

**LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN
RIGHTS COMMISSIONS**

ANNUAL ESSAY CONTEST

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LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS ANNUAL ESSAY CONTEST

PRIZES

<i>CONTEST GUIDELINES</i>

1. All sixth, seventh and eighth grade students are eligible to participate by submitting one entry.
2. All entries are to be based on the Universal Declaration of Human Rights, the Bill of Rights and the Minnesota Human Rights Act.
3. Essays may be from one to three pages in length.
4. Attach entry form to back of the essay.
5. All first place essays should be mailed to:

Marion Helland
7720 Winnetka Hts. Drive
Golden Valley, MN 55427
marionhelland@comcast.net

- | | |
|----------------|-------|
| 6. First Prize | \$500 |
| Second Prize | \$350 |
| Third Prize | \$200 |

7. Entry Deadline: Last week in March.
8. Plans for a recognition program will be announced.
9. Attached are resource pages for school use.

LEAGUE OF MINNESOTA HUMAN RIGHTS COMMISSIONS
ESSAY CONTEST ENTRY FORM
(tape, glue or staple to back of essay)

Your name: _____

Your grade: _____

Your home address: _____
_____ Zip Code: _____

Name of your parent(s) _____

Telephone number of parent(s) _____

Name of your teacher: _____

School name: _____

School address: _____

School telephone number: _____

Permission to publish essay and photos in print, multimedia, or on-line (www) from
award program: Parent(s)' signature:

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Your home address: _____
_____ Zip Code: _____

Name of your parent(s) _____

Telephone number of parent(s) _____

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School name: _____

School address: _____

School telephone number: _____

Permission to publish essay and photos in print, multimedia, or on-line (www) from
award program: Parent(s)' signature:

Suggested To-Do List for Local Essay Contest

<u>Select</u>	Working Committee
<u>Write</u>	Time Line
<u>Decide</u>	What local awards will be given
<u>Write</u>	Descriptive announcement of essay contest <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Topic (See LMHRC poster)• Criteria (length, other requirements)• Local due date• Where to send essays• Identification sheet to fasten to essay (enclosed)
<u>Mail or Bring</u>	Announcement to superintendent or principals (early in school year) This is an opportunity to meet with school people
<u>Select</u>	Essay judges
<u>Mail</u>	Reminder posters to principals, teachers
<u>Plan</u>	Time and place for judging of essays
<u>Mail</u>	Winning essay to LMHRC
<u>Plan</u>	Award ceremony (program, food, time and place)
<u>Select</u>	<i>Speakers, including students reading essays</i>
<u>Notify</u>	Winners, parents, principals and teachers
<u>Find Out</u>	If students will read essays
<u>Write</u>	Program
<u>Write</u>	Invitations
<u>Mail</u>	Invitations (include teachers, staff, school board members, city council members human rights commissioners)
<u>Prepare</u>	Awards and certificates
<u>Notify</u>	Media
<u>Prepare</u>	Handouts for the event
<u>Order</u>	Refreshments
<u>Find out</u>	How to pronounce names of students and speakers

What are human rights?

From The Human Rights Handbook
Human Rights Resource Center, University of Minnesota

Human rights are those rights that belong to every individual — man or women, girl or boy, infant or elder—simply because she or he is a human being. They embody the basic standards without which people cannot realize their inherent human dignity.

Human rights are universal: they are the birthright of every member of the human family. No one has to earn or deserve human rights.

Human rights are inalienable: you cannot lose these rights any more than you can cease to be a human being. Human rights are indivisible: you cannot be denied a right because someone decides that it is "less important" or "non-essential." Human rights are interdependent: all human rights are part of a complementary framework.

Because human rights are not granted by any human authority such as a monarch, government, or secular or religious authority, they are not the same as civil rights, such as those in the US Constitution and Bill of Rights. Constitutional rights are granted to individuals by virtue of their citizenship or residence in a particular country whereas human rights are inherent and held as attributes of the human personality.

Human rights are both abstract and practical. They hold up the inspiring vision of a free, just, and peaceful world and set minimum standards for how both individuals and institutions should treat people. They also empower people to take action to demand and defend their rights and the rights of others.

Although human rights were principally defined and codified in the twentieth century, human rights values are rooted in the wisdom literature, traditional values, and religious teachings of almost every culture. For example, the Hindu Vedas, the Babylonian Code of Hammurabi, the Bible, the Quran (Koran), and the Analects of Confucius all address questions of peoples' duties, rights, and responsibilities. Native American sources include the Inca and Aztec codes of conduct and justice and the Iroquois Constitution.

International Human Rights Law

The foundation documents of human rights law are the Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR, 1948), the International Covenant on Civil and Political Rights (ICCPR, 1966) and its **Optional Protocol**, and the International Covenant on Economic, Social and Cultural Rights (ICESCR, 1966). Known collectively as the International Bill of Human Rights, these four documents were followed by more than twenty human rights conventions—treaties that become binding law in those countries that ratify them. When a UN member state ratifies a convention, it agrees to abide by its provisions, to change the laws of the country to conform to the convention, and to report on its progress in doing so.

Some conventions define and ban abhorrent, inhuman acts (e.g., The Convention Against Torture and Other Cruel, Inhuman or Degrading Treatment or Punishment); others address populations in need of particular protection and provision (e.g., The Convention on the Rights of the Child; The Convention on the Rights of Migrant Workers and the Members of Their Families) or groups who experience particular discrimination (e.g., the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Racial Discrimination; the Convention on the Elimination of All Forms of Discrimination against Women).

The Universal Declaration of Human Rights (abbreviated)

- Article 1 Right to Equality
- Article 2 Freedom from Discrimination
- Article 3 Right to Life, Liberty, Personal Security
- Article 4 Freedom from Slavery
- Article 5 Freedom from Torture and Degrading Treatment
- Article 6 Right to Recognition as a Person before the Law
- Article 7 Right to Equality before the Law
- Article 8 Right to Remedy by Competent Tribunal
- Article 9 Freedom from Arbitrary Arrest and Exile
- Article 10 Right to Fair Public Hearing
- Article 11 Right to be Considered Innocent until Proven Guilty
- Article 12 Freedom from Interference with Privacy, Family, Home and Correspondence
- Article 13 Right to Free Movement in and out of the Country
- Article 14 Right to Asylum in other Countries from Persecution
- Article 15 Right to a Nationality and the Freedom to Change It
- Article 16 Right to Marriage and Family
- Article 17 Right to Own Property
- Article 18 Freedom of Belief and Religion
- Article 19 Freedom of Opinion and Information
- Article 20 Right of Peaceful Assembly and Association
- Article 21 Right to Participate in Government and in Free Elections
- Article 22 Right to Social Security
- Article 23 Right to Desirable Work and to Join Trade Unions
- Article 24 Right to Rest and Leisure
- Article 25 Right to Adequate Living Standard
- Article 26 Right to Education
- Article 27 Right to Participate in the Cultural Life of Community
- Article 28 Right to a Social Order that Articulates this Document
- Article 29 Community Duties Essential to Free and Full Development
- Article 30 Freedom from State or Personal Interference in the above Rights

Universal Declaration of Human Rights

Plain Language Version

1 When children are born, they are free and each should be treated in the same way. They have reason and conscience and should act towards one another in a friendly manner.

2 Everyone can claim the following rights, despite

- a different sex
- a different skin colour
- speaking a different language
- thinking different things
- believing in another religion
- owning more or less
- being born in another social group
- coming from another country

It also makes no difference whether the country you live in is independent or not.

3 You have the right to live, and to live in freedom and safety.

4 Nobody has the right to treat you as his her slave and you should not make anyone your slave.

5 Nobody has the right to torture you.

6 You should be legally protected in the same way everywhere, and like everyone else.

7 The law is the same for everyone; it should be applied in the same way to all.

8 You should be able to ask for legal help when the rights your country grants you are not respected.

9 Nobody has the right to put you in prison, to keep you there, or to send you away from your country unjustly, or without good reason.

10 If you go on trial this should be done in public. The people who try you should not let themselves be influenced by others.

11 You should be considered innocent until it can be proved that you are guilty. If you are accused of a crime, you should always have the right to defend yourself. Nobody has the right to condemn you and punish you for something you have not done.

12 You have the right to ask to be protected if someone tries to harm your good name, enter your house, open your letters, or bother you or your family without a good reason.

13 You have the right to come and go as you wish within your country. You have the right to leave your country to go to another one; and you should be able to return to your country if you want.

14 If someone hurts you, you have the right to go to another country and ask it to protect you. You lose this right if you have killed someone and if you, yourself, do not respect what is written here.

15 You have the right to belong to a country and nobody can prevent you, without a good reason, from belonging country if you wish.

16 As soon as person is legally entitled, he or she has the right to marry and have a family. In doing this, neither the colour of your skin, the country you come from nor your region should be impediments. Men and women have the same rights when they are married and also when they are separated. Nobody should force a person to marry. The government of your country should protect your family and its members.

17 You have the right to own things and nobody has the right to take these from you without a good reason.

18 You have the right to profess your religion freely, to change it, and to practice it either on your own or with other people.

19 You have the right to think what you want, to say what you like, and nobody should forbid you from doing so. You should be able to share your ideas also—with people from any other country.

20 You have the right to organize peaceful meetings or to take part in meetings in a peaceful way. It is wrong to force someone to belong to a group.

21 You have the right to take part in your country's political affairs either by belonging to the government yourself or by choosing politicians who have the same ideas as you. Governments should be voted for regularly and voting should be secret. You should get a vote and all votes should be equal. You also have the same right to join the public service as anyone else.

22 The society in which you live should help you to develop and to make the most of all the advantages (culture, work, social welfare) which are offered to you and to you and to all the men and women in your country.

23 You have the right to work, to be free to choose your work, to get a salary which allows you to support your family. If a man and a woman do the same work, they should get the same pay. All people who work have the right to join together to defend their interests.

24 Each work day should not be too long, since everyone has the right to rest and should be able to take regular paid holidays.

25 You have the right to have whatever you need so that you and your family: do not fall ill; go hungry; have clothes and a house; and are helped if you are out of work, if you are ill, if you are old, if your wife or husband is dead, or if you do not earn a living for any other reason you cannot help. The mother who is going to have a baby, and her baby should get special help. All children have the same rights, whether or not the mother is married.

26 You have the right to go to school and everyone should go to school. Primary schooling should be free. You should be able to learn a profession or continue your studies as far as wish. At school, you should be able to develop all your talents and you should be taught to get on with others, whatever their race, religion or the country they come from. Your parents have the right to choose how and what you will be taught at school.

27 You have the right to share in your community's arts and sciences, and any good they do. Your works as an artist, writer, or a scientist should be protected, and you should be able to benefit from them.

28 So that your rights will be respected, there must be an 'order' which can protect them. This 'order' should be local and worldwide.

29 You have duties towards the community within which your personality can only fully develop. The law should guarantee human rights. It should allow everyone to respect others and to be respected.

30 In all parts of the world, no society, no human being, should take it upon her or himself to act in such a way as to destroy the rights which you have just been reading about.

This plain language version is only given as a guide. For an exact rendering of each principle, refer students to the [original](#). This version is based in part on the translation of a text, prepared in 1978, for the World Association for the School as an Instrument of Peace, by a Research Group of the University of Geneva, under the responsibility of Prof. L. Massarenti. In preparing the translation, the Group used a basic vocabulary of 2,500 words in use in the French-speaking part of Switzerland. Teachers may adopt this methodology by translating the text of the Universal Declaration in the language in use in their region.

Who's protected — and how

PROTECTED CLASSES	AREAS OF PROTECTION						
	Employment	Housing	Public Accommodations	Public Service	Education	Credit	Business
Race	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Color	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Creed	●	●	●	●	●	●	
Religion	●	●	●	●	●	●	
National Origin	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Sex	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Marital Status	●	●	●		●	●	
Disability	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Public Assistance	●	●		●	●	●	
Age	●				●		
Sexual Orientation	●	●	●	●	●	●	●
Familial Status		●					
Local Human Rights Commission Activity	●						

The Bill of Rights

The first ten amendments to the US Constitution.ratified on December 15, 1791.

Amendment I

Congress shall make no law respecting an establishment of religion, or prohibiting the free exercise thereof; or abridging the freedom of speech, or of the press; or the right of the people peaceably to assemble, and to petition the government for a redress of grievances.

Amendment II

A well regulated militia, being necessary to the security of a free state, the right of the people to keep and bear arms, shall not be infringed.

Amendment III

No soldier shall, in time of peace be quartered in any house, without the consent of the owner, nor in time of war, but in a manner to be prescribed by law.

Amendment IV

The right of the people to be secure in their persons, houses, papers, and effects, against unreasonable searches and seizures, shall not be violated, and no warrants shall issue, but upon probable cause, supported by oath or affirmation, and particularly describing the place to be searched, and the persons or things to be seized.

Amendment V

No person shall be held to answer for a capital, or otherwise infamous crime, unless on a presentment or indictment of a grand jury, except in cases arising in the land or naval forces, or in the militia, when in actual service in time of war or public danger; nor shall any person be subject for the same offense to be twice put in jeopardy of life or limb; nor shall be compelled in any criminal case to be a witness against himself, nor be deprived of life, liberty, or property, without due process of law; nor shall private property be taken for public use, without just compensation.

Amendment VI

In all criminal prosecutions, the accused shall enjoy the right to a speedy and public trial, by an impartial jury of the state and district wherein the crime shall have been committed, which district shall have been previously ascertained by law, and to be informed of the nature and cause of the accusation; to be confronted with the witnesses against him; to have compulsory process for obtaining witnesses in his favor, and to have the assistance of counsel for his defense.

Amendment VII

In suits at common law, where the value in controversy shall exceed twenty dollars, the right of trial by jury shall be preserved, and no fact tried by a jury, shall be otherwise reexamined in any court of the United States, than according to the rules of the common law.

Amendment VIII

Excessive bail shall not be required, nor excessive fines imposed, nor cruel and unusual punishments inflicted.

Amendment IX

The enumeration in the Constitution, of certain rights, shall not be construed to deny or disparage others retained by the people.

Amendment X

The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the states, are reserved to the states respectively, or to the people.

TAKING THE HUMAN RIGHTS TEMPERATURE OF YOUR SCHOOL

David Shiman and I welcome you to translate and/or adapt the activity to your specific communities. We have adapted this activity for use in other settings, including the workplace, communities of faith, and neighborhoods. I would like to post this activity in different languages and be able to share ways this activity is being used throughout the world.

Overview:

Participants evaluate their school's human rights climate using criteria derived from the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. The subsequent discussion builds towards identifying areas of particular concern and developing an action plan to begin addressing them.

Objectives:

- To assess human rights conditions within the school community
- To reflect critically on forces at work within the school that affect the human rights climate
- To develop an action plan to improve the human rights situation within the school

Grade Level: 7-12; administrators, parent and teachers as well

Time: 1-2 hours (survey only)

Materials: TAKING THE HUMAN RIGHTS TEMPERATURE QUESTIONNAIRE (attached); copies of the UDHR (reference only)

Procedures:

1. Have participants evaluate their school's human rights climate, i.e. take its "temperature," by completing the survey questionnaire below. It might be appropriate to have participants conduct research into school conditions, using the survey items below, prior to completing the instrument or prior to developing an action plan.
2. Prepare for class discussion by creating a 1-4 rating scale on a chalkboard or newsprint. Then have participants call out responses to each item.
IMPORTANT: Participants might not wish to make their own responses public. Consider collecting the questionnaires and redistributing them so that participant anonymity can be assured.
3. Discuss the findings from the survey, drawing on the following questions to move from analysis and evaluation to the development of an action plan.
 - a. In which areas does your school appear to be adhering to or promoting human rights principles?
 - b. In which areas do there seem to be human rights problems? Which of these are of particular concern to you? Elaborate on the areas of concern, providing examples and identifying patterns in human rights violations.
 - c. How do you explain the existence of such problematic conditions?
 - * Do they have race/ethnicity, class, gender, disability, age, or sexual orientation dimensions?
 - * Are the issues related to participation in decision-making(who is included and who isn't)?
 - * Who benefits and who loses/suffers as a result of the existing human rights violations?
 - * Other explanations to consider?
 - d. Have you or any of your fellow community contributed in any way to the construction and perpetuation of the existing climate? (e.g. by acting in certain ways. by not acting in certain ways--ignoring abuses or not reporting incidents)

e. Were those completing the questionnaire representative of the population of the school? Would you expect different results from a different group of people? In what ways might another group's responses differ and why? Should these differences be of any concern to you and to the school community? When determining which human rights concerns need to be addressed and how to address them, how can you be certain to take into account the perspectives and experiences of different people?

f. What needs to be done to improve the human rights climate in your school? What action(s) can you and your group take to create a more humane and just environment where human rights values are promoted and human rights behaviors practiced?

4. Review questionnaire item #25, stressing the importance of assuming responsibility and acting. Then, as a group brainstorm possible actions the group might take to improve the human rights situation? Decide on a short list of options for action. Thoroughly debate and discuss the short list before any decision regarding actions to be taken.

5. Based on the group discussion, choose items for action, and develop an action plan, identifying goals, strategies, and responsibilities.

TAKING THE HUMAN RIGHTS TEMPERATURE OF YOUR SCHOOL INTRODUCTION

The questions below are adapted from the United Nations Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR). (The relevant UDHR articles are included parenthetically in each statement.) Some of these issues correlate more directly to the UDHR than others. All of these questions are related to the fundamental human right to education found in Article 26 of the Universal Declaration. It asserts:

Everyone has the right to education... Education shall be directed to the full development of the human personality and to the strengthening of respect for human rights and fundamental freedoms.

When discrimination is mentioned in the questionnaire below, it refers to a wide range of conditions: race, ethnicity/culture, sex, physical/intellectual capacities, friendship associations, age, culture, disability, social class/financial status, physical appearance, sexual orientation, life style choices, nationality, and living space. This is a much more expansive list than that found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights but is more helpful in assessing the human rights temperature in your school community.

The results should provide a general sense of the school's climate in light of principles found in the Universal Declaration of Human Rights. Obviously more questions are needed and follow-up questioning during the discussion will enrich the assessment. These questions can help to identify specific areas of concern that need to be addressed.

TAKING THE HUMAN RIGHTS TEMPERATURE OF YOUR SCHOOL: THE QUESTIONNAIRE

Directions: Take the human rights temperature of your school. Read each statement and assess how accurately it describes your school community in the blank next to it. (Keep in mind all members of your school: students, teachers, administrators, staff.) At the end, total up your score to determine your overall assessment score for your school.

RATING SCALE

- 1 - no/never
- 2 - rarely
- 3 - often
- 4 - yes/always

___ 1. My school is a place where students are safe and secure. (Art. 3 & 5)

___ 2. All students receive equal information and encouragement about academic and career opportunities. (Art. 2)

___ 3. Members of the school community are not discriminated against because of their life style choices, such as manner of dress, associating with certain people, and non-school activities. (Art. 2 & 16)

___ 4. My school provides equal access, resources, activities, and scheduling accommodations for all individuals. (Art. 2 & 7)

___ 5. Members of my school community will oppose discriminatory or demeaning actions, materials, or slurs in the school. (Art. 2, 3, 7, 28, & 29)

___ 6. When someone demeans or violates the rights of another person, the violator is helped to learn how to change his/her behavior. (Art. 26)

___ 7. Members of my school community care about my full human as well as academic development and try to help me when I am in need. (Art. 3, 22, 26 & 29)

___ 8. When conflicts arise, we try to resolve them through non- violent and collaborative ways. (Art. 3, 28)

___ 9. Institutional policies and procedures are implemented when complaints of harassment or discrimination are submitted. (Art. 3 & 7)

___ 10. In matters related to discipline (including suspension and expulsion), all persons are assured of fair, impartial treatment in the determination of guilt and assignment of punishment. (Art. 6, 7, 8, 9 & 10)

___ 11. No one in our school is subjected to degrading treatment or punishment. (Art. 5)

___ 12. Someone accused of wrong doing is presumed innocent until proven guilty. (Art. 11)

___ 13. My personal space and possessions are respected. (Art. 12 & 17)

___ 14. My school community welcomes students, teachers, administrators, and staff from diverse backgrounds and cultures, including people not born in the USA. (Art. 2, 6,13, 14 & 15)

___ 15. I have the liberty to express my beliefs and ideas (political, religious, cultural, or other) without fear of discrimination.(Art. 19)

___ 16. Members of my school can produce and disseminate publications without fear of censorship or punishment. (Art. 19)

_____ 17. Diverse voices and perspectives (e.g. gender, race/ethnicity, ideological) are represented in courses, textbooks, assemblies, libraries, and classroom instruction. (Art. 2, 19, & 27)

_____ 18. I have the opportunity to express my culture through music, art, and literary form. (Art. 19, 27 & 28)

19. Members of my school have the opportunity to participate (individually and through associations) in democratic decision-making processes to develop school policies and rules. (Art. 20, 21, & 23)

_____ 20. Members of my school have the right to form associations within the school to advocate for their rights or the rights of others. (Art. 19, 20, & 23)

_____ 21. Members of my school encourage each other to learn about societal and global problems related to justice, ecology, poverty, and peace. (Preamble & Art. 26 & 29)

_____ 22. Members of my school encourage each other to organize and take action to address societal and global problems related to justice, ecology, poverty, and peace. (Preamble & Art. 20 & 29)

_____ 23. Members of my school community are able to take adequate rest/recess time during the school day and work reasonable hours under fair work conditions. (Art. 23 & 24)

_____ 24. Employees in my school are paid enough to have a standard of living adequate for the health and well-being (including housing, food, necessary social services and security from unemployment, sickness and old age) of themselves and their families. (Art. 22 & 25)

_____ 25. I take responsibility in my school to ensure other individuals do not discriminate and that they behave in ways that promote the safety and well being of my school community. (Art. 1 & 29)

TEMPERATURE POSSIBLE = 100 HUMAN RIGHTS DEGREES
YOUR SCHOOL'S TEMPERATURE _____

Distributed by: D. Shiman & K. Rudelius-Palmer, Economic and Social Justice: A Human Rights Perspective (Minneapolis: Human Rights Resource Center, University of Minnesota, 1999)

Prewriting Essays

What is the prewriting stage?

The prewriting stage is when you prepare your ideas for your essay before you begin writing. You will find it easier to write your essay if you build an outline first, especially when you are writing longer assignments.

Six Prewriting Steps:

- 1. Think carefully about what you are going to write.** Ask yourself: What question am I going to answer in this paragraph or essay? How can I best answer this question? What is the most important part of my answer? How can I make an introductory sentence (or thesis statement) from the most important part of my answer? What facts or ideas can I use to support my introductory sentence? How can I make this paragraph or essay interesting? Do I need more facts on this topic? Where can I find more facts on this topic?
- 2. Open your notebook.** Write out your answers to the above questions. You do not need to spend a lot of time doing this; just write enough to help you remember why and how you are going to write your paragraph or essay.
- 3. Collect facts related to your paragraph or essay topic.** Look for and write down facts that will help you to answer your question. Timesaving hint: make sure the facts you are writing are related to the exact question you are going to answer in your paragraph or essay.
- 4. Write down your own ideas.** Ask yourself: What else do I want to say about this topic? Why should people be interested in this topic? Why is this topic important?
- 5. Find the main idea of your paragraph or essay.** Choose the most important point you are going to present. If you cannot decide which point is the most important, just choose one point and stick to it throughout your paragraph or essay.
- 6. Organize your facts and ideas in a way that develops your main idea.** Once you have chosen the most important point of your paragraph or essay, you must find the best way to tell your reader about it. Look at the facts you have written. Look at your own ideas on the topic. Decide which facts and ideas will best support the main idea of your essay. Once you have chosen the facts and ideas you plan to use, ask yourself which order to put them in the essay. Write down your own note set that you can use to guide yourself as you write your essay.

Supporting Paragraphs

What are supporting paragraphs?

Supporting paragraphs make up the main body of your essay.

What do they do?

They develop the main idea of your essay.

How do I write them?

1. List the points that develop the main idea of your essay.
2. Place each supporting point in its own paragraph.
3. Develop each supporting point with facts, details, and examples.

To connect your supporting paragraphs, you should use special transition words. Transition words link your paragraphs together and make your essay easier to read. Use them at the beginning and end of your paragraphs.

Examples of transition words that can help you to link your paragraphs together:

For listing different points

First
Second
Third

For counter examples

However
Even though
On the other hand
Nevertheless

For additional ideas

Another
In addition to
Related to
Furthermore
Also

To show cause and effect

Therefore
Thus
As a result of
Consequently

Like all good paragraphs, each supporting paragraph should have a topic sentence, supporting sentences, and a summary sentence.

Editing Essays

What is the editing stage?

The editing stage is when you check your essay for mistakes and correct them.

Editing Steps:

Grammar and Spelling

1. Check your spelling.
2. Check your grammar.
3. Read your essay again.
4. Make sure each sentence has a subject.
5. Make sure your subjects and verbs agree with each other.
6. Check the verb tenses of each sentence.
7. Make sure that each sentence makes sense.

Style and Organization

1. Make sure your essay has an introduction, supporting paragraphs, and a summary paragraph.
2. Check that you have a thesis statement that identifies the main idea of the essay.
3. Check that all your paragraphs follow the proper paragraph format.
4. See if your essay is interesting.

Editing Checklist

Ideas and Content

My ideas are clear.

I give enough details.

I need to add more information.

Organization

My paper has a main idea.

Paragraphs only talk about one thing.

My paper has a strong beginning.

My ending is well thought out.

My paper doesn't jump around. It is easy to follow.

Topic sentences tell about each paragraph.

Voice

This paper sounds like me.

This paper shows I care about the topic.

This paper is lively, or exciting in some way, or it is a little different from everyone else's.

Word Choice

I chose accurate, strong, specific words.

My words are fun to read.
I tried something new with my words.

Sentence Fluency

Sentences are smooth and easy to read.
I fixed my choppy sentences.
Sentences start in different ways.
I have some long sentences and some short sentences to
make my paper interesting.
Each sentence has a noun and a verb.

Conventions

I checked my spelling.
I checked my capitals, periods, and indents.
I gave each speaker a new paragraph.
I put quotation marks “” around things that characters
said.

Score point 3 = Basic Passing Composition — Passing

The composition:

- is related to the **assigned topic**.
- has a central idea that is **clearly expressed**.
- has some supporting **details** and sufficient development.
- has a **beginning**, a **middle** and an **end**.
 - may present minor obstacles for the reader in moving from idea to idea.
- may have errors in sentence formation, word usage and mechanics, but they do not substantially detract from the overall quality of the composition.

Score point 4 = Basic Passing Composition — Passing

The composition:

- is related to the **assigned topic**.
- has a central idea that is **clearly expressed**.
- is well developed with supporting **details**.
- has a **beginning**, a **middle** and an **end**.
 - demonstrates a control of language that enhances the overall quality of the response.
- may have errors in sentence formation, usage and mechanics, but they do not substantially detract from the overall quality of the composition.

Score point 5 = Skillful Composition — Passing

The composition:

- is related to **assigned topic**.
- remains consistently **focused** on a **central idea**.
- is evenly and richly developed with selected supporting **details** and/or **elaboration** that clarifies and expands the central idea, but may have occasional lapses.
- has an **effective beginning**, a **middle** and an **end**, and an overall sense of **wholeness**; may use transitional devices, parallel structure, or other unifying devices to provide a mostly **clear, unified** progression of ideas.
- demonstrates control of language that enhances the overall quality of the response; includes some specific and **engaging word choice**, along with some purposefully **varied sentences**.
- demonstrates knowledge of the **rules** for sentence formation, word usage and mechanics, (may contain occasional errors, but they do not detract from the overall quality of the composition).

Watch Out

Following are COMMON sources of rater bias — any one of which can cause you to score unfairly:

The positive-negative leniency error: A tendency to be too hard or too easy on everyone — just as a matter of principle.

Appearance: Scoring up because the paper looks neat and presentable or down because it looks messy Judge content first. Good appearance IS important, but it is not part of the scoring criteria.

Length: Is longer better? No! In fact, length often works against a piece if there's too much "interruptive information." Papers that are too short, of course, cannot be scored fairly, but the real trick is to balance the need for good detail with an ability to be succinct.

Fatigue: If you're never tired and bleary-eyed while you're doing this, you're either a machine or you're sneaking your papers into someone else's stack. The point is, take an occasional break. You'll score faster (and MUCH more accurately) in the long run if you get up to stretch now and then.

Personality clash: I hate animal stories! I love sport papers! Oh, what a neat kid — he fishes with his dad! All this kid DOES is watch TV — he needs a couple of rejections to wake him up to reality! This is the don't-even-go-there approach to scoring. Try to be neutral. If you simply can't ("I hate iguanas, my father hated iguanas, and I'm never changing my mind"), give the paper to someone else. Think: What if it were your paper? Your child's?

Skimming: You might think you know after the first 8 lines, but Do read the whole thing to be sure you're assessing the entire performance, not just the grand opening.

Sympathy Score: Her dog died...she loves her grandpa so much... These situations tug at your heart, and rightly so. But the hard truth is, there are good and not-so-good pet papers, grandparent papers, etc. Be sure you score the writing, not the circumstances.

