves independent, as to all useful purposes, by resisting our oppressors upon our own foundation. And while we keep upon this ground, without connecting ourselves with any foreign nations, to involve us in fresh difficulties and endanger our liberties still further, we are able, in our own element (upon the shore), to continue this resistance; and it is our duty to continue it till Great Britain is convinced (as she must soon be) of her fatal policy, and open her arms to reconciliation, upon the permanent and sure footing of mutual interests and safety.

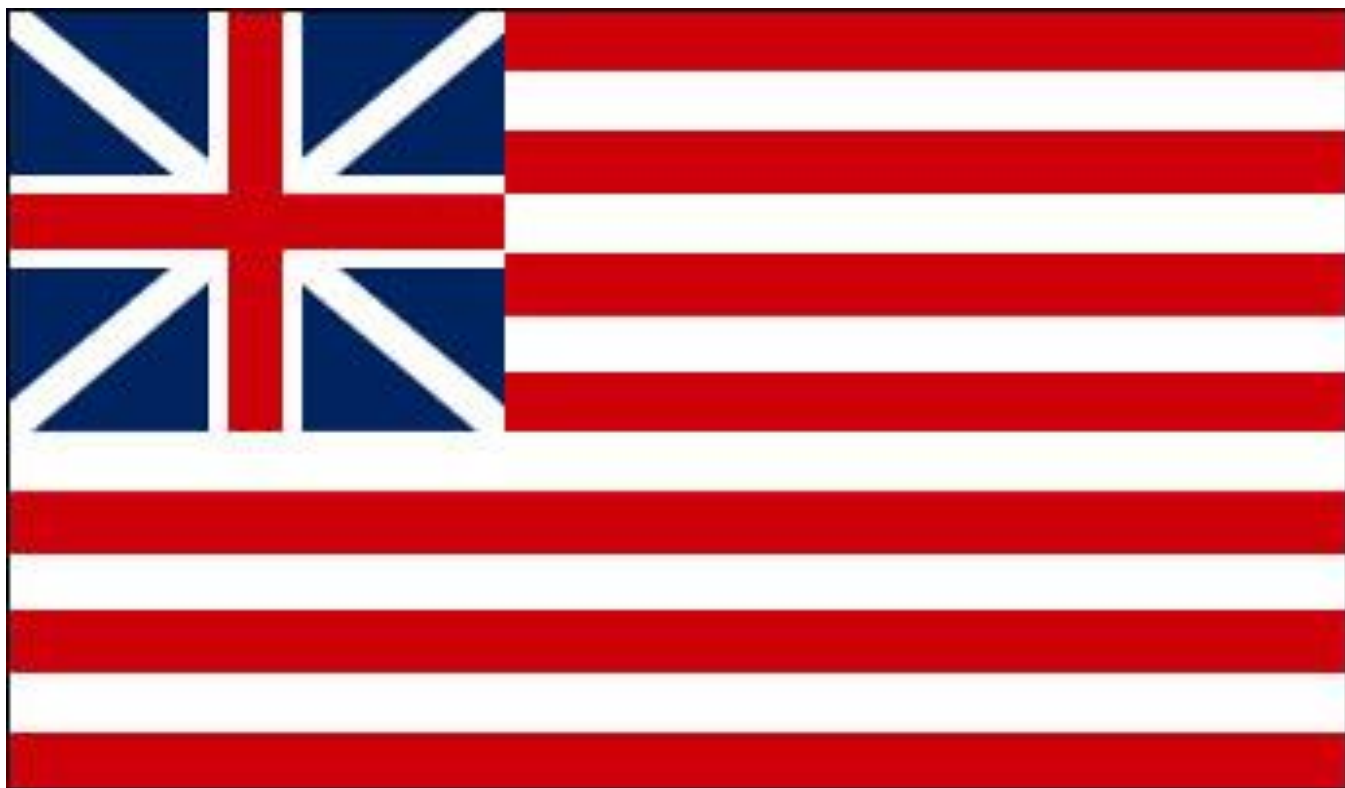
Upon such a footing, we may again be happy. Our trade will be revived. Our husbandmen, our mechanics, our artificers will flourish. Our language, our laws, and manners being the same with those of the nation with which we are again to be connected, that connection will be natural; and we shall the more easily guard against future innovations. Pennsylvania has much to lose in this contest and much to hope from a proper settlement of it. We have long flourished under our charter government. What may be the consequences of another form we cannot pronounce with certainty; but this we know, that it is a road we have not traveled and may be worse than it is described.

- Explain the main idea of Loyalist William Smith's letter, "***Reconciliation Better than Independence.***"



DONT TREAD ON ME

**Time for Neutrality is over.
Pick a side, Patriot or Loyalist?**



Patriot or Loyalist Rubric:

5 paragraph persuasive essay either supporting Loyalty to Great Britain or promoting Independence from the British government.

Introduction:

- _____ Does it hook the reader?
- _____ Does it have some context (background information from the Situation of the task)?
- _____ Does it have a thesis or purpose statement?

Body:

- _____ Is it in paragraphs?
- _____ Do they have transitions? (first, next, also, etc. They might have a transition at the end of the last paragraph that leads to the next or it may be in chronological order if narrating).
- _____ Is the paragraph well constructed with a topic sentence, detail and a closing sentence?
- _____ Is there good detail? Do they have examples, rich description, etc.?

Do they hit on all parts of the prompt? Is the paper about 5 paragraphs or more? If not- they probably do not have enough detail and/or did not hit on all parts of the prompt.

- _____ Yes
- _____ No

Conclusion:

- _____ Do they sum up their main point(s)?
- _____ Do they connect back to their purpose?
- _____ Do they end with a strong statement/sentence?

Final Comments:

Pick one of the two following writing prompts & write a 5 paragraph persuasive essay either supporting Loyalty to Great Britain or promoting Independence from the British government.

A

What would lead an American colonist to remain a Loyalist in the face of the rebellion against Great Britain after 1776

B

What would lead an American colonist to join the Patriot cause in the face of the rebellion against Great Britain after 1776

Introductory Paragraph --1

Does the paragraph clarify the itself? Does it present a clear thesis, or overall answer?

The Internal Paragraphs — 2-4

Are these paragraphs organized around main points with details supporting those main ideas? Do all these main ideas support the thesis in the introductory paragraph?

The Internal Paragraphs — 2-4

Are all of your main ideas and key points linked in a logical way? That is, does each idea follow clearly from those that went before? Does it add something new and helpful in clarifying your thesis?

Use of Primary Source Documents

Are they simply mentioned in a “laundry list” fashion? Or are they used thoughtfully to support main ideas and the thesis?

Concluding Paragraph --5

Does it restate the thesis in a way that sums up the main ideas without repeating old information or going into new details?

- Use the front and back of the page

