

# **Written Expression Instruction**

# **Examples**

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**Example #1** Rubric for Descriptive Paragraph

No  
Not Evident  
**0**                      **1**                      **2**                      **3**                      **4**  
Yes  
Very evident

Fix-up Zone

**Descriptive Paragraph**

<b>Critical Attribute</b>	<b>You</b>	<b>Teacher</b>
<b>(Organization)</b>		
1. The first sentence tells what is being described.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
2. All the other sentences tell more about what is being described	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
3. The length is adequate.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
<b>(Sentences)</b>		
4. Complete sentences are used.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
5. The sentences begin with different words.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
6. The sentences vary in length.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
<b>(Word choice)</b>		
7. Descriptive words are used.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
8. Overused words (e.g., nice, big, little) have been replaced with more precise or interesting words.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
<b>(Content)</b>		
9. The description paints a clear and accurate picture of what is being described.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>
10. The description is easy for the reader to understand.	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>	<b>0 1 2 3 4</b>

**It was dusk when we entered the tiny grocery store on the edge of the deserted road. The store was lit by a single bulb hanging near the entrance. The aisles in the store were narrow allowing only one shopper at a time. Ancient wooden shelves lining the aisles were cluttered with dust-covered cans and boxes. Yellowed labels on the cans held the secret of the store.**

## Example #1 Rubric for a Summary

### Article to be Summarized

#### **Just Say No to School Uniforms**

Theresa J. Jenkins

People like to look nice, it's that simple. Sure, some people may spend more time on their appearance than others, but everybody puts at least a little thought into what they wear. It's important for kids to learn how to select their own outfits so that they will be able to participate comfortably in society as an adult. Requiring school uniforms takes away that opportunity. Uniforms blur an individual's sense of self, make kids self-conscious when the uniforms don't fit correctly, and cost the same if not more than normal clothes.

Childhood is an important time in a person's life. It is when they begin to form their personal identity. The clothes a person wears, especially as a teenager, reflects who they are and what they think. By forcing all students to wear the same thing, the school is not only denying them the freedom of dress, but the right to be truly themselves. If students aren't breaking the school dress code, there shouldn't be a problem with students wearing regular clothes that express their unique beings.

Uniforms won't fit everyone the same way. Human bodies, especially the developing teenage body, are hardly the same size or shape. Most people don't easily fit into the simple categories of small, medium, and large. Will the uniform skirt be long enough for the tall girl who has a hard time finding the right fit? Will the waistline and belt match the skinny boy? If anything, uniforms are going to make students feel overly conscious about their size, shape, and weight.

Some parents believe that school uniforms they will save them money on their children's wardrobes. However, this may not be true. Wearing uniforms all week is going to make kids even more anxious to have their own clothes to wear after school and on weekends. Students will get tired of always wearing the same navy and khaki and want new outfits to spice up their closets. In addition, parents will have to buy more than one outfit for each child and replacements since the clothes will eventually get worn. In the end, the clothing bill is unlikely to be reduced.

In conclusion, requiring school uniforms robs students of their unique identity and forces them into a "one size fits all" mold while costing parents additional money and failing to prepare students for the real world. Schools should just say no to school uniforms .

Example 1: **Rubric - Summary of Informative Text**

<b>Content of Summary</b>	<b>Student Rating</b>	<b>Teacher Rating</b>
1. <b>Topic</b> - Is the topic of the original text stated?	Yes No	Yes No
2. <b>Main Idea</b> - Is the main idea of the text clearly stated?	Yes No	Yes No
3. <b>Major Points</b> - Does the summary focus on the major points or information presented in the text?	Yes No	Yes No
4. <b>Accurate</b> - Are the major points and information accurate?	Yes No	Yes No
5. <b>Own Words</b> - Is the summary written in your own words?	Yes No	Yes No
6. <b>Concise</b> - Is the summary shorter than the original text?	Yes No	Yes No
7. <b>Combined Ideas</b> - Are some of the ideas combined into longer, more sophisticated sentences?	Yes No	Yes No
8. <b>Understanding</b> - Is the summary easy to understand?	Yes No	Yes No

<b>Conventions</b>	<b>Student Rating</b>	<b>Teacher Rating</b>
1. <b>Handwriting</b> - Is the handwriting legible?	Yes No	Yes No
2. <b>Spelling</b> - Are the words spelled correctly, particularly the words found in the text?	Yes No	Yes No
3. <b>Capitalization</b> - Is correct capitalization used including capitalization of the first word in the sentence and proper names of people, places, and things?	Yes No	Yes No
4. <b>Punctuation</b> - Is correct punctuation used including a period at the end of each telling sentence?	Yes No	Yes No

### Example 1: Rubric - Summary of Argument Article

Content of Summary	Student Rating	Teacher Rating
1. <b>Topic</b> - Is the topic of the original article stated?	Yes No	Yes No
2. <b>Claim</b> - Is author's claim (opinion) clearly stated?	Yes No	Yes No
3. <b>Reasons</b> - Does the summary focus on the major reasons for the claim?	Yes No	Yes No
4. <b>Accurate</b> - Does the claim and reasons in the summary match those in the article?	Yes No	Yes No
5. <b>Own Words</b> - Is the summary written in your own words?	Yes No	Yes No
6. <b>Concise</b> - Is the summary shorter than the original article?	Yes No	Yes No
7. <b>Combined Ideas</b> - Are some of the ideas combined into longer, more sophisticated sentences?	Yes No	Yes No
8. <b>Understanding</b> - Is the summary easy to understand?	Yes No	Yes No

Conventions	Student Rating	Teacher Rating
1. <b>Handwriting</b> - Is the handwriting legible?	Yes No	Yes No
2. <b>Spelling</b> - Are the words spelled correctly, particularly the words found in the article?	Yes No	Yes No
3. <b>Capitalization</b> - Is correct capitalization used including capitalization of the first word in the sentence and proper names of people, places, and things?	Yes No	Yes No
4. <b>Punctuation</b> - Is correct punctuation used including a period at the end of each telling sentence?	Yes No	Yes No

**Summary Example** (*All attributes illustrated in summary.*)

In this article, Theresa Jenkins expresses her contention that schools should not require students to wear uniforms. She believes that requiring uniforms could have many negative outcomes including: 1) robbing children of their individuality, 2) requiring students to wear clothing that is not matched to their body types, and 3) increasing the wardrobe budget for families to cover the cost of regular clothing and uniforms.

**Summary Non-Example** (*Includes opinions other than those of the article's author.*)

The author of this article believes that schools should not require school uniforms for a number of reasons. First, wearing school uniforms takes away a children's chance to express their personality through their choice of clothing. I think this is particularly important when you are in middle school and you are trying to make a statement about yourself through the t-shirts, jeans, and jackets that you select. Second, students won't have a chance to practice picking out their own outfits, something that they would have to do everyday before they go to work.

**Summary Non-Example** (*Is not written in the student's own words.*)

Requiring school uniforms takes away the opportunity for students to learn how to select their own outfits. Uniforms blur an individual's sense of self, make students self-conscious when the uniforms don't fit correctly, and cost the same if not more than normal clothes. Schools should just say no to uniforms.

**Example #2** Writing Frame for Emerging Writers

My favorite city is \_\_\_\_\_. This city is located in the state of \_\_\_\_\_. I like this city because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_. One of my favorite things to do in this city is \_\_\_\_\_.

Another activity that I enjoy in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Example #3** Writing Frame to Accommodate Emerging Writers – State Report

\_\_\_\_\_ (State)

\_\_\_\_\_ is a very fascinating state. It is found in the \_\_\_\_\_ part of the United States. It is bordered by the following states: \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ has a variety of land and water forms. In terms of landforms, this state has \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

The most dominant landform is its \_\_\_\_\_.

The largest lake in \_\_\_\_\_ is \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ also has a number of rivers including \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ has a diverse economic base. One aspect of its economy is agriculture. Some of the crops grown in \_\_\_\_\_ include \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Its most important crop is \_\_\_\_\_.

Another aspect of this state’s economy is manufacturing. The following products are produced in \_\_\_\_\_:

\_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_,  
and \_\_\_\_\_ is the  
product most often associated with this state. If you visited this state and  
purchased either an agricultural or manufacturing product, you would  
probably buy \_\_\_\_\_.

There are many recreational opportunities in \_\_\_\_\_.  
First, there are a number of large state and federal parks. My favorite  
park is \_\_\_\_\_. This park would be a great  
place to visit because \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.  
These are some of the recreational activities you might enjoy in

\_\_\_\_\_: \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

Of these, I would particularly enjoy \_\_\_\_\_.

One thing that this state is noted for is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

This is noteworthy because \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

However, I thought the most interesting thing about this  
state was \_\_\_\_\_.

**Example #3** Writing Frame to Accommodate Emerging Writers – Animal Report

Directions. Select a mammal that lives in our state. Research this mammal and write a report. Include a description of the mammal, its diet, its habitat, and any other interesting facts about this mammal. Draw a picture of the mammal.

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_ are fascinating mammals that have their home in \_\_\_\_\_ (state). To appreciate \_\_\_\_\_, knowledge concerning their appearance, habitat, diet, and uniqueness is needed.

There are a number of characteristics that help in the identification of \_\_\_\_\_. They are a \_\_\_\_\_ (size) animal. They measure about \_\_\_\_\_ in height. Their head is \_\_\_\_\_.

Their body is \_\_\_\_\_ and is covered in \_\_\_\_\_ hair. The legs of this mammal are \_\_\_\_\_. A distinct feature of this mammal's appearance is its \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ have their homes in the \_\_\_\_\_.

This is the perfect habitat for \_\_\_\_\_ for a number of reasons.

First, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

Another reason that this is a good habitat for \_\_\_\_\_ is

\_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, this habitat supplies some of the things that \_\_\_\_\_

need including: \_\_\_\_\_,

\_\_\_\_\_, and \_\_\_\_\_.

All mammals need food but their diets vary a great deal. The most important food for \_\_\_\_\_ is

\_\_\_\_\_.

Another thing that they eat is \_\_\_\_\_.

There are a number of interesting facts about \_\_\_\_\_.

First, \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

Another interesting fact is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

The most amazing fact is \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_.

When you are in the \_\_\_\_\_, you may have a chance to see \_\_\_\_\_. Don't forget what you have learned about this interesting mammal.

**Example #4** Writing frame for a story-problem explanation in math

In this problem, we were asked to figure out \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. Some  
information was already given including \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_.

When creating a plan to solve this problem, I decided to follow a number  
of steps. First, I \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Next, I \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Then, I \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, I \_\_\_\_\_.

After following these steps, I determined that answer to this problem was  
\_\_\_\_\_.

To check this answer I \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Based on my verification of the answer, I am quite certain that it is  
accurate.

**Example # 5 – Summarization - Narrative**

\_\_\_\_\_ took place in/at  
\_\_\_\_\_.

The main character of this story was \_\_\_\_\_.

His/her major problem was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ tried to solve this problem by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

In the end \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

**Example 5** continued – Summarization - Narrative

\_\_\_\_\_ title \_\_\_\_\_ was a narrative  
selection about \_\_\_\_\_ theme \_\_\_\_\_. In  
this story, \_\_\_\_\_ name \_\_\_\_\_, a/an \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, was the main  
character. Other critical characters included: \_\_\_\_\_ name \_\_\_\_\_,  
\_\_\_\_\_,  
and \_\_\_\_\_ name \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_.  
In this story, \_\_\_\_\_ name \_\_\_\_\_'s major  
problem/conflict/goal was \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.  
First, \_\_\_\_\_ name \_\_\_\_\_ tried to resolve this  
problem/conflict/goal by \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.  
In the end, the following happened: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

## Example # 6 – Summarization – Expository

### Viruses

Viruses have some characteristics of \_\_\_\_\_ things and \_\_\_\_\_ things. In some cases, viruses are \_\_\_\_\_, but they can live and \_\_\_\_\_.

To live and reproduce, viruses must invade a \_\_\_\_\_ and use it. Viruses are NOT \_\_\_\_\_ but have genetic \_\_\_\_\_. Different viruses need different \_\_\_\_\_. The \_\_\_\_\_ coat helps the virus detect the right kind of host cell. In \_\_\_\_\_, the virus attaches to the outside of a host cell. In \_\_\_\_\_, the virus injects genetic information into the host cell. During \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_, the host cell's enzymes obey the virus's genetic instructions. During \_\_\_\_\_ new virus particles leave the \_\_\_\_\_ in search of new host cells.

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**Example # 7 - Writing Frame - Academic Language**

(Compare and Contrast)

\_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are similar in a number of ways. First, they both \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

Another critical similarity is \_\_\_\_\_.

An equally important similarity is \_\_\_\_\_.

Finally, they \_\_\_\_\_.

The differences between \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are also obvious. The most important difference is \_\_\_\_\_.

In addition, \_\_\_\_\_ and \_\_\_\_\_ are \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_.

In the final analysis, \_\_\_\_\_ differs from \_\_\_\_\_ in two other major ways: 1) \_\_\_\_\_ and 2) \_\_\_\_\_.

**Example #8** (Using strategy to write a paragraph summary. This is taken from *REWARDS PLUS*, published by Sopris Learning)

Step 1. **LIST** (List the details that are important enough to include in your summary.)

Step 2. **CROSS-OUT** (Reread the details. Cross out any that you decide not to include.)

Step 3. **CONNECT** (Connect any details that could go into one sentence.)

Step 4. **NUMBER** (Number the details in a logical order.)

Step 5. **WRITE** (Write the paragraph.)

Step 6. **EDIT** (Revise and proofread your answer.)

Example # 8 continued

Greek Theater

- began as a religious ceremony
- 1 - honored the Greek god Dionysus
- ~~beliefs in Dionysus began to spread southward~~
- 2. choruses chanted lyrics
- 3- actors joined the choruses
- 4 - the Dionysus festival in Athens became a drama competition
- amphitheaters were built
- 5 - performed tragedies that taught lessons
- performed comedies that made fun of life
- 6 -declined when playwrights died and the government changed

**Example #8** continued

The roots of modern theater can be found in early Greek theater. Greek theater began as a religious ceremony that honored the Greek god Dionysus. At first, choruses chanted lyrics. When actors were added to interact with the chorus, theater was born. Later, the Dionysus festival in Athens became a drama competition, and amphitheaters were built to accommodate the event. Both tragedies, which taught lessons, and comedies, which made fun of life, were performed. Greek theater declined when the great playwrights died and the government changed.

**Example #9**

**Compare/Contrast Think Sheet**

**Subject:** \_\_\_\_\_

**SAME**

**Groups**

<b>Categories</b>	<b>St. Bernard</b>	<b>Newfoundland</b>
<b>Use</b>	<b>Rescue</b>	<b>Rescue</b>
<b>Height</b>	<b>Full grown males same</b>	<b>Full grown males same</b>
<b>Type of Fur</b>	<b>Smooth dense that protects from cold</b>	<b>Smooth dense that protects from cold</b>

**DIFFERENT**

**Groups**

<b>Categories</b>		
<b>Weight</b>	<b>155 – 170 pounds</b>	<b>140 – 150 pounds</b>
<b>Place of Origin</b>	<b>Swiss Alps</b>	<b>Newfoundland</b>
<b>Different Clients</b>	<b>Climbers and skiers</b>	<b>People in Atlantic Ocean</b>

Example #9 continued

**The Saint Bernard and the Newfoundland are the same in several ways. Both dogs are large rescue dogs. The full grown males are about the same height. Both dogs have smooth dense fur that protects them from the cold while they are rescuing people.**

**Although the two dogs are similar, they also have differences. The Saint Bernard is much heavier, weighing 155 to 170 pounds. The lighter Newfoundland weighs 140 to 150 pounds. The dogs originated in different places, so the types of rescues they perform are different. The Saint Bernard originated in the Swiss Alps and rescues climbers and skiers from the snow. The Newfoundland rescues people from the Atlantic Ocean. Both dogs perform important services for mankind.**

#### **Reference**

Stephanie Gray and Catharine Keech. *Writing from Given Information: Classroom Research Study No. 3*. 1980. Bay Area Writing Project. Berkeley, CA: University of California.

### Compare/Contrast Think Sheet

Subject: \_\_\_\_\_

**SAME**

**Groups**

<b>Categories</b>		

**DIFFERENT**

**Groups**

<b>Categories</b>		

# Argument - Rubric

Author \_\_\_\_\_ Essay Topic \_\_\_\_\_

Question	Student or Partner Rating	Teacher Rating
<p><b>INTRODUCTION</b></p> <p>1. Does the introduction <b>grab</b> the reader's <b>attention</b>?</p> <p>2. Does the introduction tell the <b>topic</b> of the essay?</p> <p>3. Does the introduction state the <b>author's claim</b> (thesis statement) on the topic?</p> <p>4. Does the introduction preview two or more convincing <b>reasons</b> for the claim?</p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>
<p><b>BODY</b></p> <p>5. Does the body include at least <b>three major reasons</b> that support the author's position?</p> <p>6. Does the author elaborate on and <b>explain</b> each of the major reasons using logical arguments, evidence and examples?</p> <p>7. Did the author acknowledge and respond to the <b>opposing side's view</b> (counterarguments)?</p> <p>8. Are the paragraphs <b>well-organized</b> and <b>easy to understand</b>?</p> <p>9. Are <b>transition words and phrases</b> used to connect ideas within and between paragraphs?</p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>
<p><b>CONCLUSION</b></p> <p>10. Does the conclusion a) <b>summarize the author's claim and reasons</b>, b) <b>call for action</b>, or c) <b>state what will happen if no action is taken</b>?</p> <p>11. Does the essay have a <b>definite conclusion</b> that wraps up the essay?</p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>
<p><b>CONVENTIONS</b></p> <p>11. Did the author <b>correctly spell</b> words?</p> <p>12. Did the author use <b>correct capitalization</b>?</p> <p>13. Did the author use <b>correct punctuation</b>?</p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>
<p><b>CONTENT</b></p> <p>14. Did the essay hold the reader's <b>attention</b> from beginning to end?</p> <p>15. Is the essay clear and easy to <b>understand</b>?</p> <p>16. Did the author stay <b>focused</b> on the same position throughout the paper?</p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>	<p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p> <p><b>Yes No</b></p>

**Prompt:** *In order to fight the rise of violence and use of drugs in schools, some faculties have implemented random searches of backpacks, book bags, lockers, and/or desks for weapons and drugs. Do you agree with these random searches or do you disagree? Write a letter to the faculty members at a school stating your opinion and justification for that opinion. Begin the letter with these words: Dear Faculty Members.*

Dear Faculty Members,

How would you like a stranger to forge through YOUR purse, your computer bag, or your bedroom drawers? Would you not feel violated? That is exactly how I feel when teachers and administrators search my backpack and locker with NO notification. While I understand the danger of illegal drugs and weapons on campus, I am more afraid of the consequences that these searches cause. I know these policies come from a real concern for the safety and quality of our school campus, but I think that they will cause more problems than solutions. Random searches threaten personal privacy and erode a student's trust in the faculty without solving the heart of the issue.

Random searches through a student's book bag, locker, or desk are a clear invasion of personal privacy. Our desks, book bags, and lockers are essentially our home away from home. Thus, they contain very personal items that are part of our non-academic life such as diaries, notes from boy or girl friends, pictures from non-school events, cosmetics, and dental retainers. We had no intent that anyone would ever see or touch these items, but now a teacher or security guard is holding it up for all to see. Do you realize how embarrassing this would be to a shy, sensitive student?

Not only do these searches overstep boundaries of a person's private space, they break down valuable trust between students and teachers, the heart of that relationship. In order for a student to learn, they need to be comfortable with their teachers. If students are always worried about whether or not their teachers will look through their book bags or lockers, they will be too anxious to learn. School faculty will become intimidating figures that students don't trust. Education is supposed to help students grow up, not bring them down and make them feel

vulnerable. Random searches would dramatically change the environment of a school from academic to suspicious.

Finally, searches will not solve the problem on a permanent basis. There's no doubt that widespread random searches will uncover some illegal weapons or drugs in the beginning, but that doesn't mean that it is actually effective in the long run. Rather it will force offending students to be sneakier. Making more rules doesn't get to the root of the problem, but makes problems become more concealed. If students have drugs, they will just find different places to hide them. Even though these search efforts are well intentioned, they do little to solve the problem of illegal drugs and weapons in the school and may actually punish the innocent. For example, what if a nail file is found in a girl's locker and the security guards consider it a weapon? Would her future be jeopardized over a little manicure tool? What if a boy has Tylenol in his backpack because of a sprained ankle? These searches could punish the innocent while the guilty think of new and sneakier ways to hide their contraband.

Instead of random backpack searches, maybe schools could offer alternate solutions like counseling or advertising for anonymous help-lines. If students are using drugs or feel the need for weapons, they obviously need real help. Schools should point troubled kids to safe solutions instead of quick punishment. This way the students that aren't doing anything wrong won't be treated like criminals and schools can keep their focus on academics and education.

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# Argument

Topic: <i>random searches</i>	Task: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> letter <input type="checkbox"/> essay <input type="checkbox"/> other
Audience: <i>faculty members</i>	Type of preparation: <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> think    OR <input type="checkbox"/> collect evidence
Purpose: Convince <input type="checkbox"/> Pro <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Con	

<b>Introduction</b>		
<b>GRAB</b>		
<b>Claim (Thesis Statement) :</b> <i>Random searches of desks, lockers, and backpacks should be forbidden.</i>		
<b>Reason A.</b> <i>Invades personal privacy</i>	<b>Reason B.</b> <i>Destroys trust between students and faculty</i>	<b>Reason C.</b> <i>Doesn't solve problem</i>
<b>Body A. Explain</b>	<b>Body B. Explain</b>	<b>Body C. Explain</b>
1- <i>desks, book bags,</i>	1- <i>not comfortable with teachers</i>	1- <i>bad students sneakier</i>
<i>lockers are students' "home"</i>		
	3- <i>faculty intimidating</i>	2- <i>hide drugs in new places</i>
- <i>contain personal items</i>		
<i>diaries</i>	2 - <i>students worried about searches</i>	3 - <i>may punish innocent</i>
<i>notes</i>		
2- <i>pictures</i>		4 - <i>example - nail file</i>
<i>retainers</i>	4 - <i>feel vulnerable</i>	
		5 - <i>example - Tylenol</i>
	5 - <i>changes school environment</i>	
- <i>don't want people to see</i>		
3- <i>don't want people to touch</i>		
4 - <i>embarrassing</i>		
<b>Conclusion</b>		
<b>WRAP</b>		





### Think Sheet – Argument

<b>Topic =</b>	<u>Curfews</u>
<b>Audience =</b>	<u>General public - adults</u>
<b>Purpose =</b>	To persuade
<b>Claim =</b>	<i>Governments should not establish curfews for teens.</i>

Reason A	Reason B	Reason C
<i>Infringe on teens freedom of movement</i>	<i>Infringe on parents' right to raise children</i>	<i>Reinforces negative stereotypes of teens</i>
<b>Support</b> (logical evidence, factual evidence, examples)	<b>Support</b> (logical evidence, factual evidence, examples)	<b>Support</b> (logical evidence, factual evidence, examples)
<i>1 a democratic liberty</i>	<i>1 parents should pick curfews -they know kids</i>	<i>1 older people think teens irresponsible</i>
<i>2 discriminates based on age</i>	<i>3 honors individual child</i>	<i>4 distrust between adults and teens</i>
<i>3 treats teens as criminals</i>	<i>2 consider maturity, school performance, activities of child</i>	<i>2 curfew laws reinforce negative view of teens</i>
		<i>3 must be violent &amp; irresponsible if need curfew laws</i>

## Argument - Opinion Writing Prompts

1. (fast food restaurants) In numerous towns, community members are considering banning all fast food, chain restaurants. Decide if you agree with this suggestion or disagree. Write an essay for adults in the community stating and justifying your position.
2. (children's crimes) As you know, it is not just adults who commit crimes of robbery, assault, or murder. These can also be committed by youth. Many believe that parents should be jailed or fined for the crimes of their children. Do you agree or disagree with this action? Write an essay for the general public that argues your position.
3. (cheating) Many believe that cheating on assignments and tests is more widespread today than in the past. Mr. Smith, a principal, wants to implement a policy in which any child caught cheating would immediately be expelled. Write a letter to Mr. Smith expressing your position on this issue. Try to convince Mr. Smith that your position is correct.
4. (four day school week) The school board is considering reorganizing the school week. They are suggesting that there be four school days rather than five. Each school day would then be two hours longer. Write a letter to the school board members stating and supporting your position on this issue.
5. (summer reading) Over the summer, the reading skills of students often decline due to lack of reading practice. For this reason, the teachers at one school are proposing that students read a list of eight books during the summer. Completion of the required books would be a part of their grade in the following school year. Would you agree or disagree? Write a letter to the teachers that would convince them that your position should be taken.
6. (separate schools) Many people believe that boys and girls should attend separate schools. Do you agree or disagree with this position. Write an essay that would convince teachers and students that your view is right.
7. (inmates) When an individual is incarcerated (sent to prison) for committing a crime different types of programs are offered. Do you believe that inmates should be allowed to take classes toward a high school or college education

while in prison? Write a letter to a prison warden in which you try to convince the warden of your position. Start the letter with: Dear Warden,

8. (athletics) Many adults believe that athletic competition is so important that all children in 4<sup>th</sup> grade and above should be required to compete in a team sport of their choosing. What do you think? Write an essay expressing your opinion on this issue. Make it convincing.
9. (siblings) Do you think it is better to be an only child OR to have brothers and sisters? Select one family configuration (only child or brothers and sisters) and write an essay that will convince your peers that your choice would be best.
10. (optimist or pessimist) There are two kinds of people in this world: optimists and pessimists. While optimists expect the best in situations, pessimists expect the worst. Convince your classmates that it is better to be an optimist or that is better to be a pessimist.
11. (lying) “It is NEVER appropriate or honorable to lie.” Do you agree or disagree with this statement. Write an essay that would convince your classmates that they should take your position on this issue.
12. (immigrant) Many people come to our country each year. In fact, historically, we are a country of immigrants. Do you think that immigrants should maintain their culture and customs OR do you think they should blend into our culture? Pick one of these positions and write a paper to convince new immigrants to follow your suggested path.
13. (life expectancy) The number of years that people are living is expanding with each passing year. Do you believe that is good or bad for people? Write an essay expressing your opinion. Make it as thoughtful and convincing as possible.
14. (moving) Do you think it is better for a child to live in only one place as they grow up or is it better to live in many different places? Decide which you believe would be better for children and write an essay that would convince your classmates that your position is correct.
15. (TVs) A local newspaper had an article that began with this statement, “Children would be much better off with no televisions in their homes.” Do you

agree or disagree with this statement? Write a letter to the editor that states and supports your opinion. Begin with these words: Dear Editor.

16. (helmets) A number of state legislations are considering requiring ALL children under 16 to wear helmets when biking, skiing, snowboarding, skating, and skateboarding. Do you agree this position on helmets? Write a letter to a legislator stating your position and reasons clearly. Begin with these words: Dear Legislator.
- 17.(location) A parent with children your age is considering whether to move to a big city, a suburb, a small town, or a farm. Select one that you believe would be the best location for a child your age to grow up in and write an essay that would convince parents that your choice is correct.
18. (age) Do you think it is better to be an adult or a child? Write an essay that would be convincing both to adults and to your classmates. State your belief and defend it with strong reasons.
19. (cars) “The automobile has been very harmful to our society.” Do you agree or disagree. Select a position and write an essay that will convince your classmates that your position is correct.
20. (second language) Many school districts are considering teaching a second language to all students beginning in elementary and continuing through high school. The goal would be to insure that all citizens can speak more than one language. Do you agree with this requirement? Write an essay why you agree or disagree with making proficiency in a second language a requirement.
21. (school time) The school board has decided to extend the school day by 30 minutes. While the extension of the school day is non-negotiable, they are seeking suggestions on how the time might best be used. Write a letter to the school board expressing and supporting your suggested time use. Begin with these words: Dear School Board Members.
22. (uniforms) Many schools serving children your age have decided to require all students to wear school uniforms. However, many people still disagree with this common practice? What is your opinion on this issue? Write an essay either agreeing or disagreeing with required uniforms. Be sure that your essay would convince school personnel.

23. (backpack searches) In order to fight the rise of violence and use of drugs in schools, some faculties have implemented random searches of backpacks, book bags, lockers, and/or desks for weapons and drugs. Do you agree with these random searches or do you disagree? Write a letter to the faculty members at a school stating your opinion and justification for that opinion. Begin the letter with these words: Dear Faculty Members.
- 24.(rules) Like every school, your school has a set of rules that have been communicated to students. Consider your schools rules. Determine one rule that should be eliminated OR one rule that should be added to the list. Write a letter to the principal asking that your chosen rule be eliminated or added. Be sure that your reasons strong enough to convince the principal.
25. (TV viewing) SHUT IT OFF. This is the motto of the PTA in regards to TV watching during the school week. Do you agree or disagree with the suggestion that their should be no TV watching during the school week (Monday through Thursday evenings). Write a persuasive letter to the PTA president stating your opinion and supporting reasons. Start the letter with: Dear PTA President.

# Persuasive Strategies

## Examine writing prompt

T = topic / task

A = audience

P = purpose  
position

## Introductions

G = gutsy statement or question

R = relevant example

A = appeal to emotions

B = background knowledge

## Conclusions

W = Write a summary.

R = Respond to a question.

A = Ask for action.

P = Predict an outcome.

## Writing a Paragraph

List

Cross-out

Connect

Number

## ALTERNATIVE INTRODUCTIONS

### **G = Gutsy Statement or Question**

*Are you feed up with cell phones ringing while you are teaching? Well, I have heard too many rings as I try to concentrate on your lectures. Cell phones should be banned from all school campuses in the district. When students have cell phones at school, the educational process is interrupted and learning is compromised.*

### **R = Relevant Example**

*As I walk through our school, cell phones are everywhere. Attached to student's ears as they walk the halls and eat in the cafeteria. Ringing during class lectures and assemblies. Vibrating audibly during tests. Cell phones should be banned from all school campuses in the district. When students have cell phones at school, the educational process is interrupted and learning is compromised.*

### **A = Appeal to Emotion**

*Ring... Ring... Ring... Ring... Ring... Ring... Are you going to let these tiny cell phones destroy my education. Please HELP me! Cell phones should be banned from all school campuses in the district. When students have cell phones at school, the educational process is interrupted and learning is compromised.*

## **B = Background Knowledge**

*In the past twenty years, there has been a movement away from landline phones to mobile, cell phones. Almost all adults and 75% of all teens have a cell phone. As a result, phone conversations, once relegated to the living room or kitchen, can be heard in restaurants, movie theaters, stores, churches.... and now SCHOOLS, destroying their academic climate. Cell phones should be banned from all school campuses in the district. When students have cell phones at school, the educational process is interrupted and learning is compromised*



## Thanksgiving – A Day of Gratitude

(Introduction)

My favorite holiday is Thanksgiving for a number of reasons. First, Thanksgiving gives me an opportunity to visit and play with friends and family members. Of course, Thanksgiving is also a great day to enjoy a variety of wonderful foods. In addition, it is a chance to stop and express gratitude for the richness of our lives.

(Body)

First, Thanksgiving affords me the gift of gathering with friends and family members. Normally, I celebrate Thanksgiving on the Friday after the official holiday. Twenty-five to fifty people generally attend my Thanksgiving party. My guests include my sister and her family and an array of friends from across the country. We spend much of our time just visiting, but we also engage in numerous activities. For example, we entertain each other by telling a story, playing the piano or guitar, or singing a song. Guests who don't want to perform make up the attentive audience. As a group, we also sing traditional Thanksgiving songs and hymns. After eating, we play games, go on a group stroll through the neighborhood, and continue our conversations.

Thanksgiving is not only an excellent time to enjoy friends and family members, it is also a wonderful time to EAT. You should see the buffet table at our Thanksgiving party. Of course, we have all the traditional foods: turkey, mashed potatoes, stuffing, and gravy. In addition, we always have a variety of vegetables and a Pacific Northwest specialty, salmon. The guests usually bring the desserts including pies, cakes, and cookies. My

favorite Thanksgiving food may surprise you: bread covered with gravy. Late at night, once my guests have turned off their lights, I slip back to the kitchen for my private snack. I tear a piece of bread into small pieces, cover it with gravy, heat the mixture in the microwave, and sit down for the final feast.

But most importantly, I love Thanksgiving because I take time to reflect on my life and express gratitude for my abundance. Even as I prepare for Thanksgiving, I contemplate my many blessings. As I set the table, I remember many of my relatives: my mother who gave me the salt and pepper shakers, my grandmother who once cherished the pitcher with an autumn leaf design, my sister who brought me the blue serving dish for this party. As I prepare the food, I am reminded of all the gifts that I have in my life that others lack: joyful work, abundant food, the shelter of a house, and warm clothing. My final preparation activity, creating floral arrangements for each of the tables, always carries me into deep gratitude for the beauty of nature. And then my friends arrive and I experience the greatest blessings of my life.

(Conclusion)

As you can see Thanksgiving is my favorite holiday. But it should also be your favorite for Thanksgiving is the only holiday that will never disappoint you. On Christmas, you may not get the gift you hoped for. On Valentine's Day, you may not have a girl or boy friend. On the Fourth of July, the fireworks may be cancelled due to dry conditions. However, on Thanksgiving, you expected turkey and you got it!

**Example # 12 - Short Story**

**Think Sheet – Story**

**(7) Title**

**(3) Setting**

**(1) Main Character(s)**

**(2) Problem**

**(4) Beginning**

**(5) Middle**

**(6) End**



## Autobiographical Incident Think Sheet

<b>(5)</b>	<b>Title</b>	<i>Give Heart</i>
<b>(1)</b>	<b>Incident</b>	<i>Fifth grade with Mrs. Finkle -- Heart pin</i>
<b>(3)</b>	<b>Settings</b>	<i>Mountain View Elementary School</i>
<b>(4)</b>	<b>Events</b>	
	1.	<i>Arrive at Mountain View.</i>
	2.	<i>Difficulty adapting to new fifth grade class.</i>
	3.	<i>Decided to be silent.</i>
	4.	<i>Mrs. Finkle was kind and caring.</i>
		<i>Talked to me.</i>
		<i>Patted my back.</i>
		<i>Smiled at me.</i>
	5.	<i>Class got better.</i>
		<i>Made friends.</i>
		<i>Participated in class.</i>
	6.	<i>Mrs. Finkle caught heart pin in hairnet.</i>
	7.	<i>Helped Mrs. Finkle remove pin.</i>
	8.	<i>She gave me the pin and told me to "give heart" as a teacher.</i>
	9.	<i>Today I wear on Valentine's Day.</i>
	10.	<i>Wear hearts every day ... and try to "give heart".</i>
<b>(2)</b>	<b>Lesson learned</b>	
		<i>Give heart to all people. Show love and care.</i>

## Give Heart

Being a teacher was not even a consideration at the time, but Mrs. Finkle, my fifth grade teacher, taught me my first lesson about teaching. Even now, it is the lesson that I try to practice every day.

Mountain View was the second school of my fifth grade, the eighth school of my short school career. After so many moves, the prospect of making new friends, of learning about a new teacher, of once again learning the classroom routines, brought me to total silence. For an outgoing person, silence was a new experience. I just didn't want to try again.

However, Mrs. Finkle was not about to lose my mind or soul. I will never forget the little things she did each day to reach out to the silent one: talking with me as we lined up for music, patting my back as I worked on math problems, quietly praising my efforts, writing comments on my papers. Best of all, when I was reading or working, I would look up and there would be her smile...greeting me, making me feel safe.

Gradually, the scary life of fifth grade in a new school began to fade. I did make friends. I did begin to talk in class. I began to write long stories and to read them to my class. All of this occurred because of the love and care shared by Mrs. Finkle.

And one day, she shared a symbol of that love. It was right before recess and most of the kids were already

out the door. Mrs. Finkle and I were both at the cloakroom pulling on hats, gloves, and coats as protection against the February cold. As she put on her coat, Mrs. Finkle caught her hairnet on her red heart pin that always rested on her collar. After struggling for a moment, she beckoned, "Anita , would you help me." Soon I had separated the heart pin from her hairnet. However, instead of replacing the pin, she handed it to me and gently directed, "You take it. You will be a teacher someday. Remember to give heart...always."

Forty years later, I wear that heart each Valentine's Day. But everyday, I wear at least one heart and try to remember her message as I teach. "Give heart." Thanks, Mrs. Finkle.