

Name: _____ Date: _____ Class: _____

Fission vs. Fusion Mini-Position Paper Assignment

Assignment due date: _____

What is a Position Paper?

A position paper is an essay that presents an informed opinion based on research about an issue.

Why a “Mini” Position Paper?

Some position papers are thousands of words long. Your paper will be a maximum of 500 words.

You will be writing a mini-position paper which answers the question:

Given 10 billion dollars, how would you allocate funding between (1) continuing to build and run fission reactors and (2) research into the development of fusion reactors as sources of energy for the future?

You will be required to write an essay following the structure below in which you will defend your answer to this question using examples and information about fission and fusion that your group found during your research.

Your position paper should include:

1. An introduction – a first paragraph which clearly presents the position you are taking on the issue (how you will distribute the money).
2. Your position – a paragraph which explains your view and tells the reader why you are taking the position you've chosen. Be sure to present the information in a logical order. You must present at least **three** pieces of evidence about fission and fusion science and technology which support your opinion.
3. The other side of the issue – a paragraph which explains why alternative positions are not as good as your position. You must present at least **three different** pieces of evidence about fission and fusion science and technology.
4. A conclusion – a final paragraph which summarizes the main points of your position (but does not repeat any sentences directly from the other paragraphs).
5. A list of sources – which websites did you refer to?

The paper will be a maximum of two pages (500 words) in length and must be typed (12 pt, 1.5 line spacing).

You will need to ensure that your position is well-supported. Listing the pros and cons of fission and fusion science and technology will help you to choose a position as well as help you support your position and argue against alternative positions. For both fission and fusion, you will want to consider: the process itself, raw materials (fuel), energy input, energy output, waste products, potential for catastrophic failure (meltdown), potential for leaks and availability of technology (does it exist now or when will it exist).