

# Editorial

INTRODUCTION

Attention-grabbing introduction

Background

Evidence/Facts

Opinion statement

Emotional appeal

BODY

Strongest reason

Evidence/Facts and expert opinions

Second reason

Evidence/Example

## Tough Penalties for Drunk Drivers:

### A Last Chance at Life

Last week eight teenagers on their way home from a party were killed when their truck crashed into a tree. The autopsy on the seventeen-year-old driver showed that his blood alcohol level was more than twice the legal limit.

The leading cause of death for people sixteen to nineteen years old is not cancer or heart disease or any other illness that may strike without warning. It is driving while under the influence of alcohol. We must do something to stop this slaughter, and we can: Drivers under the age of twenty-one who have a blood alcohol level over the legal limit should immediately lose their licenses, and they should not be allowed to drive again for at least two years.

The most important reason to support my proposal is that it will save the lives of not only drivers but also innocent victims. Drunk driving is a tragic mistake at any age, but as Susan and Daniel Cohen write in their book *A Six-Pack and a Fake I.D.*, "drivers under twenty-one are involved in much more than their share of serious traffic accidents." According to Sandy Golden, author of *Driving the Drunk off the Road*, of the 25,000 people who are killed every year in drunk driving accidents, one fifth are teenagers.

Another reason is that the penalty can stop dangerous behavior before it happens. Teenagers are not like adults, who may have

# Editorial *continued*

Conceding a point

Rebuttal

Evidence/Example

Logical appeal

Conceding a point

Rebuttal

Evidence/Facts

hardened, hard-to-change habits. Most teenagers who drink do so not because they're addicted to alcohol, but because of peer pressure. With the freedom that a driver's license brings, they can go to unchaperoned parties where they drink to prove their new adult status. But if teenagers knew they could lose this glorious freedom, they would be less likely to take the risk.

Some people claim that it's unfair to treat teenagers differently from others. If eighteen-year-olds are old enough to vote and fight in a war, they argue, then eighteen-year-olds are adults and should have the same rights as adults.

I believe teenagers should be treated differently. As new drinkers, teenagers don't know their limits, and they don't realize how alcohol clouds their judgment. Moreover, teenagers are breaking the law just by buying and drinking alcohol. They are already different from adults under the law, and they compound their crime when they drink and drive.

Some people argue that teenagers are better drivers than older people. It's generally true that young people have faster reflexes than middle-aged and elderly drivers, but they also have less experience on the road. Some older drivers who are under the influence of alcohol drive slowly, but teenagers, confident in their abilities, tend to be less cautious even when sober. In fact, most alcohol-related collisions involving teenagers are caused by reckless driving and speeding.

## Editorial *continued*

### CONCLUSION

Restatement of thesis;  
Emotional appeal

Call to action

Emotional appeal

We must keep all drunk drivers off the road, and tough penalties for teenagers are a firm step toward that goal. Support a law that gives teenagers a clear message: If you drink, your license is gone. Give them this chance to learn. It may be their last chance at life.

# Editorial

## Definition

An **editorial** is a brief essay that presents one writer's opinion about an important issue and attempts to persuade other people to agree. A good editorial uses evidence and arguments (logical, emotional, and ethical appeals) to convince its audience.

Many editorials use the structure illustrated in the framework below. Print this framework and use it as a guide when you write your own editorial.

## Framework

## Directions and Explanations

**Introduction**

- Grab readers' attention.
- Give necessary background information.
- State your opinion clearly.

**Attract attention** Begin with a mysterious statement, a description of a serious event, or a thought-provoking question.

**Describe your issue** Identify your issue and give readers the information they need to understand your argument.

**State your position** State your opinion on the issue clearly and directly.



**Body**

- Support your position.
- Rebut the opposition.

**Present your appeals** Provide reasons that support your opinion. Use evidence, including facts, examples, statistics, stories, and analogies. Make sure you include logical, emotional, and ethical appeals.

**Organize your case** Organize your reasons in chronological order, logical order, or order of importance.

**Look at both sides** Be fair. Always present the opposing points of view and provide your arguments against them.



**Conclusion**

- Restate your thesis.
- Call readers to action, if possible.

**End with a strong impression** Wrap up your argument by restating your thesis in a new way.

**Involve your readers** If the issue demands immediate attention, urge your readers to take action. Tell them what they can do to help, or leave them with an interesting idea.