

#### Activity 4.18d: Check, Check, and Double-Check

Okay, okay. You're probably rolling around on the floor right now shouting, "I am so done with this paper." Maybe you want to throw it against a wall or rip it to shreds.

But you don't, not really. We mean, come on, your paper is so helpless. It needs care and nurturing that only you can provide.

The truth is, there's always room to make writing a teensy little bit better. In our final activity this lesson, we're revising our papers into shiny, polished drafts.

To give you a little extra nudge in this final revising activity, we're giving you our Super Helpful Writing Checklist. Use it as a guide in revising your paper.

#### Super Helpful Writing Checklist

Did you...

answer the prompt?

craft an introduction that snags the reader's attention and gives an overview of your topic?

include a well-developed thesis that serves as the guide for your entire paper?

clearly organize your paper so that all of your reasons work together to prove your thesis?

develop claims by supplying evidence from the texts?

use transitional words to link the major ideas of your paper?

provide a well-developed conclusion?

establish and maintain a formal writing style, following the rules of the English language?

proofread? You don't want any run-on sentences, spelling errors, verb tense issues, pronoun-antecedent disagreement, or the dreaded passive voice, right?

Please choose up to 3 files for upload

## Teacher Notes

This is it. Your students have now gone through the entire paper-writing process. Wipe the sweat from your brow and breathe a sigh of relief. Then treat yourself to some pie. Pie makes everything better, and frankly, you deserve it.

As you're grading, go through the checklist we gave students yourself as well. We hope it helped students hit the high points when it comes to revision.

You should also take the time here to evaluate the paper as a whole. Go forth and grade papers!

## The best responses

address the prompt.

use details, examples, and quotations from Hamlet and Oedipus the King.

use details, examples, and quotations from Poetics.

have a clear, persuasive thesis statement.

use transitional words and phrases.

maintain a "formal style," using good grammar to do so.

Differentiation: Break the revision process down for students by having them revise for one thing at a time. Maybe they check to see if all their ideas connect to their thesis first. Then they go back and look for transitions. Then they examine their conclusion. You get the idea.

Extension: Students will no doubt be pretty proud of their papers. And they should be—it's been a journey to get to this point. If you would like, have students create a quick presentation, in which they share their main ideas with the class. Then, encourage the class to ask students questions about each other's arguments.

Standards covered in this activity:

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

Literary Essay Rubric - 100 Points

Outstanding   Proficient   Developing   Needs Improvement

Introduction

Grabs reader's attention effectively. Presents effective context for thesis, including background and significance of topic.

(10)

Presents topic clearly. Presents some context for thesis, including background. Attempts to discuss significance.

(9)

Presents topic. Includes some background and context. May be trite and unfocused.

(8)

Does not present topic clearly and/or does not contextualize thesis.

(7)

Thesis

Has clear, supportable, and interesting perspective on topic with clear rationale.

(15)

Has clear and supportable perspective on topic with sense of rationale.

(13)

Has supportable perspective on topic.

(11)

Has no evident perspective on topic, or has one that is not supportable.

(10)

#### Analysis of Text

Creates insightful, meaningful interpretation of texts. Analyzes author's use of language, structure, and literary elements and how they contribute to larger meaning of text.

(20)

Creates logical interpretation of text. Discussion of author's use of language, structure, and literary elements mixes analysis and description.

(17)

Creates reasonable but limited interpretation of text. Discussion of language, structure, and literary elements is primarily descriptive.

(15)

Interpretation of text is not reasonable, or discussion of text never extends beyond description.

(13)

#### Evidence / Support

All support is clearly and logically connected to the topic. Examples, evidence and details are thorough and relevant with effective explanation.

(15)

All support about the main topic is relevant. Examples, evidence and details are explained.

(13)

Most support is related to the topic. Examples, evidence or details are given.

(11)

Insufficient examples, evidence, or details. Support may be irrelevant.

(10)

Organization

Has a logical organizational scheme. Each piece of information flows logically and smoothly to the next.

(10)

Has a clear organizational plan. Information is presented logically with some sense of connection.

(9)

General sense of organizational plan. Information makes sense within it, but transitions are lacking.

(8)

Information appears disconnected or illogical.

(7)

Citation

All citation form is accurate. Goes beyond required integration of sources. Paraphrase and quoting is used effectively.

(10)

All citation form is accurate. All required sources are used. Has examples of both paraphrasing and quoting.

(9)

May contain minor citation form errors. May be missing required source. Direct quotes are over utilized and/or paraphrasing is occasionally inaccurate.

(8)

Major citation errors, or correct form is used, but most of paper is quoted directly. (If paper is plagiarized, it automatically gets a zero in total.)

(7)

Conclusion

Logically and effectively synthesizes information in an interesting way that shows the larger implications of the topic.

(10)

Synthesizes information persuasively and shows larger implications somewhat.

(9)

Restates information with some attempt at showing larger relevance.

(8)

Restates information.

(7)

Style

Language is clear and interesting. Enhances presentation of information. No errors.

(10)

Language is clear and appropriate to topic. Minor spelling or grammatical errors.

(9)

Language is occasionally unclear, but meaning is generally understandable. Frequent spelling/grammar errors that do not impede comprehension.

(8)

Language use makes writing very difficult to understand. Frequent spelling or grammar errors that impede comprehension.

(7)

## Activity 5.19b: Revising, Polishing, and Publishing

Revising is a good thing. A lot of people use someone else's eyes to help them revise their writing. A lot of people take a little time away from their writing. You've already had the time away, so now it's time to dig into the actual work.

### Self-Revision

Some of you are coming to this with a detailed outline but no real draft. You're probably going to want to use this time to turn what you have into an actual draft.

Others of you have a draft, but it's probably disorganized and unfocused. That's cool—you're going to use this time to try to organize your thinking and expand or contract some of your ideas.

Revising your own work is probably one the most difficult—and most important—skills you can learn how to do. You'll use it all the time. We cannot emphasize this enough. The skills that you use to make sure that text message is perfect, that's revising.

Because we always give a little guidance, here are some questions for you to ask yourself as you go through your work:

Do I answer the essay question?

How can I say this more clearly or succinctly?

How can I organize my thinking? Should this go here, or is it better for it to go there?

Do I need this?

Do I need to explain this more?

What examples and evidence do I give to support my ideas? Do I need more of this? Less?

You're going to save and upload two versions of your essay today.

For the first version, open up your draft or detailed outline of your paper. Click on Track Changes and start revising. If you'd like, you can add comments here and there with things you have questions on or don't want to see yet in the text. Your task is to comment on and revise 25% of your draft or detailed outline.



Hold on to that. You'll turn it in later.

## Polishing

People often confuse proofreading for editing, but they're actually birds of a completely different feather (like sparrow vs. pterodactyl). Proofreading strictly deals with grammar, structure, and spelling problems at the sentence level. That's the reason it should come last—you don't want to meticulously proofread something that you're going to rearrange or delete later.

In this last "seeing" of your essay, you're looking for the obvious stuff: spelling mistakes, sentence fragments and run-ons, inconsistent verb tense, pronoun-antecedent disagreements, incorrect capitalization, passive voice, and all things grammatically incorrect. Even if you won the third grade spelling bee, this might still be difficult. That's because our brains are often reading what we meant to write, rather than what we actually wrote. Stupid brains. So it can be useful to trick your brain into seeing your writing a little more clearly. Try reading the whole thing out loud or printing it out. Even changing the font size or color can change it up enough for you to see the mistakes more clearly.

Beyond the basic punctuation and grammar errors, here are some things that you should keep an eye out for:

Messy citations. We know you know what good citations look like. Don't let 'em turn into poorly punctuated train wrecks.

Comma use. Do you have the Oxford comma in a list of three things? Do you use commas to separate two sentences joined by coordinating conjunctions (and, but, for, nor, so, or, yet)?

Semicolon use. You should have at least two semicolons used correctly in your essay.

Colon use. You should have at least two colons used correctly in your essay.

There are a bunch of other things you can look at, but basically, you're going to move through your essay like a chimp picks nits off its companions—deliberately and thoroughly.

Once you finish everything, submit your two drafts below: your self-revision and your final, polished essay. This is it, so make sure it's good. Also, submit the final draft with Track Changes enabled. Your teacher wants to see how much your draft has changed from start to finish.

Now do a little celebratory dance.

Please choose up to 3 files for upload

### Expository Essay Rubric - 100 Points

Outstanding   Proficient   Developing   Needs Improvement

#### Introduction

Grabs reader's attention effectively. Presents effective context for thesis, including background and significance of topic.

(15)

Presents topic clearly. Presents some context for thesis, including background. Attempts to discuss significance.

(13)

Presents topic. Includes some background and context. May be trite and unfocused.

(11)

Does not present topic clearly and/or does not contextualize thesis.

(10)

#### Thesis

Has clear, supportable, and interesting perspective on topic with clear rationale.

(20)

Has clear and supportable perspective on topic with sense of rationale.

(17)

Has supportable perspective on topic.

(15)

Has no evident perspective on topic, or has one that is not supportable.

(13)

Evidence / Support

All support is clearly and logically connected to the topic. Examples, evidence and details are thorough and relevant with effective explanation.

(30)

All support about the main topic is relevant. Examples, evidence and details are explained.

(26)

Most support is related to the topic. Examples, evidence or details are given.

(23)

Insufficient examples, evidence, or details. Support may be irrelevant.

(20)

Organization

Has a logical organizational scheme. Each piece of information flows logically and smoothly to the next.

(10)

Has a clear organizational plan. Information is presented logically with some sense of connection.

(9)

General sense of organizational plan. Information makes sense within it, but transitions are lacking.

(8)

Information appears disconnected or illogical.

(7)

Conclusion

Logically and effectively synthesizes information in an interesting way that shows the larger implications of the topic.

(15)

Synthesizes information persuasively and shows larger implications somewhat.

(13)

Restates information with some attempt at showing larger relevance.

(11)

Restates information.

(10)

Style

Language is clear and interesting. Enhances presentation of information. No errors.

(10)

Language is clear and appropriate to topic. Minor spelling or grammatical errors.

(9)

Language is occasionally unclear, but meaning is generally understandable. Frequent spelling/grammar errors that do not impede comprehension.

(8)

Language use makes writing very difficult to understand. Frequent spelling or grammar errors that impede comprehension.

(7)

### Activity 5.09b: Ahem, Ahem, Philosophizing Here

We're going to keep this intro short and sweet. Your job here is to write a philosophical essay about the following ideas:

How do the readings from this unit define wisdom? How do your personal experiences align with these definitions? When factoring the readings and your personal experiences, how would you define wisdom?

How do the readings from this unit define argument? How do your personal experiences align with these definitions? When factoring the readings and your personal experiences, how would you define argument?

To what extent are wisdom and argument similar and/or different? What makes you say this?

That's it. A 2009 survey of philosophers and experts made the following agreed-upon points about wisdom:

It is uniquely human.

It is a form of advanced cognitive and emotional development that is experience-driven.

It is a personal quality, albeit rare.

It can be learned, increases with age and can be measured.

It is probably not enhanced by taking medication.

(Source)

How you convince us what is "truly wise" is up to you. You might talk about the wisest person you know and what makes him or her wise, an experience that made you wiser, or anything you think is an appropriate example to support your definition.

(Yeah, you're probably gonna want to use rhetorical devices to prove your points.)

To answer the second question, you'll have to pull in ideas (not quotes, but general ideas) from what you've learned about argument and specific examples from your own life. You might talk about an argument that you lost but learned from, an argument that you "won" but felt terrible about winning because you eventually realized that you were a big meanie (hey, we've all been there), or anything you think appropriately supports your definition.

The third question, well, you're going to have to think through that one on your own after you define the two terms.

Aim for 250 – 500 words, not too short, not too long. And finally, make sure you use two semicolons and one colon in your mini-essay.

Post your essay on the discussion board that your teacher has set up. Once you post your essay, read two other students' essays and respond to what they have to say in a discussion thread.

You might want to comment on

The extent to which you agree with the writer's definition of wisdom

The extent to which you agree with the writer's definition of argument

Any personal connection that is similar to the writer's and how it might have influenced you in a similar way

You should also consider asking questions. What do you want to know more about? Does the writer need to clarify any ideas? What gaps are you seeing? What might the writer not be considering?

#### Teacher Notes

This particular activity is kind of a breath of fresh air for students, coming from several lessons that require some deep reading and detailed rhetorical analysis. The purpose of this discussion board activity is for students to flex their analytical and explanatory muscles practice their new rhetoric skills on each other. There are plenty of poorly-argued debates on the internet. This is a chance to engage in a meaningful dialogue!

There's no real answer key to this essay, but here's a handy-dandy guide for what you should look for in student work:

A clear definition of wisdom, evidence from Plato's Apology, and a detailed personal connection

A clear definition of argument, ideas consistent with the previous eight lessons, and a detailed personal connection

Sufficient explanation of how wisdom and argument are similar and/or different, accompanied by "why"

Two semicolons and one colon, used correctly

You can make these discussion boards as formal or as informal as you like. You might want to have students respond to comment threads based on what other people say or ask about their mini-essay. You might have students check others' use of colons and semicolons. You could even turn the whole thing into an online discussion. We'd recommend doing as much with technology as you feel comfortable with, but no more. The primary focus of the activity should be students' essays—what they think.

Differentiation: Prepping for this writing can include all sorts of engaging activities, from brainstorming to small-group discussions to silent round-robin discussions.

Extension: For students who need a little more extension, you might have them read the Allegory of the Cave. Philosophy like whoa!

Standards covered in this activity:

Common Core State Standards (CCSS)

Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS)

Expository Writing Rubric - 35 Points

Outstanding    Proficient    Developing    Needs Improvement

Evidence / Support

All support is clearly and logically connected to the topic. Examples, evidence, and details are thorough and relevant with effective explanation.

(14)

All support about the main topic is relevant. Examples, evidence, and details are explained.



(12)

Most support is related to the topic. Examples, evidence, or details are given.

(11)

Insufficient examples, evidence, or details. Support may be irrelevant.

(9)

Content Understanding

All content is accurate and analysis is interesting and sophisticated.

(14)

All content is accurate.

(12)

May contain minor errors.

(11)

Major errors.

(9)

Style

Language is clear and interesting. Enhances presentation of information. No errors.

(7)

Language is clear and appropriate to topic. Minor spelling or grammatical errors.

(6)

Language is occasionally unclear, but meaning is generally understandable. Frequent spelling/grammar errors that do not impede comprehension.

(4)

Language use makes writing very difficult to understand. Frequent spelling or grammar errors that impede comprehension.

(3)

## Activity 7.06b: Step Up to the Mic

You've been reading and analyzing a bunch of other people's work in the past several units. And though you're still going to do this today (natch), we also want to hear what you have to say about things.

We mean really, in your own spoken words.

Here are the steps to follow for this activity:

### Step One

Pick one of the four pieces we read in the reading today. We mentioned you should be choosing a fave as you read—now's the time to revisit it.

### Step Two

Reread the piece you chose. While you're reading it this time, take notes on the following:

Themes in this piece that you've already seen in other readings we've done in this unit (e.g. religion, identity, family)

Any notes you might've jotted in your organizer about how this piece is both akin to and different from the other forms of writing we've been analyzing

Keep this link open to refer back to as you continue working through this activity.

### Step Three

Compile your notes into some semblance of organization. You won't be submitting a formal written piece today, but you are going to be giving a short oral presentation—get ready—so make sure you've got enough material for a 90–120 second oral report.

Make sure you prepare notes to touch on the following:

Why you chose the piece you did

What themes are present in the piece you chose

How this particular piece is similar to and different from other readings we've done

### Step Four

Time to put your thoughts into words—step up to the podium\* (Podium not included.)

A few pieces of advice when presenting:

Breathe. You can't speak without air, so this one is crucial.

Make eye contact with your audience. It's scary, we know, but it's a surefire way to create a connection between you and them.

If you're a super fast talker when you get nervous... s l o w d o w n. Breathe. Your audience really wants to understand what you're saying. Practice, and maybe time yourself so you can feel what 90-120 seconds actually feels like.

If...uh...you...uh...pause...uh...a lot... you should practice too. The more you practice, the more likely you are to remember what to say.

Try not to be a statue. Let your hands gesture to imaginary places. Count with your fingers. Give a side eye. Emote! Let your physical presence help support your words.

Your report might go a little like this:

Hi, I'm Shmoop. I chose to focus my report on "Hersh Wasser on the Attitude of Poles to the Warsaw Ghetto" because it was surprising when he wrote, "We Jews have it good!" I wasn't expecting to read anything like this. His piece touches on the themes of religion and identity. Wasser's diary entry contains what seems to be factual information, like when the new decree for Warsaw was put into practice—this is like the speech we read by Elie Wiesel. The language is a bit different, however, and less formal, like when Wasser references "Mr. R." but doesn't give the man a full name.

When you're finished, remember to breathe again, and think about all of the knowledge you gave to the world today.

Step Five

Now, it's time for the most nerve-wracking and soul-wrecking part: feedback. Don't be terrified though! Let's set some ground rules.

We've got a few suggestions we'll get to, but contribute to a thread on the discussion board about how people should conduct themselves as the civilized individuals we know you can be. What's going to actually help a presenter...present confidently? What kind of feedback will actually help them improve as a presenter? Go on. Add ideas to the discussion board. We'll wait.

Ready? Great. No doubt you came up with some fantastic ideas perfect for helping your peers. Just in case these didn't come up, here's what we recommend.

Be kind—everyone has a tendency to get camera/voice shy, and we're not here to make judgments on one another's performances. Instead, offer one kind thought (like "I really appreciated that you made your report funny") so the presenter know what they did well and what they should continue doing in the future.

Ask a question—at least one question shows the presenter you were paying attention, hanging on their every word, and it highlights opportunities where they might be able to add more content (such as "You mentioned the similarities between Moshe Flinker's diary and Night, but did you see any differences?").

Provide feedback on the discussion board for each of your peers after their reports.

#### Speaking and Listening Rubric - 25 Points

Outstanding    Proficient    Developing    Needs Improvement

##### Voice and Speaking

Speaks clearly and articulately

Uses language that is grade-level and beyond

Voice conveys tone and emotion

(6)

Speaks clearly and articulately

Uses a loud voice and some tone and emotion

(5)

Language is too conversational or inappropriate to task

Volume is too low, or mumbling

(4)

Language is inappropriate to task

Volume is rushed and unclear

(3)

Content and Evidence

Every point made is quoted or paraphrased from relevant texts or information, with original student analysis

Makes reference to specific passages from text or unit

Any information from outside the text is detailed and relevant

(13)

Most point made are quoted or paraphrased from relevant texts or information, with original student analysis

Evidence from outside the text or unit is relevant

(10)

Content has little connection to relevant texts

Information from outside the text or unit is irrelevant

Evidence doesn't support argument being made and is off-topic

Analysis is re-hashed or paraphrased from outside sources

(8)

No evidence is made to support points

No content is relevant to unit materials

Any analysis is re-hashed or paraphrased from outside sources

(5)

Preparation

Student has rehearsed and researched ahead of time

Student is prepared with notes or text to refer to

Student shows a clear and sophisticated grasp of key ideas

(6)

Student has likely rehearsed ahead of time

Student shows grasp of key concepts

(5)

Student does not understand some key topics in spoken presentation

Student has not likely rehearsed ahead of time, as some sections sound rushed or unsure

If applicable: Student's spoken presentation reflect pre-planned topics not organic to the conversation

(4)

Student has not prepared or rehearsed for presentation

Student does not grasp key concepts

If applicable: Student's spoken presentation reflect pre-planned topics not organic to the conversation

(3)