

**10<sup>th</sup> Grade English – Test Out – Semester 2**

Requirements before taking the 10<sup>th</sup> Grade English Test-Out Exam:

Read and be prepared to answer questions regarding the following:

- To Kill A Mockingbird
- Medea

Write and submit a persuasive argumentative research paper 3-5 pages in length with a works cited page. Instructions and rubric attached.

**Scoring**

Multiple Choice	55 points
Research Paper	100 points
<b>TOTAL</b>	<b>155 points</b>

## The Persuasive Essay/Research

The primary purpose of a persuasive essay is to convince readers to think the way that you do about a subject. To accomplish this goal, you will have to establish a reasonable and thoughtful argument supporting a subject or a position you have strong feelings about. 3-5 pages in length.

### Step 1: Choose a Subject

- The subject you choose for your persuasive essay should be controversial (it should have at least two sides). Also, the subject needs to be specific enough to be handled in a multi-paragraph essay. Finally, choose a topic that you care about and are interested in. This will make the writing process much more enjoyable!
- The following is an example of a controversial topic that could easily be discussed in a persuasive essay:

*High school athletes should not be allowed to use Creatine.*

### Step 2: Gather Details

- Once you have chosen a topic, begin to collect information, facts, statistics, anecdotes, etc. about that topic. You may also include your own thoughts and opinions. Collect information from as many credible sources as possible, but primarily the official databases provided by our media center. Once you begin to write your essay, you can pick and choose the information that will be most beneficial.

### Step 3: Develop a Thesis

- The thesis statement for your persuasive essay should be written according to the guidelines discussed during the course.
- A thesis is a sentence that makes an argumentative statement (what) and is followed by a justification for that position (how or why).
- A thesis statement that would be effective for our Olympian drug subject is:  
*High school athletes should not use Creatine because of the serious risks and dangers involved. Coaches and administrators need to develop and implement a punitive policy addressing the issue.*

### Step 4: Plan and Organize the Essay

- Once you have written your thesis statement, create a list of the main points you will use to support your opinion. Remember, you are trying to persuade an audience to agree with your point of view, so use strong arguments as support.
- Some examples of main points that may be used in our Creatine essay include:  
*Short term effects of Creatine use include diarrhea, dehydration, increased blood pressure, etc.*

*Long term effects of Creatine use include kidney problems, tearing of connective tissue, and the body may cease to produce any natural Creatine.*

*Creatine use just exacerbates the problem of teens giving in to pressure put upon them to be "super athletes".*

### Step 5: Write the Essay

- Now that you have a thesis and a list of the main points that you are going to use, you can begin to write the essay. Your essay should include an introduction, a body, a conclusion, and a works cited page.

**The Introduction:** In the introduction, it is the writer's job to grab the reader's attention, introduce and provide background information on your subject, and clearly express your thesis statement.

**Body Paragraphs:** Your body paragraphs should present the premises/conclusions in support of your position. Each body paragraphs should focus on ONE main point. Be sure to provide evidence, examples, and explanations for each main point (See "**Types of Evidence**" below). **Be sure each paragraph in some way helps support your thesis.**

\*At least one of your body paragraphs should address the opposing point of view on your subject (see "**Opposing Viewpoint**" below).

**The Conclusion:** In the conclusion, creatively restate your thesis. Also, summarize the main points you presented. Try to leave your audience connected to your topic by ending with a strong statement.

**Works Cited Page:** You need to cite your sources on a separate page using MLA format.

- **Types of Evidence:** In our body paragraphs, we need to support our main points. There are several types of effective evidence that can be used to support your opinion. The more types of convincing evidence you use, the stronger your argument. Here are some examples:

**Statistics** – percentages, ratios, numbers of people, etc.

**Observation** – something the writer has witnessed that may be used as support

**Expert Testimony** – an expert on your topic makes a statement about your issue in an interview, newspaper article, etc. (Dr.'s, professors, scientists, etc.)

**Comparison** – In order to illustrate your point, ask the reader to compare your topic to something else (for example, "*Imagine the feeling a person has after stepping off of a roller coaster. This is the type of feeling that can be a long-lasting side effect of Creatine use*").

**Experience** – This would include an anecdote that could support one of your main points. (*A local high school student was rushed to the emergency room after collapsing during football practice.*)

- **Opposing Viewpoint:** When you acknowledge the opposing viewpoint, or make a "concession", you identify other valid opinions about your subject. Making a concession often makes your overall argument more convincing. One of your body paragraphs must address the opposing viewpoint on your subject. You must anticipate and overcome objections that the opposition might raise. Ask yourself the following questions to begin thinking about your counterargument: *What will the other side say about my idea? How can*

*I defend my idea against their arguments? Can any of my points be easily attacked? Can I see any weak links in the opposition's thinking?*

In addition, certain phrases allow the writer to introduce the opposing viewpoint in a way that shows respect for the other side of the argument. The following phrases are very useful:

*Even though...      While it is true that...      Admittedly...*

*Granted...      It is hard to deny that...*

\*In keeping with our Creatine example, we may begin our concession paragraph with the following phrase: *While it is true that Creatine is produced in the body naturally, taken in high doses it can be very harmful.*

**Step 6: Proofreading, Revising, and Editing**

- Carefully review your first draft for completeness, organization, and voice. Do you sound knowledgeable and confident in the position you've taken?
- Add, cut, and rearrange information as necessary to make your essay as persuasive as possible.
- Be sure you have avoided the common style errors: contractions, sentence fragments, etc.
- Make sure your sources have been cited properly and that your Works Cited page is complete.
- The final copy must be in MLA format!

## **Persuasive Essay Rubric**

### ***Stimulating Ideas:***

The writing...

\_\_\_\_\_/15 focuses on a statement of opinion on a controversial subject (the thesis is written effectively).

\_\_\_\_\_/15 contains specific facts and details from scholarly sources to support the thesis.

### ***Logical Organization:***

\_\_\_\_\_/5 includes a clear beginning, strong support, and a convincing conclusion.

\_\_\_\_\_/5 arranges ideas in an organized manner.

\_\_\_\_\_/5 presents strong, logical arguments, acknowledges and develops an opposing viewpoint.

### ***Engaging Voice:***

\_\_\_\_\_/5 shows that the writer feels strongly about his or her position.

### ***Mechanics:***

\_\_\_\_\_/10 uses language that shows an understanding of the topic, strong vocabulary.

\_\_\_\_\_/10 flows smoothly from one idea to the next (transitions).

\_\_\_\_\_/10 properly formats works cited page in MLA.

\_\_\_\_\_/10 adheres to the basic rules of writing (spelling, grammar, sentence structure, etc.).

\_\_\_\_\_/10 follows the appropriate format for citing sources and formatting (MLA format).

Comments:

