

Course: Chemistry 1	Grade Level: 10 and 11
Type: Argumentative	Structure: Analysis
Teaching Task 2: Should energy drink purchase and consumption be regulated by government agencies? After reading a selection of texts provided by the teacher, write a persuasive letter to an FDA regulator that addresses the question, using evidence from the texts to support your opinion. L2 Be sure to acknowledge opposing views concerning the need for regulation. L3 Give examples from past or current products that the FDA has regulated and those it appears not to regulate.	
Performance Level: Approaches Expectations	

Peggy Lee

123 New Hampshire Ave

Silver Spring, CO 1967

Dear Mrs. Peggy Lee:

My name is _____ and I live a town called _____ in Pennsylvania. I am writing to you about the issue of energy drinks and the dangers they cause to the youth. I do not believe there is a need to put restrictions on the sales of energy drinks. Brian Rohrig wrote in his article "Are Energy Drinks Good For You?" that most energy drinks do come with warning labels advising people of certain ages or with certain medical problems should avoid use of them. In an article by Karrie Heneman called "Energy Drinks" the author says pregnant and nursing women, adolescents and kids should not drink energy drinks. This is stated on the warning labels on the cans already. It is the faults of the people if they decide not read or follow the warnings on the labels. She later adds that people need to be responsible when consuming energy drinks. In an article written by Dr. Ayala titled "Energy drinks: it is safe to caffeinate kids?" it is stated that the empty calories from sugar contribute to obesity and dental problems, but if a young child drinks an energy drink, shouldn't they be moving around and burning off the energy and calories they gained? Also, almost everything with sugar can contribute to dental problems and someone of any age can buy a chocolate bar. Karrie Heneman's article, mentioned earlier, talks about the sugar in the drinks and how it should be limited in the daily diet and there is too much in energy drinks. Fats should also be limited in the daily diet, yet fried chicken sales are not limited or restricted. In that same article, Dr. Ayala says caffeine can cause overall exhaustion and says the best way to get energy is a good diet, enough sleep, and to be physically active. This statement caught my attention because some people, myself included, suffer from sleeping disorders such as insomnia. These people naturally do not get enough sleep most nights, so they therefore naturally cannot use the "best recipe" for energy. The so-called "crash" that can follow the burst of energy received from these drinks might even help these people sleep at night. Most of the health issues are in the children and youth that consume energy drinks, but they have parents who can regulate their consumption.

I think a lot of the issues could be solved if parents became more involved in what their children eat and drink throughout their day. Instead of regulating sales we should work on finding ingredients that can give you energy without posing health problems. When we do that, then either the amount of caffeine and sugar can be cut down, or the amount in the cans can be lowered. That will eliminate most concern for young children and teenagers who drink energy drinks. If sales were to be regulated though, I think anyone should be allowed to buy them but maybe only one at a time. If you have any questions or are interested in my argument you can contact me at

Sincerely yours,

High School Student

Annotation		
Focus	2	The writer addresses some elements of the prompt by addressing why restrictions should not be placed on the sales of energy drinks. The writer also acknowledges opposing views and provides examples of products that the FDA elects not to regulate.
Reading/Research	2	<p>The writer refers to research, but glosses over details that appear damaging to the writer's argument by making generalizations that seem vague and unconvincing.</p> <p>The writer does not use evidence from the provided texts to support an FDA ban or restriction. Rather, the writer uses texts solely to provide counter point arguments that the writer then attempts to refute with subjective, unsubstantiated opinion: <i>In an article by Karrie Heneman called "Energy Drinks," the author says pregnant and nursing women, adolescents and kids should not drink energy drinks. This is stated on the warning labels on the cans already. It is the faults of the people if they decide not read or follow the warnings on the labels.</i></p>
Controlling Idea	2	<p>The writer's second sentence initiates a point that runs counter to the writer's thesis: <i>I am writing to you about the issue of energy drinks and the dangers they cause to the youth.</i></p> <p>In the sentence that follows, the writer takes a stance that is mostly maintained, but yet potential for confusion has already been established: <i>I do not believe there is a need to put restrictions on the sales of energy drinks,</i></p> <p>The writer also strays from the thesis by addressing issues that are tangential (e.g. parent involvement, the discovery of other energy-producing ingredients).</p>
Development	2	<p>The arguments offered to support the writer's position are unsubstantiated, detracting from the writer's credibility. Lapses exist in the reasoning, examples, and explanations:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Fats should also be limited in the daily diet, yet fried chicken sales are not limited or restricted.</i> • <i>if a young child drinks an energy drink, shouldn't they be moving around and burning off the energy and calories they gained?</i>
Organization	1	The letter shows minimal evidence of organizational structure. The entire letter is presented as one paragraph, making logical progression a significant challenge. Despite the presence of transitions from sentence to sentence (e.g. <i>She later adds; Also; In that same article</i>), no clear transition from topic to topic exists.
Conventions	2.5	The tone of the essay is mostly appropriate for its intended audience. Diction, phrasing, and mastery of conventions are uneven. Sources are used and cited with minor errors.
Content Understanding	2	The letter does not suggest a strong mastery of content. It includes background information and research in the counter claims, but fails to use content relevant to the support of the thesis. The writer relies on subjective opinion and personal anecdote rather than evidence of solid comprehension.

This student would benefit from feedback, discussion, and/or instruction in the following areas:

- Reliance on examples and research to provide more compelling arguments
- Proper comma usage, avoidance of run-on sentences