



# **2018 International Conference Professional Development**

## **Day 2, Session 4: Reasoning Through Language Arts**

Information, Resources, and Strategies for the  
Classroom

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# What is close reading?



## It's Your Turn! – Editing Social Media

The following celebrity tweet has one or more grammatical errors. Circle or underline the errors and rewrite the update in the space below. In the following box, write your reasoning for the edits and revisions that you made.

### Tweet



**Josh Hutcherson** ✓

@jhutch1992

 Follow

anyone in or near atlanta needs to check out  
my friends new pizzeria @ammazzahq best  
pizza I've ever had. got to taste the menu last  
night!

### My Edited and Revised Version

### Reasons for My Edits

## Editing and Revising Social Media

The following tweet has one or more grammatical errors. Circle or underline the errors and rewrite the revised version in the space below. Write your reasoning for the changes made.

**Tweet**

**My Edited and Revised Version**

**Reasons for My Edits**

## What is evidence-based, argumentative writing?



## Multi-Dimensional Scoring Rubric for RLA

### Trait 1: Creation of Arguments and Use of Evidence

Score	Description
Trait 1: Creation of Arguments and Use of Evidence	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• generates text-based argument(s) and establishes a purpose that is connected to the prompt</li><li>• cites relevant and specific evidence from source text(s) to support argument (may include few irrelevant pieces of evidence or unsupported claims)</li><li>• analyzes the issue and/or evaluates the validity of the argumentation within the source texts (e.g., distinguishes between supported and unsupported claims, makes reasonable inferences about underlying premises or assumptions, identifies fallacious reasoning, evaluates the credibility of sources, etc.)</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• generates an argument and demonstrates some connection to the prompt</li><li>• cites some evidence from source text(s) to support argument (may include a mix of relevant and irrelevant citations or a mix of textual and non-textual references)</li><li>• partially analyzes the issue and/or evaluates the validity of the argumentation within the source texts; may be simplistic, limited, or inaccurate</li></ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• may attempt to create an argument OR lacks purpose or connection to the prompt OR does neither</li><li>• cites minimal or no evidence from source text(s) (sections of text may be copied from source)</li><li>• minimally analyzes the issue and/or evaluates the validity of the argumentation within the source texts; may completely lack analysis or demonstrate minimal or no understanding of the given argument(s)</li></ul>

#### **Non-scorable Responses (Score of 0/Condition Codes)**

Response exclusively contains text copied from source text(s) or prompt

Response shows no evidence that test-taker has read the prompt or is off-topic

Response is incomprehensible

Response is not in English

Response has not been attempted (blank)



## Trait 2: Development of Ideas and Organizational Structure

Score	Description
<b>Trait 2: Development of Ideas and Organizational Structure</b>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains ideas that are well developed and generally logical; most ideas are elaborated upon</li> <li>contains a sensible progression of ideas with clear connections between details and main points</li> <li>establishes an organizational structure that conveys the message and purpose of the response; applies transitional devices appropriately</li> <li>establishes and maintains a formal style and appropriate tone that demonstrate awareness of the audience and purpose of the task</li> <li>chooses specific words to express ideas clearly</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains ideas that are inconsistently developed and/or may reflect simplistic or vague reasoning; some ideas are elaborated upon</li> <li>demonstrates some evidence of a progression of ideas, but details may be disjointed or lacking connection to main ideas</li> <li>establishes an organization structure that may inconsistently group ideas or is partially effective at conveying the message of the task; uses transitional devices inconsistently</li> <li>may inconsistently maintain a formal style and appropriate tone to demonstrate an awareness of the audience and purpose of the task</li> <li>may occasionally misuse words and/or choose words that express ideas in vague terms</li> </ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains ideas that are insufficiently or illogically developed, with minimal or no elaboration on main ideas</li> <li>contains an unclear or no progression of ideas; details may be absent or irrelevant to the main ideas</li> <li>establishes an ineffective or no discernable organizational structure; does not apply transitional devices, or does so inappropriately</li> <li>uses an informal style and/or inappropriate tone that demonstrates limited or no awareness of audience and purpose</li> <li>may frequently misuse words, overuse slang or express ideas in a vague or repetitious manner</li> </ul>

### Trait 3: Clarity and Command of Standard English Conventions

Score	Description
<b>Trait 3: Clarity and Command of Standard English Conventions</b>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates largely correct sentence structure and a general fluency that enhances clarity with specific regard to the following skills:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) varied sentence structure within a paragraph or paragraphs</li> <li>2) correct subordination, coordination and parallelism</li> <li>3) avoidance of wordiness and awkward sentence structures</li> <li>4) usage of transitional words, conjunctive adverbs and other words that support logic and clarity</li> <li>5) avoidance of run-on sentences, fused sentences, or sentence fragments</li> </ol> </li> <li>demonstrates competent application of conventions with specific regard to the following skills:               <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) frequently confused words and homonyms, including contractions</li> <li>2) subject-verb agreement</li> <li>3) pronoun usage, including pronoun antecedent agreement, unclear pronoun references, and pronoun case</li> <li>4) placement of modifiers and correct word order</li> <li>5) capitalization (e.g., proper nouns, titles, and beginnings of sentences)</li> <li>6) use of apostrophes with possessive nouns</li> <li>7) use of punctuation (e.g., commas in a series or in appositives and other non-essential elements, end marks, and appropriate punctuation for clause separation)</li> </ol> </li> <li>may contain some errors in mechanics and conventions, but they do not interfere with comprehension; overall, standard usage is at a level appropriate for on-demand draft writing.</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates inconsistent sentence structure; may contain some repetitive, choppy, rambling, or awkward sentences that may detract from clarity; demonstrates inconsistent control over skills 1-5 as listed in the first bullet under Trait 3, Score Point 3 above</li> <li>demonstrates inconsistent control of basic conventions with specific regard to skills 1 – 7 as listed in the second bullet under Trait 3, Score Point 3 above</li> <li>may contain frequent errors in mechanics and conventions that occasionally interfere with comprehension; standard usage is at a minimally acceptable level of appropriateness for on-demand draft writing.</li> </ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates consistently flawed sentence structure such that meaning may be obscured; demonstrates minimal control over skills 1-5 as listed in the first bullet under Trait 3, Score Point 3 above</li> <li>demonstrates minimal control of basic conventions with specific regard to skills 1 – 7 as listed in the second bullet under Trait 3, Score Point 3 above</li> <li>contains severe and frequent errors in mechanics and conventions that interfere with comprehension; overall, standard usage is at an unacceptable level for on-demand draft writing.</li> </ul> <p>OR</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>response is insufficient to demonstrate level of mastery over conventions and usage</li> </ul>

\*Because test-takers will be given only 45 minutes to complete Extended Response tasks, there is no expectation that a response should be completely free of conventions or usage errors to receive a score of 3.

## From Struggling to Successful

	Struggling Writers	Successful Writers
<b>Plan</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Are unaware of purpose or process of writing</li> <li>• Have little or no knowledge of the text structure of an essay</li> <li>• Have difficulty developing plans and staying focused on the topic</li> <li>• Experience greater writing anxiety and decreased motivation</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze the task</li> <li>• Understand and apply all the elements of an essay</li> <li>• Create goals for their writing</li> <li>• Develop plans to achieve their goals</li> <li>• Discuss how and why a plan will work</li> </ul>
<b>Organize</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Produce fewer ideas</li> <li>• Fail to organize their thoughts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Develop multiple ideas</li> <li>• Organize their ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Draft/write</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan what they are going to say as they write</li> <li>• Use imprecise and nonspecific vocabulary</li> <li>• Struggle to convey their thoughts, ideas, and opinions</li> <li>• Write fewer sentences</li> <li>• Focus on mechanics rather than on clarity and organization</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Write using an organized plan, but adjust goals when obstacles arise</li> <li>• Use vocabulary accurately</li> <li>• Experience fewer difficulties with the elements of an essay</li> <li>• Generate sentences that support their ideas</li> </ul>
<b>Edit and Revise</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Experience problems with grammar, punctuation, and spelling</li> <li>• Place words and letters too close or too far from each other</li> <li>• Do not review and make correction</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Edit spelling, capitalization, and punctuation</li> <li>• Make more content revisions</li> <li>• Correct overall appearance</li> </ul>

The IRIS Center Vanderbilt Peabody College

## 2014 GED® Test RLA – Sample Stimulus Material

### “Taxation and Revenue” – Test Bank Item 18101, Stimulus and Prompt

#### Press Release from the Office of U.S Representative Melody Walls

United States House of Representatives, Washington, DC

*Representative Walls Announces Economic Boost for 12<sup>th</sup> District  
July 17, 2013*

Washington, DC – Representative Melody Walls announced that Congress passed the highway and transit bill today.

“This bill funds the expansion of Highway 17 from a two-lane highway to a four-lane thoroughfare. It will positively affect the town of Oak Falls,” Walls said. As part of the expansion, Highway 17 will move two miles east of the town of Oak Falls. The bill will ease traffic congestion and create job opportunities during and after construction.

Last year, Representative Walls held town hall meetings to gather opinions from her constituents about revitalizing the economy in the 12<sup>th</sup> District. Two years ago, Turnaround Motors and Bell Camera closed their factory doors. The result has been high unemployment with no immediate prospects for new businesses. Representative Walls heard residents’ concerns for jobs in the district.

Improving the highway means jobs for local construction workers. Once completed, the highway will bring more long-distance travelers into the area. Some officials anticipate a 30% increase in highway traffic due to the ease of traveling on the improved Highway 17. An increase in travelers will attract national motel and restaurant chains along the highway route. These national businesses will mean permanent jobs for residents.

In the future, historical features in Oak Falls and Gaston, such as brick streets built by early settlers and the old wheat mill, will likely become popular tourist attractions. More visitors will increase business for local shops and restaurants.

The improved highway will eliminate eighteen-wheeler traffic through towns, a major source of traffic congestion and noise. A 2001 study in Texas showed that bypasses reduce traffic through towns by as much as 75%. Eliminating eighteen-wheeler traffic will also reduce road maintenance costs.

The improvement of Highway 17, funded by federal tax allocations, is an important investment in the area.

## **Oak Falls Gazette**

### **Letter to the Editor**

I am a small-business owner living in Representative Walls's congressional district. A bill has been passed to expand Highway 17 from a two-lane highway to a four-lane thoroughfare. This change includes plans to move Highway 17 two miles to the east, which means it will now bypass our town completely. I find this unacceptable.

The *Gazette* reports that because Highway 17 runs through six states, construction will be paid for with federal road funds. That means some of our federal taxes will pay for a road that I believe will harm our town. I also believe that few residents of Oak Falls will use the road. Our town and district will lose money as a result of this highway bypass paid for by our tax dollars.

The road construction jobs are only a temporary bandage on the wound made by our two manufacturers closing their doors. Once the road construction is finished, only minimum wage jobs will remain.

In fact, the highway will bypass four cities in our district alone. Each of these towns will lose business because fewer travelers will pass through them and eat, stay overnight, or purchase gas. There is no guarantee that tourists will drive an extra two miles into our town if national chain motels and restaurants are built at the highway exits. The 2001 study Representative Walls references does show that bypasses reduce traffic and noise in towns, but the study also shows they have a negative impact on local businesses.

If this project were paid for with state tax money alone, angry voters would have struck it down. Representative Walls held town hall meetings to hear residents' opinions about the local economy, but obviously she did not listen to the concerns they voiced. Please consider local concerns about this federal project.

#### **Prompt:**

Analyze the arguments presented in the press release and the letter to the editor.

In your response, develop an argument in which you explain how one position is better supported than the other. Incorporate relevant and specific evidence from both sources to support your argument.

Remember, the better-argued position is not necessarily the position with which you agree. This task should take approximately 45 minutes to complete.

## Both Sides Now

When reading argumentative non-fiction text, materials often present one side or viewpoint on a particular issue. Sometimes, the text may provide evidence to support both sides. Then, it is up to the reader to determine which is best supported. Analyzing and evaluating the evidence for both sides is one way to identify a claim and the reasons for making a specific decision/claim.

Both Sides Now		
Evidence that Supports		Evidence that Opposes
	<b>Question or statement</b>  <b>Which position is better supported?</b>	
<b>Decision (Claim)</b>		
<b>Reasons (Analysis/Evaluation)</b>		

## RLA Extended Response

I believe that Highway 17 should be expanded from a two lane highway to a fourlane highway due to the better support it has. There are many benefits of extending the highway and although it may seem negative at times, we need to look at the broader picture as well as some specifics. Overall, expanding the Highway will create new jobs in communities, therefore helping economically, and also will help decrease traffic congestion.

With an increase in unemployment in the 12<sup>th</sup> district after two major factiores closed down, there is little hopes for new businesses to arise as well as for the unemployed to recieve jobs. With a need to improve highways, jobs will be created as construction workers. this will therefore help the community get back on its feet and to help the community's economy. Some of the road construction jobs which are created while creating the road may be temporary, however there is room for premenant positions. Roads always will need upkeep and tiding up, which is why some will need to stick around to do the job after the creation of the road.

With roads being completed, this will allow more tourists to come visit the area. It will now be easier for people to travel from far distances and there will be an increase of travelers. This will bring money to the area tremendously, benefiting restaurants and motels as well as the old wheat mill for tourism. This will then allow people who work at those places to spend their money they are making within thir community to help everyone living in it. These businesses also will be doing well, perhaps expanding and hiring more workers. This will mean permanent jobs for residents.

Eighteen-wheeler traffic in towns will be eliminated through towns. Noise will become a minimal issue as well as traffic congestion. It will also reduce road maintenance costs, which will help the city economically.

Although the expansion of Highway 17, federal taxes will be used to pay for the road. This will not have a direct effect on solely one community. Money will be used, given by the government which would come from everyone living in the United States.

Although the new highway will bypass four cities in the district, there is still a lot of room for advertisement. Travelers will be able to easily get to the four cities by the highway and come from longer distances. Although there is no guarentee tourists won't stop in the city, with adertising and networking with national motels and restaurants, they may be able to suggest ones in the four cities.

Overall there seems to be stronger evidence that building the new highway will help communities and decrease traffic congestion.

## Annotations

### Trait 1: Score Point 1

The response includes an argument for the expansion of the highway (*Overall, expanding the highway will create new jobs...helping economically, and also will help decrease traffic congestion*). The writer supports these two reasons (*help communities and decrease traffic congestion*) by referencing portions from the source text that discuss those topics and then analyzing the argumentation. To support the reason for the expansion, the writer proposes solutions to the problems from the opposing view (*Although the new highway will bypass four cities, there is still room for advertisement*). The writer needs more specific evidence from the text and more analysis. Overall, this response is simplistic and limited and therefore earns a score of 1 for Trait 1.

### Trait 2: Score Point 1

The response begins with a statement of the writer's argument (*I believe that the Highway 17 should be expanded...due to the better support it has*), but without specific reference to either of the passages. In fact, the writer does not mention either Rep. Walls or Alice Jenkins in the response. Following the introduction, the response is organized into paragraphs, each of which addresses an aspect of the topic under consideration. Within the paragraphs, there is some elaboration of ideas and some use of transitional devices (*This will then allow...*). However, overall the structure does not present the opposing positions clearly or specifically, making the response only partially effective at conveying the writer's message. Therefore, this response earns a score of 1 for Trait 2.

### Trait 3: Score Point 1

The response contains multiple instances of run-on sentences (*Some of the road construction jobs which are created while creating the road may be temporary, however there is room for premenant positions*), comma errors, sentence fragments, confusing pronoun-antecedent references, and problems with parallelism that occasionally interfere with the writer's meaning. The writer has used some variety in sentence structure, but there are awkward sentences that are difficult to understand (*Although there is no guarentee tourists won't stop in the city, with adertising and networking with national motels and restaurants, they may be able to suggest ones in the four cities*). Standard usage is at a minimally acceptable level of appropriateness for on-demand draft writing. Therefore, this response earns a score of 1 for Trait 3.



## Reflections

3

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2

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1

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# Resources for Close Reading

## Five Simple Strategies on How to Read Complex Texts

### 1. Number the paragraphs

The Common Core asks students to be able to cite and refer to the text. One simple way to do this is by numbering each paragraph, section, or stanza in the left hand margin. When students refer to the text, require them to state which paragraph they are referring to. The rest of the class will be able to quickly find the line being referenced.

### 2. Chunk the text.

When faced with a full page of text, reading it can quickly become overwhelming for students. Breaking up the text into smaller sections (or chunks) makes the page much more manageable for students. Students do this by drawing a horizontal line between paragraphs to divide the page into smaller sections.

At the beginning of the year, group the paragraphs into chunks before handing out the assignment. Look at the paragraphs to see where natural chunks occur. Paragraphs 1-3 may be the hook and thesis statement, while 6-8 may be the paragraphs where the author addresses the opposition. It is important to understand that there is no right or wrong way to chunk the text, as long as you can justify why you grouped certain paragraphs together.

By the end of the year, let go of that responsibility and ask students to chunk the text on their own. They number the paragraphs then must make decisions about what paragraphs will be grouped together. Usually, most of the class is very similar in the way they chunked the text.

### 3. Underline and circle... with a purpose.

Telling students to simply underline “the important stuff” is too vague. “Stuff” is not a concrete thing that students can identify. Instead, direct students to underline and circle very specific things. Think about what information you want students to take from the text, and ask them to look for those elements. What you have students circle and underline may change depending on the text type.

For example, when studying an argument, ask students to underline “claims” - belief statements that the author is making. Students will quickly discover that the author makes multiple claims throughout the argument.

When studying poetry, students could underline the imagery they find throughout the poem. Circling specific items is also an effective close reading strategy. Have students circle “Key terms” in the text. Define key terms as words that:

1. Are defined.
2. Are repeated throughout the text.
3. If you only circled five key terms in the entire text, you would have a pretty good idea about what the entire text is about.

Have students circle the names of sources, power verbs, or figurative language. Providing students with a specific thing you want them to underline or circle will focus their attention on that area much better than “underlining important information”.

#### **4. Left margin: What is the author SAYING?**

It isn't enough to ask students to "write in the margins". Be very specific and give students a game plan for what they will write. This is where the chunking comes into play.

Ask students to summarize each chunk. Demonstrate how to write summaries in 10-words or less. The chunking allows the students to look at the text in smaller segments, and summarize what the author is saying in just that small, specific chunk.


#### **5. Right margin: Dig deeper into the text**

In the right-hand margin, direct students to complete a specific task for each chunk. This may require that students:

- Use a power verb to describe what the author is DOING. (For example: Describing, illustrating, arguing, etc.) Note: It isn't enough for students to write "Comparing" and be done. What is the author comparing? A better answer might be: "Comparing the character of Montag to Captain Beatty".
- Represent the information with a picture. This is a good way for students to be creative to visually represent the chunk with a drawing.
- Ask questions. When modeled, students can begin to learn how to ask questions that dig deeper into the text. Use these questions as the conversation driver.
- There are many other things students can write in the margins. Model and teach these strategies so that students will have an idea of what to write when they are on their own.

Adapted from *Five close reading strategies to support the Common Core*. Allam, C (2012, June 11). <http://iteachicoachiblog.blogspot.com/2012/06/five-simple-close-reading-strategies.html>

## Sample Annotation Guide

<b><i>Symbol</i></b>	<b><i>Meaning</i></b>
1, 2, 3 . . .	<i>Number of the paragraph</i>
_____	<i>Major points or key ideas</i>
	<i>Key words or terms</i>
?	<i>Something that is confusing</i>
!	<i>Something you found surprising</i>
<i>E</i>	<i>Example supporting major points</i>

## Franklin D. Roosevelt: First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933

I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper. So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for. Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

The excerpt from Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address is available in an online collection of public government works through the American Presidency Project. Source: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=14473>

## Chunking the Text

### Franklin D. Roosevelt: First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933

The following passage is an excerpt from the speech and has been chunked for instructional purposes.

1 I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a candor and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper.

2 So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

3 In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious curtailment of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

4 More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

5 Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for.

6 Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

The excerpt from Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address is available in an online collection of public government works through the American Presidency Project. Source: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=14473>

## Annotating the Text

### Franklin D. Roosevelt: First Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933

Sample annotations

Major Points

? – Questions

E – Evidence  
or Examples

Words or phrases not understood ! - Surprise

1

I am certain that my fellow Americans expect that on my induction into the Presidency I will address them with a **candor** and a decision which the present situation of our Nation impels. This is preeminently the time to speak the truth, the whole truth, frankly and boldly. Nor need we shrink from honestly facing conditions in our country today. This great Nation will endure as it has endured, will revive and will prosper.

E – This is  
evidence of  
hope for  
future.

2

So, first of all, let me assert my firm belief that the only thing we have to fear is fear itself – nameless, unreasoning, unjustified terror which paralyzes needed efforts to convert retreat into advance. In every dark hour of our national life a leadership of frankness and vigor has met with that understanding and support of the people themselves which is essential to victory. I am convinced that you will again give that support to leadership in these critical days.

E – This is  
evidence of  
the problem.

? – Had people stopped  
believing in leaders?

? – Are these personal values – like  
honesty or something else?

3

In such a spirit on my part and on yours we face our common difficulties. They concern, thank God, only material things. Values have shrunk to fantastic levels; taxes have risen; our ability to pay has fallen; government of all kinds is faced by serious **curtailment** of income; the means of exchange are frozen in the currents of trade; **the withered leaves of industrial enterprise lie on every side**; farmers find no markets for their produce; the savings of many years in thousands of families are gone.

4

More important, a host of unemployed citizens face the grim problem of existence, and an equally great number toil with little return. Only a foolish optimist can deny the dark realities of the moment.

! Wow, this is like workers  
today with low wages.



---

5

Yet our distress comes from no failure of substance. We are stricken by no plague of locusts. Compared with perils which our forefathers conquered because they believed and were not afraid, we have still much to be thankful for.

? – What does this mean?

? – What perils did they face?

---

6

Nature still offers her bounty and human efforts have multiplied it. Plenty is at our doorstep, but generous use of it languishes in the very sight of the supply. Primarily this is because rulers of the exchange of mankind's goods have failed through their own stubbornness and their own incompetence, have admitted their failure, and have abdicated. Practices of the unscrupulous money changers stand indicted in the court of public opinion, rejected by the hearts and minds of men.

? – Who is he talking about?

E – This is evidence of the problem.

The excerpt from Franklin D. Roosevelt's First Inaugural Address is available in an online collection of public government works through the American Presidency Project. Source: <http://www.presidency.ucsb.edu/ws/?pid=14473>

## Sample Reading Strategies

Strategy	Sentence Starters for Response
<p><b>Making Connections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• text to text</li> <li>• text to self</li> <li>• text to world</li> </ul> <p>Strategic readers connect what they know with what they are reading.</p> <p><b>Always explain WHY you made the connection (because...).</b></p>	<p>This reminds me of . . .</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I connected to this when . . .</li> <li>• _____ made me remember a time when . . .</li> <li>• This relates to my life because . . .</li> <li>• _____ makes me think about . . .</li> <li>• This illustration makes me think about . . .</li> <li>• This makes me think about...</li> <li>• This part makes me remember . . .</li> <li>• I really had a strong connection to this part because . . .</li> <li>• This is like . . .</li> <li>• This is familiar to me because . . .</li> <li>• This is similar to . . .</li> </ul>
<p><b>Predicting</b></p> <p>Strategic readers think about what's going to happen and make predictions based on what they know and what they have read.</p> <p><b>Always explain WHY you predicted something (because...).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I think this will be about _____ because . . .</li> <li>• I think _____ is going to happen next because...</li> <li>• I predict that . . . because...</li> <li>• _____ make me think that _____ will happen.</li> <li>• I'm guessing this will be about _____ because...</li> <li>• Since _____ happened, I think _____ will happen.</li> <li>• My predictions were right/wrong because . . .</li> </ul>
<p><b>Inferring</b></p> <p>Strategic readers “read between the lines” and make an educated guess based on what their prior knowledge and evidence in the story.</p> <p><b>Always explain WHY you inferred something (because...).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• From the text clues, I can conclude that . . .</li> <li>• Based on what the text says and what I know, I think . . .</li> <li>• This information makes me think . . .</li> <li>• This evidence suggests . . .</li> <li>• That is probably why . . .</li> <li>• Although the writer does not come right out and say it, I can figure out that . . .</li> </ul>

<p><b>Asking Questions</b> Strategic readers ask themselves questions before, during, and after reading to better understand the author and the meaning of the text. <b>Always try to infer a possible answer to a question (maybe...).</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I wonder . . .</li> <li>• I would like to ask the author . . .</li> <li>• Who? What? When? Where? Why? How?</li> <li>• This makes me wonder about . . .</li> </ul>
<p><b>Visualizing</b> Strategic readers picture what is happening as they read. <b>Always explain what visualizing help you understand/infer about the story/characters.</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I could really picture . . .</li> <li>• The description of ____ helped me visualize . . .</li> <li>• I created a mental image of . . .</li> <li>• In my mind I could really see . . .</li> <li>• When it said ____, I could imagine . . .</li> <li>• If this were a movie . . .</li> </ul>
<p><b>Monitoring and Clarifying</b> Strategic readers stop to think about their reading and know what to do when they don't understand.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• I had to slow down when . . .</li> <li>• I wonder what ____ means.</li> <li>• I need to know more about . . .</li> <li>• This last part is about . . .</li> <li>• I was confused by . . .</li> <li>• I still don't understand . . .</li> <li>• I had difficulty with . . .</li> <li>• I ____ (name strategy) to help me understand this part.</li> <li>• I can't really understand . . .</li> <li>• I wonder what the author means by</li> <li>• I got lost here because . . .</li> <li>• I need to reread the part where . . .</li> </ul>
<p><b>Evaluating text (commenting)</b> Strategic readers stop to think about their reading and make judgments about the plot, setting, themes, characters, etc.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• This is good because...</li> <li>• I like the part where... because...</li> <li>• I dislike the part where... because...</li> <li>• My favorite part so far is... because...</li> <li>• I think that... because...</li> <li>• I think this setting is important because...</li> <li>• This part is very realistic/unrealistic because...</li> <li>• I think the relationship between____ and____ is interesting because...</li> <li>• I like/dislike (name the character) because...</li> <li>• The character I admire is____ because...</li> </ul>

<p><b>Summarizing and Synthesizing</b> Strategic readers identify the most important ideas and restate them in their own words.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The text is mainly about ____.</li> <li>• The author's most important ideas were ____.</li> <li>• The details I need to include are . . .</li> <li>• Some important concepts are . . .</li> <li>• The most important evidence was . . .</li> <li>• The basic gist . . .</li> <li>• The key information is . . .</li> <li>• In a nutshell this says that . . .</li> </ul>
<p><b>Determining What's Important</b> Strategic readers think about the text's big idea or message and why it's important.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At first I thought ____, but then I thought ____.</li> <li>• My latest thought about this is ____.</li> <li>• I'm getting a different picture here because ____.</li> <li>• What this means to me is . . .</li> <li>• So, the big idea is . . .</li> <li>• A conclusion I'm drawing is . . .</li> <li>• This is relevant to my life because . . .</li> </ul>
<p><b>Analyzing Author's Craft</b> Strategic readers notice the way the author uses language to get his or her ideas across.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A golden line for me is . . .</li> <li>• I like how the author uses ____ to show ____.</li> <li>• This word/phrase stands out for me because . . .</li> <li>• I like how the author uses ____ to show . . .</li> <li>• The simile / metaphor / image that caught my attention was . . .</li> <li>• My favorite quote was . . .</li> <li>• I like how the author described ____ to show . . .</li> </ul>

# Constructed Response Resources for the Classroom

## Unpack the Prompt

Do	What

## Close Reading Questions

After they have read the excerpt(s), can your students answer these questions?

- What is the author's argument?
- What position does the author take (for or against)?
- What is one point that supports the author's argument?
- What evidence does the author give to support this point?
- What is the point of view of the author?
- What is one point that refutes the author's point of view?

## Evaluating What You Have Read

After reading the article, answer these questions to help you to reflect upon and analyze the article.

Question	Answer
1. What is the author's main argument? Use your own words to rearticulate the main idea.	
2. List and explain the reasons the author provides for his/her main argument.	
3. What kind of evidence is presented to support the author's argument? Is it fact or opinion or a different type of evidence? What is the source of the information? Does it come from an informed authority in the field?	
4. What is the purpose and tone of the article?	
5. Is the author objective or does he/she try to convince the reader to have a certain opinion? If so, what viewpoint does the author use to try and convince you of his/her position?	
6. Does the author's argument assume that the reader thinks in a particular way or has a particular view? What are the major underlying assumptions that the author makes? Do you think they are reasonable and acceptable to most people?	
7. Does the author make inferences based on his/her evidence? Is the line of reasoning logical or illogical? Why?	
8. Does the author try to appeal to the reader's emotions? Does the author use any "loaded" words in the headline or the article? List these words or phrases and explain their effect on the reader.	
9. Based on what you have read, how has the author persuaded or dissuaded you from his/her viewpoint? Why?	



## Types of Evidence to Support an Argument

Evidence isn't the same as proof. "Whereas *evidence* allows for professional judgment, *proof* is absolute and incontestable."

(Denis Hayes, *Learning and Teaching in Primary Schools*, 2009)

### Definition of Evidence

Facts, documentation, or testimony used to strengthen a claim, support an argument, or reach a conclusion.

Type of Evidence	Definition	Samples Supporting an Author's Claim
<b>Factual</b>	Truthful statements that cannot be denied. Statements that the average person may know or which can be proven.	
<b>Statistics or Data</b>	Numerical facts; can be presented in raw numbers, percentages, or fractions.	
<b>Examples or Anecdotes</b>	Real-life situations, events, or experiences that illustrate a position; anecdotal stories that help explain an author's claim.	
<b>Expert Testimony</b>	The observations or conclusions of someone who is considered highly knowledgeable because he/she is an expert in a particular field of study or occupation; someone who has first-hand knowledge and experience.	
<b>Logical Reasoning</b>	An explanation which draws conclusions that the reader can understand; a discussion which helps the reader understand or make sense out of facts or examples offered.	
<b>Emotional Appeal</b>	Use of sympathy, fear, loyalty, etc. to persuade; manipulates the reader's emotions – ethos, pathos, logos	

## Sample Completed Organizer: Types of Evidence

*Note: The following graphic organizer shows different types of evidence that was used in Passage 1 - Press Release from the Office of U.S Representative Melody Walls United States House of Representatives, Washington, DC*

### Example of Types of Evidence

Claim: While both sides make an acceptable case, Representative Walls provides a stronger argument for the road construction bill because the press release provides more factual and valid evidence.

Type of Evidence	Definition	Samples Supporting an Author's Claim
<b>Factual</b>	Truthful statements that cannot be denied. Statements that the average person may know or which can be proven.	The bill will ease traffic congestion.
<b>Statistics or Data</b>	Numerical facts; can be presented in raw numbers, percentages, or fractions.	A 2001 study in Texas showed that bypasses reduce traffic through towns as much as 75%.
<b>Examples or Anecdotes</b>	Real-life situations, events, or experiences that illustrate a position; anecdotal stories that help explain an author's claim.	. . . held town meetings to gather opinions from her constituents about revitalizing the economy of the 12 <sup>th</sup> District.
<b>Expert Testimony</b>	The observations or conclusions of someone who is considered highly knowledgeable because he/she is an expert in a particular field of study or occupation; someone who has first-hand knowledge and experience.	Some officials anticipated a 30% increase in highway traffic.
<b>Logical Reasoning</b>	An explanation which draws conclusions that the reader can understand; a discussion which helps the reader understand or make sense out of facts or examples offered.	An increase in travelers will attract national motel and restaurant chains along the highway route.
<b>Emotional Appeal</b>	Use of sympathy, fear, loyalty, etc. to persuade; manipulates the reader's emotions – ethos, pathos, logos	Representative Walls heard residents' concerns for jobs in the district.

## Sample Completed Organizer: Types of Evidence

*Note: The following graphic organizer shows different types of evidence that was used in Passage 2 - Letter to the Editor*

### Example of Types of Evidence

Claim: While both sides make an acceptable case, the letter provides a better-supported argument.

Type of Evidence	Definition	Samples Supporting an Author's Claim
<b>Factual</b>	Truthful statements that cannot be denied. Statements that the average person may know or which can be proven.	. . . the highway will bypass four cities in our district alone.
<b>Statistics or Data</b>	Numerical facts; can be presented in raw numbers, percentages, or fractions.	. . . two manufacturers closed their doors.
<b>Examples or Anecdotes</b>	Real-life situations, events, or experiences that illustrate a position; anecdotal stories that help explain an author's claim.	If this project were paid for with state tax money alone, angry voters would have struck it down.
<b>Expert Testimony</b>	The observations or conclusions of someone who is considered highly knowledgeable because he/she is an expert in a particular field of study or occupation; someone who has first-hand knowledge and experience.	. . . The 2001 study . . . shows they (bypasses) have a negative impact on local businesses.
<b>Logical Reasoning</b>	An explanation which draws conclusions that the reader can understand; a discussion which helps the reader understand or make sense out of facts or examples offered.	There is no guarantee that tourists will drive an extra two miles into our town if national chain motels and restaurants are built at the highway exits.
<b>Emotional Appeal</b>	Use of sympathy, fear, loyalty, etc. to persuade; manipulates the reader's emotions – ethos, pathos, logos	Please consider local concerns about this federal project.

## Both Sides Now

When reading argumentative non-fiction text, materials often present one side or viewpoint on a particular issue. Sometimes, the text may provide evidence to support both sides. Then, it is up to the reader to determine which is best supported. Analyzing and evaluating the evidence for both sides is one way to identify a claim and the reasons for making a specific decision/claim.

Both Sides Now		
Evidence that Supports		Evidence that Opposes
	<p><b>Question or statement</b></p> <p><b>Which position is better supported?</b></p>	
<b>Decision (Claim)</b>		
<b>Reasons (Analysis/Evaluation)</b>		

## Both Sides Now (Sample Completed Organizer)

*Note: The following graphic organizer shows different types of evidence that was used in “Taxation and Revenue” – Test Bank Item 18101, Stimulus and Prompt*

Both Sides Now		
Evidence that Supports	Question or statement  Which position regarding the building of a new road is better supported?	Evidence that Opposes
Will ease traffic congestion		Will bypass town and harm it
Will create jobs		Road paid for with federal funds
Improving highway means jobs for construction workers		Few residents will use road
Will bring more long-distance travelers to area		Will lose money because of bypass
30% increase in traffic that won't impact city roads		Construction jobs are only temporary
Will attract national motel and restaurant chains		Minimum wage jobs will remain
Will eliminate truck traffic through city by as much as 75%		Highway and bypass four cities in one district, so fewer travelers will stop in the cities
Will reduce road maintenance costs		2001 study shows bypasses have negative impact on local businesses
Representative held town meetings		Representative did not listen to local concerns in her town meetings
Decision (Claim) Pro side		
When comparing the two positions, Representative Walls has the better supported position.		
Reasons (Analysis/Evaluation) Pro side		
The press release provides a stronger argument because it provides more factual and valid evidence instead of opinions.		

## Argumentative Writing Organizers: Pros and Cons

Question or Statement	
Pros (Evidence that Supports)	Cons (Evidence that Opposes)

Decision for a claim:

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Defend your decision:

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## Constructed Response Graphic Organizer

Prompt/Question:		
<p>Restatement of question in your own words (unpack it)</p> <p>Claim</p> <p>Evidence Detailed body of evidence or reasons that support answer – include enough details to answer the question. Make sure all details support the claim and are not off-topic.</p> <p>Counterargument(s)</p> <p>Restated question Concluding thoughts</p>		
	Text 1	Text 2
	Claim	Rebuttal

## Constructed Response Organizer

Introductory Paragraph
Hook the audience:
Give a little background on the issue
Claim:

↓

Body Paragraph #1 Reason/Evidence/Connection (use as many paragraphs as needed)
Reason #1
Evidence, Support and Connection
Transition

↓

Body Paragraph Counterclaim/Rebuttal
Counterclaim (Evidence and Support)
Rebuttal (Evidence, Support, and Connection)
Transition

↓

Conclusion Paragraph
Provide take-away points
Restate your thesis in different way



## Sample Thesis/Claim Frames

A thesis is an answer to a specific question. A thesis statement makes a claim or proposition that reflects a specific point of view. The thesis statement should recognize both sides of a question, yet focus on two to three specific points (discussion points) sometimes called points of analyses. A thesis statement is the roadmap for the written response. The placement of the thesis statement is generally located in the introduction and summarized in the conclusion of a writing sample.

The general argument made by \_\_\_\_\_ in his/her work \_\_\_\_\_ is that \_\_\_\_\_ because \_\_\_\_\_.

Although \_\_\_\_\_ (believes, demonstrates, argues) that \_\_\_\_\_, \_\_\_\_\_ supports/provides the clearest evidence \_\_\_\_\_.

A key factor in both \_\_\_\_\_ can be attributed to \_\_\_\_\_.

When comparing the two positions in this article, \_\_\_\_\_ provides the clearest evidence that \_\_\_\_\_.

Looking at the arguments regarding \_\_\_\_\_, it is clear that \_\_\_\_\_.

In discussion of \_\_\_\_\_, one controversial issue has been \_\_\_\_\_ believes that \_\_\_\_\_.

On the other hand, \_\_\_\_\_ asserts that \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_ is clearly the best supported argument on the issue of \_\_\_\_\_.

## How Do You Know? – Frames for Incorporating Evidence

In the article, “\_\_\_\_\_,” \_\_\_\_\_ maintains that \_\_\_\_\_.

\_\_\_\_\_’s point is that \_\_\_\_\_

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

One reason that \_\_\_\_\_ maintains the position of \_\_\_\_\_ is that \_\_\_\_\_

According to the text/article/passage/report, \_\_\_\_\_

An example of \_\_\_\_\_, is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. This proves/supports that \_\_\_\_\_

The author states that \_\_\_\_\_

In addition, the author/article/research supports that \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_. This proves that \_\_\_\_\_.

Examples/data supporting \_\_\_\_\_, include \_\_\_\_\_

## Citing the Evidence

Question	State	Cite	Explain
This is the question you are directly responding to. If you are writing an essay, you must also use part of the stimulus in your answer so your audience knows what you are talking about.	State the claim - the idea you had about the text.	Cite what in the text led you to that idea.	Explain how each piece of evidence supports your idea.

Question	State	Cite	Explain

## Connecting Ideas – Using Transitional Words and Phrases

Transitional words and phrases create a link between your ideas when you are speaking and writing. They help your audience understand the logic of your thoughts. When using transitional words, make sure that it is the right match for what you want to express. Remember, transition words work best when they are connecting two or more strong ideas that are clearly stated. The following is a list of transitional words and phrases that you can use for different purposes.

<b>Add Related Information</b>	<b>Give an Example or Illustrate an Idea</b>	<b>Make Sure Your Thinking is Clearly Understood</b>	<b>Compare Ideas or Show How Ideas Are Similar</b>	<b>Contrast Ideas or Show How They Are Different</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• furthermore</li> <li>• moreover</li> <li>• too</li> <li>• also</li> <li>• again</li> <li>• in addition</li> <li>• next</li> <li>• further</li> <li>• finally</li> <li>• and, or, nor</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• to illustrate</li> <li>• to demonstrate</li> <li>• specifically</li> <li>• for instance</li> <li>• as an illustration</li> <li>• for example</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• that is to say</li> <li>• in other words</li> <li>• to explain</li> <li>• i.e., (that is)</li> <li>• to clarify</li> <li>• to rephrase it</li> <li>• to put it another way</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in the same way</li> <li>• by the same token</li> <li>• similarly</li> <li>• in like manner</li> <li>• likewise</li> <li>• in similar fashion</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• nevertheless</li> <li>• but</li> <li>• however</li> <li>• otherwise</li> <li>• on the contrary</li> <li>• in contrast</li> <li>• on the other hand</li> </ul>
<b>Explain How One Thing Causes Another</b>	<b>Explain the Effect or Result of Something</b>	<b>Explain Your Purpose</b>	<b>List Related Information</b>	<b>Qualify Something</b>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• because</li> <li>• since</li> <li>• on account of</li> <li>• for that reason</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• therefore</li> <li>• consequently</li> <li>• accordingly</li> <li>• thus</li> <li>• hence</li> <li>• as a result</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• in order that</li> <li>• so that</li> <li>• to that end, to this end</li> <li>• for this purpose</li> <li>• for this reason</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First, second, third...</li> <li>• First, then, also, finally</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• almost</li> <li>• nearly</li> <li>• probably</li> <li>• never</li> <li>• always</li> <li>• frequently</li> <li>• perhaps</li> <li>• maybe</li> <li>• although</li> </ul>

*From Odell Education*

## Sentence Structures: Helping Students Discuss, Read, and Write About Texts

Students at all levels struggle to find language that expresses their ideas and helps them achieve their rhetorical purpose. Sentence structures offer a useful means of getting students up and running with academic language through either sentence starters or sentence frames. Both approaches are useful for writing about and discussing different types of texts.

Sentence Starters	Sentence Frames
<p><b>Making Predictions</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I predict that...</li> <li>If x happens, then...</li> <li>Because x did y, I expect z.</li> </ul> <p><b>Making Connections</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X reminds me of...</li> <li>X is similar to y because...</li> <li>X is important to y because...</li> </ul> <p><b>Making Inferences</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X means . . . since x is...</li> <li>Early on the author says... which suggests</li> <li>X is...</li> <li>X causes y as a result of... which shows...</li> </ul> <p><b>Summarizing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The main (central) idea is...</li> <li>The author argues that...</li> <li>In_____, (author's name) implies...</li> </ul> <p><b>Evaluating</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The author's point is/is not valid because...</li> <li>The author does/does not do a good job of...</li> <li>The most important aspect/event/idea is...</li> </ul> <p><b>Analyzing the Text</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The author uses_____to show/achieve...</li> <li>The author assumes_____which is/is not true...</li> <li>The use of_____strengthens/weakens the author's argument by...</li> </ul>	<p><b>Summarizing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Readers often assume that....</li> <li>While many suggest x, others say y....</li> <li>(Author's name) agrees/disagrees with x, pointing out...</li> </ul> <p><b>Responding</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>X claims...which I agree/disagree with because....</li> <li>X's point assumes x, which I would argue means...</li> <li>While I agree that____, you could also say...</li> </ul> <p><b>Agreeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most will agree that...</li> <li>I agree with those who suggest that...</li> <li>X offers an effective explanation of why y happens, which is especially useful because most think that....</li> </ul> <p><b>Disagreeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>I would challenge x's point about y, arguing instead...</li> <li>X claims y, but recent discoveries show this is...</li> <li>While X suggests y, this cannot be true since...</li> </ul> <p><b>Taking the Third Path: Agreeing and Disagreeing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>While I agree that..., I reject the larger argument that...since we now know...</li> <li>I share X's belief that..., but question...due to...</li> <li>Most concede x though few would agree that y is true...</li> </ul>

<p><b>Clarifying</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What the author is saying is...</li> <li>• Given that x happened, the author is trying to show...</li> <li>• X is not _____ but is, instead, _____ since....</li> </ul> <p><b>Synthesizing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• These elements/details, when considered together, suggest...</li> <li>• Initial impressions suggested x, but after learning _____ it is now clear that... It is not a question of x but rather of y because....</li> </ul>	<p><b>Arguing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Although x is increasing/decreasing, it is not y but z that is the cause...</li> <li>• While x is true, I would argue y because of z.</li> <li>• X was, in the past, the most important factor but y has changed, making it the real cause.</li> </ul> <p><b>Explaining Importance</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Based on x, people assumed y, which made sense at the time, but now we realize z, which means....</li> <li>• This change questions our previous understanding of x, which means that now we must assume...</li> <li>• While this conclusion appears insignificant, it...</li> <li>• challenges our current understanding of x, which means that...</li> </ul>
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Sentence starters and frames from: "A Cognitive Strategies Approach to Reading and Writing Instruction for English Learners in Secondary School," by Olson and Land in *Research in the Teaching of English* (Feb 2007) and *They Say/I Say: The Moves that Matter in Academic Writing*, by Graff and Birkenstein (Norton 2006/2010).

# Revising and Editing Checklist

## Introduction

- ☐ Does your introduction begin with a sentence that grabs the reader's attention?
- ☐ Does your paper contain a thesis that is a clear summary of your main point or argument?
- ☐ Is your thesis arguable? Your thesis should not simply be the statement of a fact because a statement is NOT arguable.
- ☐ Does your thesis match your assignment? A thesis for a compare-contrast paper is constructed differently than a thesis for a personal narrative or a research paper.
- ☐ Is your thesis placed correctly? Normally the thesis should be the last sentence of your introductory paragraph, but it can also appear either as the first sentence or within the first paragraph.
- ☐ Does your thesis provide a clear outline for the entirety of your paper?
- ☐ Does your thesis answer a question? Keep in mind, a thesis should never be written as a question.

## Body Paragraphs

- ☐ Does the topic sentence of each body paragraph summarize the entirety of the points that paragraph covers?
- ☐ Does each topic sentence correspond with your thesis statement?
- ☐ Does all of the information in your paragraph support your topic sentence?
- ☐ Is the final sentence in each body paragraph a sentence that either summarizes the paragraph or transitions to the next point?
- ☐ Do you acknowledge an opposing point of view and then explain why you think it isn't strong enough to change the point of view selected?

## Conclusion

- ☐ Does the last paragraph remind readers of the main points of the essay, without going into too much detail repeating everything readers just read?
- ☐ Is the conclusion free of new information (such as another supporting point)?
- ☐ Does the last sentence leave readers with a strong final impression?

## Entire Paper

### General

- ☐ Is the writing in formal, third person?
- ☐ Does one idea flow smoothly into the next?
- ☐ Do the sentence structures and lengths vary?
- ☐ Does every sentence relate to the thesis?
- ☐ Does everything make sense?
- ☐ Is the essay convincing?
- ☐ Are the grammar, punctuation, and spelling correct?

## **Sentence Composition**

- ☐ Have you removed unnecessary hedges that weaken your arguments such as *probably*, *might be*, *somewhat*, or *kind of*?
- ☐ Have you removed unnecessary words that do not add to the sentence such as *really* or *a lot*?
- ☐ Have you varied your vocabulary by utilizing a thesaurus and dictionary when necessary in order to avoid repetition or incorrect word choices?
- ☐ Are your sentences of varied lengths and complexities? A paper is stronger when it has a mixture of sentences versus all short sentences or all long sentences.
- ☐ Are all transitions from one idea to another smooth and clearly explained, so the reader does not need to make any leaps in logic?
- ☐ Has all slang and conversational language been removed?
- ☐ Have you removed any offensive language, such as gender-based or biased language?

## **Verbs**

- ☐ Do your verb tenses match?
- ☐ Are your verb tenses consistent?
- ☐ Have you replaced unnecessary “to be” verbs (be, been, is, are, were, was) with stronger verbs?
- ☐ Are you using “active” verbs?

## **Integration of Information**

- ☐ Are all of your quotes and paraphrases correctly cited?
- ☐ Are all of your quotes introduced and explained properly?
- ☐ Is all of your information, such as quotes and data, pertinent to your topic? Does your information correspond with the topic sentence of your current paragraph?

## **Grammar and Mechanics**

- ☐ Have you used parallel structure?
- ☐ Do your pronouns agree with the antecedents they are replacing?
- ☐ Is your paper free of fragments and run-on sentences?
- ☐ Is your paper properly punctuated?
- ☐ Is your paper free of spelling errors?
- ☐ Have you read through your paper (slowly) in order to catch errors that you would miss otherwise?



## RLA Resources from the World Wide Web

**National Council for Teachers of English.** This site provides lessons and strategies for teaching nonfiction text. <http://www.ncte.org/>

**Newsela.** A site with nonfiction articles available in 4-5 different Lexile Levels with many of them providing a quiz that is aligned to a specific anchor standard. It is necessary to sign up for the free account to see the different level of articles. <https://newsela.com/>

**PBS Teacher Source.** Lesson plans and lots of activities are included in the teacher section of PBS. <http://www.pbslearningmedia.org/>

**ProCon.org.** A website that provides both sides of the argument. Useful for use in teaching argumentative writing. <http://www.procon.org/>

**Purdue University's OWL.** One of the most extensive collections of advice about writing found on the web. <https://owl.english.purdue.edu/>

**ReadWorks.org.** Written for the K-12 program, many of these nonfiction texts and lessons are usable in the adult basic education program. <http://www.readworks.org/>

**ReadWriteThink.** From the International Reading Association and the National Council of Teachers of English, this site has great resources. <http://www.readwritethink.org/>

**Teach 4 Results.** A list of resources for teaching the writing process. [http://iteach4results.wikispaces.com/\\*Writing](http://iteach4results.wikispaces.com/*Writing)

**Teaching That Makes Sense.** A K-12 site with lots of free resources and graphic organizers from Steve Peha. <http://ttms.org/>

**The Writing Studio – Colorado State University.** A step-by-step guide for argumentative writing. <http://writing.colostate.edu/guides/guide.cfm?guideid=58>

**Tools for Teachers:** Engaging in Academic Writing. Resources from the Aspen Institute. <http://www.aspendri.org/portal/browse/CategoryList?categoryId=281>

**Writing Fix.** Lessons and strategies on how to teach different types of writing skills, including constructed responses and RAFTS. [http://writingfix.com/rca/constructed\\_response.htm](http://writingfix.com/rca/constructed_response.htm)

**Writer's Web.** Materials from the University of Richmond's Writing Center. <http://writing2.richmond.edu/writing/web.html>

### Stay in Touch!

- **GED Testing Service®** – [www.GEDtestingservice.com](http://www.GEDtestingservice.com)
- **Twitter at @GEDTesting®** – <https://twitter.com/gedtesting>
- **GED® Facebook** – <https://www.facebook.com/GEDTesting>
- **YouTube Channel** – <https://www.youtube.com/user/GEDTestingService>
- **“Tuesdays for Teachers” archived webinars**  
<http://www.gedtestingservice.com/educators/exploring-the-2014-ged-test-webinar-archive>

# Key Concepts of Making Thinking Visible

## Six Key Principles of the Cultures of Thinking Project

- 1. Skills are not sufficient; we must also have the disposition to use them.**  
Possessing thinking skills and abilities alone is insufficient for good thinking. One must also have the disposition to use those abilities. This means schools must develop students' inclination to think and awareness of occasions for thinking as well as their thinking skills and abilities. Having a disposition toward thinking enhances the likelihood that one can effectively use one's abilities in new situations.
- 2. The development of thinking and understanding is fundamentally a social endeavor,** taking place in a cultural context and occurring within the constant interplay between the group and the individual. Social situations that provide experience in communicating one's own thinking as well as opportunities to understand others' thinking enhance individual thinking.
- 3. The culture of the classroom teaches.** It not only sets a tone for learning, but also determines what gets learned. The messages sent through the culture of the classroom communicate to students what it means to think and learn well. These messages are a curriculum in themselves, teaching students how to learn and ways of thinking.
- 4. As educators, we must strive to make students thinking visible.** It is only by making thinking visible that we can begin to understand both what and how our students are learning. Under normal conditions, a student's thinking is invisible to other students, the teacher, and even to him/herself, because people often think with little awareness of how they think. By using structures, routines, probing questions, and documentation we can make students' thinking more visible toward fostering better thinking and learning.
- 5. Good thinking utilizes a variety of resources and is facilitated by the use of external tools to “download” or “distribute” one’s thinking.** Papers, logs, computers, conversation, and various means of recording and keeping track of ideas and thoughts free the mind up to engage in new and deeper thinking.
- 6. For classrooms to be cultures of thinking for students, schools must be cultures of thinking for teachers.** The development of a professional community in which deep and rich discussions of teaching, learning, and thinking are a fundamental part of teachers' ongoing experience provides the foundation for nurturing students' thinking and learning.

Cultures of Thinking Project, Project Zero, Harvard Graduate School of Education  
Ron Ritchhart & David Perkins Co-Principal Investigators

## Defining Thinking Routines

Tools used over and over again in the classroom, that support specific thinking moves such as,

Making connections

- Describing what's there
- Building explanations
- Considering different viewpoints and perspectives
- Capturing the heart and forming conclusions
- Reasoning with evidence

Structures, through which students collectively as well as individually initiate, explore, discuss, document, and manage their thinking. These structures are:

- Explicit: They have names to identify them
- Instrumental: They are goal directed and purposeful
- A few steps: Easy to learn, and easy to remember
- Individual as well as group practices
- Useful across a variety of contexts
- Help to reveal students' thinking and make more visible

Patterns of behavior adopted to help one use the mind to form thoughts, reason, or reflect. We see these patterns emerging as the routines:

- Are used over and over
- Become engrained in us both teachers and students
- Flexibility emerges

From Ritchhart et al, 2006