

Mark Twain Boyhood Home & Museum
Lesson Plan for *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*

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Hannibal, Missouri

“Panel Presentation Unit”

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| LESSON PLAN for <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> | |
| Concept or Topic: Demonstrating the relevancy of <i>Huck Finn</i> in modern society through speaking, listening, reading and writing | Suggested Grade Level: 11-12 (can be modified for other levels) |
| Subject: Literature/Writing/Social Studies | Suggested Time Frame: This lesson/assignment will last approximately three weeks after students have read the novel. |
| Objective(s): <ol style="list-style-type: none"> 1. Students will collaborate, agree upon and research five concepts from <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> that are relatable to present society and write two research-based questions for each of the five concepts. 2. Students will attend a panel presentation that discusses these five concepts, ask a minimum of two of their questions, and take notes during the presentation. 3. Students will utilize information presented in a panel presentation over the five concepts from <i>Huckleberry Finn</i> in a formal writing assessment, either a literary analysis essay or letter to the editor, depending on class. | |
| State Standards: <p>Reading Standards for Informational Text 6-12: Integration of Knowledge and Ideas (7. Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats.) and Range of Reading an Level of Text Complexity (10. By the end of grade 12, read and comprehend literary nonfiction in the grades 11-CCR text complexity band proficiently with scaffolding as needed at the high end of the range.)</p> <p>Writing Standards 6-12: Text Types and Purposes (1a, 1b, 1d, 1e. Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts using valid reasoning and relevant an sufficient evidence.), Production and Distribution of Writing (4. Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. 5. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. 6. Use technology, including the internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products . . .) and Research to Build and Present Knowledge (7. Conduct</p> | |

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short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question or solve a problem . . . 8. Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively . . .)

Speaking and Listening Standards 6-12: Comprehension and Collaboration (1a. Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively. 3. Evaluate a speaker's point of view, reasoning, and use of evidence and rhetoric, assessing the stance premises, links among ideas, word choice, points of emphasis, and tone used.) and **Presentation of Knowledge and Ideas** (6. Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a command of formal English when indicated or appropriate.)

Language Standards 6-12: Conventions of Standard English (2a, 2b. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.)

Assessment Options:

This is a culminating assignment for two different classes: College English (Dual Credit course) and English IV (Senior English). The English IV class will determine the guest speakers, research and compose the questions for the panelists, and ask the questions at the panel presentation. The College English students will write the Literary Analysis Essay and follow the Literary Analysis Scoring Guide (see below) and English IV students will write the Email and Letter to the Editor and follow the Scoring Guides (see below).

Subject Area Integration:

- Language Arts (Reading, Writing, Research, Speaking, Listening)
- Social Studies (Panel Presentation topics, Letter to the Editor)
- Business/Vocation (Teacher should teach a mini-lesson on the parts of an email and how to write a professional email.)

Background Information:

- The teacher must define a **panel presentation** and its structure for students. This is an opportunity for students to demonstrate some autonomy in their education as they determine the content to be discussed in the presentation as well as the speakers to be invited. This also allows students to determine for themselves the relevancy of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* in today's society.
- The teacher should define and describe an **email** and its structure and purpose. While many students use email, many are unfamiliar with the purpose of each component or how to write professional correspondence.
- The teacher should define and describe a **letter to the editor** and its structure and purpose. Students should be made familiar with their local paper, its audience, and its importance in the community. Examples from several different papers with differing circulation numbers should be provided to students, and discussion should accompany these examples.

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Materials:

- Examples of emails, or even better, write one together as a class
- Examples of letters to the editor
- Descriptions of assignments and their scoring guides (found below)

Technology:

- A video to watch with students is Stephen Colbert's satire of the censorship of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*
<http://thecolbertreport.cc.com/videos/ttqn4k/huckleberry-finn-censorship>
- A video to watch with students is Byron Pitts, CBS reporter for *60 Minutes*, discussing the "N-Word" <http://www.cbsnews.com/news/the-n-word-is-it-ever-okay-to-say-it-19-06-2011/>
- Two short video clips from *60 Minutes* and *CBS News* discussing the use of the "N-Word" http://www.alanreinsteinst.com/site/The_N-word.html
- *Hobart Shakespeareans* is a PBS documentary that can be shown to students as enrichment. While the focus of the documentary is *Hamlet*, the students in the video comment frequently of the impact of *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*.
- Students will need access to various websites for their research. This assignment is another opportunity to teach the importance of valid, reliable internet sources. I encourage my students to use government sites to find statistics for their county and state.

Lesson Sequence:

Senior English Course

- Ask students to brainstorm five major concepts/themes developed in the novel that are still applicable and relevant today. Once students agree upon the topics, we discuss as a class the types of speakers who would be best to speak upon these topics.
- Discuss the entire unit and its individual assignments with the students, but wait until each component of the unit is assigned to discuss specific requirements and scoring guides.
- Discuss the email assignment and go over the scoring guide requirements. Create a sample email together as a class.
- Spend some class time discussing and providing examples of professional vocabulary.
- ***While I require the students to write one email to any one of the five guest speakers, in order to save time, I contact the speakers. With 40-50 students, I do not want to inundate someone with email requests, and it would be difficult to choose just one email that I would send to the actual speaker.*
- After giving students approximately one class period to work on their emails, introduce the research question assignment (see below) and go over the scoring guide for the questions. Put students into groups/teams for the question assignment. While they can conduct the research independently, they will work

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- together to compose the questions. Give them several days to work both independently and as groups/teams. Each group will submit 10 questions.
- Spend several class periods peer-editing or conducting writing workshops with students' emails, and then provide students some time to make their corrections.
 - Questions are due several days prior to the presentation so that they can be reviewed and graded.
 - Several days before the presentation, discuss the letter to the editor and the scoring guide requirements (see below).
 - The day before the presentation, spend some time discussing expected behavior and good speaking and listening skills. Since the presentation will be recorded and the video loaded onto the school's computer network, stress the importance of attentive behavior during the presentation.
 - The day of the presentation, student ambassadors greet the guests and escort them to the library. All students are expected to take notes during the presentation. *(Since almost every senior is enrolled in either Senior English or College English and were required to attend the presentation, I notify all staff well in advance that seniors would not be in their afternoon classes. Students are expected to discuss this with their teachers in advance and make arrangements to make up any missing work.)*
 - The day after the presentation, as a class discuss the event and evaluate it. Discuss how each topic would lend itself to a letter to the editor.
 - Students are given several days to compose a draft. Students then peer edit and make revisions before turning in the final draft.

College English Course

- Prior to reading the novel, we discuss the controversy associated with *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*. As we read, we continue to discuss the controversy and its relevance to today's society.
- After finishing the novel, we discuss the literary analysis essay requirements and the scoring guide.
- The day before the presentation, spend some time discussing expected behavior and good speaking and listening skills. Since the presentation will be recorded and the video loaded onto the school's computer network, stress the importance of attentive behaviors during the presentation.
- The day after the presentation, as a class discuss the event and evaluate it. Discuss how each topic would lend itself to the essay topics. Students are given a week to compose a draft.
- Students are given two class periods to peer edit. After making revisions, the final draft is due.

**I notify our yearbook staff about the presentation so they can cover the event. I also invite the local newspaper to come and cover the event.

Suggested Follow-Up Activities:

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- Require students to write hand-written thank you notes for each guest speaker. Gather them together in one large envelope/box and mail them to the speakers.
- Write an article for the local paper to accompany the letters. Include pictures taken during the event.

Email

You will compose an email in which you ask someone to speak to the senior class. While this is not an essay, this is formal writing and must be typed. You will not have the typical essay structure with an introduction, thesis statement, body paragraphs, and a conclusion, but there will be an established structure.

Rationale

- ✓ Writing an email is a useful skill, necessary in an academic setting and especially in the workplace.
- ✓ This assignment will provide experience in using a formal, collegiate vocabulary.

Requirements and Recommendations:

- ✓ You must introduce yourself to the person to whom you are writing. If you are already familiar with your correspondent, you may want to refer to your last contact to better help the correspondent remember who you are.
- ✓ Once you have introduced yourself, you will need to state the purpose of the email – tell your correspondent why you are contacting them. Be sure to explain the unit, the purpose of the unit, and how you would like him/her to contribute.
- ✓ After establishing the purpose, you will need to provide relevant details about the event. You must provide the date and time and any requirements you would like the correspondent to meet.
- ✓ Provide your contact information. While the email would provide your email address, you should also include a cell number.
- ✓ You should offer to provide directions if they are unfamiliar with our location. Our school's website offers a link that will provide directions, so you may want to direct them there.
- ✓ You will be writing in the first person, so it is permissible to use first person pronouns (I, me, my, etc.).
- ✓ Vary your sentence structure. Don't be afraid to use a well-worded but short sentence.

- ✓ Do not use great, really, very, well/so (to start sentences) or a lot – I know I taught you better vocabulary than that!
- ✓ Since you are speaking to the reader, you may use the pronoun “you.”
- ✓ Avoid the use of contractions.
- ✓ Watch verb tense – keep it the same throughout. Make sure your pronouns agree in number with their antecedents.

EMAIL SCORING GUIDE

| Element | Grading Criteria | Points Received | Total Points |
|----------------|---|-----------------|--------------|
| Format | Single-spaced, paragraphs left aligned w/correct space between paragraphs | 3-2-1-0 | |
| | Correct Header (TO, CC, Subject) | 3-2-1-0 | |
| | Font: Arial/TNR etc., 12 pt | 1-0 | |
| | One inch margins | 1-0 | /8 |
| Content | Introduction | 2-0 | |
| | Statement of purpose | 4-2-0 | |
| | Provides details regarding the event | 10-8-6-4-2-0 | |
| | Provides contact information | 4-2-0 | |
| | Information is logically organized | 4-2-0 | |
| | Word choice is correct and appropriate for audience and purpose. | 8-6-4-2-0 | /32 |

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|------------------|--|-----------------|------------|
| Mechanics | Contains few errors in grammar/usage, punctuation, capitalization, and/or spelling | 1 pt. per error | /10 |
| TOTAL | | | /50 |

Research-Based Questions

You will come up with a list of 10 research-based, documented questions to ask the panel of speakers. You will need to provide specific evidence from your **five** sources. You may definitely use your own experiences, your own perspective, and your own voice in these questions. You must include a works cited page and cite sources within your questions.

Rationale

- ✓ Post high school research will require you to sort through volumes of writing, distinguish fact from opinion, and utilize valid work rather than off-beat claims. These questions will provide experience conducting research efficiently and effectively.
- ✓ You will gain experience using your sources to support your own ideas rather than simply repeating what they say.
- ✓ This assignment will provide you with an opportunity for critical thinking – evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing.

Requirements and Recommendations:

- ✓ You must have a **total of FIVE sources** – a minimum of one source for two questions.
- ✓ You must incorporate the research into each question. Below is an example question:
 - **EXAMPLE QUESTION:** According to a survey from the People and Relationship section on About.com, in 2000 92% of teens admitted to lying to their parents in the past 12 months and 79% of them lied two or more times. In the novel *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn*, lying was an easy escape for Huck. Do you think teens lie as an escape now or do you think society has a greater influence on lying? Why or why not?
- ✓ You must have **TWO** questions for each topic being presented:

- **Morality** – following your heart vs. following established rules of organized religion or society
 - **Family Abuse/Neglect** – how DFS handles children in abusive situations
 - **Human Trafficking** – how to be prepared and protect yourself but not paranoid in a dangerous world
 - **Diversity** – how can our students better prepare themselves for a diverse world
 - **Violence** – how our students may be affected by gang violence in mid-Missouri
- ✓ Each question must be an open-ended, discussion question. If a person can respond with a “yes” or a “no,” it is not an open-ended question. Use terms like **how** or **why** when asking your questions.
 - ✓ You must correctly cite your sources in your questions or cite them parenthetically, and you must include a works cited page.
 - ✓ You must include copies of the research you used and **highlight** the information included in your questions. Put your documentation in the same order as your questions.
 - ✓ Questions must be typed and numbered.
 - ✓ Do not use great, really, very, well/so (to start sentences) or a lot – I know I taught you better vocabulary than that!
 - ✓ Since these are questions you are expected to ask the guest speakers, you will be expected to speak to the reader! You may use the pronoun “you.”
 - ✓ Avoid the use of contractions.
 - ✓ Avoid slang, clichés, and indefinite wording.

✓ QUESTIONS SCORING GUIDE

| Element | Grading Criteria | Points Received | Total Points |
|----------------|--|-----------------|--------------|
| Format | Questions double-spaced, numbered, w/correct space between questions | 3-2-1-0 | |
| | Header: Last name and page number in right hand corner, page heading in MLA format | 2-1-0 | |
| | Font: Arial/TNR etc., 12 pt | 1-0 | |
| | One inch margins | 1-0 | 17 |
| Content | Question #1 provides documentation and addresses MORALITY | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #2 provides documentation and addresses MORALITY | 4-2-0 | |

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| | Question #3 provides documentation and addresses FAMILY ABUSE/NEGLECT | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #4 provides documentation and addresses FAMILY ABUSE/NEGLECT | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #5 provides documentation and addresses SLAVERY | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #6 provides documentation and addresses SLAVERY | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #7 provides documentation and addresses DIVERSITY | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #8 provides documentation and addresses DIVERSITY | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #9 provides documentation and addresses VIOLENCE/LAW ENFORCEMENT | 4-2-0 | |
| | Question #10 provides documentation and addresses VIOLENCE/LAW ENFORCEMENT | 4-2-0 | |
| | Word choice is correct and appropriate for audience and purpose. | 10-8-6-4-2-0 | |
| | Works Cited page included and correctly formatted | 10-8-6-4-2-0 | /60 |
| Mechanics | Contains few errors in grammar/usage, punctuation, capitalization, and/or spelling | 2 pts. per error | /20 |
| TOTAL | | | /87 |

✓
Letter to the Editor

You will write a letter to the editor of the **[insert name of your local paper]** in which you describe a problem identified in the panel discussion. You will need to provide specific supporting evidence from the panel discussion to explain why this is a problem for **[insert name of your county]** County or for Missouri. You may definitely use your own experiences, your own perspective, and your own voice within this letter. This is a formal, typed essay with an introduction, thesis statement, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. If you use outside sources, you must include a works cited page and cite sources within your paper.

Rationale

- ✓ Writing a formal letter is a useful skill, necessary in both an academic setting but also in the workplace.
- ✓ Post high school research will require you to sort through volumes of writing, distinguish fact from opinion, and utilize valid work rather than off-beat claims. This paper will provide experience conducting research efficiently and effectively.
- ✓ You will gain experience using your sources to support your own ideas rather than simply repeating what they say.
- ✓ This essay will provide you with an opportunity for critical thinking - evaluating, analyzing, and synthesizing.

Requirements and Recommendations:

- ✓ If you use outside sources, you must correctly cite your sources within your letter, and you must include a works cited page that includes your last name and page number.
- ✓ Your **introduction** should contain a central claim and identifies a main purpose for writing. It should be well thought out and a logical basis for your thesis. Your thesis statement should be persuasive - it must tell the reader what you want them to believe.
- ✓ Your **body paragraphs** should include sound reasons for your position and sufficient supporting evidence. Your editorial should tell readers how this problem affects Osage County or Missouri and persuades readers to take a specific action about it. Your arguments should also appeal to the appropriate audience.
- ✓ The **conclusion** should leave a strong impression on readers and urge them to take a specific action. Tell readers how you feel about this issue/problem. You are stating your opinion – it's okay to use first person pronouns (I, me, my, etc.).
- ✓ Use transition sentences to transition between the topics of each paragraph.
- ✓ Your conclusion should refer back to the problem, summarize, and restate the thesis. End with a provocative thought or statement.
- ✓ Your paper will be approximately **1-2 pages in length**. Make sure you have chosen a problem that is relevant to the readers of the newspaper. If you have a works cited page, it is **NOT** included in the page length requirement.
- ✓ Convince the readers of the newspaper to believe what you believe! However, to be fair and persuasive, it is important to understand

the opposing views as well. You might begin by trying to state what your reader probably thinks (as best you can infer).

- ✓ To support your thesis, you will need evidence – anything that demonstrates what you’re claiming. Evidence may include facts, statistics, expert opinions, examples, reported experience, etc.
- ✓ Vary your sentence structure. Don’t be afraid to use a well-worded but short sentence.
- ✓ Do not use great, really, very, well/so (to start sentences) or a lot – I know I taught you better vocabulary than that!
- ✓ Do not speak to the reader! Avoid use of the pronoun “you.”
- ✓ Avoid the use of contractions.
- ✓ Watch verb tense — keep it the same throughout. Make sure your pronouns agree in number with their antecedents.

LETTER TO THE EDITOR SCORING GUIDE

| Element | Grading Criteria | Points Received | Total Points |
|---------------|--|-----------------------|--------------|
| Format | Double-spaced, indented paragraphs w/correct space between paragraphs | 3-2-1-0 | |
| | Header: last name and page number in upper right-hand corner, MLA format for heading | 2-1-0 | |
| | Font: Arial/TNR etc., 12 pt | 1-0 | |
| | One inch margins | 1-0 | 17 |
| | Introductory paragraph that describes the problem to be addressed and contains a persuasive thesis statement | 10-8-6-4-2-0 | |
| | Body that clearly addresses the topic and persuades the reader using convincing elaboration through specific and relevant details, reasons, and examples | 35-30-25-20-15-10-5-0 | |

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| | Information is logically organized with paragraphs reflecting topic divisions. Transitions between paragraphs are clear. | 8-6-4-2-0 | |
| | Word choice is correct and appropriate for audience and purpose. | 10-8-6-4-2-0 | |
| | Paper has a conclusion that refers back to the problem, summarizes, and ends with a thought-provoking statement. | 10-8-6-4-2-0 | /73 |
| Mechanics | Contains few errors in grammar/usage, punctuation, capitalization, and/or spelling | 2 pts. per error | /20 |
| TOTAL | | | /100 |

***Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* Literary Analysis Essay**

For your final essay this semester you will write a composition that proves your thesis statement which is an **opinion** you have reached using **one** of the topics from the list below. You will need to provide specific supporting evidence from the novel to explain your position and to convince your readers of its soundness. Any direct quotes from the book need to be cited within the essay by including the page number. You may definitely use your own experiences, your own perspective, and your own voice within this essay. This is a formal, typed essay with an introduction, thesis statement, body paragraphs, and a conclusion. **Your essay assignment for *Adventures of Huckleberry Finn* should be an easy one to write—if you have read the book, paid attention and participated in class.**

Topics

- ✓ Should this book continue to be banned in high school classrooms? Why or why not?
- ✓ How are the themes of this novel still applicable even though it was written over 125 years ago?

Rationale

- ✓ This type of writing assignment requires you to closely read a literary work and then divide it into its elements, explain its meaning, and support your interpretation with evidence from the work. In other words, you will compose a literary analysis!

- ✓ Many upper level collegiate courses will require students to read literature relevant to their subjects and then analyze the information. This type of writing requires you to focus on the key details that will support your thesis statement and provide practice for future literary analysis.
- ✓ You will utilize situations and/or quotes from the novel to support your thesis. This type of citation will provide practice for the research paper that you will write next semester.
- ✓ By sharing the experiences of literary characters, you gain insight into your own thoughts and feelings.

Requirements:

- ✓ You **MUST** include information from the panel presentation in your essay and you must cite your source. Directly below this checklist is the information from the Purdue Owl that demonstrates how to cite public speeches.
- ✓ If you choose the first topic (book banning), you **MUST** address the opposition. In other words, you must respond and refute the reasons for banning the novel in high school classrooms.
- ✓ If you choose the second topic (applicable themes), you **MUST** address the argument that these themes are no longer applicable.
- ✓ Your introduction should be well thought out and a logical basis for your thesis. Include a hook (quote, question, anecdote, definition, etc.). **Weave your hook throughout the paper.**
- ✓ Your thesis statement **MUST** include terms from the topic so that I know which topic you will be addressing.
- ✓ Do not speak to the reader! Avoid use of the pronoun “you.”
- ✓ You are stating your opinion – it is appropriate to use first person pronouns (I, me, my, etc.).
- ✓ Use transition sentences to transition between the topics of each paragraph.
- ✓ The support for your thesis can be either quotes or paraphrases, but each of these must have a page citation. If you do not know how to paraphrase, ask for help!
- ✓ Be careful to introduce and explain each quote/paraphrase you use. Do not just drop one in. **You are expected to reference the book.**
- ✓ Your conclusion should summarize, restate the thesis and refer back to the hook. End with a provocative thought or statement.
- ✓ Vary your sentence structure. Don’t be afraid to use a well-worded but short sentence.
- ✓ Do not use great, really, very, well/so (to start sentences) or a lot – I know you have learned better vocabulary than that!

- ✓ Avoid the use of contractions!
- ✓ Watch verb tense — keep it the same throughout.
- ✓ Writing an outline for this essay may prove beneficial, but I am not requiring you to do this.

Speeches, Lectures, or Other Oral Presentations (including Conference Presentations)

Provide the speaker’s name. Then, give the title of the speech (if any) in quotation marks. Follow with the name of the meeting and organization, the location of the occasion, and the date. Use the descriptor that appropriately expresses the type of presentation (e.g., Address, Lecture, Reading, Keynote Speech, Guest Lecture, Conference Presentation). Remember to use the abbreviation *n.p.* if the publisher is not known; use *n.d.* if the date is not known.

Doe, John. "Name of Speech." Fatima High School. Westphalia, MO. 04 Dec 2013. Senior English Panel Presentation.

LITERARY ANALYSIS ESSAY SCORE GUIDE

| Element | Grading Criteria | Points Received | Total Points |
|----------------|--|-----------------|--------------|
| Format | Double-spaced, indented paragraphs w/correct space between paragraphs | 1-0 | |
| | Header: last name and page number in upper right-hand corner, MLA format for heading | 1-0 | |
| | Font: Arial/TNR etc., 12 pt | 1-0 | |
| | One inch margins | 1-0 | /4 |
| Content | Title- catchy and creative | 5-3-0 | |
| | Introductory paragraph that catches the reader’s attention (anecdote, quote, etc.). | 7-5-3-0 | |
| | Paper has a thesis statement containing terms from the topic. | 6-4-2-0 | |

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| | Body that clearly addresses the topic and provides convincing elaboration through specific and relevant details, reasons, and examples. Information from panel presentation is incorporated. Hook is referenced in body paragraphs. | 30-25-20-15-10-5 | |
| | Information is logically organized with paragraphs reflecting topic divisions. Transitions between paragraphs are clear. | 9-6-3-0 | |
| | Word choice is correct and appropriate for audience and purpose. | 10-8-6-4-2-0 | |
| | Paper has a conclusion that refers back to the introduction, summarizes, and ends with a thought-provoking statement. | 9-6-3-0 | /76 |
| Mechanics | Contains few errors in grammar/usage, punctuation, capitalization, and/or spelling | 2 pts. per error | /20 |
| TOTAL | | | /100 |

