

MEMORANDUM

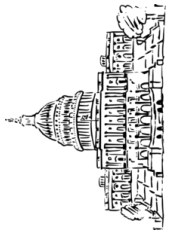
As the Congressional representative from Maine’s First District, you are in a very tough spot. Your political future is likely at stake in this vote.

The new drug, pentasodium chloradimethaline, trademarked as Psychamine™, has caused major controversy in the popular, scientific, and academic press. Feelings are running very high in Maine, both for and against legalization.

Your chief aide tells you that you should get a letter out soon to your constituents explaining how you will vote —either to legalize it, ban it, or make it a prescription drug. She points out that you are bound to upset at least half the voters no matter what your decision, and recommends your letter show very clearly that you understand all sides of the issue. She says you should quote from and refer to witnesses from the hearings of the Subcommittee on Health to help make sure your constituents realize that you have been involved in the debate in Washington.

The letter, addressed to “Dear Constituent,” should be long enough to explain the complicated ideas surrounding the issues (minimum 650 words) but not so long as to lead people to not read it at all (maximum 1200 words).

Many political scientists, philosophers, and religious leaders have weighed in on all sides of this debate. If you can, part of the letter should address “higher issues” these people have been discussing.



ASSIGNMENT NECESSITIES

- your paper must be in the form of a letter to your constituents: at least 150,000 households will receive it.
- you are the representative to Congress
- your paper must have funnel opening
- your thesis is your position on Psychamine: let your reader know at the end of the first [funnel] paragraph whether you will legalize Psychamine, ban it, or restrict it to a doctor's prescription (or other restrictions).
- your constituents have probably heard about Psychamine but you cannot expect they are fully informed; they might have read or seen distorted information from media. Therefore, you must explain the basics of Psychamine to them clearly and succinctly so they will know the necessary facts.
- your letter must reflect your familiarity with all of the testimony and must use direct quotation to support your ideas. No more than about 20 per cent of the paper should be direct quotation, however.
- your letter must show that you can create "quotation sandwiches." Use at least one example each of full sentence, indented, and run-in quotations. That's a minimum of 3 quotations.
- in addition to several points (in several paragraphs) explaining the reasons for your decision, you should have at least one "yabut" paragraph that explains why you have rejected the other choices of what to do with Psychamine.
- in addition to a thorough command of the "facts" of the Psychamine case, your letter must show that you have given careful attention to underlying issues about the use of drugs – ideas that have come from class discussions as well as your own personal knowledge, thinking, and experience. (Making use of the work we did with the 7 controversial statements about drug use and your position on them will help.) This might be especially useful in the conclusion.