CONVENTIONS OF WRITING
GRADE 9

THE EWING PUBLIC SCHOOLS
2099 Pennington Road
Ewing, NJ 08618

BOE Approval Date: June 24, 2013  Michael Nitti
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In accordance with The Ewing Public Schools’ Policy 2230, Course Guides, this curriculum has been reviewed and found to be in compliance with all policies and all affirmative action criteria.
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Course Description

Prerequisite:

Satisfactory completion of 8th grade Language Arts-Writing, a demonstrated need on standardized or diagnostic testing, and/or teacher recommendation for support in the area of writing. Placement by Administration only.

The Conventions of Writing is a five-credit, Level II course designed for those students who would benefit from additional instruction and support with writing structure and the conventions of writing. Students will build upon the skills learned in middle school language arts classes and will work toward proficiency in high school and post-secondary institutions.

Instruction will focus on persuasive, analytical, expository, business and creative writing.

While writing daily, students will learn not only the rules of grammar and writing mechanics, but also how to apply those rules when writing. Students will also learn how to naturally infuse new vocabulary terms into their writing. Student performance and individual growth will be evaluated using rubrics, quizzes, tests, formal writings and a final portfolio.
Unit 1: Analytical Writing and the Thematic Study of Identity (10 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

In this unit, students will compare their lives and beliefs to those of literary characters and will work to use that knowledge to dissect their own personal identity. They will analyze different types of texts and evaluate characters, conflicts and themes while employing the components of the writing process. Students will be responsible for developing an original thesis statement and creating an analytical essay applying lessons related to structure and organization. In addition, students will be introduced to how to properly utilize and create MLA citations for primary sources, both parenthetical and in-text, which will allow them to support their claims. The Big Ideas embedded in this unit will include the following:

- Developing one’s personal identity is a complex process.
- Individuals define themselves in ways perhaps not familiar to others.
- Writers purposefully develop the personal identity of literary characters.
- Oftentimes, a reader can identify with characters or with aspects of characters presented in literary works.
- Citing primary sources is imperative when writing analytically.

Enduring Understandings

- One develops his or her personal identity in myriad ways.
- Sometimes, a reader identifies with a character or with a specific aspect of a character presented in a literary work. On an elementary level, this is called ‘making a text-to-self connection.’
- In order to effectively write analytically, a writer must clearly articulate his/her thinking while supporting claims with specific evidence or support.
- There are specific rules and requirements one must use when citing evidence from a primary source.

Essential Questions

- How does one create his/her identity?
- Why is it that readers connect with some literary characters and not others?
- What is the purpose of analytical writing?
- Why does the structure of analytical writing matter?
- What makes one analytical essay effective and another ineffective?
- Why must one cite when referencing primary sources in analytical writing?

Acquired Knowledge

- How one creates his/her own identity differs from how someone else creates his/her personal identity.
• There are typical influences that help to shape one’s identity, but those influences differ from person to person.
• Analytical writing “assesses [one’s] ability to articulate and support complex ideas, construct and evaluate arguments, and sustain a focused and coherent discussion. It does not assess specific content knowledge.” (www.ets.org).
• Textual support must be accurate, powerful and clearly communicated in order to be effective.
• A writer must provide a citation whenever he/she references an outside source.

Acquired Skills

• Explain in writing how one creates a personal identity.
• Analyze the identities of individuals one knows or those presented in literary works and compare those personal identities with one’s own.
• Analyze the theme of a literary work and connect themes across works, using character analysis and identity as support.
• Extrapolate textual support from a primary source and support one’s thesis using specific cited evidence.
• Compose analytical paragraphs and essays utilizing proper analytical structure and primary source citations.

Benchmark or Major Assessments

• Graphic organizers
• Analytical paragraphs
• Parenthetical citations from primary sources
• Analytical essay (benchmark)

Instructional Materials

• Excerpts from Harper Lee’s To Kill a Mockingbird
• Nonfiction excerpts
• Short story excerpts
• Analytical paragraph format handouts
• Graphic organizers such as It Says, I Say, and So
• Sample exemplar paragraphs

Interdisciplinary Connections

• Historical information or current events to provide nonfiction or historical fiction texts for analysis
• The study of sociology as students analyze the roles they play in today’s society
• The study of psychology as students consider their lives, families and experiences and how each relates to the development of identity
Technology Connections

- SmartBoard or projector for exemplar essays, graphic organizers, etc.
- Google Docs or Google Domain

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners

- Graphic organizers to help students focus on essential information
- Graphic organizers to help students organize information
- Differentiated assignments or assessments (i.e., organizers, essay topics, etc.)
- Extended time as needed
- Differentiated articles or texts to help students support their thinking (i.e., by reading level, by interest, etc.)

List of Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Reading Standards:  RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10.5, RL.9-10.10, RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.5, RI.9-10.8, RI.9-10.10

Writing Standards:  W.9-10.2a, W.9-10.2b, W.9-10.2c, W.9-10.2d, W.9-10.2e, W.9-10.2f, W.9-10.4, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.10

Language Standards:  L.9-10.1a, L.9-10.1b, L.9-10.2a, L.9-10.2c, L.9-10.3a, L.9-10.4a, L.9-10.4c, L.9-10.5

Websites

This list of websites may be utilized in the English classroom and by students at home as they read about and investigate current events.

- Tween Tribune at www.tweentribune.com (An online ‘newspaper’ highlighting current events written specifically for young adults and teens)
- PBS News Hour Extra at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/ (News articles, informational videos for students, and teacher resources, all specifically for those in Grades 7-12)
- CNN Student News Online at http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/ (A ten-minute, commercial-free, daily news program for middle and high school students produced by the journalists and educators at CNN; teacher materials and show transcripts are available daily)
- Wall Street Journal: Classroom Edition at http://classroom.wsj.com/ (Current and past issues are available and are specifically written for the reading level and interests of young adults and teenagers)
- State and Local News at www.nj.com (State and local news including politics, sports, high school sports and entertainment)
- District Databases
- Facts.com: Issues and Controversies
Benchmark Assessment

**DIRECTIONS:** Select one of the quotes provided below* and write an analytical essay in its proper format and structure. Be sure to connect your selected quote to our study of identity development, providing evidence from literary works and/or your own personal experience. Parenthetical citations as discussed in class are required.

- “Nothing of me is original. I am the combined effort of everyone I’ve ever known.” - Chuck Palahniuk
- “We know what we are, but not who we may be.” - William Shakespeare
- “Most people are other people. Their thoughts are someone else’s opinions, their lives a mimicry, their passions a quotation.” - Oscar Wilde

*Quotes may vary.
Unit 2: Argumentative Writing and the Thematic Study of Education (10 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

In this unit of study, students will explore the changes and developments that have occurred in the field of education over time. They will examine local and global data and statistics in order to support their claims in argumentative writing. The data examined will expose students to the ever-changing educational system worldwide. Students will also research and discuss current controversies impacting students, educators and school administrators both locally and globally. Understanding the issues facing today’s school community is intended to create a more informed student and set the foundation for life-long learning. The Big Ideas embedded in this unit will include the following:

- When comparing educational systems from around the world, procedures, accessibility and emphasis differ drastically.
- The US Department of Education has included a focus on 21st century learning in its 2011 Common Core State Standards revision; in doing so, many issues and controversies have been introduced into the American educational system.
- Current controversies and advancements in the field of education that directly impact students, educators and administrators.
- Using data and statistics is one of many ways to effectively support an argument.
- There is a structure to an effective argumentative essay that requires one not only to support his/her position but also to rebut or refute the opposing position with facts, data and statistics.
- Citing primary and secondary sources is imperative when writing an argument.

Enduring Understandings

- Geography, culture and customs often influence the educational system of a people.
- In theory, American classrooms should mirror American society, but budget constraints and social issues such as cyber-bulling create issues for American schools related to the integration of technology and 21st century learning.
- There are effective ways to incorporate data and statistics into one’s writing to support a rational argument.
- There is a specific function and format that, when used correctly, creates effective arguments in writing.
- There are specific rules and requirements one must use when citing evidence from a primary or secondary source.

Essential Questions:

- In what ways do typical American classrooms mirror American society? In what ways do they differ?
• What are the obstacles that schools in America face regarding technology integration, social issues and the expectation that they develop a globally-aware citizen?
• What are current advancements in education?
• What are current controversies surrounding education?
• Why does the structure of argumentative writing matter?
• How does rebutting or refuting an opposing viewpoint strengthen an argument?
• How does one select reliable sources and identify valid data to support or refute an argument?

Acquired Knowledge

• Historically, an academic calendar was created based upon the agricultural and seasonal needs of a people.
• The ‘Space Race’ after the launching of Sputnik began the emphasis on increased rigor, especially in the areas of mathematics and science, in American education. This expectation of increased rigor continues to grow as the U.S. Department of Education emphasizes 21st century learning (i.e., creating students who are problem-solvers, technologically savvy, and competitive in a global economy).
• Traditional instructional practices, including whole group instruction, lecture and the whole group assessment, have remained a constant in the American educational system.
• The advancement of technology in American society and American education has caused issues and controversies in education that never existed before.
• “An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer’s position, belief or conclusion is valid. In English language arts, students...defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are writing about.” (Common Core State Standards, Appendix A)
• Facts or data from reliable sources, such as databases and organization or government websites, best support or strengthen an argument.
• A writer must provide a citation whenever he/she references a primary or secondary source.

Acquired Skills

• Research and explain in writing (i.e., paraphrase, summarize, retell) the historical timeline, modern advancements and present day controversies in the field of education.
• Compare and contrast both sides of a controversy, citing and analyzing strengths and weaknesses of all arguments.
• Create and support an argument effectively in writing.
• Compose paragraphs that support an argument utilizing researched data, statistics and facts.
• Identify and utilize textual support from a variety of secondary sources to support one’s thesis or analysis.

**Benchmark or Major Assessments**

• Graphic organizers
• Outlines
• Argumentative paragraphs, including evidence from research
• Citations from secondary sources with written explanation of each citation and source
• Rebuttal paragraphs
• Persuasive essay (benchmark)

**Instructional Materials**

• Education articles – current trends, issues and events
• Nonfiction excerpts – newspaper articles, journal entries, online blogs, etc.
• Short story excerpts
• Graphic organizers
• Sample paragraphs
• Databases and websites for research

**Interdisciplinary Connections**

• History – the study of the American educational system over time, including the impact of the launching of Sputnik in 1957, educational systems from around the world, creating a “globally aware citizenry” (Common Core State Standards)
• Sociology – the incorporation of social issues into discussion and writing

**Technology Connections**

• SmartBoard or projector to display exemplar essays, organizers, etc.
• Google Docs and Google Domain
• Videos (i.e., American education)
• Databases and vetted websites for research

**Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners**

• Differentiated graphic organizers before or during reading to help students identify and focus on key information
• Graphic organizers (i.e., outline) to organize notes and thoughts before drafting
• Differentiated articles or texts for research
• Video support to help struggling readers or gifted thinkers strengthen an argument
• Extended time as needed
• Modified essay length as needed

List of Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Reading Standards:  RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3, RI.9-10.5, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.8, RI.9-10.10


Language Standards:  L.9-10.1a, L.9-10.1b, L.9-10.2a, L.9-10.2c, L.9-10.3a, L.9-10.4a, L.9-10.4c, L.9-10.6

Websites

This list of websites may be utilized in the English classroom and by students at home as they read about and investigate current events.

• Tween Tribune at www.tweentribune.com (An online ‘newspaper’ highlighting current events written specifically for young adults and teens)
• PBS News Hour Extra at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/ (News articles, informational videos for students, and teacher resources, all specifically for those in Grades 7-12)
• CNN Student News Online at http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/ (A ten-minute, commercial-free, daily news program for middle and high school students produced by the journalists and educators at CNN; teacher materials and show transcripts are available daily)
• Wall Street Journal: Classroom Edition at http://classroom.wsj.com/ (Current and past issues are available and are specifically written for the reading level and interests of young adults and teenagers)
• State and Local News at www.nj.com (State and local news including politics, sports, high school sports and entertainment)
• District Databases
• Facts.com: Issues and Controversies

Benchmark Assessment

DIRECTIONS:  Select one of the two argumentative writing prompts listed below* and develop a thoughtful, reflective written response supporting your thinking with evidence, citing as necessary.

OPTION #1:  All-girl schools have been gaining popularity in recent years because of the belief that girls learn better when they are not competing with or intimidated by boys, who statistically get more attention in the classroom. Do you think single-sex schools are a good idea for all educational institutions to follow? Why or why not? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.
OPTION #2: Many junior high and high schools around the country now require students to spend a certain number of hours each term doing volunteer work or community service. Some people believe this is an excellent idea that promotes good citizenship and cultivates compassion. Others feel that forced volunteerism is not volunteerism at all. How do you feel about this issue? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

*Writing prompt choices may vary.*
Unit 3: Expository/Explanatory Essay Writing and the Thematic Study of Adversity (10 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

In this unit of study, students will research and discuss myriad historical and contemporary figures and writers who overcame personal tribulations in their lives; they will ultimately analyze the theme of adversity. By the end of this unit, students will recognize that the issues surrounding and causing adversity span time and are universal. In addition, students will determine that the hardship a person faces allows him or her to grow mentally, emotionally and socially. Throughout this unit of study, students will analyze quotes, construct essays analyze the quotes, and support statements with textual evidence, citing as needed. The Big Ideas embedded in this unit will include the following:

- All people, from historical figures to present day entertainers, encounter obstacles or hardships.
- Each person approaches a hardship in a unique and individual way.
- Statements about persistence, positivity and maintaining focus are often spoken by those who overcome adversity. It is in analyzing these statements that one learns most about a person’s strength and character.
- One can analyze a quote and support that analysis using evidence from literature, history, current events or personal experience.

Enduring Understandings

- Overcoming obstacles or hardships and achieving success is often done through persistence, perseverance, determination and hard work.
- When analyzing a statement or quote, it is imperative that one examines, evaluates and interprets the quote and then connects it to other knowledge; an analysis goes beyond a restatement or summary.
- Supporting one’s opinion is best done through the use of history or literature; specific examples from contemporary issues or one’s personal experience are effective means of support as well.

Essential Questions

- What is adversity?
- How does one overcome an adverse situation, especially when the hardship seems to be insurmountable?
- What is the difference between summarizing and analyzing? Why does it matter?
- How does one select the most appropriate, relevant evidence to support his/her opinion?
- How does one research using a biography?
- How does a reader judge the validity or authenticity of a biographical work?
Acquired Knowledge

• Adversity takes many forms, but all people encounter adversity or hardship at some point in life.
• The way in which one approaches an adverse situation is dependent upon his/her culture, background, life experience and support system.
• An analysis, as defined by the Writing Center Online, is “breaking down the reading into smaller parts and examining it.”
• To produce an expository piece, “students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources.” (Common Core State Standards, Appendix A)
• When writing an expository/explanatory piece where a quote serves as the inspiration, one must consider the following: the context surrounding the statement; the speaker’s life, challenges and success; and connections between the speaker’s life and history or society.

Acquired Skills

• Define and explain adversity and describe various forms of adversity, citing specific examples from history and contemporary society.
• Interpret a higher-level quotation and identify the speaker’s intended message.
• Research the lives of others, consider statements made by individuals, and connect statements to the life experience and social context in which the statement was made.
• Establish an opinion about a quote (i.e., agree or disagree with an intended message) and support that opinion with carefully chosen evidence from literature, history, contemporary issues or personal experience.
• Create and support an analysis effectively in writing.
• Cite evidence appropriately.

Benchmark or Major Assessments

• Graphic organizers
• Written analyses of quotes on specific themes/abstract ideas
• Notes related to biographical research
• Expository/explanatory essays (benchmark)
• Organizers and assessments related to citing information

Instructional Materials

• Lists of thematic quotes
• Nonfiction excerpts
• Short story excerpts
• Biographies
• Graphic organizers
• Exemplar paragraphs or analytical essays
• Databases and websites for research

Interdisciplinary Connections

• History – Research of historical figures and the social context in which specific statements were made.
• Sociology – Social context surrounding quotes and the impact of those situations on the speaker.

Technology Connections

• SmartBoard or projector to display exemplar essays, organizers, etc.
• Google Docs or Google Domain
• Helpful websites (i.e., Summary vs. Analysis at The Writer Center Online)

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners

• Differentiated quotes (i.e., level of complexity of the quote)
• Differentiated research topics (i.e., interest, historical vs. present day figure, readability of nonfiction texts, etc.)
• Graphic organizers before or during research to support or challenge learners
• Extended time as needed
• Modify essay length as needed

List of Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Reading Standards: RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10; RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.7

Writing Standards: W.9-10.2a, W.9-10.2b, W.9-10.2c, W.9-10.2d, W.9-10.2e, W.9-10.2f, W.9-10.4, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.9, W.9-10.10

Language Standards: L.9-10.1a, L.9-10.1b, L.9-10.2a, L.9-10.2c, L.9-10.3, L.9-10.4a, L.9-10.4c, L.9-10.6

Websites

This list of websites may be utilized in the English classroom and by students at home as they read about and investigate current events.

• Tween Tribune at www.tweentribune.com (An online ‘newspaper’ highlighting current events written specifically for young adults and teens)
• PBS News Hour Extra at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/ (News articles, informational videos for students, and teacher resources, all specifically for those in Grades 7-12)
• CNN Student News Online at http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/ (A ten-minute, commercial-free, daily news program for middle and high school students produced by the journalists and educators at CNN; teacher materials and show transcripts are available daily)

• Wall Street Journal: Classroom Edition at http://classroom.wsj.com/ (Current and past issues are available and are specifically written for the reading level and interests of young adults and teenagers)

• State and Local News at www.nj.com (State and local news including politics, sports, high school sports and entertainment)

• District Databases

• Facts.com: Issues and Controversies

Benchmark Assessment

Writing Situation: The idea or theme of adversity was evident throughout every excerpt read in this unit. How each author handled his/her adversity was unique and provided the reader with an understanding of how to surmount great obstacles.

Writing Prompt: What characteristics or personal traits did some of the authors possess that allowed him/her to surmount their adversity or struggle? Identify at least three characteristics/traits and connect each to specific evidence from the reading we conducted in class or from the research you conducted independently. Support your analysis and cite as needed.
Unit 4: Analytical Writing and the Thematic Study of Power (10 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

In this unit of the study, students will investigate and discuss in writing the various forms and types of power in society. Students will analyze different genres of texts and evaluate characters and conflicts as they relate to the thematic study of power; the components of power will be explored through research as well. Students will demonstrate their ability to develop an original thesis and support it with textual evidence through analytical writing, while being cognizant of the structure and organization of the analytical essay. Writers will demonstrate the ability to include MLA citations for primary sources, both in-text and parenthetical. The Big Ideas embedded in this unit will include the following:

- Power, “the possession of control, authority or influence over others”, can take many forms.
- When acquired, power is handled differently by different people; the impact of power on a society or a people differs as well.
- The positive use of and the abuse of social, political or individual power is a common theme across literary and informational works.
- An analytical essay responds to and examines ideas from a text or a variety of texts, often requiring one to synthesize information across multiple texts.
- Citing primary sources is imperative when writing analytically.

Enduring Understandings

- The concept of ‘power’ requires that one person or group maintains control over another person or group.
- Individuals or groups assert their power differently, and the perception of power is received differently as well.
- The use and abuse of power can be seen when studying world, American or local history and can be seen when reviewing myriad works of fictional literature.
- In order to effectively write analytically, a writer must clearly articulate his/her thinking while supporting claims with specific evidence or support.
- There are specific rules and requirements one must use when citing evidence from a primary source.

Essential Questions

- How and why is power used and/or abused?
- How is ‘abuse of power’ recognized?
- How have/do individuals or groups use power to promote good causes?
- How does one effectively synthesize and compare two works of literature in writing rather than simply summarizing two works?
- What is the purpose of analytical writing?
• Why does the structure of analytical writing matter?
• What makes one analytical essay effective and another ineffective?
• Why must one cite when referencing primary sources in analytical writing?

Acquired Knowledge

• Power is defined by Merriam-Webster as, “possession of control, authority or influence over others; a controlling group.”
• According to researchers John R.P. French and Bertram Raven, there are six bases or distinct forms of power: coercive power, reward power, legitimate power, referent power, expert power and informational power.
• Throughout history and in present day society, power has been used in a positive manner and it has been abused. Positive use of power is linked to developing leadership, while abuse of power adversely impacts a people or a society.
• Comparative literary writing is “the branch of literary history that deals with literary relationships, similarities and distinctions among different countries” (Free Dictionary).
• Analytical writing “assesses [one’s] ability to articulate and support complex ideas, construct and evaluate arguments, and sustain a focused and coherent discussion. It does not assess specific content knowledge.” (www.ets.org).
• Textual support must be accurate, powerful and clearly communicated in order to be effective.
• A writer must provide a citation whenever he/she references an outside source.

Acquired Skills

• Explain power and describe the six forms or bases of power.
• Analyze the uses and abuses of power and their impacts on society.
• Compare and contrast the theme of power across multiple texts, both fiction and nonfiction.
• Compose analytical paragraphs and essays utilizing proper analytical structure and primary source citations.
• Find textual support from at least two primary sources that sustain a thesis and/or analysis.

Benchmark or Major Assessments

• Graphic organizers (i.e., comparison of literary elements and themes across texts)
• Analytical paragraphs
• Citations from primary sources with written explanation for selection
• Analytical essay (benchmark)
Instructional Materials

- Excerpt from novels
- Nonfiction excerpts
- Short story excerpts
- Analytical paragraph format handouts
- Graphic organizers (i.e., *It Says, I Say, and So*)
- Sample paragraphs

Interdisciplinary Connections

- History – Read about and discuss positive examples of positive uses of power as well as examples of abuse of power.
- Sociology – Study the impact that leaders and leadership have on a society or the impact that the society has on the leader/leadership.
- Psychology – The impact of ‘group-think’ when abuse of power is observed (i.e., in-group/out-group bias).

Technology Connections

- SmartBoard or projector for exemplar paragraphs, essays or sample organizers
- Google Docs or Google Domain
- Videos of positive leaders using power for ‘good’ and examples of abuse of power
- Comparative literature websites and databases

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL, or Gifted Learners

- Graphic organizers to help struggling readers extrapolate key information during research
- Note-taking organizers to help students record notes when reading or researching
- Differentiated topics (i.e., student interest, readability of texts, complexity of social aspects related to power, etc.)
- Video and audio support (i.e., speeches, informational videos, etc.)
- Extended time or differentiated essay length as needed

List of Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards in English Language Arts

**Reading Standards:** RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3; RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.7, RI.9-10.8

**Writing Standards:** W.9-10.2a, W.9-10.2b, W.9-10.2c, W.9-10.2d, W.9-10.2e, W.9-10.2f, W.9-10.4, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.10
Language Standards: L.9-10.1a, L.9-10.1b, L.9-10.2a, L.9-10.2c, L.9-10.3a, L.9-10.4a, L.9-10.4c, L.9-10.5

Websites

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- State and Local News at www.nj.com (State and local news including politics, sports, high school sports and entertainment)
- District Databases
- Facts.com: Issues and Controversies

Benchmark Assessment

DIRECTIONS: Select one of the quotes provided below* and write an analytical essay in its proper format and structure. Be sure to connect your selected quote to our study of the positive aspects and abuses of power, providing evidence from literary works and your individual research. Parenthetical citations as discussed in class are required.

Option #1: “Nearly all men can stand adversity, but if you want to test a man’s character, give him power.” - Abraham Lincoln

Option #2: “The day the power of love overrules the love of power, the world will know peace.” - Mahatma Gandhi

*Quotes may vary.
Unit 5: Argumentative Writing and the Thematic Study of Change (15 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

In this unit of study, students will focus argumentative writing on the theme of *change*. The concept of change will be examined through texts, specifically reading about and discussing local and global current events; such readings will serve as inspiration for argumentative essay writing. Throughout completion of this unit, students will discuss different types of change and the effects that change can have on a pluralistic society. Through their writings, students will discuss how people adapt and handle change differently. In addition, students will examine facts, data and statistics and use them as support in argumentative writing. The Big Ideas embedded in this unit will include the following:

- Change can impact an individual, a group of people or a society, and its impact on each differs greatly.
- Changes most often occur related to an individual, a situation or a course of action; sometimes change is temporary and sometimes it is transformational.
- Using facts, data and statistics are effective ways to support an argument.
- There is a structure to an effective argumentative essay that requires one not only to support his/her position but also to rebut or refute the opposing position with facts, data and statistics.
- Citing primary and secondary sources is imperative when writing an argument.

Enduring Understandings

- Change is unavoidable; it is how one adapts to change that determines his/her success after the change occurs.
- At times, change impacts only one individual; at other times, change impacts a group or an entire society. It is the response to change that determines success after the change occurs.
- There are effective ways to incorporate facts, data and statistics into one’s writing to support a rational argument.
- There is a specific function and format that, when used correctly, creates effective arguments in writing.
- There are specific rules and requirements one must use when citing evidence from a primary or secondary source.

Essential Questions

- What are different types of change and how does each impact an individual or a group similarly? Differently?
- Why do people deal with change differently? What determines how one is going to respond to a change or series of changes?
- Why does the structure of argumentative writing matter?
How does rebutting or refuting an opposing viewpoint strengthen an argument?

How does one select reliable sources and identify valid facts or data to support or refute an argument?

Acquired Knowledge

According to management training specialists, there are three types of change: developmental change (one recognizes the need to improve an existing situation), transitional change (one recognizes the need to implement a new course of action), and transformational change (a new process or need creates itself as a result of the failure of another and one must recognize it and adapt).

Individuals, groups and societies experience events that result in developmental, transitional and transformational change; how one adapts to said change is what determines his/her success after the change takes place.

“An argument is a reasoned, logical way of demonstrating that the writer’s position, belief or conclusion is valid. In English language arts, students…defend their interpretations or judgments with evidence from the text(s) they are writing about.” (Common Core State Standards, Appendix A)

Facts or data from reliable sources, such as databases and organization or government websites, best support or strengthen an argument.

A writer must provide a citation whenever he/she references a primary or secondary source.

Acquired Skills

Explain verbally and in writing how people encounter and adapt to change, citing examples from local and global current events.

Compare and contrast the arguments from both sides of an issue, citing and analyzing strengths and weaknesses of all arguments.

Create and support an argument effectively in writing.

Compose paragraphs that support an argument utilizing researched data, statistics and facts.

Identify and utilize textual support from a variety of secondary sources to support one’s thesis or analysis.

Benchmark or Major Assessments

Graphic organizers
Outlines
Argumentative paragraphs including evidence from research
Citations from secondary sources with written explanation of each citation and source
Rebuttal paragraphs
Argumentative essay (benchmark)
Instructional Materials

- Current event articles and nonfiction excerpts (i.e., online resources, newspapers, magazines, etc.)
- Excerpts from books (i.e., *Who Moved My Cheese* by Spencer Johnson)
- Graphic organizers
- Sample paragraphs to serve as exemplars
- Databases and websites for research

Interdisciplinary Connections

- History, Sociology and Psychology – Study and discussion of the political pluralistic society experienced in America; the discussion of changes that have impacted individuals, groups or societies.

Technology Connections

- SmartBoard or projector to display exemplar essays, organizers, etc.
- Google Docs and Google Domain
- Video news reports of current events
- Databases and vetted websites for research

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners

- Differentiated graphic organizers before or during reading to help students identify and focus on key information
- Graphic organizers (i.e., outline) to organize notes and thoughts before drafting
- Differentiated articles or texts for research
- Video support to help struggling readers or gifted thinkers strengthen an argument
- Extended time as needed
- Modified essay length as needed

List of Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

**Reading Standards:** RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3, RI.9-10.5, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.8, RI.9-10.10

**Writing Standards:** W.9-10.1a, W.9-10.1b, W.9-10.1c, W.9-10.1d, W.9-10.1e, W.9-10.4, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.9b, W.9-10.10

**Language Standards:** L.9-10.1a, L.9-10.1b, L.9-10.2a, L.9-10.2c, L.9-10.3a, L.9-10.4a, L.9-10.4c, L.9-10.6
Websites

This list of websites may be utilized in the English classroom and by students at home as they read about and investigate current events.

- Tween Tribune at www.tweentribune.com (An online ‘newspaper’ highlighting current events written specifically for young adults and teens)
- PBS News Hour Extra at http://www.pbs.org/newshour/extra/ (News articles, informational videos for students, and teacher resources, all specifically for those in Grades 7-12)
- CNN Student News Online at http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/ (A ten-minute, commercial-free, daily news program for middle and high school students produced by the journalists and educators at CNN; teacher materials and show transcripts are available daily)
- Wall Street Journal: Classroom Edition at http://classroom.wsj.com/ (Current and past issues are available and are specifically written for the reading level and interests of young adults and teenagers)
- State and Local News at www.nj.com (State and local news including politics, sports, high school sports and entertainment)
- District Databases
- Facts.com: Issues and Controversies

Benchmark Assessment

DIRECTIONS: Choose one of the two argumentative writing prompts listed below* and develop a thoughtful, reflective written response supporting your thinking using evidence, citing as necessary.

**Argumentative Writing Assessment: Option #1:** A few decades ago, many families had half a dozen or more children. Nowadays, more and more families are choosing to have only one or two children. Is this change in our society to have smaller families better for our country and economy? Why or why not? State your position and support it with specific reasons and examples.

**Argumentative Writing Assessment: Option #2:** Elementary and secondary schools have made a change across the country to actively address the problem of bullies. In your opinion, has this change with the way schools handle bullying helped our school system? Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

*Writing prompt choices may vary.*
Unit 6: Expository/Explanatory Writing and the Thematic Study of Heroes  
(15 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

Throughout this unit of study, students will explore the different definitions of *hero* and the various qualities that a hero exemplifies. The concept of a hero recurs throughout literary works in English I-IV courses, so the completion of this unit is intended to familiarize students with this theme and connect this knowledge to literary works and nonfiction texts. Students will formulate an opinion on what constitutes a heroic person, research historic, literary and present day heroes, and analyze quotes spoken by different heroes connecting them to the hero’s life experience. Each writer will support his or her stance with examples from a variety of texts. The Big Ideas embedded in this unit will include the following:

- While there is a dictionary definition of *hero*, the qualities that a hero exemplifies extend well beyond that denotative meaning.
- Heroic individuals emerge when studying history, literature and current events.
- Statements about heroic deeds or quotes spoken by an individual considered a ‘hero’ can be analyzed to help one understand a hero’s obstacles, successes and influence.
- One can analyze a statement or quote and support that analysis using evidence from literature, history, current events or personal experience.

Enduring Understandings

- The connotative and denotative meanings of the term *hero* differ greatly.
- There are characteristics common to heroes that apply to historical, literary or present day individuals who are considered heroic.
- When analyzing a statement or quote, it is imperative that one examines, evaluates and interprets the statement/quote and then connects it to other knowledge; an analysis goes beyond a restatement or summary.
- Supporting one’s opinion is best done through the use of history or literature; specific examples from contemporary issues or one’s personal experience are effective means of support as well.

Essential Questions

- What is a hero?
- What are some qualities a hero should possess?
- Who are individuals who you consider ‘heroes’?
- What is the difference between summarizing and analyzing? Why does it matter?
- How does one select the most appropriate, relevant evidence to support his/her opinion?
- How does one research using a biography?
How does a reader judge the validity or authenticity of a biographical work?

Acquired Knowledge

- The denotative meaning of hero is, “a man admired for his achievements and noble qualities; one who shows great courage; a mythological or legendary figure often of divine descent endowed with great strength or ability” (Merriam Webster Online).
- A hero is often said to possess several of the following characteristics: significant, ethical, strong, responsible, brave and reflective of the ideals of a particular society.
- An analysis, as defined by the Writing Center Online, is “breaking down the reading into smaller parts and examining it.”
- To produce an expository piece, “students draw from what they already know and from primary and secondary sources.” (Common Core State Standards, Appendix A)
- When writing an expository/explanatory piece where a thought-provoking statement or topic is presented as the writing prompt, one must consider the following: the context surrounding the statement, the statement’s subject or central idea, and connections between the statement and the historical or societal implications related or connected to it.

Acquired Skills

- Explain verbally and in writing what it means to be a hero.
- Identify historical, literary and present-day individuals who can be considered heroes, conduct research about said individuals, and connect their experiences to the connotative definition of a hero.
- Establish an opinion about a quote (i.e., agree or disagree with an intended message) and support that opinion with carefully chosen evidence from literature, history, contemporary issues or personal experience.
- Respond to an expository, informational prompt and support an opinion with carefully chosen evidence from literature, history, contemporary issues or personal experience.
- Create and support an analysis effectively in writing.
- Cite evidence appropriately.

Benchmark or Major Assessments

- Written analyses of quotes on specific themes or abstract ideas (i.e., heroes, heroic deeds)
- Gathered biographical research with citations as needed
- Expository essay (benchmark)
Instructional Materials

- Lists of quotes connected to the theme of heroes
- Nonfiction excerpts
- Literary excerpts
- Biographies
- Graphic organizers
- Sample quote analyses or paragraphs to serve as exemplars
- Databases and websites for research

Interdisciplinary Connections

- History – Research of heroic historical figures and the social context in which heroic actions were taken.
- Sociology – Social context surrounding heroic deeds and the impact of those actions on a person or a group of people.

Technology Connections

- SmartBoard or projector to display exemplar essays, organizers, etc.
- Google Docs or Google Domain
- Helpful websites (i.e., Summary vs. Analysis at The Writer Center Online)
- Video or audio recording (i.e., speeches), reports, etc. of heroes or heroic acts

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners

- Differentiated prompts (i.e., quote vs. narrative prompt, level of complexity of the quote or prompt, etc.)
- Differentiated research topics (i.e., interest, historical vs. present day figure, readability of nonfiction texts, etc.)
- Graphic organizers before or during research to support or challenge learners
- Extended time as needed
- Modify essay length as needed

List of Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

**Reading Standards:** RL.9-10.1, RL.9-10.2, RL.9-10.3, RL.9-10; RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.2, RI.9-10.3, RI.9-10.6, RI.9-10.7

**Writing Standards:** W.9-10.2a, W.9-10.2b, W.9-10.2c, W.9-10.2d, W.9-10.2e, W.9-10.2f, W.9-10.4, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.9, W.9-10.10

**Language Standards:** L.9-10.1a, L.9-10.1b, L.9-10.2a, L.9-10.2c, L.9-10.3, L.9-10.4a, L.9-10.4c, L.9-10.6
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- Wall Street Journal: Classroom Edition at [http://classroom.wsj.com/](http://classroom.wsj.com/) (Current and past issues are available and are specifically written for the reading level and interests of young adults and teenagers)
- State and Local News at [www.nj.com](http://www.nj.com) (State and local news including politics, sports, high school sports and entertainment)
- District Databases
- Facts.com: Issues and Controversies

Benchmark Assessment

**WRITING SITUATION:** The triumph of good over evil is existent in most works of literature and even in movies. But heroes do not merely exist in books, movies or animated shows; rather, some would argue that the most important demonstration of heroism is the one seen in everyday life.

Most of us have heroes we admire, those individuals we admire because of the significant role they play in our lives or in society. They are ethical, strong, responsible and brave individuals who reflect the ideals that connect closely to our system of beliefs or to societal beliefs.

**Writing Prompt:** Write an essay describing an individual or group of individuals who you consider heroic, perhaps symbolic of the triumph of good over evil. The person or group may be real or imagined, historic or present day. Explain, using specific details and evidence, how the individual/group exemplifies the characteristics of a leader. When referring to literary, historical information or contemporary issues, be sure to cite as needed.
Unit 7: Research Writing and the Thematic Study of Technology (15 Days)

Why Is This Unit Important?

Throughout this unit of study, students will explore the daily impact that technology has on individuals in a pluralistic society. Students will discuss and write about the issues and controversies surrounding the advancement of technology on a local and a global scale. Each student will examine a variety of sources in order to defend, support or refute claims about the concept of technology. Students will demonstrate their ability to properly insert in-text citations and cite sources on a works cited page. In addition, students will incorporate and expand upon research while developing and organizing a sound argument. The Big Ideas embedded in this unit will include the following:

- Modern technology is advancing at an amazingly rapid rate.
- While technological advancement has made many aspects of life easier and more convenient, there are consequences and implications for such advancements as well.
- There is a research process that progresses through the stages of the writing process and includes elements such as documenting note cards and source cards, creating a research outline, and developing a works cited page.
- “MLA style for documentation is widely used in the humanities, especially in writing on language and literature” (Modern Language Association).

Enduring Understandings

- There are both benefits and challenges to the rapid rate of technological development and advancement in today’s society.
- The research and reporting processes are constant and can be applied no matter the content area or topic of inquiry.
- The research process can be used to create and support a rational argument.
- In order to support one’s thesis, a researcher must seek information from different sources, deem those sources to be reliable, identify pertinent information, and write a report that synthesizes the information in one’s own words.
- It is imperative that a writer use his/her own wording when presenting research; plagiarism, either intentional or unintentional, is a serious offense.

Essential Questions

- What are different forms of technology?
- What are some recent advancements in technology?
- How does technology positively or negatively impact society?
- What are current controversies surrounding technology?
- What is the purpose of research writing?
• How does one identify appropriate sources and select appropriate evidence when supporting a thesis in research writing?
• How does one support an analysis with concrete examples?
• How does one avoid plagiarism?

Acquired Knowledge

• In the introduction to the Common Core State Standards, it specifies one goal of the CCSS is to develop students who “employ technology thoughtfully to enhance their reading, writing, speaking, listening and language use…tailor their searches online to acquire useful information efficiently…integrate what they learn using technology with what they learn offline…are familiar with the strengths and limitations of various technological tools and mediums and…select and use those best suited to their communication goals.”
• As stated in the IEEE Technology and Society Magazine online, there are societal and social implications of technological development, especially in the areas of health, safety, ethics, academic and professional responsibilities, economics and environment.
• “Research is about extending the range of what you know…A research report is a written report that presents the results of a focused, in-depth study of a specific topic. Its writer chooses a topic, gathers information about the topic from several sources, and then presents that information in an organized way.” (McDougal Littell, 2001)
• Anyone can create a website, so vetting online resources for their use of valid, reliable information is imperative when conducting research.
• “MLA style features brief parenthetical citations in the text keyed to an alphabetical list of works cited that appears at the end of the work” (Modern Language Association).

Acquired Skills

• Explain verbally and in writing recent advancements in technology.
• Examine current controversies related to technology, especially in the areas of safety, privacy and ethics, academia and environment.
• Comprehend nonfiction resources and extrapolate evidence relevant to one’s research question.
• Utilize the internet to conduct research, specifically focusing on reliable sources including, but not limited to, databases, websites, podcasts and RSS feeds.
• Summarize, paraphrase or quote notes to avoid plagiarism.
• Synthesize information across multiple sources to form an opinion related to a research question.
• Support an opinion using information obtained from reliable sources.
• Cite information, either in-text or parenthetically, utilizing MLA format.
Benchmark or Major Assessments

- Published research paper (benchmark)
- Research notes
- Outline
- Source cards
- Works cited page

Instructional Materials

- MLA handbooks or website source
- Graphic organizers
- Sample Works Cited Page and sections of an exemplary research paper
- Computers with internet to conduct research

Interdisciplinary Connections

- History – The development of technology over time.
- Sociology – The impact that technological advancement has had on society, both positive and negative.
- Psychology – The impact that online blogging, chat rooms, etc., have on the adolescent psyche, especially as it connects to health and safety issues.

Technology Connections

- SmartBoard or projector to display exemplars or to plan shared writing opportunities
- Google Docs or Google Domain
- EHS Media Center Research and Citation Page at http://www.ewing.k12.nj.us/Page/244
- Helpful websites:
  - Technology and Society Magazine Online at http://ieeessit.org/technology_and_society/
  - Modern Language Association Online at www.mla.org or www.mlahandbook.org
  - Purdue Online Writing Lab (OWL) at https://owlenglish.purdue.edu/owl/resource/747/01/1

Accommodations or Modifications for Special Education, ESL or Gifted Learners

- Student-selected or differentiated research topics
- Audio or video resources for research
- Differentiated organizers for note-taking to support struggling students or accelerate gifted readers
• Check the research paper project and provide individualized feedback after each step in the process (i.e., vetted online sources, note cards, source cards, outline, rough draft, works cited page)
• Differentiated due dates or extended time as needed
• Modify research paper length as needed

List of Applicable 2010 Common Core State Standards for English Language Arts

Reading Standards: RI.9-10.1, RI.9-10.7, RI.9-10.8, RI.9-10.10

Writing Standards: W.9-10.4, W.9-10.5, W.9-10.6, W.9-10.7, W.9-10.8, W.9-10.9b, W.9-10.10

Language Standards: L.9-10.1a, W.9-10.1b, W.9-10.2a, W.9-10.2c, W.9-10.3a, W.9-10.4a, W.9-10.4c, W.9-10.6

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• CNN Student News Online at [http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/](http://www.cnn.com/studentnews/) (A ten-minute, commercial-free, daily news program for middle and high school students produced by the journalists and educators at CNN; teacher materials and show transcripts are available daily)
• Wall Street Journal: Classroom Edition at [http://classroom.wsj.com/](http://classroom.wsj.com/) (Current and past issues are available and are specifically written for the reading level and interests of young adults and teenagers)
• State and Local News at [www.nj.com](http://www.nj.com) (State and local news including politics, sports, high school sports and entertainment)
• District Databases
• Facts.com: Issues and Controversies
## Analytical Writing Rubric (Units 1 and 4)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>1 In Progress</th>
<th>2 Emerging</th>
<th>3 At Standard</th>
<th>4 Exemplary</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>Ideas are weak; details may be vague, unrelated, or lacking.</td>
<td>Ideas are emerging and are at times supported with explanatory details.</td>
<td>Ideas are mostly clear; important details support most of the writer’s ideas.</td>
<td>Ideas are strong; rich informative details clarify and strengthen the writer’s ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Organization</strong></td>
<td>Organization is not apparent; connections among ideas are unclear, and transitions may misdirect the reader or may be lacking.</td>
<td>Organization is emerging; the reader can follow ideas but connections among some ideas may be weak and some transitions may be bumpy.</td>
<td>Well organized, with clear connections among ideas and smooth transitions that facilitate understanding.</td>
<td>Very well organized, with powerful connections among ideas and strong transitions that enhance understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Word Choice</strong></td>
<td>Word choice may be inaccurate or unclear; it may interfere with the reader’s understanding.</td>
<td>Mostly clear language supports understanding of some ideas; word choice may be basic and/or repetitive.</td>
<td>Clear and somewhat varied language supports the reader’s understanding.</td>
<td>Clear, precise, and varied language enhances the reader’s understanding.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Sentence Fluency</strong></td>
<td>Sentence structure is simple, choppy, and unconscious of the writer’s purpose.</td>
<td>Sentence structure is somewhat varied; some repetition may hurt the flow of the writer’s ideas.</td>
<td>Sentence structure is varied in length and style and generally supports the writer’s purposes.</td>
<td>Varied sentence structure adds power, rhythm, and movement to the writing and strategically supports the writer’s purposes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Mechanics</strong> (spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, paragraphing, etc.)</td>
<td>Errors in the use of mechanics impede the clear reading of the text.</td>
<td>Use of mechanics generally supports the clear reading of the text; errors do not significantly interfere with understanding.</td>
<td>Use of mechanics supports the clear reading of the text; errors do not interfere with understanding.</td>
<td>Use of mechanics enhances and adds impact to the reading of the text; few errors do not take away from the clarity.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Citing Sources</strong></td>
<td>MLA format has not been used accurately. There may or may not have been an attempt to include citations. Numerous errors exist.</td>
<td>MLA format was attempted. Some citations may be missing, or patterns of errors may be evident.</td>
<td>MLA format has been used correctly most of the time. Most required information and many quotations are cited; some errors in punctuation may be evident.</td>
<td>MLA format has been used accurately. All required information has been cited (parenthetical or in-text), quotes have citations, and punctuation is correct.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
New Jersey Holistic Scoring Rubric for Essay Writing (Units 2 and 5)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>In scoring, consider the grid of written language</th>
<th>Inadequate Command</th>
<th>Limited Command</th>
<th>Partial Command</th>
<th>Adequate Command</th>
<th>Strong Command</th>
<th>Superior Command</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>5</td>
<td>6</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Content and Organization</td>
<td>May lack opening and/or closing</td>
<td>May lack opening and/or closing</td>
<td>May lack opening and/or closing</td>
<td>Generally has opening and/or closing</td>
<td>Opening and closing</td>
<td>Opening and closing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Minimal response to topic; uncertain focus</td>
<td>Attempts to focus</td>
<td>May drift or shift focus</td>
<td>Usually has single focus</td>
<td>Single focus</td>
<td>Sense of unity and coherence</td>
<td>Well-developed</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>No planning evident; disorganized</td>
<td>Attempts organization</td>
<td>Few, if any, transitions between ideas</td>
<td>Some lapses or flaws in organization</td>
<td>Transitions evident</td>
<td>Logical progression of ideas</td>
<td>Logical progression of ideas</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Details random, inappropriate, or barely apparent</td>
<td>Details lack elaboration, i.e., highlight paper</td>
<td>Repetitious details</td>
<td>Several unelaborated details</td>
<td>Uneven development of details</td>
<td>Details appropriate and varied</td>
<td>Logical progression of ideas; Fluent, cohesive; Compositional risks successful</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usage</td>
<td>No apparent control</td>
<td>Severe/nearous errors</td>
<td>Numerous errors</td>
<td>Errors/patterns of errors may be evident</td>
<td>Some errors that do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>Few errors, very few, if any, errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sentence Construction</td>
<td>Assortment of incomplete and/or incorrect sentences</td>
<td>Excessive monotony/same structure</td>
<td>Little variety in syntax</td>
<td>Some variety</td>
<td>Generally correct</td>
<td>Variety in syntax appropriate and effective</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Mechanics</td>
<td>Errors so severe they detract from meaning</td>
<td>Numerous serious errors</td>
<td>Patterns of errors evident</td>
<td>No consistent pattern of errors</td>
<td>Some errors that do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>Few errors, very few, if any, errors</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**NON-SCORABLE RESPONSES**

- NE = No Response
  - Student wrote too little to allow a reliable judgment of his/her writing.
- OT = Off Topic/Off Task
  - Student did not write on the assigned topic/task, or the student attempted to copy the prompt.
- NE = Not English
  - Student wrote in a language other than English.
- WF = Wrong Format
  - Student refused to write on the topic, or the writing task folder was blank.

**Content/ Organization**

- Communicates intended message to intended audience
- Relates to topic
- Opening and closing
- Focused
- Logical progression of ideas
- Transitions
- Appropriate details and information

**Usage**

- Tense formation
- Subject-verb agreement
- Pronoun usage/agreement
- Word choice/meaning
- Proper Modifiers

**Sentence Construction**

- Variety of type, structure, and length
- Correct construction

**Mechanics**

- Spelling
- Capitalization
- Punctuation
Expository/Explanatory Essay Rubric (Units 3 and 6)

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Critical Thinking</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Displays no real development of ideas</td>
<td>Displays ideas superficially or inconsistently</td>
<td>Displays ideas with some consistency and depth</td>
<td>Displays insight and thorough development of ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacks convincing support</td>
<td>Provides weak support</td>
<td>Develops adequate support</td>
<td>Develops consistently strong support</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits no attempt to make connections between ideas</td>
<td>Begins to make connections between ideas</td>
<td>Makes some good connections between ideas</td>
<td>Reveals mature and thoughtful connections between ideas</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Includes no real analysis, or synthesis, or interpretation, or …</td>
<td>Begins to analyze, or synthesize, or interpret, or …</td>
<td>Shows some analysis, or synthesis, or interpretation, or …</td>
<td>Shows sophistication in analysis, or synthesis, or interpretation, or …</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Demonstrates no real integration of ideas (the author’s or those of others) to make meaning</td>
<td>Begins to integrate ideas (the author’s or those of others) to make meaning</td>
<td>Displays some skill at integrating ideas (the author’s or those of others) to make meaning</td>
<td>Is adept at integrating ideas (the author’s or those of others) to make meaning</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Organization</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lacks introduction</td>
<td>Displays weak introduction</td>
<td>Includes weak introduction</td>
<td>Includes adequate introduction</td>
<td>Includes strong introduction</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacks controlling idea</td>
<td>Displays controlling idea</td>
<td>Displays adequately developed controlling idea</td>
<td>Displays clear, well-developed controlling idea</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacks clarity</td>
<td>Exhibits weak clarity</td>
<td>Exhibits adequate clarity</td>
<td>Exhibits excellent clarity</td>
<td>Exhibits strong logical structure</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacks logical structure</td>
<td>Exhibits weak logical structure</td>
<td>Exhibits adequate logical structure</td>
<td>Includes adequate logical structure</td>
<td>Includes well-supported conclusion</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Lacks conclusion</td>
<td>Includes weak conclusion</td>
<td>Includes adequate conclusion</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Style</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Tone or voice is off-putting</td>
<td>Contains inconsistent tone or voice</td>
<td>Contains occasional lapses in tone or voice</td>
<td>Maintains a consistent tone and voice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Seems to have no audience in mind</td>
<td>Shows little audience awareness</td>
<td>Shows audience awareness</td>
<td>Shows consistent audience awareness</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Frequently chooses inappropriate words</td>
<td>Sometimes chooses inappropriate words</td>
<td>Chooses appropriate words</td>
<td>Exhibits skill in word choice</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exhibits frequent inappropriate sentence structure</td>
<td>Exhibits occasional inappropriate sentence structure</td>
<td>Exhibits appropriate sentence structure</td>
<td>Exhibits sophisticated sentence structure</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uses no appropriate stylistic conventions</td>
<td>Uses few appropriate stylistic conventions</td>
<td>Uses appropriate stylistic conventions</td>
<td>Skillfully uses appropriate stylistic conventions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Mechanics</th>
<th>0</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2</th>
<th>3</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Lacks command of mechanical conventions: grammar, punctuation, or spelling</td>
<td>Demonstrates weak command of mechanical conventions: grammar, punctuation, or spelling</td>
<td>Demonstrates adequate command of mechanical conventions: grammar, punctuation, or spelling</td>
<td>Demonstrates excellent command of mechanical conventions: grammar, punctuation, and spelling</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Errors present major distraction to readers</td>
<td>Errors are occasionally distracting to readers</td>
<td>Errors are minimally distracting to readers</td>
<td>Small errors do not distract readers</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Research Paper Grading Guide (Unit 7)

## Thesis Statement:

[Blank box for thesis statement]

### Format
- Times New Roman
- 12 point font
- 1” margins
- Double spaced
- Header and title

______/5 points

### Content

#### Introductory Paragraph and Thesis Statement
- Clearly states an integrated thesis that is thoughtful, argumentative and specific
- Properly introduces the research topic and subtopics that will be elaborated upon throughout the essay

______/20 points

#### Detailed Writing Connecting Source Information and Examples (details included in the body paragraphs) to the Thesis
- In-depth, insightful analysis that relates both source information and examples from research to the thesis
- Each paragraph actively works to prove the thesis appropriately utilizing analysis and commentary and provides substantial proof of the thesis

______/60 points

#### Proper, Relevant Source Information Included
- Source information clearly relates to the paragraph topic and provides support for the paragraph argument
- Source information works toward clarifying the point; it does not merely restate information
- Source information is effectively integrated into the paragraph

______/30 points

#### Clear, Specific Examples from Research Included
- Examples are clear and specific, relating to the paragraph topic and the thesis the student is attempting to prove
- Adequate context is provided for each example to ensure the example is clear to the reader and relates to the thesis/argument being made

______/40 points

#### Concluding Paragraph
- Clearly restates (does not merely rewrite) the thesis statement
- Adequately summarizes the primary points put forth in the body of the paper
- Connects the controlling topic/argument of the paper to an issue beyond the text

______/20 points

### Citations

- At least five (5) parenthetical citations are included and each is properly formatted

______/20 points

- Works Cited Page is properly formatted

______/20 points
**Grammar**

- Limited typing errors
- Proper word usage
- Few, if any, fragments or run-ons
- Proper subject-verb agreement
- No first person pronouns
- No direct reference to the quote/paper/audience
- Varied sentence structure  

_____ / 35 points

_____ Points Earned / 250 Total Possible Points

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**Grade:**

__________

**Comments:**