

<b>Item Name:</b>	<i>Americans Dreaming</i>
<b>Item Type:</b>	Complex Performance Task
<b>Subject and/or Domain:</b>	Argumentation
<b>Common Core Standards:</b>	<p><b>Reading Standards for Informational Texts</b> Grades 9-10 RI 1-8, 10</p> <p><b>Reading Standards for Literature</b> Grades 9-10 RL 1-10</p> <p><b>Writing Standards</b> Grades 9-10</p> <p>W1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence; W3: Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events...; W4: Produce clear and coherent writing...</p> <p><b>Language Standards:</b> Use the conventions of English spelling and grammar</p>
<b>Developer/Source:</b>	Inquiry By Design, Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning & Equity (SCALE), and Ohio Department of Education
<b>Item Features:</b>	<p>Administration: Curriculum-embedded, scaffolded within teacher-designed instructional unit, completed in and out of class, optional core texts (texts may be substituted with approval)</p> <p>Length of time for response: 2-3 weeks (teacher choice)</p> <p>Method of scoring: Analytic rubric scoring (1-4 points)</p> <p>Opportunity for student collaboration: Yes, except for final product</p> <p>Opportunity for teacher feedback and revision: Yes</p>

Collection of assessment items compiled by



Stanford University, 2011

## ***Bearing Witness: Portraits of Americans Dreaming***

### **Task Summary**

In this task students:

- Read, analyze, and write about a range of documentary texts that portray the American dream and how people pursue, secure, or are disappointed in their quest for it.
- Research the life of a person *they know* who has pursued his or her dreams in America, using a range of strategies (e.g., interviewing, analyzing photos and objects, and using the Internet to research the time periods (e.g., historical, cultural contexts) that are relevant.
- Write a short expository portrait of that person that examines the complex idea of the American dream, drawing on the evidence they collected about their subject’s life and times.
- (Optional) Develop and strengthen their writing as needed by planning, revising, editing to focus on what is most important for their purpose and audience.

This task assesses students’ ability to meet the following College and Career Readiness anchor standards for English Language Arts and Literacy (Common Core State Standards):

### **Reading**

- Read closely to determine what the text says explicitly and to make logical inferences from it; cite specific textual evidence when writing or speaking to support conclusions drawn from the text.
- Determine central ideas and themes
- Interpret words and phrases as they are used in a text
- Analyze the structure of texts
- Assess how point of view or purpose shapes the content and style of a text
- Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text
- Analyze how two or more texts address similar themes or topics

### **Writing**

- Write arguments to support claims in an analysis
- Write informative texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information
- Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Ohio Performance Assessment Pilot Project – English Language Arts 2010-11 Pilot  
Americans Dreaming: Teacher Guide  
Version: 9/1/10

- Conduct short research projects based on focused questions in which they gather relevant information from multiple sources, integrate the information, and draw conclusions

In addition, through class discussions students will have the opportunity to develop the set of speaking and listening skills that support their reading and writing performances

- Prepare for, and participate effectively in, a range of conversation and collaborations with diverse partners

**Core Texts:**

- Introduction to “Bearing Witness: Portraits of Americans Dreaming”
- Langston Hughes “Let America Be America Again”
- F. Scott Fitzgerald’s “Winter Dreams”
- Dan Barry, “At an Age for Music and Dreams”

**Optional Texts:**

- Van der Zee photographs of Harlem and its residents
- Dorothea Lange photographs of “Migrant Mother”

### **Introduction to “Bearing Witness: Portraits of Americans Dreaming”**

Since its founding in 1776, the United States has promoted itself as the land of opportunity. In the early years of the nation, the dream was tied to the widespread availability of land. Over time, it has evolved to signal a person’s ability, through effort, to achieve prosperity regardless of their origins. In addition, it is the opportunity to make individual choices without the prior restrictions that limited people according to their class, caste, religion, race, or ethnicity. At its most expansive, the dream includes the belief that one's children will grow up safe, healthy, and educated; that they will become capable of a career and even greater prosperity, without barriers due to class, race or gender.

The term “American Dream” was first used by historian James Truslow Adams in his book *Epic of America* (1931):

The American Dream is that dream of a land in which life should be better and richer and fuller for every man, with opportunity for each according to ability or achievement. It is a difficult dream for the European upper classes to interpret adequately, also too many of us ourselves have grown weary and mistrustful of it. It is not a dream of motor cars and high wages merely, but a dream of social order in which each man and each woman shall be able to attain to the fullest stature of which they are innately capable, and be recognized by others for what they are, regardless of the fortuitous circumstances of birth or position.

Adams also wrote:

The American Dream...[which] has lured tens of millions of all nations to our shores in the past century has not been a dream of material plenty, though that has doubtlessly counted heavily. It has been a dream of being able to grow to fullest development as a man and woman, unhampered by the barriers which had slowly been erected in the older civilizations, unrepressed by social orders which had developed for the benefit of classes rather than for the simple human being of any and every class.

Martin Luther King, Jr. used the concept of the American Dream to anchor the Civil Rights movement. In his famous "Letter from a Birmingham Jail" (1963), he wrote:

We will win our freedom because the sacred heritage of our nation and the eternal will of God are embodied in our echoing demands. . . when these disinherited children of God sat down at lunch counters they were in reality standing up for what is best in the American dream and for the most sacred values in our Judeo-Christian heritage, thereby bringing our nation back to those great wells of democracy which were dug deep by the founding fathers in their formulation of the Constitution and the Declaration of Independence.

This dream has not been easy to sustain and realize. Some would say that it is a myth – even a mirage – that eludes most Americans. Numerous authors, such as Sinclair Lewis in his 1922 novel *Babbitt*, satirized the materialism and shallowness that he saw in the chase for the American dream. In *The Great Gatsby*, Nick Carraway describes how the pursuit of opportunity became “the service of a vast, vulgar, and meretricious beauty.” In 1949 Arthur Miller wrote the play "Death of a Salesman" in which the American Dream is portrayed as a fruitless pursuit that destroys and deludes.

The pursuit and the elusiveness of this dream are major themes throughout American history, literature, art, film, and music.

**Sequence with Task Summaries**

The required tasks are numbered below. Instructional supports for student performance appear in shaded boxes. The suggested instructional steps in shaded boxes are **optional for the teacher, and may be adapted for the particular needs of a class**. While they increase the overall length of the task, they can help a wider range of students to demonstrate their mastery of the literacy skills involved.

<p><b>1. Determine central ideas or themes</b></p>	<p><i>Introduce students to the concept of the American Dream, sharing with them the ideas included in the Introduction.</i></p>
<p><b>Understand arguments in visual and written texts</b></p>	<p><i>To help students examine the concept of the American dream ask students to read the Adams and King (Letter to the Birmingham Jail) quotes and discuss</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>What is the promise of the American dream?</i></li> <li>• <i>In their experience, is the dream a myth or a reality?</i></li> </ul> <p><b>OR</b></p> <p><i>Examine a set of American photographs that portray two different aspects of the American dream</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <i>James Van der Zee’s studio photographs taken during the Harlem Renaissance.</i>  <a href="http://www.google.com/images?q=van+der+zee&amp;oe=utf-8&amp;rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&amp;client=firefox-a&amp;um=1&amp;ie=UTF-8&amp;source=univ&amp;ei=yiBxTJK0EYW8lQe0zfjDDQ&amp;sa=X&amp;oi=image_result_group&amp;ct=title&amp;resnum=1&amp;ved=0CC8QsAQwAA&amp;biw=1062&amp;bih=624">http://www.google.com/images?q=van+der+zee&amp;oe=utf-8&amp;rls=org.mozilla:en-US:official&amp;client=firefox-a&amp;um=1&amp;ie=UTF-8&amp;source=univ&amp;ei=yiBxTJK0EYW8lQe0zfjDDQ&amp;sa=X&amp;oi=image_result_group&amp;ct=title&amp;resnum=1&amp;ved=0CC8QsAQwAA&amp;biw=1062&amp;bih=624</a></li> <li>• <i>Dorothea Lange’s WPA photographs of “Migrant Mother,” a series of shots taken of an agricultural worker during the Great Depression, a time when the notion of an American dream withered and died for many people out of work and hungry.</i>  <a href="http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/awhhtml/awpnp6/migrant_mother.html">http://lcweb2.loc.gov/ammem/awhhtml/awpnp6/migrant_mother.html</a>.</li> </ul> <p><i>Place students in pairs or trios and give them five to seven minutes to study the images and to discuss and make notes in response to the following questions:</i></p>

	<p>1) <i>Describe what you see in the images (the <u>explicit</u> message).</i></p> <p>2) <i>What do you think the photographer was trying to communicate about the American dream? (the <u>implicit</u> message)</i></p> <p>3) <i>What strategies does each photographer use to communicate these messages?</i></p> <p><i>Afterwards, reconvene the class and conduct a whole group discussion about students’ analysis of these images and what they communicate about the possibility of the American dream. Record the students’ ideas on wall charts for later use.</i></p> <p>Ask students to write a brief definition of the American dream in their own words.</p> <p>Ask students to write a brief claim about the American dream (e.g., what do they believe about it and the way it affects people).</p>
<p><b>2. Engage in Close Reading: Cross Media</b></p> <p><i>NOTE: Quickwrite on “Let America Be America Again” and summary of “Death of a Salesman” ARE NOT submitted for OPAPP, but teacher should collect and provide feedback to support students’ understanding of these texts</i></p>	<p><b>A. Text Comprehension: Langston Hughes’s “Let America Be America Again”</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• First reading: Ask students to read (or read aloud to them) Langston Hughes’s “Let America Be America Again,” marking places in the poem:           <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ That have a strong impression on them</li> <li>○ Where they agree or disagree</li> <li>○ That leave them wondering or asking a question</li> </ul> </li> <li>• In pairs, ask students to “re-say” or paraphrase the poem in a paragraph, taking care to capture the sequence of main ideas in poem and what it says about the American dream</li> <li>• Discussion, followed by quickwrite: Why does the speaker say, “O, let America be America again--/The land that never has been yet--/And yet must be—“?</li> </ul> <p><b>B. Text Comprehension Work: Film version of Arthur Miller’s “Death of a Salesman” (1985, Starring Dustin Hoffman, 136 minutes).</b></p> <p>Ask students to:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• View one scene from the film (if students have not read the play, provide an overall synopsis)</li> <li>• As they watch, students take notes on places in the film that affect or confuse them.</li> </ul>

 <p><b>Submit for OPAPP</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Divide the plot of the scene into several sections or chunks and summarize each in 2-3 sentences. One of those sentences should highlight what Miller is showing the audience about the American dream in that segment.</li> <li>• Write a quick write in response to the question: What is Arthur Miller saying to the audience about the American dream in this scene?</li> </ul> <p><b>C. Cross-Text Analysis:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Drawing on their notes, students compose a 400-500 word response to the following prompt:       <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Imagine that in “Death of a Salesman” and “Let America Be America Again,” Miller and Hughes are making arguments about the American dream. <b>What argument(s) do Miller and Hughes make in their texts about the nature of the American dream? How are their perspectives similar or different?</b> Be sure to cite specific lines in the story to support your claims.</li> </ul> </li> </ul>
<p><b>3. Extend Close Reading to a Range of Texts: A Portrait of a Young American Dreamer</b></p> <p><i>NOTE: These prompts are for discussion only. This is NOT SUBMITTED for OPAPP.</i></p>	<p><b>A. Identifying an argument:</b>        Ask students to read the short essay, “At an Age for Music and Dreams,” by Dan Barry that appeared in the <i>New York Times</i>, April 15, 2009, accessed at <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/15/us/15land.html">http://www.nytimes.com/2009/04/15/us/15land.html</a></p> <p>As they read, ask students to think about the argument Barry is making about the American dream. Ask them to identify specific facts, words, phrases, and ways of organizing that Barry uses to make his point.</p> <p><b>B. Text analysis of craft and structure:</b>        As a class, discuss the following questions, citing evidence from the essay</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• What is Barry’s view of the American dream?</li> <li>• How does Barry communicate his view? (e.g., how does he select facts, use language, and develop his ideas through the piece?).  <i>Save the wall charts about these strategies for students to use when writing their own portraits.</i></li> </ul>

<p><b>4. Conduct a Short -Term Research Project</b></p> <p><i>NOTE: Students' interview questions, notes and analysis ARE NOT submitted for OPAPP.</i></p>	<p><b>Explain to students that they will be writing a portrait of their own about an American dreamer they know.</b></p> <p>A. <b>Subject Selection:</b> Ask students to identify a person they know who pursued the American dream. It can be someone who has succeeded or someone who has struggled.</p> <p>B. <b>Interview Questions:</b> Work with the class to add additional interview questions to the "Interview Support Worksheet." Afterwards, ask students to identify a shorter set of interview questions from the larger list that they think will be best used with the person they plan to interview.</p> <p>C. <b>Conducting Interviews:</b> Students interview their subjects, recording their conversation if possible (many cell phones have recording capacity) and taking detailed notes during the interview.</p> <p>D. <b>Analyzing the Interview:</b> Students listen to their interviews and review their notes, making note of:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The major points their interviewee made</li> <li>• Direct quotes that express the person's experiences</li> <li>• Key events the person mentioned that they need to research. (Students should use the Internet and other available texts to research these key events, taking notes on key points.)</li> </ul>
<p><b>Student Support:</b></p> <p><b>Understand arguments in mixed-media texts</b></p>	<p>If students need practice in thinking about how authors use craft and structure to make their arguments compelling, it can be helpful to begin with simpler and illustrated texts. A number of newspapers feature portraits of living Americans whose ordinary lives are often stories about how they seek their dreams. These series use both spoken language and powerful images:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• "One in 8 Million" series in the New York Times  <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/1-in-8-million/index.html">http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/1-in-8-million/index.html</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ Joseph Cotton: The Grandfather</li> <li>○ Tika Chapagai: The Newcomer</li> <li>○ Buster English: The Green Thumb</li> </ul> </li> <li>• "On Being" series in the Washington Post  <a href="http://specials.washingtonpost.com/video/onbeing/">http://specials.washingtonpost.com/video/onbeing/</a></li> </ul> <p>Select a portrait that will speak to your students. Play it for them once so that they can get an overall understanding. Discuss the main</p>



Ohio Performance Assessment Pilot Project – English Language Arts 2010-11 Pilot  
 Americans Dreaming: Teacher Guide  
 Version: 9/1/10

<p><i>or DVD)*</i></p>	<p>(direct quotes, facts, etc.)</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>2. A set of images that enrich the written portion of the portrait (e.g., slides with video/audio clips or a collage of photos to illustrate the written text)</li> <li>3. A reflective commentary (e.g., the student’s closing statement, an artist’s statement) – can be written text or an audio commentary</li> </ol> <p>For examples of mixed-media portraits, students can explore:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>○ “One in 8 Million” series in the New York Times  <a href="http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/1-in-8-million/index.html">http://www.nytimes.com/packages/html/nyregion/1-in-8-million/index.html</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Joseph Cotton: The Grandfather</li> <li>▪ Tika Chapagai: The Newcomer</li> <li>▪ Buster English: The Green Thumb</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ “On Being” series in the Washington Post  <a href="http://specials.washingtonpost.com/video/onbeing/">http://specials.washingtonpost.com/video/onbeing/</a> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Gladys Mitchell</li> <li>▪ Jeffrey Barehand</li> </ul> </li> <li>○ “This American Life” Radio Series            e.g., Nice Work If You Can Get It: “Act Four - Just One Thing Missing”  <a href="http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/329/nice-work-if-you-can-get-it">http://www.thisamericanlife.org/radio-archives/episode/329/nice-work-if-you-can-get-it</a> </li> </ul> <p><b><i>* If the presentation in Choice B includes audio or videotape of the subject, the file must be playable using Quicktime (iTunes) or Windows Media Player software.</i></b></p>
<p><b>Student Support: Peer-to-peer editing</b></p>	<p>If students have peer-editing experience, have them work in pairs or trios to share the initial drafts of their portraits. In making suggestions for improvement, students should consult the wall charts that the class developed in looking at the Barry essay.</p>
<p><b>Publishing or Presenting the Work</b></p>	<p>As a culmination to the work, you and students may want to publish or present it in any number of formats:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• As a website with each portrait</li> <li>• As a changing display on a monitor or bulletin board in the school’s entry way</li> <li>• As a page linked to the school’s web site</li> <li>• As a presentation to the school board (selected portraits with</li> </ul>

Ohio Performance Assessment Pilot Project – English Language Arts 2010-11 Pilot  
Americans Dreaming: Teacher Guide  
Version: 9/1/10

	<p>an invitation to visit and read the whole collection (as in the New York Times site.) If these portraits are made public, students should obtain prior approval from their subjects for public display.</p>
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### Interview Support Worksheet

*It is important to introduce the interview and why you are conducting it. You can use this introduction, or put it in your own words.*

Starred questions should be asked in all interviews. Other questions are optional and should be selected to suit the person being interviewed.

Depending on the person you are interviewing, you may want to use this English version, or translate it into the language in which your interviewee will be most comfortable sharing his or her life experiences.

### Sample Introduction

“In one of my high school classes we are discussing the American dream and the experiences that people have in trying to pursue it. Each of us is doing interviews of people we think have pursued their dreams in America. I would like to ask you some questions about your life and your ideas about the American dream. May I please record our conversation so I can go back and study it later?”

Name:

Born (year):

Where:

Please tell me a little bit about your life:

What is one of the dreams that you have tried to pursue in America?

Ohio Performance Assessment Pilot Project – English Language Arts 2010-11 Pilot  
Americans Dreaming: Teacher Guide  
Version: 9/1/10

Tell me the story of how you pursued that dream. What were some of the ups and downs?

Based on your experiences, do you think that people can accomplish their dreams in America today?

<b>Item Name:</b>	<i>The Obesity Paradox</i>
<b>Item Type:</b>	Standardized Performance Task
<b>Subject and/or Domain:</b>	Argumentation
<b>Common Core Standards:</b>	<p><b>Reading Informational Texts</b> Grades 9-10  RI 10: Read and comprehend literary nonfiction independently and proficiently; RI 1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence...; RI 6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose...; RI 8: Evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text...;</p> <p><b>Writing Standards</b> Grades 9-10  W1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence; W4: Produce clear and coherent writing...</p> <p><b>Language Standards:</b> Use the conventions of English spelling and grammar</p>
<b>Developer/Source:</b>	Dennie Wolfe & Associates, Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning & Equity (SCALE), and New York City Department of Education
<b>Item Features:</b>	<p>Administration: Curriculum-embedded (formative) (Days 1-2) &amp; On demand / standardized (Days 3-5)  Length of time for response: 5 class sessions  Method of scoring: Analytic rubric scoring (0-4 points)  Opportunity for student collaboration: During Days 1-2 only; none during Days 3-5  Opportunity for teacher feedback and revision: Days 1-2 only; none during Days 3-5</p>

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### Lead-In Materials Overview

This guide provides you with the information you need to teach students the essential information they need in order to perform on the reading comprehension task that will be administered on Session 3, and the writing task that will be administered on Session 4, and Session 5. This lesson is necessary to ensure that all students have an equal opportunity to perform their best on the tasks. Please read this carefully and follow the instructions with fidelity.

<b>Overall Assessment Structure</b>	
Session 1: Introduction	The materials and activities on this day are designed to introduce the specific topic of the assessment, build common background knowledge, introduce the topic of the argument that students will be addressing, and share expectations with the students.
Sessions 2 and 3: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Reading comprehension</li><li>• Building Understanding of the Topic</li></ul>	These two days are devoted to an assessment of reading comprehension. Students read one or more non-fiction texts, engage in activities that help them to analyze those texts, then write a short (2 paragraphs) constructed response to an open-ended reading prompt. This reading task is also designed to develop students' understanding of the topic so that they can take an informed position when they write their essay
Sessions 4 and 5 <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Argument-based Essay Writing</li></ul>	These two days focus on students writing a short (500 word) argument-based essay on the topic introduced on Session 1 and developed on Sessions 2 and 3.

*In this task, students will read and analyze a set of informational texts that address the rise of obesity rates within the United States. Students will then write a short response to a given prompt regarding one particular text to assess for reading comprehension. Finally, each student will plan and write a short (500 word) essay in which he or she takes a position about the causes for the rise of obesity rates within the United States.*

*Following is a suggested sequence (Please note the specific requirements and suggestions for each session):*

Teacher Manual: Guidance for **Session 1** Lead-In Materials

<b>Session 1</b>	Lead-In Materials Guidance Booklet
Purpose	The purpose of this first session is to: <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Create a level playing field with respect to understanding the concept of argument</li><li>• Provide students with “the big picture” of the task activities</li><li>• Begin sharing the ingredients of an effective argument through a close examination of the claims and evidence different authors offer</li></ul>
Materials	Provided texts (student lead-in packet: Session 1) Provided graphic organizer (student lead-in packet: Session 1) Smart Board or Chart Paper
Total Time	45 minutes

(15 min.) **Activity 1:** Introduce Students to Academic Argument

- 1) *5 minutes*: Students may need help building an understanding of the concept of an argument as it is used here: a position on an important issue, backed up by evidence and reasoning. Some students may need help making the distinction between this meaning of argument and the everyday term for a noisy disagreement with two sides stubbornly holding on to their original positions.

To build up this understanding ask students work to work in pairs to discuss the following:

There are two kinds of argument:

- A noisy disagreement with two (or more) sides stubbornly holding on to their original positions.
- A exchange on an important issue, where each speaker/writer uses evidence and reasoning to convince the other to consider a different point of view, choice, or action.

What happens in these two different kinds of exchanges?

- What strategies do people use in the first case?
- What strategies do people use in the second case?

If you can get your way in the first kind of argument, why does the second kind of argument matter (e.g., in court cases, in making significant choices for government, etc.)?

Use a smart board or chart paper and note students’ ideas and the key differences between these two definitions of the term.

- 2) *5 minutes*: Help students develop an understanding of some key terms often used in writing arguments. For example:

Argument-based essay: In this kind of essay, writers not only give information but they also present an argument with the PROS (supporting claims and evidence) and CONS (opposing claims and evidence) for an issue. Writers need to take a clear stand and use clear language and well-chosen evidence that will convince people who are uncertain or who have a different point of view on the issue.

3) 5 minutes: Review Key Vocabulary for Argument Writing:

**Vocabulary for Argument Writing**

+	-
<b>Supporters</b>	<b>Opponents</b>
Those in favor of ...	Those opposed to ...
Defenders of ...	Critics of ...
Advocates	Objectors
Pro-... (e.g. <i>Pro-abortionists</i> )	Anti-... (e.g. <i>Anti-abortionists</i> )
Claim	Counterclaim
Evidence	Counter-evidence
<p>Teachers may want to add additional terms taken from the argument rubric or checklist. It can be useful for students to develop definitions in their own words and to keep these “student-friendly” definitions posted in the classroom</p>	

(30 minutes) **Activity 2: Critical Analysis of a Text**

**Remind students that they are going to write short argumentative essays in which they take a position on how best to fight the rise of obesity within the United States.** Those essays will draw on their reading and discussion of these texts, as well as their reflections on what they have experienced and observed.

Because this topic is complex and time is limited (two class periods) teachers have the option of introducing their students ahead of time to the topic and thinking that goes into taking a position based on using evidence. Included here are a set of Preparatory Texts that explore the different sides to the argument and some of the different factors involved with the rise of obesity. If students read these texts, they will have more background knowledge and additional evidence that can strengthen their position when they write their final essays.

Teachers may not show the Reading Assessment Prompt and the Writing Assessment prompt prior to the days of administration (Sessions 3 & 4).

You may opt to break students into smaller reading groups for analysis of the following texts, you may also choose to analyze it in a full-class setting. Students should use the provided graphic organizer to collect information for use during their final essays.

**Text 1: “Obesity Within the United States”**

This handout provides a general introduction to the topic of obesity within the United States; the health and financial risks associated with obesity; and an initiative Michelle Obama’s Lets Move campaign is promoting to combat the rise in obesity among the nation’s children by eliminating the nation’s “food deserts.” Teachers should use this handout to:

Provide context and background information about the nationwide rise in obesity rates

**Text 2: “The Obesity Hunger Paradox”**

This article, by Daniel Weintraub, digs further into the obesity epidemic and presents an interesting claim on where the responsibility lies to fight the present issues.

- 1) *25 minutes:*
  - a. Distribute the graphic organizer and texts to students.
  - b. Ask students to read the texts provided in their lead-in booklet silently to themselves, and have them fill in the graphic organizer (based on how you choose to organize it).
- 2) *5 minutes:* Facilitate a discussion with students regarding the graphic organizer they have filled in.
- 3) **Collect graphic organizers and texts at the conclusion of class, to be distributed to students at the beginning of class on Session 2.**

<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Lead-In Guidance Booklet</b>
Purpose	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Students start the session with a conversation about their own experiences and choices.</li><li>• Students read and analyze at least two texts which will serve as the basis for their response to the reading and writing prompt during Sessions 3, 4 and 5.</li></ul>
Materials	Student Lead-In Booklet
Total Time	45 minutes

(30 min). **Activity 1:** Pass out the graphic organizers students were working on during Session 1.

Instruct students to read the Mark Bittman article from the *New York Times*. Have students continue to fill in the charts and continue the conversation with your class about what evidence they are finding and what sides of the argument they are seeing.

Indicate to students that this article presents another option for ways to fight the obesity epidemic. They should consider the points made in it in relation to the Weintraub article they read during Session 1.

(15 min). **Activity 2: Critical Analysis of a Text:**

During this discussion, student groups/individual students should share out :

- The different sides of the argument about the obesity epidemic
- Possible methods of combating the problem
- At least one question they want to raise about the issue

Based on this work, ask students to write a short (5-7 sentence) paragraph in answer to this prompt:

- What is each author arguing?
- What are the strongest claims and pieces of evidence in the article?
- What questions do I have about this argument?

4) **\*\*\* STOP. SWITCH TO TASK ADMINISTRATION GUIDANCE MATERIALS FOR SESSION 3, 4, and 5 INSTRUCTION. \*\*\***

**Texts and Graphic Organizer made Available to students Session 1 (also printed separately in student materials)**

**Text: Obesity within the United States: An Introduction**

Over the last decade, the nation has seen a dramatic increase in the number of people labeled as obese within the United States. Defined as weighing roughly 30 or more pounds over a healthy weight, the obesity epidemic has been described as the fastest-growing public health challenge the nation has ever faced. Over the past 30 years the obesity rates within the United States have tripled. Statistics show that nearly 1 in 3 children in America are overweight or obese, and the numbers are even higher among African American and Hispanic communities, where nearly 40% of the children are overweight or obese.

The Center for Disease Control has released statistics showing that *at least* 20% of the adult population of *every* state within the nation is currently obese, with 12 of those states having an obese population greater than 30%. A report from the United Health Foundation estimates that if the nation's percentage of obese persons continues to climb at the same rate, then 43 percent of our country's adult population will be classified as obese by the year 2018.

**The Dangers**

Obese people are more likely to suffer from diabetes, heart disease, hypertension, sleep apnea (sleeping problems), and arthritis. Because of this, an obese person is also likely to die at a younger age than a non-obese person. Obesity also takes a toll on the financial health of a family. For example, a family with an obese child or parent spends on average 30% more in healthcare costs and 77% more in medication costs than a family without an obese parent or child. Statistics also show that lower income and minority families experience obesity at a higher rate than financially well-off families. Therefore, these same families are more likely to suffer from the physical and financial consequences of obesity.

**Food Deserts**

A "food desert" is defined as an area where at least 33% of the population lives *more* than a mile from grocery stores or supermarkets that offer fresh fruits and vegetables. Many families living within a designated food desert must travel several miles to shop at stores providing a selection of healthy foods. Because many people in high-poverty neighborhoods have little time, money or the ability to travel to those grocery stores and supermarkets, this lack of access forces people to shop at the local, smaller bodegas and corner stores which frequently either do not have, or have a very limited selection of, healthy food options.

On Wednesday July 20<sup>th</sup>, 2011, first-lady Michelle Obama joined with some of the nation's largest supermarket operators to announce a nationwide plan to remedy the nation's food deserts" as part of her plan to combat childhood obesity within the country. Over 650 food deserts have been located within the United States in both urban and rural areas. Recognizing that access to healthy and affordable food is an important role in curbing the obesity epidemic, several of the nation's largest food retailers have joined with Obama and committed to opening grocery stores and supermarkets within food desert locations. In theory, the

elimination of food deserts should give people in impoverished areas better access to fresh fruits and vegetables, and, thus, the ability to make healthier choices about what to eat.

But for all of the evidence about the existence of obesity, the causes - and solutions - for the epidemic remain hotly debated. Some questions to consider:

- Will the addition of supermarkets and elimination of food deserts be enough to combat childhood obesity?
- Is there a lack of education for people about how to eat healthy?
- Is obesity a direct result of poverty?
- Is the fast-food industry's marketing of unhealthy foods to children and adults to blame?
- Or are parents and the individuals themselves to blame for the choices they make about what they eat?

Among adults and children alike, the numbers reflect that more and more people are becoming obese – and this increase affects everyone. All too frequently the voices of those most directly affected by this issue is neither heard nor heeded – you. This task provides an opportunity for students to voice their opinions about how best to combat the rise of obesity. In your opinion, what should our country do to best fight the rise of obesity among our citizens?

**Text:**

**Daniel Weintraub – Sacramento Bee Columnist**

Published December 17, 2002

A public health group called last week for Gov. Gray Davis to declare childhood obesity a state emergency and take immediate steps to reduce it. But while the California Center for Public Health Advocacy proposes some worthy ideas, the foundation might be aiming at the wrong target.

Parents, not state government, are in the best position to fight the epidemic of overweight children in our schools.

It is parents -- not the government, not the fast-food companies, not the video-game manufacturers -- who are responsible for teaching kids healthy eating and exercise habits. Can they use some help? Sure. But they are the ones who need to step up to the plate, so to speak.

Child fitness is getting more and more attention these days, and rightly so. But the danger in well-meaning studies and, even more, in lawsuits against the fast-food industry, is that they send a message to parents and kids alike that obesity is somebody else's fault.

It's not. It's the fault of parents who let their kids eat unhealthy foods and sit in front of the television or computer for hours at a time. The sooner we face up to that fact as a society, the sooner we are going to be able to do something about it.

Last week's report from the Center for Public Health Advocacy took data already published by the state Department of Education and crunched it to make it more relevant to politicians. The center presented the data by state Assembly district, so that members of the Legislature could see where their communities ranked on the fat index.

Statewide, the center said, 26 percent of schoolchildren are overweight. The numbers ranged from a low of 17 percent in a wealthy Orange County Assembly district to a high of 36.8 percent in an inner-city Los Angeles district. More boys (32 percent) than girls (21 percent) were overweight. And more minorities than white children were overweight, though the study's authors said the data didn't allow them to draw any conclusions as to why that was so.

The center blamed the problem on the increasing consumption of fast food and soft drinks, larger portion sizes in restaurants, the availability of junk food on campus, advertising of junk food to children and their families, and the lack of consistent physical education programs in the schools.

The authors recommended that the state enforce an existing law requiring an average of at least 20 minutes per day of physical education, implement a state law outlining nutritional standards for elementary schools, and ensure that water fountains are present and working on every campus.

Many of the report's long-term recommendations focused on the fast-food industry: hearings to examine the impact of advertising on kids; a study to examine the prevalence of fast-food restaurants and convenience stores near schools; and incentives for communities that ban fast food outlets near schools or that ban advertising for junk food on campus.

Of the 20 recommendations put forward by the center, only one focused on parents. The authors suggest that schools be required to provide parents with fitness test results on their children and information about the importance of daily physical activity for learning and lifelong good health.

But none of the center's other ideas are likely to do much good until parents understand and accept their role in fighting the problem. We have laws against parents' leaving a loaded weapon where their children can find it and use it to hurt themselves or others. But no one seems to want to tell parents that they need to protect their children from unhealthy foods and from sloth.

It's not easy, especially when both parents are working, or there is only one parent in the home. Fast food is fast. It can also seem cheap, at least before you start adding the fries and sodas and desserts. And a television or video game can be like an opiate that quiets a restless child so a weary parent can get some rest of his own.

My own home is by no means a fast-food-free zone or a shrine to physical fitness. But we've tried to take a few modest steps to give our kids a fighting chance. We don't stock soda in the kitchen or serve it regularly at home; it's a treat saved for special occasions.

We try to cook as many meals at home as possible on the theory that even the least-healthy home-cooked meal is probably better for our children than the healthiest fast-food serving. We limit television time and encourage our boys to get out of the house, either to participate in organized sports or to ride their bikes, skateboards or roller blades.

If the health-care foundations did more to encourage these kinds of simple policies in the home, they might make some progress against the purveyors of fat and cholesterol, whether they are pushing their wares on the street a block from the school, in the cafeteria or even in the classroom. Before we start talking about banning fast food, let's do more to encourage personal responsibility.

Argument Construction Outline

<p><b>CONTEXT</b> <i>Why is this topic important?</i></p>	
<p><b>Position (thesis)</b></p>	
<p><b>CLAIM #1</b> (Topic Sentence for this PP)</p>	
<p><b>EVIDENCE</b></p> <p>Include Specific Quote or example. *Remember to “set up” the quote - give enough information so your reader can understand: 1)where the quote comes from 2) why it is important and 3)how it proves your thesis</p>	<p><i>One example that shows...</i></p>

<b>CLAIM # 2</b>	<i>Another example that shows....</i>
<b>EVIDENCE</b>	
<b>CLAIM #3</b>	
<b>EVIDENCE</b>	
<b>COUNTER CLAIM</b> <i>- What would someone with a different viewpoint have to say? How might someone argue against you?</i>	
<b>YOUR RESPONSE TO COUNTERCLAIM</b>	

<b>CONCLUSION</b>	
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## **Text Made Available to Students During Session 2**

“Food’s New Foot Soldiers” By: Mark Bittman retrieved from : <http://opinionator.blogs.nytimes.com/2011/08/23/foods-new-foot-soldiers/?emc=eta1>

[FoodCorps](#), which started last week, is symbolic of just what we need: a national service program that aims to improve nutrition education for children, develop school gardening projects and change what’s being served on school lunch trays.

I’ve been looking forward to this for months, because it’s such an up: 50 new foot soldiers in the war against ignorance in food. The service members, most of them in their 20s, just went to work at 41 sites in 10 states, from Maine to Oregon and Michigan to Mississippi. (FoodCorps concentrates on communities with high rates of childhood obesity or limited access to healthy food, though these days every state has communities like that.)

I’d be even more elated if there were 50 FoodCorps members in each state. Or 5,000 in each, which approaches the number we’re going to need to educate our kids so they can look forward to a lifetime of good health and good eating. But FoodCorps is a model we can use to build upon.

Curt Ellis, co-creator of the movie, “[King Corn](#),” is running the show with Debra Eschmeyer, formerly of the National Farm to School Network, and Cecily Upton, formerly of [Slow Food USA](#). FoodCorps is part of the AmeriCorps, from which it receives about a third of its budget. Most of the money comes from sources like the W.K. Kellogg Foundation and individual donors.

Is FoodCorps necessary? The organizations that are fighting childhood obesity on the front lines seem to think so: 108 groups from 39 states and the District of Columbia [applied to host FoodCorps](#), which chose to work at locations that had already begun to improve school food and needed help in expanding their work.

Potential participants were turned away at a crazy rate: More than 1,230 people applied for 50 positions. ([It’s easier to get into Harvard](#).) Nor is this a program for the college grad who wants to do some soul-searching by playing in a garden for a year. “Many service members,” says Ellis, “have firsthand experience with the communities they’re serving. Some are going back to the towns they grew up in; others were raised on food stamps or overcame obesity. They understand these challenges from the inside.”

They’re also smart, well informed, and articulate; Ellis told me there wasn’t a day last week that he didn’t tear up from something that one of them said. (I’m going to post some of their initial sets of beliefs and, I hope, ongoing reports from the field on [my blog](#).)

FoodCorps members will be paid \$15,000 for the year. On this they must find places to live and pay for food, though those without other sources of income are being encouraged to apply for help from the Supplemental Nutrition Assistance Program (usually called SNAP, and formerly known as food stamps), so they’ll live like many of those they’re serving. (Those eligible will also receive a \$5,550 federal education award to apply to their student loans when they finish.)

How, I asked Ellis, will we know if FoodCorps is successful? “This year we expect about 60,000 kids to benefit from improved food education,” he says. (This will be sadly easy to achieve: currently, elementary-age kids typically get less than five hours of nutrition education annually.) “Gardens will be begun or fortified to try to get kids more excited about fruits and vegetables; fresh food will be sourced from local farms; and parents and community members will be more invested in school food.”

FoodCorps will cost less than \$2 million for the first year. Thus for less than a million bucks of our money we are getting a program that will start to roll back the \$147 billion it costs us each year to deal with the health consequences of obesity, while changing the way thousands of young people grow up thinking about food.

Not to burst any bubbles, but let’s note that this in no way levels the playing field. That \$2 million invested in FoodCorps — well conceived, raised with the best possible nonprofit intentions, and ultimately well spent (a bargain!) — was starkly contrasted last week with the \$30 million that a new group of corporate farmers and ranchers intend to spend to promote the idea that they’re “[committed to providing healthy choices](#).” As anyone who’s followed the news in recent years knows, agribusiness has done pretty much the opposite, relying on direct federal subsidies (also our money) to the tune of at least \$5 billion annually to produce precisely the kind of junk food that is largely responsible for the tripling of childhood obesity in the last 30 years.

Teacher Materials: Lead-In Activities Guidance: Sessions 1 and 2  
Grade 10 ELA: Obesity Paradox

Here's the problem: raising \$30 million for a corporate public relations campaign to defend the rights of Big Food to continue to produce junk is easy; raising \$2 million to promote healthy eating in our children is hard. Ellis says that his dream is to have 1,000 service members a year working in all 50 states by 2020. I say let's have 10,000 by 2015.

But let's end on a happy note: FoodCorps is up and running. Hallelujah!

**Common Core State Standards Rubric: Reading Information/Writing Argument: Analytic Version/9-10<sup>th</sup> grade**

<b>I. READING INFORMATIONAL TEXTS (NOTE: THIS APPLIES WHERE THERE ARE SPECIFIC READING TASKS)</b>					
<b>CCS STANDARDS</b>	<b>Needs Major Support/ Provides No Evidence (0):</b> The student has not yet acquired the basic reading, writing, and thinking skills required by standards-based high school instruction. Needs major support in and out of class to make progress.	<b>Emerging (1):</b> The student has basic reading, writing, and thinking skills for participating and producing grade-level work but needs explicit support for building skills, practice, and clear feedback to become and stay an active member of the class.	<b>Developing (2)</b> The student is developing the higher-order reading, writing, and thinking skills necessary for becoming proficient but needs support, demanding assignments, and clear feedback to work independently.	<b>Proficient (3)</b> The student has developed the higher-order reading, writing, and thinking skills to transition to upper-level high school work. Still needs support, demanding assignments, and clear feedback to become college and career ready	<b>Exemplary (4)</b> The student has developed the level of reading, writing, and thinking skills needed for rigorous upper level high school courses or early college courses, or work in independent study or internship settings.
<b>RIT 9-10.10:</b> Read and comprehend literary nonfiction independently and proficiently	Does not identify or misidentifies the central idea of informational text.	Identifies the central idea, topic, or issue, but not supporting details. Does not draw inferences or make connections across texts.	Identifies the central idea and some supporting details, draws simple inferences. Does not make connections across texts.	Identifies the central idea and analyzes key supporting details, draws inferences (such as author’s position and purpose), makes simple connections across texts.	Identifies the central idea and analyzes key supporting details thoroughly, draws inferences (such as author’s position and purpose), makes sophisticated connections across texts.
<b>RIT 9-10.1:</b> Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of a specific texts/sources	Relies only on personal opinion and experience to analyze a text.	Cites only general evidence to support the analysis of a text (e.g. topic, event, etc.).	Cites some specific textual evidence to support the analysis of a text.	Cites sufficient specific textual evidence, generally supporting relevant points in the analysis.	Cites sufficient, specific textual evidence, from throughout the text, clearly connecting to and supporting relevant points in the analysis.

<p><b>RI: 9-10.6</b> Determine an author’s point of view or purpose and analyze how an author uses rhetoric (persuasive language) to advance it.</p>	<p>Misinterprets or misidentifies the author’s point of view or purpose or how language is being used to persuade.</p>	<p>Identifies author’s point of view or purpose but does not analyze how the author uses persuasive language or techniques.</p>	<p>Identifies the author’s point of view or purpose and examples of persuasive language or techniques, but does not analyze how the author uses language to persuade.</p>	<p>Identifies the author’s point of view or purpose and analyzes several major instances of how the author uses persuasive language and techniques.</p>	<p>Identifies the author’s point of view or purpose and analyzes and critiques how the author uses a range of different types of persuasive language and techniques.</p>
<p><b>RIT 9-10.8:</b> Evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing truthfulness and validity.</p>	<p>Does not evaluate the argument.</p>	<p>Evaluates the argument in a text implicitly by using its points or evidence.</p>	<p>Explicitly evaluates the argument by endorsing or rejecting it, but does not provide reasons or analysis.</p>	<p>Explicitly evaluates the argument and provides partial reasons and analysis for the evaluation.</p>	<p>Explicitly evaluates the argument, provides clear and sufficient reasons and analysis for the evaluation.</p>

II. EVIDENCE AND REASONING					
	<b>Needs Major Support/ Provides No Evidence (0):</b>	<b>Emerging (1):</b>	<b>Developing (2):</b>	<b>Proficient (3):</b>	<b>Exemplary (4):</b>
<b>W.7.1</b> Take a clear position; Introduce claims	Takes no clear position, makes no identifiable claim; only writes generally on the topic.	Takes a position; Implies, but does not state, a claim.	Takes a clear position that is clear and present for much of the text, which may contain contradictions or irrelevant points that distract from the argument. At least one claim is clearly stated.	Takes a clear position that remains constant throughout the text and is supported by more than two claims.	Takes a clear position that remains constant throughout and is supported by several detailed claims
<b>W.7.1</b> Support claims with logical reasoning and relevant evidence	States or insists on purely personal claim with no logical reasoning or evidence	Develops own claims with some logical reasoning or evidence from the texts	Develops own claims consistently, using some logical reasoning and at least one piece of evidence from the texts;	Develops own claims consistently; presents clear logical reasoning, examining a sufficient range of evidence from the texts	Develops own claim thoroughly, employing a detailed, well-reasoned logical argument, thoroughly examining a wide range of evidence from the texts
<b>W.7.1</b> Acknowledge and evaluate counter-claims examining and responding to them objectively	Develops no evidence of a balanced look at the issue; ignores or dismisses counterclaims.	Other opposing claims are mentioned but not examined.	Other opposing claims are acknowledged and examined.	Other opposing claims are acknowledged, examined and evaluated against the writer's claim.	Other opposing claims are acknowledged, examined and evaluated against the writer's claims in a way that is fair and balanced.

<b>W.9-10.1</b> Provide a conclusion that follows from and supports the argument	Provides no conclusion or a provides conclusions that are disconnected from the body of the essay.	Provides an explicit conclusion that restates the opening position but develops it no further.	Provides an explicit conclusion that summarizes several of the major claims.	Provides an explicit conclusion that summarizes all of the major claims that have been developed.	Provides an explicit conclusion that summarizes all major claims that have been developed and includes closing insight or implications.
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III. Organization and Clarity					
	Needs Major Support/ Provides No Evidence (0):	Emerging (1):	Developing (2):	Proficient (3):	Exemplary (4):
<b>W.9-10.1</b> Use words, phrases and clauses to link major sections of the text, create cohesion, and structure the argument.	Does not write coherent prose using the structure of an argument.	Presents argument as a collection of ideas or points linked using few or simple words (and, also, then, etc.).	Presents argument as a sequence of points and evidence, linked using more explicit words and phrases (because, finally, further, etc.).	Presents argument as a coherent and logically sequenced series of points and evidence using words and phrases that describe both immediate (thus, therefore, etc.) and longer-term connections (as mentioned earlier, etc.) within the text.	Presents argument as a coherent and logical sequence of points relating the major claims and counterclaims, linked with words and phrases that describe both immediate (by contrast, on the other hand, etc.) and longer-term connections (In sum) throughout the text.
<b>W.9-10.4.</b> Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.	Produces writing in which there is little development or organization.	Produces writing that is on the topic but where there is only a loose collection of information and claims with no overarching organization.	Produces writing in which there is a simple statement of position, some relevant information, and a brief conclusion.	Produces writing in which there is a clear claim, followed by the examination of several claims and counterclaims, and a conclusion that reflects how the argument has developed.	Produces writing in which there is a clear claim, followed by the balanced examination of several claims and counterclaims, and a conclusion that reflects how the argument has developed and its implications.

[Type text]

IV. Language and Conventions					
	<b>Needs Major Support/ Provides No Evidence (0):</b>	<b>Emerging (1):</b>	<b>Developing (2):</b>	<b>Proficient (3):</b>	<b>Exemplary (4):</b>
<b>W. 9-10.1</b> Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone.	Writes as s/he might speak; language is informal and/or choppy, using incomplete sentences; the tone and framing are highly personal.	Writes in a style appropriate for written communication; frames the argument largely from a personal point of view, without objective treatment of other positions.	Writes in a style appropriate for written communication; personal views dominate, but other views may be included as background.	Writes in a formal style, treats claims and counterclaims fairly.	Writes in a formal style and treats claims and counterclaims objectively and fairly; acknowledges limits or raises questions related to own position.
<b>Language Standards:</b> Use the conventions of English spelling and grammar to make meaning clear.	Lack of basic English conventions makes positions, claims, or conclusions unclear.	Employs basic English conventions so that overall meaning is clear, with a pattern of major errors.	Employs a wide range of English conventions so that broad meaning and finer points are clear, with a pattern of minor errors.	Employs a full range of English conventions so that broad meaning and finer points are clear, with only occasional errors that do not detract from clarity.	Employs a full range of English conventions so that broad meaning and finer points are clear. Errors are minor and rare.

[Type text]

<b>W 9-10.1:</b> Use the vocabulary and structures of the topic and academic discipline in which they are writing (using data, embedding quotations, citing sources, including tables, etc.).	Uses vocabulary and structures of daily conversation.	Uses a few terms relevant to the topic or discipline, with little evidence of writing appropriate to the academic discipline (e.g., discuss data, name sources, embed quotes, etc.).	Uses a number of key terms relevant to the topic or discipline, with little evidence of the structures of the academic discipline (e.g., discuss data, name sources, embed quotes, etc.).	Uses the key terms relevant to the topic or discipline, with simple structures of the academic discipline (e.g., discuss data, name sources, embed quotes, etc.).	Uses the key terms relevant to the topic or discipline, with more sophisticated uses of structures of the academic discipline (e.g., present data in tables, fully cite sources, embed quotes, etc.).
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**Session 3:**

**The Reading Comprehension Task**

**Prompt:**

**Reading Assessment**

In the article “The Battle against Fast Food begins at Home,” the author, Daniel Weintraub, uses a report from the Center for Public Health Advocacy to explore his position that “Parents... are in the best position to fight the epidemic of overweight children in our schools.” Weintraub then provides a number of reasons for why he believes the best approach to ending childhood obesity is found within a child’s home.

**Prompt:**

Think about the Weintraub article critically and write a short (250 word/3 paragraph) response in which you:

- Summarize Weintraub’s argument (the specific claims and evidence he provides)
- Evaluate the strengths and/or weaknesses of his evidence
- Reflect on what other factors may be involved using your own experience

In order to help plan and organize their response, ask students to answer the “Prepare to Write” questions.

What do you have to read and write to complete this task? In other words, what is this task asking you to do?	
What are the parts of the task you need to answer?	
How do you want to organize your response?	

**As you write:**

- State your position clearly
- Cite specific evidence, from both authors of the provided texts, that supports your position.
- Use the conventions of standard written English.

Students write their responses in the provided student assessment booklet.

\*\*\*STOP. DO NOT LOOK AT THE FOLLOWING PAGES UNTIL INSTRUCTED BY YOUR TEACHER.\*\*\*

## Writing Assessment

### Obesity in the United States

**Context:** Over the last few days you have seen and read work by authors concerned with the rise of obesity within the United States. It is also clear from these readings that there are many causes for obesity among people of all races and socioeconomic classes.

**Assignment:** Write a short (500 word) essay in which you take a clear position (make an explicit argument) about how to fight the rise of obesity within the United States. Within your essay you must use evidence from the readings to highlight 2-3 causes for the rise of obesity and what the country can do to counteract those causes. You must also ensure you address what critics might say about your ideas.

For example, you may argue that:

- More supermarkets should be built in low-income neighborhoods
- Parents need to take an active role in their children’s health
- The city should tax unhealthy foods
- You may also choose to make an argument based on a combination of the factors above, OR other factors you’ve learned from reading the texts

No matter what position you take, it is important to:

- State clearly where you stand
- Back up your position with claims and evidence
- Consider why people might disagree with you (make counterclaims) and defend your position against their objections
- Use the conventions of standard written English, and vocabulary relevant to the topic

Your teacher and other readers will score your essay based on how well you: (Checklist provided below)

- **State your position** clearly and fully.
- **Make specific claim(s)** or point(s) that support your position.
- **Develop your claim(s)** using your own ideas and evidence (such as data, quotes, and observations).
- **Cite, analyze, and connect the evidence** to your argument.
- **Address claims or viewpoints that differ** from your position or argument.

- **Write a conclusion** that summarizes your argument and helps your readers to think (for instance, what future implications or consequences might result from continuing or not continuing to sanitize literary works?)
- **Organize your essay clearly** using words, phrases, transitions, and clauses to show how the parts of your argument are related.
- **Use a formal style and objective tone.**
- **Use the conventions of standard written English and vocabulary relevant to the topic.**

Preparing to Write: Think about the following questions:

- What is your position?
- What is the best evidence from the texts to support your position?
- What might people who disagree with you claim or question about your claims?

**You will have two days to complete your final essay.**

Students write their responses in the provided student assessment booklet.

Use the following checklist to help guide you through your writing.

<b>Argument Check List</b>	
<b>Dimensions for Writing Prompt</b>	
<b>Using Evidence and Reasoning</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> I stated my position clearly	
<input type="checkbox"/> I summarized the readings carefully and fairly	
<input type="checkbox"/> I analyzed the readings and stated where I disagreed or had questions	
<input type="checkbox"/> I wrote a conclusion that summarizes my argument and makes my readers think	
<b>Being Clear and Organized</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> I used words and phrases that help a reader follow my argument	
<input type="checkbox"/> My writing is clear and my ideas develop from the introduction to the conclusion	
<input type="checkbox"/> I used paragraphs to organize information and ideas that belong together	
<b>Using Standard English</b>	
<input type="checkbox"/> I wrote in a formal style	
<input type="checkbox"/> I have checked my grammar and spelling	
<input type="checkbox"/> I used the vocabulary that is appropriate for this topic	

<b>Item Name:</b>	<i>CAHSEE Writing Task 4</i>
<b>Item Type:</b>	Long Constructed Response
<b>Subject and/or Domain:</b>	Persuasive Writing
<b>Common Core Standards:</b>	Writing Standard 1 (Grades 9-10): Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence...
<b>Developer/Source:</b>	California Department of Education (2008) California High School Exit Examination English Language Arts Released Test Questions Available from <a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/documents/ela08rtq.pdf">www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/documents/ela08rtq.pdf</a>
<b>Item Features:</b>	Administration: On demand / standardized Length of time for response: Unlimited time within test administration day Method of scoring: Holistic rubric scoring (1-4 points) Opportunity for student collaboration: None Opportunity for teacher feedback and revision: None

Collection of assessment items compiled by



Stanford University

2011

**Writing****REMINDERS**

- Write your response to the writing task below.**
- You may give your writing a title if you like, but it is not necessary.**
- You may NOT use a dictionary. If you do not know how to spell a word, sound the word out and do the best you can.**
- You may either print or write in cursive.**
- Write clearly! Any erasures or strike-throughs should be as clean as possible.**

**Writing Task 4:**

**Some students at your school expressed an interest in making the school more attractive by getting rid of the trash on the school grounds.**

**Write a persuasive essay for your school paper in which you convince the readers of the importance of getting rid of the trash and making the school more attractive. Convince your readers through the use of specific reasons and examples.**

L0000060

**Checklist for Your Writing**

**The following checklist will help you do your best work. Make sure you do the following:**

- Read the description of the task carefully.**
- Organize your writing with a strong introduction, body, and conclusion.**
- State your position, support it with specific examples, and address the reader's concerns.**
- Use words that are appropriate for your audience and purpose.**
- Vary your sentences to make your writing interesting to read.**
- Check for mistakes in grammar, spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and sentence formation.**

*NOTE:* Pages 167 through 170 provide a sample student essay for this writing task at each of the four score points with commentary and rationale for the given score. The student responses have been typed with the students' own content, grammar, capitalization, and spelling. The CAHSEE Response to Writing Prompt Scoring Guide for this writing task may be found in the Teacher Guide for English-Language Arts.

<b>Item Name:</b>	<i>Envisions Schools (Justin Wells) - Campaign Ads Project</i>
<b>Item Type:</b>	Complex Extended Project
<b>Subject and/or Domain:</b>	Argumentation
<b>Common Core Standards:</b>	<p><b>Reading Informational Texts</b> Grades 11-12  RI 10: Read and comprehend literary nonfiction independently and proficiently; RI 1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence...; RI 2 Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development; RI 6 Determine an author’s point of view or purpose...; RI 7 Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats; RI 8: Evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text...;</p> <p><b>Writing Standards</b> Grades 11-12  W1 Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence; W4 Produce clear and coherent writing...; W7 Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question...; W8 Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources; W9 Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research</p> <p><b>Language Standards:</b> Use the conventions of English spelling and grammar</p>
<b>Developer/Source:</b>	Envision Schools (Justin Wells)
<b>Item Features:</b>	Administration: Interdisciplinary, Curriculum-embedded, scaffolded within teacher-designed instructional unit, completed in and out of class, student choice, independent research, multimedia production Length of time for response: 4+ weeks Method of scoring: Analytic rubric scoring (1-4 points)

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Opportunity for student collaboration: Yes, except for individual products Opportunity for teacher feedback and revision: Yes
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## **WHAT DOES IT TAKE TO CHANGE A VOTER'S MIND? ENVISION SCHOOLS**

On Monday, November 3, the night before the coming election, your team will present a print advertisement on a specific California proposition to the registered voters of the Metro School community. The purpose of your ad is to persuade your audience about how to vote in the California election on the following day.

### **YOUR TASK**

Each team of four students will create the following products:

1. a research brief on the issue of your proposal (INDIVIDUAL PRODUCT)
2. a draft team platform and presentation of the platform (GROUP PRODUCT)
3. focus group research, based on interviews you conduct with the target voters of your campaign (GROUP PRODUCT)
4. an ad proposal (GROUP PRODUCT)
5. a print advertisement (GROUP PRODUCT)
6. an expanded and updated issue platform (INDIVIDUAL PRODUCT)

### **YOUR SUCCESS**

Your success depends on:

1. the quality of the research on your team's proposition
2. your understanding of the art and science of voter persuasion
3. your skill in designing and producing a print advertisement
4. your ability to work collaboratively in a fast-paced, deadline-demanding election schedule
5. the critical thinking and communication skills you develop while forming a sustained political argument

## **Benchmark #01: Ballot Review (INDIVIDUAL PRODUCT)**

**due 9/19**

### **DETAILS**

Date due: 9/19

Date introduced: 9/15

- 600 words (two pages double-spaced)
- Summarizes top three choices for campaign issues
- Name, date, and block printed in upper right corner
- Academic formatting: double-spaced, 12-point serif font
- Carefully proofread
- Ready to be read out loud in class

Using the information and websites provided to you, familiarize yourself with what's on the ballot on November 4. Then **write a two-page essay** proposing what you would like to make an ad for and with whom you would like to make it.

There are no absolute guarantees, but the more persuasive your proposal, the higher the likelihood of being granted your request.

### **PART 1**

Identify your top three choices of ballot measures, in order of preference. You can specify which position you would like to take on the measure (for or against), but you do not have to. Your discussion of each preference should include the following:

- A summary of the ballot measure
- An overview of the arguments for *and* against the proposition
- Why you are interested in this issue

### **PART 2**

Identify one student in your block with whom you would like to work and explain why. If you do not have a preference, then leave this part out of your essay.

Also, please identify which arts class or classes you are taking here at Metro.

### **RESEARCH SOURCES**

- [Secretary of State Voter Information Guide: www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov](http://www.voterguide.sos.ca.gov)
- [Easy Voter Guide: www.easyvoter.org](http://www.easyvoter.org)
- [Smart Voter: www.smartvoter.org](http://www.smartvoter.org)

## **Benchmark #02: Initial Issue Platform (GROUP PRODUCT)**

**due 9/26**

This week, your team's task is to decide which ballot measure you are working on, to take a position, to research your position, and to formally announce your platform to the class.

### **WRITTEN REQUIREMENTS**

Your campaign group will need to submit a written brief (properly formatted according to class requirements). This brief should include the following:

1. an announcement of your team's position on *one* of the 12 state propositions. This will be the subject of your campaign ad.
2. a non-biased background summary of what the ballot measure proposes, i.e. what would change if it passes. (at least 200 words)
3. a description of the arguments for and against the ballot measure. This part should include a list of the special interest groups that are lining up for and against (at least 400 words)
4. a list of the political issues that are raised by this proposition (200 words)
5. a list of the five people whom you are interviewing for your [Focus Group Research](#) and the rationale behind these choices
6. a status report on how your group is collaborating: how have you reached your decisions, how have tasks been divided and accomplished in the first week (at least 150 words)
7. a bibliography that cites at least two articles written about your proposition, from sources that are *not* the Secretary of State Voter Information Guide or the Smart Voter site. 7. (A great free site that will help you correctly construct your bibliography is [Easy Bib.](#))

### **PRESENTATION**

On Friday, 9/26, your group will stand before the class to present the information above. In addition, you must also report on initial findings from your [Focus Group Research](#), so have at least **three interviews** completed by this point.

Prepare a handful of Keynote slides to support your presentation. If you have a Google account, utilize Google Docs. This feature allows you to share documents and slides, online. You also don't need to worry about bringing a file to school since Google Docs are accessible on the Internet.

Every group member must speak during the oral presentation. Sketch out a script that addresses all the elements listed above, and divide it among you.

All the Metro standards for public speaking apply: face the audience with confident posture, prepare notes that allow you to maintain eye contact with your audience, do not read from your Keynote slide.

## **Benchmark #03: Focus Group Research (GROUP PRODUCT)**

**due 9/29**

A “focus group” is a tool or method of social science research based on in-depth interviews of a range of people and the gathering of their opinions. The social scientist then analyzes this data to better understand society and its culture.

Before you can produce an effective ad, you need to understand your audience. As political scientists for the Campaign Ad Project, you will interview potential voters whose opinions will help you design your campaign ad more effectively. Your goal in these interviews is to determine

- how do voters from different demographic backgrounds feel about the issues that frame your proposition
- more importantly, **why** do your interviewees feel the way they do
- what information do voters lack to make an informed choice
- and most importantly, **who is your target voter**, that is, the voter who hasn't made up her mind and therefore whom your ad can possibly sway to vote the way you want her to

### **DETAILS**

1. Each campaign ad team must conduct **at least five interviews** with voters from different demographic backgrounds: i.e. both men and women from various age groups and from different sides of the issue. **Every member of your team must participate in at least one interview.** It is recommended that your group conducts **10 interviews**.
2. You can conduct the interviews in person or over the phone. You must come to the interview prepared with questions on the issues, and most importantly, you must take careful notes on the responses. (Do an

audio recording of the interview if you can.) Use the [Focus Group Interview Form](#) to guide your interview.

3. To document the interview, fill out the [Focus Group Interview Form](#) and attach to it all notes you took during the interview. Your group must submit at least five of these forms with their notes on Monday, September 29.

### **STRATEGIES FOR SUCCESS**

- Start by telling your interviewee who you are, what school you go to, and the purpose of your project. Ask permission to conduct this interview, and if he says yes, assure him that you will keep his identity confidential.
- Try to interview a range of voters who will look at the issue from different, even opposing, angles. For example, if you were doing a ballot initiative proposing an increased tobacco tax, then you would be wise to interview a few smokers, a few merchants who sell tobacco, a few nurses or health practitioners (an interest group), and a few people who clearly don't smoke.
- The voters you interview may not know much about the actual propositions (it is early in the process), but most voters have feelings about the larger issues that are raised by these propositions. Therefore, your job as a critical thinker is to identify the larger political issues that are raised by your particular ballot initiative, and then to develop open-ended questions that stimulate your interviewees to discuss their feelings on those issues. Don't bring up the details of the proposition until the last half of the interview. The [Focus Group Interview Form](#) will guide you in this.
- Ultimately, the job of your campaign ad is to change voters' minds, but that is not the purpose of your focus group interview. Before you can change minds, you need to find out where voters stand, what they know, and how you can later convince them to vote a certain way. Therefore, you don't want to give them too much bias up front as to your pro/con position; you certainly don't want to get into arguments with them. At this point, you are a social scientist gathering data; your job is to listen.
- Conduct the interview in pairs so there are two notetakers.
- Record audio of the interview if you can and your interviewee agrees to this.

- Have fun with this, keep it safe and appropriate, and be serious.

## **Benchmark #04: Ad Analysis Task (GROUP PRODUCT)**

**due 10/1**

Print advertisements are a kind—a genre—of text. As with other varieties of persuasive texts, ads also are shaped by controlling ideas and rhetorical devices or moves that have an impact on audiences.

Before you can create an effective campaign ad, you need to take some time to study successful ads so that you can tune in to the ways that print ads “work” on an audience. This task will give you an opportunity to think carefully about some successful print advertisements—to notice their features, their composition, and the devices they use to effect an audience.

### **DETAILS**

1. Find three different examples of successful print advertisements, e.g. Shepard Fairey’s “Obama/Hope” ad, Apple Computer’s “Think Different” ad campaign.
2. For each of your three ads, conduct an analysis and then distill it in a 1-2 page analysis paper that accounts for the following questions:
  - What is the ad’s controlling idea? (What values does the ad promote?)
  - How are color, words, and images used in the ad?
  - Who is the intended audience? (How do you know?)
  - How does the ad work? (how does it persuade?)

Remember: Your papers should be analytical, not descriptive. That is, they should state how the ad works, how its elements interact together to create some persuasive effect.

## **Benchmark #05: Ad Proposal (GROUP PRODUCT)**

**due 10/3**

Written in prose, at least 300 words (1 double-spaced page), your proposal must include the following:

1. **a description of your target voter**

Campaigns don't pay for ads to preach to the already converted. The purpose of your ad is to convince an unconvinced voter to show up to the polls and vote the way you want her to. What is the profile of that unconvinced voter? Why is she unconvinced?

2. **the relevant focus group research**

What did you learn from your focus group research that will apply to the strategy and design of your ad?

3. **the general strategy of your campaign ad**

How will you convince your target voter? How will your ad present argument and imagery to appeal to your voter's intellect and emotions?

4. **a description of what your ad will look like**

### **GROUP PRESENTATION**

On Friday, 10/3, your group will stand before the class to present the information above.

Every group member must speak during the oral presentation. Sketch out a script that addresses all the elements listed above, and divide it among you.

All the Metro standards for public speaking apply: face the audience with confident posture and prepare notes that allow you to maintain eye contact with your audience.

## **Benchmark #06: Producing the Ad and Commentary (GROUP PRODUCT)**

### **due 10/8**

The final group assignment for this project is to create a one-page ad that promotes the ballot issue you are working on. You will present your ads in a community meeting ("Voter Information Night") preceding election day.

In addition, your group will also need to submit a 300-500 word commentary that analyzes your ad by addressing the following questions:

- What is your ad's controlling idea? (What values does your ad promote?)

- How did you use color, words, and images in your ad?
- Who is your intended audience? (How do you know?)
- How is your ad designed to persuade your audience? (how does it work?)

## **FINAL ASSIGNMENT: Expanded and Updated Issue Platform (INDIVIDUAL PRODUCT)**

### **Final Draft due 10/15 with REFLECTION**

Revisit your team platform. Add and synthesize information from at least 3 additional sources of information beyond the Voter Information Guide produced by the state (a total of 5 sources). In addition, include the perspectives of the individuals your group interviewed for the Focus Group Research. Sources should represent differing perspectives on the selected issue and may come from newspaper articles, position statements from different organizations, scholarly research, data/statistics, and/or other sources.

For each source:

- Analyze the perspective/bias of the individual(s) or group(s)
- Analyze the rhetorical elements or other strategies used by the author(s) of the sources to convince or persuade the voter
- Evaluate the credibility of the source
- Cite the source correctly using APA formatting both within the text and in a bibliography

Expand on the political issues and implications raised by the proposition. What would be some of the consequences if the proposition is passed by California voters? If the proposition is NOT passed?

Last, clearly state YOUR personal position on the issue and the rationale for your position.

### **In your REFLECTION (at least 300 words):**

- Reflect on how your ideas and the quality of your work have evolved over the course of completing this performance assessment;

- Reflect on how the learning gained from this performance assessment connects with what you have learned previously or in other classes;
- Reflect on the strategies for learning, thinking, and producing your work that worked well for you and that did not work so well;
- Consider how you learned from collaborating with your group on this project, and from peer and teacher feedback on your work;
- Consider how the work could be improved;
- Use examples from your work to support your reflections.



<b>Item Name:</b>	<i>none</i>
<b>Item Type:</b>	Short Constructed Response
<b>Subject and/or Domain:</b>	Literary Response and Analysis
<b>Common Core Standards:</b>	Reading Standards for Literature Grades 9-10 RL1: Cite strong and thorough textual evidence...; RL2: Determine a theme or central idea of a text...; RL 5: Analyze how an author's choices... Writing Standard 2b: Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details...
<b>Developer/Source:</b>	New York State Education Department, Office of Standards, Assessment, & Reporting (2010) Regents Comprehensive Examination in English Test Sampler, Spring 2010 Available from <a href="http://www.nysedregents.org/ComprehensiveEnglish/english-sampler-2010.pdf">http://www.nysedregents.org/ComprehensiveEnglish/english-sampler-2010.pdf</a>
<b>Item Features:</b>	Administration: On demand / standardized Length of time for response: 3 hours for entire exam Method of scoring: Holistic rubric scoring (0-2 credits per question) Opportunity for student collaboration: None Opportunity for teacher feedback and revision: None

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## Part 3

**Directions:** Read the passages on the following pages (a poem and an excerpt from an essay) about possessions. You may use the margins to take notes as you read. Answer the multiple-choice questions on the answer sheet provided for you. Then write your response for question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet.

### Passage I

#### Mrs. Caldera’s House of Things

You are sitting in Mrs. Caldera’s kitchen,  
You are sipping a glass of lemonade  
And trying not to be too curious about  
The box of plastic hummingbirds behind you,  
5 The tray of tineless<sup>1</sup> forks at your elbow.

You have heard about the back room  
Where no one else has ever gone  
And whatever enters, remains:  
Refrigerator doors, fused coils,  
10 Mower blades, milk bottles, pistons, gears.

“You never know,” she says, rummaging  
Through the cedar chest of recipes,  
“When something will come to use.”

There is a vase of pencil tips on the table,  
15 A bowl full of miniature wheels and axles.

Upstairs, where her children slept,  
The doors will not close,  
The stacks of magazines are burgeoning,<sup>2</sup>  
There are snowshoes, lampshades,  
20 Bedsprings and picture tubes,<sup>3</sup>  
And boxes and boxes of irreducibles!<sup>4</sup>

You imagine the headline in the *Literalist Express*:  
House Founders<sup>5</sup> Under Weight Of Past.

But Mrs. Caldera is baking cookies,  
25 She is humming a song from childhood,  
Her arms are heavy and strong  
They have held babies, a husband,  
Tractor parts and gas tanks,  
What have they not found a place for?

<sup>1</sup>tineless — without prongs

<sup>2</sup>burgeoning — growing

<sup>3</sup>picture tubes — a tube in a television receiver that translates the received signal into a picture

<sup>4</sup>irreducibles — broken down to most basic form

<sup>5</sup>founders — collapses

30 It is getting dark, you have sat for a long time.  
If you move, you feel something will be disturbed,  
There is room enough only for your body.  
“Stay awhile,” Mrs. Caldera says,  
And never have you felt so valuable.

— Gregory Djanikian  
from *Poetry Magazine*, May 1989

## Passage II

It was a silver Seiko watch with a clasp that folded like a map and snapped shut. The stainless-steel casing was a three-dimensional octagon with distinct edges, too thick and ponderous, it seems now, for a thirteen-year-old. Four hands—hour, minute, second, and alarm—swept around a numberless metallic-blue face. I received it for my bar mitzvah;<sup>1</sup> a quarter century later I can, in my mind, fingernail the button just one click to set the alarm hand—not too far, or I’ll change the time—and pull out the other, obliquely positioned button to turn on the alarm. When the hour hand finally overcame the angle between itself and the alarm hand, a soft, deep mechanical buzzing would ensue<sup>2</sup>—a pleasant hum long since obliterated by hordes of digital beeps. I haven’t seen my watch for twenty years, but I still hear that buzz, feel its vibrations in my wrist. . . .

Another machine still lingering in the afterlife: the 1973 Datsun 1200 my dad handed down to me to run into the ground, which I eventually did. A bottom-of-the-line economy model, “the Green Machine,” as my friends called it, looked like a vehicle out of Dr. Seuss, but it always started and got forty miles to the gallon—a cause for nostalgia, indeed, in these simmering, gas-guzzling days. I can still see the schematic four-gear diagram on the head of the stick shift and feel the knob—and the worn transmission of the gears—in my right hand. The radio had five black cuboid push-buttons for preset stations: the two on the left each sported the AM in white indentations, and the other three said FM. It took almost the entire ten-minute ride to school for the anemic defogger to rid the windshield of its early-morning dew. One day that teary outward view was replaced, at forty miles an hour, by green. A rusted latch had finally given out, and the wind had opened the hood and slapped it all the way back against the glass. Luckily, the glass didn’t break, and I could see enough through the rust holes to avoid a collision as I braked. Whenever the friend I drove to school was not ready to go, her father would come out and wait with me, looking the Green Machine up and down and shaking his head.

What does it mean that some of my fondest memories are of technology? Have we begun our slide toward the ineluctable<sup>3</sup> merging of man and machine? Are Walkman headphones in the ears the first step toward a computer chip implanted in the brain? Or is it merely that inanimate objects, whether Citizen Kane’s wooden [sled] “Rosebud” or my own handheld electronic circuitry, by virtue of their obliviousness to the passage of time, seize our longing? As photographs do, these objects capture particular periods of our lives. The sense memory of turning that clock-radio knob, or shifting that gear stick, fixes the moment in time as well as any photograph. Just as we painstakingly fit photos into our albums or, in the new age, organize them into computer folders and make digital copies for safekeeping, so I hang on to the impression of a stainless-steel wristwatch that once applied a familiar force of weight to my left wrist. . . .

— Marshall Jon Fisher  
excerpted from “Memoria ex Machina”  
Summer 2002, *Doubletake*

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<sup>1</sup>bar mitzvah — Jewish ceremony recognizing a boy’s attainment of adulthood and religious duty at age 13

<sup>2</sup>ensue — follow

<sup>3</sup>ineluctable — not to be avoided, changed, or resisted

### Short-Response Questions

**Directions** (26–27): Write your response to question 26 on page 1 of your essay booklet and question 27 on page 2 of your essay booklet. Be sure to answer **both** questions.

26 Write a well-developed paragraph in which you use ideas from both passages to establish a controlling idea about possessions. Develop your controlling idea using specific examples and details from each passage.

27 Choose a specific literary element (e.g., theme, characterization, structure, point of view, etc.) or literary technique (e.g., symbolism, irony, figurative language, etc.) used by one of the authors. Using specific details from that passage, in a well-developed paragraph, show how the author uses that element or technique to develop the passage.

<b>Item Name:</b>	<i>A Universal Language</i>
<b>Item Type:</b>	Selected Response
<b>Subject and/or Domain:</b>	Literary Response and Analysis
<b>Common Core Standards:</b>	Reading Standards for Informational Texts Grades 9-10. RI 2: Determine a central idea of a text...; RI 4: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text...; RI 6: Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text
<b>Developer/Source:</b>	California Department of Education (2008) California High School Exit Examination English Language Arts Released Test Questions Available from <a href="http://www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/documents/ela08rtq.pdf">www.cde.ca.gov/ta/tg/hs/documents/ela08rtq.pdf</a>
<b>Item Features:</b>	Administration: On demand / standardized Length of time for response: Unlimited time within test administration day Method of scoring: Correct/Incorrect Opportunity for student collaboration: None Opportunity for teacher feedback and revision: None

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Read the following passage and answer questions 10 through 12.

## A UNIVERSAL LANGUAGE

1 Thousands of different languages exist in the world, some spoken by millions of people and some spoken by only a few. Since it is difficult and time-consuming to learn a new language, many people speak only one. Some people have a little knowledge of one or two other languages but aren't able to put them into practice very often. Travelers to foreign countries often have to rely on a translator or an international dictionary. Wouldn't it be helpful, then, to have a universal language that everyone could understand?

### Dr. Zamenhof and His Belief in the Benefits of a Universal Language

2 L. L. Zamenhof believed in such a language. A linguist from Warsaw, Poland, he felt that a common language would contribute to better communication and help ease world tensions. Zamenhof wanted to create a language that did not favor speakers from any geographic area and one that would be easy for everyone to learn. He rejected existing languages because they were either too complicated or would put native speakers at an advantage over others.

3 Zamenhof published his universal language in 1887. It quickly became known as "Esperanto" after his pseudonym, which means "one who is hoping." He was hoping that his language would become accepted and spread throughout the world.

4 Zamenhof did not envision his language as one replacing all other languages but instead as one spoken as a second language by people around the world. In addition to travelers, Esperanto could be useful for anyone wanting to learn more about other cultures. In fact, people from all around the world come together at Esperanto conventions, where the communication barrier is broken because everyone speaks the same language.

### An Easy Language to Learn

5 Esperanto is easy to learn. The grammar and other rules of Esperanto are relatively simple, and all words are spelled as they sound. These features make it possible to become fluent in Esperanto much more quickly than in other languages. A knowledge of Esperanto also makes it easier to learn other foreign languages, since Esperanto has its roots in many different languages.

6 The majority of the words in Esperanto are derived from Latin and Romance languages, and French in particular. The rest of the vocabulary comes from German, English, Russian, Polish, and Greek. The words were chosen to be as easily recognizable as possible.

- 7 Most of the letters in Esperanto are pronounced the same way as they are in English. Some of the exceptions are the letter “J,” which is pronounced as we would pronounce a “Y,” and the letter “R,” which is trilled. The letter “G” is always pronounced as in the word “go,” and never as in the word “gentle.”
- 8 In Esperanto, it is also easy to identify the different parts of speech. Nouns always end in the letter “o” or “on,” with plural nouns ending in “oj” or “ojn.” Some common nouns are “amiko” for friend, “libro” for book, and “vorto” for word. Adjectives always end in the letter “a.” Some common adjectives in Esperanto are “granda,” which means large, and “bruna,” which means brown.
- 9 There are no indefinite articles in Esperanto. The only article used is “la,” which is used like the English word “the.” There is no need to learn different articles for masculine or feminine words, or for any cases.
- 10 Another interesting rule of the language is that word order is more flexible than in most languages. For example, an adjective may be placed before or after a noun.

### **The Future of Esperanto**

- 11 Although Esperanto is easy to learn, it has not yet achieved widespread usage as a universal language. One reason is that many people simply

prefer their own language. They are proud of their country, and their own language is one way to keep that identity.

- 12 Another reason is that, while many will agree with the idea of a universal language, they do not have the time or motivation to learn one. Learning a new language can be time-consuming, and many people will not take the time to learn one unless they have an inclination to learn languages or see some personal benefit in doing so. Others, perhaps, have not even heard of Esperanto or are unaware that such a universal language exists.
- 13 Despite Esperanto’s seeming lack of popularity, it is estimated that several million people can speak the language. Many magazines are published in Esperanto, and books—from Shakespeare to Dante—have been translated into Esperanto. Esperanto leagues and organizations help maintain the language and provide interested people with information. Perhaps in the future, Esperanto will find its place as a widely used and accepted universal language.

90B

**Reading**

10. Read this sentence from the passage.

Learning a new language can be time-consuming, and many people will not take the time to learn one unless they have an inclination to learn languages or see some personal benefit in doing so.

What does the word *inclination* mean?

- A liking
- B voice
- C profit
- D indifference

L190B004

11. Based on the passage, which sentence is the BEST conclusion about Zamenhof?

- A He wanted the fame that creating a universal language would bring.
- B He wanted to make a contribution to world peace and understanding.
- C He thought English was the best basis for a universal language.
- D He believed that pride in one's country led to conflicts and wars.

L190B006

12. How does the passage reflect the themes and concerns of the 21st century?

- A It is about global communication.
- B It describes a particular language.
- C It reinforces the importance of research.
- D It focuses on one person's achievement.

L190B016