

Appendix D:

Eighth Grade Scored Sample Essays with Annotations from 2009 KWA

These pre-scored writing samples can be used to refresh training for scorers using the 6-TRAIT model. Annotations are provided that suggest the thinking and rationale that was used in determining a score for each trait and also suggestions for improvement that model the kind of feedback and instruction teachers might provide to their students on classroom assignments to help drive student revision. Additionally, the quick reference chart on page 135 also lists the 6-TRAIT scores for these essays.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #61

My Hero

I have a lot of friends, but none of them have the qualities like she does.. she can make me smile no matter what my mood is. She understands all my problems and that's why she's my hero. So I'm going to tell you about my best friend/sister.

The one person who knows me best is my best friend. She listens to my problems, & gives me good advice. She keeps me out of trouble. She always knows what to say to make me feel better. And she never criticizes me for the mistakes I make; instead she steers me on the right road to make them better. I can tell her **anything** & she won't tell anyone. She helps me out through the toughest times and she never backs down from what she thinks is right. She's the bravest person I know and she smiles no matter how much stuff she's going through, which makes her a strong person to me.

When I have problems, and I don't want to go to my parents or my siblings, I go to her. Late night/morning conversations about what's on our mind or what's bothering us. Even days when I'm smiling and joking around she still knows when I'm not happy. I can tell her my thoughts, fears and feelings without me feeling embarrassed afterwards.

She is the only friend of mine who I can trust 100%. We have so much fun when we hang out and I wouldn't trade her for no one. She can make me smile even on my worst days. And when we have a problem we come to each other.

She made me see that no one is going to take you serious unless you put your foot down and show them you mean business; And don't be afraid to show your true colors. Be yourself, even if others don't accept it. She also taught me that even though I do want to be straight up with people, sometimes it's best if you think about other people's feelings.

Overall, we've had our ups & downs but she's the one person who has changed my life. Having "confession time" got us closer than ever over the summer; she knows the real me that I don't like to show. I've made mistakes that were unforgivable but she put up with me anyway. And after everything we've been through together, I love her no matter what.

Thanks for being there (:

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 2.5 |
| Organization: | 3.5 |
| Voice: | 3 |
| Word Choice: | 3.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4 |
| Conventions: | 4 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 3.25 |
| Performance Category: | MS |

Scorer Commentary:

Only broad, general ideas are offered—more specifics are needed.

Does not appear to be a clear sense of purpose in this essay.

Content is predictable, little originality exists.

A few instances of strong word choice, e.g. *criticize*.

Transitions are occasionally present but more are needed.

Suggestions for Revision:

Craft a stronger conclusion for the essay.

Spell out *and* rather than using symbol.

Add additional detail and examples to support ideas.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #62

T.V. Teens

In the world of television many things are not the same as their real life counterparts. Things are often exaggerated to make them seem more interesting. It is no different with how T.V. portrays teenagers. T.V. often only shows stereotypes, they almost always act the same, and they all do crazy things.

Everyone knows about teen stereotypes, the band geeks, the jocks, and the popular crowds. Television shows how the nerds are always pushed around and the jocks all go around in school jacket and their all stuck up. T.V. always focuses on the classic valley girl and there always dumb yet popular. While there are groups such as these in real life, T.V. doesn't usually focus on what the majority of kids in school are normal people. It doesn't really show what life is like for the average teen. People usually think of the groups that stand out, which are the stereotypes, and don't notice the typical people just going about their life's school.

Also on television people always seem to act the same way. They rarely show the mood swings that teens usually go through. People in real life might be happy go lucky one second and all of a sudden they're really depressed. Sure T.V. shows the occasional argument but they never seem real to me. Thing is that a lot of fights are started by something small and completely pointless. Television should really make fights more realistic.

While it may be good for ratings the things that producers have the teens in their show do is pretty ridiculous. They get in all these crazy adventures that are just dumb. Really T.V. should tone things down sometimes. Your average run of the mill teenager wouldn't do anything like that. Their antics are exaggerated to the point that they don't seem remotely real anymore. All of the pranks and food fights, etc are just way over the top. Television needs to lower the teen's actions down to an almost realistic level.

T.V. teens are rarely real. There are the common stereotypes, they always act the same, and they do ridiculously crazy things. They get into fights and there is a lot of drama. There are nerds, there are the jocks, and there are the popular people. They will be around until the television dies and probably beyond.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 4 |
| Organization: | 4 |
| Voice: | 4 |
| Word Choice: | 4 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4.5 |
| Conventions: | 4 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 4.04 |
| Performance Category: | ES |

Scorer Commentary:

Nice attempt at a thesis statement; writing is clear, focused, and purposeful.

Nice tone; good voice.

Strong word choice allows for the reader to understand the main idea.

Some over-reliance on simple sentences at times.

Only a few convention errors.

Suggestions for Revision:

More support to strengthen ideas is needed. Be specific in trying to explain how TV should be more realistic.

Revise word choice and replace *thing* and *things*.

A few issues with subject-verb agreement and internal punctuation could be corrected.

Conclusion could be made stronger.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #63

“Love Sick”

How you ever heard a song that you thought about what the theme is?? Well I have had one of those moments. I wrote a song about love and how it hurts and how it comes to be. The song name is “love sick”. Many different songs don’t usually have the theme in the title. Some songs do. In my song you can tell what the theme is. In the lyrics you can understand why I wrote it & how I wrote it.

The song “love sick” was written when I had strong feelings for a person that I didn’t know if he had the same feelings for me too. The reason I wrote it was because it was a way for me to share my feelings for something. My feelings about the song are strong and powerful. The cause of the song is to tell people what love can do to a person, even if they don’t realize it. The person who inspired me to write the song was someone who was close to me during a summer.

This song is important to me; it tells me that I need to get over it. Like I say all the time “boo hoo cry me a river, build a bridge and get over it”. The song tells you things that you have thought about and why it happened. I came up with the title “love sick” because it reminds me how I was so foolish over one person. It made me realize that love is a scary but a beautiful thing. It can hurt you in a way that you couldn’t imagine. But at the same time, you only think about the bright side and you don’t see why things happen in love the way they do.

This song relates to my life in a way that I never thought it would. I looked at the song over and over again. Then I see, this song is something that I been through so much things in my life with love, it’s not even funny, love hurts, people just don’t see that. It relates to me by the lyrics I wrote. The lyrics are so strong when you hear it, it makes you think about what love life you had in the past and present. Also, the song relates to me because it had happened to me already. All these artists write and sing songs that didn’t really happen to them. This song does.

The whole point of this song is that when you love, you shouldn’t love so hard that it makes you think twice something’s you can’t take back. Love can be depressing at times but not all the time. One of the lyrics of my song is this “I can’t take this anymore. I need to get my feelings straight, but I can’t, because we used to kick it all the time back en la veraneo de 2008” This that its hard to get your feelings in order for one person. It’s hard to forget about them I hope this will prove some fact that love is not all fun and games. It’s a hard thing to deal with.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 3 |
| Organization: | 3 |
| Voice: | 3 |
| Word Choice: | 2.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 3 |
| Conventions: | 3 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 2.92 |
| Performance Category: | AS |

Scorer Commentary:

Confusing to read. Has a main idea but it is continually repeated in different ways.

Paragraphing is not effective—very random thinking, shows no purpose.

Introduction and conclusion are present and functional, but are not truly effective.

Little variation in sentence structure or length; often favors a particular pattern.

Suggestions for Revision:

Develop ideas and content and organize them more effectively (perhaps try developing an outline).

Include more explanation of the song itself to help the reader to relate to your ideas.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #64

What if you were given the chance to buy new technology for your school? My middle school class received that honor of choosing new technology. I chose technology items that will impact are school greatly, with good reasons too.

The best part of choosing this new technology is the impact that it will do. These technology items will greatly increase are state assessment scores resulting in less people in summer school. This technology may help you know the subject later in life, and the more you know the better. Most importantly this technology will help you get ready for high school, college, and your career. You always want to be prepared!

There is a lot of technology I thought of having in the classrooms and computer labs. For the classroom we should add a projector and screen for hands on learning. The projector could also connect to a laptop with speakers, for online use. It wouldn't be a bad idea for a DVD/VCR too, so you could show and watch videos. In the computer lab we should include a call light to let teachers know we need help, and maybe some education CD games. An extra item would be remotes that could signal answers to a port, so teachers could give pop quizzes effortlessly. We might also want a microphone for big classes.

Finally, I have great reasons for choosing the technology I did. The biggest reason was that the technology would help teachers teach faster and easier, and students would ask fewer questions. Students would better understand the subject, get better grades, and would be more interactive. Plus there would be fewer students after school for help.

What would it be like if you were selected to purchase new technology for your school? With excellent reasons, I chose technology objects that will greatly impact are school. I wonder if the school will agree with my choices.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 4 |
| Organization: | 4 |
| Voice: | 3.5 |
| Word Choice: | 3.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4 |
| Conventions: | 4 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 3.83 |
| Performance Category: | ES |

Scorer Commentary:

Well organized. Great introduction and topic sentences.

Good outline of ideas but more detail is needed, particularly in the third body paragraph.

Good example of a balance between interesting and dull language.

Transitions are awkward.

A few convention errors—confusion of *are* and *our*.

Suggestions for Revision:

Consider possibly re-paragraphing your ideas, creating one paragraph for each technology item and expanding on each to provide more support.

Strengthen conclusion.

Revise to make sure pronoun reference is clear and check internal punctuation.

Avoid repetition in word choice, i.e. *greatly* and *great*.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #65

THEME SONG

Have you ever liked a song and thought of letting it be your theme song? Music speaks to us from one reason to another it could be because you like the beat or just because you think it's the right one for you. Music is good for the brain and helps you to remember things too.

I have many favorite songs and stars that sing the songs like Take *Bow* – Rihanna, *Summertime*- Kidz next door, *Sexy Can I* and *Whatever* are the others I like. But my best song is Take Bow it plays a good part in my life. The beat is not why I like the song it's the words and her voice that's important to me. People say it's the beat that matters the most but it's not. I believe that you have to be able to sing and have a positive attitude in order to sing it.

The song is mostly a get over its over break-up song it's a helpful song when you need it like when Rihanna says "*but its over now go on and the bow*" its saying leave him and go on with your life it does not matter anymore its over now. There's more to life than having a boyfriend or this song could help you if you have a friend you can't hang around with or you had a fight with but you want to calm down and forget about it. This could help out a lot.

Many people say that their life is just one song playing over and over. Just because the song kind of means something to you or about you it does not mean that your life plays that song over. People act different and talk different which means we like different songs. *Take bow* is a song that helps heal a wounded heart and makes me feel good when I listen to it. Music can help make friends from all over the world it also can share inspiration to one another. Everybody learns from their mistakes and *Take bow* helps you learn not to choose that type of people or be that kind of person anymore. It's not hard to find a theme song for your life and don't listen to anyone when they say it's your theme song only you can decide that.

Music is everywhere and sharing it is good because you never know what you can get out of it. And in every song there's a story behind it and listening is the best way to share your beliefs and your way of life all artist express what they feel so if a song means something to you or it's what your life is let it be the theme song of your life.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 2.5 |
| Organization: | 2.5 |
| Voice: | 3 |
| Word Choice: | 2.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 2 |
| Conventions: | 2 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 2.50 |
| Performance Category: | AS |

Scorer Commentary:

The essay lacks a clear focus.

Good use of a question at the beginning to capture the reader's attention.

More examples are needed throughout to help the reader understand the meaning.

Serious problems with run-on sentences.

Suggestions for Revision:

Revise to eliminate repetition of ideas.

Strengthen word choice to help writing come to life.

Edit for run-on sentences and clarity.

Include thesis in opening paragraph.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #66

Music.....it's been around since before man can remember. All around the world people are intrigued on how music can have large or small effects in our lives. Some wish they could have a certain song play when they enter or exit a room or just have it play when they want it to.

If I could pick any of the billions of songs around the world as my theme song it would be "Wind" by Akeboshi. The rhythm tosses my feelings around inside my head and makes me feel different every time I listen to it. Each word is put together and sang just at the right moment like a well oiled machine. Any other person listening, of course, might think it's not much at all but to me it's special.

I first listened to it on a T.V. show called Naruto. From that moment it started to become my favorite song. I listened to it when I could. I would some times replay it in my head if I could remember the lyrics. Some people might disagree on my choice but that's just it, *my* choice.

In the chorus they say "Don't try to look so right, don't cry cause you're so right..." this gives me a.....happy kind of feeling. You know how something can give you that good feeling inside when you get a new car or like someone you meet.

Now..... I know this is reality and nothing like this will happen but its nice to think about. I hope I've changed some people's minds about this song. Now if only music could settle wars and other worldwide problems.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 3 |
| Organization: | 3 |
| Voice: | 3.5 |
| Word Choice: | 3.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4 |
| Conventions: | 4 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 3.33 |
| Performance Category: | MS |

Scorer Commentary:

Support for central ideas are lacking in this essay.

Good use of word choice, particularly the simile in the second paragraph; however, some words are too general, e.g. *some people*.

Good use of personification.

Some problems with internal punctuation.

Suggestions for Revision:

Expand content and be more specific regarding why exactly this is a favorite song.

Avoid overuse of the ellipsis.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #67

Qualities of a Hero

Heroes are a part of everyday life. They are all around us; soldiers, firefighters, policemen, and doctors are a few heroes. My hero though, is my dad. He is a soldier and has served in the army for six years. He is brave, kind, caring, and dedicated. Being in the army, he deployed very often, up to a year sometimes. He deployed four times. He has proven that anyone can be brave and that is why he is my hero.

He is smart too. Often, my mom tells me to go to him for help with math. We moved here, like many others, for him to go to school. Also, he knows more about the computer than my family, except for my uncle. It's really cool to have him for a dad. We played a Wii Nerf game last night and had a blast.

Over winter break, my dad, little brother and I played paintball with our cousins. We had a blast and my dad got to show off what he was trained for. He was always steadily advancing, while I usually stayed in the back providing cover. At one point, he got hit on the top of the head. (Ouch) On New Year's Eve we back went to our cousin's house and set off fireworks. (BAAM!).

Sometimes, he would come on our trampoline with my brother and me and we would wrestle. He even takes us fishing sometimes. It's always fun to have him around. He even took us to hockey and football games. (WHOO!). When he first deployed, I was so upset my mom had to get me with my guidance counselor at school. Lucky she didn't have to worry about my little brother getting upset; he was still too small to understand.

We even went up to his uncle's ranch to spend time with our cousins. Two years ago, my mom sneakily hid the fact that he was coming home for Christmas by saying we were going to our grandparents' house. I don't remember what I said, but my mom told me about it. I got really excited but kept it from my brother. He arrived two days late, but we didn't care. He has survived four deployments and is still on one piece and that makes me feel great.

He has even met former president George W. Bush during his second term in office. He has been in the army for maybe eighteen to nineteen years. He has lived in Hawaii, Florida (I came along), Georgia (hello little bro), North Carolina, and now here in Kansas. Even when he retired he will always be my hero and dad.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 3 |
| Organization: | 2.5 |
| Voice: | 3.5 |
| Word Choice: | 3 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4 |
| Conventions: | 4 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 3.13 |
| Performance Category: | MS |

Scorer Commentary:

Provides many details from experience.

Series of events could be better organized, currently appears random with a clear conclusion.

Secondary ideas overshadow main ideas.

Voice is strong and makes reader want to keep reading but lack of coherency interferes with that.

Suggestions for Revision:

Reorganize ideas and support central idea.

Strengthen the conclusion.

Increase the use of figurative language and incorporate onomatopoeia into the paper rather than parenthetically.

Use transitions more effectively to guide reader through ideas.

Revise sentence beginnings for fluency.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #68

Hero

I don't really have a hero. Or think of anybody like that, but if I had to choose a hero it would be my mom. She is a fun mom but when its time for her to work she gets the job done and that is why my mom is my hero.

My mother works very hard at what she does. My mom's job is very important. Mainly because people need her job in order to get many things done like weddings and ceremonies. My mom really loves her job it's like her home away from home. One of the reasons I think she loves it so much is because she is getting away from us by us I mean my siblings and me.

My mom does a lot of planning at her job. She plans birthdays, weddings, military balls, and other stuff along those lines. Her job is called conference center. She spends most of her time at her job on week days sometimes even on weekends. That's another reason why I call it her home away from home.

When my mom comes home she barely has any time to do what mothers do. She's very tired when she gets here. My mom's job requires a lot of skills such as organizing and decorating things along those lines sometimes I work with my mom but not a lot because I'm only fourteen.

My mom comes home our children who haven't seen her for along time. So there's going to be lots of talking going on. Talks about school wants, needs, and other things the kids and their moms talk about. She doesn't really look likes she listening most of the time but we know she is. I have two older sisters and one younger brother.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 3 |
| Organization: | 2.5 |
| Voice: | 3 |
| Word Choice: | 3 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 2.5 |
| Conventions: | 3 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 2.83 |
| Performance Category: | AS |

Scorer Commentary:

Elaboration needed, essay only offers superficial information.

Does not fully address readers' informational needs; several issues and/or questions are left hanging.

Main ideas might be better arranged.

Structure is beginning to take shape but is not yet functional.

Repetitive sentence beginnings.

Suggestions for Revision:

Develop ideas by supplying specific examples.

Strengthen voice and word choice by using more lively and engaging words throughout the essay.

Revise sentence beginnings for more variety to improve fluency.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #69

In My Life

“There are places I remember, in my life though some have changed”. This is the first line of the song *In My Life* by John Lennon and Paul McCartney. This song has become one of my all time favorites due to the fact that it is so truthful. I can relate to it and know how it feels to go through what the lyrics are saying. I would choose this song to be my theme song because the music is unique, and I can relate to the lyrics.

The Music is unique. I tend to go for the odder music. I listen to music kids my age have probably never heard about. When people hear what music I listen to, they tend to label me odd. Which I am! While the other kids are listening to rap, and Chris Brown, I’m listening to Billy Joel, and Paul Simon. *In My Life* has this slow calming music which is more background music than anything else. This is the kind of song that they would play during graduation and a high school reunion.

Honestly, once they start to sing, I don’t even listen to the music. But there are those first few chords. They are always there. You hear them and you think “oh hey, I love this song”. Those first few chords are what people listen for on the radio. I think that it’s like the phrase, “You want to make a good first impression”. Well the opening line, chords, music, whatever, are the first impression of a song. When you meet a person if they look nice, you will shake their hands, and want to get to know them. The first part of the song is that. Does it sound nice, or give me a headache? No? If you like it, or if it impresses you, you will keep listening.

I like the song because I can relate to the lyrics. The song is all about the people and things in your life that you have to leave behind, but will always remember. It’s about the memories that are sweet, and the ones that are more *bittersweet*. It’s about that one person who is there throughout your life. Whether they are on the sidelines, rooting for you as you go by, or the shoulder you cry on they are there. “In my life, I love you more”. The song was written by John Lennon, and sung by him and Paul McCartney. They give it a voice. I think that it is one of those songs, which no one ever hears but should.

Being military, we move around a lot. We never stay in one place. We are nomads. “They need you here”, then “they need you there”. Our lives are full of memories of places, people, good times, and bad times. There are always people who are coming and going in our lives, but are not permanent. Some of them are good, some are not. We always remember them though. Maybe not their faces, or names, but the effect they have on our lives.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 4 |
| Organization: | 4 |
| Voice: | 4 |
| Word Choice: | 3.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4 |
| Conventions: | 4 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 3.92 |
| Performance Category: | ES |

Scorer Commentary:

Follows thesis fairly well. Third paragraph seems out of place.

Could be supported with clearer details.

Rambles in places.

Voice is strong. Can really sense the writer’s personality.

Some repetitiveness in words and phrases.

This song talks about all those things, which never stay. Sometimes you wish they would, and sometimes you wish they wouldn't.

This song, I think is the perfect theme song. I can't think of a better one. It is unique, in its music, in its message. I think that anyone can relate to the lyrics. John Lennon and Paul McCartney did an amazing job. This song is perfect. It's my theme song!

Suggestions for Revision:

Use transitions to tie ideas together and build coherence.

Third paragraph needs to be re-worked.

Revise word choice to include more emotion.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #70

I search for many qualities in a Hero some may be big some maybe strong but these are the qualities I search for in a Hero! I look for strength in a hero both physically and mentally he has to be able to make a tough choice at times or even be tough. My hero has to be selfless by not always thinking of him/her self but for others like helping other people with everyday problems or just to be there when he/she is needed. A hero has to be brave because if a hero isn't brave then he/she is not really a hero, he/she has to volunteer for something that nobody else would do like a dangerous mission. The hero has to be caring and has to be gentle at some times not always tough he/she needs to play and have fun! A hero has to be loving too he/she needs to have time to spend with his family or at least try to make time for them.

My hero has to be forgiving about things that have happened to them or someone they care about. He or she learns to forgive people for what they have done. A hero has to be loyal to the people he knows or people he works with or for he also has to be loyal to who ever follows him if anybody does. The hero has to be dedicated to something he sets a goal to do or anything he wants to do or has to do. A hero also has to be merciful whether it is in a fight or in a game. A true hero has to show mercy to his opponent or enemy unless they had done something to scar him of her for the rest of they're life or somebody they know. A hero has to be generous. He/she needs to be nice to people they have to share and be good to all people and things.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 2.5 |
| Organization: | 1.5 |
| Voice: | 2 |
| Word Choice: | 3 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 1.5 |
| Conventions: | 2.5 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 2.17 |
| Performance Category: | AW |

Scorer Commentary:

Topic is identifiable but details are missing.

Several important questions and/or issues are left hanging.

Weak introduction; conclusion is missing.

Paragraphing appears random.

Demonstrates no understanding or awareness of audience.

Repetitive sentence beginnings.

Suggestions for Revision:

Get more specific, offer examples.

Add transitions to connect one idea with the next.

Edit for pronoun and antecedent agreement.

Vary sentence beginnings.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #71

Theme Song of My Life

The song I chose for my theme song is Believe by Fantasia. I chose it to be my theme song because the song is saying when you believe you can do anything, and when I listen to it it sort of tells me just to keep believing. That's something that you can have for the rest of your life no matter what. It doesn't even matter where you come from or even where you're at now. The part bbbbbb that says "There's a time for every soul to fly it's in the eyes of every child, and a heart of love can save the world and oh, we should never let it go" Is really the message part to me.

"Ever reached a rainbows end, and did you find a pot of gold" No I have not ever reached a rainbows end, and no I haven't found a pot of gold. But just the way it sounds just makes you want to try it just in case you can and that's what I feel about the stuff I know I can do...and some things that I know is just flat out impossible.

"Ever catch a shooting star and, tell me how high did you soar" I know you can't really catch a shooting star. But just imagine you really jumping up and catching one how would you feel? I know after that I would feel like I could do anything.

"Ever felt like you were dreaming just to find that you're awake and the magic that's around you can lift you up and guide you on your way" If you really yearn and dream for something it's in your soul not just your heart. It can start when you are young and stay with you for ever.

"You see I waited all my life for this moment to arise an finally I believe" Once you get to your dream that you thought was impossible you can look back and say wow it came true, and you might be saying well how do she know she's still a kid? Well I'll tell you this when I get to my dream then you will see how I know this. I know this because I believe. so my advise for you is if you really want if just go after I you may not get it the first time but just keep trying and always always always BELIEVE!!!

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 3 |
| Organization: | 2.5 |
| Voice: | 3 |
| Word Choice: | 2.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 3 |
| Conventions: | 3 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 2.79 |
| Performance Category: | AS |

Scorer Commentary:

Main idea is there but more thorough explanation/detail is needed at times.

Paragraphing could be improved to illustrate main ideas.

Some repetition in word choice.

Convention errors distract reader and prevent reader from enjoying the passion of the writing.

Suggestions for Revision:

Revise for organization—be sure each paragraph has a topic sentence that relates back to your main idea.

Have a peer read the paper out loud while the writer follows along, listening for mistakes in fluency and word choice.

Edit for correct usage and punctuation.

Weave lyrics into sentences rather than just including them at the beginning.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #72

My Mom

Have you ever had a hero? Someone that has been there for you or saved you from something that could later turn out to be something you wish hadn't happened? I do. My hero is my mom. She has been there for me through thick and thin and has a personality that some people love. She is one of the hardest working people I have ever met and she does it all just to give her family a roof over their heads and food on the table.

There have been many times when I needed someone to listen to my problems and help me get through some tough times. My mom is always the first to be there. She gives me advice on things that I would otherwise have no idea what to do. I know that there will be many more times where I will need advice and she will be the first person I talk to.

Many people love my mom for her personality. She is a nice, sweet, caring, loving mother. My mom goes out of her way to make her family and friends happy. Even though she can be nice she can also be strict. For example, if I don't do my chores I get all phone privileges taken away. She has a great sense of humor too, except for when she starts dancing. It's a little weird. Now don't get me wrong, even though my mom is crazy and dances weird she's also a hard worker.

Working hard is something my mom is great at. She will do anything to make her employees and customers satisfied. She works at bank on Main Street. Things were going great with her work until not too long ago she came home with some bad news. She was told that her bank was being shut down because there was already another bank not too far from her bank. She hasn't lost her job with bank of America but she was relocated about an hour away. We were on our way home from one of my basketball games when she asked my brother and I if we wanted to move. We both yelled "NO!" We have been going to our school practically our whole lives and aren't ready leave. My mom told us that we don't have to move but that we won't be able to see her during the week because she will be staying in a hotel. It's very hard on us to not see her throughout the week but I know it's harder on her. She's going out of her way to make us happy even though she may not be.

I hope to one day be like my mom. How she works hard to make everyone happy, her personality, and always being there for someone when they need her. I love my mom so much that I don't know what I would do without her. I hope that some day you too have someone in your life that is willing to go out of their way to make you happy.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 5 |
| Organization: | 4.5 |
| Voice: | 4.5 |
| Word Choice: | 4.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4.5 |
| Conventions: | 4.5 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 4.63 |
| Performance Category: | EX |

Scorer Commentary:

Excellent ideas and content. Ideas fit naturally where they are placed.

Writer's engagement is clear; however, language could be made more unique and descriptive.

Appears aware of an audience, but does not fully engage the audience.

Sentences read very smoothly.

Suggestions for Revision:

Word choice could be made more descriptive in places.

Voice could be strengthened to reveal more passion and personality of the writer.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #73

Many things describe me. If I could describe myself by music, I would choose “The Young Persons Guide to the Orchestra” by Benjamin Britten. This song has many changes in style and mood, which I think represent my personality. The different sections of the orchestra play a variation of the theme in different speeds, rhythms, and of course every instrument has a different sound. The song is about thirty minutes long and I think the song gives a shortened version of who I am, like, my character, personality, and of course the kind of music I like which is pretty obvious by just reading the name of the song. I think all the adjectives I use have described me at some point in my life and if you don’t know me, I hope this description of the song gives you an idea of how I’m like.

The orchestra starts by playing the main theme of the song which represents triumph. Low instruments play very soft. The woodwind section plays a quiet version of the theme, followed by the powerful brass section, then the beautiful strings. Percussion comes in with the timpani and then the rest of the percussion instruments follow. The whole orchestra restates the now familiar theme. There’s a brief transition with the harp and low instruments playing very soft.

Woodwinds start to play. The flutes and piccolos play a delicate and dainty variation of the theme, like birds flying. The oboes play a contemplative, sadder and slower interpretation at a lower tempo (speed). The clarinets answer playfully playing their lower sounds first and then they arise to their higher notes. The bassoons sound slightly pompous (like dancing hippos, perhaps?). All the woodwind instruments play simultaneously getting louder and louder.

Strings take their turn. The swirling violins interpret the theme as a waltz. The violas follow playing the theme romantically. Cellos play a rich version of the theme with a lot of feeling. The double basses show-off their pizzicato (plucked) and bowed sound. The woodwinds accompany the double basses with happy, playful comments. The harp plays loud and gradually getting softer changing the mood.

Brass section takes over. French Horns play a royal-like interpretation of the theme. Trumpets, lightly accompanied by snare drums play giving the song a military air and a more serious feeling. Trombones and tuba change the mood which is now dramatic, powerful. After a while you hear some percussion in the background. The brass section stops playing.

Percussion starts playing after a few second of silence. Timpani, bass drum and cymbals play lightly accompanied by

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 3 |
| Organization: | 2.5 |
| Voice: | 3.5 |
| Word Choice: | 4.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 4.5 |
| Conventions: | 4.5 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 3.46 |
| Performance Category: | MS |

Scorer Commentary:

Great ideas and content; however, the purpose of this paper is unclear. The introduction states that the writer will reveal how the song relates to him/her but then only examines the musical merits of the song itself.

Body paragraphs do not support the thesis.

Strong introduction captures reader’s interest.

Excellent word choice.

Good use of simile and alliteration in the third paragraph.

Strong fluency and use of conventions.

strings making the song danceable. Tambourine and triangle play the rhythm of the theme and snare drum and Chinese block join in. The xylophone plays really fast with a very soft and low sound in the background. Castanets and the gong play joined by the whip or slap-stick (two pieces of wood slapped together). The full percussion sections plays at the same time. There's some seconds of silence.

The next part of the song is called Fugue. The piccolos introduce a very fast and lively tune. The rest of the woodwind section, the flute, oboe, clarinets, and bassoon answer playfully. First violins play the new tune, succeeded by the second violins, violas, cellos and double basses with the woodwinds accompanying the very, very busy ensemble. The harp comes in very powerful and loud. French Horns, trumpets, trombones, and tubas play different variations of the new tune then the orchestra comes in. Percussion instruments join the fun. Brasses play the first theme very loud while woodwinds and strings play the new tune simultaneously. The rest of the orchestra comes in bringing the piece to a loud and exciting conclusion.

Suggestions for Revision:

Relate how this song is like you—be specific. For example, “oboes are contemplative,” when are you? Explain this so your reader can see how this song relates to you as a person.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #74

Qualities of a Hero

The hero I chose to write a report about is Superman. I have watched Superman since I was 5 years old. He has several abilities like flying, laser eyes, strength, and x-ray vision. He also has a weakness which is kryptonite. Superman was born a planet called Krypton. His parents brought him to earth to be safe from the war happening on Krypton at the time. He is now a grown man with whose alias is Clark Kent. He has been saving his city from crime like all heroes' do but some of his enemies get the best of him like Anti-Superman or Lex Luther. He also has a lot of allies such as Spiderman, Hulk, Ironman, Batman, Aqua Man, and Wonder Woman. Superman where's blue tights with a red cape the tights have a red diamond with a yellow "S" inside of it. Superman has helped me by keeping me occupied long enough to keep me out of trouble and harm. If Superman was real he would be a fun, smart, and friendly person.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 2.5 |
| Organization: | 2 |
| Voice: | 2.5 |
| Word Choice: | 2.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 2.5 |
| Conventions: | 3 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 2.42 |
| Performance Category: | AS |

Scorer Commentary:

Reads like an encyclopedia report.

Only very general information, little meaningful detail relevant to why he is a hero.

Very formulaic and repetitive sentences.

Suggestions for Revision:

Develop your ideas into paragraphs.

Vary sentence beginnings.

Use transition more effective to move among ideas.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #75

I am going to talk about what qualities my mom has that makes her a hero. Some of the things that make her a hero are her just being there for me. She can sometimes be hard on me and nice at other times. I am going to tell you how her qualities make her a hero.

The first quality that makes her a hero is her being there for me. It's like she is my best friend. If I get in trouble with my dad she defends me. My mom does the best she can to try to get me what I want or what I need for school or something. I tell her thank you from time to time because she does a lot for me. I haven't been getting my allowance but its okay because I have enough stuff. I love her dearly from the bottom of my heart.

My mom sometimes can be hard on me. The thing's she does to be hard on me is that she is always on my back about my grades. I try the best I can to keep my grades up so I don't have to deal with that problem. When I get in trouble for something I did, I get grounded for a month and it seems like years sometime's. Most the time when that happens I didn't do what she told me to do right away. An example is like when I don't do my chores when she tells me to do them. I understand why she does it but sometimes I don't. I think she grounds me is to show me to stay out of trouble, and take responsibility and do what I am supposed to.

She can also be nice the things she does to be nice is cook, take me places and hang out with me. My mom is not like others she cooks very nice meals to make sure we eat. If there is extra stuff left over she will ask if any one want some more. I tell her how much I liked the dinner and say thank you. On the weekends she always asks if I'm doing anything so she can go to the bank to get some money out for me if I need it. The other thing she does that is nice is takes me places like if I want to go to the mall we go to the mall and hang out for about two to three hours. Sometimes we just go driving around and have a conversation. We talk about mostly everything just like most very close friends.

Those are all the things that make my mom a hero. She has my back is there when I need her, she can be hard on me and she is nice. I love my mom very much she is my one and only hero.

6-TRAIT Scores:

| | |
|--------------------|-----|
| Ideas and Content: | 4 |
| Organization: | 3 |
| Voice: | 4 |
| Word Choice: | 2.5 |
| Sentence Fluency: | 3.5 |
| Conventions: | 3 |

Performance Levels:

| | |
|-----------------------|------|
| Composite Score: | 3.38 |
| Performance Category: | MS |

Scorer Commentary:

Good use of specific examples and supporting details.

Writer's voice is clear in the essay.

Paragraphing could be more effective.

Voice often retreats behind general, vague language.

Word choice lacks appeal and specificity.

Suggestions for Revision:

Strengthen introduction and conclusion.

Revise for stronger word choice.

Some repetitive language could be omitted.

QUICK REFERENCE SCORING CHART FOR APPENDIX D ESSAYS

| | Ideas and Content | Organization | Voice | Word Choice | Sentence Fluency | Conventions | Composite Score | Performance Category |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #61 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.5 | 4 | 4 | 3.25 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #62 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4.5 | 4 | 4.04 | ES |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #63 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 2.92 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #64 | 4 | 4 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 4 | 4 | 3.83 | ES |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #65 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3 | 2.5 | 2 | 2 | 2.50 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #66 | 3 | 3 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 4 | 4 | 3.33 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #67 | 3 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 3.13 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #68 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 2.83 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #69 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3.5 | 4 | 4 | 3.92 | ES |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #70 | 2.5 | 1.5 | 2 | 3 | 1.5 | 2.5 | 2.17 | AW |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #71 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3 | 2.79 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #72 | 5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.63 | EX |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #73 | 3 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 3.46 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #74 | 2.5 | 2 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3 | 2.42 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #75 | 4 | 3 | 4 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.38 | MS |

Performance Categories: AW = Academic Warning, AS = Approaches Standard, MS = Meets Standard, ES = Exceeds Standard, EX = Exemplary

Appendix E

Eighth Grade Practice Essays without Annotations from 2009 KWA

These practice essays can be used for calibration sessions in which groups of readers score and discuss these essays to ensure that scoring is accurate and consistent from one scorer to another. Readers can complete the annotation boxes to facilitate discussion and also model the kind of feedback and instruction that teachers might provide to their students on classroom assignments. Although annotating essays is **not** required on the Kansas Writing Assessment, it is suggested here as an effective training procedure. The quick reference chart on page 155 lists the 6-TRAIT scores for these essays.

Grade 8 Expository Essay #76

Naruto the ninja hero

Duh Da Duh Da! The qualities of a hero (or role model) that inspires you require many things. My hero is Naruto. A hero must be selfless, brave, and loyal; also there must be a reason why he's your hero.

First are the reasons why Naruto is my hero. One reason is because he is brave; he can do what he wants without fear. I want to be that brave but can't. Another reason is because he does things that are very social. I'm an unsocial person so I want to be social but can't. Next up is the reasons why Naruto is selfless.

Second are the reasons why Naruto is selfless. Naruto would risk his own life just to save something. He has saved many people and almost died half the time. If someone needed his help he'd be there. Finally the reasons why Naruto is brave.

These are the reasons to why Naruto is brave. Naruto can fight and solve problems with no worries. I worry on problems in every day life. Naruto won't give up until a problem or problems are solved. I usually give up on really complex problems.

So now I have explained why Naruto is my hero. The reasons for why he is my hero, he is selfless, and is brave. I hope this has informed you on my hero (or role model).

6-TRAIT Scores:

Ideas and Content:
Organization:
Voice:
Word Choice:
Sentence Fluency:
Conventions:

Performance Levels:

Composite Score:
Performance Category:

Scorer Commentary:

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #77

A Hero

When thinking about a hero most people are thinking about a comic book hero. There are regular people in life that can be hero's to. Doctors, cops, someone that just saved a kid from getting hit by a car, and more. Military children are more familiar with the army and soldiers being hero's. My dad is my hero for that exact reason and more.

My dad has been in the army for more than 15 years. He is in Iraq right now protecting are country in any way that he can. He has gotten a lot of injuries in the army but he wears them with pride like a victory. He is brave and loyal when it comes to this country and his duties. He is an honest man and never goes against the law. He is also smart when it comes to giving people advice. He always knows what to say and when to say it.

My dad is not afraid to stand up for what he believes in. He knows that it is his duty to do the right thing. He would lay down his life to save someone else that he might not even know. He became a soldier to protect innocent people from evil in this world and that is what he does every day. He is a good influence to anyone that needs him to be.

He has given a lot of good advice when I needed it. He always tells me to listen to everyone because they may talk a lot but they always have a point. When I'm not doing well in school he tells me to never give up and to try my best. The best advice he has ever given me is to leave your big sister alone when she is mad. He is a good person to ask advice from. He is a good person and would save everyone if he could.

My dad is a good man and an awesome solider. He protects people even if it means that he will get hurt in the process. When he gets deported he always stays in contact with the family. He knows what he has to do in Iraq or any place for that matter. He helps people every day in all different ways, whether it is through advice or saving them he is always there to help. He would risk his life to save someone else in a heartbeat.

When kids grow up they want to be teachers, doctors, scientists, and all different kinds of things. All jobs help people in some way. You don't even have to have a job to help someone. You could help someone cross the street. Help a lost child find his or her parents. Whatever you do the best reward in the end is knowing that you helped someone. All I know is tht my dad has taught me how to do great things. When I grow up I want to help as many people as I can.

6-TRAIT Scores:

Ideas and Content:
Organization:
Voice:
Word Choice:
Sentence Fluency:
Conventions:

Performance Levels:

Composite Score:
Performance Category:

Scorer Commentary:

My lifetime goal isn't completely clear to me yet. Everyone thinks I that they know what they want to be but when it comes down to it you really don't know. All you really know is what your main goals is why you think that. My main goal is to help people in any way possible. The reason is because it is the best thing that I could do with my life.

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #78

Hero's, they signify so much to kids who are reading about them in there basement at night in there favorite comic book. The same kids who dream about there favorite super hero's and wish that they were them. People sometimes forget about the hero's around them and only think about the ones on television. How blind they must be to not see that everyone around us is a hero to someone. What about the hero's like the firefighters of 9/11, the Pearl Harbor of our time? They died trying to save innocent lives just to lose there own. They are heroes, are they yours?

Hero's have many qualities, if you ask a little boy playing with wrestling figures he might say that the quality that he looks for in a hero is his strength. If you ask for a little girl playing with ballerina dolls she might say that beauty is the most important aspect of a super hero. It all depends on what the person is likes, and what they think makes a person special. But something that is particularly special about heroes is that they are usually the person that has the biggest impact on the person's life. Even if it is a character on someone's favorite show the character might show something totally unique that intrigues a person. The ever important thing to remember is that like time, heroes change. If you were to ask me eight years ago who my hero was, I probably would have said that it was one of the Rugrats. It's just, at that age; they had some of the traits I wanted, like courage and problem solving.

What's funny is, if someone would take a poll on who there hero was, a huge majority might say one of there parents. This is probably because parents raise kids to meet certain standards, they also preach to there kid the rights and wrongs about life, the ethics. These standards and morals are what kids usually look for in a hero, and most parents have these standards. Even growing up looking at your dad or mom and wishing that you were like them and spending every minute with them probably has a huge affect on the kid's life. When people look back on there life, who do they picture? Most likely, it is there parents. Everyone has memories about the people that raised them, do you?

For me the same principles apply, my father has made me who I am. He always seems to be able to teach me something new. He also has many qualities like honor and respect. The number one lesson he teaches me is to honor and respect the people around you, because that shows the true colors of someone. His strength is something that also puts him as a hero in my eyes, for strength is something that people can always rely on. There is always something else that people look at in there hero, there back round or there history. My dad has done so much in his

6-TRAIT Scores:

Ideas and Content:
Organization:
Voice:
Word Choice:
Sentence Fluency:
Conventions:

Performance Levels:

Composite Score:
Performance Category:

Scorer Commentary:

history. He is a role model for anybody that has to work to get somewhere in life, because everyday he is working to make his life and our families life's better.

From the moment him and my mom got married I knew everything was going to change for the better, because he was the stepdad that I always dreamed about. Just being around him made me think of my future, to see if I can even come close to be half of the man he is. Every lesson he tells me makes me try to improve to try to get better in his eyes. Without him in my life I wouldn't be half the person I am, and not near the person I would be. Thanks to him I have got chances that I would never have been able to even dream about. The moment that my parents got married, he was not my step father, he was the person that I would always call my dad.

As you see, the qualities that my dad has, has really impacted my life. My dad to me is what millions of other kids have with there parents, or maybe even there favorite super hero's. It doesn't matter who someone's hero is, as long as they promote good qualities. Now days more and more people are promoting horrible qualities, and it does have an affect to these young kids when they look up and see there hero do something bad, like doing drugs. They might perceive that it's alright for them to do drugs. All heroes have an affect, no matter what kind of affect they have. So lets hope, not only for those kids whose hero's have bad qualities, but for those kid's who's hero is that kid, because one bad quality in someone will teach someone else a bad quality. This domino affect is what will truly harm humanity. So, no matter what happens, lets all try to be better people. Especially for that little boy who reads comic books, because maybe you'll be his hero.

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #79

H. G wells

H.G WELLS is my my hero for any reasons .His writing makes me my mind wonder through the settings and situations he puts his characters through. Wells facinats me in how he actually puts you in the story. He literally puts pictures in your brain of men that create time machines to, giant machines controlled by 1aliens to take over our world. These make my mind wonder of possibilities.

H.G Wells is probably one of the world’s greatest writers of science fiction. For example in the “*time machine*” he manipulates the surroundings to give the story a feel of desperation on of the character being stranded in time. The other famous book he wrote was “*WAR OF THE WORLDS*”. This book made me actually wonder if there really is life on another planet other than. He is also my hero because of the words he uses to make you understand what is going on in the story. All of the reasons I listed are why I think H.G wells is the greatest

6-TRAIT Scores:

Ideas and Content:
Organization:
Voice:
Word Choice:
Sentence Fluency:
Conventions:

Performance Levels:

Composite Score:
Performance Category:

Scorer Commentary:

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #80

Television's portrayal of teenagers is both under- and overrated. Every show I've seen shows teens either a lot worse or a lot better than we really are. No, teens are not angels, but many are not horrendous beings either. We have our teen angst moments. The writers of the various TV shows take the bad behavior and portray it ten times worse.

One show that really irks me is Degrassi. I've never seen it, but I've seen commercials and it takes some real life situations and worsens them. High school students have their cliques and such, but Degrassi takes them and blends the qualities of each clique. Shows like these make some teens angry and it gives them wrong ideas. It basically tells us to go out and do that sort of stuff.

Other shows such as The Secret Life of the American Teenager show teens in a more real environment. The main character (played by Shailene Woodley) gets pregnant and has to deal with the father, who as a child was sexually abused. Many teens are in a situation that is similar, but different. Sadly, teens do get pregnant, but this show does not give the idea to go out and do that. At the end of each episode, one of the actors gives an announcement, like how to prevent teen pregnancy and numbers to abuse hotlines.

Many other television shows portray teens as goody-goody angels. I bet most parents would kill for a teenager like that. Shows like Hannah Montana, What I Like About You, and That's So Raven, show teens as perfect, when honestly, we're far from perfection. Teens should be shown as most really are.

Most shows are fun to watch, as the teens act hilarious in most cases. Some writers do a great job at portraying teens. Others should follow their examples and stick to reality.

6-TRAIT Scores:

Ideas and Content:
Organization:
Voice:
Word Choice:
Sentence Fluency:
Conventions:

Performance Levels:

Composite Score:
Performance Category:

Scorer Commentary:

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #81

What are qualities of a hero? What makes a hero? Who is your hero? Why is this person your hero? Do others think of you as a hero? My hero is my grandma. She's responsible, caring and generous. Are these qualities you would look for?

These are qualities I look for is someone who helps others. They don't care for themselves because others are more important. They don't need to be asked to help others because they do it anyway. Hero's are caring, there helpful, trustworthy, there always generous, they are responsible. People think heroes have to have a power that's not true.

I think my grandma has all these qualities. She's caring, helpful, generous and so much more. My hero needs to have some of these qualities. But my grandma has all of them. That's why she's my hero. She's always there when I need her. She never gets mad at me for telling her how I feel. If my grandma wasn't there for me I wouldn't be the way I am now!

I try to be like my grandma responsible, caring and all that. I hope that one day I'll be like my grandma. My sister looks up to me. I know this because she wants to be around me all the time. She follows me around, dresses like me. I think it's cool though. I don't know what I do but she looks up to me.

In conclusion, heroes are people that are caring, nice, helpful, generous, trustworthy and responsible. They can be anyone not just people with powers. You determine who your hero is. Someone can think your there hero. So keep up what your doing .So what kind of qualities do you look for?

6-TRAIT Scores:

Ideas and Content:
Organization:
Voice:
Word Choice:
Sentence Fluency:
Conventions:

Performance Levels:

Composite Score:
Performance Category:

Scorer Commentary:

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #82

My theme song is called My Struggle. This is my theme song because it explains me. I hustle everyday trying to make money and get rich. In school I make good grades and stay out of trouble. I play sports to help me in the feature like right now I'm playing basketball. I also struggle with finding me a job because I need the money to help with bills around the house. My life is also a struggle because I only live with my daddy and he is paying all the bills. The things I do to help my daddy is clean the house and cook for the both of us. I always struggle with haters. People hate on me for no reason they just see a good looking black boy trying to make his life better but they just push me back down so they can have company.

Haters also stand in my way of getting an education by talking mess or picking fights with me because they know I'm going to fight back. When it comes to sports I feel good but I know my daddy is mad because he wants me to get a job, but I can't do that because my life is based on sports right now. Another thing when I hustle I only make enough for myself so I can buy me food and clothes and an little extra to spend to have an good time on weekends.

The main part of the song is "You Don't Know My struggle So You Can't Feel Hustle". This song also motivates me so I can do what I do to survive this world. It also reminds me of how my daddy lives and how he makes his money. This song even encourages me to be like my daddy and the artist Lil Boosie. When I wake up in the morning I think of what they would and then follow in their foot steps. I know my life is getting better so I don't think negative. I just do me and live my life.

This morning Feb.4, 2009 I felt hyper because I have a game. I'm hoping it would go good because I use to struggle with basketball. Now I'm tight with it. I'm like the star of the team, but when it comes to getting a job it fails. Getting a job is hard for me. I tried like every place a can but none of them hired me. The best I got to a job is cutting grass washing cars. I really do make enough for myself but it's all good. I'm still on top of my game.

In this song Boosie say he has a roll model and so do I. my roll model is my daddy. I look after my daddy because he always knows what to do. He never fights nobody or harms them. He said hustling, struggling and family is the only thing and his life. So that's the only thing in my life to. I know I stay in a lot of trouble but I do it because I have haters. The old saying is "If YouDon't Got Nobody Hating on You Then You Aint Doing Nothing". I know my life is a struggle but I enjoy every minute of it.

6-TRAIT Scores:

Ideas and Content:
Organization:
Voice:
Word Choice:
Sentence Fluency:
Conventions:

Performance Levels:

Composite Score:
Performance Category:

Scorer Commentary:

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #83

“MY Portrayal of Teens on TV”

What makes the teens on television seem so realistic is in my opinion the DRAMA that can get out of control!! The love that doesn't last. The sad departure of a loved one and the relationship between friends that slowly drifts away!!! In television shows such as “The Secret Life of the American Teenager” and “Degrassi (Da-grass-e)” you see and can get a good look at things such as teenage pregnancy's, loved ones passing and etc. Though it's not just the drama that makes actors seem so realistic, but the emotion they give off while portraying their character!!

Realistic drama seen in such television shows are teenage pregnancies. A teenage girl gets pregnant and the male involved isn't ready for the responsibility of a child. So the young girl is left with a child and still has the pressure on her to tell her parents. Statistics state that teen pregnancies are very high which I believe some shows portray. So on shows that show young teenage girl's pregnant lets other girls know that having the responsibility of a child isn't all it's cut out to be. In a song called “Runaway Love” they take you to a girl who is pregnant as a teen and has to tell her mother, but can't and runs away from home just like in real except sometimes the girl doesn't run away she has abortion.

Teenagers who may be an only child or have stepparents tend to have more on their minds for example family problems. Family problems may be that a young teen's parents are getting divorced after being together for so long. A very popular problem can be that there is someone in the family who has a very bad medical condition. In most situations teens go through a time of depression because a relative has a serious medical condition such as cancer or maybe lupus. In a book called “**Blood is thicker**” they tell of a teenage boy whose father has cancer and how it affects him dramatically. Many of these problems teens face everyday.

Another realistic as well as popular on teen shows are relationships between friends and the love that can follow. The issue that is so popular mostly evolves around girls more than boys. It all starts with two girls who are best friends liking the same boy. One friend picks up the guts to ask him out and gets turned down, but her friend doesn't. That causes hostility between the friends and uncomforness between the girl's friend and the boy. On television they show ways to handle the problem in a mature way. They also show things that might or could happen when facing such a problem.

Shows also show how to handle loving someone. They might show two best friends a boy and a girl falling in love and

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the downfalls and good parts to it. Some downfalls maybe uncomfortness towards the rest of their friends. Some good parts maybe is that the teens know each other very well. On some shows they give a visual picture of how being best friends and liking each other can turn out! For example it may show how awkward it can be talking to your friend once you start liking him.

Very serious and emotional situations they may also show on teen related shows are the sad deaths of loved ones. This is very popular because lots of kids have aging grandparents with horrible medical conditions. The death of a loved one can cause serious trauma and heartache to family members. Some trauma can be towards grandchildren who had very strong relationships with that person. Some heartache may be to the spouse of that person or maybe that person's child. The death of a spouse can be very dramatic because then the widow or widower can try to kill themselves or die from depression.

In many shows they show when someone dies you can't hold on to them forever sooner or later they have to leave you. So in closing I have to say that the more realistic a show involving real teen situations the better. The better because it can help people actually going through those situations ideas on how to handle and react in that situation. So if their realistic enough they can actually teach teens instead just entertain them. Teens need to know how to handle these situations and that they aren't alone because people portraying what their going through know about that sort of problem. It makes some teens feel comfortable.

Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #84

My hero is Spiderman. Spiderman is a student too. He has to maintain his hero life and collage life but he has to keep his super hero life a secret. He is my hero because he save's people lives. His traits are strong, kind, Smart and selfless.

He is always putting other people lives before his. He is smart and solves his own problems. When I hear the word hero I think of someone smart and caring.

Even though he is a super hero he doesn't want glory all he wants is people to have safe lives. He knows right from wrong.

When I grow up to be older I want to be like that I know I can't save people but I could be smart. He also can maintain his hero life and his collage life. I would want to control my daily life and my collage life when I'm older and do the right things. He respects his elders and is loyal to them.

Every kid needs to be respectful o there elders. Spiderman keeps up his grade when he is not stressed and is a good student. I would do my best in collage so I could get a good education and job. He never is talking in class always paying attention. That is why Spiderman is my hero. The conclusion of this is to inform readers why Spiderman is my hero.

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Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #85

Theme Song of My Life

Music has been heard around the world in so many different ways ever since man has walked the Earth. Each culture influences different types of music. In Mexico many people listen to salsa music while here in the United States we listen to rap, hip-hop, rock, or country music.

Ever since I was a little kid I loved listening to music that made me want to sing or dance. Now the music I like to listen to is songs with really good lyrics and a fun beat. Normally I listen to rap, hiphop or pop music but songs like *Stand* by Rascal Flatts are the kinds of songs I love, too.

Rascal Flatts is a very famous singer. He sings countless numbers of songs that have to do with everyday life. One of my favorite songs by Rascal Flatts is *Stand*. In this song he is talking about how some things might not be fair. These things push us down in life but we can't stay down forever. WE have to stand back up again. The main verse of this song is "Cause when push comes to shove, you taste what you're made of. You might bend till you break, cause it's all you can take. On your knees you look up decide you've had enough. You get mad, you get strong, wipe you hands, shake it off. Then you stand.

In each part of the world everybody listens to different music. Each type of music speaks to them in its own way. Music is a huge part of my life because when I am sad music helps me escape into a world of happiness. When Rascal Flatts sings this song it makes me realize that each time you fall it makes you stronger.

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Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #86

In the Secret Life of The American Teenager you made Amy and everyone else in the show seem so real. It just amazed me on how real she seems or is. Amy goes through the same things that high schoolers do. They do things they aren't supposed to do and make wrong choices. But I guess that's what high school is all about, learning from your mistakes.

In the show Amy your average 15 year old, band geek, strait A student..... who makes a wrong choice at band camp, (And with the hottest guy in school, Ricky). And yea you guessed it..... She got pregnant. And now Amy goes to school trying to find someone who actually cares for her, and she finds Ben. So Ben and Amy start dating and they tell each other they love one another so then they want to get married. Just think about it for a minute; when you were/are in high school did you want to get married to someone you loved?

Now what would you do if you found out you were pregnant and about to get married to someone that isn't the father of your child? You would do what anyone in that situation would do, think of your choices. So Amy decided she wants to give her baby up for adoption (smart choice). Now here is the problem, how is she going to handle Ben and Ricky and the baby all at once. With the symptoms of her pregnancy showing Amy is forced to tell her parents, and like any teenager parents often tend to have arguments but Amy's were going to get a divorce. So what is a girl to do? Hide it from everyone? Amy wants to pretend like its not happening but it is. So when Amy tells her parents what happens? You guessed it again, they get in a fight about it. Now Amy has to decide how to handle EVERYTHING.

Amy just seems so real it crazy if I wouldn't of known it was a show I could easily said it was a documentary. With all the drama of high school put into one show. And not just Amy but everyone and everything in the show seems real. The problems on the show and problems in real life are about the same. It all seems just so real I cant believe it.

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Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #87

My Dad

“live army stonge”.I know that my hero is special to me because I choose him to be. My hero is and will always be my dad. He is my hero because he’s done a whole bunch for me and my family. My dad has sacrificed a lot for my family and me. Without my dad I would have nothing to look forward to in life.

First off, my dad is my hero because of the things he taught me. He taught me what to do and how to do them. My dad has disciplined me to do the right things in life. He didn’t spoil me, he made me act right around important people I will meet like a manager. He’s helped me out when I needed him in school or with sports. I wouldn’t act the same around people and school teacher if my dad didn’t teach me right.

Second, my dad has to take a lot of things out his life because he’s going to Iraq. My dad is only going to Iraq to let my brothers finish high school, but he isn’t going to be able to see my oldest brother graduate. Also by going to Iraq he is putting a big impact to my sister. For instance, my sister is back talking my mother, and calling me cusswords. (She’s only ten years old) I am okay with him going to Iraq because I know he will come back. He is only going to Iraq to be a Deputy commander of administration of a hospital over there.

Last but not least, my dad is very special to my family and me. He has given us a head start in how our life could turn out. My dad is my hero because he has helped me in life and has helped this country. He has made it hard for my family and me, but serving our country is worth it in the end.

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Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #88

Theme Song of My Life

Do you have a favorite song? Does this song feel like it describes you? If so, it's probably the theme song of your life.

My theme song is sung by my favorite singer. He also has a skating brand. (Emerica)

His name is Eminem. His song is called "The Way I Am".

I don't know if you've heard this song before, so I'm going to tell you what it's about. In this song he is telling everybody how he acts and no matter what you call him, he'll always be the same.

This is my theme song because I am how I am no matter what anybody says. A lot of people say I need to get a haircut but I don't care.

When people talk about me, I don't care because I probably talk about them. The only difference is they care what I say about them. So while you're reading this, and you think I'm an idiot, just know that I don't care.

I love this song, so that's why I wrote this paper. I would choose this one over any other song on the world.

"That's just the way I am" is part of the song and it's all of my life.

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Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #89

Qualities of a Hero

Think of all the characters the modern society associate with the word hero. Spiderman, Batman, and Wonder Woman. Are these fictional characters *really* heroes because they have all kind of superpowers? Or are the real heroes just the average humans that no one seems to notice? I think they are. Parents, siblings, military members, fire fighters, and police are some of the most neglected heroes of our world.

I think fire fighters display some of the best heroic qualities. That's why they are my heroes. A fire fighter will respond to any call, no matter what the weather or time of day. They risk their lives every day and can never be sure if they will return home. A fire fighter is trained never to leave anyone behind. Firemen are disciplines, brave, and loyal.

When the siren in the station rings, it doesn't matter what they're doing, fire fighters are faithful to respond quickly. Even if it's the middle of the night, they are up and racing to the scene in a matter of minutes. They are trained to do their job correctly and without flaws. Whether it is snowing and cold or hot and humid, expectations are the same. Their capability and endurance is some of the greatest among heroes.

Fire fighters endanger themselves with the possibility of injury or death every time they're on call. Around 100 fire fighters die each year while at work. When they go into burning buildings, they jeopardize their safety and well being. They are some of the bravest heroes on Earth and will risk their lives to save another's. A fireman can never assume he or she will return home to their family and friends. This goes to show how boldness and courage fire fighters' posses.

One of the most important reasons fire fighters are true heroes, is their loyalty. When a member of the crew is lost, it isn't just a single person's defeat. All the other colleagues mourn. In an emergency, firemen will go back into danger to retrieve a partner. The firemen's motto is 'leave no man behind'.

These are some of the reasons I admire fire fighters so much. They're loyal, disciplines, and extremely brave. They risk all they have to help others. I don't think you have to be famous and well known or have powers to be a hero. The genuine hero's are those who don't boast their skills. They use them to assist those who need them. That's why I think fire fighters are real heroes.

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Suggestions for Revision:

Grade 8 Expository Essay #90

Television's Teenagers

Teenagers, also known as the trouble makers. Teenagers got this name because some teenagers usually get into a lot of trouble. Most people got this name from the television. A lot of people like to watch television, so they watch a lot of shows and most of them have teenagers that are getting arrested, selling drugs, killing, or even getting pregnant at a young age. Also some people are learning to do these things off of the T.V. or it makes the parents think that all of the teenagers are like the ones shown on T.V. so it makes some parents over protective and most parents do not give there teenagers the freedom that teenagers need.

For example there is a show called the outsiders. And in the movie there are school jocks that get all of the girls and have parties and sneak beer and get drunk. Then there are the greasers, they are in a gang that has knives or weapons. They flirt with the jocks girls and end up getting into fights. And they also do illegal drugs and get arrested. The producers of the outsiders make two characters run away. So they are found by the jocks and get into a fight and one of the characters pulls out a knife and kills the jocks. Then the two greasers run away and hide and change there identity. So that is one way that or movie that tells people that teenagers are the ones that cause the most trouble around the towns and neighborhoods.

There is also a T.V. show called Home Improvement. It usually is a good and funny show to watch, but on one of the shows the oldest son is sneaking marijuana in the house and hiding it and his parents the bag and got in a lot of trouble. Also there youngest son was a nerd one day and got a girl friend and got dumped and turned Goth which usually means that they are not responsible. The parents usually say that kids learn all of the bad things off of TV. Which is probably true, but adults learn as much things as teens do. Parents make as much as trouble teens.

Parents learn and every one learns from TV. And it needs to stop. TV. Needs to make teenagers look good if they are going to make teenagers look bad to. Some teenagers are bad, but most are good and helpful. Making teenagers looking bad needs to stop. Teenagers need freedom and because of television teenagers have not been getting there freedom. So television is a trader to teenagers.

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QUICK REFERENCE SCORING CHART APPENDIX E ESSAYS

| | Ideas and Content | Organization | Voice | Word Choice | Sentence Fluency | Conventions | Composite Score | Performance Category |
|------------------------------|-------------------|--------------|-------|-------------|------------------|-------------|-----------------|----------------------|
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #76 | 3 | 2.5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 2.67 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #77 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3.5 | 3.04 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #78 | 4 | 4.5 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 3 | 4.04 | ES |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #79 | 2 | 2 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 2.5 | 2 | 2.38 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #80 | 3.5 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3 | 3.5 | 3.17 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #81 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2 | 2.5 | 3 | 2.13 | AW |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #82 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 4 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.71 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #83 | 3 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 3.83 | ES |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #84 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 2 | 3 | 3 | 2.5 | 2.54 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #85 | 3.5 | 4 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 4.5 | 4.5 | 3.79 | ES |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #86 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.5 | 2.5 | 3.5 | 3.5 | 3.21 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #87 | 3.5 | 3 | 4 | 3 | 3.5 | 3 | 3.33 | MS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #88 | 2.5 | 2.5 | 3 | 2.5 | 3 | 3.5 | 2.71 | AS |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #89 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4 | 4.00 | ES |
| Grade 8 Expository Essay #90 | 3 | 3 | 4 | 3.5 | 2 | 1.5 | 3.04 | MS |

Performance Categories: AW = Academic Warning, AS = Approaches Standard, MS = Meets Standard, ES = Exceeds Standard, EX = Exemplary