Topic will: Evaluate the impact of a parent staying at home on a child's overall well-being and social skills. Discuss whether children and families are better off in dual-income households or in households where one parent stays home with young kids before they enter school full time. ASSIGNMENT: Following the Topic Selection Guidelines below, choose an argumentative topic to research. This will be your topic throughout the entire course, so the activities required for this assignment will provide the foundation for your future Touchstones. The topic for an argumentative research paper must be an arguable topic, meaning that it involves a stance that advocates for a concrete course of action and at least three supporting reasons which are defensible with credible sources. Additionally, it must take a stance that someone could hypothetically disagree with. You will need to take a firm position on the topic and use evidence and logic to support the position. Touchstone 1.2 includes a research question, a working thesis, a detailed outline, and a reflection on this pre-writing process A. Topic Selection Guidelines DIRECTIONS: You may choose any topic you wish as long as the stance is arguable and the supporting reasons are defensible with evidence. Your topic should be current, appropriate for an academic context and should have a focus suitable for a 6-8 page essay. THESIS STATEMENTS • Evaluate the impact of a parent staying at home on a child's overall wellbeing and social skills. Discuss whether children and families are better off in dual-income households or in households where one parent stays home with young kids before they enter school full time. B. Research Guidelines DIRECTIONS: Refer to the list below throughout the writing process. Do not submit your Touchstone until it meets these guidelines. 1. Research Question and Working Thesis Keep in mind: The research question and working thesis are the driving force behind your research and eventual argument. ❒ Your research question should be a single sentence, framed as an actionable statement that takes a clear position on the research question and includes three main supporting points for holding that position. ❒ Your working thesis should be a single focused sentence, framed as a statement that takes a clear position on the research question. ❒ Include your research question followed by your working thesis. 2. Detailed Outline Keep in mind: Your detailed outline provides a map of the argumentative research essay that you will write including your key claims and the sources that support them. You might not have all seven required sources yet, and that is fine. The outline is a way to organize your essay and determine which areas (e.g. your sub-points) will require researched evidence as support. ❒ Headings: one for each paragraph with a brief label of the paragraph’s controlling idea(s). ❒ An introduction, at least five body paragraphs, and a conclusion. ❒ Introduction includes your working thesis. ❒ Body paragraphs should each have their own unique title and key points. ❒ At least one body paragraph is devoted to addressing counterarguments. ❒ Conclusion includes notes on your final thoughts. ❒ Subheadings: two to five for each paragraph, below each heading, indicating key points that support the controlling idea ❒ Sources: one to three for each paragraph, as relevant, indicating the support for the key points. Do not over-rely on any single source. ❒ For each source, include the author’s name and the idea or information relevant to your argument (e.g. “Lappé (2017) on mono-cropping corn/soy and production”). Link with a website if it is available. 3. Reflection ❒ Have you displayed a clear understanding of the research activities? ❒ Have you answered all reflection questions thoughtfully and included insights, observations, and/or examples in all responses? ❒ Are your answers included on a separate page below the main assignment? C. Reflection Questions DIRECTIONS: Below your assignment, include answers to all of the following reflection questions. 1. Learning to conduct research is important because it is a skill you will use both in academia and in your professional life. It improves critical thinking and empowers you to find information for yourself. Consider the process of researching as a whole. What was the most challenging aspect of the process for you? (2-3 sentences) 2. The working thesis statement is a proposed answer to your research question. It should clearly identify an arguable topic and take a position on one side of that topic. Analyze the effectiveness of your working thesis statement. (3-4 sentences) 3. A detailed outline is an effective tool for laying out the progression of an argument. It allows you to consider the arrangement and organization of your ideas, as well as choose places to incorporate outside source materials. Review your detailed outline and summarize the argument you've presented. (3-4 sentences) 4. You will use the same topic on three of the remaining Touchstones in this course. What kind of feedback would be helpful for you? What are specific questions you might have as you go deeper into the research process? (2-3 sentences)