

English Lesson to Prepare for UIL Ready Writing Contest

Lesson Plan Title: Writing an Effective Introduction for an Essay

Goal of Lesson: To have students write an introduction that hooks the reader's attention and sets the tone for an essay.

Grade Level: English I-IV

TEKS Addressed:

(13)(C) revise drafts to clarify meaning and achieve specific rhetorical purposes, consistency of tone, and logical organization by rearranging the words, sentences, and paragraphs to employ tropes (e.g., metaphors, similes, analogies, hyperbole, understatement, rhetorical questions, irony), schemes (e.g., parallelism, antithesis, inverted word order, repetition, reversed structures), and by adding transitional words and phrases; (ELAR 3-4)

(15)(A)(i) effective introductory and concluding paragraphs and a variety of sentence structures; (ELAR 1-2)

Overview of Lesson:

The teacher will explain about the value/purpose of an effective introduction, have students examine techniques for creating an attention-getting device or hook, ask students to discover an introductory technique for ten topics and assign each student to write an introduction.

Materials Needed:

1. Purpose of an Introduction (attached)
2. Topics for Introductions (attached)

Procedures and Activities:

The teacher will –

- present a short lecture or explanation about the value of an introduction, calling students' attention to the four purposes.
- conduct a class discussion about Creating a Great Introduction by asking for student examples about ways to use the devices.
- have a student read aloud to the class the sample introduction and ask the students to determine what device was used and the effectiveness of the introduction.
- assign students to work in small groups to complete the worksheet on devices by developing techniques/devices that can be used for an introduction for each topic.
- pick a different topic for each group and have groups report on the device they chose, explaining in detail what it is and how it should be developed.

Independent Practice:

The teacher will –

- assign each student to select a topic from the ten on the worksheet, use the device suggested by their group and write an introduction as if for an essay on

the topic.

Assessment:

- Evaluation of worksheet - Topics for Introductions.
- Evaluation of student-written introduction.

Purpose of an Introduction:

1. To get the reader's attention.
2. To move the reader into your subject matter and set the tone.
3. To shift from a general idea to the specific thesis of your essay.
4. To state your thesis before moving to the body of the essay.

Creating a Great Introduction:

1. Understand the prompt.

The number one thing you must do to write a great introduction is to make sure you know the direction you are taking the essay. What does the prompt mean?

2. Use an analogy or metaphor.

Analogies or metaphors require creativity. Think of one that fits the prompt. In fact, if the metaphor is clever, it can be extended throughout the entire essay.

3. Tell a brief anecdote or historical event.

You can create an engaging introduction by telling a brief story.

4. Use a quote that was not used in the prompt.

It is useful to memorize short quotes that you love.

5. Mention a topic in the news.

Try to use a news story that isn't front page news and clearly fits the topic.

6. Use a cliché in an inventive way.

One way to use a cliché creatively is to change it to fit the topic.

(Writing a good introduction is important but you should not sacrifice the body of the essay in an attempt to create a perfect introduction.)

Sample Introduction:

"Hollowed eyes and shadowed skin, the tired veteran slumps against the underpass. A cigarette glows in his frail hand, and with every sneering passerby, the man hunches a little deeper in the dark silence of the concrete. Dirt clings to his body as fiercely as it clings to this soul, and the eyes that have seen mass graves and legless, armless corpses, stray from any human concrete. For the people walking by, the people he fought for and comrades died for, are too good for the filth that tortures his soul, too innocent for the stench of war that stagnantly drifts about him. He marched off to battle a valiant soldier, confident in the black-white contrast of right and wrong. But the horrors of the battlefield and corruption of humanity taught him that there is not black and white but only an endless gray area of lost hope and regrets, into which every man falls. Any war that forces man against man destroys the humanity of its participants and infects both sides with evil." (Lacey Elick, 3A UIL Ready Writing Champion, 2006)

Student's Name:
Group Members:

Class:

Topics for Introductions

1. "A nation of readers is less likely to be fooled." (Karol McMahan)
Device and Explanation:

2. Art is like soup. There will be some vegetables you don't like but as long as you get some soup down you it doesn't matter. (George Wyllie)
Device and Explanation:

3. "The fact is, vindictive behavior and meanness of spirit finally make us as small as those we despise." (Harry Stein)
Device and Explanation:

4. "If we share a brotherhood of man, then we also share an insanity of man."
(Stephen King)
Device and Explanation:

5. "The mass of men lead lives of quiet desperation." (Henry David Thoreau)
Device and Explanation:

6. "Violence is immoral because it thrives on hatred rather than love. It destroys a community and makes brotherhood impossible." (Martin Luther King)
Device and Explanation:

7. "A banker is a fellow who lends you his umbrella when the sun is shining and wants it back the minute it begins to rain." (Mark Twain)
Device and Explanation:

8. "A baby is born with a need to be loved - and never outgrows it." (Frank A. Clark)
Device and Explanation:

9. "A celebrity is a person who works hard all his life to become well known, then wears dark glasses to avoid being recognized." (Fred Allen)
Device and Explanation:

10. "Today every invention is received with a cry of triumph which soon turns into a cry of fear." (Bertolt Brecht)
Device and Explanation:

English Lesson to Prepare for UIL Ready Writing Contest

Lesson Plan Title: Using Patterns to Organize the Body of an Essay

Goal of Lesson: To provide organizational tools so that students can effectively communicate their ideas.

Grade Level: English I - IV

TEKS Addressed:

(23) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into a written or an oral presentation that:

(A) marshals evidence in support of a clear thesis statement and related claims;

(B) provides an analysis for the audience that reflects a logical progression of ideas and a clearly stated point of view; (ELAR 1-4)

Overview of Lesson:

The teacher will explain the types of organizational patterns, provide students with topics, have students create outlines using the various patterns and finally, have students write an essay using one type of organizational pattern.

Materials Needed:

1. List of Patterns of Organization for the Body of an Essay (attached)
2. List of Topics for Practicing Use of Patterns (attached)
3. Two Possible Topics for an Essay (attached)
4. Essay rubric focused on organization (attached).

Procedures and Activities:

The teacher will –

- provide students with a copy of the Patterns of Organization for the Body of an Essay.
- explain and demonstrate use of the various patterns, asking students for ideas and input as each pattern is discussed.
- provide students with Topics for Practicing Use of Patterns.
- assign students to work in groups to create outlines, using each pattern and suggested topic.
- select a few topics and have a student from each group place the group's outline for that topic on the chalkboard for class discussion.
- Have each student turn in his/her copy of the group's outlines.

Independent Practice:

The teacher will –

- provide students with Two Possible Topics for an Essay.

- assign students to write an essay by selecting a topic and using one of the patterns of organization in the body of the essay.

Assessment:

- Evaluation of each student's outlines which originated from group work.
- Evaluation of each student's essay using the rubric focused on organization.

TEN PATTERNS OF ORGANIZATION FOR THE BODY OF AN ESSAY:

climactic or reverse climactic order - arranged from least important to most important ideas or arranged from most important to least important ideas.

psychological order - organization grows from our learning that readers or listeners usually give most attention to what comes at the beginning and the end, and least attention to what is in the middle.

general-to-specific order or specific to general – starts with general concepts and moves to specific ideas or examples or starts with specific ideas or concepts and moves to general conclusions, etc.

most-familiar-to-least-familiar – gradually introduces new and unfamiliar material.

simplest-to-most-complex – moves reader from easy to difficult ideas.

topical order - a catchall pattern that refers to organization that emerges from the topic itself.

compare and contrast pattern - arranges information according to how two or more things are similar or different from one another (or both).

advantages-disadvantages pattern - organizes information about a topic by dividing it up into its "good" and "bad" parts or pros and cons.

cause-effect pattern - shows the different causes and effects of various conditions.

problem-solution pattern - divides information into two main sections, one that describes a problem and one that describes a solution.

List of Topics for Practicing Use of Patterns

Create an outline for each of the following topics, using the pattern listed beside it.

- 1. climactic or reverse climactic order** – What are the qualities of a good leader?
- 2. psychological order** – Why are many teachers strict?
- 3. general-to-specific or specific-to general order** – What is the impact of music on your life?
- 4. most-familiar-to-least-familiar** – What are the effects of long term smoking?
- 5. simplest-to-most-complex** – What impact do school uniforms have on the campus climate?
- 6. topical order** – What are productive ways to spend leisure time?
- 7. compare and contrast pattern** – Which is better: living in an apartment or house?
- 8. advantages-disadvantages pattern** – What are the consequences of having a job in high school?
- 9. cause-effect pattern** – Should cities have curfews for teens?
- 10. problem-solution pattern** – What should schools do to prevent students from dropping out?

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Two Possible Topics for an Essay

Select one of the following topics and write an essay, using one of the patterns of organization which we have studied in class for the body of the essay.

Choice I: "Peace is an accident; war is natural. Old men start it, young men fight it, everybody in the middle dies, and nobody tells the truth."

Sylvester Stallone, *Rambo*, 2007-2008

Choice II: "A great civilization is not conquered from without until it has destroyed itself from within."

Will Durant, *Caesar and Christ*, Epilogue, 1944

Student Name _____

Class _____

Rubric with Focus on Organization

Evaluation criteria are listed in the order of importance. Circle score rating in each of the three major areas of *interest*, *organization*, and *correctness of style*, and check the column which best describes the quality in each of the sub-areas.

(30%) 10 pts. 20 pts. 30 pts.

INTEREST: Writing exhibits originality of thought, analytical acuteness and overall coherence of exposition.

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Perceptive ideas	_____	_____	_____	_____
Originality	_____	_____	_____	_____
Examples	_____	_____	_____	_____
Title	_____	_____	_____	_____

(60%) 10 pts. 15 pts. 20 pts. 25 pts. 30 pts. 40 pts. 50 pts. 60 pts.

ORGANIZATION: The pattern of organization effectively contributes to an understanding of main idea or thesis.

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Clear thesis	_____	_____	_____	_____
Well-developed organizational pattern	_____	_____	_____	_____
Transition	_____	_____	_____	_____
Organization supported Thesis	_____	_____	_____	_____
Impact of organization/ideas	_____	_____	_____	_____

(10%) 2 pts. 4 pts. 6 pts. 8 pts. 10 pts.

CORRECTNESS OF STYLE:

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Punctuation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sentence structure	_____	_____	_____	_____
Grammar	_____	_____	_____	_____
Word usage	_____	_____	_____	_____
Spelling	_____	_____	_____	_____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

English Lesson to Prepare for UIL Ready Writing Contest

Lesson Plan Title: Using Transitional Expressions in an Essay

Goal of Lesson: To have students use transitional expressions to form a bridge from one idea to another and to show relationships between sentences and paragraphs.

Grade Level: English I-IV

TEKS Addressed:

(13)(C) revise drafts to clarify meaning and achieve specific rhetorical purposes, consistency of tone, and logical organization by rearranging the words, sentences, and paragraphs to employ tropes (e.g., metaphors, similes, analogies, hyperbole, understatement, rhetorical questions, irony), schemes (e.g., parallelism, antithesis, inverted word order, repetition, reversed structures), and by adding transitional words and phrases; (ELAR 3-4)

(15) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:

(A) write an analytical essay of sufficient length that includes:

(ii) rhetorical devices, and transitions between paragraphs; (ELAR 1-2)

Overview of Lesson:

The teacher will conduct exercises about the purpose and usage of transitions in writing, have students research a celebrity of their choosing, and assign them to write a 350-500 word essay about the celebrity using appropriate transitional expressions.

Materials Needed:

1. Purpose and Use of Transitions in an Essay (attached)
2. Sample Essay with Transitions on William Hoy (attached)
3. Sample Essay without Transitions (attached)
4. Transitional Expressions (attached)
5. Computers with Internet access

Procedures and Activities:

The teacher will –

- provide students with a copy of the Purpose and Use of Transitions in an Essay.
- explain the purpose and usage of transitions and have students read aloud the Essay about William Hoy.
- have students read the Essay without Transitions and compare and contrast the two essays, emphasizing the value of transitional words.
- conduct a class discussion about transitions found in the chart, Transitional Expressions.
- have students write a paragraph using four transitional words from the chart and underline them in the paragraph.

Independent Practice:

The teacher will –

- have students select a celebrity.
- provide students with access to the Internet to research the celebrity.
- assign students to write an 350-500 word essay about the celebrity.
- have them use transitional expressions from the chart and underline them in the essay.

Assessment:

- evaluation of the paragraph based on the student's use of transitions.
- evaluation of the essay based on the student's use of transitions.

Sample Essay with Transitions on William Hoy

William E. Hoy was born a hearing baby in Houchstown, Ohio, on May 23, 1862. He became deaf **before** he was three years old. **Later**, he attended the Columbus "Ohio" School for the Deaf from the age of ten to the age of eighteen. As a student, he learned to play baseball; **from then on**, he was always involved with the sport of baseball.

Following his high school graduation, Johnny started playing semi-professional baseball **while** he worked as a shoemaker. **Eventually**, Johnny began playing professional baseball in 1886 for Oshkosh (Wisconsin) of the Northwestern League. In 1888, he started as an outfielder with the old Washington Senators. Hoy was a small man, and he was fast. **As a result**, he was an outstanding base runner. **In addition**, he was very good at stealing bases during his career. **In fact**, during the 1888 major league season, he stole 82 bases. **Moreover**, he was the Senators leading hitter in 1888. **Most importantly**, he invented the arm signals, still used by umpires.

Hoy's last ball game in 1903 was amazing. At that time he was playing for Los Angeles of the Pacific Coast Winter League. It was a very memorable game. **To illustrate**, it was foggy; **therefore**, it was very hard to see the ball. In the ninth inning, **while** two men were out, Hoy managed to catch the ball **in spite of** the fog. **Consequently**, Los Angeles won the pennant for that year.

When his last game was over, he retired from playing baseball. He knew that as he became older he was no longer playing as **well as** when he was younger. **Nevertheless**, he stayed very busy running a dairy farm near Cincinnati for 20 years and taking 4 and 10-mile walks several mornings a week. In October, 1961, **after so much time** away from baseball, Hoy appeared at Crowley Field in Cincinnati. He tossed the first ball of the World Series. **Soon, after that**, Hoy died on December 15, 1961 at the age of 99.

(Adapted from: Goodstein, A., and Walworth, M. (1979). Interesting Deaf Americans. Washington, DC: Gallaudet University.)

Essay without Transitions

William E. Hoy was born a hearing baby in Houckstown, Ohio, on May 23, 1862. He became deaf. He was three years old. He attended the Columbus "Ohio" School for the Deaf from the age of ten to the age of eighteen. As a student, he learned to play baseball. He was always involved with the sport of baseball.

He graduated from high school. Johnny started playing semi-professional baseball. He worked as a shoemaker. Johnny began playing professional baseball in 1886 for Oshkosh (Wisconsin) of the Northwestern League. In 1888, he started as an outfielder with the old Washington Senators. Hoy was a small man, and he was fast. He was an outstanding base runner. He was very good at stealing bases during his career. During the 1888 major league season, he stole 82 bases. He was the Senators leading hitter in 1888. He invented the arm signals, still used by umpires.

Hoy's last ball game in 1903 was amazing. At that time, he was playing for Los Angeles of the Pacific Coast Winter League. It was a very memorable game. It was foggy. It was very hard to see the ball. In the ninth inning with two men out, Hoy managed to catch the ball in the fog. Los Angeles won the pennant for that year.

When his last game was over, he retired from playing baseball. He knew that as he became older he was no longer playing well. He stayed very busy running a dairy farm near Cincinnati for 20 years and taking 4 and 10-mile walks several mornings a week. In October, 1961, Hoy appeared at Crowley Field in Cincinnati. He tossed the first ball of the World Series. Hoy died on December 15, 1961 at the age of 99.

Purpose and Use of Transitions in an Essay

What are transitions?

They glue the ideas in our essays together.

Why you need transitions in your writing:

- Evaluations of your writing contain comments like "choppy," "jumpy," "abrupt," "flow," "need signposts," or "how is this related?"
- Readers (instructors, friends, or classmates) tell you that they have trouble following your organization or train of thought.
- You tend to write the way you think—and your brain often jumps from one idea to another pretty quickly.
- You wrote your paper in several discrete "chunks" and then pasted them together.

The organization of an essay includes two elements:

(1) order in which you have chosen to present the different sections of your discussion.

(2) relationships you construct between these sections. Transitions cannot substitute for good organization, but they can make your organization clearer and easier to follow.

Types of Transitions:

Transitions between sections—Particularly in longer works, it may be necessary to include transitional paragraphs that summarize for the reader the information just covered and specify the relevance of this information to the discussion in the following section.

Transitions between paragraphs—If you have done a good job of arranging paragraphs so that the content of one leads logically to the next, the transition will highlight a relationship that already exists by summarizing the previous paragraph and suggesting something of the content of the paragraph that follows. A transition between paragraphs can be a word or two (*however, for example, similarly*), a phrase, or a sentence. Transitions can be at the end of the first paragraph, at the beginning of the second paragraph, or in both places.

Transitions within paragraphs—As with transitions between sections and paragraphs, transitions within paragraphs act as cues by helping readers to anticipate what is coming before they read it. Within paragraphs, transitions tend to be single words or short phrases.

TRANSITIONAL EXPRESSIONS

RELATIONSHIP	TRANSITION
Similarity	also, in the same way, just as ... so too, likewise, similarly
Contrast	but, however, in spite of, on the one hand ... on the other hand, nevertheless, nonetheless, notwithstanding, in contrast, on the contrary, still, yet
Sequence/Order	first, second, third, ... next, then, finally
Time	after, afterward, at last, before, currently, during, earlier, immediately, later, meanwhile, now, recently, simultaneously, subsequently, then
Example	for example, for instance, namely, specifically, to illustrate
Emphasis	even, indeed, in fact, of course, truly
Position	above, adjacent, below, beyond, here, in front, in back, nearby, there
Cause/Effect	accordingly, consequently, hence, so, therefore, thus
Additional Support or Evidence	additionally, again, also, and, as well, besides, equally important, further, furthermore, in addition, moreover, then

**English Lesson to Prepare
for UIL Literary Criticism Contest**

Lesson Plan Title: Supporting ideas in an essay

Goal of Lesson: To research and brainstorm material to support arguments/ideas in an essay.

Subject/Grade Level: English I – IV

TEKS Addressed:

(16)(D) information on the complete range of relevant perspectives;
(E) demonstrated consideration of the validity and reliability of all primary and secondary sources used; (ELAR 1-4)

(23) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into a written or an oral presentation that:

(A) marshals evidence in support of a clear thesis statement and related claims; (ELAR 1-4)

Overview of Lesson:

The teacher will have students discuss topics, brainstorm supporting material for their ideas and complete an outline.

Materials Needed:

1. Handout - Supporting your Ideas in an Essay (attached)
2. Worksheet – Outline of Supporting Material for an Essay (attached)

Procedures and Activities:

The teacher will –

- ask students the question – Does America exert power and influence on the culture of the rest of the world?
- have students brainstorm arguments both for and against.
- have one student serve as secretary, taking notes on the arguments/ideas.
- hand out the information on Supporting your Ideas in an Essay.
- examine in a class discussion the material on the sheet, adding any new ideas which originated in the brainstorming session.
- allow students to suggest even more supporting material.

Independent Practice:

The teacher will –

- have each student on notebook paper brainstorm ideas about the question – How does power and greed affect society in the United States?
- assign each student to complete the Outline of Supporting Material for an Essay

Assessment:

Evaluation of student outlines.

Supporting your Ideas in an Essay

Topic – American influence on the culture of the world.

Thesis statement: Since the American revolution, the United States has exerted a strong influence on the culture of the rest of the world.

1. Current Examples

- Number of McDonald's in major cities around the world
- Popularity of U.S. television shows, music and film
- American fashion seen around the globe
- Power of American capitalism with corporations moving abroad to hire workers
- U.S. efforts to spread democratic and human rights ideals

2. Historical Examples

- U.S. dominance in WWII
- Vaccine for polio discovered in U.S. by Jonas Salk
- Influence of U.S. banking industry during last half of 20th century
- English is foreign language most taught around world since WWII.
- Spread of Information Age through U.S. industries like Apple, Microsoft, etc.

3. Personal Experiences

- Vacation to Denmark where majority of citizens studied and spoke English

4. Statistics

- 50 million copies of Michael Jackson's Thriller sold around world – best selling world album
- 5 top highest grossing movies in the world came from U.S.

5. Literary Examples

- *Common Sense* by Thomas Paine (influenced ideas for revolution and democracy around the world)
- "Civil Disobedience" by Henry David Thoreau (influenced Ghandi's actions in India and helped form method for civil unrest)
- *Silent Spring* by Rachel Carson (started world's concern for environment)

Create an Outline of Supporting Material for an Essay, based on the following topic:

Topic – Effects of power and greed on U.S. society

Thesis statement:

1. Current Examples
2. Historical Examples
3. Personal Experiences
4. Statistics
5. Literary Examples

Create an Outline of Supporting Material for an Essay, based on the following topic:

Topic –

Thesis statement:

1. Current Examples

2. Historical Examples

3. Personal Experiences

4. Statistics

5. Literary Examples

English Lesson to Prepare for UIL Ready Writing Contest

Lesson Plan Title: Using Quotations from a Novel for Expository Essay Prompts

Goal of Lesson: To have students explain, prove, or explore a topic in a balanced way, allowing the argument and the evidence to be the deciding factor in an essay.

Grade Level: English I - III

TEKS Addressed:

(15) Writing/Expository and Procedural Texts. Students write expository and procedural or work-related texts to communicate ideas and information to specific audiences for specific purposes. Students are expected to:

(A) write an analytical essay of sufficient length that includes:

(i) effective introductory and concluding paragraphs and a variety of sentence structures;

(ii) rhetorical devices, and transitions between paragraphs;

(C) write an interpretative response to an expository or a literary text (e.g., essay or review) that:

(i) extends beyond a summary and literal analysis;

(ii) addresses the writing skills for an analytical essay and provides evidence from the text using embedded quotations; (ELAR 1-2)

(iv) identifies and analyzes the ambiguities, nuances, and complexities within the text; (ELAR 3-4)

(23) Research/Organizing and Presenting Ideas. Students organize and present their ideas and information according to the purpose of the research and their audience. Students are expected to synthesize the research into a written or an oral presentation that:

(A) marshals evidence in support of a clear thesis statement and related claims;

(B) provides an analysis for the audience that reflects a logical progression of ideas and a clearly stated point of view;

(13)(D) edit drafts for grammar, mechanics, and spelling; (ELAR 1-3)

(18) Oral and Written Conventions/Handwriting, Capitalization, and Punctuation. Students write legibly and use appropriate capitalization and punctuation conventions in their compositions. Students are expected to:

(A) use conventions of capitalization; and

(B) use correct punctuation marks including:

(i) quotation marks to indicate sarcasm or irony;

(ii) comma placement in nonrestrictive phrases, clauses, and contrasting expressions; and

(iii) dashes to emphasize parenthetical information. (ELAR 1-4)

(19) Oral and Written Conventions/Spelling. Students spell correctly. Students are expected to spell correctly, including using various resources to determine and check correct spellings. (ELAR 1-4)

Overview of Lesson:

The teacher will assign students to read a novel. After reading and studying the novel, students will write an expository essay, selecting one of the two quotations from the novel that are supplied by the teacher.

Materials Needed:

1. Copies of a novel for each student.
2. Copies of two quotations from the novel, one of which will be used for an essay (samples attached).
3. Copies of the rubric that will be used to evaluate the essay (attached).
4. Copies of a sample expository essay (use previous student's essay or essay from UIL Ready Writing Handbook).

Procedures and Activities:

The teacher will –

- select a novel, give each student a copy and assign students to read the novel.
- conduct reading activities, discussions and other exercises that promote student interest in reading fiction.
- discuss the elements of the rubric (attached).
- provide students with a sample expository essay.
- have students read the essay, either silently or orally in class.
- have students work in small groups to evaluate the essay using the rubric.
- ask each group to report its criticism of the essay based on the rubric.

Independent Practice:

The teacher will -

- provide students with the two quotations from the novel (samples attached).
- have students select one of the quotations.
- assign students to write an expository essay on the quotation.

Assessment:

Evaluate the student-written essays using the rubric provided.

Student Name _____

Class _____

Practice UIL Ready Writing Rubric

Evaluation criteria are listed in the order of importance. Circle score rating in each of the three major areas of *interest*, *organization*, and *correctness of style*, and check the column which best describes the quality in each of the sub-areas.

(60%) 10 pts. 20 pts. 30 pts. 40 pts. 50 pts. 60 pts.

INTEREST: Writing exhibits originality of thought, analytical acuteness and overall coherence of exposition.

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Perceptive ideas	_____	_____	_____	_____
Originality	_____	_____	_____	_____
Examples	_____	_____	_____	_____
Title	_____	_____	_____	_____

(30%) 10 pts. 15 pts. 20 pts. 25 pts. 30 pts.

ORGANIZATION: Each paragraph develops one idea and contributes to an understanding of main idea or thesis.

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Clear thesis	_____	_____	_____	_____
Well-developed paragraphs, focused on one idea	_____	_____	_____	_____
Transition	_____	_____	_____	_____
Thesis support	_____	_____	_____	_____
Composition clarity (as a whole)	_____	_____	_____	_____

(10%) 2 pts. 4 pts. 6 pts. 8 pts. 10 pts.

CORRECTNESS OF STYLE:

	POOR	FAIR	GOOD	EXCELLENT
Punctuation	_____	_____	_____	_____
Sentence structure	_____	_____	_____	_____
Grammar	_____	_____	_____	_____
Word usage	_____	_____	_____	_____
Spelling	_____	_____	_____	_____

TOTAL SCORE: _____

ADDITIONAL COMMENTS:

Select one of the following quotations and explain, prove, or explore the topic in a balanced way, allowing the argument and the evidence to be the deciding factor in your essay. Descriptive or narrative passages may be used to illustrate or reinforce an idea or point, but they must be clearly subservient or incidental to the purpose of exposition.

Topic 1:

"I hadn't had a bite to eat since yesterday, so Jim he got out some corn-dodgers and buttermilk, and pork and cabbage and greens—there ain't nothing in the world so good when it's cooked right—and whilst I eat my supper we talked and had a good time. . . .We said there warn't no home like a raft, after all. Other places do seem so cramped up and smothery, but a raft don't. You feel mighty free and easy and comfortable on a raft."

From The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

Topic 2:

"The pitifulest thing out is a mob; that's what an army is--a mob; they don't fight with courage that's born in them, but with courage that's borrowed from their mass, and from their officers. But a mob without any MAN at the head of it is BENEATH pitifulness."

From The Adventures of Huckleberry Finn by Mark Twain

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Select one of the following quotations and explain, prove, or explore the topic in a balanced way, allowing the argument and the evidence to be the deciding factor in your essay. Descriptive or narrative passages may be used to illustrate or reinforce an idea or point, but they must be clearly subservient or incidental to the purpose of exposition.

Topic 1:

"They were careless people, Tom and Daisy - they smashed up things and creatures and then retreated back into their money of their vast carelessness, or whatever it was that kept them together, and let other people clean up the mess they had made."

From The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Topic 2:

"Gatsby believed in the green light, the orgiastic future that year by year recedes before us. It eluded us then, but that's no matter--tomorrow we will run faster, stretch out our arms farther.... So we beat on, boats against the current, borne back ceaselessly into the past."

From The Great Gatsby by F. Scott Fitzgerald

Select one of the following quotations and explain, prove, or explore the topic in a balanced way, allowing the argument and the evidence to be the deciding factor in your essay. Descriptive or narrative passages may be used to illustrate or reinforce an idea or point, but they must be clearly subservient or incidental to the purpose of exposition.

Topic 1:

"He (*Jack*) tried to convey the compulsion to track down and kill that was swallowing him up."
From Lord of the Flies by William Golding

Topic 2:

"Ralph wept for the end of innocence, the darkness of man's heart, and the fall through the air of the true, wise friend called Piggy."
From Lord of the Flies by William Golding

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Topic 1:

"Alpha children wear grey. They work much harder than we do, because they're so frightfully clever. I'm awfully glad I'm a Beta, because I don't work so hard. And then we are much better than the Gammas and Deltas. Gammas are stupid. They all wear green, and Delta children wear khaki. Oh no, I don't want to play with Delta children. And Epsilons are still worse. They're too stupid to be able to read or write. Besides they wear black, which is such a beastly color. I'm so glad I'm a Beta."
From Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

Topic 2:

"Our world is not the same as Othello's world. You can't make flivvers without steel-and you can't make tragedies without social instability. The world's stable now. People are happy; they get what they want, and they never want what they can't get."
From Brave New World by Aldous Huxley

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Topic 1:

"You never really understand a person until you consider things from his point of view... until you climb into his skin and walk around in it."

From To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

Topic 2:

"I wanted you to see what real courage is, instead of getting the idea that courage is a man with a gun in his hand. It's when you know you're licked before you begin but you begin anyway and you see it through no matter what. You rarely win, but sometimes you do."

From To Kill a Mockingbird by Harper Lee

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Select one of the following quotations and explain, prove, or explore the topic in a balanced way, allowing the argument and the evidence to be the deciding factor in your essay. Descriptive or narrative passages may be used to illustrate or reinforce an idea or point, but they must be clearly subservient or incidental to the purpose of exposition.

Topic 1:

"She had wandered, without rule or guidance, into a moral wilderness. Her intellect and heart had their home, as it were, in desert places, where she roamed as freely as the wild Indian in his woods. The scarlet letter was her passport into regions where other women dared not tread. Shame, Despair, Solitude! These had been her teachers - stern and wild ones - and they had made her strong, but taught her much amiss."

From The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne

Topic 2:

"It is to the credit of human nature, that, except where its selfishness is brought into play, it loves more readily than it hates. Hatred, by a gradual and quiet process, will even be transformed to love, unless the change be impeded by a continually new irritation of the original feeling of hostility."

From The Scarlet Letter by Nathaniel Hawthorne