

## **Gorman Learning Center Writing Program Grade 10**

Before responding to any of the prompts, please read the Submission Guidelines for Students, available online under the Writing Program link on the GLC homepage. Each writing prompt has a code. For example, the code for the first expository prompt is E12A. Please record the proper code on your essay to identify the chosen prompt. The top corner of the essay should include the following information:

Student Name

Teacher (IST) Name

Date

Grade Level

Prompt Code

All submissions should be typed, double-spaced, in 12-point Times New Roman font.

### **Self-assessment**

**S10A:** *Write a reflection on your writing.*

Consider the Portfolio that you completed in the spring. Carefully read over the Evaluator Narrative that you received back from the Writing Program. Keeping the evaluator's letter in mind, write a reflection of at least 500 words on your writing. Describe your writing process—the steps you go through from start to finish—to transform ideas into a polished final draft. Describe your strengths as a writer and explain how those strengths enable you to write effectively. Also describe your weaknesses as a writer, why these weaknesses exist, and what you can do to improve on them (avoid discussion of mechanical errors such as spelling and punctuation, focusing instead on global aspects of the essay such as creating an effective thesis or developing ideas). Describe your revision process, the methods you use when revising; either include an example of a situation in which revision contributed to making a more effective final draft, or speculate on how your revision process might improve. Lastly, describe what you do to avoid past problems or frustrations you have had with writing; address problems or frustrations such as getting started, procrastination, fulfilling an essay assignment, following through with a thesis, developing ideas, concluding, researching and avoiding plagiarism, or some other facet of writing that concerns you.

### **One-Draft Writing** (1 single-sitting essay)

A One-Draft Writing should be submitted in the first or second submission period (before the state-test occurs).

In tenth grade, California requires that you complete a writing test in the spring. Therefore, this prompt is practice for your test. You will be asked to write in one

of five modes (biographical narrative, expository, response to literature, persuasive, or business letter). You will respond to the prompt in one sitting. You will not see the actual prompt until you sit down to write the essay. Please arrange with your teacher to do the one-draft practice prompt.

You are required to complete one one-draft prompt; however, you are encouraged to submit up to five (one for each mode you may encounter on the test).

### **Expository Writing (5 total)**

**E10A:** *Write about the qualities of your favorite song or film.* Choose your favorite song or film, and then write an essay of at least 750 words in which you describe the song or film, what you like about it, and what sets it apart from others. Summarize the song or film with enough detail that readers of your paper unfamiliar with it will be able to understand your discussion, and be sure also to identify the title of it early on in the essay. Explain what makes this your favorite song or film, and describe its significant qualities or characteristics.

**E10B:** *Write a composition that examines your relationship with a particular person of your choice who is not a family member.* In an essay of at least 750 words, discuss a specific person you know, explaining whether that person is a good or bad friend, good or bad role model, or somewhere in between good or bad. Explain why this person is or is not important to you and why you do or do not value this person. Also, consider whether the type of friendship or companionship that this person offers you now will still be useful for you later in life. Consider whether the meaning of friendship or companionship changes as people age.

**E10C:** *Write a composition that analyzes either a children's book or a comic book, treating the one of your choice as if it were a serious piece of literature.* Choose from and describe several of the following: setting, point of view, characters, diction, images and/or symbols, or theme. In an essay of at least 750 words, explain the lessons about life that either the children's or comic book intends to teach readers. Determine whether this message is any more or less powerful given the form or genre. If the book includes illustrations, describe the ways these contribute to or distract from the book's message.

**E10D:** *Write a composition about your favorite book that was not assigned in school.* In an essay of at least 1000 words, discuss a book you've read that wasn't assigned, explaining why it is one of your favorite books. Summarize enough so that readers unfamiliar with the book will be able to follow your discussion, and discuss fully what about the book qualifies it as one of your favorites. Explain whether you believe other people should read this book, and if so, who?

**E10E:** *Write a composition that compares and contrasts different types of school systems.* (To respond to this prompt effectively, you should have experience in more than one type of school system; if not, it is recommended that you do not respond to this prompt.) If you have experience in more than one type of school system, write an essay that compares and contrasts at least two types of school systems, whether public, private, charter, or home-school. In an essay of at least 750 words, discuss the similarities and differences you witnessed and experienced between the two types of schooling. Describe advantages and disadvantages of the different educational settings, explaining which in your experience is more conducive to learning. Also discuss other advantages and disadvantages of both. Be sure to identify what type of school system is best for you, supporting your assertions with evidence and reasons.

**Narrative (4 total)**

**N10A:** *Write a narrative piece that takes place in your future.* Check the calendar and your watch, and imagine your world at the same date and time but exactly five years into the future. Think of a specific place and activity for you to be doing at this point in the future. Write a narrative piece of at least 750 words in which you create a day or even a moment in a day exactly five years from now. Describe where you are and what you are doing with specific details so that the reader will be able to visualize your future as well as you do. Let no boundaries stop you from imagining your future. Tell a story that will express your hopes and dreams for the future.

**N10B:** *Write a narrative piece in which you are a fictional character for a day.* Choose a character from a novel you have read whom you would like to be for a day. Write a narrative piece of at least 750 words in which you describe that day, being sure early on to identify the character's name and the novel's author and title. Use sensory language that appeals to sight or smell so that readers can virtually experience the setting, and also use language that will express the thoughts, feelings, and emotions you think you would have as that character. Consider the character's dilemma(s) in context of the novel. Reflect on what you think you would learn from the experience of being this character for a day.

**N10C:** *Write a composition that reflects on being a person who has lost one of his or her senses.* Reflect on your various senses—sight, smell, taste, touch, and hearing—and then choose one which you would lose for the purpose of responding to this prompt. In at least 750 words, write a narrative in which you reflect on how your life would be different if you had lost one of your senses. Describe the sense and what it provides you, and then describe what your life would be like without that sense. Discuss how your interactions with people you know and don't know would or would not change, and reflect on whether you believe people would treat you any differently without that one sense. Describe

ways that your day-to-day life would differ without that sense. Reflect on the value of that sense to you.

**N10D:** *Write a composition that reflects on being someone of a gender other than yours.* In an essay of at least 750 words, describe the circumstances if you were to wake up one day and be of another gender—that is, if you are a boy, write about what life would be like if you suddenly woke up as a girl; or if you are a girl, write about what life would be like if you suddenly woke up as a boy. Trying to avoid the obvious—people who knew you before, of course, would be shocked—describe what your day would be like as a person of a different gender, how your experiences in a given day might be different. Discuss how your interactions with specific people may or may not be different. Explore the sorts of activities you would be expected to do and not to do, explaining what aspects of culture—media, family, education, artifacts like toys and tools, etc.—promote or inhibit those activities. Explore how your concerns might differ if your gender had changed. Explain what sorts of things you would have to be aware of that you are not now given your real-life gender. Additionally, describe the advantages and disadvantages of being that gender and being the gender you were born into, the one you are in real life.

### **Response to Literature (5 total)**

[For any essay requiring that you read a long book, make sure you start reading the book about two months before the essay's due date. Also, remember that when you quote from a book you need to cite the page number for a quotation in text and document the book on a Works Cited page.]

**L10A:** *Write a composition comparing or contrasting the treatment of a theme, issue, or message in two pieces of literature from two different genres.*

Choose two pieces of literature in two different genres (e.g., poem, play, short story, novel) which share a similar theme, issue, or message, about which you have a strong personal feeling. Write an essay of at least 1000 words in which you identify the issue, theme, or message that the two authors address.

Describe the similarities and differences in the pieces. Analyze how the genres of the two pieces affect the authors' ways of communicating or expressing their issue, theme, or message.

Example: You might compare Martin Luther King Jr.'s "I Have a Dream" speech to Langston Hughes' short story "Thank You, Ma'am," since both pieces deal with the theme of lack of opportunity and dreams.

**L10B:** *Write a composition that examines point of view.* In an essay of at least 1000 words, discuss the point of view in two works of literature of your choice. For each work, consider: Who is telling the story? How would the point of view be characterized—as first, second, or third person point of view; as singular or plural; as omniscient or limited? If the point of view is that of a single character in the story, describe the character: what is the person's gender, race, or socio-economic class background? What is the person's age, level of maturity? Is the person a reliable narrator, one who may be trusted at all times? If the point of

view is limited to one character, is anything in the story lost on or unknown to that character? Also, be sure to describe how point of view in both works of literature contributes to the overall themes.

**L10C:** *Write a composition comparing the messages of two pieces of literature that share the theme of economic class and/or lack of opportunity.* Choose two from the following pieces of literature: *House on Mango Street*, *Great Expectations*, *A Raisin in the Sun*, or *A Tale of Two Cities*. Each of these pieces of literature deals with the theme of economic class and lack of opportunity. Write an essay of at least 1000 words in which you identify the messages of the two pieces you have chosen concerning this theme, and analyze and compare how the authors convey their messages. Choose at least one particular literary device and explain its significance to the theme for each of the two pieces of literature. Examples: How does the author create her or his characters and settings, and how does this express the messages in the writing? How does the author's word choice get a message across? How does symbolism help express the theme?

**L10D:** *Write a composition comparing the portrayal of women in two pieces of literature.* Choose two pieces of literature that have female main characters who defy contemporary social standards or limitations. Write an essay of at least 1000 words in which you identify the ways the two characters rebel against society, express the authors' messages about women and defiance, compare the portrayal of the two characters, and explain how the characters are relevant today. Examples: Antonia, a character in 20<sup>th</sup> century American Literature, and Antigone, in Greek literature—each defy the expectations for women in their respective historical time periods.

**L10E:** *Write a composition comparing an original piece of literature to its film adaptation.* Choose a piece of literature that has been adapted into a film. Write an essay of at least 1000 words in which you analyze how the film adaptation changes the message of the original. Analyze at least three scenes, or three aspects, of both the original and adaptation, and evaluate the success of each in communicating its message. Decide which is better—the original or the adaptation—and support your decision with specific references or quotations. Examples: *Raisin in the Sun*, *To Kill a Mockingbird*, *A Tale of Two Cities*, *Last of the Mohicans*, *A Midsummer Night's Dream*, *Julius Caesar*. How does the adaptation interpret certain scenes? Is anything left out? Is anything added? Is the original or the adaptation more effective, moving, or powerful?

### **Persuasive (4 total)**

**P10A:** *Write a composition proposing which country you would live in if it could not be the United States.* Choose a country that you have learned about in your world history readings, one in which you would like to live. Write an essay of at least 750 words in which you explain what is attractive about the country, how life in that country is similar or different from life in the United States, and persuade your readers why they too should also consider relocating to that country. Be

sure to discuss specific aspects of the country, like location, environment, economy, politics, or other aspects.

**P10B:** *Write a composition arguing whether or not children should be allowed access to violent video games.* Take a position on whether children should be allowed to play video games that contain violence. Define and provide examples of video game violence, and also consider what effects the presence or lack of violent games will have on children. Write an essay of at least 750 words in which you express your opinion. Support your opinion with good reasons and evidence from personal experience or the experience of people you know. Consider performing I-search, asking the views of others and incorporating them into your essay.

**P10C:** *Write a persuasive composition in which you argue the pros and cons of watching television.* In an essay of at least 750 words, take a position and discuss not only different types of television programming but also how much exposure to different types is good for a person of your age. Describe both advantages and disadvantages of watching television, discussing what may be gained from watching television as well as what may be lost. Consider performing I-search, asking some people you know what their opinions are on watching television so that they can be quoted in the essay and discussed.

**P10D:** *Write a persuasive composition in which you argue whether a specific technology is good or bad.* Reflect on various technologies, identifying one that you want to write about. In an essay of at least 750 words, describe a specific technology, explaining both its benefits and drawbacks, and then take a position, arguing whether this technology is beneficial or detrimental. Support your position with sufficient evidence and strong reasons, and anticipate objections to your position, explaining why they are not valid. If you argue to do away with the technology, then consider proposing an alternative technology to replace it.

### **Revision (1 total)**

**V10A:** *Revise an essay you have already submitted and have had assessed to make it as good as possible.* Choose any essay that you have already submitted to evaluators. Consider the comments and feedback. Read your own work objectively and think of ways it could accomplish its goals more effectively. Get an idea of what you want to change, rearrange, remove from, or add to the essay to make it better. Then begin to work on the essay directly. To revise means to see anew, so as you revise think of new ways to rewrite the essay as well as to improve the strategies already in use. Spend extra time on this revision (revision is one of the most important of writing skills), following through with your ideas for improving the work. It is your essay, so it is up to you whether to accept or reject the evaluator's comments and suggestions; either way, attend also to aspects of the essay the evaluator has not commented on. Revision is not just a matter of

following instructions: it is a matter of doing whatever is possible to make an essay more effective.

Along with the original essay (including rubrics with commentary) and the revised essay, submit also one full-page of journal-style writing in which you describe why you revised what you did (and maybe also why you did not revise some other parts) and what you intend to achieve through those changes.

### **Research (3 total)**

[It is recommended that you begin research at least one month prior to the essay's due date. Also, remember that when you quote from a book you need to cite the page number for a quotation in text and document the book on a Works Cited page.]

**R10A:** *Research a historical event of your choice, reading several different accounts of it, and then write an essay in which you assess differences among competing points of view concerning the one event.* Focus on the ways the different histories have been written—what is emphasized? What are some of the biases embedded in the different takes on the event? Who benefits, and who not, from a particular version of the event? For this research project, read at least three different histories; try to vary between new and old histories (those written recently and those written a long time ago); a documentary may be substituted for one written history. Write a research paper of at least 1500 words that compares and contrasts the ways the histories have been written. Be sure to document the sources used on a Works Cited page.

Examples: To get a good range of views, it may be wise to choose an international event or an event involving more than one nation. For example, researching the conflict over the island-nation of Cyprus would require investigating the positions of both Greece and Turkey. Or researching the battle that took place at the Alamo, now located in Texas, would mean to read histories from both Mexican and American historians, just as would researching the events that led to the transfer of California from Mexico to the U.S.

**R10B:** *Write a research paper on the effects of a historical event on two foreign nations.* Choose an historical event or a phenomenon that interests you. Choose two countries other than the United States that were affected by it. Research to what extent the countries were involved in the event or phenomenon, the effects on the people of those countries, and the changes to the countries after the event or phenomenon had taken place. Write a research paper of at least 1500 words in which you compare and contrast the ways these two countries were involved with the event or phenomenon and the ways in which they were affected. Be sure to document the sources used on a Works Cited page.

Examples: 1) World War I affected England and Germany, among many other nations. The causes for their involvement in the war could be researched, as well as how the war affected the people of those countries and how the countries were altered by the war. 2) New Imperialism, or Colonialism, affected India and Vietnam. Reasons for the occupying countries' choices of location could be researched, as well as how imperialism affected the people of these countries and how the countries later gained independence and what followed. 3) Iraq has been drawn into

several wars that could also be researched, including WWI and WWII, both of which resulted in the occupation of Iraq by foreign nations.

**R10C:** *Write a research paper on the practice of marriage in the U.S. and in two other countries.* In a research paper of at least 1500 words, discuss the role and function of marriage in the U.S. and in at least two other countries, giving attention to whether or not the role and function of marriage has changed over time and is practiced similarly or differently across countries. Discuss what marriage has meant and presently means. Explore what marriage meant in the past and who did and did not participate in it, examining whether all people in a given society practiced it similarly or differently. Determine in the U.S. and in the other countries you've researched whether marriage is a religious, legal, or social function, a combination of one or more of those, or something else altogether. Lastly, reflect on what marriage means to you and, should it be the case, how you intend to practice it, explaining why. Be sure to document the sources used on a Works Cited page.