English Language Arts / English Language Development

Analyzing and Writing Arguments, Research Across Texts, Informational Oral Presentations

Performance Supertask |   
Student Materials

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August 31, 2024

Directions

Please review the task below and answer the various questions within the task to the best of your ability. If needed, you may have an adult or peer read the task out loud to aid your understanding. Additionally, feel free to use the following tools as resources in answering each item.

When conducting research and analyzing literature from diverse perspectives, you can demonstrate your thinking and learning by:

* writing short responses with pen and paper or a word-processing application
* communicating your understanding verbally
* creating an infographic or other visualization
* creating a multimedia presentation

When writing arguments, you can utilize the following options for demonstrating your skills and knowledge:

* using text-to-speech or speech-to-text to complete the content
* writing with pen and paper
* writing using a word processor that includes spelling and grammar tools
* dictating to a scribe[[1]](#footnote-2)

When creating an oral presentation, you could present in the following ways or use the following tools:

* using notes or a brainstorming/outline template available to stay organized through the presentation
* creating a slide presentation and narrating key points
* creating a poster presentation and narrating key points
* using a screen casting from a multimedia device
* creating a podcast
* creating a video of the oral presentation
* using text-to-speech software to communicate key points of a presentation

Consult with your teacher if you need to request any additional allowable resources to complete this performance task.

PART 1. Analyzing and Writing Arguments: Using Knowledge of Rhetoric to Write Arguments and Analyze Arguments from Diverse Perspectives (A)

Part 1. Directions

In this part of the performance task, you will read and analyze a piece of short literature—such as a poem, short story, or novel excerpt—that your teacher will provide featuring a multisided issue of interest. The reading can be read aloud with a partner, read silently on your own, or within a facilitated discussion with your teachers and peers. Your responses to the following questions will be used to demonstrate your understanding and analysis.

Item 1

What are the main claims being made in the text? Cite strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis.

Item 2

After reading the text, respond to the following questions.

* How does the author structure their argument to support their claim, and how are the ideas and claims developed and refined throughout the text? Analyze the order of points, specific sentences, and paragraphs and how they are introduced and developed.
* What is the author's point of view and how do they use rhetoric and language to advance this point of view? Analyze the choice of words, tone, style, and rhetorical strategies used.

Item 3

After reading the text, respond to the following question.

Restate the argument you see the text is making and evaluate the reasoning in the text to assess whether the evidence is strong and relevant. Are there any false statements or logical fallacies?

PART 2. Research Across Texts—Conducting Research and Using Findings in Written Informational and Explanatory Texts

Part 2. Directions

During this part of the task, you will develop your own research questions about a policy or condition that is of interest to you. Your questions guide the ensuing research to answer these questions, leading to informational writing of their research results. Later, you will use your research and skills in analyzing informational and argumentative writing to write your own argument (Part 3) and develop a presentation (Part 4).

Item 1

Now you will consider a multiple-perspectives topic or local policy you are curious about. Maybe you’ve noticed a lot of accidents in an intersection, you and your friends need to walk far to get to the soccer field, or there seems to be a lot of food thrown away at lunchtime. You decide which questions you’d like to answer and then conduct research to answer your own questions. Finally, write an informational research summary. Please consult your teacher for any appropriate resources you may wish to use to complete this task, such as using speech-to-text software. Your summary must address the following components:

* **Introduction and Organization:** Introduce your topic or thesis statement clearly. Organize your ideas and information effectively, using headings, graphics (for example, figures or tables), and multimedia when useful to aid comprehension.
* **Summary of Findings:** What did you learn from your research? Provide a clear and concise summary of your findings, developing your topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
* **New Questions:** What new questions have emerged from your research? Use appropriate and varied transitions to link your major sections, creating cohesion and clarifying relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
* **Sources:** List the sources you used, citing them correctly with footnotes and endnotes, and briefly summarize what you learned from each. Ensure you use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
* **Overall Insights, Style, and Tone:** Describe your overall insights from the research, any new questions you now have, and your next steps related to the multisided topic. Maintain a formal style and objective tone while adhering to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which you are writing.
* **Conclusion:** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation you have presented, articulating the implications or significance of the topic.

Your summary should be clear, coherent, and well-organized, using complete and concise sentences and key words as needed.

Item 2

Choose one of your sources from Item 1 to analyze and respond to these related questions.

* What is the central idea of your chosen text, and how does it emerge, develop, and refine from the beginning to the end? Provide specific details from each part of the text.
* How does the author introduce and arrange the main points in the text, connect different ideas, and use the structure (for example, chronological, cause and effect, problem and solution) to make the argument or narrative more effective? Provide examples from the introduction, transitions between sections, and overall structure.

PART 3. Analyzing and Writing Arguments: Using Knowledge of Rhetoric to Write Arguments and Analyze Arguments from Diverse Perspectives (B)

Part 3. Directions

Apply your research about the multisided topic of your choice and argue a related position.

Item 1

Using the research you have already conducted on your chosen multisided topic, write a well-reasoned argumentative essay. Your essay should incorporate clear claims, relevant evidence, and counterarguments while maintaining a formal style and structure that facilitates clear communication. Your task is to take a stance on the issue and construct a compelling argument in its favor. Follow the guidelines to structure your essay effectively.

* **Claim:** Clearly state a precise, knowledgeable claim: ensure your main point (thesis) is clear and compelling while setting the direction for your argument.
* **Development:** Develop claims and counterclaims thoroughly: provide strong, relevant, and sufficient evidence to support your claims. Acknowledge and refute counterclaims effectively.
* **Organization:** Use clear and logical organization with appropriate transitions: ensure your argument flows smoothly with a clear progression of ideas. Structure sections and paragraphs cohesively.
* **Style and Tone:** Maintain a formal style and objective tone appropriate for the audience and purpose.
* **Grammar and Usage:** Demonstrate command of standard English grammar and usage: use parallel structure and a variety of phrases and clauses effectively. Accurately use general academic and domain-specific vocabulary.
* **Conclusion:** Provide a strong and effective conclusion: ensure your conclusion follows from and supports your argument. Synthesize the main points and reinforce your thesis.

Following these guidelines will ensure that you demonstrate your ability to write detailed and compelling arguments effectively.

PART 4. Informative Oral Presentations: Planning and Delivering Oral Presentations Conveying Information from Credible Sources

Part 4. Directions

In Part 4, use your research and summaries and create a plan to present your findings. You will have multiple mediums available to deliver your presentation. The primary focus of this Big Idea is for you to conduct your own research, create a clear plan for communicating your research, and carry out your plan effectively.

Item 1

Using research you have already conducted on a chosen multisided topic, create a presentation plan and design or select digital media such as text, graphic, audio, visual, or interactive elements to enhance your presentation.

* **Remember that your response must include**
  + the central message of your presentation,
  + the sources you are using to reinforce your messages, and
  + a clear design for the messages and presentation tools you will be using.

Item 2

Deliver your speech clearly and confidently. You will be presenting your research findings to an audience of your peers. Ensure your presentation and delivery is clear, concise, and logical. You will have a predetermined amount of time to deliver your presentation and share your supporting visuals. You may create a video of your presentation or present it live to an audience.

* **Remember that your response must include**
  + a clear purpose, claim, or central message;
  + content-specific language; and
  + a coherent flow with language supporting clear transitions and sentence structures.

1. If a student dictates to a scribe, it is important for the scribe to be careful to record **only** what the student explicitly communicates, rather than making interpretations and “filling in the blanks.” [↑](#footnote-ref-2)