



PERSUASIVE ESSAY SCORING GUIDE

Contestant # _____

Requirements: Entrants will write a persuasive essay on a topic provided (50 minutes). Best handwriting and double-spacing is required.

Judging: Rate each criterion using the 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest) scale. Tally the points for a total score.

Criteria	1	2	3	4	5
Ideas	The author is just figuring out what to say. Paper lacks a central focus or main idea. Descriptions need fuller development.		Writing may grab attention here and there, but could use more concrete and interesting details. Topic could be narrowed for greater impact.		The paper is clear, focused, filled with relevant details. Writing maintains interest and engages the reader.
Organization	The paper has no direction or sense of beginning/ending. Needs some order.		Has a clear beginning, middle, end. Transitions and flow could be better. Ideas could be better integrated and connections clearer.		Introduction/beginning hooks reader. Ending is satisfying and insightful. Details/descriptions are presented in orderly fashion with strong transitions.
Voice	Writing lacks energy, feeling, and personal commitment to topic. No audience is apparent.		Writing is friendly and personable and author is comfortable with the topic, but no clear audience is established.		Clearly speaks to the reader in a unique style. Paper has personality. Author cares about the topic and writing rings with confidence.
Sentence Fluency	Sentences are confusing, incomplete or awkward and affect readability.		Sentences flow generally well with occasional fragments and/or incomplete thought.		Sentences show strong use of language and variety in structure. Understanding is enhanced by carefully structured phrases.
Word Choice	Vague or misused words cause fuzzy reading; trite use of vocabulary; obvious redundancy.		Key words carry the meaning; repetition establishes threads and/or clarifies. May use a few clichés or too many adjectives but words are appropriate for context and level of formality.		Original and creative use of vocabulary. Just the right word in the right place adds to appreciation of topic and images evoked; strong verbs set pace and energy to the writing.
Conventions	Needs much more careful editing; too many punctuation and spelling errors; poor paragraphing		Shows an adequate control of punctuation & paragraphing; may have a few spelling or grammatical errors.		Free of errors. Shows careful editing for correctness and usage.

TOTAL SCORE: _____