

GRADE 8 LANGUAGE ARTS  
UNIT II:  
RESEARCH ESSAY  
VILLANOVA JUNIOR HIGH



Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Teacher: \_\_\_\_\_

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Grade 8 English Language Arts Speech Unit

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Homeroom: \_\_\_\_\_

For this assignment, you are required to research a topic and write an essay. This essay will then be presented as a SPEECH.

Remember, an essay is written about a single subject. The essay is written in a specific way, according to how the writer thinks about and approaches the topic.

The speech must last a *minimum* of 3 minutes and a *maximum* of 5 minutes.

*NOTE: marks are deducted for not abiding by these regulations.*

Your finished project must have:

- A cover page
- Work from all stages of the writing process
- A final draft
- Editing Sheets

## Steps for Writing your Speech

### **Rough Draft — Introductory Paragraph**

- Step 1: Begin with a sentence(s) that *catches the audience's attention*. This should not be the thesis statement.
- Step 2: The thesis statement goes next *but* give it in *one sentence only*. Do not explain it at this point; you'll do that later in the essay.
- Step 3: Next, state each of your 3 ideas in one sentence each, joined by *transitions*.
- Step 4: Conclude the introductory paragraph by restating the thesis. Don't use "In conclusion".

### **Write each Body Paragraph (paragraphs 2, 3, and 4) as follows:**

- Step 1: *Topic Sentence* — state your idea.
- Step 2: *Explain*.
- Step 3: Give your *supports*, connecting back to your thesis on a regular basis.
- Step 4: End each body paragraph by returning to your *thesis* (e.g., Therefore, testing on animals must be banned!)
- Use *transition* words, phrases and/or sentences to connect your ideas so that there is smooth flow.
- DON'T FORGET: Voice (created through word choice and varied punctuation) = Audience Appeal

## **Writing the Concluding Paragraph:**

- Step 1: Begin with a *transition that gives a feeling of closure* (e.g., In conclusion...) Then *restate your thesis*.
- Step 2: Next, *restate each idea* in the order in which you developed them earlier. Don't forget to include the CALL TO ACTION.
- Step 3: *Restate your thesis* one last time ensuring that you leave the reader / listener with a strong sense of your position on the subject.

**NOTE:** This pattern is repetitive but it will create UNITY, COHERENCY & EMPHASIS. You add your own creativity and *style* with VOICE, WORD CHOICE → AUDIENCE APPEAL.

## **Supporting your Arguments**

SUPPORTS for each idea must include a VARIETY (if possible) of the following:

- A specific example (e.g., from your own life)
- Anecdote — a story/example which brings out your reason
- Statistic — this must come from a reliable source
- An appeal to authority — a direct (or indirect) quote from someone “in the know” of this topic (an expert) \*\* Include person's name and title
- Logic — for example, if a source says, “smoking causes cancer” then if you smoke, you could get cancer too

## Choosing a Topic

Begin research by Internet, book, encyclopedia, magazine, newspaper, interview or discussion with someone else. Use this experience as a means to decide which topic will be your best choice for finding three arguments with supporting research.

The possible topics I have chosen:

**Choice 1:** \_\_\_\_\_

My 3 arguments would be:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Choice 2:** \_\_\_\_\_

My 3 arguments would be:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_

**Choice 3:** \_\_\_\_\_

My 3 arguments would be:

1. \_\_\_\_\_

2. \_\_\_\_\_

3. \_\_\_\_\_













## Self-Editing Checklist



I need to check to make sure:

- I have a clear thesis statement.
- I have three well-researched, well-presented arguments that support my thesis statement.
- I have a concluding paragraph and an effective call to action.
- My speech is 5-paragraphs in total.
- I do not have any spelling mistakes.
- I have varied and effective word choice.
- I have varied sentences.
- I have checked my capitalizations and punctuation.

▪ *SIGNED:* \_\_\_\_\_

## Peer Editing Checklist

Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Peer Editor's Signature: \_\_\_\_\_

### CONTENT:

- Does the speech include all 3 arguments and have they given enough explanations and supports (facts, statistics)?
- Is the speech at least 3 minutes but not over 5 minutes?

### ORGANIZATION:

- Does the introduction grab the audience's attention and does it include the thesis statement?
- Does the conclusion give the thesis again, summarize, and end with a clear show of their position on the topic including a call to action?
- Did they use transitions consistently?

### SENTENCE FLUENCY:

- Are there a variety of sentence lengths?
- Check for run on sentences, comma faults, and sentence fragments.

## WORD CHOICE:

- Circle repeated words.
- Check word choice to see that they have used enough vivid words where possible.  
e.g.: These animal tests are bad. (Bland)  
      These cruel animal tests are horrifying. (Better)

## VOICE:

- Adding a variety of punctuation marks will increase voice. Check to see that there is a variety of punctuation marks.

## CONVENTIONS:

- Check all capitalization:
  - the first word in every sentence.
  - proper names, organizations, cities, provinces, countries, etc.
  - the word "I".
- Check all spelling and circle any words that you think are misspelled.
- Check punctuation:
  - There needs to be a punctuation mark at the end of each sentence.
  - Apostrophes need to be used correctly (to show a missing letter: don't/do not OR to show ownership: the smoker's problem).
  - There needs to be a variety of punctuation marks (e.g., exclamation marks, quotes, question marks, etc.).

Dear Parent/Caregiver,

Please read through your son/daughters' process piece prior to the due date. Any suggestions or positive feedback you can offer your child is greatly appreciated. Kindly sign below to confirm you have seen this important piece of evaluation.

Student's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Parent/Caregiver's Name: \_\_\_\_\_

Thank you,  
Language Arts Department

## **Final Copy Checklist**

1. Cover page
2. Jot-note sheets
3. Rough drafts 1 and 2 (includes source cards)
4. Revise/edit checklist
5. Final draft



**Sample Cover Page:**

**Persuasive Essay/Speech**

**(Topic)**

Submitted to: \_\_\_\_\_

Submitted by: \_\_\_\_\_

Due date: \_\_\_\_\_