

**Mini Grant
Writing Ideas, Strategies,
and Tips for the Adult
Education Classroom
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Rationale for Mini Grant: Writing Ideas, Strategies, and Tips for the Adult Education Classroom

In preparing for this mini grant, I thought of my students that I work with personally and the difficulty that they face when having to write the essay on the GED. Many of them struggle with understanding the prompt, generating ideas, and formulating ideas that are coherent and applicable to the topic. Many students have difficulty in formulating the ideas of a topic sentence and its supporting details. It is difficult to watch students who need to pass the GED essay struggle with this aspect.

It is the hope of this mini grant to support teachers in any area of adult education, whether it is pre-GED, ABE, ESOL, or Adult High School Diploma. This mini grant is not just for any particular group or teacher of a practical topic~it is for all teachers who have students write in their classes.

Writing is critical to functioning in society, whether it is in academic domains such as school, or in every day life, such as grocery lists. The goal of the mini grant is to get students to write and to see themselves as writers, despite what they see in themselves as the inability to write or to ever become a writer.

Our students have to write in every facet of their life, whether it is for work, for personal, or for hopefully, pleasure. Writing is an integral skill that all learners need to possess, and we need to help them along their journey of becoming writers.

In beginning to write this mini grant, I had many ideas about how I wanted to go about doing it. I have text books with writing strategies and I have ideas that I have gleaned from my experience. I did an internet search regarding this topic, and there is a plethora of information available. I took the liberty to copy and paste many wonderful ideas that I found helpful from the internet and place them directly into the mini grant so that

over time, the useful information is not lost if a website changes or ends.

This mini grant is divided into several parts:

- How to Write an Essay: Pages 4-15
- Common Mistakes: Pages 16-28
- Essay Topics: Pages 29-60
- Writing Strategies for the Adult Education Classroom: Pages 61-94
- Recommended Websites: Pages 95-96
- References: Page 97

This mini grant was a pleasure for me to write, and helpful to me as well. I look forward to sharing these ideas with my students.

How to Write an Essay

Introduction to an Essay

When beginning an essay, the writer must have an introductory paragraph. Within the introductory paragraph, the writer must also have a thesis statement, which is a statement that the writer will use to tell the reader what the essay will be about. A well written introductory paragraph will also contain a "transitional hook" which will move the reader to the first paragraph of the body of the essay.

Introductory paragraphs should accomplish two tasks:

1. They should get the reader's interest so that he or she will want to read more.
2. They should let the reader know what the writing is going to be about.

When writing a thesis statement, the writer will compose a sentence or two in his or her text that contains the focus of his or her essay and tells his or her reader what the essay is going to be about.

According to writing research, many writers like to compare a thesis statement to an umbrella; everything that you carry along in your essay has to fit under this umbrella, and if you try to take on packages that don't fit, you will either have to get a bigger umbrella or something's going to get wet.

Good writing avoids announcing the thesis statement. Avoid using phrases such as "The purpose of this paper is . . ." or "In this paper, I will attempt to . . ." According to writing research, "such phrases betray the paper to be the work of an amateur". The thesis statement is also a good test for the scope of intent. Lastly, the thesis statement needs to be narrowed and focused to allow the writer to do justice to his or her essay.

The thesis statement should remain flexible until the paper is actually finished. It ought to be one of the last things that is considered in the rewriting process.

To summarize, an introductory paragraph should contain an opening paragraph that sets the tone of the paper. The writing should be in the active voice. Sentence structure should vary and supporting ideas need to be contained within the introductory paragraph to support the main thesis statement.

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/intros.htm>

Body of an Essay

Body — First paragraph

The first paragraph of the body should contain the strongest argument, most significant example, cleverest illustration, or an obvious beginning point. The first sentence of this paragraph should include the "reverse hook" which ties in with the transitional hook at the end of the introductory paragraph. The topic for this paragraph should be in the first or second sentence. This topic should relate to the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. The last sentence in this paragraph should include a transitional hook to tie into the second paragraph of the body.

Body — Second paragraph

The second paragraph of the body should contain the second strongest argument, second most significant example, second cleverest illustration, or an obvious follow up the first paragraph in the body. The first sentence of this paragraph should include the reverse hook which ties in with the transitional hook at the end of the first paragraph of the body. The topic for this paragraph should be in the first or second sentence. This topic should relate to the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. The last sentence in this paragraph should include a transitional hook to tie into the third paragraph of the body.

Body — Third paragraph

The third paragraph of the body should contain the weakest argument, weakest example, weakest illustration, or an obvious follow up to the second paragraph in the body. The first sentence of this paragraph should include the reverse hook which ties in with the transitional hook at the end of the second paragraph. The topic for this paragraph should be in the first or second sentence. This topic should relate to the thesis statement in the introductory paragraph. The last sentence in

this paragraph should include a transitional concluding hook that signals the reader that this is the final major point being made in this paper. This hook also leads into the last, or concluding, paragraph.

Conclusion of an Essay

Concluding paragraph

This paragraph should include the following:

- An allusion to the pattern used in the introductory paragraph.

- A restatement of the thesis statement, using some of the original language or language that "echoes" the original language. The restatement, however, must not be a duplicate thesis statement.

- A summary of the three main points from the body of the paper.

- A final statement that gives the reader signals that the discussion has come to an end. This final statement may be a "call to action" in a persuasive paper.

http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/five_par.htm

The Final Steps to Writing an Essay

- **Edit and revise your essay**

- **Check your spelling and grammar**
Subjects and verbs agree, and verb tenses are consistent

- **Examine your whole essay for logic**
Thought builds and flows?
Avoid gaps in logic, or too much detail.

- **Review individual sentences**

- **Use active verbs to be more descriptive**
Avoid passive constructions and the verb "to be"

- **Use transitional words and phrases**
Avoid sentences beginning with pronouns, constructions as "There are....,"
Example: "There is a need to proofread all works"
becomes "Proofreading is a must."

- **Be concise** though vary the length and structure of sentences

<http://www.studygs.net/fiveparag.htm>

Essay Writing Tips-4 Key Areas

"Faultless writing is a sophisticated and laborious art, which needs special skills and a lot of attention."

Vocabulary

It is no secret that in order to write a successful essay, it is necessary to possess a vast word stock and know how to make use of it in the proper way.

The following checklist enumerates the vocabulary errors, which often occur in writing and can be used for essay proofreading:

- When writing an essay, pay special attention to homonyms, homographs and homophones; the most widely occurred errors include such words as *here/hear*, *hole/whole*, *its/it's*, *know/no*, *knew/new*, *desert* as a noun/*desert* as a verb and *dessert*, *to/too/two*, *they're/their/there*, *through/threw*.
- Adjectives ending in *-ed* and *-ing* (e.g. *boring* vs. *bored*, *frightening* vs. *frightened*, *interesting* vs. *interested*) are another common vocabulary mistake: while writing, pay special attention to such adjectives and use *-ed* if they denote a state and *-ing* in case they denote a quality.
- There are also words in English which are not homonyms, but are similar in spelling, sound and meaning, so, such errors are not even identified by computer spell checkers. Among them there are: *accept* as a verb and *except* as a preposition, *advice* as a noun and *advise* as a verb with the meaning *to recommend*, *affect* as a verb and *effect* as noun with the meaning *result* and as a verb with the

meaning to *bring about*, *loose* as an adjective and *lose* as a verb, *than* as a conjunction and *then* as an adverb, *sense* as a noun and *since* as an adverb, *quiet* as an adjective, *quit* as a verb and *quite* as an adverb. In order to solve the problem of often confused words, keep a record of them and always pay special attention to the words from your list while writing an essay.

Although the vocabulary errors occur quite often and are not easy to spot, being aware of them will definitely help you improve your writing.

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/writing-tips/essay-writing-tips-on-vocabulary.html>

Stylistics

Following stylistic requirements and rules is of the highest importance in writing. Unfortunately, students usually consider it as unimportant and do not pay enough attention to this aspect.

- Avoid contractions and non-standard words

- Avoid too long sentences

- Avoid very short sentences

- Avoid archaic words and sentence structures

- Try to be realistic
- Get rid of unnecessary repetitions

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/writing-tips/essay-writing-tips-on-stylistics.html>

Punctuation

English system of punctuation is rather complicated and hard to understand for an average student. However, it influences greatly the essay's comprehension by its reader and the correct understanding of our ideas.

Use this checklist to ensure correct punctuation:

- Use a **question mark** only at the end of a direct question; all indirect questions require a period at the end.
- **Exclamation points** can serve two different purposes: they either indicate an emotionally colored sentence, or make it stand out for emphatic purposes; however, using too many exclamation points can produce an impression similar to the one as if you were shouting.
- **Hyphen** is often used to link parts of compound words, but it is worth mentioning that not all compound words are hyphenated. In the modern American English, hyphen tends to be used more and more seldom, so always check the correct form with a recent dictionary.

- Use **apostrophe** for contractions, but pay attention to the correct placement, as it is usually used instead of the omitted vowel.

- Use **commas** to join clauses of a compound sentence, to separate each item in a list when listing more than two items, to single out all forms of appositions, to single out the phrases in an unusual syntactic position and to set off all the parenthetical words and phrases.

- Use **commas** to separate non-defining relative clauses, which can be omitted without destroying the meaning of the sentence.

- Use **commas** to separate numbers of four and more digits, days, months and years in a date.

- Use **comma with inverted commas** to separate quoted matter from the rest of the sentence.

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/writing-tips/essay-writing-tips-on-punctuation.html>

Grammar

Mastering grammar is one of the most difficult tasks for any student.

The most important tip for correct grammar in essay is simple: use the structures that you are one hundred percent sure of.

The following checklist will help you focus on the key grammar areas while checking your essay:

- **Simple sentence:** check your sentences for both the subject and the predicate; make sure simple sentences are not introduced by a subordinate clause connector.
- **Complex sentence:** when a subject comes before an adjective clause, do not add an extra subject after the adjective clause (Ex. *The essay he wrote yesterday **it** was a real success*); when a noun clause is the subject, do not add an extra subject after a noun clause (Ex. *What was done **it** left much to be desired*).
- **Subject-predicate agreement:** subjects agree with predicates in number; a compound subject needs a plural verb.
- **Countable and uncountable nouns:** always check countable singular nouns for determiners; check uncountable nouns, as they can be singular or plural (Ex. *news, goods*).
- Be careful **not to use adverbs instead of adjectives and vice versa:** remember that *-ly* suffix is not always an adverbial marker.
- **Use correct capitalization:** use the initial capital letter for the names of individuals, institutions, historical events,

days, months and holidays; capitalize words like mother and father, when they are used with a proper name.

- **Pay attention to comparative and superlative forms** and try to avoid double forms (Ex. *Your ideas are **more deeper** now.*)

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/writing-tips/essay-writing-tips-on-grammar.html>

Common Mistakes

According to writing research, essay writing may seem to be a trivial task that does not require a lot of expertise and may be performed by anyone who has at least a basic understanding of principles along which the English language works; however, this assumption ends when one encounters an actual necessity of writing an essay – the task turns out to be much more difficult, than it seemed to be.

Content Mistakes in Essay Writing

- Never write an essay, in which the content does not reflect and develop the real topic.

- Never write an essay without an introduction.

- Never write an essay without a thesis.

- Never write a thesis statement that you will fail to develop due to the lack of ideas.

- Never use ideas which you cannot prove with examples.

- Never write an essay without a conclusion.

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/common-mistakes/content-mistakes-in-essay-writing.html>

Vocabulary Mistakes in Essay Writing

Writing a good essay can be a challenging task. In order to succeed, you need an ability to develop your ideas logically, use correct grammar and make appropriate stylistic references.

The four most common types of vocabulary mistakes are:

1. Misuse of homonyms.

Homonyms are words that sound the same, but differ in meaning, spelling and usage. While writing, we can easily confuse such words and, as a result, the reader will fail to understand the idea. Typical homonyms which are often misused are *here vs. hear, hole vs. whole, its vs. it's, know vs. no, knew vs. new*, etc.

2. Confused words.

Apart from homonyms, there are words which are similar in spelling, sound and meaning and, thus, are often confused. Such words as *accept – except, affect – effect, loose – lose, quite – quit – quiet, then – than* will not be identified by a computer spell checker. So, it is important to proofread your essay carefully in order to make sure you have used the correct words.

3. Wrong word forms.

When we write quickly, we can also make a mistake in writing a word form, different from what we were actually going to write. This is especially true about parts of speech reference. For example, it is a common mistake to write a verb instead of an adjective, which can considerably change the meaning (e.g. *disable people* instead of *disabled people*).

4. **Nonstandard vocabulary.**

Another important point, which is actually on the borderline between a stylistic and a vocabulary error, is the use of nonstandard words like *wanna*, *gonna*, *kinda*. Although they are generally understood by the reader, when used in academic writing, they produce an unfavorable impression and must be avoided.

In order to eliminate such mistakes, use the following strategies:

- **Plan your time effectively:** do not spend too much time for the preparation stage; this will mean you have very little time for the writing process itself, which can make you nervous and inattentive.

- **Always proofread your writing**, paying special attention to the key problem areas.

- If possible, **revise your writing** several days after you have written the first version, and if possible, find a person who will read your essay for you.

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/common-mistakes/vocabulary-mistakes-in-essay-writing.html>

Stylistic Mistakes in Essay Writing

The most commonly observed stylistic problems are as follows:

1. **Word repetition.**

The problem of word repetition usually results from the desire of a student to emphasize a certain idea. However,

using the same lexical sets can make your essay look boring and childish. A good way out in this case is to use synonyms. Another effective technique is to use word substitutes like *one*, *the former*, *the latter*, etc. to avoid repetition of the same nouns.

2. Inappropriate words and phrases, which are either too formal or too informal.

The problem of creating a stylistically inappropriate piece of writing is mainly accounted for the fact that students tend to forget that an academic essay requires a totally different layer of vocabulary, than the one we use in our everyday life. In order to make your essay sound good, avoid using slangish expressions and nonstandard verb forms, like *gotta*, *wanna*, etc. However, it is equally important not to use the constructions and vocabulary, characteristic of other more formal styles. Keep the balance and consult a good dictionary if you are not sure.

3. Too many passive structures.

Many students see the passive voice as an indispensable prerequisite of the academic style. It is certainly true up to a point, as it makes your sentences sound more impersonal and objective. However, passive sentences are usually longer, harder to read and, thus, can hinder understanding of the text. On the contrary, active sentences are clearer and more direct. So, in order to create a powerful piece of writing, use both types, but make sure you use not more than 20% of passive constructions and only in the cases when the emphasis is on the action, receiver, or result, you do not know who performed the action or it is of minor importance and in case you want to sound objective.

4. **Too long or too short sentences.**

The problem of using too long or too short sentences has a lot to do with the way you convey your ideas to the reader. If a sentence is too bulky, it can easily absorb your idea and make it difficult to perceive. On the contrary, if the sentences are too short, they destroy the logical development of the idea and make your writing sound choppy and incomplete. Use a combination and variety of long and short sentences.

5. **Sentences beginning with coordinating conjunctions.**

Another common problem for many students is inappropriate use of coordinate conjunctions (Ex. *and, but, as, or, yet, for, etc.*). They are mainly used to coordinate, join ideas within the same sentence. Sometimes they can also be used to begin a sentence. However, when the text has too many coordinating conjunctions in the beginning of the sentence, there is lack of smooth connections and links between the sentences.

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/common-mistakes/stylistic-mistakes-in-essay-writing.html>

Mistakes in Structure

An essay is an established form of academic writing that has long history and tradition of structuring and formatting. That is why there exist strict rules along which every type of essay is supposed to be written. Without limiting the creativity of the writer, it makes it easier to organize one's thoughts.

Structural Mistakes in Essay Writing

A successful essay is supposed to be well-structured both at the level of sentence and at the level of text. Thus, the most common structural mistakes can be subdivided into those which refer to the sentence structure and those which influence the structure of the whole essay.

Sentence Errors

The most typical mistakes of the first type are *fragments* and *run-on sentences*.

Fragment is an incomplete structure, which does not contain a subject-predicate unit, and, thus, does not express an idea properly, despite beginning with a capital letter and ending with a punctuation mark. Fragments cannot function in the text on their own and must be either added to a complete sentence or rewritten in the way there is a proper subject-predicate unit in them.

WRONG:

Difficult to develop an idea.

RIGHT:

Many students can find it difficult to develop an idea.

It is certainly difficult to develop an idea properly.

Run-on sentences are sentences which consist of two subject-predicate units, joined together without a conjunction or any proper punctuation and, thus, being confusing for the reader. In order to correct a run-on sentence, you can divide it into two separate sentences, add a coordinating conjunction, or a subordinating one.

WRONG:

Good essay writing skills are important for achieving good academic results they are easy to develop.

RIGHT:

Good essay writing skills are important for achieving good academic results. They are easy to develop.

Good essay writing skills are important for achieving good academic results, yet they are easy to develop.

Text Structure Errors

The most common mistake in the text structure is poor paragraph division or its total absence. Although the issue of paragraphs seems to be relatively unimportant if compared to the issue of ideas, an essay, which does not have a clear text structure, will definitely fail to convey the meaning effectively.

Any essay must be organized in at least four paragraphs with the introduction, conclusion and two paragraphs of the main body.

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/common-mistakes/structural-mistakes-in-essay-writing.html>

Spelling Mistakes in Essay Writing

Many students complain that the English language boasts of the most unpredictable spelling in the world. However, numerous linguistic studies prove that it is actually not true: only about 400 words in English have the spelling that does not follow any rule. Of these 400 words, they are the most widely used and the rest of the rules must be learned by heart in order to write correctly.

Here are the most commonly used spelling rules:

- Usually write -i before -e (like in *friend*, *believe*, etc.); however, write -ei after -c (*receive*) and when it sounds like a (*weight*, *heir*, etc.).
- If a word ends in a silent -e, drop it before adding a suffix starting with a vowel (*bite* – *biting*) and use it when the suffix starts with a consonant (*use* – *useful*).
- When a word ends in -y preceded by a consonant, change -y into -i before adding a suffix (*beauty* – *beautiful*, *try* – *tried*).
- When a word ends in one vowel and one consonant, double the final consonant when adding a suffix (*swim* – *swimmer*).

Another important consideration in trying to achieve an ideal spelling is to avoid typos – mistakes that we make when typing. The most common way to deal with the problem is to use a spell check function on your computer. However, this is not enough, as there are certain mistakes that the spell checker will not identify. This mainly happens when the word is spelled correctly, but is used instead of its homophone (Ex. *Learn the rule and right correctly*).

These mistakes can only be spotted if you read your essay carefully after you have finished it. For the best result, you can ask somebody to read your essay, or at least read it the next day after you have finished it.

Another tip for improving your spelling is to keep record of the words that you usually misspell and practice writing them from time to time. Then check your essay for these words specifically.

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/common-mistakes/spelling-mistakes-in-essay-writing.html>

Mistakes in Punctuation

Punctuation may seem to be a rather unimportant and not very conspicuous part of academic writing, and sometimes it is true – it is harder to notice an incorrectly placed comma, than a blatant spelling mistake. But, still it does not create a good impression on the reader.

Punctuation Mistakes in Essay Writing

Although punctuation is of utmost importance for successful writing, using punctuation marks correctly is probably the most neglected writing skill. The **most common mistakes** in terms of punctuation can be divided into those referring to the use of apostrophe, comma and hyphen:

1. Use an **apostrophe** when writing a contraction and pay attention to its place in a word. However, it is worth mentioning that contractions are not common in formal style in general.

WRONG

Lets take care of our planet.

We could'nt get there on time.

RIGHT

Let's take care of our planet.

We couldn't get there on time.

2. Use an **apostrophe** to form the possessive case of nouns and mind its position for singular nouns (before -s) and plural nouns (after -s).

3. Use a **comma and a conjunction** to join clauses of a compound sentence: *The ideas are important for a successful essay, yet they can be totally destroyed if the grammar is poor.*

4. **Comma** is used to separate information attached to the beginning or the end of sentence if this position is syntactically unusual.

WRONG

Many years ago the experiment was carried out.

RIGHT

*Many years ago, the experiment was carried out.
The experiment was carried out many years ago.*

5. **Comma** is necessary between each item of a list when you are enumerating three or more items in a sentence: *Grammar, vocabulary, style, and original ideas are important components of an essay.*

6. Use a **comma** to separate epithets used before a noun they describe: *It was a challenging, time-consuming task.*

7. Use **commas** to single out appositions, parenthetical words and constructions and non-defining relative clauses.

*Her father, Professor Johns, was a famous scientist.
A first year student, who knows very little about the routine of a university life, can face many problems.
And, last but not least, remember to meet the deadline.*

8. **Commas** set off quoted phrase from the one that introduces it: As a famous poet once said, "He who is tired of London is tired of life."

9. In written American English, **commas** are also used to set off numbers in groups of three digits, words for the day of the week, month and year of a date.

*The total company's turnover is \$5,000,000.
The paper is due Monday, December, 7th, 2010.*

10. Use **hyphens** with compound adjectives and numbers (Ex. *time-consuming, twenty-one, etc.*) and prefixes *self-, ex-, great-* (Ex. *self-efficient, ex-president*).

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/common-mistakes/punctuation-mistakes-in-essay-writing.html>

Mistakes in Grammar

Grammar is an important element of any piece of academic writing and there is hardly anything that deteriorates the overall

impression of otherwise brilliant essay, than a grammar mistake sticking out of the smooth pattern of text.

Grammar Mistakes in Essay Writing

It somehow goes without saying that a successful essay must be grammatically correct. However, grammar mistakes are one of the most frequent reasons why many students fail to perform the task.

The most common grammar mistakes can be roughly divided into five groups:

1. **Noun form mistakes.**

Correct noun forms are of utmost importance, as nouns can perform functions of both subject and object. Key grammar areas, studying of which will help you succeed, are countable and uncountable nouns, plural forms and the use of determiners with singular nouns.

2. **Verb form mistakes.**

The main grammar rules to remember, when it comes to verb form mistakes, are those, related to the place of auxiliary verbs in sentence, usage of state verbs, meanings of the modals and the correct use of infinitive.

3. **Subject-predicate agreement.**

The subject-predicate agreement in English seems to be easy: subject and predicate must always agree in number. But despite this simplicity, the grammar point can present considerable difficulty. First, it is important to pay attention to the cases with a compound subject, which can be introduced by the words *both*, *neither*, etc., and still acquire the plural predicate. Second, in the American English, unlike British English and many other European languages, collective nouns take a singular predicate.

4. **Pronouns.**

Pronouns are a part of speech that can perform functions of a noun and, therefore, are used very often. Pronouns must necessarily agree with the nouns they refer to, and it is important to remember that some indefinite pronouns can be only plural or only singular, but some of them can be both depending on the situation. It is also important to bear in mind that if there are two nouns joined by a conjunction, a pronoun that refers to them must also agree in number correctly. Always make sure that you do not use pronouns excessively, as it may be confusing.

5. **Forms of expressing possession.**

When considering the forms of expressing possession, it is important to agree the possessive pronoun with the noun it refers to in number and not to use an apostrophe with it. However, when using the possessive case of a noun, the rules of using the apostrophe and an -s (-'s) must be strictly observed, so make sure you put it in the right place and only when it is necessary.

So, in order to avoid the mistakes, after you have finished your essay, proofread it and use the following checklist:

- Are all the uncountable nouns in singular?
- Have I used correct determiners with singular countable nouns?
- Have I used correct auxiliaries and modal verbs?
- Does the subject agree with the predicate in person and number in all the sentences?
- Are there any pronouns which do not agree with nouns?
- Have I used the possessive forms correctly?

<http://www.essay-writing-tips.com/common-mistakes/grammar-mistakes-in-essay-writing.html>

Essay Topics

What does it take to be a good parent? In your essay, describe the characteristics of a good parent. Give specific details to explain your views. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge.

<http://www.unm.edu/~tinan/writing/topicA.htm>

What has been the happiest day of your life so far? In your essay, tell what made it so wonderful. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge.

<http://www.unm.edu/~tinan/writing/topicB.htm>

Today our workplaces and neighborhoods are composed of people of diverse backgrounds. For this reason, it is important for people to find ways to get along with each other. Write an essay explaining how people of diverse backgrounds can get along better.

<http://www.unm.edu/~tinan/writing/topicC.htm>

How do you define success? In your essay, describe what it means to be successful. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge.

<http://www.unm.edu/~tinan/writing/topicD.htm>

It is difficult to make changes in one's life. Do you agree with this statement? State your view in an essay. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge.

<http://www.unm.edu/~tinan/writing/topicE.htm>

What has been the best period in your life, and why? Write an essay of about 200 words describing the time of your life when you were the happiest, and explain why you were happiest then. (You may choose to write about the present.)

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

Most people feel that they have "learned some lessons" in their life. They may have made some mistakes that taught them something. What is one thing you have learned from your past? What would you do differently if you could? Remember to be specific.

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

Think of something you really like doing (a hobby, sport, and so on...). Write an essay of 200 words explaining why you enjoy this activity and how you benefit from it. Give examples and be specific.

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

What do you think the most serious problem in the world is? Why? Write an essay explaining what you think, and give specific examples and reasons.

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

Choose an important person that you have looked up to and who has helped you in your life. In a 200 word essay explain who this person is, why you look up to her (him) and how the person has helped you. Be specific and give examples.

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

If you were given one million dollars to spend, how would you spend it? You cannot use it for yourself, family members, or friends. Discuss your ideas in an essay of 200 words. Support your ideas with reasons and examples.

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

Many people believe you cannot learn everything in school. Some say that experience is the best teacher. What is more important to a person's education: things learned in school or through real life experiences? Write a 200 word essay

answering this question. Be specific and give examples to support your view.

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

What are your reasons for returning to school this year? In an essay of 200 words discuss your reasons for coming back to school. How will what you expect to learn benefit you?

<http://abeged.com/essaytopics.html>

What are the essential characteristics of a good parent?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

If your doctor told you that you had only a few months left to live, how would you change your way of life?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

Is there too large of an emphasis placed on grades in our educational system?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

The automobile is an invention that has done irreparable harm to our environment. How do you think that the social and economic benefits provided by the automobile compare with the damage it has wrought?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

In general, do movies and television provide a realistic picture of American life?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

Why do you think that radio continues to be popular in the age of television?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

If you could choose to live in a different historical time period, in America or another country, which one would you pick and why?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

The term "human rights" is used frequently in daily conversation, but much less frequently defined. What rights do you think should belong to every human being?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

If you could change one thing about your childhood, what would it be and why?

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

Television is detrimental to the well-being of today's youth. Every time I see young people passing their time watching television, I feel that they are setting themselves up to have significantly emptier lives. If we unplugged our televisions, our children would grow up to be healthier, happier, more productive human beings. Do you agree or disagree with the above statement? Write a 250 word essay that presents your opinion (whether it supports or disagrees with the statement) and support it with examples from your own experience, things you have read, or your observations of others.

<http://www.gedforfree.com/free-ged-course/language-arts/sample-essay-questions.html>

Our personalities are greatly influenced by our environment. In your essay, identify an important characteristic of your personality and explain how the environment has helped to shape this characteristic. Use your personal observations, experience, and knowledge.

http://highered.mcgraw-hill.com/sites/0809222280/student_view0/ged_practice_test_pt_ii.html

The following writing ideas come from the website:

<http://www2.gsu.edu/~wwwrtp/topics.htm>

Discuss the influence that advertising has had on your life or the lives of your friends.

If you were asked to make a fair evaluation of your teachers, what criteria would you use for the evaluation? Discuss.

If your doctor told you that you had only a few months to live, how would you alter your way of life? Discuss.

Name someone you consider to be a modern hero or heroine and explain why.

Each year, many teenagers run away from home. What do you think are the chief causes?

Explain why you would or would not want to live in a large city.

Should every able-bodied citizen be required to serve for a certain period of time in some branch of the military service? Why or why not?

How does your public image differ from your private self?

If you were an employer, under what circumstances would you fire an employee? Explain.

Should sex education be taught in public schools? Why or why not?

What are the essential characteristics of an effective leader? Discuss.

Do you think that sports help develop good character? Discuss.

Explain the chief reasons why students drop out of high school.

Is romantic love a good basis for marriage? Discuss.

Should children be disciplined by physical punishment? Discuss.

Discuss one cause for which you would be willing to risk your life.

Are spectator sports overemphasized in this country today? Discuss.

Discuss the most important characteristics an elected official should have.

Do you long for the past or look eagerly toward the future? Explain.

Has credit buying affected your way of life? Explain.

What changes would occur in your way of life if you were forced to live in a cash economy?

Was giving eighteen-year-olds the right to vote a mistake? Discuss.

If you could have a conversation with a famous person (living or dead), whom would you choose? Discuss.

Discuss some practical ways in which each of us can help to conserve natural resources.

What steps need to be taken in order to reduce crime? Explain.

Do you believe that violence in television programs leads to violence in our society? Explain.

Explain why you do or do not vote.

Discuss what could be done to increase the public's respect for police officers.

In your opinion, what invention or discovery has brought about the most far-reaching and lasting changes in our civilization? Explain.

If you had the power to change any event in history (outcome of an election, who won a war, etc.), which would you choose to change, and why?

What characteristics do you regard as important in a person you would choose as a friend?

Should both parents assume equal responsibility in child rearing? Explain why or why not.

Should court proceedings be televised? Explain why or why not.

"American family life would be more stable if parents, not the couples involved, arranged the marriages of their children." Agree or disagree.

Is there any job that you would absolutely refuse to take? Explain.

Should government employees such as police officers and fire fighters have the right to strike? Discuss.

Research indicates that you and your friends are likely to have fewer children than your parents and grandparents. What do you think are reasons for this? Explain.

Should smoking in public places be illegal? Explain why or why not.

"Professional athletes and entertainers are among the highest paid people in this country – and justifiably so." Agree or disagree.

If you were to be deprived of one of your five senses (sight, touch, smell, taste, and hearing) which one would you most hate to give up? Explain.

Would you prefer to raise a family in the city or the country? Explain why.

In general, do movies and/or television programs provide a realistic picture of life in America? Explain.

Some states now permit single men and women to adopt children. Do you favor such a policy? Explain why or why not.

Should college students be required to attend classes? Discuss.

For what qualities or achievements would you feel justified in calling an individual successful? Explain.

Various commentators have suggested that no person should serve more than twelve years in either the U.S. Senate or the U.S. House of Representatives. Discuss.

Why do you believe radio has continued to be popular in the age of television? Discuss.

What do you think are the major causes of divorce? Explain.

Choose a profession whose members make a worthwhile contribution to society and discuss the benefits that society receives from members of this profession.

What, in your opinion, are some of the reasons so many people have pets? Discuss.

Do you prefer shopping at a large shopping center or at downtown stores? Discuss.

Apart from chronological age, what are some major differences between an adolescent and an adult? Explain.

Should women in the military services be assigned combat duties? Discuss.

What do you think would be the consequences of the legalization of marijuana? Explain.

Does our society allow women to assume masculine roles more readily than it allows males to assume roles traditionally called feminine? Discuss.

If you were made the programming director of a major television network, what changes in the programming would you make? Explain.

If you could live in some other historical period, which would you choose, and why?

Should fathers be given the same chance as mothers to gain custody of their minor children? Discuss.

We now have more people over 65 than at any other time. What are the major effects of this increased proportion of older people? Discuss.

Should victims of crime be compensated? Explain.

Do you function best in the morning, afternoon, or evening? Explain.

What do you think are the major effects of divorce upon children? Discuss.

It has been proposed that American presidents be elected for one six-year term and not be eligible for reelection. Do you agree with this proposal? Discuss.

Do you favor decreased spending for national defense? Why or why not?

Watching the "soaps" has become an American pastime. Why are these television shows so popular?

In the United States, as a rule, are the punishments imposed appropriate to the crimes committed? Explain.

Would you like to be a candidate for public office? Why or why not?

If music reflects the mood of an age, what does current music say about America? Explain.

Are Americans too dependent on the automobile? Discuss.

What could be done to make the public less hesitant to report crime?

Do Americans seem unable to relax in their leisure time? Discuss.

"Human rights" is a term frequently used but seldom defined. What rights should belong to every human being? Discuss.

Should American students be required to learn a second language? Why or why not?

Do you or your family support public television (the educational channels) either as viewers or contributors? Why or why not?

How do you account for the popularity of horror films? Discuss.

In what ways has the availability of fast-food restaurants affected your eating habits?

What do you hope to accomplish within the next ten years? Explain.

If you could ban anything in the world, what would it be and why?

If you were awarded an expense-paid trip to any one place in the world, where would you go? Why?

What do you consider the most important event of the past decade? Why?

If you were guaranteed a steadily improving standard of living (in terms of buying power, free time, quality of goods and services, etc.), would you be willing to give up your right to vote? Explain.

Is anger ever beneficial? Explain.

How can the individual citizen reduce the probability of his or her home's being burglarized? Explain.

What are the most important skills and/or values that children learn from their parents? Explain.

Is it better for a political leader to be feared instead of loved? Why or why not?

What specific sacrifice or sacrifices would you endure as a partial solution to our country's economic problem? Discuss.

Most people consider themselves part of a particular generation. Discuss what you consider the most important values of your generation.

Should the government do more to discourage cigarette smoking? Why or why not?

"Manners belong to a bygone age; they are no longer relevant." Attack, defend, or modify.

Discuss the advantages and/or disadvantages of nuclear power as a source of energy.

Is marriage an outmoded institution in the United States?
Explain why or why not.

Is athletic competition good for children under twelve years old? Explain why or why not.

If you could make one scientific discovery in your lifetime, what would it be? Why?

Given all the evidence that cigarette smoking is harmful, why do people continue to smoke cigarettes? Discuss.

If the average life span were increased to 150 years, what major changes in society would you expect? Discuss.

What would cause you to end a friendship? Explain.

When we return to places we knew as children, we are often surprised at how different these places seem. Compare and/or contrast your impression of some place you knew as a child with your current impression of the same place.

Do you believe that banning certain books from public and school libraries is justified? Discuss.

Do high schools put too much emphasis on athletics? Discuss.

What would you place in a time-capsule to allow people opening the capsule 1,000 years from now to understand life today? Explain.

"Self-discipline is the most important ingredient for success."
Agree or disagree.

Describe a model physical fitness plan.

Should the custom of tipping be abolished? Explain why or why not.

"In the United States, we waste a great natural resource: the elderly." Agree or disagree.

Beauty contests, despite some criticism, are still very popular. In your opinion, what are the chief reasons for their popularity? Explain.

What are the chief causes of shoplifting? Discuss.

What can be done to prevent violence in public schools? Discuss.

Should law enforcement agencies be permitted to tap telephone lines? Explain.

If you could pass one law, what would it be? Why?

What do you consider to be your duties as a citizen? Discuss.

Should national and state governments set aside land for parks? Discuss.

Do you believe that it is the responsibility of the young to provide financial security for the aged? Why or why not?

Why are many people afraid of growing old? Discuss.

What can parents do to prepare their children for school? Discuss.

The changes brought on by the women's movement are typically seen as benefitting women. Do men also benefit from the women's movement? Discuss.

According to studies, the average American watches television as much as six hours a day. Why do Americans watch so much television? Discuss.

If you could hold any job for one year, what would you choose? Why?

If you could change one thing about your childhood, what would it be? Discuss.

How can parents promote good reading habits in their children? Discuss.

Is it better to have brothers and sisters than to be an only child? Explain.

Is the traditional role of fathers changing? Discuss.

It has been said that computers are taking over our lives. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

Is the person without knowledge of computers handicapped? Discuss.

Should adoption records be open to the people directly involved (the person adopted, the biological parents and/or the adoptive parents)? Explain why or why not.

How does a person make a good first impression in an interview? Discuss.

What is your most prized possession? Why? (Do NOT write about a person.)

What is your definition of a gentleman or a lady? Explain.

What is the value of recreation? Explain.

Should teenaged children of divorced parents have the right to decide which parent to live with? Discuss.

Whether we want them or not, many of us get tagged with one or more nicknames during our lives. Discuss the positive and/or negative aspects of the practice of nicknaming.

Whom would you identify as a truly wise person? What makes him or her seem wise to you?

Discuss what people reveal about themselves by the way they drive.

Name your favorite game or sport and explain why you find it enjoyable.

In the development of a national budget, which should be more important – fighting poverty at home or arming to fight an aggressor? Explain.

Should all students be required to take a course in computer science some time during their education? Explain why or why not.

Which of the four seasons of the year appeals to you the most? Why?

What is the best advice you ever got? Explain.

Discuss why people are fascinated by amusement parks such as Disney World and Six Flags.

How effective is television in disseminating news? Explain.

What steps would you recommend be taken to make health care in America more available to everyone? Explain.

Is it better to know a little about many subjects than to know a lot about one subject? Discuss.

Should the law require automobile drivers and passengers to use safety belts? Discuss.

What steps should be taken to reduce the number of drunk drivers? Discuss.

Is increased life expectancy a blessing or a curse? Discuss.

Should the United States offer foreign aid only to those nations which support our policies? Discuss.

What is your favorite piece of furniture? Explain.

Though a favorite sport of many, boxing is a dangerous sport that leaves many boxers suffering from eye and/or brain damage. Should the sport of boxing be outlawed?

Why do people still go to movie theaters despite the availability of television movies and video cassettes? Discuss.

If you were forced to live without television, how would you spend the time you normally spend watching TV? Discuss.

Do you think of yourself as a "goal-oriented" person? Explain.

Does a person have to be wealthy and powerful in order to be considered successful? Discuss.

If you had the power to do one thing to improve the world, what would you do? Discuss.

What do you think are the best methods of disciplining children? Explain.

If you could have a household robot, for what jobs would you want it programmed? Discuss.

Is it the responsibility of the United States to share its food supplies with the hungry people of the world? Explain.

What is the value of foreign travel? Discuss.

The United States has never had a female president. To what do you attribute this? Discuss.

If you could choose any culture or society, which one would you choose to live in? Discuss.

Discuss some of the advantages and/or disadvantages of having three or more generations of a family living together under the same roof.

Why do people play practical jokes? Explain.

If you were alone for a week, what books (or music) would you select to read (or listen to)? Discuss.

What type of music do you prefer? Why?

Which of your talents do you value most? Why?

If you were among the first colonizers of a new planet in the twenty-first century, what would you not want your fellow colonists to transport from the planet Earth? Explain.

Americans generally condemn daydreaming as a waste of time. Do you agree with this view, or do you see some benefits of daydreaming? Discuss.

When you are approached for a charitable contribution, do you generally contribute? Why or why not?

Publishers report that horoscope columns are among the most widely read features in newspapers. Do you check your astrological forecast from time to time? Why or why not?

The evidence shows that for many reasons the family-owned and family-run small farm is a vanishing American institution. Should this situation cause concern in American society? Why or why not?

Do you suppose you would be happier if you lived more simply, eliminating the effort it takes to acquire an abundance of luxuries? Why or why not?

Do you read the newspaper every day? Why or why not?

The "Living Will" directs a person's family and physicians not to keep that person alive by artificial means if that person were to suffer a totally incapacitating disease or illness. Would you

consider signing such a document and giving it to your own family? Why or why not?

Is noise pollution becoming a serious threat to the welfare of Americans? Discuss.

"Very few of us really know how to listen." Discuss why you agree or disagree with this statement.

Is it better to have loved and lost than never to have loved at all? Discuss.

Do you favor or oppose the use of animal organs (such as hearts or kidneys) as transplants in humans when human organs are not available? Explain.

The Supreme Court has ruled that public schools have the right to conduct searches of students' persons and property when there is reasonable cause to suspect the presence of weapons or drugs. Do you support or oppose such searches? Explain.

Would you be better off if you didn't own a television set? Discuss.

It is said that the United States has the highest crime rate of any country that keeps accurate records. What, in your opinion, are some of the reasons for the unusually high rate of crime in the U.S.? Discuss.

If you could participate in only one extracurricular activity, which would you choose? Why?

Should the advertisement of alcoholic beverages be banned from television? Discuss.

Should tax dollars be used to subsidize public television and radio broadcasts? Discuss.

If you were placed in a position to reduce the national debt, what area would you cut? Why?

Some think that divorces are too easy to obtain today. Do you agree or disagree? Explain.

What steps can be taken to reduce the amount of litter found along highways and in the countryside? Discuss.

Should stricter laws be enacted banning billboards along our major highways? Why or why not?

Presidential greatness is often debated by professional historians. Which U.S. president would you identify as the greatest? Justify your selection.

What is your favorite source of entertainment? Explain why.

Would you want to survive a nuclear war? Discuss.

Is it better to have lived in one place all one's life than to have moved around? Discuss.

What is your favorite holiday? Why?

Do Americans place too much emphasis on physical appearance? Discuss.

Should the media show more respect for celebrities' desire for privacy? Discuss.

"The best things in life are free." Discuss why you agree or disagree with this statement.

Is there anything that teachers can learn from students? Discuss.

If you had to choose between a job that you loved that paid \$25,000 a year and a job that you hated that paid \$50,000 a year, which job would you take? Explain why.

Why do so many people like to have collections of something (antiques, coins, stamps, dolls)? Discuss.

It has been said that winning is not the most important thing; it's the only thing. Explain why you agree or disagree with this view.

With the widespread availability of calculators, is it necessary for students to learn arithmetic? Discuss.

With news readily available from the electronic media, why are newspapers still popular? Discuss.

Should parents encourage their teenage children to work even if the family does not need the money?

Which advertisements do you find most appealing or offensive? Why?

What do you do to cope with stress?

Do you think that most people would rather conform (be like everyone else in a group) than stand out as individuals? Discuss.

What contemporary problem do you find most disturbing? Explain.

Has television brought members of the family together? Discuss.

What animal do you like (or dislike) the most? Why?

Should polygraph (lie detector) tests be used as a condition of employment? Discuss.

If you could live in any city in the world, which would you choose and why?

What is the greatest bargain you ever got? Explain.

How can we reduce the problem of illiteracy in our nation?
Explain.

One suggested partial solution to the drug problem is to turnish drugs to certified addicts, thus removing the profit for drug dealers. What do you think of this idea?

Should employers have the right to require their employees to take drug tests? Discuss why or why not.

Would you rather spend a weekend with your friends or your family? Explain.

Of the sources of entertainment which are popular today, which do you find least appealing? Discuss.

What types of movies do you prefer? Explain.

Which do you believe has been more influential in your life -- good luck (chance) or good decisions? Explain.

What types of reading materials do you prefer? Discuss.

If you could buy one very expensive thing, what would it be? Explain.

How would your life change if you inherited a million dollars?

Discuss the influence that a relative (other than a parent) has had in your life.

Given the choice, would you rather live in the mountains or near the beach? Discuss.

If you were to set up a personal museum of the most significant objects you own, what would you include and why?

Do you like surprises? Explain why or why not.

Discuss a New Year's resolution that you actually kept (or wish you had).

People dress to project an image or to follow trends or to be comfortable. Discuss why you dress the way you do.

What have you been promising to throw out for years but just cannot seem to part with? Discuss.

If you could relive one day in your life, which day would it be? Explain.

What is your idea of a perfect vacation? Explain.

What are some characteristics of people you try to avoid when selecting friends? Explain.

Name some of your family's traditions (perhaps concerning holidays, birthdays, vacations, or other activities) and discuss why they are important to you.

How are you different from your parents (or other adults significant in your upbringing)? Explain.

Explain why you would or would not recommend a movie you saw recently.

What influences from the past have helped shape the person you are today? Discuss.

If you could have free, unlimited service for five years from an extremely good cook, chauffeur, housekeeper, masseuse, or personal secretary, which, if any, would you choose? Why?

What foreign country would you like to visit, and why would you like to go there?

Should local governments pass a law restricting the ownership of dangerous pets such as pit bulldogs? Discuss why or why not.

More and more people are seeking plastic surgery for purely cosmetic reasons. Why are so many people willing to accept the costs and risks of this kind of surgery?

Are people in the U.S. overly concerned about being thin? Discuss.

Americans are fast becoming the most overweight people in the world. To what do you attribute this trend? Explain.

Should animals be used in medical research? Discuss.

What can be done to make the public more aware of the dangers of drinking and driving?

What was the most useless invention of the twentieth century? Explain.

Do you think a person's looks affect his or her success in the job market? Discuss why or why not.

What should be done to reduce the problem of homelessness in the U.S.?

How can Halloween be made safer for young people?

What are the chief reasons for our youth's interest in music videos? Explain.

Why are television talk shows so popular? Discuss.

Why do many people prefer watching television news shows to reading newspapers? Discuss.

Should people accept it as their duty to take care of their aging parents? Discuss.

Women today are waiting until they are older to marry for the first time. Why?

Which qualities or characteristics of childhood should we strive to preserve throughout our lives? Discuss.

Name the worst movie or television program you have ever seen, and explain why you dislike it.

Is there ever a situation in which a person should hide his or her true feelings? Explain.

Name your favorite pastime and explain why you enjoy it.

If you could make one resolution and follow through with it no matter what the difficulties, what would you choose? Explain.

Do you believe that recycling should be mandatory? Discuss.

Some people have argued that zoos are inhumane, that keeping animals captive is wrong. Discuss why you agree or disagree.

Is there one sport that you would never play and/or would never want to play? Explain.

Some people have begun to regulate the hours of television that their children may watch each week by giving each child a "television allowance" time. Do you believe that this is a good idea? Why or why not?

If you could donate a thousand dollars to a charity, which one would you choose? Why?

John F. Kennedy once said, "Ask not what your country can do for you; ask what you can do for your country." Discuss whether Americans are heeding this call from the past.

What changes might occur if gasoline prices rose to \$5.00 a gallon? Discuss.

Have you ever been pressured into doing something that you would have preferred to avoid but that later turned out to be beneficial? Discuss.

Should a person who has been convicted of a crime be allowed to run for public office? Discuss why or why not.

Why is it that political candidates do not always keep their campaign promises once they are in office? Discuss.

Is it appropriate for the President of the United States to appoint a close relative to an important policy-making position? Discuss.

Have you ever learned something that seemed insignificant at the time but that later became particularly valuable? Discuss.

What things would you look for when buying or renting a place to live? Discuss.

What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of growing up in a large family as opposed to a small family? Discuss.

During what period of your life have you been the happiest? Explain.

If your need for sleep were reduced to only one or two hours, what would you do with the added time while others are sleeping?

What kinds of people do you enjoy most? Explain.

Do you have the skills to run your own business? Explain.

What things about yourself would you most like to improve? Explain.

Have your attitudes changed much in the last few years? Explain.

If you suddenly found that your home was on fire and you had time to rescue only a few belongings, what would you save? Explain.

If you could take one entire year off from your responsibilities of school or work, how would you spend that year? Explain why you would make these choices.

Have computers made our lives easier or more complicated? Explain.

Would you buy and use an electric car? Explain.

If you had to choose a few words to describe yourself, what words would you choose and why? Explain.

If you do not measure success in monetary terms, how do you measure it? Explain.

If you could begin next year with one new ability, what would it be? Explain.

What really scared you when you were a child that you now consider humorous? Explain.

What is the most frustrating thing that regularly happens to you? Explain.

Discuss how life can be made easier for people with disabilities.

If you could wake up tomorrow as someone else, who would it be and why?

Should a person be given another chance after he or she has been unfaithful, lied, or broken a promise? Explain.

Some doctors now believe that people make themselves sick with their attitudes and lifestyles. How much do you think people influence their own health through their attitudes and lifestyles?

What does someone have to do to earn your respect? Discuss.

Imagine that you must choose one of the following: a heartfelt and fulfilling relationship with one person but no other close friendships, or lots of friends but no single, enduring connection to one person. Which would you choose and why?

When you are unhappy, what do you do that usually makes you feel better? Explain.

What would it take to make you give up TV? Explain.

What do you think is lost in the process of growing up? Discuss.

If you could reclaim an item, attitude, or feeling from your childhood, what would it be? Explain.

Discuss one of your short-term goals and one of your long-term goals.

Some sociologists argue that if we look carefully at shopping malls, we will see in them many clues to our current values and attitudes. Discuss.

Optimists are people who always expect the best; pessimists always expect the worst. Which kind of person is it better to be? Explain.

Explain what it means to be an honorable person.

Discuss some of the major pressures faced by teenagers.

How useful is the movie rating system? Explain.
attacks? Discuss.

What are the best ways for step-parents to deal with the special problems they face? Explain.

In recent years Americans have expanded their fascination with sports to include such activities as gymnastics and soccer. What do you think are the reasons for this interest in a greater variety of sports?

Explain why you do or do not like to gamble.

Should the legal driving age be raised to eighteen? Why or why not?

Will computers ever completely replace books? Discuss.

Is there a member of your family whom you wish you were not related to? Discuss.

Pick one type of music that is currently very popular and explain why it is popular.

Should doctors be required to inform a patient when he or she probably has a short time to live?

Would you rather take one longer vacation during the year or several shorter ones? Discuss.

Has the TV remote control device been a blessing or a curse? Discuss.

Do you enjoy shopping? Why or why not?

Failure can often teach more than success can. Has failure ever taught you a valuable lesson? Discuss.

Discuss one aspect of your life in which you have settled for less than you had once wanted.

How has your birth order (eldest, middle, youngest, or only child) affected your personality development? Discuss.

What specific things might one do to enrich personal relationships (parent-child, husband-wife, friends) despite a busy schedule? Discuss.

How would your life be different if computers did not exist? Discuss.

Can computers and the personal information stored in them jeopardize our right to privacy? Discuss.

If your town received a gift of several million dollars, how would you recommend the money be spent? Discuss.

Discuss ways in which one person's actions can help to improve the world.

Argue for or against the view that people of your generation are selfish and concerned only with money and comfort.

Are there situations in which lying is appropriate? Discuss.

Should content on the Internet be regulated? Why or why not?

Have Americans lost their appreciation of nature? Discuss.

At what major historical event would you like to have been present? Why?

Discuss the effects in society of the increasing number of women in the workforce.

What is the difference between courage and recklessness?
Discuss.

Many educators are now looking to computers as the key to improving education. Are there limits to what computers can do to teach our children? Discuss.

If you wrote a book about your life, would it be a comedy, a tragedy, or a combination of the two? Discuss.

Do you think the world will become more peaceful in the next 10 years? Discuss.

Are you motivated more by external rewards (such as money or grades) or internal rewards (such as self-esteem or integrity)? Discuss.

What do you think motivates people to offer assistance to others through volunteer work? Discuss.

What are the positive and/or negative effects of teenagers and young adults "surfing the net"? Discuss.

Is it important for you to "make a difference"? If so, in response to what issues? Discuss.

What qualities of character does it take to be a survivor? Discuss.

Do celebrities have a responsibility to the public to act as good role models? Discuss.

What factors make a job or career satisfying? Discuss.

Suppose you were asked to teach a subject, sport, or activity of your choice. What would you teach and to whom would you teach it? Discuss.

If you had to live life as an animal, which animal would you prefer to be and why?

What are the most appropriate ways for people to show anger? Explain.

What do sports reveal about American culture? Discuss.

Explain why people sometimes continue to do things that are harmful to them.

How is fear of crime affecting America? Explain.

Should preserving endangered species take priority over jobs, development, and property rights? Why or why not?

Have your family's expectations of you been a help or a hindrance? Explain.

Writing Strategies for the Adult Education Classroom

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Trait Sundae Strategy

In the Trait Sundae, the students get a visual of how writing should be...multi layers and delicious!

The sundae bowl represents the trait of ideas. This is just the starting point to writing.

The scoops of ice cream are all about the trait of organization. For a sundae to be extra delicious, it is good to have three scoops of ice cream. Alternating patterns of ice cream is the visual for alternating patterns of writing. The writing piece needs to have an audience, a purpose, and a form. The first scoop of ice cream is the lead into the writing. The second scoop of ice cream is the middle of the essay, in which the essay needs to be easy to follow and understand. The last scoop of ice cream represents the conclusion of the writing.

The mix-ins for a sundae is the trait of voice.

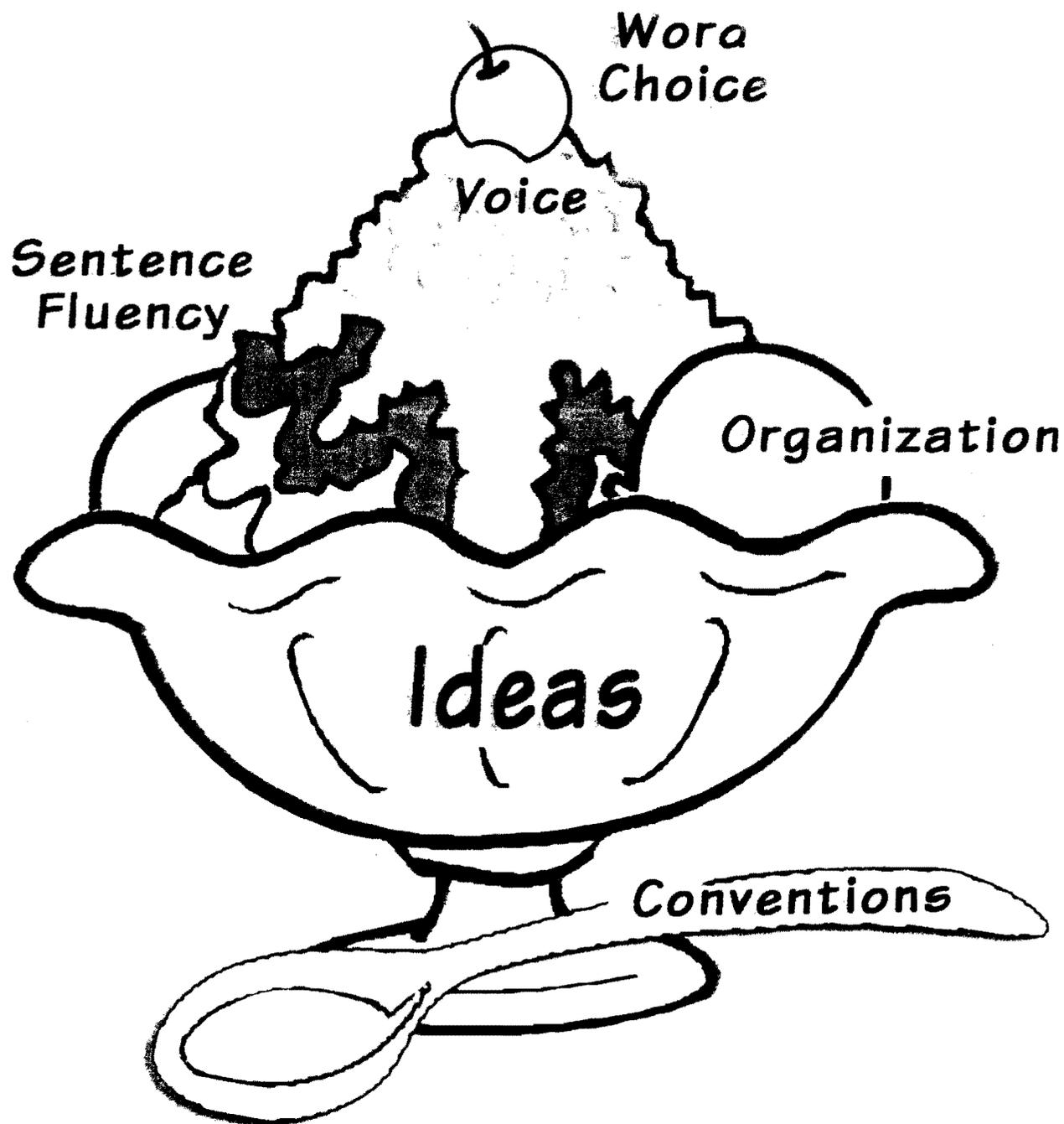
The toppings are the choice of words that are used in the essay.

The syrups are the flow of the ice cream; smooth and easy to read.

The spoon is the trait of conventions: spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

TRAIT SUNDAE

- The Bowl: Ideas
- The Scoops of Ice Cream: Organization
- The Mix-Ins: Voice
- The Toppings: Word Choice
- The Syrups: Sentence Fluency
- The Spoon: Conventions



Character-tac-toe Strategy

You can use this strategy, for either writing or reading comprehension. In this activity, you have the student pick from a three by three grid activities that they are able to do, following the concept of tic-tac-toe.

This concept can be used in multiple lessons since you can cut out the reproducible and rearrange the quadrants.

You will need the reproducible on the following page to complete this strategy.

CHARACTER-TAC-TOE

After reading a book and picking a character, choose three activities in the tic-tac-toe design. The three activities need to make a row horizontally, vertically, or diagonally. You may decide three activities are enough, or you may decide to keep going and complete more activities. You may work with one or more partners on one of the activities.

Write about a day in the life of your character. 1	Create a collage that tells something about your character. 2	Create a rap or song to describe your character. 3
Create a timeline of the important events in your character's life. 4	FREE SPACE (your choice) 5	With a group of three other students, write a fairy tale that includes your character. 6
Write a biography of your character. 7	Write about how your character would react to winning the lottery. 8	Write a poem that reveals your character's strengths and weaknesses. 9

I have chosen _____ (character)

from _____ (book)

I have chosen to complete these activities: # ____, # ____, and # ____.

Student Signature: _____ Date: _____

Teacher Signature: _____ Date: _____

Graffiti Board Strategy

In this strategy, cover a wall with bulletin board paper and have plenty of markers and pens available.

Invite students to go to the "graffiti board" and write their comments about books they have read.

To keep this writing activity going, let other students respond, in writing, on the same board.

Vary the writing topic or allow students to free write on the graffiti board, providing the students know the writing has to be appropriate.

Biopoem Strategy

For this strategy, you will need the template on the following page.

A biopoem is a type of poem in which the subject of the poem is the author. Each line follows a prompt given within the template.

Have students work independently with the biopoem, or with a partner.

Have the student share their poem if they are able.

Stress to the student that this is a personal piece of poetry, but to share only to the degree that they want to.

Biopoem Template

Your first name

**Who is...(Descriptive
words that describe
you)**

Sibling of...

**Who loves...(three
ideas or people)**

**Who fears...(three
ideas)**

**Who needs...(three
ideas)**

**Who feels...(three
ideas)**

**Who would like to
see...**

Resident of...

Last Name

R.A.F.T. (Role, Audience, Format, Topic) Strategy

The purpose of this writing strategy is to encourage creativity in all content areas. It also adds voice to writing because it requires students to write from different points of view.

An example of how to model **R.A.F.T.** is:

Role: the teacher

Audience: student

Format: journal article

Topic: encouraging his/her students to succeed

In this example, the teacher will have to explain to his/her students how to succeed and it will be written as a journal entry.

The role, audience, format and topic will change for each writing assignment.

Another example would be:

Role: heart

Audience: French fries

Format: complaint

Topic: effects of fat in the diet

In this example, the heart is to write a letter of complaint to the French fries describing the effect on the heart due to the fat in the fries.

10 Steps to Better Word Choice Strategy

In this strategy, you are challenging students to write 10 sentences that do not have any repeating words, including the verbs, "is", "are", "was" and "were".

As the teacher, you will model writing 10 sentences about any given topic. For the example here, it is 10 sentences on "family". Once you have written the word "family", you cannot use it again. Model writing 10 sentences with no repeating words.

Once this has done, challenge students to write 10 sentences on a topic. For this example, 'friends'.

Ask students to stand once they have written 10 sentences, with no repeating words.

Have student read sentences to the class.

As students complete this exercise, they will see quickly that they have to vary their word usage.

Creating Word Images Strategy

In this strategy, you will need the reproducible on the following page.

The purpose of this activity is to help students use words that invite the reader to see, hear, smell, feel, or taste specific things.

To model this activity you will have to select an object to write about. You can make a copy of the reproducible on an overhead transparency. For example:

The object is: ***pillow***

The ***pillow*** looks like a ***marshmallow***.

The ***pillow*** sounds like a ***whisper***.

The ***pillow*** feels like a ***giant cotton ball***.

The ***pillow*** tastes like ***straw***.

The ***pillow*** smells like ***sleep***.

One thing about this ***pillow*** is ***that it is lumpy***.

CREATING WORD IMAGES

My Object: _____

The _____ looks like _____.

The _____ sounds like _____.

The _____ feels like _____.

The _____ tastes like _____.

The _____ smells like _____.

One thing about this _____ is _____.

Tally It Up Strategy

In this strategy, you will need the reproducible on the following page.

This activity makes students aware of the critical parts of sentence fluency: variation in the ways sentences begin and variation in the general patterning of the sentences. When you teach and model this lesson, you can also remind students to use the lively verbs that make up word choice.

To begin this lesson, you will need an example of writing that has been copied onto an overhead transparency.

Model for the students how to fill in the reproducible by listing the beginning of sentences and the verbs in each sentence, then counting the number of words in each sentence.

Point out that if many or all of the sentences begin with the same words, or if the sentences are pretty much the same length, then perhaps revision is in order.

This is an activity for students to do individually. Have each student get a piece of their writing and tally up what they see about their own writing on the tally sheet.

Use your discretion if this activity should be then shared with a partner.

TALLY IT UP

Sentence Beginnings

Verbs

Number of Words

**Rubric for Trait of Ideas, Organization, Voice, Word Choice,
Sentence Fluency, Conventions**

I loved this rubric, since I am a huge baseball fan. You can print it out and use it as is, or you can brainstorm with the class different objectives for each of the categories: single, double, triple, homerun!

You will find the rubrics on the following pages.



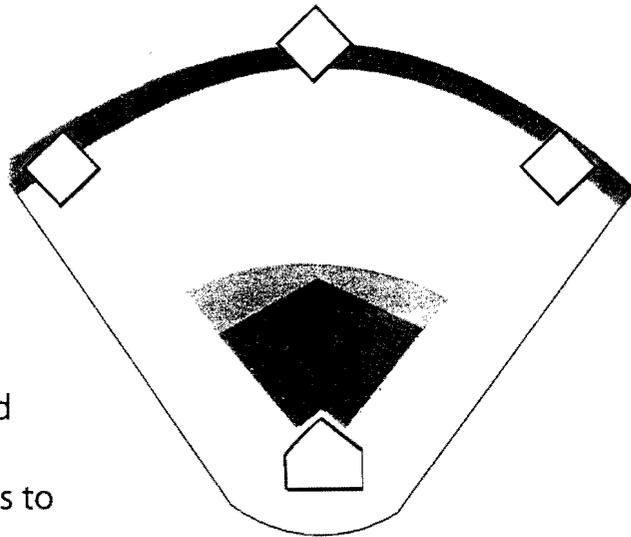
RUBRIC FOR TRAIT OF IDEAS

Double (2)

- The main idea is here, but it needs work.
- At times the content is clear and focused.
- There are a few details.
- There is some unneeded information.

Triple (3)

- It's easy to tell what the main idea is.
- Most of the time the content is clear and focused.
- There are some good details.
- The reader still needs to figure things out.



Single (1)

- The main idea is not clear.
- The content is confusing.
- There are not enough details.
- There is a lot of unneeded information.

Home Run (4)

- The main idea is well developed.
- The content is clear and focused throughout.
- The writing includes the right number of appropriate details.



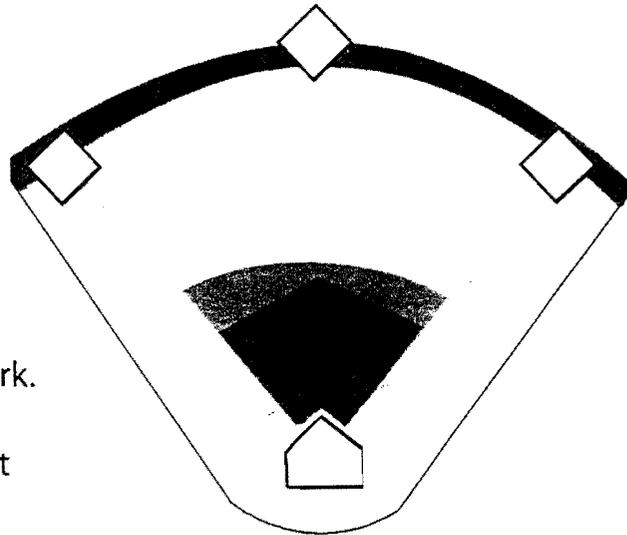
RUBRIC FOR TRAIT OF ORGANIZATION

Double (2)

- There is a weak writer's lead.
- Transitions are weak.
- There is some order, but the writing is confusing.
- There is a weak writer's ending.

Triple (3)

- There is a writer's lead, but it could be better.
- Transitions are repetitive and sometimes don't work.
- At times the order makes sense, but not always.
- There is a writer's ending, but it needs to be more effective.



Single (1)

- There is no identifiable lead.
- Transitions are missing.
- The order of the details is random.
- There is no ending; the writing just stops.

Home Run (4)

- The writing has an effective writer's lead.
- There are smooth transitions that make the writing easy to follow.
- The order makes sense.
- There is an effective writer's ending.



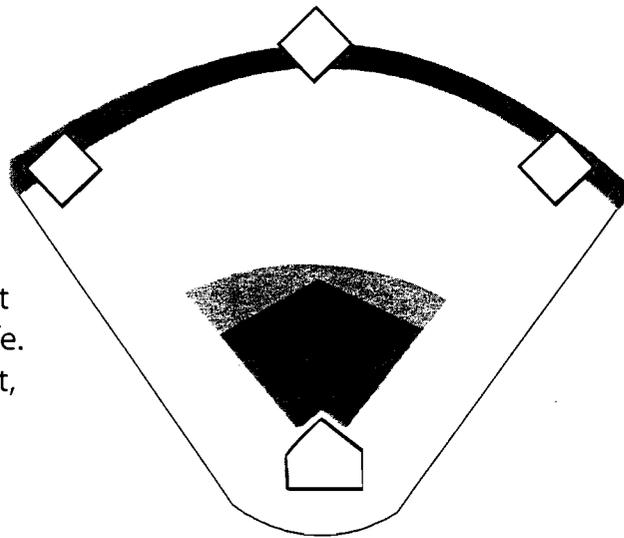
RUBRIC FOR TRAIT OF VOICE

Double (2)

- Sometimes there is voice, and sometimes there is just information.
- The writing is distant, overly formal, or too informal.
- The writer can't seem to hit the right tone.

Triple (3)

- The voice is acceptable for the topic, audience, and purpose, but it doesn't bring the writing to life.
- The writing is pleasant, agreeable, and satisfying.
- Much of the time, the writer seems to care about the topic and the audience.



Single (1)

- There is no voice, only information.
- The writing is boring, stiff, and mechanical.
- The writer doesn't seem to care about the topic or the audience.

Home Run (4)

- The voice makes the writing come to life.
- The writing is lively, expressive, and engaging, with lots of energy.
- The writer really seems to care about the topic and audience, and it shows throughout the writing.



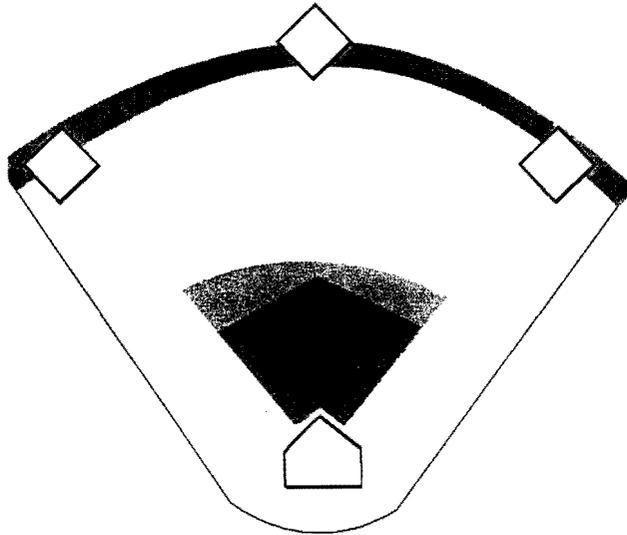
RUBRIC FOR TRAIT OF WORD CHOICE

Double (2)

- Some words are used correctly.
- Some verbs and nouns are strong, and some are ordinary.
- There is an over-reliance on passive verbs.
- The descriptions confuse the reader.

Triple (3)

- Most of the words are used correctly.
- Most verbs and nouns are strong.
- The words get the job done, but the writing is not there yet.
- At times, too much description buries the reader in details.



Single (1)

- The words are not used correctly.
- The writer uses limited and repetitive vocabulary.
- The words are colorless and flat. They fail to communicate.

Home Run (4)

- The words are fresh and unique. They make the message clear and memorable.
- There are strong nouns and lively verbs throughout.
- The writer creates clear mental pictures through effective words.



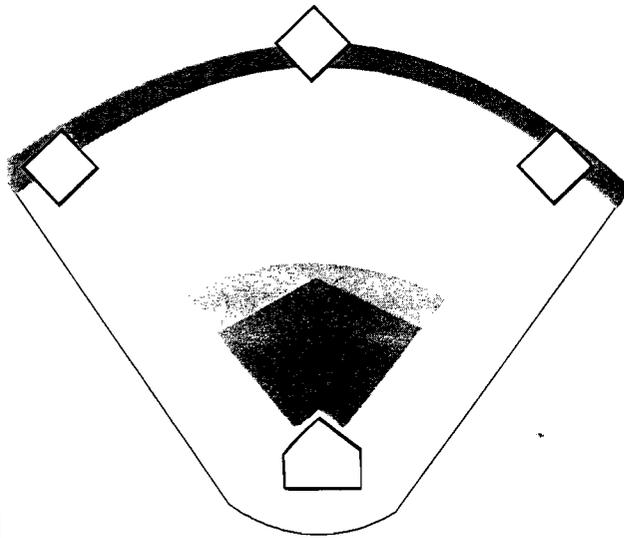
RUBRIC FOR TRAIT OF SENTENCE FLUENCY

Double (2)

- Most of the sentences begin the same way and are the same length.
- At times, the writing has to be reread to get the meaning.
- There are still inappropriate fragments and/or run-on sentences that interfere with flow.

Triple (3)

- The writing can be read aloud but lacks enough rhythm and flow.
- Some sentences begin in different ways and are different lengths but are still basically simple sentences.
- In general, if there are fragments, they are used for a purpose.



Single (1)

- The writing is really hard to read aloud.
- The reader must stop and reread to get the meaning.
- The reader cannot tell where sentences begin or end because of run-ons and/or fragments.

Home Run (4)

- The writing is a joy to read aloud.
- The sentences vary in length and structure.
- Sentence structure, rhythm, and flow match the purpose.
- Fragments are used effectively.



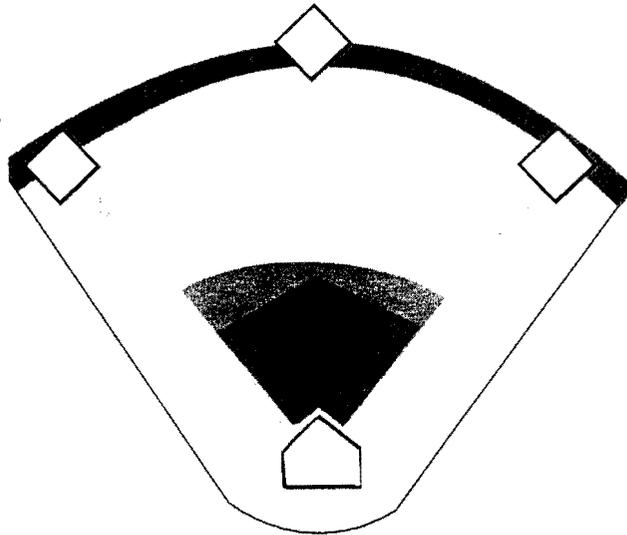
RUBRIC FOR TRAIT OF CONVENTIONS

Double (2)

- There are errors that detract from the meaning.
- Some attention is given to capitalization, agreement and usage, punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing.
- Moderate editing would be needed to make this writing publishable.

Triple (3)

- Some errors are present, but they do not detract from the meaning.
- Reasonable attention is given to capitalization, agreement and usage, punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing.
- Light editing would be needed to make this writing publishable.



Single (1)

- There are errors that interfere with meaning.
- No attention is given to capitalization, agreement and usage, punctuation, spelling, or paragraphing.
- Much editing would be needed before this writing would be publishable.

Home Run (4)

- The errors are so few that the reader can read right over them.
- Capitalization, agreement and usage, punctuation, spelling, and paragraphing are all excellent.
- The writing is virtually ready to publish.

T.H.I.N.K Strategy

In this activity, you are challenging your students to “think”.

T.H.I.N.K stands for:

T: thoughts, feelings, opinions, point of view questions

H: how come questions

I: what if questions

N: name and next questions

K: kind of alive and kind of different questions



118 T.H.I.N.K. Questions

T (THOUGHTS/FEELINGS/OPINION/POINT OF VIEW)

- How do you feel when no one laughs at your jokes?
- Which day of the week are you the happiest?
- What time of day is your favorite?
- What is your opinion of homework?
- What is your parents' opinion of homework?
- Be the head secretary for the U.N. for one day. Tell what you do.
- If the ozone layer could talk, what would it say?
- What would your journal say if it could talk?
- Pretend you are the principal. Describe your best day.
- What would you change if you were the teacher for one day?
- Be a pencil. Tell why you are better than a pen.
- You are (character from a book). What is your best (worst) memory?
- Pretend you are a grizzly bear. Who is your best friend?
- You are a trick question in math. What is the question?
- Two cars in the student parking lot are having a conversation. What are they saying?
- What would protons say to neutrons?
- Do you ever feel sad when you laugh?
- Do you ever feel happy when you cry?

H (HOW COME?)

- How come the president of the United States is not elected by popular vote?
- How come people in different parts of the United States speak English with different accents?
- How come a toaster has a setting that burns the toast?
- How come pushing the elevator button over and over again doesn't make it go faster?
- How come companies outsource labor to other countries? Isn't shipping expensive?
- How come students don't have lunch duty?
- How come teachers send home papers with red marks and not yellow marks?
- How come you get in trouble for "talking back" to the teacher? Aren't you supposed to do that?
- How come a teacher can tell if a holiday is coming without looking at a calendar?
- How come people don't drive more fuel-efficient cars if those kinds of cars are available?



- How come you fill in a form by filling it out?
- How come there's not an egg in eggplant?
- How come U.S. high school tracks are different from college tracks and from tracks in the rest of the world?
- How come you set your alarm to go . . .
- How come water boils quickly unless you watch it?
- How come experience is the best teacher?
- How come a dog is a man's best friend?
- How come the Olympics change location each time?
- How come we aren't extracting very much oil from the oil shale in Colorado?
- How come a whole bag of light and fluffy marshmallows makes you gain weight?

I (WHAT IF?)

- What if you only went to school on Saturdays?
- What if you lived where the story took place?
- What if computers didn't exist?
- What if all food tasted the same?
- What if there were no classroom rules?
- What if there were no chocolate?
- What if water didn't freeze?
- What if you awoke and you were 7 feet tall?
- What if there were no desks at school?
- What if water had an expiration date?
- What if you had eyes in the back of your head?
- What if you could travel at the speed of light?
- What if you could feel the earth rotating?
- What if you were invisible?
- What if women weren't paid less (on average) for doing the same jobs as men?
- What if the war on terrorism never ends?
- What if Quebec achieves national sovereignty?
- What if the Endangered Species Act had not been passed?
- What if the United States were more multilingual?
- What if local government received more prominence in the media?



- What if people reduced their television watching by 50 percent?
- What if a majority of school districts adopted mandatory school uniforms?
- What if the earth were not tilted on its axis?
- What if we could develop a carbon-dioxide-neutral energy power plant?
- What if we could predict earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, and tsunamis?
- What if we genetically modify the vegetables we eat?

N (NAME AND NEXT)

- Name all the ways you could say "Great!"
- A hurricane has destroyed the trees in your yard. What do you do next?
- Name all the ways you could communicate if you couldn't talk.
- The saying goes, "When in Rome, do as the Romans do." Name all the things you wouldn't do in Rome.
- 1, 2, 3, 5, 8, 13 . . . What comes next?
- Name all the uses for a paper clip.
- Name all the good things about homework.
- You wake up during the night and smell smoke. What do you do next?
- Name all the ways you can think of to convince your friend to drink a glass of buttermilk.
- Name all the ways to use a toothpick.
- Name all the words you can make from the word "unbelievable."
- Name all the reasons you can why it might be good to be early to something.
- Name all the questions you can add to this list of T.H.I.N.K. questions.
- Name all the reasons for more gun control.
- Name all the reasons for less gun control.
- Name all the reasons for economic growth.
- Name all the reasons for regulation of economic growth.
- An oil tanker . . . What do you do next?
- A presidential administration is accused of corruption or illegal acts. What do you do next?
- A viral disease becomes pandemic. What do you do next?
- You discover a cure for H.I.V. What do you do next?
- Name all the reasons for keeping the Electoral College.
- Name all the reasons for abolishing the Electoral College.
- You are not accepted to college. What do you do next?
- Your job is outsourced. What do you do next?

- Name all the reasons for restricting the international trade in human organs.
- Name all the reasons for allowing the international trade in human organs.
- Name all the reasons for getting involved in international territorial disputes.
- Name all the reasons for staying out of international territorial disputes.
- Name all the reasons for ...
- Name all the reasons for not signing the Kyoto Protocol.
- Name all the reasons for developing nuclear energy.
- Name all the reasons for not developing nuclear energy.
- Name all the reasons for pursuing stem cell research.
- Name all the reasons for restricting stem cell research.
- Name the advantages of wind-generated electricity.
- SARS strikes again. What do you do next?

K (KIND OF ALIKE AND KIND OF DIFFERENT)

- How are you different from your siblings?
- How is running the same as a ruler?
- How are you different from your parents?
- How are a race car and the president alike?
- How are risk and change alike?
- How is planning your weekend like solving a problem?
- How is gossiping about your friends like writing a story?
- How are an explorer and an artist different?
- How are school and a bagel alike?
- How is school different from a party?
- How are the geography of Mexico and the geography of Saudi Arabia alike?
- How are the Japanese Archipelago, the Mediterranean, the Caribbean Isles, and the Malay Archipelago alike?
- How is the American Dream examined in *The Great Gatsby* different from the American Dream examined in *A Raisin in the Sun*?
- How are the Cascade Range in Washington and the Southern Alps in New Zealand alike?
- How is Santiago Calatrava's Turning Torso apartment building like a human spine?
- How are the major world religions alike? How are they different?
- How is the book version of _____ like the movie version? How is it different?

Sticky Dot Editing Strategy

Sticky dot editing is a process that can be done by the teacher to the student, or to peer to peer editing, or self-editing.

The process is simple: all you need are sticky dots of two different colors. One color would symbolize: "great work", "well done", "I really liked this part". The other color would mean, "consider changing this", "confusing", "could be better".

You can vary it in any way you choose, but I find that two dots of each color should be used at a minimum. That would mean that two positive and two corrective points would be mentioned in the writing.

I would avoid using red dots, since red seems to conjure up negative emotions in students.

Colorful Speech Strategy

In this strategy, you get to use colors and hands-on movement to determine parts of speech in writing.

This is a visual activity that keys in for the student the different parts of speech that make up sentences in writing.

You will need unifix cubes, or some other type of colored item. Lego blocks work well, as do colored pencils or markers. All you need is for the student to be able to manipulate an item under the specified word within the sentence.

The colors to be identified within sentences are:

- Blue=noun

- Red=verb

- Brown=pronoun

- Yellow=preposition

- Orange=adverb

- Green=adjective

- Black=article

Pass the Plate Strategy

This is a high energy strategy that encourages students to generate a wide variety of ideas and exposes all students to creative thinking. It also allows for students to see a wealth of rich vocabulary words.

In this strategy, you will need 6 disposable plates and water based, wipe-off markers.

The steps to the strategy are as follows:

Place students in heterogeneous groups and provide each group with a plate and a marker.

Announce to the class that you will say a word. One of the group members is to write it down in the center of the plate. For example, the word might be "big".

Once the word has been written down, tell the student that they will have two minutes as a group to generate as many synonyms for the words as possible. Each student is to take a turn and write a synonym on the plate around the edge. The plate is to be passed around the group as quickly as possible. If a student cannot think of a word, they can pass.

Explain that each word will generate points but that the most points will be awarded to words that are not found on any other plate in the class.

If necessary, provide examples such as large or gigantic, or more creative examples, such as gargantuan and supersized.

At the end of the allotted time, have the groups add up their points. You can determine the points, but the strategy calls for 10 points for all words on their plates, and 50 points for a word that no other group has.

Pass the Plate strategy continued

When finished, just rinse off the plates and reuse them for another activity.

This activity can be further adjusted to be used as a review. It also can be used as a brainstorming activity, in which you put a central theme in the middle of the plate, and "pass" until each student has had an opportunity to record a word that they know and can relate to the topic.

One consideration is to look at the groups and determine if one or more students may struggle with this. If so, try to have the plate begin with that student so they may have one of the first opportunities to "pass the plate".

Editing Checklist Poster

You may use the poster on the following page to help students remain focused to the “art” of editing their papers.

You may also use the poster as something that they keep with them so that they have it as a reference for when they are not in class.

Editing Checklist

- Punctuation is correct.
- Spelling is correct.
- Capitals are used correctly.
- Sentences are complete.
- Writing is within margins.
- Writing/typing is neat.
- First sentence in each paragraph is indented.

Editing Checklist Bookmark

You may use the bookmark on the following page to help students remain focused to the "art" of editing their papers.

The goal of using the bookmark is so that the students have it with them and get to keep it with them so that they have it as a reference for when they are not in class.

Editing Checklist

- Punctuation is correct.
- Spelling is correct.
- Capitals are used correctly.
- Sentences are complete.
- Writing is within margins.
- Writing/typing is neat.
- First sentence in each paragraph is indented.

Editing Checklist

- Punctuation is correct.
- Spelling is correct.
- Capitals are used correctly.
- Sentences are complete.
- Writing is within margins.
- Writing/typing is neat.
- First sentence in each paragraph is indented.

Editing Checklist

- Punctuation is correct.
- Spelling is correct.
- Capitals are used correctly.
- Sentences are complete.
- Writing is within margins.
- Writing/typing is neat.
- First sentence in each paragraph is indented.

Writing Assessment Rubric Reproducible

The reproducible on the following page can be used by the teacher to assess the student, or for the student to self-assess their own personal progress.

The rubric is based on a number system from 1=seldom/never to 4=consistently.

Writing Assessment Rubric

Student name _____

- SCALE:** 4—consistently
3—frequently
2—rarely/inconsistently
1—seldom/never

- ___ Views writing as a tool to give information and to gain it (by clarifying student's own thinking)
- ___ Selects appropriate, relevant writing topics
- ___ Writes daily
- ___ Writes for a variety of purposes (letters, stories, journals, etc.)
- ___ Writes for a given audience
- ___ Demonstrates knowledge of the conventions of print (punctuation and capitalization)
- ___ Demonstrates knowledge of the conventions of grammar and spelling
- ___ Writes research reports using a variety of resources (reference books, first-hand sources, Internet, and so on)
- ___ Writes in the content area on a regular basis
- ___ Uses the writing process (draft, edit, rewrite, and so on)
- ___ Adjusts writing to fit the genre or purpose
- ___ Uses appropriate reference materials (dictionary, atlas, thesaurus, Internet)
- ___ Writes poetry
- ___ Writes drama
- ___ Maintains a personal journal of collected wonderings, quotes, and ideas for future writing
- ___ Uses literary language (similes, idioms, onomatopoeia) in writing

T.O.W.E.R. Strategy

In this writing strategy, you have the students remember the letters to T.O.W.E.R. and what it stands for.

T: topic

O: outline

W: write

E: edit

R: revise

Recommended Websites

This website included an index that includes 427 references to both the **Guide to Grammar and Writing** and **Principles of Composition**. The website also offers word and sentence level, paragraph level, essay and research level, ask grammar, quizzes, search devices,
<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/index.htm>

This website includes an index that includes seventeen references to the writing process, five references to structural considerations, and fourteen references to patterns of composition.
http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/composition/comp_textonly.htm

This website offers concise information on writing the five point essay as well as an index offering assistance in the following types of essays: http://essayinfo.com/essays/5-paragraph_essay.php

This website offers information on style, writing tips, and citations: <http://essayinfo.com/guides/>

This website offers information on: how to write the 5 point essay, suggested reading, confusing words and grammar rules, and related articles to the writing topic.
<http://homeworktips.about.com/od/essaywriting/a/fiveparagrapph.htm>

This website offers a pdf version of how to write an essay. Succinct information that could be printed out for students to keep with them on how to write an essay.

<http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/basicessay.pdf>

This website offers an enormous amount of information on writing the essay.

<http://lklivingston.tripod.com/essay/links.html>

This website offers information on all aspects of writing the essay.

http://www2.actden.com/writ_den/tips/essay/

This website offers information on all aspects of writing the essay.

<http://grammar.ccc.commnet.edu/grammar/intros.htm>