

Student Writing Portfolio

Level C

Blackline Masters

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Institute for Excellence in Writing, L.L.C.

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Music, Jefferson, and the Declaration of Independence

The committee assigned the task of writing the Declaration of Independence consisted primarily of John Adams, Benjamin Franklin, Thomas Jefferson, and unofficially, Thomas Paine. The first draft contained the basic points they all agreed upon, but they also knew that the language used in the final document would have to be artistic and inspiring as well as precise. Adams was too rough, Franklin too sick, and Paine too controversial to author the final draft; thus the task fell to Jefferson. His landlady recorded in her journal the struggle he had in completing his task. Upstairs, she would hear him pacing the floor endlessly; he seemed to accomplish little for many days. Then he sent home for one of his violins. After it arrived, Jefferson would pace a little, and then play for half an hour or so. Then quiet descended upon the house for a while. In a few days, the vital document was complete and ready for presentation. Playing music may have helped unlock his linguistic genius, or perhaps it made him be more receptive to the words of destiny: “When in the course of human events....” Either way, few people know the important role the violin played in the founding of our country.

This story is told as part of the tour given in the historical house where Thomas Jefferson stayed while he worked on the final draft of the Declaration of Independence.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Source: "Music, Jefferson, and the Declaration of Independence"

Spoke in complete sentences.	
Used clear pronunciation and proper intonation.	
Feet remained flat on the floor.	
Hands remained still (gently gripping podium).	
Eyes up when speaking.	

Name: _____

Date: _____

Source: "Music, Jefferson, and the Declaration of Independence"

- ☐ Composition is double-spaced.
- ☐ Dress-ups are marked with underline.
- ☐ Name is on paper as directed.
- ☐ Title is centered.
- ☐ Title repeats key words of final sentence.
- ☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline.

Dress-Ups (underlined)	I
who/which clause	

Mechanics and Grammar	I
ending punctuation	
capitalization	

- ☐ Checked for **BANNED WORDS**:

Plants Respond to Music

Over the past several decades, numerous experiments have been conducted to examine if music has an effect on plants. As early as 1957, Wisconsin florist Arthur Locker began piping music into his greenhouses. He observed, “My plants grew straighter, germinated more quickly, and bloomed more abundantly.” About that same time, Canadian farmer Eugene Canby found that the violin sonatas of Bach produced a crop 66% greater than the average plot, even though portions of that plot contained inferior soil. In 1960, George Smith, a skeptical botanist in Normal, Illinois, conducted the first truly scientific experiment. He planted corn and soybeans in identical greenhouses, keeping the same levels of temperature and humidity, and played George Gershwin’s “Rhapsody in Blue” twenty-four hours a day. The musically entertained plants weighed an average of 40% more than the musically deprived ones.

In the early 1970s, Dorothy Retallack began a series of experiments comparing the effects of different types of music on marigolds and beans. She found that plants exposed to Haydn, Brahms, Beethoven, and Schubert gradually grew toward the speakers. Those “listening” to Led Zeppelin, Vanilla Fudge, and Jimi Hendrix leaned away. Even after she rotated their pots, the plants reacted in similar manner, reversing their growth angle in an attempt to either escape or embrace the music. She wondered if the negative reactions were caused by the heavy, percussive nature of the music. Selecting a familiar Spanish folk tune, she recorded one version with string ensemble and another with steel drums. The percussion version caused a ten-degree lean away from the source of sound. By leaning fifteen degrees toward the speaker when the string version was played, the plants showed a clear preference.

Other experiments followed throughout the early 1970s, testing the angle, rate, and size of growth in a variety of plants. Among European composers, the organ music of Bach proved to have the most profound effect, causing plants to lean thirty-five degrees toward the speaker. However, nothing compared to the classical sitar music of Indian performer Ravi Shankar. In one test, plants actually bent to a horizontal angle, trying to reach the speaker. Continuing to test a broad spectrum of music, Retallack and her team found that plants exposed to folk and country western music showed little or no difference compared to silent groups, and that the dissonant twentieth-century music of Schoenberg also caused no discernable effect. Results from tests with jazz proved the most complex: Although the plants grew taller and leaned toward the music, they also had scrawny roots and required significantly more water.

Information from:

Tompkins, Peter and Christopher Bird. *The Secret Life of Plants*. New York: Harper & Row, 1973. Print.

Name: _____

Date: _____

Source: Plants Respond to Music

- ☐ Composition is double-spaced.
- ☐ Dress-ups are marked with underline.
- ☐ Name is on paper as directed.
- ☐ Title is centered.
- ☐ Title repeats key words of final sentence.
- ☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline.

Dress-Ups (underlined)	I
who/which clause (or invisible)	
strong verb	
-ly adverb	
quality adjective	

Mechanics and Grammar (correct usage)	I
proper punctuation of quotations	
commas	

Banned Words:

Name: _____

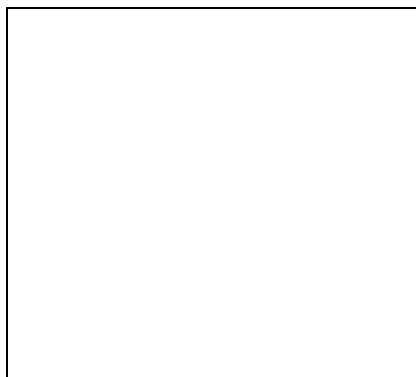
Date: _____

Source: Lecture

Stood at the podium (or desk) and gave the title and speaker's name.	
Spoke in complete sentences.	
Used clear pronunciation and proper intonation.	
Used planned gestures when speaking.	
Eyes up when speaking.	

“Writing from Pictures” Model

Key Point: Topic Sentence = Central Fact of Picture



I. Central Fact = _____

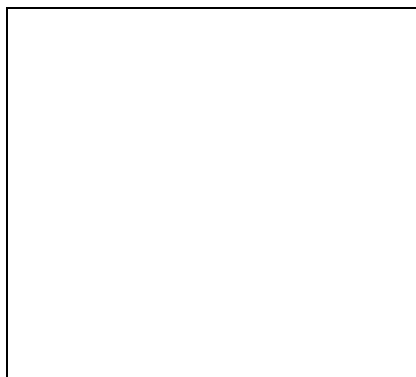
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Clincher = central fact _____



II. Central Fact = _____

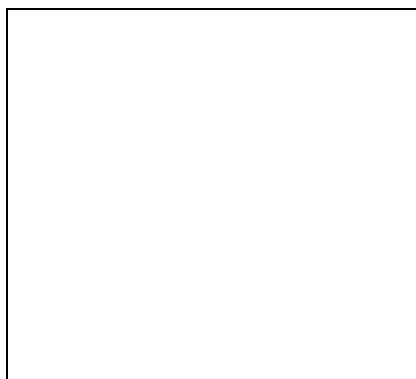
1. _____

2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Clincher = central fact _____



III. Central Fact = _____

1. _____

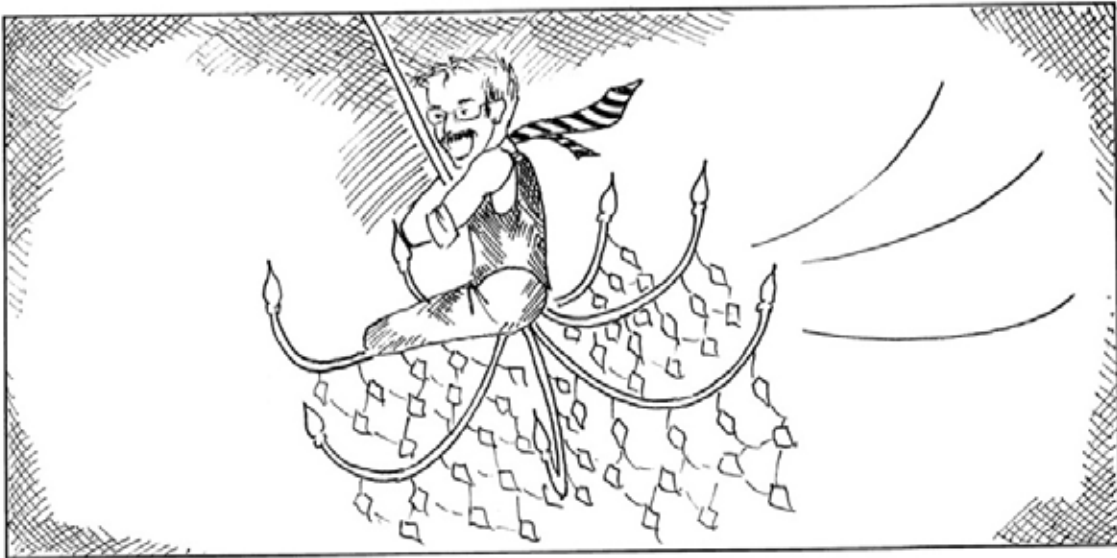
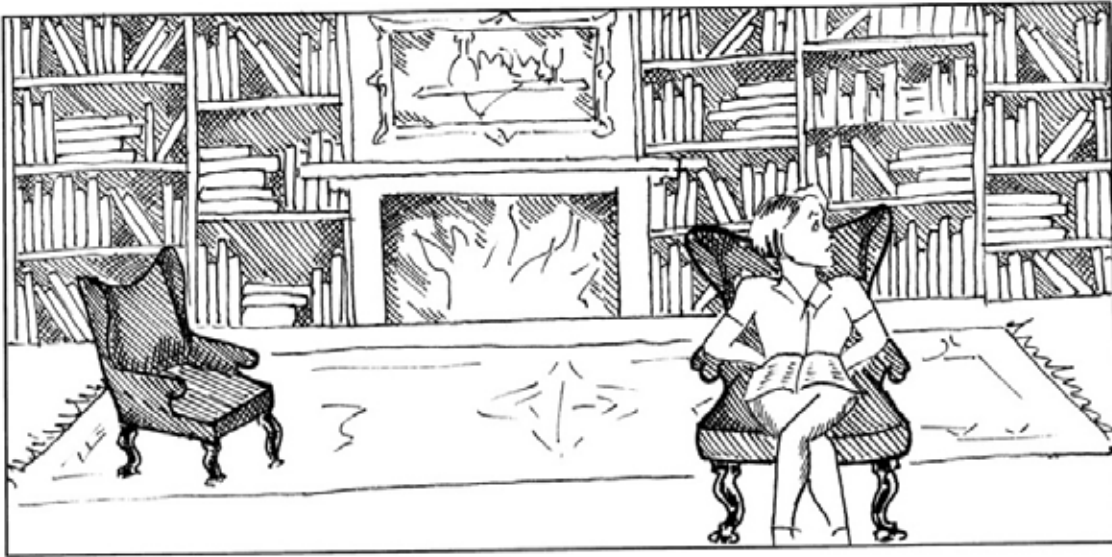
2. _____

3. _____

4. _____

Clincher = central fact _____

Ask questions to get details:
where? who? how? when? what? why? before? after? outside?



Name: _____ Date: _____

Source: _____

- ☐ Name is on paper as directed.
- ☐ Title is centered.
- ☐ Composition is double-spaced.
- ☐ Dress-ups are marked with underline.
- ☐ Sentence openers are numbered in margin or in brackets in front of sentence.
- ☐ Topic and clincher sentences repeat or reflect 2–3 key words (highlighted or **bold**).
- ☐ Title repeats key words of final sentence.
- ☐ Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline.

Dress-Ups (underlined)	I	II	III
who/which clause (or invisible)			
strong verb			
-ly adverb			
quality adjective			
www.asia.b clause			

Sentence Openers (marked in margin or use brackets)	I	II	III
❶ subject			
❷ prepositional			

Mechanics and Grammar (correct usage)	I	II	III
topic/clincher			
past-perfect tense			
quotes for conversation, if used			

Banned Words:

BARTON, Clara (1821-1912)

The founder of the American branch of the Red Cross was Clara Barton, a nurse who was sometimes called the “angel of the battlefield.”

Clara Barton was born on December 25, 1821, in Oxford, Mass. She was christened Clarissa Harlowe by her parents, Stephen and Sarah Barton. Clara was the youngest of seven children, separated by ten years from the next youngest Barton child. Although shy and small, she possessed courage and perseverance. When she was 11, she undertook the nursing of an invalid brother.

To temper Clara’s shyness, her mother gave her much responsibility. At 15 Clara became a teacher with her mother’s help. She taught school for 18 years. In Bordentown, N.J., she persuaded officials to set up a free public school under her direction. When the school proved successful, a male principal was appointed to replace her as head of the staff; Clara resigned her teaching position.

In 1854 she suffered the first of many periods of nervous exhaustion brought on by strenuous work. Later that year she was appointed a clerk in the Patent Office at Washington, D.C. At the outbreak of the Civil War, she learned that much suffering at the front was caused by the scarcity of supplies. Single-handedly she organized supply depots. Later she served as a nurse and in 1864 was appointed a superintendent of nurses. She often served near the line of fire. For four years after the war, she headed the government search for missing soldiers.

While in Europe for her health, Clara Barton studied the action of the Red Cross in the Franco-Prussian War. On her return home in 1872, she campaigned to organize a branch of the Red Cross in the United States. She succeeded in 1881. For 23 years she directed Red Cross work in every great disaster. She resigned in 1904. Clara Barton died April 12, 1912, in Glen Echo, MD.

Compton’s Interactive Encyclopedia. San Francisco: The Learning Company, Inc., 1998. CD-ROM.

Name: _____ Date: _____

Source: Clara Barton articles (five of them)

- | | |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Name is on paper as directed.
<input type="checkbox"/> Title is centered.
<input type="checkbox"/> Composition is double-spaced.
<input type="checkbox"/> Dress-ups are marked with underline.
<input type="checkbox"/> Sentence openers are numbered in margin or in brackets in front of sentence.
<input type="checkbox"/> Topic and clincher sentences repeat or reflect 2–3 key words (highlighted or bold).
<input type="checkbox"/> Title repeats key words of final sentence. | <input type="checkbox"/> At least two different kinds of footnotes included in the essay: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Integrated (use quote marks, less than three lines) • Inset (three or more lines, no quote marks) • Paraphrase (no quote marks) • Informational <input type="checkbox"/> Quote includes lead-in.
<input type="checkbox"/> Bibliography/Works Cited are properly formatted.
<input type="checkbox"/> Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline. |
|------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|---------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|

Dress-Ups (underlined)	II	III	IV
who/which clause (or invisible)			
strong verb			
-ly adverb			
quality adjective			
www.asia.b clause			

Sentence Openers (marked in margin or use brackets)	II	III	IV
❶ subject			
❷ prepositional			
❸ -ly adverb			
❹ “-ing” ,			
❺ clausal ,			
❻ V.S.S.			

Mechanics and Grammar (correct usage)	II	III	IV
topic/clincher			

Banned Words:

Persuasive Essay Topic Suggestions

Apple vs. PC
dogs vs. cats
caffeinated vs. decaf (soda or coffee)
gas vs. electric/hybrid car
in public restrooms: paper towels vs. air dryers
bike helmets
Lasik eye surgery: yes or no?
driving age
satellite vs. cable TV
organic vs. non-organic
compost
recycle
cellphone companies
inkjet vs. laser jet
public school vs. private vs. homeschool
vegetarian
Daylight Savings Time
daytime curfew
microwave
whole milk vs. fat free
dating vs. courtship
school uniforms
salt water vs. fresh water aquarium
DVD vs. Blu-ray

A great place to find some research on opposing viewpoints is your local library online database. Look for “Opposing Viewpoints Resource Center (Gale),” which gives articles on two sides of an issue for study and writing. If your library has a connection with them, it will be free to you.

Quotations and Footnotes

1. Information—comment
2. Paraphrase, no quotation marks, used for reference
3. Integrated -3 lines or less, quotation marks, used for reference
4. Inset - more than 3 lines, no quotation marks, used for reference

Name: _____ Date: _____

Write a five-paragraph persuasive essay.

- | | |
|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Name is on paper as directed. | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction includes attention getter. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Title is centered. | <input type="checkbox"/> Introduction makes question clear. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Composition is double-spaced. | <input type="checkbox"/> Uses at least one clincher starter (see list). |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Dress-ups are marked with underline. | <input type="checkbox"/> Title repeats key words of final sentence of conclusion. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Sentence openers are numbered in margin or in brackets in front of sentence. | <input type="checkbox"/> Conclusion discredits con/reaffirms pro. |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Decoration are marked with “dec” in margin or in <i>italics</i> . | Includes quotations (one each per essay): |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Topic and clincher sentences repeat or reflect 2–3 key words (highlighted or bold). | <input type="checkbox"/> Inset <input type="checkbox"/> Integrated |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Checklist on top, final draft, rough draft, key word outline. | <input type="checkbox"/> Paraphrased <input type="checkbox"/> Informational |
| | <input type="checkbox"/> Includes Works Cited. |

Dress-Ups (underlined)	I	II	III	IV	V
who/which clause (or invisible)					
strong verb (duals)					
-ly adverb (duals)					
quality adjective (duals)					
www.asia.b clause					

Sentence Openers (marked in margin or use brackets)	I	II	III	IV	V
❶ subject					
❷ prepositional					
❸ -ly adverb					
❹ “-ing” ,					
❺ clausal					
❻ V.S.S.					

Decorations (different one each ¶; “dec.” in margin)	I	II	III	IV	V
question, 3 S.S.S., conversation, quote, dramatic opening/closing, simile/metaphor, alliteration, triple					

Mechanics and Grammar (correct usage)	I	II	III	IV	V
topic/clinchier in body paragraphs only					
correct use of duals, if attempted					

Banned Words: