

**Old Bridge Township Public Schools**  
**Jonas Salk & Carl Sandburg Middle School**  
**Student Handbook for Writing**



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## Philosophy

Recognizing that each person has an inherent worth, it is the mission of Old Bridge Public Schools to empower each student to learn to achieve success and to become a confident productive member of a pluralistic global society prepared to face the challenges of the 21<sup>st</sup> century. Our mission at Old Bridge Township Public Schools is to provide a safe, nurturing environment in which all students can learn the skills necessary to find success as respectful members of their community.

Utilizing effective writing skills and strategies ensures that Old Bridge Middle School students become successful members of society. According to the National Writing Project, "Writing is essential to communication, learning, and citizenship, and is the currency of the new workplace and global economy." Writing helps us convey ideas, solve problems, and understand our changing world; likewise, writing is a bridge to the future.

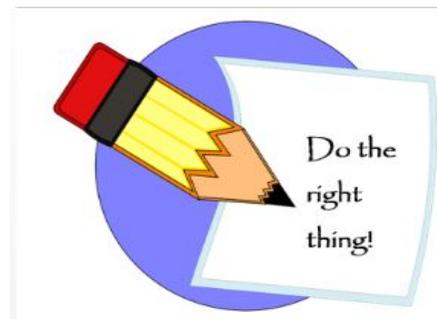
Preparing students to be college and career ready beyond Middle and High School requires proficient writing, not only formally, but informally. For example, writing emails should be done correctly. As a prevalent form of communication for most people in today's society, it is important that students understand the proper way to communicate through email. If this skill is taught at an early age they will be conditioned to practice good habits well into the future.

The **purpose** of writing is to effectively communicate ideas. Learning to clearly articulate ideas in an organized way helps readers gain a solid understanding of the writer's purpose. The ability to articulate ideas empowers writers in both personal and business relationships. These skills of articulating, presenting, and persuading can be gained through a strong understanding and application of the writing process (Writer's Handbook).

This handbook is designed to support writers of all content areas throughout the writing process. Divided into sections, the handbook provides explanations and examples of writing instruction grounded in current research and best practice.

## Statement of Academic Honesty

Academic integrity is honesty and responsibility in scholarship. Every assignment you do in school is meant to measure your knowledge of something or your ability to do something. The grade you receive on the assignment should reflect that knowledge or ability. But an assignment cannot truly measure your knowledge or ability if you have not done your own work.



**What is plagiarism?** Plagiarism is a serious scholarly offense and is subject to disciplinary action. Students are often confused about what constitutes plagiarism. If you use a **familiar expression** such as "The Golden Rule," or if you refer to **facts that are common knowledge** such as "The United States is comprised of fifty states," you need not cite a source. This type of information is considered part of the public domain; however, if you report that the population of Old Bridge is 202,751, you need to cite your source, as most residents are not aware of the exact number, and population is in flux. Plagiarism (from the Latin meaning "kidnapper") is taking the words, works, or ideas created by another and presenting them as your own. **It is considered cheating, even if it is unintentional.**

**Some examples of plagiarism are as follows:**

- You get an essay from a **friend** or from the **internet** and put your name at the top.
- You copy passages from print or online sources unchanged and without citation.
- You copy passages and change a few words without correct citation (paraphrasing).
- You use ideas presented by others in your paper without correct citation.  
(see page 18 of this handbook to learn how to cite a source correctly).
- You can also plagiarize yourself. If you submit a paper that you wrote for one class for credit in another class, you are guilty of plagiarism.
- If you steal an idea from a book, movie, speech, magazine, lecture, journal, teleplay, or electronic source and represent it as an original thought-even if it is expressed in your own words-then you have committed an act of plagiarism.

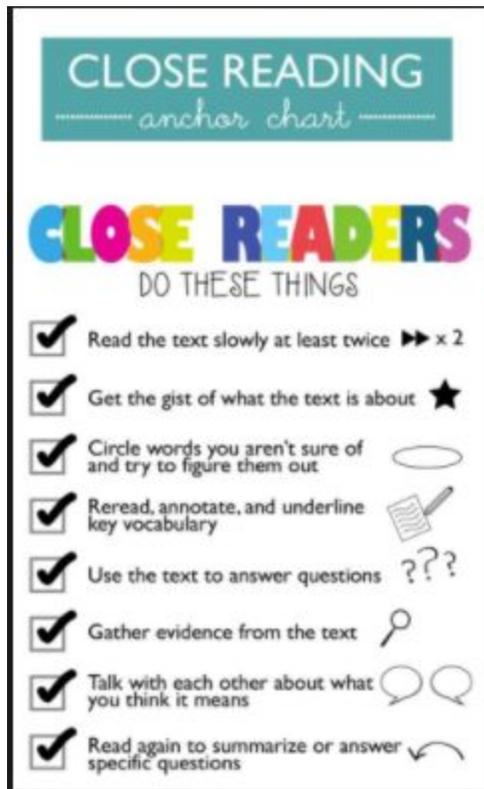
### How to Avoid Plagiarism:

- Use quotation marks around word-for-word sentences used from **any** material (e.g. everything from online databases to songs to interviews to books to journals, etc.) and provide a correct citation.
- Use an indented set-off paragraph for quotes longer than four sentences in length and cite correctly.
- Give credit for all lines of thinking, facts, evidence, arguments, paraphrased summaries, statistics, graphs, photographs, art works, and any other material that was not created by you.
- Ask for permission to use copyrighted images and other materials and cite them.
- (For more complete information on plagiarism visit <http://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/589/02/>)
- Feel free to utilize one of the library's plagiarism checkers to check your work. <http://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/webpages/obhslibrary/databases.cfm>

## Good Readers Make Good Writers

*"If you don't have time to read, you don't have the time (or the tools) to write."-Stephen King*

The process of writing an essay usually begins with the close reading of a text-either fiction or nonfiction. Most of the papers you write will involve reflection on written texts - the thinking and research that has already been done on your subject. In order to write your own analysis of this subject, you will need to do careful critical reading of sources and to use them critically to make your own argument. The judgments and interpretations you make of the texts you read are the first steps towards formulating your own approach to writing about them.



### Critical Reading: What is it?

Critical reading means being actively engaged in what you read by developing a clear understanding of the author's ideas, evaluating the arguments and evidence provided to support these arguments, and forming your own opinions.

Whenever you read, read to understand "how," "why," and "what." Look for the elements of reasoning by the author: purpose, questions, point of view, information, implications, assumptions, and conclusions.

**What does it take to be a critical reader? Here are some suggested steps:**

1. **Prepare to become part of the writer's audience.** Authors design texts for specific audiences, and becoming a member of the target audience makes it easier to get at the author's purpose. Learn about the author, the history of the author and the text, the author's anticipated audience; read

introductions and notes.

2. **Prepare to read with an open mind.** Critical readers seek knowledge; they do not "rewrite" a work to suit their own personalities. Your task as a critical reader is to read what is on the page, giving the writer a fair chance to develop ideas and allowing yourself to reflect thoughtfully, objectively, on the text.

3. **Consider the title.** The title may provide clues to the writer's attitude, goals, personal viewpoint, or approach.

4. **Read slowly.** By slowing down, you will make more connections within the text.

5. **Use the dictionary and other appropriate reference works.** Every word is important. If there is a word in the text that is not clear or difficult to define in context: look it up.

6. **Make notes.** Jot down marginal notes, underline and highlight, write down ideas in a notebook, do whatever works for your own personal taste. Note for yourself the main ideas, the thesis, and the author's main points to support the theory.

7. **Keep a reading journal.** In addition to note-taking, it is often helpful to regularly record your responses and thoughts in a more permanent place that is yours to consult. By developing a habit of reading and writing in conjunction, both skills will improve.

## Annotating and Summarizing

Reading any text (fiction or nonfiction) requires the mental acts of observing, connecting, inferring, and concluding. It requires careful attention to details of language and structure.

### Good readers:

- look not only for the information but also how that information is presented.
- observe the details of how stories are told, how arguments are made, and how evidence is presented.
- make connections among the details they observe.
- draw inferences based on those connected observations, inferences that prepare them to make conclusions from their inferences.
- are also engaged by what they read. They respond with questions if they need clarification, and they interact with the text even after their actual reading of the words on the page has been completed.

This is what we call active reading or **annotation**. Reading of this sort provides both intellectual and emotional response to the text.

"Annotating" means underlining or highlighting key words and phrases—anything that strikes you as surprising or significant, or that raises questions—as well as making notes in the margins. When we respond to a text in this way, we not only force ourselves to pay close attention, but we also begin to think with the author about the evidence—the first step in moving from reader to writer.

### The following guidelines will help you to read actively.

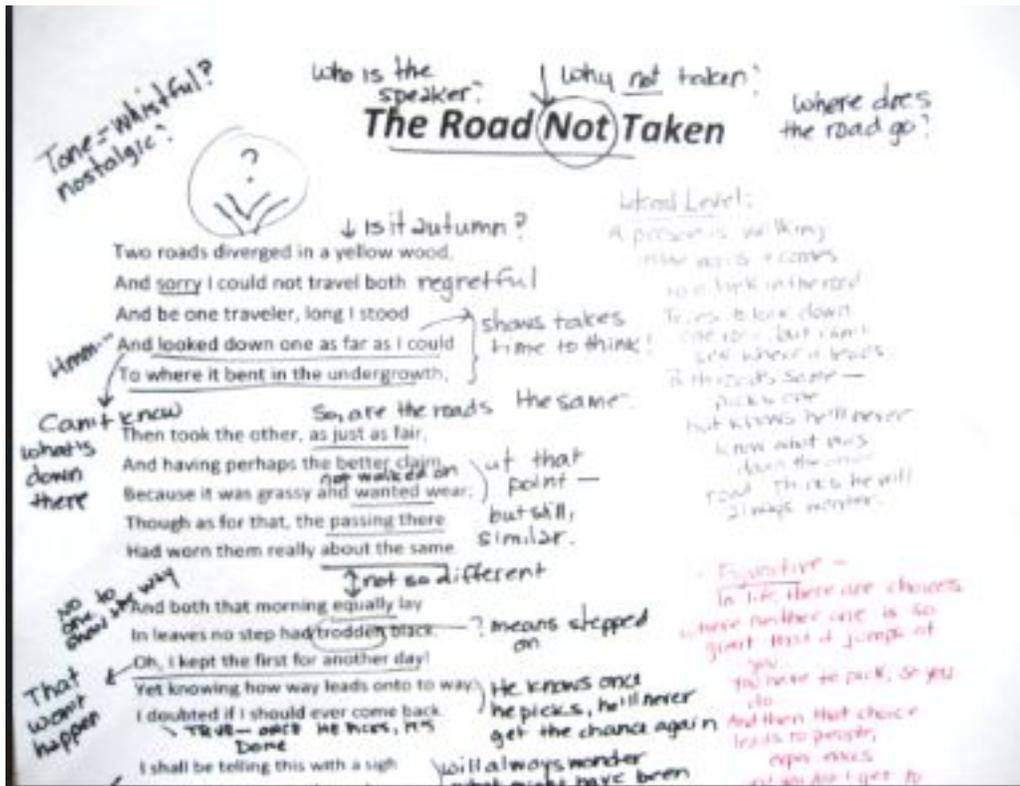
1. With pencil in hand, skim the contents of the document. Pay attention to clarity of chapter titles, headings, diagrams, graphics, and illustrations.
2. Look for the author's main point, and mark it when you find it.
3. When you see a word, acronym, sentence, and paragraph that you do not know or understand, mark it and look it up later.
4. Look for patterns in the things you've noticed about the text—repetitions, contradictions, similarities.

5. Pause from time-to-time to think about what you have read and review your notes.
6. Write key ideas and main points in the margins. When you re-read the document later, you can quickly skim the text for main ideas without re-reading the entire text.
7. Ask “What?” “Why?” “Who?” “How?” and “So what?” questions. If the answers are unclear—mark it. Keep a log of your questions, ideas, findings, and comments.
8. Pay attention to reasoning. If the reasons are not clear to you—mark them and look them up later.
9. Look for connections to other documents that might be helpful as resources.
10. Re-read the document and compare your initial findings with your new understanding. Have your questions been answered? If not, who can answer them?

### Active Reading and Annotation Strategies

Symbol	Active Reading and Annotation Strategies:
—	<b>Underline / Highlight</b> important information and details
	<b>Circle</b> important / unfamiliar words
?	<b>Question Mark</b> to indicate confusion or questions about concepts / ideas
*	<b>Asterisk</b> to make connections from the text to other sources
✓ / X	Check agree/ x disagree

## What Good Annotation Looks Like



## ETHOS, LOGOS, AND PATHOS: The Three Appeals of Persuasion

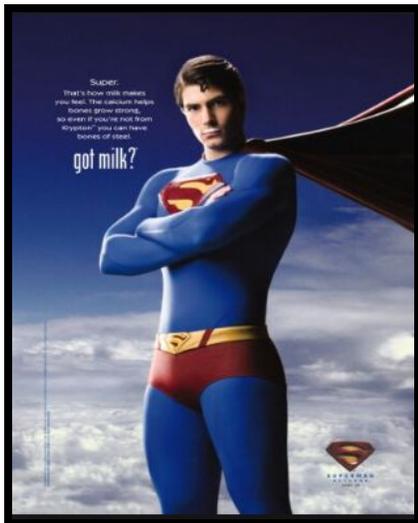
The goal of most writing is to persuade an audience that your ideas are valid, or more valid than someone else's. Purpose, audience, tone, and diction are just a few elements a writer must consider. Selecting appropriate examples and expressing yourself clearly are also important if you want to appeal to your reader. The Greek philosopher Aristotle divided the means of persuasion, called appeals, into three categories—**Ethos, Pathos, and Logos**.

**Ethos (Credibility) appeal** means convincing by the character of the author. We tend to believe people whom we respect. As author, you must be an authority on the subject of the paper, as well as someone who is likable and worthy of respect. Here is an example of a visual advertisement using **ethos**:

- What makes this picture of President Obama credible?
- What does the word HOPE represent?
- How are the picture and the word HOPE an example of ethos?



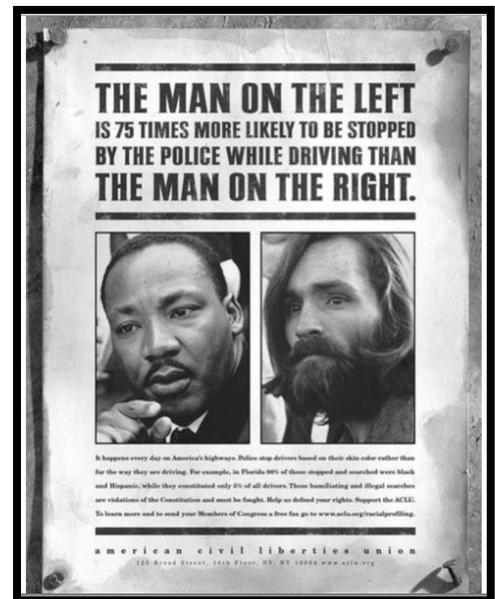
**Logos (Logical) appeal** means persuading by the use of reasoning. Logos relies on reasoning, facts, and statistics. Here is an example of a visual advertisements using **logos**:



- Why is it logical for Superman to do an ad for Got Milk?
- What facts or reasoning are present in the advertisement?
- How is the picture an example of a logical appeal?

**Pathos (Emotional) appeal** means persuading by appealing to the reader's emotions. Choices in diction and evidence affect the audience's emotional response. The most common way of conveying a pathetic appeal is through a narrative or story. Here is an example of a visual advertisement using **pathos**:

- Who are the two men in this picture to the right?
- Name two things different about them?
- Why would this advertisement appeal to pathos?



# The Rhetorical Appeals

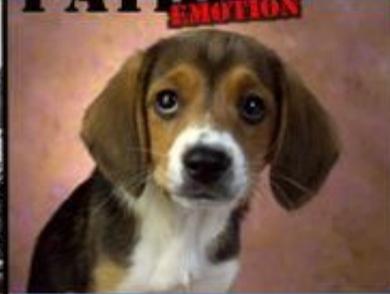
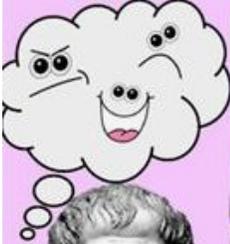
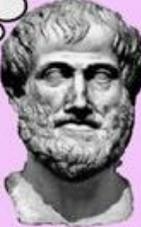
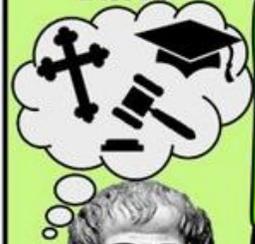
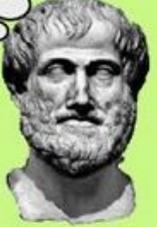
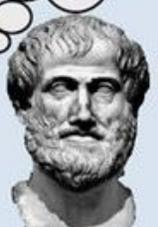
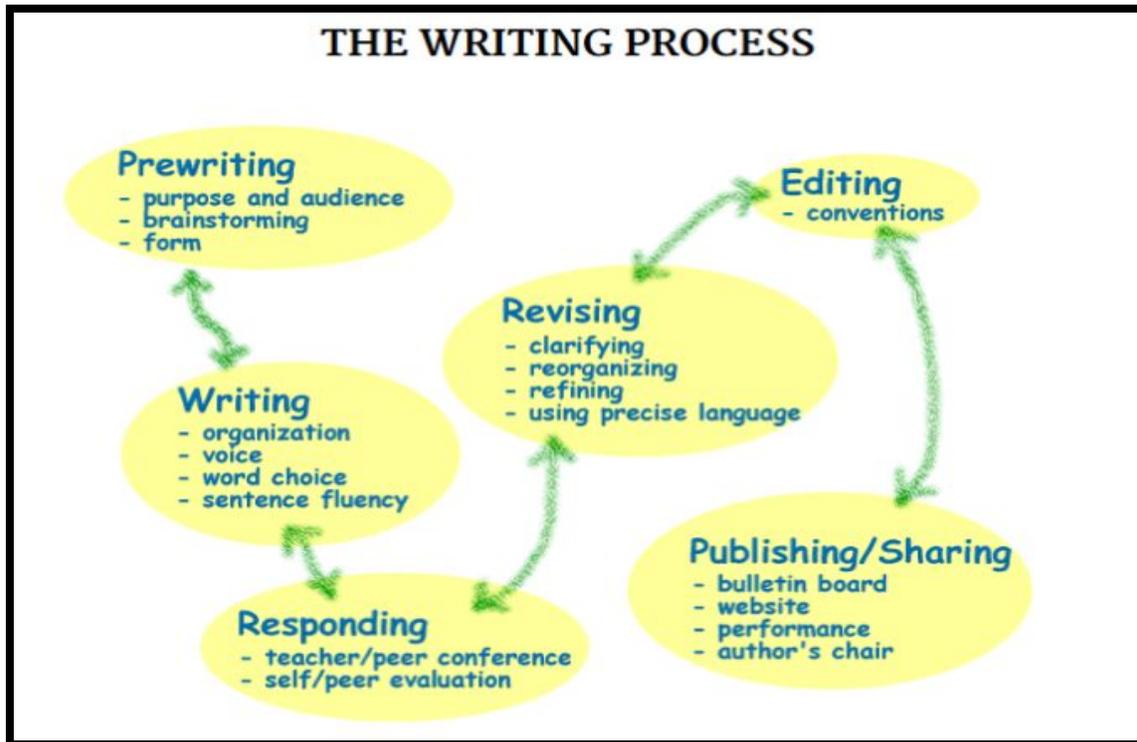
<b>ETHOS</b> <small>CHARACTER</small>	<b>PATHOS</b> <small>EMOTION</small>	<b>LOGOS</b> <small>REASON</small>
		
<p>Different readers require different kinds of <i>ethos</i>. Strong writers use voice and tone, as well as credentialed pieces of evidence to make themselves:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Trustworthy</li> <li>• Educated</li> <li>• Reliable</li> <li>• Credible</li> <li>• Honest</li> <li>• Fair</li> </ul>	<p>Audiences don't respond well to overly emotional appeals. Strong writers invite readers to care about their subject matter by using diction, evidence, or claims that inspire emotions such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Love</li> <li>• Pity</li> <li>• Justice</li> <li>• Patriotism</li> <li>• Hope</li> <li>• Jealousy</li> <li>• Anger</li> <li>• Fear</li> </ul>	<p>Strong writers build their argument on a foundation of logic using techniques such as:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Case studies</li> <li>• Cause-and-effect</li> <li>• Authority</li> <li>• Analogies</li> <li>• Statistics</li> <li>• Anecdote</li> </ul>
 <p><b>ARISTOTLE SAYS:</b> <i>Character may almost be called the most effective means of persuasion.</i></p>	 <p><b>ARISTOTLE SAYS:</b> <i>Every action must be due to one or other of seven causes: chance, nature, compulsion, habit, reasoning, anger, or appetite.</i></p>	 <p><b>ARISTOTLE SAYS:</b> <i>The use of reason is more distinctive of a human being than the use of his limbs.</i></p>

Image Source: [https://s3.amazonaws.com/engrade-myfiles/4017655811057855/Rhetorical\\_Appeals.png](https://s3.amazonaws.com/engrade-myfiles/4017655811057855/Rhetorical_Appeals.png)

<p><b>Pathos</b></p>   <p><b>Appeals to :</b> Love Hope Sadness Anger Pity Fear Excitement Patriotism Sympathy Empathy</p> <p><b>Passion</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Pink</p>	<p><b>Ethos</b></p>   <p><b>Appeals to:</b> Perceived trustworthiness Perceived intellect Perceived morals Perceived authority Perceived ethics</p> <p><b>Ethics</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Emerald Green</p>	<p><b>Logos</b></p>   <p><b>Appeals to:</b> Proof Cause-and-effect Statistics Support of argument Logical argument</p> <p><b>Logic</b></p> <p style="writing-mode: vertical-rl; transform: rotate(180deg);">Light Blue</p>
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## The Writing Process

The writing process is an approach to writing that entails the recursive phases of pre-writing, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.



## Five Steps of the Writing Process



Prewriting refers to the writing activities that are done prior to or during early drafting. These activities allow students to think about and gather their ideas. Some prewriting activities are: "free association" techniques such as brainstorming, listing, clustering, visualization or freewriting. Some other more structured techniques are the use of graphic organizers, outlining, or questioning.



**Drafting**

Create a rough copy of your writing.

- ★ Write your ideas in order.
- ★ Read your work out loud and note places where you stumble.
- ★ Ask a friend for his or her feedback.

Drafting refers to the actual process of composing during writing. During drafting, students establish their ideas and incorporate support and/or evidence for their ideas sequentially.



**Revising**

Improve your writing.

- ★ Try out different beginnings and endings.
- ★ Use quotes or add dialogue.
- ★ Include descriptive words.
- ★ Add detail to develop important parts.

This part of the process refers to changes made in the content and structure of writing to achieve a particular purpose. During revising, students can may either add or delete information, alter the organization of the essay, include or change transitional words or sentences in the essay, and make any grammatical or mechanical changes as needed.



**Editing**

Proofread your work.

- ★ Make sure you have complete sentences, correct spelling, and necessary capitalization and punctuation.
- ★ Reread to see if each sentence makes sense.
- ★ Ask a friend to proofread your work.

This part of the process refers to a particular type of revision focusing specifically on language conventions and mechanics. During editing, students should focus on errors that interfere with the meaning of the content of the piece.



This part of the process refers to the time when writing is read by the targeted audience. Students can work with their teachers and/or peers to make their writing "public". Teachers can also publish student writing by simply making it "public". Although publication is certainly not required for every writing activity, it can be a powerful learning experience when students receive feedback from a real audience about their writing (Merritt).

## The Genres/Types of Writing

Writing takes many forms. Once you understand the task at hand and the rhetorical situation you can determine your approach.

### Argumentative/Persuasive Writing

- **Argumentative:** The argumentative essay is a genre of writing that requires the student to investigate a topic; collect, generate, and evaluate evidence; and establish a position on the topic in a concise manner. Argumentative essay assignments may require extensive research of literature or empirical research where the student collects data through interviews, surveys, observations, or experiments. Detailed research allows the student to learn about the topic and to understand different points of view regarding the topic so that she/he may choose a position and support it with the evidence collected during research. Regardless of the amount or type of research involved, argumentative essays must establish a clear thesis and follow sound reason (Purdue Online Writing Lab).

Effective arguments contain:

- The claim (that typically answers the question: "What do I think?")
  - The reasons (that typically answer the question: "Why do I think this?")
  - The evidence (that typically answers the question: "How do I know this is the case?")
- **Persuasive:** Persuasive prompts present controversies arising in their interpersonal school/community, or societal contexts. Persuasive prompts ask students to respond, offering their

opinion in a persuasive essay or letter format. Likewise, a persuasive essay requires the writer to take a stand and convince the reader that the writer’s position is valid. In addition, the essay should convince an audience to think a certain way or take action on a particular issue.

## Subtle, but Significant differences between Persuasive Writing v. Argumentative Writing

<p><b>Goal</b> of persuasive writing: To get reader to agree with you/your point of view on a particular topic.</p>	<p><b>Goal</b> of argumentative writing: To get reader to acknowledge that your side is valid and deserves consideration as another point of view.</p>
<p><b>General technique</b> of persuasive writing: Blends facts and emotion in attempt to convince the reader that the writer is “right.”(Often relies heavily on opinion.)</p>	<p><b>General technique</b> of argumentative writing: Offers the reader relevant reasons, credible facts, and sufficient evidence to honor the writer has a valid and worthy perspective.</p>
<p><b>Starting point</b> of persuasive writing: <i>Identify</i> a topic <i>and</i> your side.</p>	<p><b>Starting point</b> of argumentative writing: <i>Research</i> a topic and <i>then</i> align with one side.</p>
<p><b>Viewpoint</b> presented in persuasive writing: Persuasion has a single-minded goal. It is based on a personal conviction that a particular way of thinking is the only sensible way to think. Writer presents one side— his side.</p> <p>(Persuasive writing <i>may</i> include ONE opposing point, it is then quickly dismissed/refuted.)</p>	<p><b>Viewpoint</b> presented in argumentative writing: Acknowledge that opposing views exist, not only to hint at what a fair-minded person you are, but to give you the opportunity to counter these views tactfully in order to show why you feel that your own view is the more worthy one to hold.</p> <p>Writer presents multiple perspectives, although is clearly for one side.</p>
<p><b>Audience</b> of persuasive writing: Needs intended audience. Knowing what they think and currently believe, the writer “attacks” attempting to persuade them to his side.</p>	<p><b>Audience</b> of argumentative writing: Doesn’t need an audience to convince. The writer is content with simply putting it out there.</p>
<p><b>Attitude</b> of persuasive writing: Persuasive writers want to gain another “vote” so they “go after” readers more aggressively. Persuasive writing is more personal, more passionate, more emotional.</p>	<p><b>Attitude</b> of argumentative writing: Simply to get the reader to consider you have an idea worthy of listening to. The writer is sharing a conviction, whether the audience ends up agreeing or not.</p>

## **Expository Writing**

The expository essay is a genre of essay that requires the student to investigate an idea, evaluate evidence, expound on the idea, and set forth an argument concerning that idea in a clear and concise manner. This can be accomplished through comparison and contrast, definition, example, the analysis of cause and effect, etc. (Purdue Online Writing Lab).

## **Narrative Writing**

Narration tells a story by recounting an event or a series of related events in an orderly, logical sequence. Narrative writing includes the elements of a short story, incorporates descriptive elements such as imagery, metaphors, and similes, and maintains a clear point of view. Narrative writing can be both fiction and nonfiction. Narrative essays are anecdotal, experiential, and personal, and can provide the structure for an entire essay. Narration can be used to make a point, to illustrate an argument, to offer evidence or counter-evidence, and sometimes even to substitute an argument.

## **Literary Analysis**

To master critical reading and writing skills in order to interpret the author's purpose through critical analysis of text. This practice of writing takes a critical look at various important elements in the text. The writer then attempts to explain the author's purpose and the elements of the text, including, but not limited to, rhetoric, syntax, diction and tone. All written products should always incorporate textual evidence as well as global references.

## **Creative Writing**

Creative writing is a genre of writing in which the primary purpose is to entertain. Some examples of creative writing include poetry, novels, short stories, scripts, screenplays, and blogs.

## **Bibliography**

This is a generic term for an alphabetical listing of citations forming the last page(s) of the paper. Labeling of the bibliography page is determined by the format of your citations (MLA, APA, etc.) and by whether you have only listed sources used in your paper or are listing all sources from which you took notes in the research process.

## **Book Report**

Discuss a book you have read, identifying and summarizing the plot, characters and main points. This may also require a personal response or reflection, depending on the assignment. Cite the original source.

## **Lab Report**

A lab report is a formal write-up of your experiments and their results. A template for a formal lab report is available from your Science teacher.

## **Note card**

A method of organizing your research information, a note card links your notes to a source.

## Summary

A concise account of a source (book, article, program, and so on) which states the source's main theme(s), prominent information, and main points of interest. This may also require a personal response or reflection, depending on the assignment. It can take many forms such as Article Summary, a Plot Summary, etc. Cite the original source.

## Writing a Response/Reaction to Reading, Journal Entry Ideas

Write a thoughtful personal response to a [reading assignment] book, poem, play, or short story. Your response may be a letter to the author or to one of the characters, a journal entry (or entries) focusing on a certain part of your reading, an imaginary dialogue with one of the characters, a poem expressing a specific thought or feeling about the text, or an essay (paragraph) exploring your personal connection to your reading.

## Research Paper

A research paper is the culmination and final product of an involved process of research, critical thinking, source evaluation, organization, and composition. The goal of a research paper is not to inform the reader what others have to say about a topic, but to draw on what others have to say about a topic and engage the sources in order to thoughtfully offer a unique perspective on the issue at hand. This is accomplished through two major types of research (Purdue Online Writing Lab).

## When Students Research

Traditional information research tools and sources found in library media centers have been recently supplemented by the information available on the Internet. In some cases, students at almost all instructional levels from elementary schools to universities are doing all of the information access portion of their research projects and papers on the Internet. Most material that finds its way to a library's shelves has passed through one or more information quality filters. Most journals publish articles that are referred by several experts and books are seldom published unless they meet the publisher's quality criteria. Beyond these filters are the quality filters of the institution itself as each information resource has to meet the selection criteria of the library before it can be purchased. On the Internet, we find a much broader range of information quality. Web sites can be set up by anyone who has an interest in doing so. Many students have their own web sites that contain information they find interesting or amusing.

## [How Internet Searches Work](#)

As students search for information on the Internet, they are confronted with the task of sorting and selecting the material they will use. A typical Web search on a topic of interest to a student often returns hundreds of hits. While the better search engines rank the hits to help find the sites most suited to your needs, a student will probably have to wade through a number of sites that are useless as they either fail



to address the topic or present material at a level that is not appropriate to the developmental level of the student doing the search. As students search the Internet they must beware of the truth and bias issues that would be much less of a concern if they were limited to traditional library resources (McKenzie).

## Library Resources

Here in the middle school media centers students have access to many databases in order to conduct any needed research for their courses. A variety of databases may be used depending on a student's research tasks.

Some of the available databases ([What are Databases and why you need them?](#)):

- Learning Literature – literature papers
- Ebscohost – current events, argumentative, persuasive and research paper topics
- Facts On File - A little bit of everything

To access the databases, use either of these links [OBHS Library Databases](#) (password: purple)

Middle School Database Link: <http://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/webpages/chounsell/resources.cfm>

Feel free to utilize one of the library's plagiarism checkers to check your work.

<http://www.oldbridgeadmin.org/webpages/obhslibrary/databases.cfm>

## Formatting an Essay

All essays should follow MLA guidelines for formatting. For additional information, see <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/>.

### MLA Formatting General Guidelines:

- Paper typed on standard 8.5 x 11-inch paper with 1 inch margins on all sides
- Double-spaced, 12 pt. Font, Times New Roman, black ink
- Only one space after periods or other punctuation marks
- Use the tab key (five spaces) when beginning a new paragraph
- Create a header that includes your last name and page number in the upper right-hand corner (no punctuation between last name and page number); number all pages consecutively
- Italics preferred for the titles of longer works
- No title page for your paper unless specified
- Include a proper heading in the upper left-hand corner of the first page, one inch from the top of the margin. The heading must be double-spaced and include: your name, your teacher's

name, course, and date. The date should be in this format (with no punctuation): 12 February 2012

- The title should be centered using Times New Roman. Do not include any extra space between the title and the text of the paper. The title should not be underlined, italicized, or placed in quotation marks; Proper capitalization rules followed
- Use quotation marks and/or italics when referring to other works in your title

The diagram shows a sample MLA header and title page with callout boxes explaining formatting rules:

- Header:** Elizabeth L. Angeli  
Professor Patricia Sullivan  
English 624  
12 February 2012
- Title:** Toward a Recovery of Nineteenth Century Farming Handbooks
- Text:** While researching texts written about nineteenth century farming, I found a few authors who published books about the literature of nineteenth century farming, particularly agricultural journals, newspapers, pamphlets, and brochures. These authors often placed the farming literature they were studying into an historical context by

**Callout Boxes:**

- Blue box (left):** Your name, the professor's name, the course number, and the date of the paper are double-spaced in 12-point, Times New Roman font. Dates in MLA are written in this order: day, month, and year.
- Yellow box (top right):** Last name and page number are in the header. Page number is formatted using "insert" & "page number".
- Blue box (middle right):** Page numbers begin on and with page 1. Type your name next to the page number so that it appears on every page.
- Blue box (bottom right):** Titles are centered and written in 12-point, Times New Roman font. The title is not bolded, underlined, or italicized.

Image Source: Purdue Online Writing Lab

## Tips for Conducting Research According to kidshealth.org

- **Start at school** - Ask your teacher or librarian which resources they'd recommend for your project. Unless your teacher tells you otherwise, you should use your school's database.
- **Sort fact from fiction** - Before you begin your research, check to see if the author is identified and sources are cited. Government sites ending in **.gov** and educational sites ending in **.edu** usually are safe bets. Sites ending in **.org** are usually run by nonprofit organizations. They can be good resources, but it's always best to check with your teacher to make sure he or she considers the site appropriate. Wikipedia.org is popular and ranks high in search results, but it can be

edited by anyone, whether a person has accurate knowledge of the topic or not. Therefore, using Wikipedia should be avoided.

- **Cite correctly** - When you research online, it can be tempting to copy and paste text, then forget to cite the source or go back and put the thought in your own words later. Just as teachers can recognize your voice in class, most can recognize your voice in your writing. **Even accidental plagiarism can have serious consequences for your grades — so don't take a chance.** Identify the text you've quoted and add the citation before moving on to the rest of your paper. The format for citing online resources is different from print resources, so be sure to check the particular style your teacher wants you to use for Internet citations.

## What is an Essay?

### Introduction

The introduction should start with a general discussion of your subject and lead to a very specific statement of your main point, or thesis. Sometimes an essay begins with a "grabber," such as a challenging claim, or surprising story to catch a reader's attention. The **thesis** should tell in one (or at most two) sentence(s), what your overall point or argument is, and briefly, what your main body paragraphs will be about.

For example, in an essay about the importance of airbags in cars, the introduction might start with some information about car accidents and survival rates. It might also have a grabber about someone who survived a terrible accident because of an airbag. The thesis would briefly state the main reasons for recommending airbags, and each reason would be discussed in the main body of the essay.

The introduction should be designed to attract the reader's attention and give him/her an idea of the essay's focus.

### Thesis Statement

The thesis statement is generally found at the end of the introductory paragraph. In general, your thesis statement will accomplish the following goals if you think of the thesis as the answer to the question your paper explores. Your thesis should test your ideas by distilling them into a sentence or two, better organize and develop your argument, and provide your

reader with a "guide" to your argument. A strong thesis statement must be specific and express the main idea of your essay.

### Examples:

**Weak thesis:** *World hunger has many causes and effects.*

This is a weak thesis statement for two major reasons. First, "world hunger" can't be discussed thoroughly in five or ten pages. Second, "many causes and effects" is vague. You should be able to identify specific causes and effects. A revised thesis might look like this:

**Strong Thesis:** *Hunger persists in Appalachia because jobs are scarce and farming in the infertile soil is rarely profitable.*

This is a strong thesis because it narrows the subject to a more specific and manageable topic and it also identifies the specific causes for the existence of hunger.

**Check out this video:** How To Write An A+ Thesis

<https://youtu.be/9R0ivCaLtnY>

## Body Paragraphs

The **body paragraph** is the main part of your essay or paper. Each body paragraph contains a topic sentence that tells readers what the paragraph is going to be about, supporting sentences that discuss the idea or ideas in the topic sentence, using examples and/or evidence to support that discussion, and a concluding sentence that emphasizes the importance of the supporting examples or evaluates the connections between them.

The following acronym can be applied to remember the elements of the body paragraph.

**T** - Topic sentence - states the main idea of your paragraph (usually taken from the question or task and claim)

**E** - Examples and Evidence - explain specific examples and quotations that will help prove the topic sentence

**A** - Analysis - apply your evidence to support your claim.

**L** - Link or **transition** - link evidence and analysis back to the topic sentence OR link (transition) to the next paragraph

## Quote Sandwich

Another element of the body paragraph is how to properly incorporate examples and evidence to support your claim or main point. You can do so by using a quote from the text or another source. We call it a Quotation Sandwich. The following is an example of how to properly insert a Quotation Sandwich into your body paragraph.

### [LINK: WRITING A QUOTATION SANDWICH](#)

Because quotations do not speak for themselves, you need to build a “frame” around them in which you do the speaking for them. Quotations inserted into the text without such a frame may be called **‘hit-and-run’ quotations**, likening them to car accidents in which the driver speeds away and avoids taking responsibility for the damage.

#### Example of a “Hit and Run” Quotation:

Plato was speaking to a group of young students one day at his school. He said, **“Wise men talk because they have something to say; fools talk because they have to say something.”** He wanted thinkers to think before they spoke.

To adequately frame a quotation, you need to insert it into what we like to call a ‘quotation sandwich,’ with the statement introducing it serving as the top slice of bread and the explanation following it as the bottom slice. The introduction or lead-in should explain who is speaking and set up what the quotations says; the follow-up statements should explain why the quotation illustrates the character’s claim.

#### A quotation sandwich has three parts:

1. **Context:** Introduce the quote by providing a lead-in. The lead-in is a phrase/sentence that prepares the reader by introducing the speaker, setting, or situation, and sets up what the quotation says.
2. **Quotation:** The quotation should not be too long or merely state a fact. Include a concrete detail or a specific example from the work used to provide evidence for your topic. Remember to punctuate and cite the quotation properly.
3. **Explanation/Commentary/Analysis:** This is where you explain the connection between the quote and what you’re trying to prove.

How to make a delicious

# Quotation Sandwich

Serve a different sandwich every time you make a point!

Make Quotation Sandwiches a healthy part of all your essays!

## Introduce the quotation.

Who said it? Tell us something about the author so we know why this quote is important.

Set it up. Choose words that accurately reflect the tone or attitude of the author.

"Insert the Quotation."

## Explain the quotation.

What is the author saying? What does it mean? Why is it important?

Again, use words that reflect the author's tone.

[http://cdn.quotesgram.com/img/98/91/1558700497-quotation\\_20sandwich.jpg](http://cdn.quotesgram.com/img/98/91/1558700497-quotation_20sandwich.jpg)

Example of a quotation sandwich:

## So, what does this look like in an essay?

Let's say we're writing an essay that argues that Elie Wiesel, author of *Night*, changed a great deal throughout his time in the work camps during the Holocaust...

When Elie and the others in the camp are forced to watch a child die slowly from hanging, Elie admits that he no longer has the strong faith in God that he once did. **When he retells this event, Elie writes, "Behind me, I heard the same man asking: 'For God's sake, where is God?' And from within me, I heard a voice answer: 'Where He is? This is where- hanging here from this gallows'" (Wiesel 85).**



### EXPLAIN IT:

Early in the novel, Elie is very devout and enjoys exploring his Jewish faith. His experiences in the concentration camp have changed this. This quote shows how he now doubts whether God is in control of his fate. He believes that the Nazis hanged not just a child but also God.

\*You can notice from the above example of a quotation sandwich that the author includes all the elements correctly. He introduces the quote, inserts the quote into the middle of the paragraph, cites it properly, and then explains it fully. This offers the reader a full analysis of the quote and evidence to support the topic sentence.

## Conclusion

### Why do I need a conclusion?

A conclusion provides closure to the reader, drives main points home one last time, and gives the reader understanding of why it matters. If you can remember the acronym **TSS**, it will help you to remember what to include in your conclusion.

**T - Thesis** - Paraphrase your thesis. You want to make the same point but using new language. This drives your point home one last time.

**S - Summarize** - Summarize your arguments and paraphrase how you proved the thesis. You may include ideas from topic sentences.

**S - Super So What** - A "So What" for the whole essay. What is the one thing you want the reader to take away? What do you want them to understand or learn? Why should they care about your essay? This is the last line of your conclusion.

**DO NOT ASK QUESTIONS IN YOUR ESSAYS! ANSWER THE PROMPT!**

### Examples:

**Examples**

- Thesis:
- Original: Dogs are better pets than cats.
- Paraphrased: Dogs make the best pets in the world.
- Summarize: Dogs are cleaner, better at showing affection, and ultimately easier to train.
- Super So What?: Change your life for the better - go get a dog!

**Combine**

- Dogs make the best pets in the world. They are cleaner, better at showing affection, and ultimately are easier to train. Change your life for the better - go get a dog!

**Improve and Expand**

- There is no doubt that dogs make the best pets in the world. They provide a cleaner environment for your home, are not afraid to show their feelings, and can be trained to do a variety of tricks and jobs. Every second that goes by you are missing out on happiness. Get out of your chair and make a positive difference in your life - go get a dog!

## Tips for Good Writing

### Analysis vs. Summary

#### What is Summary?

Summary is a review, retelling of the material you have read without original thoughts or interpretations. Summary is not the goal of analytical essays. The summary should provide your reader with an overview of the text in the briefest manner possible. Assume that the reader of your essay knows the story and needs just the slightest reminder. Strive for 90% interpretation and 10% summary in your essays.

#### Summary Guidelines:

- Only mention the important plot details.
- Keep your writing in the present tense.
- Make the summary as brief as possible—omit unnecessary details.
- Although you can use citations in summary, they are not necessary.
- There should be no original thoughts or interpretations in your summary.

#### What is Analysis?

Analysis examines specific elements within a text. As the writer, you must dissect aspects of the text and closely examine them for purpose, effect, or meaning. Analysis will rely on the use of quotations and summary to show the writer's understanding and interpretation of the material.

#### Analysis Guidelines

- Assume the reader is familiar with the plot of the text—do not spend time writing summary.
- Analysis does not have to be in chronological order.
- As the writer, you should examine, evaluate, dissect, interpret, and read between the lines to create your analysis.
- Discuss textual elements in full detail.

**Here is an example of summary (to be avoided) and analysis (to be practiced) according to lipscomb.edu:**

**Summary:** In Kate Chopin's short story, "The Story of an Hour," the main character learns that her husband died in a train accident. Mrs. Mallard cries at first, but when she is left alone in her room, she begins to realize that her husband's death will ultimately free her to live her own life. After she bravely comes back downstairs, she is surprised when her husband walks through the door. He had not been anywhere near the accident. Mrs. Mallard then drops dead of a heart attack.

**Analysis:** One of the most important characters in adding irony to "The Story of an Hour" is Richards. Richards is a friend of Brently Mallard and the one who makes sure Mrs. Mallard hears the news about Brently's death from someone sensitive to her "heart trouble" (28). After

receiving a second telegram that Brently was dead, Richards “*hastened to forestall any less careful, less tender friend in bearing the sad message*” (28). **Richards is also the one who attempts to shield Mrs. Mallard from seeing her husband when he arrives home quite alive, but this time he is too late. Ultimately, Richards’ sense of timing is at the core of Mrs. Mallard’s heart failure. If he had waited to bring the news of her husband’s supposed death, she would not have realized that without him she would be free, and she would not have “died of heart disease – of a joy that kills” (29).**

The **underlined text** represents the small amount of background information needed to jumpstart your analysis. The **italicized text** represents textual evidence while the **bold text** is the analysis of the textual evidence. (Note: As seen above, analysis should outweigh summary).

## Word Choice, Syntax, Imagery, and Tone

**Word choice/diction** - This term may refer to the general type or character of language used in speech or in a work of literature. What words does the author choose? Why did the author choose that particular word? What are the **connotations** (or associated feelings) of that word choice?

### Examples:

Laugh:

Is a princess more likely to **giggle** or **guffaw**? Does a witch **cackle** or **roar** with laughter?

Self-confident:

Do you prefer someone say you’re **confident** or **stuck-up**? Are you **proud** for winning or **smug**?

House:

Would a millionaire live in a **shack** or **mansion**? Would you find a **cabin** or **cottage** in Manhattan?

Old:

Should you refer to grandparents as **experienced** or **ancient**?

**As Shakespeare once wrote, “A rose by any other name would still smell as sweet,” but would you want to smell it if it was called a *trash-o-dil*?**

**Syntax** – Refers to **the arrangement (the ordering, grouping, and placement) of words within a sentence**. Different syntaxes can help make poems feel more emotional or lyrical.

### Examples:

“*I rode across the meadow*” and “*Across the meadow, I rode*” have **different syntaxes**. Both have **identical diction**. Both **make sense**. The second sounds more “**poetic**.”

“You have become powerful” and “Powerful you have become” also have **different syntaxes**. Again, both have the same **diction**, but you can’t get away with saying the second unless you are Yoda.

**Imagery** – A term used to refer to: 1) **the actual language that a writer uses to create a visual picture in the reader’s mind**; and 2) **the use of figures of speech, often to express ideas in a vivid and imaginative way**.

Imagery of this second definition makes use of such devices as **simile, metaphor, hyperbole, and personification** among others. Imagery is a central part of almost all imaginative literature and is often said to be the chief element in poetry. **Two major types of imagery exist – the literal and the figurative.**

**Literal imagery** is purely descriptive. It can appeal to all five of the reader’s senses: sight, touch, smell, taste, and sound. For example, an author can help his or her reader visualize a setting by describing what a character experiences as he or she walks through a room:

**Example:**

**Hortensia felt her ears perk up as the creak of the dusty floorboards beneath her feet echoed through the ancient mansion’s musty air.**

The reader can **see** the **dust** on the floor, **feel** their ears **perking up**, **hear** the **creak** from her steps, and **smell** the **musty** air. [Fortunately for Hortensia, there was nothing to taste here.]

**Figurative imagery** may call to mind real things that can be picked up by the senses, but it does so as a way of describing something else. In this case, authors use different types of **figurative language** to help the reader visualize what he or she is reading. Look for **metaphors, similes, personification, hyperbole, oxymoron, paradox,, symbol, irony, puns, and allusions**. Also look for sound devices: **alliteration, repetition, assonance, consonance, onomatopoeia, and rhyme**.

**Examples:**

My mistress' eyes are nothing like the sun.

**Simile - the author compares eyes to the sun. They must be very bright.**

He clasps the crag with crooked hands.

**Alliteration - the author repeats a hard -c sound to create a dramatic feeling.**

Smiling, the boy fell dead.

**Irony - the author combines two ideas that one wouldn’t normally think go together (smiling and death) to shock the reader.**

**Tone** – The attitude of the author toward the reader or the subject matter of a literary work. An author’s tone may be **serious, playful, mocking, angry, commanding, apologetic** and so forth.

### Examples:

1. **accusatory** - charging of wrong doing
2. **awe** - solemn wonder
3. **bitter** - exhibiting strong negative feelings as a result of pain or grief
4. **cynical** - questions the basic sincerity and goodness of people
5. **callous** - unfeeling, insensitive to feelings of others
6. **contemplative** - studying, thinking, reflecting on an issue
7. **critical** - finding fault in something
8. **conventional** - lacking originality and individuality
9. **derisive** - ridiculing, mocking
10. **earnest** - intense, a sincere state of mind
11. **fanciful** - using the imagination
12. **gloomy** - darkness, sadness, rejection
13. **haughty** - proud and vain to the point of arrogance
14. **indignant** - marked by anger aroused by injustice
15. **judgmental** - authoritative and often having critical opinions
16. **jovial** - happy
17. **lyrical** - song-like; full of images
18. **matter-of-fact** - not emotional
19. **mocking** - making fun of
20. **malicious** - purposely hurtful
21. **objective** - an unbiased view; able to leave personal judgments aside
22. **optimistic** - hopeful, cheerful
23. **pessimistic** - seeing the worst side of things; no hope
24. **quizzical** - odd, eccentric, amusing
25. **reverent** - treating a subject with honor and respect
26. **reflective** - illustrating innermost thoughts and emotions
27. **sarcastic** - sneering, caustic
28. **sincere** - genuine
29. **whimsical** - odd, strange, fantastic; fun

\* From *The Bedford Glossary of Critical and Literary Terms*, second ed. (Murfin, Ray)

## Identifying Common Errors in Student Writing

The following list adapted from the University of Wisconsin - Madison contains only brief examples and explanations intended for you to use as reminders while you are editing your papers.

**1. Sentence Fragments.** For a group of words to be a sentence, it must include a **subject** and a **predicate (verb)**; anything less is a fragment.

**Incorrect:** *The pollen of forty-eight plants native to Europe and the Middle East.* [There is no predicate.]

**Revised:** The cloth **contains** the pollen of forty-eight plants native to Europe and the Middle East. [**Contains** is the predicate.]

Sometimes, a group of words can have a subject and a predicate, but still be a fragment because it starts with a subordinating word such as **although, because, if, since, and when**. These groups of words are **dependent clauses** and must be attached to a complete sentence.

**Incorrect:** Scientists report no human deaths due to excessive caffeine consumption. Although caffeine does cause convulsions and death in certain animals. **[The second group of words is a fragment because of *although*.]**

**Revised:** Scientists report no human deaths due to excessive caffeine consumption, **although** caffeine does cause convulsions and death in certain animals. **[Now that the groups have been combined with a comma, there is one complete sentence.]**

**2. Sentence Sprawl.** Too many equally weighted phrases and clauses produce tiresome sentences. Try to combine and condense phrases to avoid sentences that are too “wordy.”

**Incorrect:** The hearing was planned for Monday, December 2, but not all of the witnesses could be available, so it was rescheduled for the following Friday. **[There are no grammatical errors here, but the sprawling sentence does not communicate clearly and concisely.]**

**Revised:** The hearing, which had been planned for Monday, December 2, was rescheduled for the following so that all witnesses would be able to attend. **[This sentence is clearer in meaning.]**

**3. Misplaced and Dangling Modifiers.** Place **modifiers (adjectives, adverbs, and prepositional phrases)** near the words they describe; be sure the modified words actually appear in the sentence.

**Incorrect:** Many tourists visit Arlington National Cemetery, where veterans and military personnel are buried every day **from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.** **[This misplaced modifiers suggests the veterans and personnel are always buried every day from 9 to 5, which is incorrect.]**

**Revised:** Every day **from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.**, many tourists visit Arlington National Cemetery, where veterans and military personnel are buried. **[Now the sentence is clearer in meaning because *from 9:00 a.m. until 5:00 p.m.* are closer to *tourists*.]**

**4. Unclear Pronoun Reference.** Pronouns must clearly refer to definite **referents or antecedents (nouns)**. Use *it, they, that, these, those, and which* carefully to prevent confusion.

**Incorrect:** Because Senator Martin is less interested in the environment than in economic development, she sometimes neglects **it**. **[To what does *it* refer? What does the Senator neglect?]**

**Revised:** Because of her interest in economic development, Senator Martin sometimes neglects the environment. **[By rearranging some phrases, it is clear that the Senator neglects the environment.]**

**5. Pronoun Agreement.** Be sure that each pronoun agrees in **number (singular or plural)** with the noun to which it refers (**its antecedent or referent**).

**Incorrect:** When a **candidate** runs for office, **they** must expect to have their personal life scrutinized. [*Candidate* is singular, but *they* is plural.]

**Revised:** When **candidates** run for office, **they** must expect to have their personal lives scrutinized. [**Both candidates and they are plural.**]

**6. Incorrect Pronoun Case.** Determine whether the pronoun is being used as a **subject, object, or possessive** in the sentence, and select the pronoun form to match.

**Incorrect:** Castro's communist principles inevitably led to an ideological conflict **between he and President Kennedy**. [*He and President Kennedy* are objects of the preposition *between*; therefore, an object pronoun is needed. *He* is a subject pronoun.]

**Revised:** Castro's communist principles inevitably led to an ideological conflict **between him and President Kennedy**. [*Him* is the correct object pronoun.]

**7. Omitted Commas.** Use commas to signal **nonessential material (details that are useful, but not necessary)** to prevent confusion, and to indicate relationships among ideas and sentence parts. Use commas after **dependent clauses**, and to set off **appositives (phrases that add more detail to a sentence)**.

**Incorrect:** When it comes to eating people differ in their tastes. [**Without the comma, this sentence comes dangerously close to "eating people."**]

**Revised:** When it comes to eating, people differ in their tastes. [**With the comma, the meaning is clear, and, thankfully, no one is eaten.**]

**Incorrect:** The Huns who were Mongolian invaded Gaul in 451. [**Without commas, the phrase *who were Mongolian* suggests there were Huns who were not Monoglian as well.**]

**Revised:** The Huns, who were Mongolian, invaded Gaul in 451. [***Who were Mongolian* adds information but does not change the core meaning of the sentence because Huns were a Mongolian people; it is therefore nonessential and should be set apart with commas.**]

**8. Superfluous Commas.** Unnecessary commas make sentences difficult to read.

**Incorrect:** Field trips are required, in several courses, such as, botany and geology. [**There is no need for the commas after *required* and *as*; including them makes the sentence difficult to follow.**]

**Revised:** Field trips are required in several courses, such as botany and geology.

**Incorrect:** The term “scientific illiteracy,” has become almost a cliché in educational circles. **[As there is no natural pause after *illiteracy*, there is no need for the comma.]**

**Revised:** The term “scientific illiteracy” has become almost a cliché in educational circles.

**9. Comma Splice.** Do not link two **independent clauses (complete sentences)** with a comma, unless you also use a **coordinating conjunction (for, and, nor, but, or, yet, so)**. Instead use a period or semicolon, or rewrite the sentence.

**Incorrect:** In 1952 Japan’s gross national product was one third that of France, by the late 1970s it was larger than the GNPs of France and Britain combined. **[This is a run-on sentence.]**

**Revised:** In 1952 Japan’s gross national product was one third that of France. By the late 1970s it was larger than the GNPs of France and Britain combined. **[The comma has been replaced with a period, and *by* has been capitalized, as it is the first word of a new sentence.]**

**Incorrect:** Diseased coronary arteries are often surgically bypassed, however half of bypass grafts fail within ten years. **[This is a run-on sentence.]**

**Revised:** Diseased coronary arteries are often surgically bypassed; however, half of bypass grafts fail within ten years. **[The semicolon is combining the two sentences. Do not capitalize the first letter of the word after a semicolon.]**

**10. Apostrophe Errors.** Apostrophes indicate possessives and contractions but not plurals. Caution: its, your, their, and whose are possessives (but have no apostrophes). It’s, you’re, they’re, and who’s are contractions.

**Incorrect:** In the current conflict **its** uncertain **who’s** borders **their** contesting.

**Revised:** In the current conflict **it is [it’s]** uncertain **whose** borders **they are [they’re]** contesting.

**Incorrect:** The **Aztecs ritual’s** of renewal increased in frequency over the course of time.

**Revised:** The **Aztecs’ rituals** of renewal increased in frequency over the course of time.

**11. Words Easily Confused.** **Effect** is most often a noun (the effect) and **affect** is most often a verb. Other pairs commonly confused: lead/led and accept/except. Check a glossary of usage to find the right choice.

**Incorrect:** The recession had a negative **affect** on sales. **[Affect is a verb where the noun *effect* is needed.]**

**Revised:** The recession had a negative **effect** on sales. (or) The recession **affected** sales negatively.

**Incorrect:** The laboratory instructor choose not to offer detailed **advise**. **[Advise is a verb where a noun needs to be.]**

**Revised:** The laboratory instructor chose not to offer detailed **advice**. **[Advice is a noun.]**

## Power Verbs

Eliminate *to be* verbs, and utilize rhetorically accurate/active verbs when writing.

What is a rhetorically accurate/active verb? **A rhetorically accurate verb is an action word that describes the kind of action taken.** When you write, use the active voice. Demonstrate clearly who is doing what to whom. **Use rhetorically accurate verbs INSTEAD OF: "says," "states," "writes," or a passive verb.**

**Active (Power!) Verbs in English Academic Discourse (see page 32)**



[virtualstampclub.com](http://virtualstampclub.com)

**POWER VERBS:**

Accentuates	Considers	Expands	Motivates	Regards
Accepts	Contradicts	Experiences	Muses	Regrets
Achieves	Contributes	Explains	Notes	Relates
Adds	Convinces	Expresses	Observes	Reinforces
Adopts	Creates	Exemplifies	Opines	Rejects
Advocates	Declares	Fantasizes	Opposes	Remarks
Affects	Defends	Focuses	Organizes	Represents
Affirms	Defines	Forces	Outlines	Reveals
Alleges	Defies	Foreshadows	Paints	Reverts
Allows	Demonstrates	Forewarns	Performs	Ridicules
Alludes	Depicts	Fosters	Permits	Sees
Analyzes	Describes	Functions	Personifies	Selects
Approaches	Details	Hints	Persuades	Serves
Argues	Determines	Holds	Pervades	Specifies
Asserts	Develops	Guides	Ponders	Speculates
Assesses	Differs	Highlights	Portrays	States
Assumes	Directs	Identifies	Predicts	Strives
Attacks	Discovers	Illuminates	Prepares	Suggests
Attempts	Discusses	Illustrates	Presents	Summarizes
Attests	Dispels	Imagines	Presumes	Supplies
Attributes	Disputes	Implies	Produces	Supports
Avoids	Disrupts	Includes	Projects	Symbolizes
Believes	Dissuades	Indicates	Promotes	Sympathizes
Challenges	Distinguishes	Infers	Provides	Understands
Changes	Elevates	Inspires	Provokes	Uses
Characterizes	Empathizes	Intensifies	Questions	Values
Chooses	Emphasizes	Interprets	Rationalizes	Verifies
Claims	Empowers	Interrupts	Reasons	Views
Clarifies	Encounters	Introduces	Recalls	Wants
Comments	Envisions	Justifies	Recites	Wishes
Compares	Escalates	Lists	Recollects	
Completes	Establishes	Maintains	Recounts	
Concerns	Evaluates	Magnifies	Reflects	
Concludes	Excludes	Manages	Refers	
Confronts	Exhibits	Minimizes	Refutes	

**Words to AVOID in academic writing. This is a starter list. It will grow!**

a lot	great	cool	bad	amazing
very	many	things	good	beautiful
pretty	definitely	nice	lots	extremely
stuff	really	ways	really	wonderful
awesome	"etc."			

## Glossary of Rhetorical Terms (Literary & Writing Terms)

Authors and poets use many different techniques when they write. These techniques help to convey ideas and create memorable works of literature. As students become more familiar with these terms, students will begin to incorporate them into their own writing.

1. Analogy – the comparison of two similar things so as to suggest that they are alike in some respects; they are probably alike in other ways as well
2. Antagonist - a person who is opposed to, struggles against, or competes with another; opponent
3. Apostrophe - more commonly known as a punctuation mark, apostrophe can also refer to an exclamatory figure of speech. The definition of apostrophe as a literary device is when a speaker breaks off from addressing one party and instead addresses a third party.
4. Archetype - is a typical character, an action or a situation that seems to represent such universal patterns of human nature.
5. Aside - it is a short comment or speech that a character delivers directly to the audience or to himself, while other actors on the stage cannot listen. Only the audience can realize that an actor has expressed speech for them
6. Atmosphere - is a type of feelings that readers get from a narrative based on details such as settings, background, objects and foreshadowing
7. Characterization
  - a. **Flat character** - a character who is fully developed, just like a person in real life.
  - b. **Round character** - a character who is fully developed, just like a person in real life.
8. Character Foil - a character who contrasts (is the opposite) of another character in order to highlight character personalities.
9. Conflict - a literary element that involves a struggle between two opposing forces usually a protagonist and an antagonist.
  - a. **Internal** - within a character - a conflict / difficulty within the character
  - b. **External** - struggle between the protagonist and another character against nature or some outside force
10. Connotation - meaning and emotions associated with a word that go beyond its dictionary definition
11. Context – the environment of a word, the words that surround a particular word and help to determine or deepen its meaning.
12. Critique - a critical examination of a work of art to determine its nature and how it measures up to established standards
13. Dialogue - a conversation between two or more people
14. Denotation - the literal or basic meaning of a word; the dictionary meaning of a word.
15. Diction - defined as style of speaking or writing determined by the choice of words by a speaker or a writer.
16. Drama - a mode of fictional representation through dialogue and performance. It is one of the literary genres, which is an imitation of some action.
17. Dynamic character - in literature or drama, a character who undergoes a permanent change in outlook or character during the story.

18. Epitaph - is a descriptive literary device that describes a place, a thing or a person in such a way that it helps in making the characteristics of a person, thing or place more prominent than they actually are.
19. Figurative Language - words or phrases which do not mean what they first appear to mean that are used in a special way to create a special effect
- a. **Alliteration** - the repetition of consonant sounds
  - b. **Allusion** - making a reference to another literary work or an historical event
  - c. **Assonance** - takes place when two or more words close to one another repeat the same vowel sound but start with different consonant sounds.
  - d. **Consonance** - refers to repetitive sounds produced by consonants within a sentence or phrase. This repetition often takes place in quick succession such as in pitter, patter.
  - e. **Cliché** - a word or phrase that is so overused that it is no longer effective in most writing situations.
  - f. **Euphemism** - when you replace one word or phrase for another in order to avoid being offensive
  - g. **Flashback** - a device by which a writer interrupts the main action of a story to recreate a situation from an earlier time
  - h. **Foreshadowing** - hints and clues that tip the reader off as to what is to come later in the work
  - i. **Hyperbole** - an immense exaggeration in literature
  - j. **Imagery** - to use figurative language to represent objects, actions and ideas in such a way that it appeals to our physical senses.
  - k. **Metaphor** - comparing two things based on similar traits
    - i. **Direct** - when the writer directly states both of the things being compared
    - ii. **Indirect** - when the writer states one of the things and the reader must infer the other
  - l. **Onomatopoeia** - when a word is pronounced and it makes a sound
  - m. **Personification** - gives human characteristics to inanimate objects, animals, or ideas
  - n. **Pun** - a word or phrase which has a "double meaning" as intended by the writer, often these words sound the same (or almost the same) but have different meanings.
  - o. **Simile** - compares two things using the words "like" and "as."
  - p. **Symbolism** - an object that stands for, or represents something else
20. Figure of speech - is a phrase or word having different meanings than its literal meanings. It conveys meaning by identifying or comparing one thing to another, which has connotation or meaning familiar to the audience. That is why it is helpful in creating vivid rhetorical effect.
21. Genre - the type of literature a story is
- a. **Allegory** – the representation of ideas or moral principles by means of symbolic characters, events, or objects.
  - b. **Comedy** – a play that ends happily, in which the main character gets what he or she wants.
  - c. **Editorial** - a short essay in a newspaper or magazine that expresses the opinion of the writer
  - d. **Essay** - a piece of writing that expresses an individual's point of view; it is a series of closely related paragraphs that discuss a single topic
  - e. **Epic** – a long narrative poem that tells about the adventures of a great hero. Epics embody the values of the people who tell them.

- f. **Fable** - a brief tale told to point to a moral
  - g. **Farce literature** – literature that has essentially one purpose, to make the audience laugh
  - h. **Historical fiction** - fiction whose setting is in some time other than that in which it is written.
  - i. **Myth** – traditional stories, rooted in a particular culture that usually explain a belief a ritual, or a mysterious natural phenomenon.
  - j. **Parable**- a short descriptive story whose purpose is to illustrate a lesson or moral
  - k. **Parody** - when an author imitates or mocks another serious work or type of literature
  - l. **Satire** - a piece of writing which criticizes (makes fun) manners of politics and social institutions by holding them up to ridicule
  - m. **Short story** - a brief fictional narrative in prose (500-12,00 words)
  - n. **Novel** - covering a wide range of prose materials which have two common characteristics; they are lengthy and fictional
  - o. **Anecdote** - a short narrative that tells the particulars of an interesting and/or humorous event
22. Irony:
- a. **Dramatic** - audience knows more than the characters in the play, so that words and action have additional meaning for the audience
  - b. **Situational** - set of circumstances or a result that is the opposite of what might be expected; when the audience/reader does not expect the outcome of a situation
  - c. **Verbal**- a figure of speech in which what is said is the opposite of what is meant
23. Metonymy – the substitution of an object closely associated with a word for the word itself
24. Mood - the general overall feeling conveyed (given) by the atmosphere and setting.
25. Monologue - a long speech made by one character to one or more other characters onstage.
26. Motif - recurring ideas, images, and actions that tend to unify a work (story) and helps to identify the theme.
27. Narrator – the person who is telling the story
28. Paradox – a statement that at first seems contradictory, but in fact, reveals a truth
29. Plot - the action or events of the story (what happens)
- a. **Exposition** - the information the reader gets in the beginning of the story
  - b. **Rising action** - the central part of the story leading up to the climax
  - c. **Climax** - the point of highest interest or dramatic intensity; the turning point
  - d. **Falling action** - the part of the story which is after the climax or turning point leading to the end of the story
  - e. **Denouement** - when the climax or conflict is solved; the **resolution** or outcome of a play or story.
30. Poetry - is a collection of spoken or written words that expresses ideas or emotions in a powerfully vivid and imaginative [style](#), comprising of a particular rhythmic and metrical pattern. In fact, it is a literary technique, which is different from [prose](#) or ordinary speech, as it is either in metrical pattern or in free verse.
- a. **Rhyme scheme** – pattern of rhyme along lines of poetry; denoted using letters, as in ABAB CDCD EE
  - b. **Rhythm** – a musical quality in poetry that comes from the alternation of stressed and unstressed sounds that make the voice rise and fall.
  - c. **Blank verse** – unrhymed, but otherwise regular verse, usually iambic pentameter

- d. **Couplet** – in poetry (verse), two consecutive lines that rhyme
  - e. **Free verse** - is a literary device that can be defined as poetry that is free from limitations of regular meter or [rhythm](#) and does not [rhyme](#) with fixed forms.
  - f. **Half rhythm** - is one of the major poetic devices. It is also called an imperfect rhyme, slant rhyme, near rhyme or oblique rhyme. It can be defined as a rhyme in which the stressed syllables of ending consonants match, however the preceding vowel sounds do not match.
  - g. **Heroic couplet** – two consecutive lines of rhymed verse written in iambic pentameter.
  - h. **Iambic Pentameter** - a line of poetry that contains five iambic feet; an iamb is a foot consisting of an unaccented syllable followed by an accented syllable.
  - i. **Lyric** – a short poem that expresses the personal feelings and thoughts of a single speaker
  - j. **Sonnet** – a poem of fourteen lines written in iambic pentameter that follows one of several rhyme schemes
  - k. **Enjambment** - it means moving over from one line to another without a terminating punctuation mark. It can be defined as a thought or sense, phrase or clause in a line of poetry that does not come to an end at the line break but moves over to the next line. In simple words, it is the running on of a sense from one couplet or line to the next without a major pause or syntactical break.
31. Point of view - from whose angle the story is being told
- a. **First person** - when a character in the story tells the story using "I" or "we"
  - b. **Second person** - used in nonfiction, primarily for the purpose of writing instructions or directions "you"
  - c. **Third person** - when the narrator is telling the events from "outside" the story from a neutral or unemotional viewpoint using "he" or "she"
  - d. **Omniscient** - when the narrator can see into the hearts and minds of more than one of the characters in the story
  - e. **Third person limited** - when the narrator can see into the heart and mind of only ONE of the characters in the story
  - f. **Unreliable** - learns about their situation along with the reader.
32. Protagonist - the leading character, hero, or heroine of a drama or other literary work.
33. Rhetorical question – a question asked only for effect or to make a statement, but not to get an answer.
34. Setting – the time and place a story takes place
35. Soliloquy - often used in drama to reveal the innermost thoughts of a character. It is a great technique used to convey the progress of action of the play by means of expressing a character's thoughts about a certain character or past, present or upcoming event while talking to himself without acknowledging the presence of any other person.
36. Static character - who remains basically unchanged throughout a work.
37. Structure – this is the organization or planned framework that a writer creates for his/her piece of literature.
38. Style – the particular way a writer uses language. This is revealed through diction (word choice), sentence structure and tone.
39. Syntax - is a set of rules in a language. It dictates how words from different parts of speech are put together in order to convey a complete thought.

40. Theme – the general idea or insight about human life that a work of literature reveals.
- a. **Universal themes** - literary work's message or central idea that is timeless.
41. Tragedy – a play that presents serious and important actions and ends unhappily for the main characters.
42. Tragic Hero - a literary character who makes an error of judgment or has a fatal flaw that, combined with fate and external forces
- a. **Hamartia** - is a personal error in a protagonist's personality that brings about his tragic downfall in a tragedy. This defect in a hero's personality is also known as a "tragic flaw.
  - b. **Tragic flaw** - a trait in a character leading to his downfall and the character is often the hero of the literary piece. This trait could be the lack of self-knowledge, lack of judgment and often it is [hubris](#) (pride)
  - c. **Hubris** - extreme pride and arrogance shown by a character that ultimately brings about his downfall.
43. Writer's voice - the writer's awareness and effective use of such elements as; diction, tone, syntax, unity, coherence and audience to create a clear and distinct "personality of the writer"

For additional terms and definitions: [Literary Devices](#)

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## Appendix

<b>Sample Persuasive Graphic Organizer</b>		
<b>Topic:</b>  Riding a bike for any trip under five miles	<b>Purpose:</b>  To persuade people to use bicycles for shorter trips	<b>Audience:</b>  People who overuse cars and under-utilize bicycles for short trips
<b>Thesis Statement:</b> You'll save money and time by riding a bike; even in the winter months, people should use bikes for short trips instead of cars.		
Claim/Counterclaim	Evidence	Elaboration
While some may argue that bicycling is an expensive hobby, riding a bike can actually be quite cost effective.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Current gas prices</li> <li>● Price of bike and accessories in comparison to cost of regular car maintenance</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Comparing the one-time cost of bike accessories to continued purchase of gas for a five mile commute (show math)</li> </ul>
Although riding a bike lengthens the time required for a long commute, riding a bike over a short distance actually saves time.	Time <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Convenience</li> <li>● Multi-tasking</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Average time of a five mile commute vs. average speed of a biker on same commute</li> <li>● ]No worrying about parking, no filling up on gas, etc.</li> <li>● You can exercise and commute simultaneously.</li> </ul>
While winter roads might be dangerous, riding a bike in winter can be both safe and feasible.	According to icebike.org survey, very few accidents are reported.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Compared to summer accidents, winter apparel provides protection.</li> </ul>
<b>Emotional Appeal</b>		
Many Americans are fearful of being overweight. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>● Carbon emissions are slowly killing our planet.</li> <li>● Riding a bike recalls happy childhood memories.</li> </ul>		
<b>Conclusion:</b> Associate biking with rediscovering childhood freedom.		

## Persuasive Graphic Organizer

<b>Persuasive Graphic Organizer</b>		
<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>Audience:</b>
<b>Thesis Statement:</b>		
<b>Claim/Counterclaim</b>	<b>Evidence</b>	<b>Elaboration</b>
<b>Emotional Appeal</b>		
<b>Conclusion:</b>		

## Sample Outline for Persuasive Essay

**Thesis:** You'll save money and time by riding a bike; even in the winter months, people should use bikes for short trips instead of cars.

### I. Cost

#### A.

1.

2.

#### B.

1.

2.

### II. Time

#### A.

1.

2.

#### B.

1.

2.

### III. Safety in winter

#### A. Accidents [Evidence]

1. Summer [Elaboration]

2. Winter [Elaboration]

#### B. Injuries [Evidence]

1. Summer: Exposed limbs subject to road rash [Elaboration]    2. Winter: Protective apparel [Elaboration]

## Sample Persuasive Essay

### Introduction

Italicized = *Attention Getter* / Underlined = Context / **Bolded** = **Thesis Statement**

*According to most statistics, if you, the reader, are an American, you're likely overweight.* In these tough economic times, your weight and the weight of your wallet are probably inversely proportional to one another; the more you eat and spend on gas, the less likely you are to save money. And all that gas you're pumping into your car is just killing our planet slowly. In order to prevent much future distress for you, me, and our neighbors on this planet, I offer a simple solution for both saving money and time: ride a bike. Any bike. That old junky mountain bike you've had in your garage for eight years? Yeah, that bike. Take it down off the garage wall, and pump that free air into the flat tires. The next time you start up that environment killer of a car, even in the winter, consider busting out your underused, undervalued, and underappreciated bike—for any trip under five miles. **You'll save money and time by riding a bike; even in the winter months, people should use bikes for short trips instead of cars.**

### Body Paragraph

Normal = Transition / **Bolded** = **Topic Sentence** / Underlined = Evidence / *Italicized* = *Elaboration*

There is no doubt that summer is the best time to begin this transformation of your body and wallet; however, I'm sure you'll balk at the suggestion that your bike can—and should—be just as useful in January. **Even on cold winter days, your first choice of transportation for short trips should still be your bicycle. You may ask: isn't winter riding dangerous?** Actually, a survey of winter bikers conducted through Icebike.org in 1999 suggests otherwise. When asked —What was your worst cycling accident? || only 4% of the 403 respondents cited 35 injuries that required medical attention. An astounding 50% experienced minor falls with no injury, and 21% experienced no falls at all (icebike.org). Apparently winter riding isn't as dangerous as you'd think. Consider this: Even if you do fall, it won't be as bad as it could be in the summer. In the summer, bare arms and legs are exposed to road rash on falls that otherwise wouldn't occur in the winter; your layers will protect your skin from road rash. In many ways, winter riding may actually be safer than summer riding.

### Conclusion

**Bolded** = **Restated Thesis Statement** / *Italicized* = *Synthesis* / Underlined = Extension

**Even in the winter, there are no excuses for not making short trips on a bicycle.** *The money you spend on accessories (which will last years) that make biking a comfortable and reasonable form of transportation will be outweighed by the money you save on gas and maintenance expenses over the same time period, not to mention the decrease in your ecological footprint. Additionally, concerns about the commute being longer are nullified by the fact that you are, in essence, multi-tasking by simultaneously commuting and exercising, activities which we tend to view as mutually exclusive. Ultimately, the most important benefit to remember is your ensuing happiness once you recommit to your bike.* Remember how much fun you had as a kid riding your bike around the neighborhood? That freedom is hanging there in your garage, waiting to be rediscovered, hoping that—one day soon—your feet will finally grace its pedals once more.

## Sentence Templates + Transitions for beginning to write argument

### Derived from Graff and Birkenstein's *They Say, I Say*

Remember: the templates below are meant to “be direct with [you] about the key rhetorical moves that [critical thinking] comprises” (Graff & Birkenstein, 2010). Think of them as moves in a video game or a sport--the better we get at the game or sport, the more comfortable we get with knowing when and how to use a move best. With that said, play around with these, notice how they are used in the writings of others, and determine that you will grow as an arguer this year. And remember this, too: argument is hard, and hard means we get to grow rapidly if we dare to go all in.

#### Introducing What an Author Says

- X acknowledges that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X agrees that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X argues that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X believes that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X denies/does not deny that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X claims that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X complains that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X concedes that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X demonstrates that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X celebrates the fact that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X insists that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X questions whether \_\_\_\_\_.
- X reminds us that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X reports that \_\_\_\_\_.
- X suggests that \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Introducing “Standard Views”

- Americans today tend to believe that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Common sense seems to say that \_\_\_\_\_.
- It is often said that \_\_\_\_\_.
- Many people assume that \_\_\_\_\_.

#### Introducing an Ongoing Debate

- In discussions of \_\_\_\_\_, one controversial issue has been \_\_\_\_\_. On the one hand, \_\_\_\_\_ argues \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, \_\_\_\_\_ opposes \_\_\_\_\_. Others even believe \_\_\_\_\_. My own view is \_\_\_\_\_.
- When it comes to the topic of \_\_\_\_\_, most of us will readily agree that \_\_\_\_\_. Where this agreement usually ends, however, is on the question of \_\_\_\_\_. While some are convinced that \_\_\_\_\_, others believe that \_\_\_\_\_.

### Using a Quotation (i.e., Backing up your argument with proof)

- X states, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ).  
Standage states, “Some [drinks] have served to highlight the power and status of the elite” (2).
- According to X, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ).  
According to Standage, “Wine was the lifeblood of [Greece]” (3).
- X himself writes, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ).  
Standage himself writes, “Six beverages... chart the flow of world history” (2).  
Odysseus himself says, “I longed for sweet Penelope” (9.21).
- In his book, \_\_\_\_\_, X maintains that “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ).  
In his book, *A History of the World in Six Glasses*, Standage maintains that “Greek and Roman knowledge... had been safeguarded and extended by scholars in the Arab world” (4).
- Writing in the magazine \_\_\_\_\_, X complains that “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ).  
Writing in the online magazine *Salon*, Weitz complains that “reality television is little more than gladiatorial combat” (3).
- X agrees when she writes, “ \_\_\_\_\_ ” ( ).  
I believe wine was the most influential drink in history. Standage agrees when he writes, “Wine was the lifeblood of [Greece]” (4).

### Explaining a Quotation (i.e., Showing that you understand what the quote says)

- Basically, X is saying \_\_\_\_\_.
- In other words, X believes \_\_\_\_\_.
- In making this comment, X urges us to \_\_\_\_\_.
- In making this comment, Cepeda urges us to look consider whether we do, actually, like hard work.
- X’s point is that \_\_\_\_\_.
- The essence of X’s argument is that \_\_\_\_\_.

### Naming Your Naysayers or Opponents (i.e., Introducing your rebuttal)

- Here many \_\_\_\_\_ would probably object that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Here many proponents of choice reading would probably object that complex texts destroy the enjoyment of reading.
- Of course, \_\_\_\_\_s would certainly take issue with the argument that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Of course, antiglobalization activists would certainly take issue with the argument that globalization helps out developing countries.
- \_\_\_\_\_s, of course, may want to question whether \_\_\_\_\_.  
Patriots, of course, may want to question whether the United States is acting out of selfish motives in its wars overseas.
- Nevertheless, critics of \_\_\_\_\_ will probably argue that \_\_\_\_\_.

Nevertheless, critics of student-chosen reading will probably argue that reading complex texts is the only way to increase reading levels.

- Although not all \_\_\_\_\_s think alike, some of them will probably dispute my claim that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Although not all globalization fans think alike, some of them will probably dispute my claim that globalized companies are destroying developing countries.

**Making a Concession (i.e., They have a point, BUT...)**

- Admittedly, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Proponents of X are right to argue that \_\_\_\_\_. But they are exaggerating when they claim that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Proponents of complex texts are right to argue that reading such material is essential for post-secondary success. But they are exaggerating when they claim that Standage’s book is the only possible complex text for world history students to read.
- While it is true that \_\_\_\_\_, it does not necessarily follow that \_\_\_\_\_.
- On the one hand, X is right to say \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, it is still true that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Explaining a Quotation (i.e., Showing that you understand what the quote says)**

- Basically, X is saying \_\_\_\_\_.
- In other words, X believes \_\_\_\_\_.
- In making this comment, X urges us to \_\_\_\_\_.
- In making this comment, Cepeda urges us to look consider whether we do, actually, like hard work.
- X’s point is that \_\_\_\_\_.
- The essence of X’s argument is that \_\_\_\_\_.

**Naming Your Naysayers or Opponents (i.e., Introducing your rebuttal)**

- Here many \_\_\_\_\_ would probably object that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Here many proponents of choice reading would probably object that complex texts destroy the enjoyment of reading.
- Of course, \_\_\_\_\_s would certainly take issue with the argument that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Of course, antiglobalization activists would certainly take issue with the argument that globalization helps out developing countries.
- \_\_\_\_\_s, of course, may want to question whether \_\_\_\_\_.  
Patriots, of course, may want to question whether the United States is acting out of selfish motives in its wars overseas.
- Nevertheless, critics of \_\_\_\_\_ will probably argue that \_\_\_\_\_.

Nevertheless, critics of student-chosen reading will probably argue that reading complex texts is the only way to increase reading levels.

- Although not all \_\_\_\_\_s think alike, some of them will probably dispute my claim that \_\_\_\_\_.

Although not all globalization fans think alike, some of them will probably dispute my claim that globalized companies are destroying developing countries.

### **Making a Concession (i.e., They have a point, BUT...)**

- Admittedly, \_\_\_\_\_.
- Proponents of X are right to argue that \_\_\_\_\_. But they are exaggerating when they claim that \_\_\_\_\_.  
Proponents of complex texts are right to argue that reading such material is essential for post-secondary success. But they are exaggerating when they claim that Standage’s book is the only possible complex text for world history students to read.
- While it is true that \_\_\_\_\_, it does not necessarily follow that \_\_\_\_\_.
- On the one hand, X is right to say \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, it is still true that \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Disagreeing, with Reasons (i.e., They are just wrong)**

X is mistaken because she overlooks \_\_\_\_\_.

X’s claim that \_\_\_\_\_ rests upon the questionable assumption that \_\_\_\_\_.

X can’t have it both ways. On the one hand, she argues \_\_\_\_\_. On the other hand, she \_\_\_\_\_.

By focusing on \_\_\_\_\_, X overlooks the deeper problem of \_\_\_\_\_.

### **Establishing Why Your Claims Matter (i.e., Why should I care about this argument?)**

\*This is great clincher material\*

X matters because \_\_\_\_\_.

- High school matters because it either opens or closes doors into the rest of my life.

Although X may seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in terms of today’s concern over \_\_\_\_\_.

- Although doing homework may seem trivial, it is in fact crucial in terms of succeeding in high school and developing my brain.

Ultimately, what is at stake here is \_\_\_\_\_.

- Ultimately, what is at stake here is my lifelong flourishing; being lazy now means being unhappy for decades.

Although X may seem of concern to only a small group of \_\_\_\_\_, it should in fact concern anyone who cares about \_\_\_\_\_.

- Although high school may seem of concern to only a small group of nerdy students, it should in fact concern anyone who cares about having an enjoyable life.

## Transitions

### For ADDING IDEAS:

*also*                      *another*                      *in fact*                      *equally important*                      *moreover*  
*furthermore*                      *additionally*                      *indeed*                      *in addition*

### For MAKING A CONTRAST:

*however*                      *nevertheless*                      *although*                      *conversely*  
*on the contrary*                      *notwithstanding*                      *even though*                      *all the same*  
*on the other hand*                      *by contrast*                      *nonetheless*

### For COMPARING:

*likewise*                      *equally*                      *along the same lines*  
*similarly*                      *in comparison*                      *in the same way*

### For CITING AN EXAMPLE:

*for example*                      *in other words*                      *in fact*  
*for instance*                      *specifically*                      *after all*  
*as an illustration*                      *consider*

### For SHOWING RESULTS:

*accordingly*                      *hence*                      *consequently*  
*as a result*                      *thus*                      *therefore*

### For REINFORCING AN IDEA:

*especially important*                      *above all*                      *most noteworthy*  
*especially relevant*                      *a significant factor*                      *most of all*

### For ELABORATING (expanding upon a point):

*actually*                      *by extension*                      *to put it another way*  
*to put it bluntly*                      *in short*                      *to put it succinctly*  
*in other words*                      *ultimately*                      *basically*

### For CONCEDED A POINT:

*admittedly*                      *of course*                      *although it is true that*  
*naturally*                      *granted*                      *to be sure*

### For CONCLUDING:

*clearly*                      *hence*                      *consequently*  
*obviously*                      *therefore*                      *thus*  
*in short*                      *all in all*

## Quotation Sandwich Template

### QUOTE GRAPHIC ORGANIZER

<p><b>Title:</b></p> <p><b>Author:</b></p>	<p><b>Prompt:</b> (Write it out here)</p>
<p><b>1. Focus Sentence [1 sentence]:</b> (Fill in the title and the author...remember to use quotation marks if the title is an article, underline if it is a book!)</p> <p>According to _____ in _____</p>	
<p><b>2. Context [2-3 sentences]:</b> (Background info that sets up the quote. Re-tell a little bit of the text to help the reader understand your focus.)</p>	
<p><b>3. Quote [1-2 sentence(s)]:</b> (Don't forget your page number! – See resources for using quotes)</p> <p><b>According to the author, “</b></p>	
<p><b>4. Return Back to Focus [1 sentence]:</b> Restate focus using one of these specific phrases: 1. This shows that...2. As you can see...3. This quote proves...4. This evidence led me to believe...5. Your own words (approved by teacher)...</p>	
<p><b>5. Analysis:</b> Explain how the quote relates to your focus <b>[3-5 sentences]:</b> (Give examples from the text and refer back to the words in the quote to help you elaborate the importance of the quote.)</p>	

## Examples of Student Essays---Argument/Opinion Writing

File Name: A6P Dear Teachers, Parents, and School Board

Argument/Opinion

Grade 6

On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt

Dear Teachers, Parents, and School Board,

The children in my class have been talking about the proposal that some of you have made which is whether or not our school should participate in the national “Shut Down Your Screen” week. I don’t think that if we did that, it would have a positive effect on the children in our school. There are a few reasons that we might want to participate but I weighed it out and I don’t think that we should participate. These are the reasons.

One reason that I don’t think that our school should participate in the national “Shut Down Your Screen” week is that when we can use computers, we can get assignments done faster during the school day so that we can move on to other things. For example, when you are given a task to type, if you write it by hand, it will take a much longer time than if we just decided to type it. If we are given an assignment that we have to do research on, we can usually get a lot more useful information from the internet than even from a book sometimes. Also, we will be able to move on to our next subject much faster because our research or typing will be finished.

Another reason that I don’t think we should shut down our screens for a week is because the Internet is the most reliable source for information. In the article “Is Google Making Us Stupid” it said the internet has the world’s best images, writing and ideas. That means that it will have better,

**Introduces a claim:**  
Introduction gives context for the proposal about “Shut Down Your Screen Week”

**States focus / claim**

**Organizes the reasons and evidence clearly**

**Supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence.**  
Evidence here is from writer’s own experience, and **demonstrates an understanding of the topic**

**Uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claims and reasons**

**Establishes and maintains a reasonably formal style**

more honest and reliable information than even a book. The internet lets us expand our range of thinking and see things in a different way from possibly someone else's perspective. The internet's information lets us think better and faster. Some people say that the internet is not helping us learn and not making us brilliant but I don't believe that is the case. I'm only eleven years old and I have already learned things off the internet like how solar power works and how animals like dolphins survive so that is obviously a myth. Google and the internet gives us ready and free access to information on just about anything.

Acknowledges counterclaims, then rebuts with clear reasons and relevant, credible evidence and reasoning from the writer's own experience

The last reason that I think that we shouldn't participate is because overall, calling, emailing, texting, or video chatting is more efficient. It takes less time and we are in the twenty-first century. We live in a time when it is a very normal thing to call or text someone instead of writing to them or just going to visit them. It might seem overwhelming and people might say that it is making us stupid but I find it fun and interesting to explore. I don't think that I could go a week without music or TV! I couldn't do it! I know for certain people this might not be the route that they want to take and that is fine but this world is only going to get more tech-like, it really is.

Supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence. Evidence here is from writer's own experience and demonstrates an understanding of the topic

As you can see, these are the reasons that I believe that we shouldn't participate in the "Shut Down Your Screen" week.

Provides a concluding statement that follows from the argument presented

Your friend,

In this on-demand assignment, students were asked to take a position on whether their school should participate in the national "Shut Down Your Screen Week." This writer begins by offering some context concerning the issue, and then asserts the claim that in her view the school should not participate.

The writer develops her claim with several reasons, which she supports with some relevant, credible evidence, demonstrating her understanding of the topic. The evidence in this piece comes from her own experience. The writer organizes her ideas clearly and supports her claim with logical reasoning. In addition, she acknowledges a counterclaim and then refutes the counterclaim with support for her own position, even though use of counterclaim is not stated in the Standards for this grade level. Throughout the essay, the writer uses words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to clarify the relationships among claims, reasons, and evidence, and to create cohesion. The conclusion follows from the argument presented.

The writer maintains a reasonably formal style throughout the piece.

**File Name: A6P Dear Teachers, Parents, and School Board**

**Argument/Opinion**

**Grade 6**

**On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

Dear Teachers, Parents, and School Board,

The children in my class have been talking about the proposal that some of you have made which is whether or not our school should participate in the national “Shut Down Your Screen” week. I don’t think that if we did that, it would have a positive effect on the children in our school. There are a few reasons that we might want to participate but I weighed it out and I don’t think that we should participate. These are the reasons.

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years old and I have already learned things off the internet like how solar power works and how animals like dolphins survive so that is obviously a myth. Google and the internet gives us ready and free access to information on just about anything.

The last reason that I think that we shouldn't participate is because overall, calling, emailing, texting, or video chatting is more efficient. It takes less time and we are in the twenty-first century. We live in a time when it is a very normal thing to call or text someone instead of writing to them or just going to visit them. It might seem overwhelming and people might say that it is making us stupid but I find it fun and interesting to explore. I don't think that I could go a week without music or TV! I couldn't do it! I know for certain people this might not be the route that they want to take and that is fine but this world is only going to get more tech-like, it really is.

As you can see, these are the reasons that I believe that we shouldn't participate in the "Shut Down Your Screen" week.

Your friend,

**File Name: A7R The Fight for Education**

**Argument/Opinion**

**Grade 7**

**Range of Writing**

### **The Fight for Education**

*I ran as fast as I could. I could see my destination just ahead of me. Just a little further, I kept saying to myself, just a little further and I will have made it to the land of the free and the home of the brave, the land of opportunity.*

*Diego finally got to his destination. He had gotten to America without getting caught. Now he could get the education to become a mechanic.*

Like Diego, many illegal immigrants come to America every day for a better life and a better education. Whether these illegal immigrants should get the education they came for is very controversial in today's economy. Some Americans think that illegal immigrants shouldn't be eligible for instate tuition, but other Americans think that these illegal immigrants should be eligible for instate tuition. I am one who thinks that illegal immigrants should be eligible for instate tuition.

One of the most important arguments is that illegal immigrants pay taxes. By buying goods in America they are paying sales taxes, and in April most files and pay their [income] taxes. In fact, illegals pay about nine billion dollars in [Social Security] taxes every year. Where do these taxes go? They go to lowering the cost of instate tuition, making it so affordable today. So why

Narrative lead engages reader, gives context about issue of illegal immigrants.

**Introduces claim:** introduction gives context about issue of whether or not illegal immigrants should receive in-state college tuition.

**Acknowledges competing claims**

States focus / claim

**Organizes the reasons and evidence logically**

**Uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify relationships among claim and reasons**

shouldn't the illegal immigrants be eligible for in-state tuition when they are helping to lower the price of the tuition. Another important argument is one that our forefathers set forth to make a better nation. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...and hold unalienable rights, among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness." If we are truly equal, then illegal immigrants deserve the same rights as we do for in-state tuition.

**Supports the claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence, and demonstrates an understanding of the topic**

However, some Americans say that illegal immigrants don't deserve in-state tuition because they are sending money back to their home country and families. But we do not know how much money they are actually sending back, and besides, this helps spread the money around. It may even help a foreign country to get out of poverty. This could actually stop more illegal immigrants from coming to America because they would be stable enough from the money that is being sent to them so that they don't need to look to the land of opportunity for a job.

**Acknowledges counterclaims, then rebuts with reasons and relevant, accurate, credible evidence and reasoning**

**Uses words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify relationships among claim and reasons**

In conclusion, illegal immigrants should be eligible for in-state tuition so, like Diego, they can follow their dreams. If you ever have to take a side on this issue, I hope you will consider mine.

**Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports argument presented**

**In this assignment from a social studies class, at the end of a unit on immigration, the student was asked to take a position on whether or not illegal immigrants should be eligible for in-state tuition. She gives an introduction of some background / context on the issue and makes a claim that in her view illegal immigrants should be eligible for in-state tuition.**

**The writer supports her claim with several reasons, which she develops with some relevant, accurate, credible evidence. She supports her claim with logical reasoning, and organizes the reasons logically. In addition, she acknowledges the counterclaims. She then refutes the counterclaim with support for her own position, even though use of counterclaim is not stated in the Standards at this grade level. The writer uses words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to clarify the relationships among claim, reasons, and evidence and to create cohesion.**

**The writer maintains a formal style throughout the piece. The conclusion ties back to the narrative lead, and follows from and supports the argument presented.**

**File Name: A7R The Fight for Education**

**Argument/Opinion**

**Grade 7**

**Range of Writing**

### **The Fight for Education**

*I ran as fast as I could. I could see my destination just ahead of me. Just a little further, I kept saying to myself, just a little further and I will have made it to the land of the free and the home of the brave, the land of opportunity.*

*Diego finally got to his destination. He had gotten to America without getting caught. Now he could get the education to become a mechanic.*

Like Diego, many illegal immigrants come to America every day for a better life and a better education. Whether these illegal immigrants should get the education they came for is very controversial in today's economy. Some Americans think that illegal immigrants shouldn't be eligible for instate tuition, but other Americans think that these illegal immigrants should be eligible for instate tuition. I am one who thinks that illegal immigrants should be eligible for instate tuition.

One of the most important arguments is that illegal immigrants pay taxes. By buying goods in America they are paying sales taxes, and in April most files and pay their [income] taxes. In fact, illegals pay about nine billion dollars in [Social Security] taxes every year. Where do these taxes go? They go to lowering the cost of instate tuition, making it so affordable today. So why shouldn't the illegal immigrants be eligible for instate tuition when they are helping to lower the price of the tuition?

Another important argument is one that our forefathers set forth to make a better nation. "We hold these truths to be self-evident, that all men are created equal...and hold unalienable

rights, among these are life, liberty, and the pursuit of happiness.” If we are truly equal, then illegal immigrants deserve the same rights as we do for instate tuition.

However, some Americans say that illegal immigrants don’t deserve instate tuition because they are sending money back to their home country and families. But we do not know how much money they are actually sending back, and besides, this helps spread the money around. It may even help a foreign country to get out of poverty. This could actually stop more illegal immigrants from coming to America because they would be stable enough from the money that is being sent to them so that they don’t need to look to the land of opportunity for a job.

In conclusion, illegal immigrants should be eligible for instate tuition so, like Diego, they can follow their dreams. If you ever have to take a side on this issue, I hope you will consider mine.

**File Name: A8P Shut Down Your Screen**

**Argument/Opinion**

**Grade 8**

**On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

### **Shut Down Your Screen**

Dear Teachers,

I believe that we should participate in shutdown your screen week. I think that everyone in the school should not use any electronics for one week. Since the invention of the computer, cellphone and other electronics, people have been using them more and more and more. These electronics have big upsides, you're never alone if you have cell service and Facebook allows people to talk to multiple friends at once when they're not in the same room, town, state, or country. But they also have their downsides. What makes us truly great is our ability to think deeply and focus, but when we use electronics or the internet we aren't doing either of these things. In fact, using these things makes us think more shallow and focus less. I think that we should participate in shut down your screen week.

One reason is that using electronics and multi-tasking causes focus problems, on and off computers. In *Attached to Technology and Paying a Price* by Matt Richtel, it says, "Scientists say juggling email, phone calls, and other incoming information can change how people think and behave. They say our ability to focus is being undermined by bursts of information." This ability to focus is enormously important, it's one of the things that we depend on almost every day. Like when you're driving a car to work or flying a plane. If you're distracted while doing one of these things it can have dire consequences for

**Introduces a claim:**  
The introduction gives specific context for the proposal about "Shut Down Your Screen Week" and then states a claim

**Organizes the reasons and evidence logically**

**Supports the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence,** including direct quotations, from accurate, credible sources, thereby demonstrating understanding of the topic

yourself and for others. Multi-tasking can also affect creativity, deep thought, causing problems for work and family life. By participating we could give people a chance to develop new habits of not using their phone or computer all the time.

A second reason that we should participate is that heavy multitaskers have trouble filtering out irrelevant information on and off the computer. In *Attached to Technology and Paying the Price* by Matt Richtel it says the multitaskers “had trouble filtering out the blue ones – the irrelevant information.” If we participated, we could give these people a chance to develop new habits that would help them filter out irrelevant information and only pay attention to the things that are important. For example, if someone’s playing with their daughter, they would check their email every time they received an email instead of focusing on playing with their daughter.

Now, some people say that we shouldn’t participate because technology makes you smarter, why stop doing something that’s helping yourself. In an imaging study by Dr. Small, he found that “Internet users showed greater brain activity than nonusers, suggesting they were growing their neural circuitry.” While they may be growing their neural circuitry, they were also changing a characteristic of the brain that was thought to be unchangeable, the ability to only process one stream of information at a time. This ability allows humans to think deeply, an important characteristic in today’s society. By changing it, they were preventing themselves from having the ability to think deeply.

Technology is a new thing, and it has many advantages and conveniences. But for many it becomes more than a convenience, it becomes an obsession. For this reason I believe that we should participate in shut down your screen week, to give people a chance to make new habits and make technology a convenience again, not a necessity.

**Supports the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, including direct quotations, from accurate, credible sources, thereby demonstrating understanding of the topic**

**Acknowledges an opposing claim, which the writer distinguishes from the claim and then counters with logical reasoning and relevant evidence**

**Establishes and maintains a formal style**

**Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the argument presented**

In this on-demand assignment, students were asked to take a position on whether their school should participate in the national “Shut Down Your Screen Week.” This writer begins by offering specific, well-developed context concerning the issue and then asserts the claim that, in his view, the school should participate.

The writer develops his claim with several reasons, which he supports with some relevant, credible evidence, demonstrating his understanding of the topic and the texts he has read. The evidence in this piece comes from those texts. The writer organizes his ideas clearly and supports his claim with logical reasoning. In addition, he acknowledges a counterclaim, distinguishes it from his own claim, and refutes it with support for his own position, even though this development of a counterclaim is not stated in the Standards at this grade level, and again includes evidence from the texts. Throughout the essay, the writer uses words, phrases, and clauses as transitions to clarify the relationships among claim, counterclaim, reasons, and evidence and to create cohesion.

The writer maintains a formal style throughout the piece. The conclusion follows from and supports the argument presented.

**File Name: A8P Shut Down Your Screen**

**Argument/Opinion**

**Grade 8**

**On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

Dear Teachers,

I believe that we should participate in shutdown your screen week. I think that everyone in the school should not use any electronics for one week. Since the invention of the computer, cellphone and other electronics, people have been using them more and more and more. These electronics have big upsides, you're never alone if you have cell service and Facebook allows people to talk to multiple friends at once when they're not in the same room, town, state, or country. But they also have their downsides. What makes us truly great is our ability to think deeply and focus, but when we use electronics or the internet we aren't doing either of these things. In fact, using these things makes us think more shallow and focus less. I think that we should participate in shut down your screen week.

One reason is that using electronics and multi-tasking causes focus problems, on and off computers. In *Attached to Technology and Paying a Price* by Matt Richtel, it says, "Scientists say juggling email, phone calls, and other incoming information can change how people think and behave. They say our ability to focus is being undermined by bursts of information." This ability to focus is enormously important, it's one of the things that we depend on almost every day. Like when you're driving a car to work or flying a plane. If you're distracted while doing one of these things it can have dire consequences for yourself and for others. Multi-tasking can also affect creativity, deep thought, causing problems for work and family life. By participating we could give people a chance to develop new habits of not using their phone or computer all the time.

A second reason that we should participate is that heavy multitaskers have trouble filtering out irrelevant information on and off the computer. In *Attached to Technology and*

*Paying the Price* by Matt Richtel it says the multitaskers “had trouble filtering out the blue ones – the irrelevant information.” If we participated, we could give these people a chance to develop new habits that would help them filter out irrelevant information and only pay attention to the things that are important. For example, if someone’s playing with their daughter, they would check their email every time they received an email instead of focusing on playing with their daughter.

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Technology is a new thing, and it has many advantages and conveniences. But for many it becomes more than a convenience, it becomes an obsession. For this reason I believe that we should participate in shut down your screen week, to give people a chance to make new habits and make technology a convenience again, not a necessity.

## Examples of Student Essays---Informative/Explanatory Writing

**File Name: I6R Lyddie's Choices**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 6**

**Range of Writing**

### Lyddie's Choices

Lyddie Worthen is the main character in Katherine Patterson's *Lyddie*. Lyddie is a young girl living on a Vermont farm in the 1840's. This is the time of the Industrial Revolution. Lyddie's father has abandoned the family and Lyddie's mother leaves her and her brother behind thinking that the world is coming to an end. The only thing Lyddie has left is her farm which she desperately wants to hold on to. In order to keep her farm Lyddie has to work off the debts on her farm, but the job she has isn't paying enough, so she leaves to begin a new life as a factory girl at the newly developed textile mills in Lowell Massachusetts. Because of working in the Lowell mills Lyddie gets a broader sense of herself. She is able to make some choices about who she wants to be in her life.

Lyddie is working at a place called Cutlers Tavern for very low wages. If she keeps working like this she will never be able to pay off her debts, so she decides to go to Lowell and work in the mills so that she can make more money.

She is told by a customer who works in the mills "you'd do well in the mill you know. You'd clear at least two dollars a week. And' she paused 'you'd be independent.'" (p. 25)

Lyddie then makes the choice to go to the mill. She realizes that at the mill she will be able to pay off the farm debts faster. This is a hard choice for Lyddie, if she stays at the tavern she knows that she will continue to make money and eventually pay off the debt. If she goes to the mill she has a chance of not getting

**Introduces the topic clearly, including naming the title and author of the novel; provides context of for the story, including naming identifying characters and main central ideas of the novel**

**States focus / topic of the piece**

**Develops the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and quotations, or other information and examples from the text. The writer explains the meaning of the quotation he has chosen, with details about context (what was going on here). He also explains details that clarify the relationship among the ideas / topic he is working with in the piece.**

the job at all but if she does get the job she will be able to pay off the farm debts much faster. This is when Lyddie begins to take her life into her own hands and makes the choice to take a chance at the mill.

When Lyddie begins working at the mill, she starts making much more and with that money she is able to buy a book. Lyddie does not have a good education and people at the mills by her roommate Betsy she becomes passionate about reading so she goes to buy a book.

“I-I come to purchase at book...” “what book do you have in mind...” “uh-uh *Oliver Twist* if you please sir” (p.83-84) she then pays with two silver dollars.

**Develops the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples: the writer explains the meaning of the quotation he has chosen.**

By making the choice to purchase that book she opens the doors to education and becomes a smarter person who loves to learn. She also changes from a thrifty penny pincher to someone who realizes that money isn't always the most important thing in life.

Because of Lyddie's love for reading she makes the choice to leave the farm that she has just returned to, and leave Luke, the man who loves her to go to Oberlin College in Ohio.

“I'm off” she said ‘to Ohio, there's a college there that will that will take a women just like a man’”. (p.181)

**Establishes and maintains a reasonably formal style**

By making the choice to go to college Lyddie is showing that she won't give up on her education and won't give up on an adventurous life. Even though things haven't been great for her she is still ready to start another chapter in her life.

**Uses appropriate, varied transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts**

What does the author want us to understand about the power of the Industrial Revolution? I think that in Lyddie it is showing that the Industrial Revolution gave people many opportunities in their lives. The Industrial Revolution also had lots of hard moments where people would get sick, break a bone, or even die. The Industrial Revolution seemed to rule a lot of people's

**Uses precise word choice, and domain-specific vocabulary about the Industrial Revolution**

**Provides a concluding section that follows from the explanation presented by restating the main point and reflecting on the topic**

lives and ruin their families. Lyddie took advantage of the Industrial Revolution well and through the choices she made was able to pull past just being a factory girl and take different paths in life.

In this assignment, students were asked to reflect on the question “How did the work in the Lowell mills change Lyddie’s life?” after they had read the book *Lyddie* by Katherine Paterson. Class discussion helped students to arrive at the focus statement that this writer uses. He provides enough context about the book in the introduction that even people who have not read the text can follow the writer’s thinking in the piece that follows.

The writer clearly organizes his evidence using three quotations from the text. In each case, he gives some context for the quotation he uses and follows the quote with a well-elaborated explanation that makes the relationship between the quote (evidence) and the topic / focus clear. He uses appropriate transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts. Throughout the piece, the writer uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to make his thinking clear.

The writer uses a formal, academic tone as he explains his thinking. The conclusion follows from the main point and, although not required by the Standards, provides some thoughtful reflection on the topic.

**File Name: I6R Lyddie's Choices**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 6**

**Range of Writing**

### **Lyddie's Choices**

Lyddie Worthen is the main character in Katherine Patterson's *Lyddie*. Lyddie is a young girl living on a Vermont farm in the 1840's. This is the time of the Industrial Revolution. Lyddie's father has abandoned the family and Lyddie's mother leaves her and her brother behind thinking that the world is coming to an end. The only thing Lyddie has left is her farm which she desperately wants to hold on to. In order to keep her farm Lyddie has to work off the debts on her farm, but the job she has isn't paying enough, so she leaves to begin a new life as a factory girl at the newly developed textile mills in Lowell Massachusetts. Because of working in the Lowell mills Lyddie gets a broader sense of herself. She is able to make some choices about who she wants to be in her life.

Lyddie is working at a place called Cutlers Tavern for very low wages. If she keeps working like this she will never be able to pay off her debts, so she decides to go to Lowell and work in the mills so that she can make more money.

She is told by a customer who works in the mills "you'd do well in the mill you know. You'd clear at least two dollars a week. And' she paused 'you'd be independent.'" (p. 25)

Lyddie then makes the choice to go to the mill. She realizes that at the mill she will be able to pay off the farm debts faster. This is a hard choice for Lyddie, if she stays at the tavern she knows that she will continue to make money and eventually pay off the debt. If she goes to the mill she has a chance of not getting the job at all but if she does get the job she will be able to pay off the farm debts much faster. This is when Lyddie begins to take her life into her own hand and makes the choice to take a chance at the mill.

When Lyddie begins working at the mill, she starts making much more and with that money she is able to buy a book. Lyddie does not have a good education and people at the mills by her roommate Betsy she becomes passionate about reading so she goes to buy a book.

“I-I come to purchase at book...” “what book do you have in mind...” “uh-uh *Oliver Twist* if you please sir” (p.83-84) she then pays with two silver dollars.

By making the choice to purchase that book she opens the doors to education and becomes a smarter person who loves to learn. She also changes from a thrifty penny pincher to someone who realizes that money isn't always the most important thing in life.

Because of Lyddie's love for reading she makes the choice to leave the farm that she has just returned to, and leave Luke, the man who loves her to go to Oberlin College in Ohio.

“I'm off” she said ‘to Ohio, there's a college there that will that will take a women just like a man”. (p.181)

By making the choice to go to college Lyddie is showing that she won't give up on her education and won't give up on an adventurous life. Even though things haven't been great for her she is still ready to start another chapter in her life.

What does the author want us to understand about the power of the Industrial Revolution? I think that in Lyddie it is showing that the Industrial Revolution gave people many opportunities in their lives. The Industrial Revolution also had lots of hard moments where people would get sick, break a bone, or even die. The Industrial Revolution seemed to rule a lot of people's lives and ruin their families. Lyddie took advantage of the Industrial Revolution well and through the choices she made was able to pull past just being a factory girl and take different paths in life.

**File Name: I7R To Build a Fire**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 7**

**Range of Writing**

### **To Build a Fire**

One of the most important things in life is to know how to build a successful fire. For ages fire has been a critical part of our lives. Fire provides heat, and this is what it is mainly used for. Heat cooks food. This is also critical because some uncooked foods can cause some very nasty, unmentionable diseases. And, of course, there is aesthetics. Could one be more cheerful than roasting chesnuts over an open fire?

So, now that you're all convinced that fire is the greatest thing in the world, you probably should know how to make a successful fire. Well, I agree wholeheartedly to teaching you. So, let us go through the steps one by one.

First you need to decide where you are going to build the fire, whether it be in a woodstove, in a fireplace, or out in the open. They are all relatively the same in terms of process, but materials used can differ. The basic process is as follows.

First you need to find some newspaper, or other easily burnt materials such as birch bark, office papers, old report cards, etc. Crumple up enough of the paper to cover the bottom of your fire area (if you are using birch bark just lay a few strips down). Next you need kindling. Kindling usually is best in the form of split boards, but split wood is also fine as long as the wood is dry and not green (not in color but if wood has been cut recently it is usually referred to as "green"). About four to eight pieces should be laid on top of the paper in a criss-cross design in order to

**Introduces the topic / focus clearly, previewing what is to follow:** The writer provides background information about the importance of fire, leading into an explanation of how to build a fire.

**Organizes ideas, concepts, and information using sequence:** The writer explains the process of building a fire in a step-by-step fashion

**Develops the topic with appropriate accurate, facts and concrete details** about the materials and steps needed to build a fire.

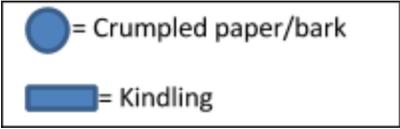
**Uses precise, domain-specific vocabulary to explain and analyze.**

**Establishes and maintains a formal style.**

allow the fire air. See Figure 1. Note: Fire will not burn without oxygen!  
Do not smother it!



Figure 1



Uses graphic to aid comprehension

Then you need a small piece of firewood, preferably not green. This should be laid diagonally across the top of the kindling.

Well, that's the hard part. Now you just need a match. Light the paper (or bark) in a few places and watch the fire blaze. Note: The wood will need to be replenished now and then. Just lay a piece of firewood across the top of the currently burning log and it will soon start blazing. Enjoy your wonderful fire wherever you are!

Uses appropriate transitions to create cohesion and clarify relationships among ideas and concepts

I hope that if you survive your first fire you will continue to use this wonderful power of nature safely so that all can enjoy it. And remember, 'only YOU can prevent forest fires!'

Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the explanation presented

In this assignment, from a language arts class, students were asked to explain a concrete procedure. This writer gives some background information about fire in the introduction and then states his purpose (to explain how to build a fire), thereby previewing the sequential steps to follow.

The writer organizes the essay sequentially, explaining each step carefully. Within each chunk, the writer uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to name and accurately explain the steps in building a fire. He uses appropriate transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts, and to create cohesion. To make the steps easier for a reader to follow, he includes a graphic. This makes the writer's thinking and understanding easy to follow.

Except for a few lapses ("*only you can prevent forest fires*"), the tone of the essay is objective and the style formal—both appropriate for procedural writing. The conclusion follows from and supports the information given.

**File Name: I7R To Build a Fire**

**Informational/Explanatory**

**Grade 7**

**Range of Writing**

### **To Build a Fire**

One of the most important things in life is to know how to build a successful fire. For ages fire has been a critical part of our lives. Fire provides heat, and this is what it is mainly used for. Heat cooks food. This is also critical because some uncooked foods can cause some very nasty, unmentionable diseases. And, of course, there is aesthetics. Could one be more cheerful than roasting chestnuts over an open fire?

So, now that you're all convinced that fire is the greatest thing in the world, you probably should know how to make a successful fire. Well, I agree wholeheartedly to teaching you. So, let us go through the steps one by one.

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See Figure 1. Note: Fire will not burn without oxygen! Do not smother it!



Figure 1

Then you need a small piece of firewood, preferably not green. This should be laid diagonally across the top of the kindling.

Well, that's the hard part. Now you just need a match. Light the paper (or bark) in a few places and watch the fire blaze. Note: The wood will need to be replenished now and then. Just lay a piece of firewood across the top of the currently burning log and it will soon start blazing. Enjoy your wonderful fire wherever you are!

I hope that if you survive your first fire you will continue to use this wonderful power of nature safely so that all can enjoy it. And remember, 'only YOU can prevent forest fires!'

**File Name: I8R How Mount Olympus is Like a Cell**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 8**

**Range of Writing**

### **How Mount Olympus is Like a Cell**

Have you ever looked at your own cells? No, of course not. You're a mortal and you don't have the power or technology to do that. Maybe some day in the future we shall grant humans the power of microscopic vision. Who knows? That's up to Zeus. Cells are amazing things. Each one is individually different. When I first looked at my own cells I thought, "*WOW there is nothing like this in the whole world.*" I was wrong. Recently, I came to the realization that my own dear Mount Olympus is very much like a cell itself. There are many components in a cells that can also, in a way, be found on Mount Olympus. The structure of a cell and the components within are very like Mount Olympus. What? You don't believe me? Well fine! Come on. I'll show you. Oh, and by the way my name is Eos and I'm the Greek goddess of dawn. I'm responsible for the rising of the sun. Be careful and follow me. Don't let anyone else see you. Mortals aren't allowed up her. Let's go.

In an animal cell, the cell membrane controls what enters and leaves the cell. There are small pores that allow things of different sizes through. Up her, on Olympus what keeps the mortals from entering. or leaving (if they are to be kept here) is an instilled fear of us. Mortals dare not enter unless told to by one of the gods or goddesses. They dare not leave either.

Now, all of you stand still. No, it's okay. This is just a powder that will make you invisible. Nobody move or make a sound. Got it? If you do, it will be your life wasted. I just have to check to make sure that neither Zeus or Hera are in their throne room... Okay, we can go in. Just go silently and quickly! This is Zeus and Hera's throne room, which is very similar to the nucleus of a cell. In a cell, the nucleus is the control

**Introduces the topic clearly, previewing what is to follow:** The writer orients the reader to the narrative setting through which information and ideas will be conveyed, introduces a narrator (the goddess Eos), and establishes the essay's explanatory focus on a comparison between the structure of cells and Mount Olympus.

**Organizes ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories:** The writer uses a narrative structure (a tour through Mount Olympus) as the frame for conveying specific comparisons between the structure of cells and Mount Olympus

**Uses precise and domain-specific vocabulary within accurate evidence to develop topic**

center of activity on a cellular level It's from here that Zeus and Hera control the happenings of immortals and mortals alike. It's like the control center for the world.

Holy Zeus! Someone's coming in. It's Zeus himself! Quick into here. No noise, no movement, no nothing! Those of you who can peer through the window, do so. You'll be able to see the head god himself! Zeus and his wife, Hera, control the gods, goddesses, and mortals. They are like the chromosomes in a cell. In a cell, the chromosomes determine what kind of cell it will be and how it acts. That is what Zeus and Hera do in the world.

**Uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.** Here, the writer is using a chronological narrative structure in addition to the cell structures to aid comprehension.

In a cell, the ribosomes turn amino acids into proteins. On Mount Olympus we make many things like laws, rules, and the weather. However, the most material thing that we make are lightning bolts. Of course, only Zeus can actually make them. Although others can use them if they have his permission. See how Zeus only uses his left hand for tasks? That is because his right hand is used to make lightening. Like the ribosomes, his hand takes raw materials (the abundant plasma and energy up here) and creates a whole new product (lightning.) His hand is like the ribosomes in a cell.

**Uses precise and domain-specific vocabulary to explain topic**

**Continues to analyze comparison between cell structure / function and Mount Olympus (develops topic, makes meaning clear)**

Good, Zeus is leaving. This closet is starting to get stuffy. We should go quickly out into the hall. Now take a right, then a left into here. This is the courtyard. Immortals don't have to eat, but we do it for the pleasure of it. Also, eating helps keep us healthy and happy. The fountains flow with sweet juices and wines. The trees have the best fruits possible. That table over there is always supplied with the most delectable food imaginable. Those chests that are spread around are filled with gold and jewels for our taking. Wearing these helps enhance our godly image. This courtyard represents the vacuoles in a cell. In the vacuoles, large amounts of what the cell needs are stored. Here large amounts of what immortals thrive on is stored.

**Uses precise and domain-specific vocabulary to explain topic**

Don't be alarmed. Those are our mortal slaves. They won't tell on us because I have ordered them not to. In an animal cell, mitochondria store energy and release it when necessary. They power the cell. Here on Mount Olympus, we could not get by with out

thee slaves. They perform almost every task that can even slight be considered laborious. The energy they get from food is stored in their bodies and released in order to do tasks.

In a cell, the ER, or endoplasmic reticulum, help to move substances around the cell. The halls and paths we've been following are very similar to the ER, they are like the roads that contain all movement.

**Uses precise and domain-specific vocabulary within evidence to develop topic**

Quick, into this room here. That was Hermes the messenger god. Now that I think of it, he is very much like the golgi bodies in a cell. The golgi bodies package and ship substances from place to place in a cell. Hermes, similarly wraps items up in goat skin and takes them from one person, immortal, or Titan to another.

Now, let's go back to the entrance. You should go. Soon every god, goddess, demi-god, and demi-goddess will be coming. There is a big meeting tonight. So they were all summoned here. By now, I'm sure you can see how Mount Olympus is structured like a cell Just follow that path down there until you get home. Wait, the day is almost over and it'll get dark. Each of you swallow some of this powder. There, this enables you to fly, which is much faster than walking. If you promise not to tell anyone about this and you can go. You swear? Okay, good bye

**Provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the explanation presented:** The writer restates the main point but also provides a sense of closure to the narrative frame

For this piece of blended writing (informational and narrative) from an eighth-grade science class, students were asked to address the question: "How is a cell like a familiar building or city?" This writer responds by comparing cell structure to the structure of Mount Olympus and writes from the perspective of one of the gods. She begins by orienting the reader to the narrative conceit, providing some context about cells and Mount Olympus, and then stating her main point (Mount Olympus is structured like a cell), thereby previewing what follows in the essay.

The writer organizes the essay clearly by using both a narrative story line (for both reader interest and analogical purposes) and a compare/contrast informative/explanatory structure. She uses appropriate transitions to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts. Within each chunk, the writer uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to name and accurately explain elements of the comparison. This makes the writer's thinking and understanding easy to follow.

The tone is conversational and the style relatively informal, both appropriate for this type of blended writing. The conclusion follows from and supports the main point, as well as providing a sense of closure for the narrative.

**File Name: I8R How Mount Olympus is Like a Cell**

**Informative/Explanatory**

**Grade 8**

**Range of Writing**

### **How Mount Olympus is Like a Cell**

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## Examples of Student Essays---Narrative Writing

File Name: N6P Black Mountains of Dust

Narrative

Grade 6

On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt

### Black Mountains of Dust

I was sitting at a park bench when I saw the endless black heading towards me. "Mom look!" I screamed. My mom turned around and faced me. A look of pure horror was painted across her face.

"Margaret come on we need to go now!"

She shouted. We ran across roads and dried up cropt fields. We did not dare look back. Suddenly I wasn't running away from the black cloud. Instead I was face down in the dirt. Oh no I had tripped over my shoelace! I slowly looked up where was my mom? The cloud loomed closer and closer. I

choked feeling the gritty dust in my throat. I tryed to crawl forward but needles shot through my legs. Oh great in a time like this my legs fall asleep! A whiff of dust blew toward me, burning my eyes and making everything blurry.

"Mom!" I screamed. "Mom!"

Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context for the narrative that follows and introduces a narrator and characters. The narrator and her mother needing to escape the storm becomes the central focus /conflict in the narrative. The need to escape the storm becomes the focus / central problem of the narrative

Uses narrative technique of dialogue to develop events. Event sequence to follow unfolds naturally and logically.

Uses transitional phrase to signal shift from one setting to another

Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey events and develop characters

Uses the narrative technique of dialogue to develop events and characters; controls pacing by slowing down the action

I tried to yell again but was choked by more dust. "Mom" I whined. Where was she. I started coughing from all of the dust in my lungs and throat.

"Margaret! Darling come on!" My mom motioned me to get up but I shook my head.

My Mom flung me into her arms and ran, soaring farther away from the storm.

After what seemed forever, my mom stopped running. Screams and yells echoed off walls. I covered my ears.

**Uses transitional clause to signal shift from one time frame to another**

A person right in front of us said:

"Get inside quickly!"

My mom answered "okay" and then I was carried into a building, that looked like the town hall.

My mom set me down in a corner, in the town hall and sat next to me. "Mom?" I croaked.

"Yes Sweetie?" She said in a sweet voice, almost like honey.

"Is this going to happen ever again, this storm?" I asked my voice still thick with dust. She did not answer and I knew that she knew this wouldn't be the last time the black mountains of dust attacked the plain states.

**Provides a conclusion which follows from and then reflects on the events and focus / conflict of the narrative, the dust storm of the Dust Bowl days**

In this on-demand narrative, the writer tells the story of a girl and her mother being caught in a dust storm during the days of the Dust Bowl. She focuses the narrative around the central conflict of trying to escape the storm. The protagonist/narrator is a girl who is terrified by the storm as she is caught up in it.

The writer organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically. Some development of the events and characters is done through dialogue. Some precise words and phrases, descriptive details, and sensory language are used as well. At times in the narrative, it would have been helpful to have had a bit more description along with the dialogue, but, in general, the writer controls plot and character development adequately.

Although not required by the Standards, the narrative concludes with reflection / foreshadowing about future dust storms, which follows effectively from the story line.

**Overall, this writer has done a good job creating a story line focused around the dust storm and developing the characters and events in an effective narrative.**

**File Name: N6P Black Mountains of Dust**

**Narrative**

**Grade 6**

**On-Demand Writing- Uniform Prompt**

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"Margaret come on we need to go now!"

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"Mom!" I screamed. "Mom!"

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"Yes Sweetie?" She said in a sweet voice, almost like honey.

"Is this going to happen ever again, this storm?" I asked my voice still thick with dust. She did not answer and I knew that she knew this wouldn't be the the last time the black mountains of dust attacked the plain states.

**File Name: N7R The Boy**

**Narrative**

**Grade 7**

**Range of Writing**

### **The Boy**

The young boy stood with the most menacing look he could muster spread across his face. He just stood there watching the endless columns stretch as far as the eye could see down the long, dusty road. The soldiers would turn and look as they went by, and he made sure to look right back. He made sure to stare as far as he could into the dark pupils of their eyes, as if it would raise the house that was now nothing more than a heap of ashes. Only a few charred remains of the walls were left.

As his eyes went from soldiers to remains he saw a small soft lump poking up from the ashes. He knew exactly what it was and he turned away. That teddy bear had been his favorite friend. Not a toy, it was more than a toy to him. For a second he was back on a green lawn, with the shutters of a house tapping softly on the window pane. And there was his bear. They waited for the next pirate ship to come around the bend in the road, so they could board it and make the captain walk the plank. But then he heard a shout and knew he was back on the dusty road with no green lawn and no shutters tapping softly.

He leaped down from his perch on an old dresser, one of the few things that hadn't been pillaged or burned in the fire. He bent down, putting both hands on his knees as his eyes searched the ground intently. He picked up the most deadly rock he could find and hopped back up on his perch to resume his watchful glare. No soldier escaped the watchful eyes as he probed them. The giant snake of blue tails was tapering off, and the boy

**Engages and orients the reader by establishing context for narrative to follow. Main character is introduced, the boy. The story will be told from his point of view, a limited third person**

**Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory details to capture the action and convey events: The writer subtly establishes both the setting and focus - the conflict the boy is dealing with.**

**Uses transitional clause to signal time shift back in time (flashback). Uses precise language to capture the memory the boy has of his life before the soldiers came**

**Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory details to capture the action and convey events, and to develop the character of the boy**

could now see the end of the tail. The boy once again hopped down from his perch. He could feel the sweat-covered rock in his palm. The last of the blue columns were passing.

The boy took a step forward and leaned back, then whipped his body forward and released the rock at the same moment. The boy heard a thud as the rock came home and the rear most soldier clutched his side and looked back – but all he saw were those hateful eyes with tears rolling forth.

**Provides a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated events:** The boy's "hateful eyes with tears rolling forth" are a comment on the events of the story—the boy is angry but helpless in the face of war.

For this narrative from a seventh-grade social studies class, the student was asked to write a story on the Civil War that focused on the effect of the war on one character at one moment in time. The writer effectively introduces a main character—a child whose home has been burned by the Yankees (“*the giant snake of blue tails*”) and relates events from his perspective.

The writer has organized a well-structured event sequence that unfolds naturally (though not in linear time order). To do this, he develops a structure that shifts the narrative from the main character’s present to a happier past, when the boy could play with his bear, and then back to the narrative present. He uses transitional clauses to signal this time shift. The writer uses precise words and phrases, sensory details, and some metaphoric language (“*giant snake of blue tails*”) to tell the story.

This narrative does not conclude in the traditional sense. The boy is left to throw a rock in helpless fury at the soldiers passing by. The lack of overt reflection is, in fact, an implied reflection on his helplessness in this war.

**File Name: N7R The Boy**

**Narrative**

**Grade 7**

**Range of Writing**

### **The Boy**

The young boy stood with the most menacing look he could muster spread across his face. He just stood there watching the endless columns stretch as far as the eye could see down the long, dusty road. The soldiers would turn and look as they went by, and he made sure to look right back. He made sure to stare as far as he could into the dark pupils of their eyes, as if it would raise the house that was now nothing more than a heap of ashes. Only a few charred remains of the walls were left.

As his eyes went from soldiers to remains he saw a small soft lump poking up from the ashes. He knew exactly what it was and he turned away. That teddy bear had been his favorite friend. Not a toy, it was more than a toy to him. For a second he was back on a green lawn, with the shutters of a house tapping softly on the window pane. And there was his bear. They waited for the next pirate ship to come around the bend in the road, so they could board it and make the captain walk the plank. But then he heard a shout and knew he was back on the dusty road with no green lawn and no shutters tapping softly.

He leaped down from his perch on an old dresser, one of the few things that hadn't been pillaged or burned in the fire. He bent down, putting both hands on his knees as his eyes searched the ground intently. He picked up the most deadly rock he could find and hopped back up on his perch to resume his watchful glare. No soldier escaped the watchful eyes as he probed them. The giant snake of blue tails was tapering off, and the boy could now see the end of the tail. The boy once again hopped down from his perch. He could feel the sweat-covered rock in his palm. The last of the blue columns were passing.

The boy took a step forward and leaned back, then whipped his body forward and released the rock at the same moment. The boy heard a thud as the rock came home and the rear most soldier clutched his side and looked back – but all he saw were those hateful eyes with tears rolling forth.

**File Name: N8P Daydreams of A Migrant Mother**

**Narrative**

**Grade 8**

**On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt**

**Daydreams of A Migrant Mother**

The cool afternoon wind brushed against my face. I watched as the kids played with a rabbit they had found in the woods. All around me the sounds of the camp faded in my mind. The sounds of babies crying turned to a soft wail. The yelling of the kids turned to quiet murmurs as I drifted into my mind.

For the past few weeks since we left Oklahoma, I've been worried. It's been really rough living on the road without a proper home and I just really want the best for my family. The kids have been going to a public school just two miles from where we'd been camping. They've told me that the kids have given them ugly looks and said awful things about them calling them "Okies" or saying they were retarded. I couldn't stand any of my kids having to go through this misfortune. I focused my vision on my two kids Annie and Joey. They were laughing and shoving some grass in the rabbit's mouth. I

**Engages and orients the reader by establishing a context for the narrative to follow and introducing a narrator and characters:**  
The struggle to live at a migrant camp is the central conflict of the narrative, which is told from the perspective / point of view of a first person narrator

**Uses transitional clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among events**

**Uses the narrative technique of reflection to develop events, as well as the character of the narrator**

didn't want them living like this but there was nothing I could do. I felt useless and weak.

The wind blew again and I went back to my daydreaming. My husband had been out for three days looking for any job available. We had planned to be at least in a home that put a roof over our heads but we accomplished nothing. Most of our close friends that had traveled with us already had a job and housing. The feeling bothered me. I looked around and saw some of the families huddled under their tents. I don't want to be like this anymore I thought. But yet again there was nothing I could do. Sometimes I felt angry with myself. As if I wasn't trying my hardest, but eventually it would just turn to sorrow.

**Uses precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to convey events**

**Uses the narrative technique of reflection to develop events, as well as the character of the narrator**

My thoughts were disrupted by Annie and Joey running up to me smiling. I looked down on them and smiled, wondering how lovely childhood must be with no worries.

"Ma, when are we going to eat, I'm starving?" asked Joey.

Even I didn't know the answer to that question, we had completely run out of food. I pondered on how I would say this to them. I gave up and just said, "I don't know Joey."

**Provides a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated events, the struggle to survive at the migrant camp**

**File Name: N8P Daydreams of A Migrant Mother**

**Narrative**

**Grade 8**

**On-Demand Writing - Uniform Prompt**

### **Daydreams of A Migrant Mother**

The cool afternoon wind brushed against my face. I watched as the kids played with a rabbit they had found in the woods. All around me the sounds of the camp faded in my mind. The sounds of babies crying turned to a soft wail. The yelling of the kids turned to quiet murmmurs as I drifted into my mind.

For the past few weeks since we left Oklahoma, I've been worried. It's been really rough living on the road without a proper home and I just really want the best for my family. The kids have been going to a public school just two miles from where we'd been camping. They've told me that the kids have given them ugly looks and said awful things about them calling them "Okies" or saying they were retarded. I couldn't stand any of my kids having to go through this misfortune. I focused my vision on my two kids Annie and Joey. They were laughing and shoving some grass in the rabbit's mouth. I didn't want them living like this but there was nothing I could do. I felt useless and weak.

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least in a home that put a roof over our heads but we accomplished nothing. Most of our close friends that had traveled with us already had a job and housing. The feeling bothered me. I looked around and saw some of the families huddled under their tents. I don't want to be like this anymore I thought. But yet again there was nothing I could do. Sometimes I felt angry with myself. As if I wasn't trying my hardest, but eventually it would just turn to sorrow.

My thoughts were disrupted by Annie and Joey running up to me smiling. I looked down on them and smiled, wondering how lovely childhood must be with no worries.

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Even I didn't know the answer to that question, we had completely run out of food. I pondered on how I would say this to them. I gave up and just said, "I don't know Joey."

# PARCC WRITING RUBRICS

[https://prc.parcconline.org/system/files/Grade6-11-ELA-LiteracyScoringRubric-July2015\\_0.pdf](https://prc.parcconline.org/system/files/Grade6-11-ELA-LiteracyScoringRubric-July2015_0.pdf)

## GRADES 6-11 (July 2015)

### PARCC SCORING RUBRIC FOR PROSE CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEMS

#### Research Simulation Task and Literary Analysis Task

Construct Measured	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
Reading Comprehension and Written Expression	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates <b>full</b> comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and inferentially by providing an <b>accurate</b> analysis;</li> <li>addresses the prompt and provides <b>effective and comprehensive</b> development of the claim or topic that is <b>consistently appropriate</b> to task, purpose, and audience;</li> <li>uses <b>clear</b> reasoning supported by <b>relevant</b> text-based evidence in the development of the claim or topic;</li> <li>is <b>effectively</b> organized with <b>clear and coherent</b> writing;</li> <li>establishes and maintains an <b>effective</b> style.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a <b>mostly accurate</b> analysis;</li> <li>addresses the prompt and provides <b>mostly effective</b> development of claim or topic that is <b>mostly appropriate</b> to task, purpose, and audience;</li> <li>uses <b>mostly clear</b> reasoning supported by <b>relevant</b> text-based evidence in the development of the claim or topic;</li> <li>is organized with <b>mostly clear and coherent</b> writing;</li> <li>establishes and maintains a <b>mostly effective</b> style.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates <b>basic</b> comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a <b>generally accurate</b> analysis;</li> <li>addresses the prompt and provides <b>some</b> development of claim or topic that is <b>somewhat appropriate</b> to task, purpose, and audience;</li> <li>uses <b>some</b> reasoning and text-based evidence in the development of the claim or topic;</li> <li>demonstrates <b>some</b> organization with <b>somewhat coherent</b> writing;</li> <li>has a style that is <b>somewhat effective</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates <b>limited</b> comprehension of ideas stated explicitly and/or inferentially by providing a <b>minimally accurate</b> analysis;</li> <li>addresses the prompt and provides <b>minimal</b> development of claim or topic that is <b>limited in its appropriateness</b> to task, purpose, and audience;</li> <li>uses <b>limited</b> reasoning and text-based evidence;</li> <li>demonstrates <b>limited</b> organization and coherence;</li> <li>has a style that is <b>minimally effective</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates <b>no</b> comprehension of ideas by providing an <b>inaccurate</b> or <b>no</b> analysis;</li> <li>is <b>undeveloped and/or inappropriate</b> to task, purpose, and audience;</li> <li>includes little to no text-based evidence;</li> <li><b>lacks</b> organization and coherence;</li> <li>has an <b>inappropriate</b> style.</li> </ul>
Knowledge of Language and Conventions		<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>full command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a <b>few minor errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>some command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>occasionally impede understanding</b>, but the meaning is generally clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>limited command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>often impede understanding</b>.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt <b>does not demonstrate command</b> of the conventions of standard English at the appropriate level of complexity. <b>Frequent and varied errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage <b>impede understanding</b>.</p>

### Narrative Task (NT)

Construct Measured	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
Written Expression	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is <b>effectively</b> developed with narrative elements and is <b>consistently appropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li>is <b>effectively</b> organized with <b>clear and coherent</b> writing;</li> <li>establishes and maintains an <b>effective</b> style.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is <b>mostly effectively</b> developed with narrative elements and is <b>mostly appropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li>is organized with <b>mostly clear and coherent</b> writing;</li> <li>establishes and maintains a <b>mostly effective</b> style.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is developed with <b>some</b> narrative elements and is <b>generally appropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li>demonstrates <b>some</b> organization with <b>somewhat coherent</b> writing;</li> <li>has a style that is <b>somewhat effective</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is <b>minimally</b> developed with <b>few</b> narrative elements and is <b>limited in its appropriateness</b> to the task;</li> <li>demonstrates <b>limited</b> organization and coherence;</li> <li>has a style that has <b>limited effectiveness</b>.</li> </ul>	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is <b>undeveloped and/or inappropriate</b> to the task;</li> <li><b>lacks</b> organization and coherence;</li> <li>has an <b>inappropriate</b> style.</li> </ul>
Knowledge of Language and Conventions		<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>full command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a <b>few minor errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but <b>meaning is clear</b>.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>some command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>occasionally impede understanding</b>, but the <b>meaning is generally clear</b>.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates <b>limited command</b> of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that <b>often impede understanding</b>.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt <b>does not demonstrate command</b> of the conventions of standard English at the appropriate level of complexity. <b>Frequent and varied errors</b> in mechanics, grammar, and usage <b>impede understanding</b>.</p>

**NOTE:**

- The reading dimension is not scored for elicited narrative stories.
- The elements of coherence, clarity, and cohesion to be assessed are expressed in the grade-level standards 1-4 for writing.
- Tone is not assessed in grade 6.
- Per the CCSS, narrative elements in grades 3-5 may include: establishing a situation, organizing a logical event sequence, describing scenes, objects or people, developing characters' personalities, and using dialogue as appropriate. In grades 6-8, narrative elements may include, in addition to the grades 3-5 elements, establishing a context, situating events in a time and place, developing a point of view, developing characters' motives. In grades 9-11, narrative elements may include, in addition to the grades 3-8 elements, outlining step-by-step procedures, creating one or more points of view, and constructing event models of what happened. The elements to be assessed are expressed in grade-level standards 3 for writing.

A response is considered unscorable if it cannot be assigned a score based on the rubric criteria. For unscorable student responses, one of the following condition codes will be applied.

**Coded Responses:**

- A=No response
- B=Response is unintelligible or undecipherable
- C=Response is not written in English
- D=Off-topic
- E=Refusal to respond
- F=Don't understand/know

