



FORMATIVE WRITING ASSESSMENT

*Department of Literacy
Instruction & Interventions
Office of Academics*

Grade 9

Text-Based Writing Prompts: Administration and Scoring Guidelines

Teacher Directions:

Students will read a stimulus about a single topic. A stimulus consists of several texts written on a single topic. The stimulus may include informational or literary fiction or nonfiction texts and can cover a wide array of topics. After reading the stimulus, the students will respond to a writing prompt in which they will provide information on a topic, develop a narrative, or take a stance to support an opinion or argument. Students will be required to synthesize information from the text sets and must cite specific evidence from the texts to support their ideas. Students' informative/explanatory responses should demonstrate a developed and supported controlling idea. Students' opinion/argumentative responses should support an opinion/argument using ideas presented in the stimulus. Students will have 90 minutes to read the passages, and plan, write, revise and edit their essay. **Students should read the prompt first.** They should be encouraged to highlight, underline, and take notes to support the planning process.

Scoring:

The attached text-based rubric should be used to score student responses. While the total possible points on the rubric is ten, it is recommended that three individual scores be given—one score for each of the three domains on the rubric. This will allow the teacher to determine specific areas of need within individual student responses, thus allowing for differentiation in the writing instruction that follows these formative writing tasks. The three domains are: Purpose, Focus, Organization (PFO), Evidence and Elaboration (EE), and Conventions of Standard English (CSE). Teachers should score **holistically** within each domain—PFO (4-points), EE (4-points), and CSE (2-points).

Each level of scoring within a domain is based on the overarching statement for the score found in the rubric. For example, on the grades 6-11 rubric for argumentation, the overarching statement for a score of 4 in the Purpose, Focus, Organization domain is, "The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness." The bulleted points that follow the statement must be considered as factors in the scoring, but should not be utilized as a checklist. Most, but not all, of the bulleted points will be evident in the student writing for a score at a specific level.

Teachers should keep in mind that a score of 3 on the rubric for a domain signals student proficiency in the addressed writing standard with a score of 4 representing mastery. In the CSE domain, a score of two represents student proficiency in the standard.

Ninth Grade: Argumentative Prompt #2

Write an essay that explains your position on owning exotic pets. Remember to cite textual evidence to support your claim.

Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- Read the passages
- Plan your essay
- Write your essay
- Revise and edit your essay

Be sure to:

- Include a claim
- Address counterclaims
- Use evidence from multiple sources
- Avoid overly relying on one source

Your written response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Remember to spend time reading, planning, writing, revising, and editing.

ANCHOR TEXT

Do You Really Want a Baby Tiger?

Second thoughts about owning an exotic pet

by Mia Lewis

You know the story: Jenny wants a puppy, but her parents are reluctant to take the plunge. They remind her of the responsibilities that go along with pet ownership: She'll have to take it for a walk, everyday, no matter what; it'll grow up from the cute puppy it is now to a gnarly old dog; there will be messes to clean up, food to buy, and trips to the vet. Jenny says she doesn't mind any of that, and soon Fido is welcomed into the family fold. In no time at all the parents love Fido just as much as Jenny does, and Fido loves them all back. It is a story with a happy ending.

10 But what if Jenny tried to persuade her parents to buy her a fuzzy lion cub she saw advertised, or a baby chimpanzee? If they had any sense, Jenny's parents would tell her "No way" and stick to their guns. Owning an exotic pet is expensive, time consuming, and a huge responsibility. And of course, it can be dangerous. Owning a wild animal is arguably cruel to the animal in a way that owning a domestic animal isn't. Given all these considerations, it's remarkable how many people across the United States decide to become owners of exotic pets.

20 For some, the allure of owning an exotic pet trumps any drawbacks. After all, it's not your average Joe who owns a python, or a puff adder! A house with a monkey or lion cub in the backyard is going to stand out in the neighborhood. No one will deny that owning an exotic pet is daring and different. But many experts argue that the negatives strongly outweigh the benefits. Here's a look at some of the reasons why owning an exotic animal as a pet is NOT such a good idea.

30 **They all grow up.** A cute puppy grows up to be a dog—bigger, but not dangerously so. A lion cub, on the other hand, inevitably turns into, well, a lion. Most people who own exotic pets find them irresistible—and manageable—when they are small. But an adorable cub becomes a powerful adult soon enough. Many exotic animals

NOTES

NOTES

are strong enough to be dangerous even without meaning to cause harm. An adult animal is also likely to be aggressive and have more difficult behaviors than a baby one.

Wild animals are wild, even in captivity. A dog is an animal, but it is a *domesticated* one—a species that has evolved over thousands of years to live well with people. Most dogs can be trained with a few puppy obedience classes. Exotic animals are something else entirely. They are wild animals with wild animal
40 instincts, even when born in captivity. A wild animal is never 100 percent predictable. An animal that has behaved one way for many years cannot suddenly change. Domestication is not something that happens in one or two generations: it takes hundreds or thousands of years.

Do you really have the resources? If keeping a dog or cat can be time consuming and costly, that's nothing compared to looking after an adult lion or chimpanzee. It's not just the food and the vet bills, although those can indeed be considerable. You also have to build a sturdy cage or enclosure that is the appropriate
50 size and has the right hiding, resting, climbing, and play spaces to approximate the animal's natural habitat. You will need to be able to devote a large portion of your time to learning about the animal and its needs. Usually only specially trained and qualified individuals working with the backing of a specially equipped facility are fully able to meet the needs of exotic animals. Keep in mind that pet ownership is a lifetime commitment. Jenny's dog may live to be 15, but a chimpanzee can live to be 60 or 65 years old.

Dangers and Diseases. While it is true that even dogs and cats can injure their owners or other people, they do not have the
60 same unpredictable potential for serious or even deadly attacks that many exotic pets do. It's not just big cats, poisonous snakes, and chimpanzees that can be harmful—even smaller exotic pets can cause serious injuries. Exotic pets can also spread diseases to humans. In addition, many exotic pets end up on the loose in the wild. (Owners who find their fully-grown pets unmanageable sometimes release them.) Out on their own, these exotic animals can be a further danger to the public, and even to the environment.

Cruel and Unusual. Many exotic pet owners end up being unable to provide the proper living environment for their fully-
70 grown pets. In order to prevent them from injuring anyone, they may decide to keep them caged. The end result is that far too many of these exotic animals spend almost their entire lives in the “prison” of a small cage. In this kind of environment, they have no opportunity to practice most of their “natural” behaviors.

All in all, Jenny is better off sticking with a “boring” dog or cat. If I were her parents, I’d say yes to the puppy before she got any more “exotic” ideas!

NOTES

Am I on Track?



REXANO Proves That Politicians and Lobbyists Introducing and Passing Laws Against Exotic Animal Ownership in the Name of ‘Public Safety’ Use False and Misleading Claims

NOTES

Private owners of wild and exotic animals in the USA have been coming under ever increasing attacks from animal rights (AR) activists and uninformed legislators to end the private ownership of exotics in the name of “public safety.” Many unfair laws have already passed on the federal, state and local levels.

REXANO (Responsible Exotic Animal Ownership), a free web resource designed to give facts-based research material to private owners of exotics to fight unfair legislation, just finished compiling a statistical table proving the legislators passing laws under the guise of
10 public safety used misleading claims.

“In the last 10–16 years, 1.5 people on average gets killed yearly by captive reptile, 1 by captive big cat, 0.81 by captive elephant, 0.125 by captive bear and 0 by captive nonhuman primate,” reports Zuzana Kukol, a REXANO co-founder. “As a comparison, 45,000 people die each year in traffic accidents, 47 from lightning and 1,600 by falling down stairs.”

“Our statistical analysis of the data disproves the claim that exotic animals in captivity are a threat to public safety. No uninvolved public has ever been killed in the USA since 1990 as a
20 result of a captive big cat, primate, bear, elephant or reptile at large,” adds Scott Shoemaker, a REXANO co-founder. “The majority of fatalities are to owners, trainers or people voluntarily visiting the property where the animals are kept.”

“If it is illegal for businesses to advertise and sell products using misleading and fraudulent claims, why is it OK for legislators and lobbyists to introduce, gain public support and pass bills using fraudulent claims they can’t back up with facts?” asks Kukol. “These bills that waste tax money are appeasing the minority of special
30 interest animal rights groups and a few individuals falling for the claims of imaginary threat at the expense of constitutional freedoms for a majority of Americans. Many animal businesses are regulated out of existence as a result of this deception.”

NOTES

“There are no hard facts and statistics to support the case for these bans, only so-called incident reports compiled by the various AR groups,” says Andrew Wyatt, President of NC Association of Reptile Keepers. “These incident reports amount to scary stories about scary animals. Many are unconfirmed, manufactured or ridiculous. Deaths or serious injuries are exceedingly rare. The reality is that you are more likely to contract *E. coli* virus from eating
40 spinach, and die as a result, than die from being attacked by an exotic animal.”

“It would be nice if for once the AR fanatics could refrain from exploiting isolated tragic incidents, but they never do. They feed on this kind of hysteria,” says Feline Conservation Federation president Lynn Culver. “AR groups use grieving relatives of those harmed by exotic animals as their poster children to help push their agenda of prohibiting exotic animals in society.”

“Fear trumps over freedom. Will America be coerced by inflammatory rhetoric from the AR Movement into over reacting to
50 a nonexistent threat by enacting overly intrusive animal bans? I hope not,” adds Wyatt.

“Animals are personal property; and we oppose legislation that restricts the private ownership or use of animals, or that inhibits free trade of any animal provided it meets Ohio Department of Agriculture testing and import requirements,” adds Polly Britton, Secretary of the Ohio Association of Animal Owners.

“As long as animal welfare and public safety laws are followed, the private ownership of all animals should be protected in the USA,” says Shoemaker.

60 “Control the land and the animals, then you control the people,” states Kim Bloomer a natural pet care educator, lecturer and host of the online radio show Animal Talk Naturally.

“There is a hidden agenda with regard to all of these laws and it has nothing to do with public safety or concerns for good animal care. Rather, it is about eroding or removing American freedoms, the right to own as many animals as we can provide for.”

Current focus of REXANO is to reverse the trend in over regulation.

Am I on Track?



FINAL

English Language Arts
Text-based Writing Rubrics
Grades 6–11: Argumentation



Grades 6–11			
Argumentation Text-based Writing Rubric			
(Score points within each domain include most of the characteristics below.)			
Score	Purpose, Focus, and Organization (4-point Rubric)	Evidence and Elaboration (4-point Rubric)	Conventions of Standard English (2-point Rubric begins at score point 2)
4	<p>The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear claim and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Strongly maintained claim with little or no loosely related material • Clearly addressed alternate or opposing claims* • Skillful use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas • Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end with a satisfying introduction and conclusion • Appropriate style and tone established and maintained 	<p>The response provides thorough, convincing, and credible support, citing evidence for the writer’s claim that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Smoothly integrated, thorough, and relevant evidence, including precise references to sources • Effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques to support the claim, demonstrating an understanding of the topic and text • Clear and effective expression of ideas, using precise language • Academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose • Varied sentence structure, demonstrating language facility 	
3	<p>The response is adequately sustained and generally focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear claim and evident organizational structure with a sense of completeness. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintained claim, though some loosely related material may be present • Alternate or opposing claims included but may not be completely addressed* • Adequate use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas • Adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end with a sufficient introduction and conclusion • Appropriate style and tone established 	<p>The response provides adequate support, citing evidence for the writer’s claim that includes the use of sources, facts, and details. The response includes most of the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally integrated and relevant evidence from sources, though references may be general or imprecise • Adequate use of some elaborative techniques • Adequate expression of ideas, employing a mix of precise and general language • Domain-specific vocabulary generally appropriate for the audience and purpose • Some variation in sentence structure 	

Continued on the following page

FINAL ELA Text-based Writing Rubrics, Grades 6–11: Argumentation
Florida Standards Assessments

Score	Purpose, Focus, and Organization (4-point Rubric)	Evidence and Elaboration (4-point Rubric)	Conventions of Standard English (2-point Rubric)
2	<p>The response is somewhat sustained within the purpose, audience, and task but may include loosely related or extraneous material; and it may have a claim with an inconsistent organizational structure. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Focused claim but insufficiently sustained or unclear • Insufficiently addressed alternate or opposing claims* • Inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety • Uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end with an inadequate introduction or conclusion 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the writer’s claim that includes partial use of sources, facts, and details. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Weakly integrated evidence from sources; erratic or irrelevant references or citations • Repetitive or ineffective use of elaborative techniques • Imprecise or simplistic expression of ideas • Some use of inappropriate domain-specific vocabulary • Most sentences limited to simple constructions 	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of basic conventions. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Some minor errors in usage but no patterns of errors • Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling
1	<p>The response is related to the topic but may demonstrate little or no awareness of the purpose, audience, and task; and it may have no discernible claim and little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Absent, confusing, or ambiguous claim • Missing alternate or opposing claims* • Few or no transitional strategies • Frequent extraneous ideas that impede understanding • Too brief to demonstrate knowledge of focus or organization 	<p>The response provides minimal support/evidence for the writer’s claim, including little if any use of sources, facts, and details. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal, absent, erroneous, or irrelevant evidence or citations from the source material • Expression of ideas that is vague, unclear, or confusing • Limited and often inappropriate language or domain-specific vocabulary • Sentences limited to simple constructions 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of basic conventions. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Various errors in usage • Inconsistent use of correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling
0			<p>The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions, with frequent and severe errors often obscuring meaning.</p>

*Not applicable at grade 6