Introduction

SpringBoard instruction in writing is addressed in two integrated ways:
• through project-based, scaffolded writing assessments in the student texts
• through SpringBoard writing workshops

To support students in becoming effective writers, these writing workshops offer guided experiences in specific rhetorical and grammar and usage skills, emphasizing practice and mastery of specific writing modes. The SpringBoard writing workshops offer direct writing instruction to support and extend mastery of the writing process and commonly assessed written products. Each workshop guides students through the writing of three separate texts in the specific mode being taught: one that is constructed as a class with direct guidance from the teacher, one that is peer constructed with teacher support, and one that is written independently.

Instructional Design
The SpringBoard writing workshops follow an instructional sequence designed to support students in their initial writing efforts and to provide practice to help them gain independent writing skills. Each workshop is composed of four activities that are structured to provide a gradual release of control, moving students from a class writing exercise to writing independently.

Activity 1 requires students to read a mentor text and to study it from the perspective of a writer to understand structure and stylistic techniques the author uses to create meaning in the text.

Activity 2 has students participate in a class-constructed writing practice in which the teacher guides students in writing a model text that incorporates learning from the analysis of the mentor text in Activity 1. Activity 2 enables the most proficient writer in the room—the teacher—to model SpringBoard writing strategies and to help students move successfully through the writing process to create a text that adheres to the Learning Targets outlined for the activity.

Activity 3 has students work in collaborative groups to apply knowledge learned from the first two activities and to produce a writing product that meets the expectations for writing in the specific mode. For this activity, students do the planning and writing, while teachers monitor their work and provide mini-lessons as needed to differentiate instruction and to support student learning.

Activity 4 requires students to work on their own to produce writing that demonstrates all the characteristics of the mode they have been learning and practicing.

Vertical Articulation of Writing Skills and Concepts
The SpringBoard writing workshops provide extensive coverage in essential modes, as well as in creative modes. For each writing mode, there is a clear sequence of writing development, taking students through organizational structure, presentation of ideas, use of stylistic techniques, use of sentence structure for effect, and incorporation of grammar and language conventions. Each writing workshop is accompanied by a Scoring Guide that outlines the performance expectations for each writing mode and provides accountability for the learning targets identified at each grade level.
In the upper grades these writing workshops provide several opportunities for students to practice responding to writing prompts that are modeled on AP-type prompts, thus preparing them to demonstrate the skills needed for college entrance exams, AP assessments, and high-stakes state assessments.

Through writing experiences in the SpringBoard texts as well as in these writing workshops, students will be prepared to write in any tested genre and will gain the following:

• Reading-writing connections that result in transferable literacy skills
• Ability to produce writing in a variety of modes
• Experience in using research to inform writing and to support credible argument
• Skills in collaborating and communicating with other writers
• Language development in writing and speech, as well as embedded grammar instruction that focuses on structure and effect in writing

Acknowledgments

The College Board gratefully acknowledges the contributions of the following classroom teachers and writers who contributed to the revision of these writing workshops.

Lance Balla
K-12 English Curriculum Developer
Bellevue School District 405
Bellevue, Washington

T. J. Hanify
English Language Arts AP Teacher
Bellevue School District 405
Bellevue, Washington

Robert J. Caughey
AP English Teacher
San Dieguito Union High School District
San Diego, California

Susan Van Doren
English Language Arts & AP Teacher
Douglas County School District
Minden, Nevada

Charise Hallberg
English Language Arts AP Teacher
Bellevue School District 405
Bellevue, Washington

Michelle Lewis
Curriculum Coordinator: English and Social Studies
Spokane Public School
Spokane, Washington

SpringBoard English Language Arts Staff

Joely Negedly
English Language Arts
Instructional Specialist

Doug Waugh
Executive Director,
Product Management

JoEllen Victoreen
English Language Arts
Senior Instructional Specialist
Writing Process: Stages and Strategies

Learning Targets
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including high school grade levels).
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on high school–level topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

The Writing Process
Writing is a recursive process and not merely a set of stages to follow when composing a text. Successful writers are flexible in how they approach a writing assignment. They use a variety of strategies to carry out and manage the task of composing. This workshop is designed to help you understand the stages of the writing process and strategies that will help develop your own writing process.

To complete this workshop you will work with your teacher and your classmates to construct a model essay. You will then use this model to write your own essay.

Activity 1

Exploring the Writing Process

Before Reading
1. What is your writing process? Describe the stages you go through, from beginning to end, to publish a piece of writing.

Stages of the Writing Process
2. Define the traditional stages of the writing process listed below in random order. Work with a partner to brainstorm the role of the writer within each stage of the writing process.
### Writing Workshop 1 (continued)

#### Writer's Role

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sharing and Responding</th>
<th>Prewriting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Editing</th>
<th>Publishing</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Revising</th>
<th>Drafting</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

#### Writing Process Graphic

3. After discussing the writing process, create a graphic representation of your writing process to show its stages and their recursive nature.

#### During Reading

**Reading like a Writer**

4. Read this student text from the perspective of a writer, thinking about what the writer is trying to convey and what **modes** of writing he uses to convey his ideas.

---

**ACADEMIC VOCABULARY**

- **Mode** refers primarily to types of writing. Common modes include narrative, expository, and persuasive.
- **Genre** refers to text type, as well as to reading forms (short story, speech, memoir, editorial, etc).
"Welcome to the Evergreen State" I read aloud. The sign flashed by. Everything I knew, all the connections I had made now lay halfway across the country. This was a new place if not a whole new world. This was not my decision to pack up and pursue a new future. "Are we almost there?" My brother was impatient, but who could blame him after three days in a compact SUV? "Only ninety more miles; are you guys excited or what?" My mother insisted the journey was almost over, but I knew that a new journey was only just beginning. I was now an alien, an immigrant, a foreigner in search of a new home.

I had seen the shift from a barren, flat, terrain to rocky outcrops and snowcapped mountains. Trees climbed ever higher, crowded by one another, jostling each other in the wind. Not much later, an unrolled window became a passageway for salt spray. For those who have grown on the inhospitable frying pan of the Midwest, a land like Washington is absolutely alien. At this time I was unnerved. The prospect of new beginnings was something I had yet to encounter in life and was certainly not something I looked forward to. Fear loomed behind my fragile facade, ready to crash through whenever I was overcome by weakness.

Fear is a product of human existence, the irrationality of it is obvious and yet it is something we find difficult to overcome. Many fear certain things—heights, snakes, the dark—but my personal fear stems from uncertainty. Change is an idea that makes everyone uncomfortable, but no one believes that they fear change itself until they are confronted with it. There is rarely any physical danger associated with transition, yet we cling to the things we know like a thin lifeline, dangling over peril. My time to hide in the shadow of familiarity had passed and it was time to run headlong into a new beginning. The sheltered life I had become accustomed to was exchanged for a small house in what seemed like the deep woods. Different customs and lifestyles, progressive people, my fear was as irrational as any, but if anything, it was justified.

At the time I was resentful of my mother’s decision, but tolerated it simply because I lacked the will to oppose it. Looking back I am extremely grateful for the choice she made; my entire future has been built on our proximity to the Puget Sound. I know I would have found a job in my home state, but it is difficult to imagine anything as fulfilling as casting off from a dock with no notion of when you will return. It would seem then, that my experience with change is one wrought with irony. The same change I resented as a youth has evolved into a desire for adventure.

Moving itself was not the key event in the whole of my life, but the fear I associated with it and the irrationality of it would resound in my subconscious for years to come. A shift in scenery such as this did much more than open my eyes to new possibilities, it also instilled in me that change is not something to fear. While the unknown may be unsettling, we must embrace it for all that it is, because only then can we take advantage of the boundless opportunity it offers.
After Reading

**SOAPSTone** is most often used for understanding and analyzing essential elements in written texts. Use the SOAPSTone strategy to assess the reading.

- **Who is the Speaker?** What can you infer about the speaker based on references in the text?

- **What is the Occasion?** What are some of the circumstances, issues, or contexts (social, geographical, cultural, or historical) that might have prompted the writer to craft this text?

- **Who is the target Audience?** To whom is this text designed to appeal or reach? Explain. What references from the text support your assertion?

- **What is the Purpose?** Why did the author write this text? How might the writer want the audience to think or respond as a result of reading this text?

- **What is the Subject?** What is the writer’s central idea, position, or main message about life? What references from the text support your assertions?

- **What is the Tone?** What is the writer’s attitude toward his or her subject? Choose a few specific words or phrases from the text, and explain how they support your opinion.

- Identify transitional devices consisting of words, phrases, and clauses that help create coherence in an essay by helping the reader make sense of the writing.
Check Your Understanding
With a partner, evaluate the effectiveness of blending two modes of writing and identify which mode, narrative or expository, dominates the essay. How effective is the author in the blending of the two modes of writing?

ACTIVITY 2
Working Through the Writing Process as a Class

Stage 1: Choosing a Topic
“There is no conversation more boring than the one where everyone agrees.”
—Michael De Montaigne

1. Make a connection between De Montaigne’s quote and choosing a topic. Consider topics of interest to you that would generate an interesting conversation for your readers—one that would be far from boring according to De Montaigne’s quote. What are some subjects that you find intriguing or have strong opinions about? Brainstorm a list of potential writing topics for you to explore and share with your readers.

2. Share the list with your writing group. As you listen to each other and discover similar ideas, add them to your initial list of potential writing topics.

3. Read through your list of topics and circle the most interesting or perplexing topic to you.

Prewriting
“I write because I don’t know what I think until I read what I say.” —Flannery O’Connor

4. Reflect on the meaning of O’Connor’s quote, and make connections between your thinking and the prewriting stage of the writing process.

5. SOAPSTone is most often used for understanding and analyzing essential elements in texts. But it can be applied to guide the creation of a text to ensure that important elements are considered while planning a draft. Use the SOAPSTone strategy to establish preliminary writing goals for your writing task.

Speaker:
• What role or persona might you take on as you craft your text?
Occasion:
• What are your motivations for creating this text? Consider the social, cultural, historical, or geographical contexts that may have triggered a response prompting you to compose a text.

Audience:
• Consider who will be interested in reading my text? Why? What genre or mode will I pursue to appeal to, reach, and engage my readers?

Purpose:
• What is your preliminary position on this topic? How do you want your readers to feel or react after reading your text?

Subject:
• What is your topic, and why do you want to explore this subject?
• Consider what you currently know and need to know in order to guide the exploration of your selected topic.

Tone:
• What is your attitude toward your subject or audience? How will you use language (e.g., diction, syntax, and imagery) to convey your tone?

6. Choose an appropriate prewriting strategy (e.g., free-writing, outlining, or webbing) and prewrite to generate ideas based on your SOAPSTone thinking.

7. Review your prewriting, and consider how the ideas generated fit your writing goals. Next settle upon a preliminary controlling idea to shape your point of view and/or underlying message.

8. Think about the genre (article, memoir, editorial, speech, letter to the editor, problem/solution essay, argumentative essay, reflective essay, diary entry, monologue, script, short story, etc.) you might use. Consider the conventions of the genre and how to develop ideas within it as you prepare to generate your first draft. Consult resources as necessary to familiarize yourself with the organizational structure of your selected genre.

Drafting
“When you first start writing—and I think it’s true for a lot of beginning writers—you’re scared to death that if you don’t get that sentence right that minute it’s never going to show up again. And it isn’t. But it doesn’t matter—another one will, and it’ll probably be better. And I don’t mind writing badly for a couple of days because I know I can fix it—and fix it again and again and again, and it will be better.”—Toni Morrison
9. Write what Morrison’s quote means to you.

10. Revisit the Writer’s Role graphic organizer and discuss how this quote pertains to the drafting stage of the writing process.

11. Describe your experience with drafting in the past.

12. Write a draft for the genre you selected. Use an appropriate tone and structure and organize ideas in a sustained and coherent way, using transitions.

13. An essential component of the writing process is self-evaluation. A constructive self-analysis of one’s work helps to refine writing before consulting feedback from others. Upon completion of your first draft, use the guidelines below to reflect on what you have written so far and make appropriate adjustments.
   • Read through your draft and look for areas of your writing that you can refine on your own.
   • Mark your draft to identify areas that warrant revision for coherence, clarity of ideas, organizational structure, and style (e.g., word choice, rhetorical devices, sentence variety, etc).
   • Notate the areas of your draft where you would like peer support and identify appropriate questions to ask or comments to share in a writing group.

Sharing and Responding in a Writing Group

“Anyone who can improve a sentence of mine by the omission or placing of a key detail is a friend of mine.” — George Moore

14. What is George Moore saying about the act of writing? Do you agree or disagree? Revisit the Writer’s Role graphic organizer and discuss how this quote pertains to the sharing and responding stage of the writing process.

15. In a writing group, all members work collaboratively to assist the writer in the revision process to develop a quality piece of writing. Identify two writing group norms of behavior or guiding principles that help group members communicate effectively.
16. In preparation for sharing, print multiple copies of your paper or read your text aloud. The role of those providing responses should be either to listen to or read the draft carefully. Use the prompts below to provide effective feedback.

Questions to Elicit Feedback for Writers

- What is the text about?
- Identify the strongest part of the paper and explain why it appealed to you as a reader.
- What is the position of the writer? Is it clear? If not, make suggestions for refinement.
- As a reader, how did the text make you feel or affect your beliefs? Explain.
- What could be done to enhance the text’s meaning, credibility, reader appeal?
- What, if any, part of the text should be removed, altered, or rearranged?
- Is the organization of the paper appropriate for the author’s purpose, target audience, and genre? Explain.
- What other questions or comments would you share with the writer?

Revising

“Writing well involves two gifts—the art of adding and the art of taking away. Of the two, the first is more important, since without it the second could not exist.” —John Updike

17. Reflect on the meaning of Updike’s quote and the implications for the revision stage in the writing process. What revision strategies or techniques have you used in the past and what effect did they have on your text?

18. In your writing groups, you received feedback on your draft. Review your notes, read through your draft, and evaluate it to consider which suggestions you will use to improve your draft.

19. Choose an appropriate revision strategy and use it to revise your draft and address readers’ concerns as well as your own concerns.

Adding: Are there any changes you could make to strengthen the central idea or focus? Does anything need to be reorganized or explained more clearly?

Rearranging: What revisions should be made to the structure or organization of paragraphs or sentences?

Deleting: Are there redundancies that could be eliminated? Is there information that does not directly support the central focus?

Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft

20. Now that your draft has been revised to clarify organization and meaning, revise to improve its style. One aspect of style is the conscious use of rhetorical devices such as those listed in the organizer below. Use the graphic organizer to record and analyze examples of rhetorical devices found in the student text above or that you think could be added to increase the effectiveness of this essay.
Syntactical Variety refers to the variety of types of sentences and combinations of sentences a writer chooses to include in a text. Including certain types of sentences or arranging sentences in different ways affects the overall effect of the passage. Review the various ways to alter syntax and isolate areas of your draft to edit for sentence variety, length, style, and order.

**Sentence types:** Declarative, Interrogative, Exclamatory, and Imperative

- **Declarative:** makes a statement: The king is sick.
- **Interrogative:** asks a question: Is the king sick?
- **Exclamatory:** provides emphasis or strong emotion: The king is dead! Long live the king!
- **Imperative:** gives a command: Cure the king!

**Sentence Length:** Telegraphic, Short, Medium, and Long

- **Telegraphic:** sentences shorter than 5 words in length
- **Short:** sentences approximately 5 words in length
- **Medium:** sentences approximately 18 words in length
- **Long:** sentences 30 words or more in length
Sentence Style: Simple, Compound, Complex, Compound-Complex, Cumulative, Periodic, and Balanced

- **Simple**: contains one independent clause: *The goalie waved to his fans.*
- **Compound**: contains two independent clauses joined by a coordinating conjunction or by a semicolon: *The goalie bowed to his fans, but gave no autographs.*
- **Complex**: contains an independent clause and one or more subordinate clauses: *Because the goalie was tired, he went straight to the locker room.*
- **Compound-Complex**: contains two or more independent clauses and one or more subordinate clauses: *The goalie waved while the fans cheered, but he gave no autographs and returned quickly to the locker room.*
- **Cumulative (or loose)**: makes complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending: *We reached New York that morning after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, tired but exhilarated, full of stories to tell our friends and neighbors.*
- **Periodic**: makes sense fully only when the end of the sentence is reached: *That morning, after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, we reached New York.*
- **Balanced**: the phrases or clauses balance each other by their likeness of structure, meaning or length: *Meditation is to the mind what exercise is to the body.*

Sentence Order: Natural and Inverted

- **Natural**: involves constructing a sentence so the subject comes before the predicate: *The group sat beside the swimming pool.*
- **Inverted**: involves constructing a sentence so the predicate comes before the subject: *Beside the swimming pool sat the group.* This device is used to create an emphatic or rhythmic effect.

21. Rhetorical devices and varying sentence syntax are specific techniques used in writing to create a particular effect or enhance the effectiveness of the writer’s message. Read through your draft, and mark the text to identify significant ideas that you want to emphasize for your readers. Revise your draft to incorporate rhetorical devices and varied sentence types and lengths where appropriate.

22. You might want to type your next draft. Print multiple copies to share in your next writing group meeting and evaluate the impact of your edits on your readers.

Editing

“I have the words already. What I am seeking is the perfect order of words in a sentence. You can see for yourself how many different ways they might be arranged.”
—James Joyce

23. How does Joyce’s quote relate to the editing stage of the writing process? Describe your experiences with editing.
**Punctuation:** Punctuation is used to reinforce meaning, construct the desired effect, and express the writer’s voice. Review the purpose of the punctuation marks below, and look at them alongside the published sample. Consider how each punctuation mark is used to convey meaning, affect the reader, or enhance voice. Create an example of each.

### Enhancing Style: Punctuation

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Punctuation Mark: Purpose and Function</th>
<th>Analyze a published model.</th>
<th>Create an original sentence emulating the author’s style.</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>The dash</strong> marks a sudden change in thought or tone, sets off a brief summary, or sets off a parenthetical part of the sentence. A dash often conveys a casual tone.</td>
<td>“It is that fundamental belief—I am my brother’s keeper, I am my sister’s keeper—that makes this country work.” —Barack Obama</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The semicolon</strong> gives equal weight to two or more independent clauses in a sentence. The syntactical balance reinforces parallel ideas and imparts equal importance on both clauses.</td>
<td>“I know not what course others may take; but as for me, give me liberty or give me death!” —Patrick Henry</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>The colon</strong> introduces lists or a complete sentence. It may also emphasize to a reader that something important is coming.</td>
<td>“The deputy told me to empty my pockets: two quarters, a penny, a stick of bubble gum, and a roll of grip tape for my skateboard.” —Carl Hiaasen</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

24. Review your draft and mark the text to identify areas where you can edit sentences to incorporate punctuation purposefully.

**Proofreading:** Share your edited draft in your next writing group meeting.
- Circle all the words that might be misspelled. Use available resources (spell check, dictionary, or peer) to correct errors in spelling.
- Read your draft aloud and carefully watch for typographical errors. Correct errors.
Publishing

“Any writer overwhelmingly honest about pleasing himself is almost sure to please others.”—Marianne Moore

25. Reflect on the meaning of Moore’s quote and the implications for the publishing stage of the writing process. Describe your experiences with publishing.

26. A writer has many choices to publish his or her work. Brainstorm a list of available publishing options.

27. In preparation for completing a final draft, consider the following:
   • Review your research on the conventions of your selected genre and type the text. You might incorporate illustrations in your final draft using appropriate formatting.
   • Brainstorm a list of titles by marking the draft for key words/phrases or identifying a word/phrase that captures the central idea of your text. Use the process of elimination to settle upon an appropriate title for your final draft.
   • Your teacher will provide you with the final guidelines for publication. Take notes on those guidelines and revise your draft accordingly.

Check Your Understanding

Now that you have gone through the stages of the writing process as a group, revisit the writing process graphic you created in Activity 1 and consider whether it still reflects your writing process. Modify it as needed in order to capture your process for writing, and create or select a quote to accompany your visual.

In your writing group,
   • Share your visual
   • Discuss your writing process
   • Explain how you have developed as a writer

ACTIVITY 3

Working Through the Writing Process Independently

1. Use your understanding of your writing process to develop an original text on a topic that appeals to an audience and is in the genre of your choice.
2. Use the following overview of the writing process presented in Activity 2 as a reference guide as you craft your next piece.

Prewriting
- Review your Potential Writing Topics list and select another topic of interest to you to take through the writing process.
- Use the SOAPSTONE strategy to plan a first draft and create writing goals.
- Choose an appropriate prewriting strategy to generate content and consider a preliminary organizational structure.

Drafting
- Review ideas and information generated from prewriting to create a draft.
- Read through your draft to refine it for clarity and coherence in preparation for sharing it with your peers.

Sharing and Responding
- Work collaboratively within writing groups to provide effective responses that will lead to revision.
- Share your draft multiple times for support in the revision and editing phase.

Revising
- Review and evaluate your draft to make any changes you think are appropriate.
- Consider the feedback received from peers and/or your teacher and how you will incorporate those suggestions in your next draft.
- Create a revision checklist that identifies what needs to be done with the draft as well as the strategies and resources needed to accomplish the task.

Editing
- Review your draft and edit for conventions of standard written English and usage (grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization) appropriate for the genre.
- Consult additional resources (mentor texts, handbook, style manuals, dictionaries, spell check, thesaurus, and peer editors) to correct errors in spelling, capitalization, grammar, and punctuation.
- Read through your draft and self-edit it using proofreading marks to signal changes that need to be made in the final draft.

Publishing
- Consider multiple venues to publish your work.
- Produce a final draft that follows the publishing guidelines specified by your teacher. This might include, but are not limited to, appropriate headings, a typed draft (or one written in legible handwriting) an original title, and formatting appropriate for the genre selected.

Reflecting
- Reflect on what you have learned about yourself as a writer.
- Locate a golden line, a best sentence in your draft. Why is this line so powerful?
- If you had more time, what would you do to make it better?
- What did you learn from this writing experience that you could use in the future?
- What did you learn about yourself as a writer?
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The essay • asserts an original focus on an idea or concept to be developed • develops specific ideas skillfully and fully using examples, details and/or evidence</td>
<td>The essay • presents a clear focus on an idea or concept for development • develops ideas clearly using examples, details and/or evidence</td>
<td>The essay • presents a limited and/or unfocused concept or central idea • presents ideas vague or incomplete with examples, details and/or evidence</td>
<td>The essay • lacks a clear claim or focus • ideas are not developed nor supported with relevant or clarifying examples, details and/or evidence</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The essay • leads with a convincing and engaging introduction • uses meaningful transitional devices to guide understanding of the relationship among ideas • logically organizes and effectively sequences ideas • provides a thoughtful conclusion that extends thinking</td>
<td>The essay • presents a clear and focused introduction • uses transitions to create coherence • orders evidence in a way that supports understanding • provides a conclusion that connects the larger ideas presented</td>
<td>The essay • contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction • makes limited use of transitional devices • does not present ideas in a logical order • contains an underdeveloped or unfocused conclusion</td>
<td>The essay • contains a minimal or incomplete introduction • uses few or no meaningful transitions • uses a confusing organization • provides minimal concluding material or none at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The essay • uses a variety of sentence structures to enhance the effect • uses diction that is deliberately chosen for the topic, audience, and purpose • incorporates rhetorical devices skillfully to advance ideas presented • demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English</td>
<td>The essay • uses a variety of sentence structures • uses diction that is appropriate to the topic, audience, and purpose • incorporates rhetorical devices effectively • demonstrates general command of standard English conventions; minor do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The essay • shows little or no variety in sentence structure • uses inappropriate diction for the topic, audience, and purpose • uses few or no rhetorical devices in the text • demonstrates limited command of standard English conventions; errors interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The essay • shows no variety in sentence structure • uses little or no purposeful diction • uses no rhetorical devices effectively • demonstrates poor command of standard English conventions; multiple serious errors interfere with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Argumentative Writing: Problem and Solution

Learning Targets

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led).
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

Writing an Argumentative Essay

Writers use argumentative writing to influence the attitudes or actions of their intended audience regarding a wide variety of issues. Effective argumentation involves clearly identifying issues, anticipating and responding to counterarguments, presenting support for a position, and using sound reasoning to help convince the audience.

To achieve these learning targets, you will work with your teacher and with your classmates to construct two argumentative essays. You will then use these as models for your own writing.

ACTIVITY 1
Discovering the Elements of a Problem-Solution Argument

Before Reading

1. Controversies are part of everyday life. Some controversies in a society or community seem to reach resolution over time, while others remain undecided even after decades of examination and debate. Using the space below, record some controversial issues that have been resolved by American society (even if they have not been accepted by every individual) and some controversial issues that continue to be debated today. An example of each is provided.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Decided Issues</th>
<th>Undecided Issues</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Driving Age</td>
<td>Immigration Law</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
2. The following prompt is from the 2004 AP Language and Composition Exam:

Contemporary life is marked by controversy. Choose a controversial local, national, or global issue with which you are familiar. Then, using appropriate evidence, write an essay that carefully considers the opposing positions on this controversy and proposes a solution or compromise.

In pairs, unpack this prompt, and discuss the requirements of the essay to be written.

During Reading

3. The following essay was written by a student as a timed writing in response to this prompt. With your class, read the essay, paying close attention to the introduction, the evidence used to establish the opposing positions on the selected controversy, and the argumentation used to support the merits of the proposed solution. As you read, mark the text for transitions from one idea to the next. Then, go back and divide the text into sections based on purpose. Identify the purpose of each section and record your thoughts in the margins.

Problem-Solution Essay: Student Sample

Exploring Space

In an era when all the frontiers of civilization's expansion seems to have vanished, when the settling and industrialization of all the Earth's land and resources seem to have reached a limit, we, as innate pioneers, look towards space as our next domain of conquest. Despite a hostile, belligerent beginning to the Space Age, in the midst of global tension and a threat of total cataclysm, mankind has since returned to space as a medium of peace and progress. But space is not free, space is not safe, and space is not easy. With millions of dollars of the federal budget tied up with NASA and related institutions, with unforeseeable dangers plaguing every launch, reentry and landing, and with public interest and support dwindling, should the United States, or any space-capable country for that matter, continue to invest in exploring this frontier in the oncoming century?

The question is not “what are the benefits of exploring space?” History, science, literature, and imagination have all shown what "out-of-this-world" feats we can accomplish and how beneficial they are. The benefits do exist, and they are ubiquitous. The first space-borne object, the Sputnik, paved way for a massive integrated network of communication which plays a critical role in society fifty-five years later. Telephones, televisions, the Internet, and cell phones all depend on satellites in orbit. Science satellites, capable of detecting weather patterns, cosmic rays, and all terrestrial changes, contribute to our awareness and understanding of our surroundings. Information from these satellites tells us how to dress for tomorrow's weather, where a hurricane will hit next, and how much time we have until a Near-Earth Object strikes Earth and destroys all life (God forbid that ever happens). Everyday appliances and textiles have their origins in space, from microwaves to Velcro, from super-comfortable mattresses to super-durable clothing. For the future, space promises many exciting things: new colonies on Mars, new medicinal discoveries in weightlessness, new aliens, elements and dimensions, and a haven for mankind in case Earth's resources are really depleted. In addition, space creates a pop-culture for us, inviting movies, sci-fi literature, and our imagination to explore it. Proponents of space point to these benefits.
But whether these benefits exist or not is not the question. The real dilemma, issue, or controversy is this: at what cost, to what means, with what sacrifice, do we need to pay in order to obtain these benefits? This, precisely, is the argument of the opponents. Certainly, millions of dollars devoted to space instead of solving our problems down here on Earth—poverty, disease, unemployment—could make space unattractive. Serious risks are involved, and the recent Columbia disaster magnifies these risks. Some fear that by exploiting space, we are creating the same military tensions that opened up this frontier in the first place. Eric Sevareid, in his editorial “The Dark of the Moon,” points out some of the psychological costs of going into space. He points out that children will be dreaming of mileage, rocket fuel, and missile noses instead of dreams, hopes and wonders; businesses will now gaze at the moon with passion instead of lovers, and generals and scientists will own space, not our imaginations.

Currently, the United States government is acting on a small 1% NASA budget as a compromise of sorts; space enthusiasts want more, realists want less. A formula for compromise is non-existent, and to create one would be foolhardy. Party lines are drawn. Opinions are carved in stone. What is the solution?

For the uncertainties of the future, look at the certainties of the past. Surely, a similar debate ensued before Columbus left for the Americas, or Marco Polo left for China, or American families for the Turner Frontier. But if we, from hindsight, see how our civilization has changed as a result, we can say with some confidence that moving to space will progress mankind in the right direction. That is not to say that it will be morally and ideally perfect, but we must bear those consequences. When a door has been opened, we take it.

After Reading

4. What is the writer’s claim? Is it precise, leaving the reader with a clear understanding of the writer’s position?

5. How does the writer establish ethos (expertise and reliability) in this text? What parts in particular convince you that the writer is trustworthy and knowledgeable about this topic?

6. How does the writer appeal to logos (logic)? How does the writer appeal to pathos (emotion)?

7. Does the writer select relevant evidence? Is it effective? Why or why not?
8. What counterclaims does the writer address? Are they presented fairly?

9. Identify at least three rhetorical techniques (such as anaphora, parallel structure, metaphor, rhetorical question, etc.) the writer uses.

10. What specific parts or elements would you suggest this writer revise to make the essay more effective? Why would you change these elements, and how?

11. What transitions does the essay writer use?

Check Your Understanding
With a partner, evaluate the effectiveness of this argumentative essay.
• How does the organization of ideas strengthen the content of the argument?
• How evenly were both sides presented before a solution was suggested?
• Does the solution seem to support the writer’s analysis of the two sides to this controversy?

ACTIVITY 2
Writing a Problem-Solution Argumentative Class Essay

WRITING PROMPT: With your class, write an essay that responds to the prompt that inspired the student sample (select a new national controversy). Be sure to
• Establish a clear problem (controversy) and develop a solution (position) based on logical reasons supported by precise and relevant evidence
• Consider a range of information and views on the topic as well as an accurate and honest representation of these views
• Present two opposing sides to the controversy, and establish them with appropriate evidence and balanced commentary
• Propose a solution that reflects thoughtful consideration of both sides of the controversy, and offer commentary and rationale for that proposed solution.
• Use an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context.
• Choose relevant and credible evidence to support your solution.
• Use rhetorical appeals appropriately to support your position and evidence.

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task to help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

Prewriting

1. Reread the prompt, making sure you understand the task it poses. Generate a list of possible controversies for which you believe a balanced or logical solution could be argued. Share your ideas with a partner, and then with the class as the teacher generates a class list. When your class selects a controversy to use for this task, write it and circle it below.

2. Use the following graphic organizer to generate lists of concerns and priorities held by the two sides of the selected issue. Include evidence for those ideas. For example, those in favor of space exploration believe it to inspire valuable technological advancements (such as microwaves and Velcro); those against it believe it to be too risky (astronaut fatalities such as the Columbia explosion).

With your group, brainstorm as many of these opposing viewpoints as you can. Include evidence for each. Then, use the space at the bottom of the organizer to make a list of possible solutions. Consider both sides’ priorities as well as possible compromises that could be entertained.

Research Note: To cite relevant and credible evidence to support a position, you may need to research information related to your topic. Gaining additional information will also help you refine the specific points to make for either the pro or con sides of the issue.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Side 1: Pro</th>
<th>Side 2: Con</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

Possible Solutions
3. Once you have brainstormed a list, choose the two to three most precise and relevant pieces of evidence, and share with the class.

4. After all evidence has been listed and evaluated for relevance and effectiveness, you will have a solid representation of a range of views and information on the topic. As a class, synthesize this information to construct an approach, detail a range of evidence, and propose a solution.

5. Your class should now have a clear and thoughtful approach to both sides of the controversy, a list of specific and relevant evidence, and a proposed solution to the problem. The next step is to review the evidence for a range of appeals. Write each piece of selected evidence on a 3x5 card. On each card, label the corner with an L, E, and/or P (logos, ethos, and pathos) to indicate which appeal(s) could be applied to this evidence.

6. Once your cards are complete, organize them according to their relevance and impact in supporting your position or claim. Then, decide where to use the evidence you have selected as being most effective and relevant. Side A? Side B? Conclusion?
   • For the purpose of this particular essay, which pieces of evidence are the most compelling?
   • Would some of the evidence you brainstormed resonate more with a particular audience?
   • In the context of a formal essay responding to this prompt, how important is the ethos of the writer?
   • Is there an adequate representation of logos (the preferred appeal in academic writing)?
   • How important is pathos to this particular controversy?

Drafting the Essay

7. Working with your teacher, draft the introduction to your problem-solution essay. Be sure to include the following elements:
   • Lead (the attention-grabber)
   • Context (establishing the topic)
   • Guiding question or statement of controversy

It is important to note that in the sample student essay, the introduction does not explicitly state a thesis or propose a solution; this information is saved for the conclusion. By refraining from taking a position early in the essay, the writer can promote a more objective persona while addressing the two sides to the controversy. As the essay develops, the writer’s attitude will become clearer. Effective problem solution essays may develop in a way that leads the audience to conclude that the solution proposed at the end of the essay is the preferable one.

8. The next step in drafting the class essay is to organize the evidence into complete paragraphs discussing one of the two sides of the issue. Use the organizational structure below, or one provided by your teacher, to draft the paragraphs. Then share the results to be considered for inclusion in the class constructed essay.
For each position/side:
- **Topic Sentence:** Statement asserting values and concerns of one side of the controversy
- **Evidence:** Examples to support these values and concerns (include multiple examples of evidence)
- **Commentary:** Explanation of the significance of the evidence or the connection to the claim or counterclaim
- **Transitional Elements:** Words/(phrases (or even sentences or paragraphs) that make explicit connections between the ideas of the argument and establish a sense of the progression of those ideas

9. As a transitional element, the student sample uses one or more paragraphs in the body of the essay before the solution is proposed in the conclusion. In the third body paragraph, the writer establishes the tension of the controversy itself without taking a side. In this manner, the writer is able to acknowledge the struggle between the two sides of the controversy, and how it is affecting the current state of American society in regard to this topic. Consider whether the class topic deserves a similar paragraph before moving into the conclusion.

10. To create the solution paragraph, use the organizational structure below, or one provided by your teacher. It is important that the solution paragraph anticipates and addresses objections.

Lead: Establish what priorities should be valued or what is at stake.

**Topic Sentence:** Introduce the solution (this is essentially the thesis).

**Evidence:** Provide examples/evidence to support the solution.

**Commentary:** Explain the significance of the evidence or its connection to the solution.

**Anticipate Objections:** Acknowledge opponents of the solution.

**Address Objections:** Point out weaknesses of the counterargument and provide evidence for why the claim is more valid than the counterargument.

**Check Your Understanding**
After you have completed this process, read over the problem-solution essay that your class has drafted. Then, respond to these questions:
- Does the introduction clearly identify the controversy that will be explored? Does it offer adequate context?
- Are the strongest concerns of the opposing viewpoints addressed?
- Does the conclusion offer a solution that sounds reasonable, based on how the problem was described?
- Does the organizational structure make sense, based on the purpose of this type of writing? Explain why or why not. Is it effective to end rather than begin with a proposed solution?

**Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft**
Revising to strengthen your writing is an important part of the writing process. After rereading the work your class has completed, analyze the class essay with these questions in mind:
• Should any changes be made to the content or organization to strengthen the argument?
• Should any changes be made to the structure of paragraphs or sentences?
• Does anything need to be reorganized or more elaborately explained?
• Are there missing transitions or choppy shifts in topic that could be improved?
• Are there mistakes in conventions that should be corrected before the draft can be considered polished?

Revising for Language Precision and Clarity
In addition to content and structural considerations, revising for precision and clarity of language enhances effectiveness and formal style. Choosing precise words to communicate your thoughts helps you become a skilled writer. The more words you add to your working vocabulary through reading and study, the more words you will feel comfortable using in your own writing.

A writer’s ethos is built by consistently using appropriate diction for the purpose, topic, and audience. In academic writing, appropriate, precise diction is more important than in less formal writing. Thus, the vocabulary for academic writing becomes an important part of effective communication.

11. Read the following sentences from the sample essay and note the words that make the writer’s sentences more formal and precise in meaning.
Read the following sentences from the essay, and explain how specific words add to the precision of meaning and the effect the writer achieves by using those words instead of simpler words.

“Despite a hostile, belligerent beginning to the Space Age, in the midst of global tension and a threat of total cataclysm, mankind has since returned to space as a medium of peace and progress.”

“Serious risks are involved, and the recent Columbia disaster magnifies these risks.”

“The benefits do exist, and they are ubiquitous.”

“The first space-borne object, the Sputnik, paved the way for a massive integrated network of communication which plays a critical role in society fifty-five years later.”

12. Reread the sample essay and note additional words or sentences that make the language of the essay more formal and precise in meaning. Determine the meanings of any words that are unfamiliar to you. Write the words below and note how those words add to the precision of meaning and the effect of the writer’s diction.
Revising for Coherence

Coherence is achieved by using transitional elements to connect ideas within and between the paragraphs of an essay. Among the transitional elements that you might use to achieve coherence are the following:

- Transitional expressions
- Repetition of key words and phrases
- Parallel form

Using transitional expressions is a common method of creating connections between ideas. For example, the following transitional words and phrases might be used in an argumentative essay:

- **Introducing Examples/Evidence:** *especially, particularly, notably, chiefly, according to (author/source) (example/evidence) (citation)*
- **Adding More Examples/Evidence:** *in fact, in reality, in the same way, furthermore, indeed*
- **Making Concessions and Refutations:** *on the other hand, although, most convincingly; it has been asserted (claimed, argued), it may be argued, some have maintained, it could be claimed, it may be asserted*

More sophisticated use of transitional elements will move beyond using common words and phrases into using clauses, repeating key words and phrases, using rhetorical questions, and even creating entire sentences or paragraphs that are transitions. Look at the following examples.

- **Repeating Key Words and Phrases:** Paragraph 3 ends with “Proponents of space point to these benefits.” Paragraph 4 begins with “But whether these benefits exist or not is not the question.” Note the repetition of “these benefits,” a phrase and an idea that is used multiple times in this essay.

- **Using a Questioning and Answering Strategy:** Rhetorical questions link the first and second paragraphs (hypophora). This rhetorical strategy of asking questions establishes a tone of objectivity by asking and answering questions that link the ideas in the essay for the reader.

- **Using Sentences as Transitions:** Three-fold transitions help you make logical connections between your points in an essay. A three-fold transition sentence does the following:
  - Refers subtly to the ideas discussed in the previous paragraph.
  - Refers briefly to the idea expressed in the thesis.
  - Refers more specifically to new ideas to be discussed in the next paragraph.

  Example: The sentence “After considering the benefits and weighing them against the risks, a solution to the question of continuing to support space exploration becomes more difficult.” might be used to introduce a transitional paragraph.

- **Using Paragraphs as Transitions:** An entire paragraph exists in the sample essay that acts as a transition to the solution paragraph (the conclusion). The writer uses this unusual element to acknowledge the tensions that exist between the benefits of progress and the realities of risk and economics.

Check Your Understanding

- Reread the class essay and delete, replace, or rearrange words in order to enhance the formal style and precision and clarity of word choice.
- Work with your class (or writing group) to revise at least one of your topic sentences, using the methods described above: repeating key words and phrases, using rhetorical questions, and including sentences that make three-fold transitional statements.
ACTIVITY 3

Writing a Problem-Solution Argumentative Essay with Peers

WRITING PROMPT: In writing groups, your task is to respond to the same prompt used in the class-constructed essay. For this collaborative essay, you will need to choose a local issue (school, city, community, etc.). Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts. Your essay should meet the requirements listed in the learning targets for problem-solution essays.

- Establish a clear problem (controversy) and develop a solution (position) based on logical reasons supported by precise and relevant evidence.
- Consider a range of information and views on the topic as well as an accurate and honest representation of these views.
- Present two opposing sides to the controversy, and establish them with appropriate evidence and balanced commentary.
- Propose a solution that reflects a thoughtful consideration of both sides of the controversy, and offer commentary and rationale for that proposed solution.
- Employ an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context.
- Exploit a range of appropriate appeals.

1. In groups, review the writing steps from the class-constructed essay and apply them to your peer-constructed problem-solution essay.
   a. Brainstorm a list of possible local controversies to use as a topic.
   b. Generate a graphic organizer that lists the concerns and priorities of the two sides to the controversy, and possible solutions (see Activity 2). Include evidence.
   c. Conduct research to augment your bank of evidence.
   d. Categorize and evaluate compelling evidence by possible appeal(s). Be sure to include an adequate number of appeals to logos.
   e. Decide on an organizational plan.
   f. Draft an introduction, body paragraphs, and conclusion.
   g. Remember to include transitions within and between paragraphs.

Peer Review

2. Upon completing your essay, reread the requirements for the essay. You will evaluate and provide feedback for another group’s essay based on those criteria as well as a specific focus on elements of argument. Use the revision checklist on the next page to guide your work. Record your feedback on the group’s essay. In addition, make marks regarding editing mistakes that need to be corrected (e.g., spelling, punctuation, etc.) and suggestions for revisions in effective diction and clarity in grammar and sentence structure.

Revising and Editing the Draft

3. After meeting with your peer reviewers and hearing their feedback, work with your group to revise and edit your problem-solution essay. Produce a final draft of your polished work.
### Problem/Solution Essay Revision Checklist

| 1. Introduction | - Is the selection of topic appropriate for this task and relevant today?  
|                 | - Does the introduction provide a guiding question or statement to clarify the controversy?  
|                 | - Is adequate context provided?  

| 2. Side A | - Are the concerns and priorities of the first side of the issue presented clearly and thoroughly?  
|           | - Is compelling evidence included to support these priorities and concerns?  
|           | - Is anything important left unsaid or unacknowledged?  

| 3. Side B | - Are the concerns and priorities of the other side of the issue presented clearly and thoroughly?  
|           | - Is compelling evidence included to support these priorities and concerns?  
|           | - Is anything important left unsaid or unacknowledged?  

| 4. Transition paragraph | - Have the writers included a transition paragraph to establish the controversy as it stands today?  
|                         | - If so, is it effective? Does it contextualize the controversy without passing judgment?  
|                         | - If not, should it be included? Why?  

| 5. Conclusion | - Does the essay address opposing viewpoints clearly, fairly, and completely?  
|               | - Does the essay provide a rational solution that is a logical conclusion based on analysis of the controversy in the body of the essay?  
|               | - Does the suggestion of the solution sound compelling and desirable?  

| 6. Rhetoric | - Has the essay included enough evidence that adequately appeals to logos?  
|             | - Have the writers established their ethos?  
|             | - Is pathos used at appropriate points based on the topic and evidence?  
|             | - Are rhetorical devices appropriately exploited to enhance the persuasiveness of the language itself?  

### ACTIVITY 4

**Independent Writing**

**WRITING PROMPT:** Respond independently to the same prompt used for the sample essay. You will need to choose another national issue (other than the one you used in the class-constructed essay). Review the writing steps from the class-constructed essay and apply them to your independent problem-solution essay. Be sure to:

- Establish a clear problem (controversy) and develop a solution (position) based on logical reasons supported by precise and relevant evidence.
- Consider a range of information and views on the topic as well as an accurate and honest representation of these views.
- Present two opposing sides to the controversy, and establish them with appropriate evidence and balanced commentary.
- Propose a solution that reflects a thoughtful consideration of both sides of the controversy, and offer commentary and rationale for that proposed solution.
- Use an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context.
- Exploit a range of appropriate appeals.

Refer to the Scoring Guide to help you understand expectations.
## SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The essay • establishes a clear problem and develops a thoughtful solution based on a variety of logical reasons • supports reasons with a variety of precise and convincing evidence and authoritative commentary • presents thoughtful consideration of strengths and limits of counterclaims.</td>
<td>The essay • presents a clear problem and develops a solution based on logical reasons • supports reasons with specific and relevant evidence and authoritative commentary • presents thoughtful consideration of strengths and limits of counterclaims fairly.</td>
<td>The essay • presents an unclear or unfocused problem and/or solution; reasons remain undeveloped • contains few reasons with insufficient evidence and vague commentary • presents few counterclaims and neglects to develop them.</td>
<td>The essay • is missing a presentation of the problem or solution • does not include reasons and evidence or they are undeveloped • provides little or no acknowledgment of counterclaims</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The essay • skillfully uses an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context • presents a sustained focus that displays a progression of ideas from problem to solution with clarity • effectively sequences ideas and uses graceful transitions.</td>
<td>The essay • includes an organizing structure appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context • includes a sustained focus that displays ideas from problem to solution with coherence • sequences ideas and uses transitions appropriately.</td>
<td>The essay • may lack an organizing structure or contain one that is inappropriate to the purpose, audience, and context • presents unfocused or underdeveloped ideas leading from problem to solution • does not connect ideas and uses few transitions.</td>
<td>The essay • is organized in a way that is confusing or incomplete • neglects to show a relationship between the problem and the solution • provides little or no transitional thinking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The essay • uses rhetorical appeals purposefully to contribute to persuasive effect • uses varied syntax effectively to enhance clarity of ideas and persuasive effect • uses diction deliberately selected for the topic, audience, and purpose • uses conventions skillfully to enhance rhetorical effectiveness.</td>
<td>The essay • uses rhetorical appeals to support assertions • uses varied syntax for persuasive effect • almost always uses diction appropriate for the topic, audience and purpose • uses conventions correctly; minor errors do not affect meaning.</td>
<td>The essay • uses rhetorical appeals ineffectively or not at all • shows little or no variety in sentence structure • uses inappropriate diction for the topic, audience, and purpose • uses conventions incorrectly; errors interfere with meaning or are so numerous that they are distracting.</td>
<td>The essay • shows little understanding or use of rhetorical appeals • lacks variety in sentence structure • demonstrates imprecise and/or inappropriate diction • includes errors so numerous as to be confusing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Targets
• Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
• Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to the task, purpose, and audience.
• Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
• Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Writing an Expository Essay
In this writing workshop, you will practice writing an expository essay to communicate ideas and information about a topic to a specific audience and for a specific purpose. Writers often use expository essays to define or describe a subject, to provide directions for how to do something, to pose a problem and its solution, or to compare subjects by exploring how they are similar and different.

The focus of this workshop is analyzing and writing an expository essay organized as a problem-solution essay. To complete the workshop, you will work with your teacher and your classmates to construct two model expository essays. You will then use these models to write your own expository essay that achieves the following:
• Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs.
• Contains a clearly stated purpose or controlling idea.
• Uses well-chosen details.
• Uses an organizing structure that is appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context.
• Accurately synthesizes ideas from several sources.
• Uses a variety of rhetorical devices, sentence structures, and transitions.

ACTIVITY 1
Discovering Elements of a Multi-Paragraph Problem-Solution Essay

Before Reading
1. Quickwrite: What do you know about expository writing? How does the purpose of a problem-solution essay fit into the expository mode?
2. In a problem-solution essay, a writer poses a problem and provides one or more solutions to that problem. List some problems and their solutions that you could write about.


**During Reading**

4. Read the following essay to discover the thesis or controlling idea. As you read, mark the text to locate supporting information (i.e., well-chosen, relevant details that support the thesis).

**Sample Text**

**Class Dismissed**


by Walter Krin

According to the unwritten constitution that governs ordinary American life and makes possible a shared pop culture that even new immigrants can jump right into after a few movies and a trip to the mall, the senior year of public high school is less a climactic academic experience than an occasion for oafish goofing off, chronic truancy, random bullying, sloppy dancing in rented formalwear and interludes of moody, wan philosophizing (often at sunrise while still half-drunk and staring off at a misty river or the high-school parking lot) about the looming bummer of adulthood. In films like “Ferris Bueller’s Day Off,” “Dazed and Confused” and “High School Musical 3,” senior year is a do-little sabbatical from what is presented as the long dull labor of acquiring knowledge, honing skills and internalizing social norms. It’s a spree, senior year, that discharges built-up tensions. It’s an adolescent Mardi Gras. And it’s not an indulgence but an entitlement. Remember that line in your yearbook? Seniors rule! And they rule not because they’ve accomplished much, necessarily (aside from surviving to age 18 or so and not dropping out or running away from home), but because it’s tradition, and seniors crave tradition. They crave it because they know, deep down, they’re lost, and tradition helps them hide this fear. From juniors.

This year of licensed irresponsibility, this two-semester recurring national holiday, was threatened recently in Utah by a Republican legislator’s proposal to do away with 12th grade entirely. The idea was advanced as a budget-cutting measure — a way to shave millions from the cash-strapped state’s expense sheet — and it called forth the sort of instant, intense hostility that often signals that an inspired notion, truly innovative, truly new, has, by some miracle, entered politics. The proposal drew scorn from teachers and students alike (another tribute to its possible genius) and swiftly spread across the news wires, eliciting such hostility and controversy that its sponsor flinched. Aware, perhaps, that his offbeat plan was drawing unwelcome attention to a state that has spent the modern era in a permanent defensive crouch thanks to a Mormon religious culture that many view as joyless and eccentric, the lawmaker suggested that 12th grade — that ritual time out from the march of time itself — be made optional rather than nonexistent.
But did he compromise too readily? For many American high-school seniors, especially the soberest and most studious, senior year is a holding pattern, a redundancy, a way of running out the clock on a game that has already been won. When winter vacation rolls My Notes around, many of them, thanks to college early-admissions programs, know all they need to about their futures and have no more reason to hang around the schoolhouse than prehistoric fish had need for water once they grew limbs and could crawl out of the oceans. As for students who aren't headed to four-year colleges but two-year community colleges or vocational schools, why not just get started early and read “Moby Dick” for pleasure, if they wish, rather than to earn a grade that they don't need? Kids who plan to move right into the labor force are in the same position. They may as well spend the whole year in detention — which some of them, bored and restless, end up doing. Twelfth grade, for the sorts of students I've just described, amounts to a fidgety waiting period that practically begs for descents into debauchery and concludes in a big dumb party under a mirror ball that spins in place like the minds of those beneath it.

It's not just one Utah lawmaker who has noticed this. The Bill and Melinda Gates Foundation has, too, it seems. In the interest of speeding students on their way to productive, satisfying careers, the foundation intends to give a $1.5 million grant to a project organized by the nonprofit National Center on Education and the Economy. The goal is to help certain students leapfrog the keg party and go directly from 10th grade to community colleges after passing a battery of tests. The goal is not to save money but precious time, and the program is modeled on systems now in place in Denmark, Finland, France and Singapore — countries whose young folk, in many cases, speak English more grammatically than a lot of American high-school seniors do. One of the fledgling program's backers, Terry Holliday, Kentucky's commissioner of education, calls the program's approach “move on when ready.” Compared with the prevailing current system, which might be termed “move on when all your friends do” or “move on when stir-crazy” or just “move on,” it seems both more pragmatic and humane, not to mention more likely to raise the G.D.P.

If senior year were to vanish from our high schools, either completely or in part, would its infamous excesses, feats of sloth, dances and stretches of absenteeism shift to junior year? To some degree. But what also might happen is that the education process, if it was shortened and compressed some, might help kids think more clearly about their paths in life and set out on them on the right foot instead of waiting to shape up later on. And what would they miss, really, under such a system? As someone who left high school a year early thanks to an offer from a progressive college that I didn't seek but hungrily accepted (anything to escape those hours of “study hall” that we passed by folding sheets of paper until they couldn't be folded any tighter, at which point we flicked them at one another's heads), I guess I wouldn't know. But I did learn from my visits home that my former classmates’ senior years did them few favors maturation-wise, other than to make one an unwed mother and a couple of them into victims of major car collisions. That's why, to my mind, Utah should feel free to ax senior year, bank the savings and see what happens. My hunch is that nothing will happen. Nothing much. Just the loss of a year when nothing much happens anyhow.

After Reading

5. Revisit the sample text, and number each paragraph to help you analyze the organizational structure of the essay. Work with a partner to discuss the purpose of each paragraph and how the writer has organized the information. Note your thoughts in the margin.
6. After analyzing the sample text, use the graphic organizer below to chart the
components and characteristics and identify the purpose of each paragraph in
this problem-solution essay. This organizer can later serve as a model for you
during the writing process as you generate and refine your own essay.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Components/Characteristics</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Check Your Understanding**
Respond to the following questions:
- What are some possible solutions for the problem of wasted time during the
  senior year of high school?
- Why is it important to understand the relationship between a problem and a
  solution or solutions? How might you use this type of writing in your academic
career? Provide examples.
ACTIVITY 2

Writing a Class Essay

WRITING PROMPT: Write an essay in which you analyze a problem and present a solution (or solutions) to an issue related to your school. Be sure the essay meets the following requirements:
• Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs.
• Contains a clearly stated purpose or controlling idea.
• Uses well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient details.
• Uses an organizing structure that is appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context.
• Accurately synthesizes ideas from several sources.
• Uses a variety of rhetorical devices, sentence structures, and transitions.

Prewriting
1. Reread and mark the writing prompt above to clarify the task.

2. With your class, choose a topic for the essay and write it here.

3. Once the class has selected a topic, begin the process of creating content for the essay. Use separate paper or your Reader/Writer Notebook for prewriting ideas.

4. What resources might you need in order to complete or add to your knowledge of this problem and possible solutions? What primary or secondary sources could you access? Are there experts you could consult?

5. Once you have found additional resources, locate and evaluate information about problems and solutions that you can gather from these resources and that will be helpful in writing your class essay.

6. To create an effective draft, you will need a thesis to give focus to the essay. A thesis statement has two purposes: to express a central opinion to be proven in the essay and to suggest how the writer intends to show or develop the opinion. An effective thesis should include an opinion; it is not a fact. Consider a three-part process when developing a working thesis:
• Define or identify the task set by the prompt.
• Consider what needs to be addressed in the response.
• Decide how best to respond.

Your thesis shows your reader that you are competent and fully committed to your opinion on the subject. With your class, generate a working thesis statement and write it here.

Successful problem-solution essays clearly state a real problem and offer real solutions. The essay analyzes the problem by discussing its parts, causes, and context. It explains why various solutions to the problem thus far tried have not been successful. The essay then clearly states a solution or solutions. It concludes by presenting practical benefits to a clearly stated solution.
7. Consider an effective order for presenting your ideas that is appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of your topic. Briefly describe your ideas for the problem, solution(s), and conclusion in the space below.

Drafting the Essay

Next, as a class you will draft the body paragraphs for your class essay. A body paragraph includes these elements:

- **Topic sentence:** A strong, clear, organizing sentence which consists of a subject and opinion that works directly to support the thesis.
- **Transitions:** Words or phrases used to connect ideas (e.g., *for example, for instance*).
- **Supporting information:** Relevant facts and details that are appropriate for the topic and relevant to the opinion in the thesis.
- **Commentary:** Sentences that explain how the information is relevant to the thesis/topic sentence. These sentences are vital as they serve to reflect, analyze, explain, and interpret. Sentences of commentary also bring a sense of closure to the paragraph.

8. With your class, generate an outline for the body paragraphs. Then draft your body paragraphs on separate paper.

Introducing and Concluding the Essay

Now you are ready to create the introduction and conclusion of the essay. Introductory paragraphs include the following:

- A hook or lead: Consider using an anecdote, quote, question, or statement of intrigue to create your hook or lead.
- A connection between the hook/lead and the thesis.
- A thesis statement describing the subject and opinion.

The conclusion brings a sense of closure to the essay. The most satisfying essay is one in which the conclusion provides an interesting way of wrapping up ideas introduced in the beginning of the essay and developed throughout. Use levels of questions to guide your thinking in crafting a conclusion that echoes, but does not exactly repeat, your controlling idea or thesis:

- What did you say? (literal)
- What does it mean? (interpretive)
- Why does it matter? (universal)

Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft

Now that the class essay is fully drafted, consider more carefully the language used to convey your ideas. A writer makes deliberate stylistic choices in language for effect, variety, and coherence.

Rhetorical devices communicate a particular purpose to an intended audience and to help ideas have a lasting effect on the reader. Some examples of rhetorical devices are anaphora, hypophora, and antithesis. In revising the draft of the class essay, try to incorporate one or more of these rhetorical devices to add interest.

- **Anaphora** is the repetition of the same word or group of words at the beginnings of two or more successive clauses or lines.

- **Hypophora** occurs when the writer poses one or more questions and then proceeds to answer them, usually at some length. The purpose of using hypophora can be to maintain the reader’s curiosity and interest. It can also serve to raise an obvious question the reader may have, which then allows the writer to answer it to fit his or her purpose.

- **Antithesis** shows a contrast in ideas by an obvious contrast in the words or clauses within a parallel grammatical structure.

Certain types of sentences, or their arrangement, can affect the text significantly by adding interest or emphasis. Writers sometimes deliberately choose a variety of syntactical constructions for their sentences; at other times, they consciously repeat at certain types of sentences to achieve a desired effect. **Varying sentence structure** can be achieved by using different sentence styles.

- **Parallel Structure**: Words, phrases, or clauses that have the same grammatical form and are similar in length are parallel in structure.

- **Telegraphic sentences** or **rhetorical fragments**: Rhetorical fragments and telegraphic sentences are short phrases or short, simple sentences used for emphasis and to slow down the reader.

  - Note how the short sentence is followed by rhetorical fragments that emphasize the main idea through repetition of the word “nothing.”

- **Balanced sentences** contain phrases or clauses that balance each other with a similar structure, meaning, or length;

  - Examples include balanced words, phrases, and clauses that simultaneously express two ideas or thoughts.

**GRAMMAR & USAGE**

**Parallel Structure**

In the first example of parallel structure, the writer uses parallel verbs (ax, bank, see). A comma separates the first two phrases, but this writer chose not to use a comma after “bank savings.” In modern usage, writers often omit the last in a series of commas. Compare this usage with the second example in which the writer separates the noun phrases (“goofing off, chronic truancy, random bullying, sloppy dancing” with commas).
Coherence: A coherent essay presents ideas that tie together and flow smoothly, making the essay easy for the reader to follow. Revise for coherence by using transitional words and phrases within and between paragraphs.

- **Transitional words** and phrases that can be used to prove include the following: because, since, for the same reason, obviously, evidently, furthermore, besides, indeed, in fact, in any case.

10. With your class, revise the class-constructed essay to include rhetorical devices, varying sentence structures, and effective transitions to improve coherence.

11. Reflection: What additional support might you need to write a problem-solution essay?

**ACTIVITY 3**

**Writing an Essay with Peers**

**WRITING PROMPT:** Write an essay in which you analyze a problem and present a solution(s) related to a topic studied in one of your classes. Be sure the essay:
- Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs.
- Contains a clearly stated purpose or controlling idea.
- Uses well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient details.
- Uses an organizing structure that is appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context.
- Uses a variety of rhetorical devices, sentence structures, and transitions.

Review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.

**Prewriting to Generate Content**

1. In your writing group, review and mark the prompt to highlight major elements of the task. Use a prewriting strategy to explore ideas that may address the prompt.

2. Select the best ideas from your prewriting to construct a working thesis.

3. What other resources might you use to complete or add to your knowledge of this subject and a solution or solutions to the problem? What primary or secondary sources could you access? Are there experts to be consulted?

4. Once you have found additional resources, locate and evaluate information about the problem and the solution or solutions that will be helpful in writing your essay.

**Drafting**

5. Review and organize the ideas from your prewriting as you draft your body paragraphs. Use an outline to organize your ideas. Be sure to brainstorm topic sentences that support the thesis and make distinctions about the relative value of specific data, facts, and ideas that support the topic sentences and thesis statement. Draft your body paragraphs, and include commentary.
6. In your groups read and share your body paragraphs and agree on an effective way to introduce and conclude your key ideas. Use a prewriting strategy to generate a draft with an effective introduction (e.g., hook/lead, connection, and thesis) and conclusion (responses to the levels of questions).

Revising

7. Review the elements of an expository essay on the first page of this workshop, and use them as a writer’s checklist. Read aloud your draft in your writing group, and gather feedback based on the criteria of an effective problem-solution essay.

8. Review language use. Select ideas to emphasize by incorporating sentence variety as well as appropriate rhetorical devices such as anaphora, hypophora, and antithesis. If your draft contains too many simple sentences, discuss the sentences that could be revised for clarity or to achieve your desired effect.

9. Review your draft for coherence.
   • Discuss which transitions can be used effectively to link ideas within and between your body paragraphs. Incorporate transitions into your draft.
   • Revise topic and concluding sentences as needed to be sure they include transitional elements.

Editing for Publication

10. Read your draft and peer edit to correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

11. Discuss the key ideas in your essay and generate a list of creative titles. Rank them and select one. Place a title at the top of your essay.

Assessing your Draft

12. With your group, use the Scoring Guide to evaluate your essay and ensure that it meets all of the requirements. If possible, exchange your essay with another group and allow them to evaluate it against the Scoring Guide to ensure your essay is successful.

Activity 4

Independent Writing

Writing Prompt: Write an essay in which you analyze a problem and present a solution or solutions. Consider selecting a problem that reaches beyond your school to the community or to the country or world. Follow the prewriting, drafting, and revising process you have been practicing during this workshop. Be sure the essay:
   • Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs.
   • Contains a clearly stated purpose or controlling idea.
   • Uses well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient details.
   • Uses an organizing structure that is appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context.
   • Accurately synthesizes ideas from several sources.
   • Uses a variety of rhetorical devices, sentence structures, and transitions.

Review the Scoring Guide for the specific requirements of this writing activity.
## SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The essay • asserts a focused, clearly stated thesis • makes valid inferences to make important connections and distinctions • develops and supports the thesis with relevant facts, extended definitions, concrete details, or quotations appropriate to the audience.</td>
<td>The essay • asserts a topic with a thesis • makes inferences to make connections and distinctions • develops and supports the thesis with facts, extended definitions, concrete details, or quotations appropriate to the audience.</td>
<td>The essay • presents a topic with an unfocused or limited thesis • makes few inferences about ideas, concepts, information and makes limited connections and distinctions • contains insufficient or inappropriate facts, definitions, details, or quotations appropriate to the audience.</td>
<td>The essay • presents a confusing topic without a controlling idea or thesis • does not develop ideas clearly or make inferences from information or connections for the reader • uses vague facts, details, or examples that lead to reader confusion.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The essay • organizes complex ideas effectively using a structure appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context • leads with an engaging introduction and concludes by insightfully articulating the significance of the thesis • sequences ideas effectively and uses a variety of meaningful transitions.</td>
<td>The essay • organizes ideas using a structure appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context • presents a clear and focused introduction and conclusion • sequences ideas and uses transitions to create coherence.</td>
<td>The essay • organizes ideas using a structure that is inappropriate for the purpose, audience, and context; expected parts may be missing • contains an undeveloped introduction • presents disconnected ideas and limited use of transitions • contains an undeveloped conclusion.</td>
<td>The essay • does not contain a clear structure for the ideas presented • does not include an introduction and/or presents an unfocused introduction • presents disconnected ideas and uses few or no transitions • contains a confusing conclusion or no conclusion at all.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The essay • uses precise and purposeful diction and a variety of sentence types and structures to enhance the effectiveness • uses rhetorical devices effectively to accomplish the purpose • demonstrates skillful command of standard English conventions.</td>
<td>The essay • uses appropriate diction for the topic and a variety of sentence types or structures • uses rhetorical devices • demonstrates general command of conventions; minor errors do not interfere with meaning.</td>
<td>The essay • uses diction that is inappropriate for the topic • shows little or no variety in sentence structure • uses few or no rhetorical devices • demonstrates limited command of conventions; errors interfere with meaning.</td>
<td>The essay • uses diction that is inappropriate for the information or explanation • shows no variety in sentence structure • uses no rhetorical devices • demonstrates limited command of conventions; multiple errors interfere with meaning.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Narrative Writing: Short Story

Learning Targets
• Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
• Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
• Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
• Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
• Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
• Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.
• Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
• Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
• Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
• Use parallel structure.

Writing a Short Story
A short story is a type of creative text in which writers share insights and observations about life through characters and theme. Readers often see characters experience a pivotal moment, grow, and change in some way. This type of writing draws upon personal experiences and imagination.

You will work with your teacher and your classmates to construct two model stories. You will then use these models to construct your own story.

Activity 1
Discovering the Elements of a Short Story

Before Reading
1. Think about a story that you really enjoyed. What did you like about the story?

2. What are some elements that are common to good short stories?
During Reading
3. As you read the sample short story, look for elements of a good story and mark the text when you find them.

Sample Text

Everyday Use

by Alice Walker

I will wait for her in the yard that Maggie and I made so clean and wavy yesterday afternoon. A yard like this is more comfortable than most people know. It is not just a yard. It is like an extended living room. When the hard clay is swept clean as a floor and the fine sand around the edges lined with tiny, irregular grooves, anyone can come and sit and look up into the elm tree and wait for the breezes that never come inside the house.

Maggie will be nervous until after her sister goes: she will stand hopelessly in corners, homely and ashamed of the burn scars down her arms and legs, eying her sister with a mixture of envy and awe. She thinks her sister has held life always in the palm of one hand, that “no” is a word the world never learned to say to her.

You’ve no doubt seen those TV shows where the child who has “made it” is confronted, as a surprise, by her own mother and father, tottering in weakly from backstage. (A pleasant surprise, of course: What would they do if parent and child came on the show only to curse out and insult each other?) On TV mother and child embrace and smile into each other’s faces. Sometimes the mother and father weep, the child wraps them in her arms and leans across the table to tell how she would not have made it without their help. I have seen these programs.

Sometimes I dream a dream in which Dee and I are suddenly brought together on a TV program of this sort. Out of a dark and soft-seated limousine I am ushered into a bright room filled with many people. There I meet a smiling, gray, sporty man like Johnny Carson who shakes my hand and tells me what a fine girl I have. Then we are on the stage and Dee is embracing me with tears in her eyes. She pins on my dress a large orchid, even though she has told me once that she thinks orchids are tacky flowers.

In real life I am a large, big-boned woman with rough, man-working hands. In the winter I wear flannel nightgowns to bed and overalls during the day. I can kill and clean a hog as mercilessly as a man. My fat keeps me hot in zero weather. I can work outside all day, breaking ice to get water for washing; I can eat pork liver cooked over the open fire minutes after it comes steaming from the hog. One winter I knocked a bull calf straight in the brain between the eyes with a sledge hammer and had the meat hung up to chill before nightfall. But of course all this does not show on television. I am the way my daughter would want me to be: a hundred pounds lighter, my skin like an uncooked barley pancake. My hair glistens in the hot bright lights. Johnny Carson has much to do to keep up with my quick and witty tongue.

But that is a mistake. I know even before I wake up. Who ever knew a Johnson with a quick tongue? Who can even imagine me looking a strange white man in the eye? It seems to me I have talked to them always with one foot raised in flight, with my
head fumed in whichever way is farthest from them. Dee, though. She would always look anyone in the eye. Hesitation was no part of her nature.

“How do I look, Mama?” Maggie says, showing just enough of her thin body enveloped in pink skirt and red blouse for me to know she’s there, almost hidden by the door.

“Come out into the yard,” I say.

Have you ever seen a lame animal, perhaps a dog run over by some careless person rich enough to own a car, sidle up to someone who is ignorant enough to be kind to him? That is the way my Maggie walks. She has been like this, chin on chest, eyes on ground, feet in shuffle, ever since the fire that burned the other house to the ground.

Dee is lighter than Maggie, with nicer hair and a fuller figure. She’s a woman now, though sometimes I forget. How long ago was it that the other house burned? Ten, twelve years? Sometimes I can still hear the flames and feel Maggie’s arms sticking to me, her hair smoking and her dress falling off her in little black papery flakes. Her eyes seemed stretched open, blazed open by the flames reflected in them. And Dee, I see her standing off under the sweet gum tree she used to dig gum out of; a look of concentration on her face as she watched the last dingy gray board of the house fall in toward the red-hot brick chimney. Why don’t you do a dance around the ashes? I’d wanted to ask her. She had hated the house that much.

I used to think she hated Maggie, too. But that was before we raised money, the church and me, to send her to Augusta to school. She used to read to us without pity; forcing words, lies, other folks’ habits, whole lives upon us two, sitting trapped and ignorant underneath her voice. She washed us in a river of make-believe, burned us with a lot of knowledge we didn’t necessarily need to know. Pressed us to her with the serious way she read, to shove us away at just the moment, like dimwits, we seemed about to understand.

Dee wanted nice things. A yellow organdy dress to wear to her graduation from high school; black pumps to match a green suit she’d made from an old suit somebody gave me. She was determined to stare down any disaster in her efforts. Her eyelids would not flicker for minutes at a time. Often I fought off the temptation to shake her. At sixteen she had a style of her own: and knew what style was.

I never had an education myself. After second grade the school was closed down. Don’t ask me why: in 1927 colored asked fewer questions than they do now. Sometimes Maggie reads to me. She stumbles along good-naturedly but can’t see well. She knows she is not bright. Like good looks and money, quickness passes her by. She will marry John Thomas (who has mossy teeth in an earnest face) and then I’ll be free to sit here and I guess just sing church songs to myself. Although I never was a good singer. Never could carry a tune. I was always better at a man’s job. I used to love to milk till I was hooked in the side in ’49. Cows are soothing and slow and don’t bother you, unless you try to milk them the wrong way.

I have deliberately turned my back on the house. It is three rooms, just like the one that burned, except the roof is tin; they don’t make shingle roofs any more. There are no real windows, just some holes cut in the sides, like the portholes in a ship, but not round and not square, with rawhide holding the shutters up on the outside. This house is in a pasture, too, like the other one. No doubt when Dee sees it she will want to tear it down. She wrote me once that no matter where we “choose” to live, she will manage to come see us. But she will never bring her friends. Maggie and I thought about this and Maggie asked me, “Mama, when did Dee ever have any friends?”

She had a few. Furtive boys in pink shirts hanging about on washday after school. Nervous girls who never laughed. Impressed with her they worshiped the
well-turned phrase, the cute shape, the scalding humor that erupted like bubbles in lye. She read to them.

When she was courting Jimmy T she didn’t have much time to pay to us, but turned all her faultfinding power on him. He flew to marry a cheap city girl from a family of ignorant flashy people. She hardly had time to recompose herself.

When she comes I will meet—but there they are!

Maggie attempts to make a dash for the house, in her shuffling way, but I stay her with my hand. “Come back here,” I say. And she stops and tries to dig a well in the sand with her toe.

It is hard to see them clearly through the strong sun. But even the first glimpse of leg out of the car tells me it is Dee. Her feet were always neat-looking, as if God himself had shaped them with a certain style. From the other side of the car comes a short, stocky man. Hair is all over his head a foot long and hanging from his chin like a kinky mule tail. I hear Maggie suck in her breath. “Uhhnhh,“ is what it sounds like. Like when you see the wriggling end of a snake just in front of your foot on the road. “Uhhnnhh.”

Dee next. A dress down to the ground, in this hot weather. A dress so loud it hurts my eyes. There are yellows and oranges enough to throw back the light of the sun. I feel my whole face warming from the heat waves it throws out. Earrings gold, too, and hanging down to her shoulders. Bracelets dangling and making noises when she moves her arm up to shake the folds of the dress out of her armpits. The dress is loose and flows, and as she walks closer, I like it. I hear Maggie go “Uhhnnh“ again. It is her sister’s hair. It stands straight up like the wool on a sheep. It is black as night and around the edges are two long pigtails that rope about like small lizards disappearing behind her ears.

“Wa-su-zo-Tean-o!” she says, coming on in that gliding way the dress makes her move. The short stocky fellow with the hair to his navel is all grinning and he follows up with “Asalamalakim, my mother and sister!” He moves to hug Maggie but she falls back, right up against the back of my chair. I feel her trembling there and when I look up I see the perspiration falling off her chin.

“Don’t get up,” says Dee. Since I am stout it takes something of a push. You can see me trying to move a second or two before I make it. She turns, showing white heels through her sandals, and goes back to the car. Out she peeks next with a Polaroid. She stoops down quickly and lines up picture after picture of me sitting there in front of the house with Maggie cowering behind me. She never takes a shot without making sure the house is included. When a cow comes nibbling around the edge of the yard she snaps it and me and Maggie and the house. Then she puts the Polaroid in the back seat of the car, and comes up and kisses me on the forehead.

Meanwhile Asalamalakim is going through motions with Maggie’s hand. Maggie’s hand is as limp as a fish, and probably as cold, despite the sweat, and she keeps trying to pull it back. It looks like Asalamalakim wants to shake hands but wants to do it fancy. Or maybe he don’t know how people shake hands. Anyhow, he soon gives up on Maggie. 


“No, Mama,” she says. "Not ’Dee,’ Wangero Leewanika Kemanjo!”

“What happened to ‘Dee?’” I wanted to know.

“She’s dead,” Wangero said. "I couldn’t bear it any longer, being named after the people who oppress me.”
“You know as well as me you was named after your aunt Dicie,” I said. Dicie is my sister. She named Dee. We called her “Big Dee” after Dee was born.

“But who was she named after?” asked Wangero.

“I guess after Grandma Dee,” I said.

“And who was she named after?” asked Wangero.

“Her mother,” I said, and saw Wangero was getting tired. “That’s about as far back as I can trace it,” I said. Though, in fact, I probably could have carried it back beyond the Civil War through the branches.

“Well,” said Asalamalakim, “there you are.”

“Uhhh,” I heard Maggie say.

“There I was not,” I said, "before 'Dicie' cropped up in our family, so why should I try to trace it that far back?"

He just stood there grinning, looking down on me like somebody inspecting a Model A car. Every once in a while he and Wangero sent eye signals over my head.

“How do you pronounce this name?” I asked.

“You don’t have to call me by it if you don’t want to,” said Wangero.

“Why shouldn’t I?” I asked. “If that’s what you want us to call you, we’ll call you.”

“I know it might sound awkward at first,” said Wangero.

“I’ll get used to it,” I said. “Ream it out again.”

Well, soon we got the name out of the way. Asalamalakim had a name twice as long and three times as hard. After I tripped over it two or three times he told me to just call him Hakim-a-barber. I wanted to ask him was he a barber, but I didn’t really think he was, so I didn’t ask.

“You must belong to those beef-cattle peoples down the road,” I said. They said “Asalamalakim” when they met you, too, but they didn’t shake hands. Always too busy: feeding the cattle, fixing the fences, putting up salt-lick shelters, throwing down hay. When the white folks poisoned some of the herd the men stayed up all night with rifles in their hands. I walked a mile and a half just to see the sight.

Hakim-a-barber said, “I accept some of their doctrines, but farming and raising cattle is not my style.” (They didn’t tell me, and I didn’t ask, whether Wangero (Dee) had really gone and married him.)

We sat down to eat and right away he said he didn’t eat collards and pork was unclean. Wangero, though, went on through the chitlins and corn bread, the greens and everything else. She talked a blue streak over the sweet potatoes. Everything delighted her. Even the fact that we still used the benches her daddy made for the table when we couldn’t effort to buy chairs.

“Oh, Mama!” she cried. Then turned to Hakim-a-barber. “I never knew how lovely these benches are. You can feel the rump prints,” she said, running her hands underneath her and along the bench. Then she gave a sigh and her hand closed over Grandma Dee’s butter dish. “That’s it!” she said. “I knew there was something I wanted to ask you if I could have.” She jumped up from the table and went over in the corner where the churn stood, the milk in it crabber by now. She looked at the churn and looked at it.

“This churn top is what I need,” she said. “Didn’t Uncle Buddy whittle it out of a tree you all used to have?”
"Yes," I said.

"Un huh," she said happily. "And I want the dasher, too."

"Uncle Buddy whittle that, too?" asked the barber.

Dee (Wangero) looked up at me.

"Aunt Dee's first husband whittled the dash," said Maggie so low you almost couldn't hear her. "His name was Henry, but they called him Stash."

"Maggie's brain is like an elephant's," Wangero said, laughing. "I can use the chute top as a centerpiece for the alcove table," she said, sliding a plate over the chute, "and I'll think of something artistic to do with the dasher."

When she finished wrapping the dasher the handle stuck out. I took it for a moment in my hands. You didn't even have to look close to see where hands pushing the dasher up and down to make butter had left a kind of sink in the wood. In fact, there were a lot of small sinks; you could see where thumbs and fingers had sunk into the wood. It was beautiful light yellow wood, from a tree that grew in the yard where Big Dee and Stash had lived.

After dinner Dee (Wangero) went to the trunk at the foot of my bed and started rifling through it. Maggie hung back in the kitchen over the dishpan. Out came Wangero with two quilts. They had been pieced by Grandma Dee and then Big Dee and me had hung them on the quilt frames on the front porch and quilted them. One was in the Lone Stat pattern. The other was Walk Around the Mountain. In both of them were scraps of dresses Grandma Dee had worn fifty and more years ago. Bits and pieces of Grandpa Jattell's Paisley shirts. And one teeny faded blue piece, about the size of a penny matchbox, that was from Great Grandpa Ezra's uniform that he wore in the Civil War.

"Mama," Wangro said sweet as a bird. "Can I have these old quilts?"

I heard something fall in the kitchen, and a minute later the kitchen door slammed.

"Why don't you take one or two of the others?" I asked. "These old things was just done by me and Big Dee from some tops your grandma pieced before she died."

"No," said Wangero. "I don't want those. They are stitched around the borders by machine."

"That'll make them last better," I said.

"That's not the point," said Wangero. "These are all pieces of dresses Grandma used to wear. She did all this stitching by hand. Imagine!" She held the quilts securely in her arms, stroking them.

"Some of the pieces, like those lavender ones, come from old clothes her mother handed down to her," I said, moving up to touch the quilts. Dee (Wangero) moved back just enough so that I couldn't reach the quilts. They already belonged to her.

"Imagine!" she breathed again, clutching them closely to her bosom.

"The truth is," I said, "I promised to give them quilts to Maggie, for when she marries John Thomas."

She gasped like a bee had stung her.

"Maggie can't appreciate these quilts!" she said. "She'd probably be backward enough to put them to everyday use."
“I reckon she would,” I said. “God knows I been saving ’em for long enough with nobody using ’em. I hope she will!” I didn't want to bring up how I had offered Dee (Wangero) a quilt when she went away to college. Then she had told they were old-fashioned, out of style.

“But they’re priceless!” she was saying now, furiously; for she has a temper. “Maggie would put them on the bed and in five years they’d be in rags. Less than that!”

“She can always make some more,” I said. “Maggie knows how to quilt.”

Dee (Wangero) looked at me with hatred. “You just will not understand. The point is these quilts, these quilts!”

“Well,” I said, stumped. “What would you do with them?”

“Hang them,” she said. As if that was the only thing you could do with quilts.

Maggie by now was standing in the door. I could almost hear the sound her feet made as they scraped over each other.

“She can have them, Mama,” she said, like somebody used to never winning anything, or having anything reserved for her. “I can ‘member Grandma Dee without the quilts.”

I looked at her hard. She had filled her bottom lip with checkerberry snuff and gave her face a kind of dopy, hangdog look. It was Grandma Dee and Big Dee who taught her how to quilt herself. She stood there with her scarred hands hidden in the folds of her skirt. She looked at her sister with something like fear but she wasn’t mad at her. This was Maggie’s portion. This was the way she knew God to work.

When I looked at her like that something hit me in the top of my head and ran down to the soles of my feet. Just like when I’m in church and the spirit of God touches me and I get happy and shout. I did something I never done before: hugged Maggie to me, then dragged her on into the room, snatched the quilts out of Miss Wangero’s hands and dumped them into Maggie’s lap. Maggie just sat there on my bed with her mouth open.

“Take one or two of the others,” I said to Dee.

But she turned without a word and went out to Hakim-a-barber.

“You just don’t understand,” she said, as Maggie and I came out to the car.

“What don’t I understand?” I wanted to know.

“Your heritage,” she said. And then she turned to Maggie, kissed her, and said, “You ought to try to make something of yourself, too, Maggie. It’s really a new day for us. But from the way you and Mama still live you’d never know it.”

She put on some sunglasses that hid everything above the tip of her nose and chin.

Maggie smiled; maybe at the sunglasses. But a real smile, not scared. After we watched the car dust settle I asked Maggie to bring me a dip of snuff. And then the two of us sat there just enjoying, until it was time to go in the house and go to bed.

**After Reading**

4. What is the main focus of this short story?
The Elements of a Short Story

Plot and Conflict

5. Use the following graphic organizer to sketch the plot of story. Your plot diagram includes a space to take notes about conflict. Be sure to think about both internal and external conflicts faced by the character(s).

6. Critique the conflicts and the resolution in the sample story. Did the resolution surprise you? Was it satisfying? Did it seem like the natural results of the conflicts and what occurred in the story?
Characterization and Point of View

7. Use the Characterization graphic organizer as a model to take notes about a major character: Dee, Maggie, or their mother. Copy the graphic organizer as needed to take notes about each of the other characters in the story.

8. What point of view does the writer of the sample short story use? Include evidence from the text to support your answer.

Theme

9. What is the theme of the story and how does the author convey the theme?

10. On a separate sheet of paper, take notes as directed by your teacher on the literary strategies and devices used in the sample story.

Check Your Understanding

• How can point of view affect the way a story is told?
• What strategies can writers use to reveal their characters to the reader?
• How does Walker express the theme of this story?
ACTIVITY 2
Writing a Class-Constructed Short Story

WRITING PROMPT: Write a short story that meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets. Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you to plan your efforts.

Prewriting
Planning the Plot
1. Brainstorm as many ideas for a new story as you can think of. Consider twists on the sample story, ideas inspired by work you have in your portfolio, new ideas you want to explore, and so on. You might consider writing the events in “Everyday Use” from a different character’s point of view. Alternatively, you might consider writing an original story about a family reunion.

2. Take notes as you and your class construct a plot together. Use the Plot Diagram to guide your discussion.
Planning the Character(s)
3. Copy and use the Characterization graphic organizer from Activity 1 for each of the characters in your class-constructed story.

Planning the Setting
4. What is the setting of your story?

5. Brainstorm sensory details (details that appeal to sight, hearing, touch, taste, or smell) to help you develop a believable story setting. Record the results of your brainstorming below and, as needed, on separate paper.

Drafting
6. Experiment with different points of view in the opening of the story. Using a first person point of view, in which the narrator tells the story, as in “Everyday Use,” is very effective for showing how a character grows or changes. You might also consider a first person narrator who is a minor character, observing the actions of the main characters. To write a story that follows more than one character, you should consider the third person point of view, in which the narrator tells the story as an outside observer.

7. Role-play with dialogue that reveals characterization and moves the plot forward.

8. Revisit and refine the climax and resolution. Does the conclusion seem like a natural result of the events that preceded it? Is this a fitting end for your characters? Is there a lesson learned, either by the characters or the audience? Make the necessary changes, big or small, to improve the climax and resolution of the story.

Revising
Revising for Literary Strategies and Devices
9. Reread the class-constructed story. What effect was your class trying to achieve? How well was this achieved?

Check Your Understanding
After you have drafted your short story, use the following checklist and the Scoring Guide to evaluate your story and consider revisions.

• Does the story include a well-structured, well-paced sequence of events?
• Are main characters well-developed and believable?
• Have you built a thought-provoking conflict that leads to a satisfying resolution?
Writing Workshop 4 (continued)

- Have you included descriptive, sensory details to enhance the mood and tone of your story?
- Have you used a range of literary strategies and devices to strengthen your writing?

Revising

Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft: Parallel Structure
Using parallel structure means using the same pattern of words to show that two or more ideas have the same level of importance. Words, phrases, and clauses can be parallel. The usual way to join parallel structures is by using coordinating conjunctions such as “and” or “or.”

Words and Phrases

Not Parallel:
The production manager was asked to write his report quickly, accurately, and in a detailed manner.

Parallel:
The production manager was asked to write his report quickly, accurately, and thoroughly.

Clauses
A parallel structure that begins with a pattern of clauses must continue with clauses. Changing to another pattern or changing the voice of the verb (from active to passive or vice versa) will break the parallelism.

Not Parallel:
The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, that they should not eat too much, and to do some warm-up exercises before the game.

Parallel:
The coach told the players that they should get a lot of sleep, that they should not eat too much, and that they should do some warm-up exercises before the game.

Examples from the Sample Story
“I have talked to them always with one foot raised in flight, with my head turned in whichever way is farthest from them.”

“She washed us in a river of make-believe, burned us with a lot of knowledge we didn’t necessarily need to know.”

Practice: Underline the elements of the sentences below that are parallel:
If you want to succeed here, you have to be patient, you have to be resilient, and usually, you have to be lucky.

Thinking he would lose, he bet on the other team. Suspecting this was illegal, he told no one.
Practice: Rewrite the sentences below so that they have parallel structure:

Elena likes reading books, writing stories, and math.

Always remember to try new things, to make new friends, and don’t be afraid of new challenges.

Revising for Parallel Structure

10. Look for areas where you can use parallel structure, especially parallel verbs or clauses, to add fluency to sentences. Aim for a minimum of two sentences with parallel structure. Use your Language and Writer’s Craft activity as a reference.

Editing

11. Use the model short story, “Everyday Use,” your list of the elements of a good story, and the Scoring Guide to make sure that the final draft of your class-constructed story meets the requirements of the Learning Targets.

ACTIVITY 3

Writing a Short Story with a Partner

WRITING PROMPT: Work with a partner to write a short story that meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets and the Scoring Guide.

Prewriting

Generating Content

1. Add to your brainstorming list of story ideas.

2. Work with your partner and take prewriting notes for a collaborative story.

Planning the Plot

3. Copy the Plot Diagram graphic organizer and use it to plan the plot of your story. Remember that your main character(s) should face both internal and external conflicts.

Planning the Setting

4. Create a Setting graphic organizer and plan how you can use sensory details to make the setting believable.

Planning the Characters

5. Copy and use the Characterization graphic organizer from the previous activities to plan each of your characters.
Drafting

6. Use the sample story and your class-constructed model story, your notes, and your graphic organizers as you and your partner draft a story opening together. You might begin in the middle of the action, or you might begin with characters in dialogue. Keep in mind that you should be trying to create interesting and believable characters, using point of view and the tools of characterization.

7. Participate with another partner pair in sharing and responding to ideas for refining your opening. Mark the draft and take good notes so you will remember what you discussed.

8. Use your models and your notes while you and your partner continue drafting your story. Don’t be afraid to modify your original plot line, as long as you and your partner agree. Your story conflict(s) should be well developed.

9. Participate again in sharing and responding to ideas for refining the middle of your story. Remember to take good notes.

10. Reread the endings of your model stories. Remember that your goal is to write a story with a well-developed resolution. With your partner, draft the ending of your story.

11. Participate in sharing and responding to ideas for refining your ending. Again, take good notes.

Revising

12. With your partner, reread your draft and mark the draft to identify your use of literary strategies and devices. Take notes on where you can employ or improve your use of a strategy or device to enhance the plot. Make a plan to revise the draft based on your notes.

13. Make sure that you have two sentences (or pairs of sentences) that use parallel structure. Remember, these can use parallel words, such as verbs with the same tense, or parallel clauses. Underline where you have used this strategy. Refer to your Language and Writer’s Craft activity as needed.

Peer Review

14. Reread your draft, and use the list of elements of a good short story to evaluate your work so far. Take notes on any missing elements and discuss areas where you and your partner agree that revisions are needed. Refine your plan for revision.

15. Participate in sharing and responding to thoughts and suggestions with another pair of students, and use their feedback to help you expand ideas for revision.

16. Use your notes and the feedback from your writing discussions as you revise your short story.
Editing

17. Edit your story to eliminate errors, perfect your formatting, and prepare your work for publication.

ACTIVITY 4
Independent Writing

WRITING PROMPT: Write a short story that meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets and the Scoring Guide. Be sure to
• Include a well-structured, well-paced sequence of events
• Develop main characters who are well-rounded and believable
• Build a thought-provoking conflict that leads to a satisfying resolution
• Include descriptive, sensory details to enhance the mood and tone of your story
• Use a range of literary strategies and devices to strengthen your writing
• Use parallel structure effectively

You might consider developing a story that is similar to “Everyday Use,” or you might try to create something fresh and original. As you pre-write, use new copies of the graphic organizers used to develop plot and characterization in the previous activities, or make your own new organizer.

Remember to use parallel structure at least twice in your new story. Underline where you employ this strategy.
## SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The story • sustains focus on setting, character, events, and/or ideas to strengthen the unity of the story • presents a thought-provoking conflict and resolution to heighten reader interest • develops engaging and authentic characters that grow in complexity throughout the story</td>
<td>The story • generally sustains focus on setting, character, events, and/or ideas to maintain the unity of the story • includes a well-developed conflict and resolution to sustain reader’s interest • develops interesting and believable characters that grow in depth in the story</td>
<td>The story • does not sustain focus on setting, character, events, and/or ideas, limiting the unity of the story • contains an incomplete or unfocused conflict and resolution • contains characters that are not developed or not believable</td>
<td>The story • presents little or no focus on setting, character, event, and/or idea to contribute to story unity • contains no recognizable conflict and resolution • contains characters that are not developed or believable</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The story • uses form or structure appropriate to purpose and that enhances story effectiveness • skillfully sequences events to develop conflict(s) and build toward a dynamic climax and thoughtful resolution • provides an insightful ending with a clear and reasonable resolution</td>
<td>The story • uses form or structure that is appropriate to the purpose • includes a sequence of events that develop the conflict and build toward the climax and resolution • provides a comprehensive ending that contains a clear resolution</td>
<td>The story • may use form or structure that is partially evident or inappropriate to the purpose • presents disconnected events and an unfocused conflict or confusing climax with little resolution • contains an underdeveloped ending with little or no resolution</td>
<td>The story • uses no evident form or structure, or one that is inappropriate to the purpose • presents disconnected events and an unfocused, confusing climax with inadequate or no resolution. • presents no clear ending or resolution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Language</strong></td>
<td>The story • skilfully uses sensory details to enhance mood or tone • effectively uses a range of literary strategies (e.g., dialogue, suspense) and devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback, motif, mood, allusion, allegory, paradox, irony) to enhance plot • employs varied syntax, including effective parallel structure • demonstrates command of standard English conventions</td>
<td>The story • uses sensory details to define the mood or tone • uses a range of literary strategies (e.g., dialogue, suspense) and devices (e.g., foreshadowing, flashback, motif, mood, allusion, allegory, paradox, irony) to establish plot • Employs varied syntax with some attempt at parallel structure • demonstrates general command of conventions; minor errors do not interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The story • uses limited sensory details to create an unfocused mood or tone • contains few or no literary strategies and devices presenting a confusing or incomplete plot • Little variety of syntax and/or no use of parallel structure • demonstrates limited command of conventions; errors interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The story • uses little or no sensory details to create mood or tone • misuses or does not use literary strategies or devices to purposeful effect • misuses or does not use variety of syntax or parallel structure • misuses conventions to the degree that it interferes with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Response to Literature: Short Story

Learning Targets
• Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
• Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
• Analyze how complex characters (e.g., those with multiple or conflicting motivations) develop over the course of a text, interact with other characters, and advance the plot or develop the theme.
• Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
• Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
• Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
• Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
• Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.
• Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 9–10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

Writing a Response to Literature
The purpose of a response-to-literature essay is to demonstrate thoughtful understanding of a literary passage. The writer crafts an analysis of the text and the author’s stylistic technique and supports the analysis with textual evidence to convey meaning to the reader.

You will work with your teacher and classmates to construct two model essays. You will use these models to write your own essay. Be sure the essay
• Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
• Analyzes literature and extends beyond a summary or literal analysis
• Contains a controlling idea or thesis
• Provides evidence from the text using embedded quotes
• Analyzes the aesthetic effects of an author’s use of stylistic or rhetorical devices
• Includes relevant information and valid inferences
• Uses an organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and context
• Uses a variety of rhetorical devices
• Uses transitions between paragraphs
• Uses a variety of sentence structures

Review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.
ACTIVITY 1

Discovering the Elements of a Multi-Paragraph Response-to-Literature Essay

Before Reading

1. Quickwrite: Describe the purpose, organization, elements, and possible audiences of a response-to-literature essay. Describe your past experiences writing in this genre.

During Reading

2. Conduct a close reading of Alice Walker’s short story “Everyday Use.”

Use the SIFT (Symbols, Images, Figures of speech, Tone) strategy to focus your analysis of a fictional text by

- examining symbols in the title and text
- identifying images and sensory details
- analyzing figures of speech
- identifying how all these elements reveal tone and theme

While reading, mark the text for elements of SIFT in order to analyze how the author uses symbolism, imagery, figurative language, and tone to convey theme. This will help prepare you to write a response-to-literature essay.

Sample Text

Everyday Use

by Alice Walker

I will wait for her in the yard that Maggie and I made so clean and wavy yesterday afternoon. A yard like this is more comfortable than most people know. It is not just a yard. It is like an extended living room. When the hard clay is swept clean as a floor and the fine sand around the edges lined with tiny, irregular grooves, anyone can come and sit and look up into the elm tree and wait for the breezes that never come inside the house.

Maggie will be nervous until after her sister goes: she will stand hopelessly in corners, homely and ashamed of the burn scars down her arms and legs, eying her sister with a mixture of envy and awe. She thinks her sister has held life always in the palm of one hand, that “no” is a word the world never learned to say to her.

You’ve no doubt seen those TV shows where the child who has “made it” is confronted, as a surprise, by her own mother and father, tottering in weakly from
backstage. (A pleasant surprise, of course: What would they do if parent and child
came on the show only to curse out and insult each other?) On TV mother and child
embrace and smile into each other's faces. Sometimes the mother and father weep, the
child wraps them in her arms and leans across the table to tell how she would not have
made it without their help. I have seen these programs.

Sometimes I dream a dream in which Dee and I are suddenly brought together
on a TV program of this sort. Out of a dark and soft-seated limousine I am ushered
into a bright room filled with many people. There I meet a smiling, gray, sporty man
like Johnny Carson who shakes my hand and tells me what a fine girl I have. Then we
are on the stage and Dee is embracing me with tears in her eyes. She pins on my dress
a large orchid, even though she has told me once that she thinks orchids are tacky
flowers.

In real life I am a large, big-boned woman with rough, man-working hands. In
the winter I wear flannel nightgowns to bed and overalls during the day. I can kill and
clean a hog as mercilessly as a man. My fat keeps me hot in zero weather. I can work
outside all day, breaking ice to get water for washing; I can eat pork liver cooked over
the open fire minutes after it comes steaming from the hog. One winter I knocked a
bull calf straight in the brain between the eyes with a sledge hammer and had the meat
hung up to chill before nightfall. But of course all this does not show on television. I am
the way my daughter would want me to be: a hundred pounds lighter, my skin like an
uncooked barley pancake. My hair glistens in the hot bright lights. Johnny Carson has
much to do to keep up with my quick and witty tongue.

But that is a mistake. I know even before I wake up. Who ever knew a Johnson
with a quick tongue? Who can even imagine me looking a strange white man in the
eye? It seems to me I have talked to them always with one foot raised in flight, with my
head fumed in whichever way is farthest from them. Dee, though. She would always
look anyone in the eye. Hesitation was no part of her nature.

“How do I look, Mama?” Maggie says, showing just enough of her thin body
enveloped in pink skirt and red blouse for me to know she's there, almost hidden by the
door.

“Come out into the yard,” I say.

Have you ever seen a lame animal, perhaps a dog run over by some careless person
rich enough to own a car, sidle up to someone who is ignorant enough to be kind to
him? That is the way my Maggie walks. She has been like this, chin on chest, eyes on
ground, feet in shuffle, ever since the fire that burned the other house to the ground.

Dee is lighter than Maggie, with nicer hair and a fuller figure. She's a woman now,
though sometimes I forget. How long ago was it that the other house burned? Ten,
twelve years? Sometimes I can still hear the flames and feel Maggie's arms sticking to
me, her hair smoking and her dress falling off her in little black papery flakes. Her
eyes seemed stretched open, blazed open by the flames reflected in them. And Dee.
I see her standing off under the sweet gum tree she used to dig gum out of; a look of
concentration on her face as she watched the last dingy gray board of the house fall
in toward the red-hot brick chimney. Why don't you do a dance around the ashes? I'd
wanted to ask her. She had hated the house that much.

I used to think she hated Maggie, too. But that was before we raised money, the
church and me, to send her to Augusta to school. She used to read to us without pity;
forcing words, lies, other folks' habits, whole lives upon us two, sitting trapped and
ignorant underneath her voice. She washed us in a river of make-believe, burned us
with a lot of knowledge we didn't necessarily need to know. Pressed us to her with the
serious way she read, to shove us away at just the moment, like dimwits, we seemed
about to understand.
Dee wanted nice things. A yellow organdy dress to wear to her graduation from high school; black pumps to match a green suit she’d made from an old suit somebody gave me. She was determined to stare down any disaster in her efforts. Her eyelids would not flicker for minutes at a time. Often I fought off the temptation to shake her. At sixteen she had a style of her own: and knew what style was.

I never had an education myself. After second grade the school was closed down. Don’t ask my why: in 1927 colored asked fewer questions than they do now. Sometimes Maggie reads to me. She stumbles along good-naturedly but can’t see well. She knows she is not bright. Like good looks and money, quickness passes her by. She will marry John Thomas (who has mossy teeth in an earnest face) and then I’ll be free to sit here and I guess just sing church songs to myself. Although I never was a good singer. Never could carry a tune. I was always better at a man’s job. I used to love to milk till I was hooked in the side in ’49. Cows are soothing and slow and don’t bother you, unless you try to milk them the wrong way.

I have deliberately turned my back on the house. It is three rooms, just like the one that burned, except the roof is tin; they don’t make shingle roofs any more. There are no real windows, just some holes cut in the sides, like the portholes in a ship, but not round and not square, with rawhide holding the shutters up on the outside. This house is in a pasture, too, like the other one. No doubt when Dee sees it she will want to tear it down. She wrote me once that no matter where we “choose” to live, she will manage to come see us. But she will never bring her friends. Maggie and I thought about this and Maggie asked me, “Mama, when did Dee ever have any friends?”

She had a few. Furtive boys in pink shirts hanging about on washday after school. Nervous girls who never laughed. Impressed with her they worshiped the well-turned phrase, the cute shape, the scalding humor that erupted like bubbles in Iye. She read to them.

When she was courting Jimmy T she didn’t have much time to pay to us, but turned all her faultfinding power on him. He flew to marry a cheap city girl from a family of ignorant flashy people. She hardly had time to recompose herself.

When she comes I will meet—but there they are!

Maggie attempts to make a dash for the house, in her shuffling way, but I stay her with my hand. “Come back here,” I say. And she stops and tries to dig a well in the sand with her toe.

It is hard to see them clearly through the strong sun. But even the first glimpse of leg out of the car tells me it is Dee. Her feet were always neat-looking, as if God himself had shaped them with a certain style. From the other side of the car comes a short, stocky man. Hair is all over his head a foot long and hanging from his chin like a kinky mule tail. I hear Maggie suck in her breath. “Uhn, nh,” is what it sounds like. Like when you see the wriggling end of a snake just in front of your foot on the road. “Uhn, nh.”

Dee next. A dress down to the ground, in this hot weather. A dress so loud it hurts my eyes. There are yellows and oranges enough to throw back the light of the sun. I feel my whole face warming from the heat waves it throws out. Earrings gold, too, and hanging down to her shoulders. Bracelets dangling and making noises when she moves her arm up to shake the folds of the dress out of her armpits. The dress is loose and flows, and as she walks closer, I like it. I hear Maggie go “Uhn, nh” again. It is her sister’s hair. It stands straight up like the wool on a sheep. It is black as night and around the edges are two long pigtails that rope about like small lizards disappearing behind her ears.

“Wa-su-zo-Tean-of!” she says, coming on in that gliding way the dress makes her move. The short stocky fellow with the hair to his navel is all grinning and he follows up with “Asalalika, my mother and sister!” He moves to hug Maggie but she falls back, right up against the back of my chair. I feel her trembling there and when I look up I see the perspiration falling off her chin.
“Don’t get up,” says Dee. Since I am stout it takes something of a push. You can see me trying to move a second or two before I make it. She turns, showing white heels through her sandals, and goes back to the car. Out she peeks next with a Polaroid. She stoops down quickly and lines up picture after picture of me sitting there in front of the house with Maggie cowering behind me. She never takes a shot without making sure the house is included. When a cow comes nibbling around the edge of the yard she snaps it and me and Maggie and the house. Then she puts the Polaroid in the back seat of the car, and comes up and kisses me on the forehead.

Meanwhile Asalamalakim is going through motions with Maggie’s hand. Maggie’s hand is as limp as a fish, and probably as cold, despite the sweat, and she keeps trying to pull it back. It looks like Asalamalakim wants to shake hands but wants to do it fancy. Or maybe he don’t know how people shake hands. Anyhow, he soon gives up on Maggie.


“No, Mama,” she says. “Not ‘Dee,’ Wangero Leewanika Kemanjo!”

“What happened to ‘Dee’?” I wanted to know.

“She’s dead,” Wangero said. “I couldn’t bear it any longer, being named after the people who oppress me.”

“You know as well as me you was named after your aunt Dicie,” I said. Dicie is my sister. She named Dee. We called her “Big Dee” after Dee was born.

“But who was she named after?” asked Wangero.

“I guess after Grandma Dee,” I said.

“And who was she named after?” asked Wangero.

“Her mother,” I said, and saw Wangero was getting tired. “That’s about as far back as I can trace it,” I said. Though, in fact, I probably could have carried it back beyond the Civil War through the branches.

“Well,” said Asalamalakim, “there you are.”

“Uhnnnh,” I heard Maggie say.

“There I was not,” I said, “before ‘Dicie’ cropped up in our family, so why should I try to trace it that far back?”

He just stood there grinning, looking down on me like somebody inspecting a Model A car. Every once in a while he and Wangero sent eye signals over my head.

“How do you pronounce this name?” I asked.

“You don’t have to call me by it if you don’t want to,” said Wangero.

“Why shouldn’t I?” I asked. “If that’s what you want us to call you, we’ll call you.”

“I know it might sound awkward at first,” said Wangero.

“I’ll get used to it,” I said. “Ream it out again.”

Well, soon we got the name out of the way. Asalamalakim had a name twice as long and three times as hard. After I tripped over it two or three times he told me to just call him Hakim-a-barber. I wanted to ask him was he a barber, but I didn’t really think he was, so I didn’t ask.

“You must belong to those beef-cattle peoples down the road,” I said. They said “Asalamalakim” when they met you, too, but they didn’t shake hands. Always too busy: feeding the cattle, fixing the fences, putting up salt-lick shelters, throwing down hay. When the white folks poisoned some of the herd the men stayed up all night with rifles in their hands. I walked a mile and a half just to see the sight.
Hakim-a-barber said, “I accept some of their doctrines, but farming and raising cattle is not my style.” (They didn’t tell me, and I didn’t ask, whether Wangero (Dee) had really gone and married him.)

We sat down to eat and right away he said he didn’t eat collards and pork was unclean. Wangero, though, went on through the chitlins and cornbread, the greens and everything else. She talked a blue streak over the sweet potatoes. Everything delighted her. Even the fact that we still used the benches her daddy made for the table when we couldn’t afford to buy chairs.

“Oh, Mama!” she cried. Then turned to Hakim-a-barber. “I never knew how lovely these benches are. You can feel the rump prints,” she said, running her hands underneath her and along the bench. Then she gave a sigh and her hand closed over Grandma Dee’s butter dish. “That’s it!” she said. “I knew there was something I wanted to ask you if I could have.” She jumped up from the table and went over in the corner where the churn stood, the milk in it crabber by now. She looked at the churn and looked at it.

“This churn top is what I need,” she said. “Didn’t Uncle Buddy whittle it out of a tree you all used to have?”

“Yes,” I said.

“Un huh,” she said happily. “And I want the dasher, too.”

“Uncle Buddy whittle that, too?” asked the barber.

Dee (Wangero) looked up at me.

“Aunt Dee’s first husband whittled the dash,” said Maggie so low you almost couldn’t hear her. “His name was Henry, but they called him Stash.”

“Maggie’s brain is like an elephant’s,” Wangero said, laughing. “I can use the chute top as a centerpiece for the alcove table,” she said, sliding a plate over the chute, “and I’ll think of something artistic to do with the dasher.”

When she finished wrapping the dasher the handle stuck out. I took it for a moment in my hands. You didn’t even have to look close to see where hands pushing the dasher up and down to make butter had left a kind of sink in the wood. In fact, there were a lot of small sinks; you could see where thumbs and fingers had sunk into the wood. It was beautiful light yellow wood, from a tree that grew in the yard where Big Dee and Stash had lived.

After dinner Dee (Wangero) went to the trunk at the foot of my bed and started rifling through it. Maggie hung back in the kitchen over the dishpan. Out came Wangero with two quilts. They had been pieced by Grandma Dee and then Big Dee and me had hung them on the quilt frames on the front porch and quilted them. One was in the Lone Star pattern. The other was Walk Around the Mountain. In both of them were scraps of dresses Grandma Dee had won fifty and more years ago. Bits and pieces of Grandpa Jattell’s Paisley shirts. And one teeny faded blue piece, about the size of a penny matchbox, that was from Great Grandpa Ezra’s uniform that he wore in the Civil War.

“Mama,” Wangero said sweet as a bird. “Can I have these old quilts?”

I heard something fall in the kitchen, and a minute later the kitchen door slammed.

“Why don’t you take one or two of the others?” I asked. “These old things was just done by me and Big Dee from some tops your grandma pieced before she died.”

“No,” said Wangero. “I don’t want those. They are stitched around the borders by machine.”
“That’ll make them last better,” I said.

“That’s not the point,” said Wangero. “These are all pieces of dresses Grandma used to wear. She did all this stitching by hand. Imagine!” She held the quilts securely in her arms, stroking them.

“Some of the pieces, like those lavender ones, come from old clothes her mother handed down to her,” I said, moving up to touch the quilts. Dee (Wangero) moved back just enough so that I couldn’t reach the quilts. They already belonged to her.

“Imagine!” she breathed again, clutching them closely to her bosom.

“The truth is,” I said, “I promised to give them quilts to Maggie, for when she marries John Thomas.”

She gasped like a bee had stung her.

“Maggie can’t appreciate these quilts!” she said. “She’d probably be backward enough to put them to everyday use.”

“I reckon she would,” I said. “God knows I been saving ‘em for long enough with nobody using ‘em. I hope she will!” I didn’t want to bring up how I had offered Dee (Wangero) a quilt when she went away to college. Then she had told they were old-fashioned, out of style.

“But they’re priceless!” she was saying now, furiously; for she has a temper. “Maggie would put them on the bed and in five years they’d be in rags. Less than that!”

“She can always make some more,” I said. “Maggie knows how to quilt.”

Dee (Wangero) looked at me with hatred. “You just will not understand. The point is these quilts, these quilts!”

“Well,” I said, stumped. “What would you do with them?”

“Hang them,” she said. As if that was the only thing you could do with quilts.

Maggie by now was standing in the door. I could almost hear the sound her feet made as they scraped over each other.

“She can have them, Mama,” she said, like somebody used to never winning anything, or having anything reserved for her. “I can ‘member Grandma Dee without the quilts.”

I looked at her hard. She had filled her bottom lip with checkerberry snuff and gave her face a kind of dozy, hangdog look. It was Grandma Dee and Big Dee who taught her how to quilt herself. She stood there with her scarred hands hidden in the folds of her skirt. She looked at her sister with something like fear but she wasn’t mad at her. This was Maggie’s portion. This was the way she knew God to work.

When I looked at her like that something hit me in the top of my head and ran down to the soles of my feet. Just like when I’m in church and the spirit of God touches me and I get happy and shout. I did something I never done before: hugged Maggie to me, then dragged her on into the room, snatched the quilts out of Miss Wangero’s hands and dumped them into Maggie’s lap. Maggie just sat there on my bed with her mouth open.

“Take one or two of the others,” I said to Dee.

But she turned without a word and went out to Hakim-a-barber.

“You just don’t understand,” she said, as Maggie and I came out to the car.

“What don’t I understand?” I wanted to know.
“Your heritage,” she said. And then she turned to Maggie, kissed her, and said, “You ought to try to make something of yourself, too, Maggie. It’s really a new day for us. But from the way you and Mama still live you’d never know it.”

She put on some sunglasses that hid everything above the tip of her nose and chin.

Maggie smiled; maybe at the sunglasses. But a real smile, not scared. After we watched the car dust settle I asked Maggie to bring me a dip of snuff. And then the two of us sat there just enjoying, until it was time to go in the house and go to bed.

**After Reading**

Now that you have read and annotated the short story for the elements listed in the SIFT strategy, use the graphic organizer below to synthesize your findings.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Literary Device</th>
<th>Examples from the Text</th>
<th>Interpretation: Consider the author’s use of this device. What is the effect on the reader?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Symbols:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Consider the author’s use of this device. What is the effect on the reader?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Imagery:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Consider the author’s use of this device. What is the effect on the reader?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Figures of Speech:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Consider the author’s use of this device. What is the effect on the reader?</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Tone/Theme:</strong></td>
<td></td>
<td><strong>Consider the author’s use of this device. What is the effect on the reader?</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
A Deeper Analysis of Theme

When analyzing a text for the theme the author is conveying to the reader, it is important that the analysis extends meaning beyond a summary or literal understanding. Use these questions to consider three levels of meaning and deepen your analysis of the theme:

- **Literal meaning:** What is the central idea or main message about life presented in the text?
- **Interpretive meaning:** What are the personal connections (what you get out of the story personally in relation to your own life) or moral considerations (what the story teaches us about how people relate to one another and the world we live in).
- **Universal meaning:** What does the text reveal to the reader about people, life, and issues as they work together in the universe?

3. Identify and discuss possible themes in “Everyday Use.” Literal:

Moral:

Universal:

4. Use a few words to identify the subject or conflict of the short story. Walker’s short story, “Everyday Use,” is about...

Check Your Understanding

How do Maggie and Dee differ in their intentions for the quilts? Do you agree with Momma’s ultimate decision about what to do with the quilts?

ACTIVITY 2

Writing a Class Essay

**WRITING PROMPT:** Conduct a close reading of Alice Walker’s short story, “Everyday Use.” With your class, write a response-to-literature essay analyzing how the writer uses at least two literary devices and/or stylistic techniques to convey a theme to the reader. Be sure the essay meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets for writing an effective multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay.

Review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.
Prewriting

1. Explore all aspects of the prompt. Based on your reading and SIFT discussion of the story, brainstorm ideas about the theme and what kind of literary devices Walker uses to tell her story.

2. In order to create an effective draft, you will need a thesis statement to provide focus for the essay. A thesis statement has two purposes: to express a central opinion to be proven, and to provide direction as to how the writer intends to show or develop the opinion. Consider a three-part process when developing a working thesis:
   • Define or identify the task set by the prompt.
   • Consider what needs to be addressed in the response.
   • Decide how to best respond.

Generate a working thesis statement, a one-sentence statement that expresses the point the class will make about the subject of its essay.

   Walker uses ______________ and ______________ to convey ______________.

   literary device literary device theme

Preliminary Outline

3. Now that you have a thesis, as a class, consider an effective order for presenting your ideas that is appropriate to the purpose, audience, and context of your topic. Before drafting, organize the main ideas generated from prewriting to support the thesis in a preliminary topic sentence outline:

   I. Thesis
      A. Topic Sentence 1
         1. Examples, Details, Quotes
      B. Topic Sentence 2
         1. Examples, Details, Quotes

Drafting

Body Paragraphs
A body paragraph has these elements:
• Topic sentence: A sentence that has a subject and an opinion that works directly to support the thesis.
• Transitions: Words and phrases used to connect ideas within and between paragraphs (for example, for instance).
• Supporting information: Textual evidence in the form of the most appropriate examples and/or details.
• Commentary: Sentences that explain how the information is relevant to the thesis/topic sentence. These sentences are vital as they serve to reflect, analyze, explain, and interpret. Sentences with commentary also bring a sense of closure to the paragraph.
Integrating Quotations

4. On a separate sheet of paper, draft the body paragraphs and include a quotation where appropriate from Walker’s text. Consider using the following process to embed a quote into your body paragraph smoothly.

- **Introduce the quote** (use a transition).
- **Use the quote** (use an appropriate quote from the text and be sure to place quotation marks around the author’s words).
- **Explain the quote** (explain how the quote supports your topic sentence).

Now that you have co-constructed a thesis statement and body paragraphs, you are ready to co-create the introduction and conclusion of the essay.

Introduction and Conclusion

Introductory paragraphs consist of

- **A hook/lead**: A Question, Quote, Anecdote, or Statement of Intrigue (QQAS) that is related to the topic. If you ask a question, answer it; if you use a quote, analyze it; if you use an anecdote or statement of intrigue, explain it.
- **A connection** between the QQAS and the thesis, using a TAG (title, author, genre) statement (e.g., Walker’s short story “Everyday Use” conveys…).
- **A thesis statement** making a claim

5. Concluding paragraphs bring a sense of closure to the essay by synthesizing insights presented in the text and examining the larger ramification of those ideas. Use the following levels of questions to guide your thinking in crafting a conclusion:

- What did you say? (Literal)
- What does it mean? (Interpretive)
- Why does it matter? (Universal)

Check Your Understanding

After you have drafted your response essay to the story, use the following checklist and the Scoring Guide to evaluate your essay and consider revisions.

- Is the essay coherent and well organized?
- Is the essay focused and thoughtful?
- Does the essay refer back to the short story to support commentary in the essay?

Revising

6. Now that the class essay has been drafted, consider the language used to convey ideas. A writer makes stylistic choices in language to achieve an intended effect. Revise the class essay to incorporate some or all of the following rhetorical devices.
Revising for Language and Writer’s Craft: Rhetorical Devices, Transitions, Varied Sentence Structure

One stylistic choice writers often make is incorporating **rhetorical devices**. Well-chosen rhetorical devices show ideas in interesting ways and help your ideas have a lasting effect on your reader. Examples of rhetorical devices are *parallelism*, *analogy*, *rhetorical questions*, *allusion*, and *anaphora*.

- **Parallelism** is using the same structure for similar parts of a sentence. Use parallelism to add balance, rhythm, and clarity to a sentence.

- An **analogy** compares two things and expresses the relationship between them. Use an analogy to explain or clarify an idea or object.

- A **rhetorical question** is one for which the writer expects no reply, or the writer clearly directs the reader to one desired reply. Use rhetorical questions to emphasize an idea or to draw a conclusion from the facts. A rhetorical question may help remind your reader of a main point.

- **Allusion** is the direct or indirect reference to a person, place, or event in history, artwork, or literature that the writer expects the reader to recognize. Writers use an allusion to extend meaning on a subject.

- **Anaphora** is the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of a clause. Writers use anaphora to emphasize an idea’s importance.

Analyzing Rhetorical Devices for Effect

7. Select a rhetorical device from Walker’s story that you thought was particularly effective, and explain why.

8. Choose a sentence from the class draft and revise it to include or refine a rhetorical device. Share your revised sentence with the class and discuss the effect it has on your reader. Continue to revise it as necessary to achieve your intended effect.

9. Revise the essay for **coherence**. A coherent essay is one that presents ideas that tie together and flow smoothly, making the essay easy to follow for the reader. Create coherence by using transitional words within and between paragraphs and by using varied sentence structures. Review your draft and add appropriate transitions.

- **Transitions to show comparison and contrast**: similarly, on the other hand, in contrast, different from, like, unlike, same as, in the same way, nevertheless, likewise, by contrast, conversely
• **Transitions to show examples:** for example, for instance, in this case, on this occasion, in this situation, to demonstrate, take the case of, as an illustration, to illustrate this point
• **Transitions to prove:** because, since, for the same reason, obviously, evidently, furthermore, besides, indeed, in fact, in any case

### Varying Sentence Structure

10. Review your draft to see where you can vary your sentence structure in your paragraphs by using different sentence styles. The writer’s choice of sentences or their arrangement can change the effect of the text significantly. Sometimes writers deliberately choose a variety of syntactical constructions for their sentences; other times, they consciously repeat certain elements to achieve the desired effect.

- **Cumulative (or loose) sentences** make complete sense if brought to a close before the actual ending; e.g., “We reached New York that morning after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, tired but exhilarated, full of stories to tell our friends and neighbors.”

- **Periodic sentences** make sense fully only when the end of the sentence is reached; e.g., “That morning, after a turbulent flight and some exciting experiences, we reached New York.”

- **Balanced sentences** contain phrases or clauses that balance each other by virtue of their likeness of structure, meaning, or length; e.g., “Meditation is to the mind as exercise is to the body.”

### Analyzing and Revising for Effect

11. Select a sentence pattern from Walker’s story that you thought was particularly effective and explain how or why the structure of the sentence affects the reader.

12. Choose a sentence from the class draft and revise it to include or refine a different type of sentence. Write this newly revised sentence below:

13. Share your revised sentence with the class and discuss the effect it has on your reader. Continue to revise it as necessary to achieve your intended effect.

14. Discuss the key ideas present in the essay and generate a list of potentially creative titles. Rank them and select one. Place a title at the top of the essay.
Writing Workshop 5 (continued)

**Editing**

15. Read the draft and peer edit to correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

16. **Reflection:** What additional support do you need to write a response-to-literature essay?

---

**ACTIVITY 3**

**Writing an Essay with Peers**

**WRITING PROMPT:** Conduct a close reading of Liam O’Flaherty’s “The Sniper.” Write a response-to-literature essay with your writing group, analyzing how the writer uses at least two literary devices and/or stylistic techniques to convey meaning or theme. Be sure the essay meets the requirements listed in the Learning Targets for writing an effective multi-paragraph response-to-literature essay.

Review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.

---

**Sample Text**

**The Sniper**

*by* Liam O’Flaherty

The long June twilight faded into night. Dublin lay enveloped in darkness but for the dim light of the moon that shone through fleecy clouds, casting a pale light as of approaching dawn over the streets and the dark waters of the Liffey. Around the beleaguered Four Courts the heavy guns roared. Here and there through the city, machine guns and rifles broke the silence of the night, spasmodically, like dogs barking on lone farms. Republicans and Free Staters were waging civil war.

On a rooftop near O’Connell Bridge, a Republican sniper lay watching. Beside him lay his rifle and over his shoulders was slung a pair of field glasses. His face was the face of a student, thin and ascetic, but his eyes had the cold gleam of the fanatic. They were deep and thoughtful, the eyes of a man who is used to looking at death.
He was eating a sandwich hungrily. He had eaten nothing since morning. He had been too excited to eat. He finished the sandwich, and, taking a flask of whiskey from his pocket, he took a short drought. Then he returned the flask to his pocket. He paused for a moment, considering whether he should risk a smoke. It was dangerous. The flash might be seen in the darkness, and there were enemies watching. He decided to take the risk.

Placing a cigarette between his lips, he struck a match, inhaled the smoke hurriedly and put out the light. Almost immediately, a bullet flattened itself against the parapet of the roof. The sniper took another whiff and put out the cigarette. Then he swore softly and crawled away to the left.

Cautiously he raised himself and peered over the parapet. There was a flash and a bullet whizzed over his head. He dropped immediately. He had seen the flash. It came from the opposite side of the street.

He rolled over the roof to a chimney stack in the rear, and slowly drew himself up behind it, until his eyes were level with the top of the parapet. There was nothing to be seen—just the dim outline of the opposite housetop against the blue sky. His enemy was under cover.

Just then an armored car came across the bridge and advanced slowly up the street. It stopped on the opposite side of the street, fifty yards ahead. The sniper could hear the dull panting of the motor. His heart beat faster. It was an enemy car. He wanted to fire, but he knew it was useless. His bullets would never pierce the steel that covered the gray monster.

Then round the corner of a side street came an old woman, her head covered by a tattered shawl. She began to talk to the man in the turret of the car. She was pointing to the roof where the sniper lay. An informer.

The turret opened. A man's head and shoulders appeared, looking toward the sniper. The sniper raised his rifle and fired. The head fell heavily on the turret wall. The woman darted toward the side street. The sniper fired again. The woman whirled round and fell with a shriek into the gutter.

Suddenly from the opposite roof a shot rang out and the sniper dropped his rifle with a curse. The rifle clattered to the roof. The sniper thought the noise would wake the dead. He stooped to pick the rifle up. He couldn't lift it. His forearm was dead. "I'm hit," he muttered.

Dropping flat onto the roof, he crawled back to the parapet. With his left hand he felt the injured right forearm. The blood was oozing through the sleeve of his coat. There was no pain—just a deadened sensa­tion, as if the arm had been cut off.

Quickly he drew his knife from his pocket, opened it on the breastwork of the parapet, and ripped open the sleeve. There was a small hole where the bullet had entered. On the other side there was no hole. The bullet had lodged in the bone. It must have fractured it. He bent the arm below the wound. The arm bent back easily. He ground his teeth to overcome the pain.

Then taking out his field dressing, he ripped open the packet with his knife. He broke the neck of the iodine bottle and let the bitter fluid drip into the wound. A paroxysm of pain swept through him. He placed the cotton wadding over the wound and wrapped the dressing over it. He tied the ends with his teeth.

Then he lay still against the parapet, and, closing his eyes, he made an effort of will to overcome the pain.

In the street beneath all was still. The armored car had retired speedily over the bridge, with the machine gunner's head hanging lifeless over the turret. The woman's corpse lay still in the gutter.

The sniper lay still for a long time nursing his wounded arm and planning escape. Morning must not find him wounded on the roof. The enemy on the opposite roof
covered his escape. He must kill that enemy and he could not use his rifle. He had only a revolver to do it. Then he thought of a plan.

Taking off his cap, he placed it over the muzzle of his rifle. Then he pushed the rifle slowly upward over the parapet, until the cap was visible from the opposite side of the street. Almost immediately there was a report, and a bullet pierced the center of the cap. The sniper slanted the rifle forward. The cap clipped down into the street. Then catching the rifle in the middle, the sniper dropped his left hand over the roof and let it hang, lifelessly. After a few moments he let the rifle drop to the street. Then he sank to the roof, dragging his hand with him.

Crawling quickly to his feet, he peered up at the corner of the roof. His ruse had succeeded. The other sniper, seeing the cap and rifle fall, thought that he had killed his man. He was now standing before a row of chimney pots, looking across, with his head clearly silhouetted against the western sky.

The Republican sniper smiled and lifted his revolver above the edge of the parapet. The distance was about fifty yards—a hard shot in the dim light, and his right arm was paining him like a thousand devils. He took a steady aim. His hand trembled with eagerness. Pressing his lips together, he took a deep breath through his nostrils and fired. He was almost deafened with the report and his arm shook with the recoil.

Then when the smoke cleared, he peered across and uttered a cry of joy. His enemy had been hit. He was reeling over the parapet in his death agony. He struggled to keep his feet, but he was slowly falling forward as if in a dream. The rifle fell from his grasp, hit the parapet, fell over, bounded off the pole of a barber's shop beneath and then clattered on the pavement.

Then the dying man on the roof crumpled up and fell forward. The body turned over and over in space and hit the ground with a dull thud. Then it lay still.

The sniper looked at his enemy falling and he shuddered. The lust of battle died in him. He became bitten by remorse. The sweat stood out in beads on his forehead. Weakened by his wound and the long summer day of fasting and watching on the roof, he revolted from the sight of the shattered mass of his dead enemy. His teeth chattered, he began to gibber to himself, cursing the war, cursing himself, cursing everybody.

He looked at the smoking revolver in his hand, and with an oath he hurled it to the roof at his feet. The revolver went off with a concussion and the bullet whizzed past the sniper's head. He was frightened back to his senses by the shock. His nerves steadied. The cloud of fear scattered from his mind and he laughed.

Taking the whiskey flask from his pocket, he emptied it a drought. He felt reckless under the influence of the spirit. He decided to leave the roof now and look for his company commander, to report. Everywhere around was quiet. There was not much danger in going through the streets. He picked up his revolver and put it in his pocket. Then he crawled down through the skylight to the house underneath.

When the sniper reached the laneway on the street level, he felt a sudden curiosity as to the identity of the enemy sniper whom he had killed. He decided that he was a good shot, whoever he was. He wondered did he know him. Perhaps he had been in his own company before the split in the army. He decided to risk going over to have a look at him. He peered around the corner into O'Connell Street. In the upper part of the street there was heavy firing, but around here all was quiet.

The sniper darted across the street. A machine gun tore up the ground around him with a hail of bullets, but he escaped. He threw himself face downward beside the corpse. The machine gun stopped.

Then the sniper turned over the dead body and looked into his brother's face.
Prewriting
1. In your writing group, after reading the story, review and analyze the prompt.

2. Read and mark O’Flaherty’s story to analyze it for elements of SIFT.

3. Use a prewriting strategy to explore ideas you generate from the prompt. Select the best ideas from your prewriting to construct a working thesis for your essay. Write it here.

4. On separate paper, co-construct a preliminary topic sentence outline for your essay that includes your thesis and supporting topic sentences with relevant examples and details.

Drafting
5. Review the ideas from your prewriting and co-construct a draft of your body paragraphs. Where appropriate, embed quotes from the short story in your essay.

6. With your writing group, read the body paragraphs and discuss an effective way to introduce and conclude the key ideas. Use a prewriting strategy to generate a draft that demonstrates the parts of effective introductions (hook/lead, connection, and thesis) and conclusions (response to the levels of questions).

Revising
7. Reread the Learning Targets for this workshop. Use the criteria as a checklist for revision. Read aloud your draft to your writing group, and gather feedback based on the criteria of an effective response-to-literature essay.

8. Review your draft for language use. Select ideas to emphasize by incorporating appropriate rhetorical devices, such as appositives and parallelism.

9. Review the group draft for coherence:
   • Discuss which transitions can be used to link ideas effectively within and between the body paragraphs. Incorporate at least two into the draft.
   • Discuss ways to revise the draft to enhance style by adding rhetorical devices where appropriate.
   • If the draft contains too many simple, short sentences, try combining them. Discuss sentences that could be improved for clarity or to provide better description. Revise at least three sentences to make a compound, a complex, and a compound-complex sentence.
Editing

10. Read the draft and peer edit to correct errors in grammar, punctuation, and spelling.

11. Discuss the key ideas present in the essay and generate a list of potentially creative titles. Rank them and select one. Place a title at the top of the essay.

Review the Scoring Guide. Compare your group’s essay with the Scoring Guide to ensure the essay meets all of the requirements. If possible, exchange your group’s essay with another group and allow them to evaluate it using the Scoring Guide to ensure that the essay is successful.
ACTIVITY 4

Independent Writing

WRITING PROMPT: Your teacher will choose or ask you to choose a new short story to read and analyze. Then, write a response-to-literature essay in which you examine how the writer uses at least two literary devices and/or stylistic techniques to convey meaning or theme.

Be sure the essay
• Presents effective introductory and concluding paragraphs
• Analyzes literature and extends beyond a summary or literal analysis
• Contains a controlling idea or thesis
• Provides evidence from the text using embedded quotes
• Analyzes the aesthetic effects of an author’s use of stylistic or rhetorical devices
• Includes relevant information and valid inferences
• Uses an organizing structure appropriate to purpose, audience, and context
• Uses a variety of rhetorical devices
• Uses transitions between paragraphs
• Uses a variety of sentence structures

Review the Scoring Guide to understand the specific requirements of this writing activity.
## SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Ideas</strong></td>
<td>The essay  • contains a focused and insightful thesis • skillfully incorporates details and quotes from the text that enhance the thesis • analyzes and uses sophisticated commentary that relates back to the thesis</td>
<td>The essay  • contains a focused thesis • skillfully incorporates details from the text that support the writer’s position • analyzes and uses commentary that relates back to the thesis</td>
<td>The essay  • contains a limited thesis • contains few, if any, supporting quotes • contains superficial analysis or states the obvious.</td>
<td>The essay  • lacks an appropriate thesis • does not use quotes or does not use them meaningfully • contains minimal or irrelevant facts, evidence, details, and examples</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Structure</strong></td>
<td>The essay  • presents an organizational structure that engages and guides the reader with smooth transitions that establish strong connections between and among ideas • creates a sustained focus that yields a coherent and unified essay</td>
<td>The essay  • contains an organizational structure that is appropriate to the purpose and links ideas with transitional elements • generally maintains a focus that produces a clear and consistent essay</td>
<td>The essay  • contains an organization that is incomplete or lacking in cohesion • includes ideas or evidence that interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay</td>
<td>The essay  • contains a minimal or incomplete introduction • uses a confusing organization for evidence and ideas and/or few or no meaningful transitions • provides a minimal conclusion or none at all</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Use of Language</strong></td>
<td>The essay  • uses effective and sophisticated diction and sentence variety to convey a clear and commanding understanding of ideas • uses language that contributes to the rhetorical effectiveness of the essay • contains few or no errors in grammar, punctuation, spelling, or capitalization</td>
<td>The essay  • uses purposeful diction and sentence variety to convey ideas appropriately • uses language effectively to support the writer’s purpose • may contain minor errors that do not detract from the general effectiveness of the essay or interfere with meaning</td>
<td>The essay  • uses inappropriate or inadequate diction and sentence variety to convey ideas with clarity and purpose • uses language inappropriately or in a way that does not support the writer’s purpose • contains errors that interfere with meaning and detract from the effectiveness of the essay</td>
<td>The essay  • shows incorrect or inconsistent use of sentence structure • uses diction that is inappropriate for the topic, audience, and purpose • uses no rhetorical devices • illustrates limited command of conventions; multiple serious errors interfere with meaning</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Learning Targets

- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
- Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
- Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology’s capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
- Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
- Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
- Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
- Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grade 10 topics, texts, and issues, building on others’ ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.
- Come to discussions prepared, having read and researched material under study; explicitly draw on that preparation by referring to evidence from texts and other research on the topic or issue to stimulate a thoughtful, well-reasoned exchange of ideas.
- Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
- Use a semicolon (and perhaps a conjunctive adverb) to link two or more closely related independent clauses.
- Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.
- Write and edit work so that it conforms to the guidelines in a style manual (e.g., *MLA Handbook*, *Turabian’s Manual for Writers*) appropriate for the discipline and writing type.

Research Writing

To write reports or communicate information to others, you may need to conduct research on a chosen topic. Creating and following an organized plan for your research will help you collect appropriate information for your finished report or communication. When conducting and presenting research, it is important to follow a process that includes:
- A research plan for a research question on a complex, many-sided topic
- Information from multiple sources that identifies the issues and debates in the field of inquiry
- Graphics, visuals, images, and other forms to represent information
- An investigation of sources using tools that demonstrate the reliability, validity, authority, objectivity, and usefulness of sources
You will work with your teacher and your classmates to conduct research and present your findings. You will then use the research plan and presentation created with your class as a model for your own research on a topic of your choice to present to your classmates.

ACTIVITY 1

Discovering the Elements of Research Writing

Before Reading

1. Think about your previous experiences with research. Work with a partner to record and share responses.
   • How did you choose a topic to research?
   • What role did audience and purpose play in helping you to choose a topic?
   • How did you find sources to research your topic?
   • What types of sources did you use?
   • How did you decide which sources were good (i.e., accurate, reliable, objective, authoritative)?
   • How did you take notes and summarize the information you found?
   • How did you write about or present your findings?

During Reading

2. Below is a sample research presentation for your review.
   • What is the research topic? What do you think was the research question for this topic?
   • Circle the thesis sentence.
   • What are the two contrasting points of view?
   • Look at the sources cited for the information presented. How do you know they are good sources? Which are primary and which are secondary sources? Which is a print source and which is electronic?

Sample Student Text

The Debate over Budget Cuts to Music Programs

Cuts to music education in schools have become a more serious problem in the last decade, and remains a topic of debate today. For those that support music education programs, it is an ongoing battle with districts that have to eliminate programs due to budget cuts. For those that support the cuts, it’s not that they are
against students being taught music, it's simply that music programs, along with other fine arts, are seen as luxuries in schools and not as necessary as math, science, and technology classes. Both sides of the issue are worth exploring.

Proponents of music education defend it by listing the many negative outcomes of cutting music programs. Music advocate John L. Benham suggested that in addition to "lost teacher jobs, lack of music programs means students don't buy or rent instruments locally, causing a loss of potential tax revenue. Government officials understand that kind of reasoning" (qtd. in Fehr). Another advocate further describes the dangers of eliminating music programs saying that "if you cut classes you would also lose out on music-making at school. Singing together creates a sense of community and connection between students; making school something students looked forward to instead of dreaded" (Lindvall).

Aside from this, there are academic benefits to music education. Music specialist Helienne Lindvall points to evidence that "learning an instrument can improve numeracy and literacy skills in young people, as well as behavior." Many studies have concluded that there are connections between music education and SAT scores, according to the College Entrance Examination Board, students with a at least four years of music study "scored 34 points higher than their peers on the verbal portion of the SAT and 18 points higher on math portion" (Fehr). Helienne Lindvall further discusses the idea that students are more willing to come to school, when they have their music programs to look forward to. She mentions a school that expanded their music department, building a recording studio. They enrolled students with particularly low attendance rates in the recording class and noticed that the attendance rates went up.

When it comes to arguing the opposite stance, some advocates of cutting music programs from schools say they have nothing against teaching music; but when cuts have to be made, music programs lie on the chopping block because other subjects (such as math, science, and technology) simply cannot be eliminated. There are strong believers in an education system that concentrates on subjects that are seen as the opposite of the arts. The director of NOAA, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration, comments that, "Short for science, technology, engineering and mathematics—STEM education is a national priority… and STEM jobs are the new "it" jobs to have" (Lubchenco). Many schools follow the STEM system, and leave little time or resources for music. STEM supporters believe that the arts may be valuable, but other subjects need much more emphasis.

Others believe in fact there are negative impacts of music programs in schools, arguing that the programs are expensive to maintain and cutting them would remove large costs. Aaron Reynolds argues that "cutting music education would, first and foremost, take a dent out of public education expenses. The cost for musical instruments, practice time, travel costs and paychecks for music instructors would all be cut from the budget." This is a direct counterargument to the assertion made by advocates of music education, that lack of music programs means students don't buy or rent instruments locally, causing a loss of potential tax revenue. Others claim that music education programs are biased against other art forms. "Some teachers and parents argue that if there is a music education department then every school should allow students to learn about film making, acting and other arts that are not an option at public schools. Cutting the music education department would dissolve some of that bias" (Reynolds). Lastly, Reynolds claims that music classes are distracting to their own students. Some schools are smaller than others, and when classrooms are placed closely together, soundproofing is sometimes not possible. Music rehearsal can be noisy and off-putting to students trying to focus on other work.

In conclusion, the debate over whether to keep music programs in schools is an important one. Schools are facing serious budget shortfalls, and it is not realistic to
expect that music programs will not have to face any cuts. However, considering the
clear value music programs offer students, they should only face the same amount of
cuts as other programs. Also, when schools do have to make unavoidable cuts to music
programs, they should consider adding other, less expensive arts programs like drama.
Though tough decisions need to be made in these difficult times, there is no need to
make an unnecessary victim out of music programs.

Works Cited
Fehr, Roz. “Music Education Advocate Uses Facts and Figures to Empower the
22 Nov. 2011.
Lubchenco, Jane. “Dr. Jane Lubchenco, NOAA Administrator, Explains the Value of
STEM Education to Competitiveness- Transcript.” Commerce.gov. United States
Service, Tom. “Out of Tune: Can Music Education Survive Government Belt-
tightening?”

After Reading
Language and Writer’s Craft: Connecting Sentences with Semicolons and
Conjunctive Adverbs
The semicolon is a helpful punctuation mark that can be used to connect two
independent clauses (e.g., a clause that can “stand alone” as a complete sentence). The purpose is to connect two sentences that are related in
some way. One way to emphasize this relationship more clearly is to add a
conjunctive adverb—an adverb that acts as a conjunction between the two
sentences.

Examples
The night was so hot that no one wanted to be in a hot kitchen;
consequently, the restaurant was filled with customers.
The conjunctive adverb consequently shows how the two sentences share a
cause-effect relationship.

The subway car was packed with people; however, the trip was strangely
enjoyable.
Using however signals that the second sentence contrasts with the first
impression of the trip, creating a more detailed impression of the subway ride.

Maria avoided vegetables like the plague; similarly, her brother never
met a salad that he liked.
Here, the conjunctive adverb, similarly, highlights the similarity between a
brother and sister.

Practice
Using the list of conjunctive adverbs below, take each pair of sentences and
rewrite them so that they are connected by a semicolon and a conjunctive
adverb. Look for appropriate adverbs to highlight the relationship between the
two sentences.
I usually don’t like scary movies. I actually enjoyed this zombie film.

Gary had a dentist appointment at 11:00. He ate a late lunch.

Just because it’s a National Park doesn’t mean it’s perfectly safe. Hikers are sometimes attacked by bears at Yellowstone.

As you continue to work through the process of writing research presentations, you will be expected to combine sentences with a semicolon and conjunctive adverb to add variety and clarity to your writing.

**Activity 2**

**Constructing a Research Presentation Together**

1. As a class, brainstorm some possible topics for a research project that involves a problem that requires a solution. Consider a local, national, or international issue that is currently a topic of debate.
2. With your teacher, you and your classmates will choose a research topic, develop possible questions to guide your research on this topic, and create a research plan.

• What topic has the class chosen to research? Pose it as a question.

• Is this topic seeking some kind of solution? State any suggested solutions that are being considered or debated:

• In small groups, further brainstorm open-ended questions that could be used to investigate the topic the class has chosen.

• After exploring the kinds of sources and the information you will need to answer your questions, create a plan for conducting the class research that includes
  • The major research question
  • The answer(s) to the major research question (these may be proposed solutions)
  • A realistic audience for your presentation (for example, if considering a school policy, you might present your research to the school board, while an issue of funding for a local government program might be presented to the city council)
  • A list of secondary questions to help focus your research
  • A preliminary list of sources you will consult
  • A list of search terms: specific words or phrases that should be effective when using a search engine or online database (consider terms that will help you find different sides of the issue, such as “supporters” or “critics” of a proposed solution)

Exploring Relevant Sources

3. As you examine sources, you will find both primary and secondary sources, as well as print and electronic sources. Think about your major research question.

• How would primary and secondary sources help you to achieve your purpose?

• In general, why are print sources such as encyclopedias and books more reliable than Internet sources? Why might electronic sources be more valuable for certain topics?

• Sources vary in reliability, validity, and accuracy based on their objectivity and authority. What print sources are most objective and authoritative? Why?

4. You will now examine source documents related to the research topic chosen by the class to determine whether a resource is valid (authoritative) and reliable. Using information about Internet sites below, evaluate the reliability and validity of the sources provided.
Your teacher will provide you with research documents related to the topic the class has chosen. Working in groups and using your class-generated topic, research questions, and research plan:

- Note the type of source documents—primary or secondary; print or electronic.
- Create categories to help you organize the kinds of information you will find in the resources available to you.
- Consider what visuals or graphics you can develop or use from sources you consult.
- Critique and evaluate the variety of sources you are consulting to decide whether you need more and/or different sources to pursue your major research question.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The URL</th>
<th>What is its domain?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• .com = a for-profit organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• .gov, .mil, .us (or other country code) = a government site</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• .edu = an educational institution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• .org = a nonprofit organization</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is this URL someone’s personal page?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Why might using information from a personal page be a problem?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do you recognize who is publishing this page? If not, you may need to investigate further to determine whether the publisher is an expert on the topic.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Sponsor</th>
<th>Does the Web site easily give information about the organization or group that sponsors it?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does it have a link (often called “About Us”) that leads you to that information?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• What do you learn from that information?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Timeliness</th>
<th>When was the page last updated (usually this is posted at the top or bottom of the page)?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>How current a page is may indicate how accurate or useful the information in it will be.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>What is the purpose of the page?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Who is the target audience?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Does it present information or opinion?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is it primarily objective or subjective?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• How do you know?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Author</th>
<th>What credentials does the author have?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Is this person or group considered an authority on the topic?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Links</th>
<th>Does the page provide links?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Do they work?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are they helpful?</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Are they objective or subjective?</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
5. Take notes on note cards, using four different kinds of note cards:
   • **Source cards** on which you record the bibliographic information in a form your teacher specifies, so you can refer to it later.
   • **Quotation cards** on which you record quotations that support important points you want to make. Be sure to note the author of the quote and to punctuate the quotation correctly.
   • **Paraphrase cards** on which you record the meaning of an author’s words, using your own. Be sure to write in complete sentences.
   • **Summary cards** on which you write summaries of the main points of a source. Remember that you will have to cite your source for these cards also.

Some ways to take notes on information from sources while avoiding plagiarism are paraphrasing, summarizing, and direct quoting.

Read the following passage and practice these three types of note-taking.

“Words belong to the person who wrote them. There are few simpler ethical notions than this one, particularly as society directs more and more energy and resources towards the creation of intellectual property. In the past thirty years copyright laws have been strengthened. Courts have become more willing to grant intellectual-property protections. Fighting piracy has become an obsession with Hollywood and the recording industry, and in the worlds of academia and publishing, plagiarism has gone from being bad literary manners to something much closer to a crime.”


**Paraphrase:** Today, in academics and also in the world of media entertainment, plagiarism is more often considered a crime than a simple act of thoughtlessness.

**Summary:** Plagiarism today is most often thought of as an act of criminal intent.

**Direct quotation:** “plagiarism has gone from being bad literary manners to something much closer to a crime.”

**Direct quotation incorporated into one’s own sentence:** The case a playwright who took whole passages from another author without any acknowledgment of the author’s work shows that “plagiarism has gone from being bad literary manners to something much closer to a crime” (Gladwell 225).

6. Practice writing information from your sources in your own words (summarizing or paraphrasing) and by copying it word-for-word from the source to use later as direct quotations in your research.

7. As a class, now is the time to categorize and evaluate the information you have collected on your class topic and research question.
   • How can you tell that your information is meaningful, reliable, objective, and authoritative?
   • When evaluating your research notes, you may see that you need to broaden or narrow your research topic. To guide this new focus, generate additional secondary questions whose answers will provide additional needed information. As a class, refine and/or expand your secondary questions for your major research question.
8. Consider the solution that you will propose for this problem. Understand that you may be dealing with a complex, difficult topic, so don’t expect to come up with the perfect answer that solves every issue. Consider, what is one “next step” that could be made to help move the issue forward? Complete the research by collecting information based on your secondary questions. Create additional note cards and bibliographic information as necessary.

9. After completing your research, you and your class will prepare and execute a presentation plan for the information you have assembled to answer your research questions. To use the information effectively in your presentation, you will
- Write an opening that explains the problem in need of a solution, and a thesis statement that states the solution being proposed.
- Develop an organizational structure that provides a thoughtful presentation of your evidence and reasoning.
- Consider using graphics (visuals, images) to display information gathered from sources.
- Read and revise your paragraphs for effective topic sentences and well-organized information. Be sure to use a variety of sources and do not depend too much on a single source.
- Choose what you consider to be important direct quotations from your sources to integrate smoothly into the flow of your report. For example: As Malcolm Gladwell notes in his essay on copyright laws, “Something Borrowed,” “plagiarism has gone from being bad literary manners to something much closer to a crime” (Gladwell 225).
- Combine related sentences with a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb to demonstrate that relationship.
- Present your research findings, including a Works Cited page.

Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts. Your teacher will determine how you present your findings to the class.

**ACTIVITY 3**

**Creating a Group Research Presentation**

1. With your writing group, go through the brainstorming process to choose a topic. Consider current issues that involve some kind of problem that requires a solution. Then develop your major research question. Show your work on separate paper.

2. Next, generate open-ended questions to help you investigate your topic. Refine, add, and delete questions as needed.

3. Develop a research plan that explains how you will research this topic and gather information to answer the research question. Brainstorm all the possible sources you could use for this project. Think of primary and secondary sources, as well as print and electronic possibilities. As part of your plan, generate a list of search terms that you can use when looking for sources with a search engine or database.
4. Consider an appropriate audience for your presentation. Who has a stake in this issue, or a role in choosing a solution to this problem? What is their level of expertise with the subject and how much information they will need?

5. Using the practice and modeling from the previous activities, work with your small group to find valid and reliable primary and secondary sources for the topic your group has chosen to research.

As you examine sources, consider how they might link to other sources and information. For example, a newspaper article might interview an expert in this topic, so look for publications written by that expert.

6. Once you have found and examined these sources, take notes on cards. Be sure to paraphrase, summarize, and use direct quotes to avoid plagiarism. Record the bibliographic information for each source from which you have taken information.

7. After finishing the preliminary research on your class topic and note-taking, examine and discuss the research you have done.
   • Sort your note cards into general categories to help organize your information.
   • Refine the topic and collect more focused information. If necessary, generate additional secondary questions to broaden or narrow your research question.
   • Begin to think how you will organize your information, with special attention to how you will demonstrate your understanding of both sides of your issue. Make sure that you are using a variety of sources and are not depending too much on a single source.
   • Create a topic sentence outline to help organize your research findings.

8. After completing your research, assemble the information into a report that summarizes your findings, and then prepare to present the information orally. Use the steps for creating a whole-class research presentation as a model for creating and presenting your group research project.

   Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you understand where to focus your attention and efforts.

9. When appropriate, combine related sentences with a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb to demonstrate that relationship. Underline or highlight at least two times where you use this strategy.

10. In groups, present your findings to the class.
Activity 4

Independent Research

1. For this task, follow the same process to research a topic and present it to your peers. Remember to
   - Choose a topic that can be researched and that concerns a problem in need of some kind of solution
   - Write a major research question
   - Create a research plan, identifying valid sources and generating search terms.
   - Determine an appropriate audience that would need the information from your research. Consider what kind of background information they might need.
   - Conduct the research and take notes
   - Evaluate your findings and decide whether to write additional research questions
   - Compile your findings. Make sure that you are using a variety of sources and not depending too much on a single source
   - Refer to the Scoring Guide for this writing task—it will help you plan your efforts
   - Write a thesis paragraph and supporting paragraph(s) that show your evidence and reasoning
   - Combine related sentences with a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb to demonstrate their relationship. Underline or highlight at least two times where you use this strategy
   - Present your findings to the class

© 2014 College Board. All rights reserved.
# SCORING GUIDE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Scoring Criteria</th>
<th>Exemplary</th>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Emerging</th>
<th>Incomplete</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| **Development of Ideas** | The presentation communicates a complex and insightful answer to a research question, suggesting an insightful solution to a problem.  
• Integrates relevant and credible information from multiple authoritative sources to maintain logical flow of ideas.  
• Synthesizes quotes or paraphrases research well while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard citation format. | The presentation presents a clear answer to a research question, suggesting a solution to a problem.  
• Uses credible information from multiple authoritative sources to maintain the flow ideas.  
• Uses quotes or paraphrases research while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard citation format. | The presentation presents an unfocused answer to a research question and/or no solution to a problem.  
• Contains source information that may not be accurate or credible and/or confuses the flow of ideas.  
• Contains few quotes or paraphrasing of the research, indicating little ability to avoid plagiarism or to follow a standard citation format. | The presentation does not present an answer to a research question.  
• Does not support main idea with information from research.  
• Contains no quotes or paraphrasing of others’ ideas, demonstrating little ability to avoid plagiarism and/or cite basic bibliographic information. |
| **Organizational Structure** | The presentation organizes complex ideas effectively using an appropriate structure for the purpose, audience, and context.  
• Leads with an effective introduction.  
• Sequences ideas effectively and uses a variety of transitions to create cohesion.  
• Provides an insightful conclusion that supports the research presented. | The presentation organizes ideas using an appropriate structure for the purpose, audience, and context.  
• Presents a clear and focused introduction.  
• Sequences ideas and uses transitions to create coherence.  
• Provides a conclusion that connects the research presented in the presentation. | The presentation organizes ideas using a structure that is inappropriate for the purpose, audience, and context.  
• Contains an underdeveloped and/or unfocused introduction.  
• Presents disconnected ideas and limited use of transitions.  
• Contains an underdeveloped or unfocused conclusion. | The presentation does not attempt to organize ideas using a structure that is appropriate for the purpose, audience, and context.  
• Does not provide an introduction.  
• Presents disconnected ideas and with no use of transitions.  
• Lacks a conclusion. |
| **Use of Language** | The presentation uses precise diction that manages the complexity of the topic.  
• Uses a variety of sentence structures to enhance the text.  
• Demonstrates technical command of conventions of standard English.  
• Uses semicolons with conjunctive adverbs to show the relationship between sentences. | The presentation uses diction that appropriately manages the topic.  
• Uses a variety of sentence structures.  
• Demonstrates general command of conventions; minor errors interfere with meaning.  
• Uses semicolons with conjunctive adverbs. | The presentation uses diction that is inappropriate for managing the topic.  
• Shows little or no variety in sentence structure.  
• Demonstrates limited command of conventions; errors interfere with meaning.  
• Does not correctly use semicolons with conjunctive adverbs. | The presentation uses diction that is inappropriate for the topic.  
• Lacks variety in sentence structure.  
• Errors interfere with meaning.  
• Does not use semicolons with conjunctive adverbs. |