

BEFORE WE GET STARTED

Remember to register your attendance and
complete session evaluations.

Session numbers are in your program.



Attendance



Online Handouts



Session Evaluations



Editorial Writing

Alyssa Boehringer

UIL Journalism Director
aboehringer@uiltexas.org

Editorial Writing

An article that states the newspaper's stance on a particular issue. Basically, it's a persuasive essay that offers a solution to a problem.

The prompt.

The prompt.

- Circle dates.
- What's the central issue?
- Who supports the “pro?”
- Who supports the “con?”
- What can you affect?
- Who is your audience?

The prompt.



You are a reporter for the Leaguettown

Press, the student newspaper of Leaguettown High School. From the given information, write an **editorial**

as you would for the high school newspaper. Remember that as an editorial writer, you should support or oppose **policy or action**; you should not sermonize.

You have **45 minutes**.

Do not write your name or the name of your school on this sheet or your entry. **Put your number on your paper.**

Editorial Writing

Invitational B Meet • 2022

Leaguettown High School has 1,000 students enrolled in grades 9-12. In the fall, the cross country team met at the school at 6 a.m. for their workouts. Three days a week, the team ran a 3-mile route around the school. During the runs, several of the male runners ran without shirts, and several of the female runners ran in their sports bra without a shirt. The team always wore shirts when lifting weights in the building or participating in a cross country meet. Cross country does not have a class period.

Due to the Texas temperatures, running shirtless has been a common practice for both the cross country team and track team. In fact, it is not usual for male athletes in basketball to practice shirtless from time to time.

In November after the cross county season ended, a parent of a student who is not on the cross country team complained on the district's Facebook account that the cross country athletes were breaking dress code and needed to wear shirts while running during practice. A heated debate on the Facebook page ensued. The parents demanded that the district end the practice of shirtless running and punish students who do not follow the rule.

Superintendent Diane Rossy asked the high school principal to address the issue and report back to her in early April. On Friday, Principal Gayle King said she organized a committee of coaches, parents, students and administrators to address the issue of athletes practicing without shirts. The committee will make a recommendation on March 25, the Friday after spring break. You are writing for the issue of the Press to be distributed Monday, March 21.

THOSE SUPPORTING SHIRTLESS RUNNING

The cross country team and track team practice outside in the Texas heat. If running shirtless helps keep them cool, then they should be allowed. The athletes, including basketball, are not running through the halls shirtless flaunting the dress code. They are training for their sport to represent the school.

THOSE OPPOSING SHIRTLESS RUNNING

No runner or athlete has to take his or her shirt off to perform better. Dry-fit tank tops do not suffocate runners, and that's exactly what the cross country practice uniform tops are. These athletes should follow the dress code when practicing for the school, whether they are inside or outside.

■ GAYLE KING, principal

The prompt.

“Until the Facebook debate, I had not given this much attention. I saw the cross country team running when I came to work in the fall. Yes, I have seen the athletes without their shirts, but I didn’t think much of it. If we are following the letter of the law, then yes, the students are violating the dress code. They would not be the only student group to do so. Our cheerleaders also violate the dress code when they wear their uniforms to school.

“I created the committee so that all stakeholders are represented. The issue has become quite volatile and heated since finding its way onto Facebook. I will take the committee’s recommendation very seriously before making a decision on this.”

■ **GENEVIEVE SAUNDERS, cross country coach**

“I am having a hard time understanding why this is even an issue. My runners are simply trying to stay cool in the Texas heat. They are not trying to be provocative or anything like that. I know that the Facebook post caused quite the storm, but it seems a little silly to me. If Ms. King creates a policy that states that my runners must wear shirts, we will abide by it, but I don’t think the policy is necessary.”

■ **COLE GRAYSON, junior and captain of the cross country team**

“I run without my shirt during practice about 90% of the time. It helps me stay cool, and it means less laundry. It’s stupid that this ended up on Facebook and turned into some big debate. None of the runners think it’s a big deal. It’s just a few parents with too much time on their hands.”

■ **CATEY ARROYO, sophomore and cross country team member**

“It’s stupid that there is even a committee to discuss this. We are not hurting anyone by running without a shirt. The parent who started it and the ones who joined in on her side are trying to shame us about our bodies. If you look at the Facebook comments, most of the parents who oppose us running shirtless write about how it’s inappropriate for female athletes. They don’t mention the male athletes. This body shaming has to stop.”

■ **CECILIA MASTERS, parent**

“I did post a comment in the Facebook debate. All students should wear shirts when representing the school. Both male and female students should be clothed properly. Running shirtless is a clear violation of the dress code.”

■ **MIA WASHINGTON, freshman**

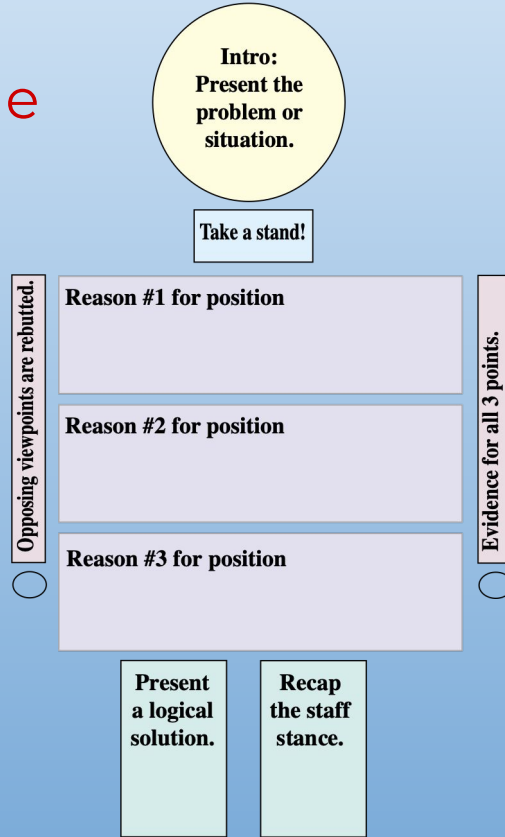
“I am not offended by the cross country or track runners who run shirtless, but I think they should wear shirts. If we have a dress code, everyone should follow it. Athletes already get special attention at this school. They don’t deserve a pass on the dress code. It is not fair for the rest of the students. This is a black and white issue. The school has a dress code, and all students should follow it.”

■ **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

The Cross Country team won second at the UIL State Meet last year. In fact, it is the most-winning sport at the school with 10 team state titles and 24 individual state medals.

The Formula:

The highly capable
and hardworking
human




No quotes!

The Head

A committee of coaches, parents, students and administrators will make a recommendation Friday on whether or not athletes should be allowed to practice without shirts. This comes following a heated debate on Facebook after a parent complained that cross country students were violating dress code during their practice runs.

Don't be afraid to drop your opinion in the lead. Be creative. Get the time element in the head or neck.



**Intro:
Present the
problem or
situation.**

The Neck

The committee should recommend that the school allows students to run shirtless.

OR

The committee should recommend that the school prohibits athletes from practicing shirtless.

Be clear and concise. Set the stance apart in its own paragraph.

Take a stand!

The Body

Give three reasons why you're taking this stand.

- The dress code policy is very clear. Students must wear shirts.
- Student athletes represent the school. They are supposed to be role models.
- The athletes do not compete shirtless. They shouldn't practice shirtless.

TIP: Include thoughts that aren't given to you in the prompt.

Reason #1 for position

Reason #2 for position

Reason #3 for position

The Arms

Support your argument with evidence and examples.

- Students aren't running through the halls shirtless. They wear shirts when exercising indoors, and their outdoor runs take place at 6 a.m., before most students arrive at school. In fact, the workouts are before most students are even awake.

Refute the opposition and tell us why the other side is wrong. (Can be its own paragraph)

Evidence for all 3 points



The Legs

This issue isn't bothering students. It isn't bothering teachers. And it certainly isn't interfering with classroom instruction. This issue started because a parent started a debate on Facebook.

The committee should spend little time on this issue, other than recommending that athletes continue to practice in a way that is most comfortable for them.

TIP: Propose your own solution from outside the prompt.

TIP: ROAST

**Recap
the staff
stance.**

**Present
a logical
solution.**
(Call to action)



Roast in the legs

Not mandatory, but can make your paper stand out.

After all, the cross country team's method seems to be working with 10 state titles and 24 individual state medals.

OR

This issue shouldn't be time-consuming for the committee at all. In fact, a committee isn't even necessary. School rules say students must wear shirts. The committee simply needs to remind the administration of that.

MAKE IT MEMORABLE.

**Recap
the staff
stance.**

**Present
a logical
solution.**
(Call to action)

Sound Advice

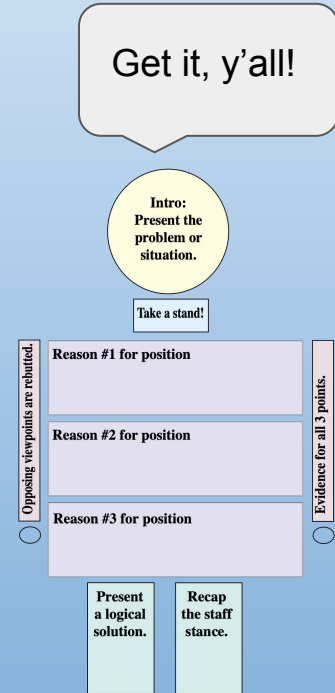
- Get the time element in there.
- No whining “it’s not fair.”
- Don’t over-stretch.
- Keep it third person or first person plural.
- Double check spelling and grammar.
- Use active voice.
- Offer a good solution or call to action.
- Develop your own recipe for a salty, spicy ROAST.

What went wrong?

- You didn't take a stand or it wasn't clear enough.
- Your argument was too general. Be specific to this situation.
- You asked too many rhetorical questions without stating an opinion.
- You used quotes. Don't do that.
- You turned into a preacher.
- You got off-topic.
- You lacked credibility or didn't use evidence.
- You used stereotypes or made personal attacks.

On contest day

- Read the entire prompt
- Decide on a stance
- Using the prompt, write three supportive statements
- Highlight the evidence in the prompt
- Think about a roast, reasoned solution or call-to-action.
- Write it



Editorial Writing

Invitational A Meet • 2022



You are a reporter for the Leaguetown **Press**, the student newspaper of Leaguetown High School. From the given information, write an **editorial** as you would for the high school newspaper. Remember that as an editorial writer, you should support or oppose **policy or action**; you should not sermonize.

You have **45 minutes**.

Do not write your name or the name of your school on this sheet or your entry. **Put your number on your paper.**

Leaguetown High School has 800 students enrolled in grades 9-12. In the fall, the “devious lick” challenge went viral on TikTok. The challenge involved students going on TikTok to boast about stealing school equipment like soap dispensers, paper towel holders, microscopes, electronic whiteboards and other school items. The high school was not immune to the challenge. In September and October, several school bathrooms were vandalized. Students stole soap dispensers, bathroom doors and even the handles on the toilets. As a result, the administration closed two girls’ and two boys’ bathrooms across the school. The student bathrooms near the cafeteria, the main office and near the gym remained open. The bathrooms in the gym also stayed open.

Because of district staff shortages and equipment shortages, the damaged bathrooms were not fixed until late December. All bathrooms have been repaired, but Principal Lucy Morningstar has not reopened them. She said several teachers and a group of students asked for those bathrooms to remain closed.

Not everyone agrees with this. The Student Council officers and a group of parents asked the administration to open all bathrooms for students.

Principal Morningstar said she hasn’t made a final decision about the bathrooms. To discuss the issue, she will hold a meeting with parents and students next Thursday at 7 p.m. in the school cafeteria. You are writing for the issue of the Press to be distributed this Friday (the week before the Thursday meeting).

THOSE SUPPORTING THE CLOSURES

Fewer open bathrooms makes it easier for administrators to patrol the area to ensure no one is vandalizing anything. Fewer bathrooms make it more likely that an administrator is nearby, which helps students feel safer. Also, custodians have less to clean at the end of the day.

THOSE OPPOSING THE CLOSURES

Four closed bathrooms leads to overcrowding. Students are late to class because they have to walk farther for the open bathroom, and they often have to wait for a stall to be unoccupied. Also, some students who need to use the bathroom during class are missing more instruction because the bathroom closest to their classroom is closed.

■ LUCY MORNINGSTAR, principal

“I expected my administration and faculty to want to keep those repaired bathrooms closed. I didn’t expect students to make that request also. Several have. They told me they were intimidated to go into the closed bathrooms because of activity that was occurring there — vandalism, vaping, bad talking,

Let's try



■ **LUCY MORNINGSTAR (cont.)**

and other infractions.

“We don’t need to reopen those bathrooms. Our school was built with too many bathrooms. My administrators and I have watched the bathroom situation closely since we closed those other bathrooms. Students rarely have to wait for a stall.

“Since closing those bathrooms, we have had no vandalism in any bathroom. My assistant principals also said that they have had a dramatic decrease in complaints of smoking or vaping in the bathrooms. I think that’s because we can monitor the open bathrooms more easily.”

■ **LAURIE GERMANY, math teacher**

“The four closed bathrooms were the least used bathrooms. The locations were not central to the main hallways in school, which is also why those are the bathrooms that were vandalized. I have only had a handful of students who have been tardy because of waiting for a bathroom. Most students are arriving on time without any issues. We don’t need to open those closed bathrooms. It will lead to more headaches.”

■ **TAMIKA ELLIS, Junior and Student Council treasurer**

“I can’t believe this is even an issue. If the bathrooms have been repaired, open them. We don’t have enough open. In between classes, the bathrooms are packed. You can barely squeeze in. I usually just wait and ask to go during class, which stinks because then I miss class time.

“I don’t think students are stupid enough to vandalize the bathrooms again. Plus, we all would keep an eye on them. Every student has suffered because of the actions of a few.”

■ **ROHAN OZA, sophomore**

“I have three tardies in English because of bathroom lines. If I get one more, I get a detention. This is ridiculous. There isn’t one bathroom near my English class, so I have to walk all the way to the main office area. I pass two closed bathrooms on my way. Ms. Morningstar needs to reopen those bathrooms. We have all been punished enough.”

■ **GRACE NGUYEN, parent of a freshman**

“If the school didn’t plan on opening the bathrooms again, then why bother to repair them? The school could have saved quite a bit of money. The bathrooms need to be reopened. My daughter hates to use the bathroom at school now because they are all so crowded.”

■ **SYBIL BROWN, freshman**

“I prefer that we don’t have all of the bathrooms open. Before the administration closed some of the bathrooms, I hated going into them. Girls would vape or scream rude and profane things at me. Now, the bathrooms are filled with other students, so those mean girls can’t do anything. Plus, teachers and administrators are now always close by. I feel much safer with the four bathrooms closed. I hope they stay that way.”

■ **ADDITIONAL INFORMATION**

Several teachers suggested turning at least one set of the closed restrooms into faculty restrooms. The only two faculty restrooms are located in the main office area.



Alyssa Boehringer

UIL Journalism Director
aboehringer@uiltexas.org