Persuasive Paper/Speech Pathfinder
English Classes

Introduction:
To be successful writers and speakers you need to understand both sides of a controversial issue. Not only does this allow you to argue both sides of any topic, but it gives you insight into arguments opponents would use against you. You can counter these opposing viewpoints in your paper/speech if you have evidence that neutralizes their argument and promotes your point of view. Second, good writers/speakers use evidence to prove their point of view, therefore when you are researching a topic you need to locate statistical information, studies, and quotes from experts in the field. The more authoritative your evidence the better chance you have backing up your point of view and persuading people to your cause. Good solid evidence will persuade people to your cause over arguments supported with poor, little, or no evidence.

Reference:
Encyclopedia materials rarely provide you with evidence for your persuasive paper/speech. However, if you can find a good encyclopedia article it can provide you with the points of view you’ll use in your paper/speech. Go ahead and see if an encyclopedia article can frame the debate for you. In addition, check the World Almanac to see if you can find some statistical information on your topic.

Books:
Check the card catalog, http://ssd-destiny.sno.wednet.edu/, we have many books that give opposing viewpoints to many controversial topics. In addition, there are many other books on different topics that can give you insight on your topic.

If you are having trouble deciding on a topic then you’ll want to look at Peggy Whitley and et al's book, 99 Jumpstarts to Research. This book will not only give you a long list of topics to choose from, but ideas on how to local information on these topics.

Periodicals:
Use ProQuest/eLibrary (http://search.proquest.com/login) to locate scholarly articles on your topic. See Mr. Mohn or Mrs. Waltz for user name and password. Also, use the Sno-Isle Public Library (www.sno-isle.org) online research resources, such as their EBSCO databases, InfoTrac, and FACTS.com to locate quality information on your topic. You’ll need your public library card to access these databases. If you don’t have a card, then apply for one online (5-7 days) or by going to the library and apply for one in person (you’ll immediately get your library card to use that day).

Internet:
One of the best databases for this project is Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center which is located under Premium Databases (http://glacierpeak.sno.wednet.edu/Page/2267). This database contains articles on both sides of an issue and sections where you can locate statistics and primary resources on your topic. Every person should use this database for their research.
Many people and organizations create web sites to promote their point of view on issues. However, not all of these web sites contain reliable information you can use in your paper/speech. Be careful the information you find on these web sites are factual and the people you quote are experts in the field.