



California Common Core Writing Standards and Anchor Papers

From original documents on California Department of Education website cde.ca.gov, in Appendix C of the Common Core Standards for English Language Arts.

Grade 9

These documents are also available on our website www.knoxeducation.com along with student standards checklists and 11x17 posters, as well as teaching units, mini lessons, tools, and resources.

CCSS ELA Standards for Grades 9-10

WRITING STANDARDS: OPINION/ARGUMENT WRITING

Opinion/Argument



<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
	9-W 1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 1a.	Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 1b.	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.

Informative/Explanatory



WRITING STANDARDS: INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
	9-W 2	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 2a.	Introduce a topic or thesis statement ; organize complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 2b.	Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 2c.	Use appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 2d.	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 2e.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 2f.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).

Narrative



WRITING STANDARDS: NARRATIVE WRITING

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
	9-W 3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, well-chosen details, and well-structured event sequences.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 3a.	Engage and orient the reader by setting out a problem, situation, or observation, establishing one or multiple point(s) of view, and introducing a narrator and/or characters; create a smooth progression of experiences or events.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 3b.	Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, reflection, and multiple plot lines, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 3c.	Use a variety of techniques to sequence events so that they build on one another to create a coherent whole.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 3d.	Use precise words and phrases, telling details, and sensory language to convey a vivid picture of the experiences, events, setting, and/or characters.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 3e.	Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on what is experienced, observed, or resolved over the course of the narrative.

Opinion/Argument Informative/Explanatory Narrative



WRITING STANDARDS: ALL GENRES

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Production and Distribution of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 4.	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. (<u>Grade-specific expectations for writing types are defined in standards 1–3 above.</u>)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 5.	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience. (Editing for conventions should demonstrate command of Language standards 1–3 up to and including grades 9–10.)
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 7.	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 8.	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation <u>including footnotes and endnotes.</u>
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 9.	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 9. a.	Apply <i>grades 9–10 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., "Analyze how an author draws on and transforms source material in a specific work [e.g., how Shakespeare treats a theme or topic from Ovid or the Bible or how a later author draws on a play by Shakespeare]").
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 9. b.	Apply <i>grades 9–10 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., "Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning").
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-W 10.	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.



WRITING STANDARDS: Opinion/Argument Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
	9-WHST 1	Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1a.	Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1b.	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.



WRITING STANDARDS: Informative/Explanatory Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes		
	9-WHST 2	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2a.	Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2b.	Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2c.	Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2d.	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic and convey a style appropriate to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2 e.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2 f.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).



WRITING STANDARDS: Narrative Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Text Types and Purposes		
	9-WHST 3	(Not applicable as a separate requirement)

Note: Students' narrative skills continue to grow in these grades. The Standards require that students be able to incorporate narrative elements effectively into arguments and informative/explanatory texts. In history/social studies, students must be able to incorporate narrative accounts into their analyses of individuals or events of historical import. In science and technical subjects, students must be able to write precise enough descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they use in their investigations or technical work that others can replicate them and (possibly) reach the same results.



WRITING STANDARDS: All Genres for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

Production and Distribution of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 4.	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 5.	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 7.	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 9-.	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources (<u>primary and secondary</u>), using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 9.	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 10.	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.



WRITING STANDARDS: Opinion/Argument Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1	Write arguments focused on <i>discipline-specific content</i> .
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1a.	Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among the claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1b.	Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, supplying data and evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both claim(s) and counterclaims in a discipline-appropriate form and in a manner that anticipates the audience's knowledge level and concerns.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1c.	Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1d.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 1e.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented.



WRITING STANDARDS: Informative/Explanatory Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2	Write informative/explanatory texts, including the narration of historical events, scientific procedures/ experiments, or technical processes.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2a.	Introduce a topic and organize ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2b.	Develop the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2c.	Use varied transitions and sentence structures to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2d.	Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic and convey a style appropriate to the discipline and context as well as to the expertise of likely readers.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2 e.	Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 2 f.	Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented (e.g., articulating implications or the significance of the topic).



WRITING STANDARDS: Narrative Writing for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Text Types and Purposes		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 3	(Not applicable as a separate requirement)

Note: Students' narrative skills continue to grow in these grades. The Standards require that students be able to incorporate narrative elements effectively into arguments and informative/explanatory texts. In history/social studies, students must be able to incorporate narrative accounts into their analyses of individuals or events of historical import. In science and technical subjects, students must be able to write precise enough descriptions of the step-by-step procedures they use in their investigations or technical work that others can replicate them and (possibly) reach the same results.



WRITING STANDARDS: All Genres for History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects

<input type="checkbox"/>	Number	Standard
Production and Distribution of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 4.	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 5.	Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach, focusing on addressing what is most significant for a specific purpose and audience.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 6.	Use technology, including the Internet, to produce, publish, and update individual or shared writing products, taking advantage of technology's capacity to link to other information and to display information flexibly and dynamically.
Research to Build and Present Knowledge		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 7.	Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 9-.	Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources (<u>primary and secondary</u>), using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 9.	Draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Range of Writing		
<input type="checkbox"/>	9-WHST 10.	Write routinely over extended time frames (time for reflection and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of discipline-specific tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Samples of Student Writing

Following are writing samples that have been annotated to illustrate the criteria required to meet the Common Core State Standards for particular types of writing—argument, informative/explanatory text, and narrative—in a given grade. Each of the samples exhibits at least the level of quality required to meet the Writing standards for that grade.

The range of accomplishment within each grade reflects differences in individual development as well as in the conditions under which the student writers were expected to work. Some of the samples were written in class or as homework; others were written for on-demand assessments; still others were the result of sustained research projects. Where possible, each sample includes information about the circumstances under which it was produced. The samples come from students in kindergarten through grade 12. The students attended school in a number of states and districts across the country.

At the lower grades, the samples include “opinion” writing, an elementary type of argument in which students give reasons for their opinions and preferences. Because reasons are required, such writing helps prepare students for drafting the arguments they will be expected to create beginning in grade 6.

Acknowledgment

The Standards work group would like to express its appreciation to teachers and students at Monte Vista High School in California and the Randolph Technical Career Center in Vermont; other colleagues in California, Massachusetts, and Washington state; and ACT, Inc., and the *Concord Review*, who helped find and obtain permission for several of the samples included in the set. The group also would like to express its appreciation to the New Standards Project and to the International Reading Association, which allowed the use of several samples from their publications, and to the other student writers who granted permission to reproduce their work here.

Student Sample: Grade 9, Argument

This argument was written in response to a classroom assignment. The students were asked to compare a book they read on their own to a movie about the same story and to prove which was better. Students had six weeks to read and one and a half weeks to write, both in and out of class.

The True Meaning of Friendship

John Boyne's story, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, tells the tale of an incredible friendship between two eight-year old boys during the Holocaust. One of the boys is Bruno, the son of an important German commander who is put in charge of Auschwitz Camp, and the other is Shmuel, a Jewish boy inside the camp. Throughout the story their forbidden friendship grows, and the two boys unknowingly break the incredible racial boundaries of the time. They remain best friends until Bruno goes under the fence to help Shmuel find his father when they are both killed in the gas showers of the camp. By comparing and contrasting supporting characters, irony, and the themes in the movie and the book, it is clear that the movie, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (Mark Herman, 2008) is not nearly as good as the novel of the same title.

Characterization is very important to a story and influences how a person interprets the novel or movie, and one important way that the book differs from the movie is how Bruno's mother is characterized. In the movie, she is unrealistically portrayed as an honest woman with good moral values, and is almost as naive as Bruno is about what is going on at Auschwitz. When she discovers what her husband is doing to people at the camp she is deeply disturbed. Mortified by her husband's cruelty, their relationship declines. In contrast, she is a far more sinister character in the book. Though Bruno is too young to understand what his mother is doing, one of the reasons he dislikes Lieutenant Kotler is that, ". . . he was always in the living room with Mother and making jokes with her, and Mother laughed at his jokes more than she laughed at Father's" (162). Bruno's mother is very unhappy in her new situation away from Berlin, and her discontent leads her to cheat on her husband. This also leads her to unknowingly hurt her son, for Bruno is upset that she is paying more attention to Lieutenant Kotler than she is to his father, and the damage she causes could be magnified if she continues to disrupt their family. Further examples of her abysmal character and unfaithfulness are revealed when Bruno's mother finds the young lieutenant and says, "Oh Kurt, precious, you're still here . . . I have a little free time now if—Oh! she said, noticing Bruno standing there. 'Bruno! What are you doing here?'"(166). Her disloyalty further allows the reader to see that her character is far from virtuous, contrary to the opinion of a person who viewed the movie. Throughout the story, it also becomes apparent that Bruno's mother is also an alcoholic, and, "Bruno worried for her health because he'd never known anyone to need quite so many medicinal sherries" (188). Unable to come to terms with her new circumstances and strained relationship with her husband, Bruno's mother tries to drink away her problems, further conveying that she is a weak character. Bruno's extreme innocence about his mother and situation at Auschwitz are magnified by the use of irony in both the movie and the book.

In some ways the book and the movie have similar aspects, and one of these aspects is how irony is used to emphasize Bruno's innocence and to greatly emphasize the tragic mood of the story. In the final climactic scene of the movie—just after Bruno has gone under the fence to help Shmuel find his father—the two boys are led to the gas showers to be killed. Unaware of what is about to happen to them, Bruno tells Shmuel that his father must have ordered this so it must be for a good reason, and that they are going into the air-tight rooms to stay out of the rain and avoid getting sick. This statement is incredibly ironic because, unbeknownst to Bruno, his father has unknowingly commenced his own son's death sentence. In addition to this, the soldiers have no intention of keeping their prisoners healthy. It never occurs to Bruno that anyone would want to destroy another human being or treat them badly, and his innocence makes his premature death all the more tragic. Although the movie may be incredibly ironic in a few specific instances, the book contains a plethora of ironic events that also accentuate Bruno's childishness and naivety. A profound example of this is exhibited when Bruno thinks to himself that, ". . . he did like stripes and he felt increasingly fed up that he had to wear trousers and shirts and ties and shoes that were too tight for him when Shmuel and his friends got to wear striped pajamas all day long" (155). Bruno has no clue that the people in the "striped pajamas" are being cruelly treated and murdered, and is jealous of what he thinks is freedom. Bruno once again reveals his innocence when he asks Pavel, the Jewish man from the camp who cleans him up after a fall, "If you're a doctor, then why are you waiting on tables? Why aren't you working at a hospital somewhere?" (83). It is a mystery to Bruno that a doctor would be reduced to such a state for no transparent reason, and his beliefs should be what all adults think. Though

what he says is naive, it points out the barbarity of the German attitude toward the Jews. If an uneducated child could be puzzled by this, then how could learned adults allow such a thing? Through Bruno's comment, John Boyne conveys the corruptness of the German leaders during the Holocaust, an idea that the movie does not relay to the watcher nearly as well. The book impels the reader to think deeper about the horrors of the Holocaust, and all this ties into the true theme of the story.

The Boy in the Striped Pajamas and its movie counterpart both have different themes, but it is the book's theme that accurately states the author's message. The movie ends with a race against time as Bruno's family searches for him in the camp, trying to find him before he is killed. They are too late, and Bruno and Shmuel die together like so many other anonymous children during the Holocaust. The theme of the movie is how so many children died at the ruthless hands of their captors; but the book's theme has a deeper meaning. As Bruno and Shmuel die together in the chamber, ". . . the room went very dark, and in the chaos that followed, Bruno found that he was still holding Shmuel's hand in his own and nothing in the world would have persuaded him to let it go" (242). Bruno loves Shmuel, and he is willing to stay with him no matter what the consequences, even if it means dying with him in the camp that his father controls. They have conquered all boundaries, and this makes the two boys more than just two more individuals who died in Auschwitz. *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* is not the story of two children who died in a concentration camp; this story is about an incredible friendship that triumphed over racism and lasted until the very end. It is the story of what should have been between Jews and Germans, a friendship between two groups of people in one nation who used their strengths to help each other.

Based on the analysis of supporting characters, irony, and themes of John Boyne's *The Boy in the Striped Pajamas* and the movie, it can be concluded that the book is far superior to the movie. Though Bruno's mother is a dishonest woman in the book, her bad character is more realistic for the time when compared to the mother in the movie who is horrified by Auschwitz. John Boyne uses many examples of irony in the book to emphasize Bruno's innocence and to magnify the tragedy of his death. Unlike the movie the irony in the book leads the reader to ponder on the barbarity of the German leaders during the Holocaust. The book's theme of long lasting friendship gives purpose to the story, while the movie's theme of the cruelty of concentration camps does not lead the viewer to delve deeper into the story. It is necessary for the person to read this book in order to understand the true message of friendship and cooperation in the story, a message that a person who had only seen the movie could not even begin to grasp.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces a precise claim and distinguishes the claim from (implied) alternate or opposing claims.**
 - . . . *it is clear that the movie, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas (Mark Herman, 2008) is not nearly as good as the novel of the same title.*
- **develops the claim and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience's need for information about the book.**
 - Reason: *In the movie, she [the mother] is unrealistically portrayed as an honest woman with good moral values . . . she is a far more sinister character in the book . . .*
 - Evidence: *. . . one of the reasons he [Bruno] dislikes Lieutenant Kotler is that, ". . . he was always in the living room with Mother and making jokes with her, and Mother laughed at his jokes more than she laughed at Father's" (162) . . . Bruno's mother finds the young lieutenant and says, "Oh Kurt, precious, you're still here . . . I have a little free time now if—Oh! she said, noticing Bruno standing there. 'Bruno! What are you doing here?'"(166). . . Bruno's mother is also an alcoholic, and, "Bruno worried for her health because he'd never known anyone to need quite so many medicinal sherries" (188)*
 - Reason: *. . . it is the book's theme that accurately states the author's message . . . the book's theme has a deeper meaning . . . The book's theme of long lasting friendship gives purpose to the story . . .*
 - Evidence: *The movie ends with a race against time as Bruno's family searches for him in*

the camp, trying to find him before he is killed. They are too late, as Bruno and Shmuel die together like so many other anonymous children during the Holocaust . . . [In the book] As Bruno and Shmuel are standing together in the chamber, “. . . the room went very dark, and in the chaos that followed, Bruno found that he was still holding Shmuel’s hand in his own and nothing in the world would have persuaded him to let it go” (242).

- **uses words, phrases and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claims and (implied) counterclaims.**
 - *In the movie . . . In contrast . . . Though Bruno is too young . . . Further examples of her abysmal character . . . Throughout the story, it also becomes apparent . . . In the final climactic scene . . . because, unbeknownst to Bruno . . . A profound example of this . . . Based on the analysis . . .*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone.**
 - *John Boyne’s story, The Boy in the Striped Pajamas, tells the tale of an incredible friendship between two eight-year old boys during the Holocaust. . . Characterization is very important to a story and influences how a person interprets the novel or movie, and one important way that the book differs from the movie is how Bruno’s mother is characterized . . . In some ways the book and the movie have similar aspects, and one of these aspects is how irony is used to emphasize Bruno’s innocence and to greatly emphasize the tragic mood of the story . . .*
- **provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the argument presented.**
 - *Based on the analysis of supporting characters, irony, and themes of John Boyne’s The Boy in the Striped Pajamas and the movie, it can be concluded that the book is far superior to the movie. Though Bruno’s mother is a dishonest woman in the book, her bad character is more realistic for the time when compared to the mother in the movie who is horrified by Auschwitz. John Boyne uses many examples of irony in the book to emphasize Bruno’s innocence and to magnify the tragedy of his death. Unlike the movie the irony in the book leads the reader to ponder on the barbarity of the German leaders during the Holocaust. The book’s theme of long lasting friendship gives purpose to the story, while the movie’s theme of the cruelty of concentration camps does not lead the viewer to delve deeper into the story. It is necessary for the person to read this book in order to understand the true message of friendship and cooperation in the story, a message that a person who had only seen the movie could not even begin to grasp.*
- **demonstrates exemplary command of the conventions of standard written English.**

Student Sample: Grade 9, Informative/Explanatory

This essay was written in response to the following assignment: *Consider The House on Mango Street by Sandra Cisneros (1984) and the movie Whale Rider, based on the novel by Maori author Witi Ihimaera and directed by Niki Caro (2003). Write a comparison/contrast paper discussing the similarities and differences between these two works. Keeping in mind the main characters Esperanza Cordero and Paikea Apirana, the traditions of the two cultures, Hispanic and Maori, the role of women, religion, and symbolism, compare and contrast how Esperanza and Pai bridge the past and the present for their people.*

Lives on Mango, Rides the Whale

More than 8,000 miles of land and sea separate two seemingly contrasting young women. One young girl lives in the urban streets of Chicago, depicted in *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (1984), while the other thrives in the countryside of New Zealand, as shown in *Whale Rider*, directed by Niki Caro (2003)—one an immigrant from a foreign country and the other a native Maori descendent. Both girls struggle for change, fighting their own quiet wars. Despite the vast differences in lifestyle and culture, both Esperanza Cordero of Chicago and Paikea Apirana of New Zealand are destined to be leaders of their generation in spite of the multitude of traditions and expectations that define them as individuals and their role as women in society. These two natural-born leaders are bridging the gap between the ancient customs and modern-day life.

While culture has a huge impact on the Cordero and Apirana families, the protagonists of both groups are affected the most. In Esperanza's world, women are put down and locked inside their husband's houses, having no rights and absolutely no say in their own households. The patriarchal society overwhelms every aspect of life, and Esperanza demands change through rebelling in her own quiet war. "I have decided not to grow up tame like the others who lay their necks on the threshold waiting for the ball and chain" (*The House on Mango Street*). She plans to set her own example, to forge her own path, in the hopes that the oppressed women of Mango Street will realize alternative options. Desperately seeking an opportunity to flee Mango Street, Esperanza dreams of the day when she will leave just another crippled house to seek her own way in the world. However, she states, "They will not know I have gone away to come back. For the ones I left behind. For the ones who cannot get out" (*The House on Mango Street*). Paikea, on the other hand is a native of New Zealand. According to legend, her ancestor and namesake rode on the back of a whale to this land and her family has been there ever since. Because of her rich and influential history, Pai is very proud of her culture. She wants the best for her people and she understands that the village and tribe must modernize and change with the times or else they may lose everything. For example, in the movie *Whale Rider*, Pai walks into her kitchen to find three elder women smoking cigarettes. Hiding the evidence, the conversation dies as soon as she enters the room, but she says to them, "Maori women have got to stop smoking." Pai loves her culture and the significance of the whale, yet she, like Esperanza, demands change, starting with her grandfather Koro accepting the fact that Pai is destined to become the first female chief of the village. Both girls dream of the day where their women will be respected and treated as equals in their patriarchal societies.

Family also plays an important role in both *The House on Mango Street* and *Whale Rider*. The Corderos are one happy group, with lots of strong and inspirational individuals, binding relatives together like a ribbon on a present. Esperanza, the namesake and great-grandmother of the young protagonist, was a strong-willed woman. "My great-grandmother. I would've liked to have known her, a wild horse of a woman, so wild she wouldn't marry" (*The House on Mango Street*). Another prominent man is Esperanza's Uncle Nacho. At a baptism, Uncle Nacho convinces Esperanza to dance; despite her sad brown shoes, she in fact does with her uncle telling her how beautiful she is, making her forget her discomfort and hatred of her shoes. Even though Esperanza may be loved in her family and close community, she is of low social status in general. She, like Geraldo in the vignette "Geraldo No Last Name," is "just another brazer who didn't speak English. Just another wetback. You know the kind. The ones who always look ashamed." Her father is a gardener at rich people's houses, and her mother watches over the four children (Esperanza, Nenny, Carlos, and Kiki). From a typical Mexican family, Esperanza is not poor but also has never really experienced any luxury other than a used car.

On the other hand, Paikea comes from a broken family. Her mother died during childbirth, along with her twin brother. After feeling the depression of loss and loneliness, Pai's father Porourangi left New Zealand to live in Germany, where he sculpted and sold Maori art. Pai was left to be raised by her grandparents Koro, the current chief, and Nanny Flowers. Similar to Esperanza, Pai shares common family members that inspired them and encouraged them through their trials, Nanny Flowers, for example, raised Pai to be the woman she is—independent and tough. Regardless of the criticism from Koro, Nanny Flowers encourages Pai to do what she knows is best, even if that results in harsh consequences. For

example, during the movie, Pai and the young boys of the village attend a school lesson taught by Koro. Pai is last in line, but sits down on the front bench with the others, although Koro tells her to sit in the back, the proper place for a woman. She refuses to move even when her grandfather threatens to send her away, which he does because Pai will not give up her seat. As she walks away from the group, Nanny Flowers has a proud little smile on her lips, for she knows that Pai is ordained to be the next leader. Because Pai is next in line to become the chief, she is of very high status, just below the current chief.

A prominent figure on Mango Street, Esperanza presents an alternative to the oppression of women in the community. In the outside world, however, she is just another young girl with parents who immigrated to the United States in the hopes of a better life for their children. Esperanza wants to set an example for the women trapped in their houses, to provide an escape for those ensnared in the barbed wire of marriage. Above all, she dreams of the day where she can leave Mango Street, yet she knows that it is her duty to return to free her friends. As told by the Three Sisters, “You will always be Esperanza. You will always be Mango Street. You can’t erase what you know. You can’t forget who you are.” These three women told Esperanza that she was special and was meant to be a strong and leading person, just like Pai and the whales. Because of the rich diversity and influences in her neighborhood, Esperanza learns through her friends and experiences they share. Marin, Rafaela, Lucy, Rachel, Sally, and Alicia all provided a learning experience in one way or another. As all of these young ladies are in a similar age range with Esperanza, they undergo multiple trials side-by-side.

Contrastingly, Paikea has the blood of a leader running through her veins. She is a native, a leader, and a change. Pai, like Esperanza, is a leading figure amongst the women of her community. Always aware of the outer world, Pai knows that her people must adapt to the changing times or they will be swept away by the current of technology. She holds a great love and respect for her culture and people, and she wants what is best for them, even if it involves changing ancient traditions and ways. Pai knows it is her duty to stay, and her desire keeps her rooted in her little village. Once, Pai’s father offered to take her to Germany with him to start a new life, and she agreed to go with him. However, in the car ride along the beach, a whale calls from the depths of the ocean and it is then that Pai knows she cannot leave her people. She asks her father to turn around and she returns to the village of her people. Due to having little to no interaction with kids her age, Pai must learn from her elders and through Koro’s reactions. The children of the village tease and taunt Pai for her name and her big dreams, yet she pays them no attention. Unlike Esperanza, Pai knew from the beginning that she was destined to be great and is different from others her age.

Finally, the personalities of these two protagonists are exceedingly different. Esperanza, although older than Paikea, has low self-esteem and little self-confidence. She is afraid of adults, and as shown in “A Rice Sandwich,” she often cries when confronted by her elders. Throughout the novel, Esperanza is shamed by her actions, other’s actions, and other’s words. All this young girl wants is to make friends and be loved by others, but she gets in her own way. However, when the world seems against her and she is all alone, Esperanza writes to escape. As directed by her deceased Aunt Lupe, she continues the poetry and short stories that free her from the chokehold of Mango Street. While she finds joy in pencils and paper, she does not in her name. “Esperanza” in Spanish means “hope” and “waiting,” two words that describe this girl perfectly. She is the hope for the oppressed but she must wait for her opportunity to leave. In contrast to Pai, she actually did have a childhood, a carefree times of playing and having fun with friends before the burden of responsibility is placed on their shoulders, like the sky on Atlas’s.

Paikea, alternatively, is a proud and confident girl. She knows what is best and what her people must do in order to survive. Starting with the women, she tells them to change their ways at the ripe old age of ten. Pai is a serious and mature child, with a grown mannerism and demeanor. Little can shame her, except for her grandfather; all Pai wants is to be loved and accepted by Koro. While everyone in the village can see that Pai is fated to become the next chief, Koro stubbornly refuses to believe until the very end. In her position, she takes her ancestry very seriously. Pai was named after her ancestor who rode the back of a whale to New Zealand, and she is exceedingly proud of her name, unlike Esperanza. And unlike Esperanza, it seems as though Pai has no time for boys or any relationships between them. She considers herself “one of the boys,” and shows no interest. Growing up with her situation and the multiple responsibilities that followed left little time for an actual childhood.

In the end, the fate of two different cultures rests in the hands of two different young girls. While they both strive for freedom from oppression and change, Esperanza Cordero and Paikea Apirana have different techniques through which they reach those goals. Esperanza, a quiet and ashamed girl of 13 or 14, chooses a singular path to walk. She chooses the road she must walk alone, unaccompanied but free from patriarchal domination. While fighting to free those sitting at the window, Esperanza finds her own destiny as the change needed on Mango Street. Paikea, a strong and confident girl of 10 or 11, walks the forbidden path, the path of a chief. She chooses to defy her grandfather and all traditions in order to modernize her people. In order to save them, she must change them. Both young women, influential and inspiring, search for the key to free the ones they love.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces the topic.**
 - *More than 8,000 miles of land and sea separate two seemingly contrasting young women. One young girl lives in the urban streets of Chicago, depicted in *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (1984), while the other thrives in the countryside of New Zealand, as shown in *Whale Rider*, directed by Niki Caro (2003)—one an immigrant from a foreign country and the other a native Maori descendent. Both girls struggle for change, fighting their own quiet wars. Despite the vast differences in lifestyle and culture, both Esperanza Cordero of Chicago and Paikea Apirana of New Zealand are destined to be leaders of their generation in spite of the multitude of traditions and expectations that define them as individuals and their role as women in society. These two natural-born leaders are bridging the gap between the ancient customs and modern-day life.*
- **organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions.**
 - The writer uses a compare/contrast organizing strategy to explain similarities and differences between the two girls' cultures, families, and personalities and in how they go about bridging *the gap between the ancient customs and modern-day life*.
- **develops the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience's knowledge of the topic.**
 - Details: *One young girl lives in the urban streets of Chicago, depicted in *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (1984), while the other thrives in the countryside of New Zealand, as shown in *Whale Rider*, directed by Niki Caro (2003)—one an immigrant from a foreign country and the other a native Maori descendent.*
 - Examples: . . . *Nanny Flowers encourages Pai to do what she knows is best, even if that results in harsh consequences. For example, during the movie, Pai and the young boys of the village attend a school lesson taught by Koro. Pai is last in line, but sits down on the front bench with the others, although Koro tells her to sit in the back, the proper place for a woman. She refuses to move even when her grandfather threatens to send her away, which he does because Pai will not give up her seat. As she walks away from the group, Nanny Flowers has a proud little smile on her lips . . .*
 - Quotations: . . . *and Esperanza demands change through rebelling in her own quiet war. "I have decided not to grow up tame like the others who lay their necks on the threshold waiting for the ball and chain" (*The House on Mango Street*).*
- **uses appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.**
 - *Despite the vast differences in lifestyle and culture, both . . . While culture has a huge impact on the Cordero and Arirana families, the protagonists . . . However, she states . . . According to legend . . . For example . . . yet she, like Esperanza . . . Even though . . . On the other hand . . . Similar to Esperanza . . . Regardless of the criticism from Joro . . . In the outside world, however . . . Above all, she dreams of the day . . . yet she knows . . . Contrastingly . . . Once . . . However . . . Due to having little interaction with kids her age . . . Unlike Esperanza, Pai . . . Finally . . . In contrast to Pai . . . In the end . . . While they both strive for freedom from oppression and change . . .*
- **uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.**
 - *More than 8,000 miles of land and sea separate two seemingly contrasting young women. One young girl lives in the urban streets of Chicago, depicted in *The House on Mango Street* by Sandra Cisneros (1984), while the other thrives in the countryside of New Zealand, as shown in *Whale Rider*, directed by Niki Caro (2003)—one an immigrant*

from a foreign country and the other a native Maori descendent. . . . the personalities of these two protagonists are exceedingly different. . . . In the end, the fate of two different cultures rests in the hands of two different young girls.

- **establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which the student is writing.**
 - *More than 8,000 miles of land and sea separate two seemingly contrasting young women.*
 - *Both young women, influential and inspiring, search for the key to free the ones they love.*
- **provides a concluding section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.**
 - *In the end, the fate of two different cultures rests in the hands of two different young girls. While they both strive for freedom from oppression and change, Esperanza Cordero and Paikea Apirana have different techniques through which they reach those goals. Esperanza, a quiet and ashamed girl of 13 or 14, chooses a singular path to walk. She chooses the road she must walk alone, unaccompanied but free from patriarchal domination. While fighting to free those sitting at the window, Esperanza finds her own destiny as the change needed on Mango Street. Paikea, a strong and confident girl of 10 or 11, walks the forbidden path, the path of a chief. She chooses to defy her grandfather and all traditions in order to modernize her people. In order to save them, she must change them. Both young women, influential and inspiring, search for the key to free the ones they love.*
- **demonstrates exemplary command of the conventions of standard written English.**

Student Sample: Grade 9, Informative/Explanatory

This short constructed response was prompted by the following test question: “Explain how civil disobedience was used in the struggle for India’s independence.” The student had only a portion of a class period to write the response.

Civil disobedience is the refusal to follow an unjust law. Gandhi led India to independence by using civil disobedience and non-violent resistance. His motto was, “will not fight, will not comply.” One of Gandhi’s first acts of civil disobedience was when he refused to move to 3rd class on the train. He bought a 1st class ticket but they wouldn’t let him sit there. He then got kicked off the train. This is just one example of Gandhi’s enforcement of non-violent resistance. He has done many things from refusing to get off the sidewalk to being beaten for burning his pass. He figured that if he died, it would be for the right reasons. He said, “They can have my body, not my obedience.” Eventually he got all of India going against Britain’s unjust laws. While it took the people of India longer to realize, Gandhi proved that civil disobedience and non-violent resistance can be a more effective way of fighting back. Britain finally let India have its independence.

Annotation

The writer of this piece

- **introduces the topic.**
 - *Civil disobedience is the refusal to follow an unjust law.*
- **organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information to make important connections and distinctions.**
 - The writer presents examples to illustrate civil disobedience and nonviolent resistance.
- **develops the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.**
 - Details: . . . 3rd class on the train . . . 1st class ticket . . .
 - Quotations: *His motto was, “will not fight, will not comply” . . . He said, “They can have my body, not my obedience.”*
 - Examples: *One of Gandhi’s first acts of civil disobedience was when he refused to move to 3rd class on the train . . . He has done many things from refusing to get off the sidewalk to being beaten for burning his pass.*
- **uses appropriate and varied transitions to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships among complex ideas and concepts.**
 - . . . *This is just one example . . . Eventually . . . While it took the people of India longer to realize, Gandhi . . .*
- **uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.**
 - *Civil disobedience is the refusal to follow an unjust law. . . . While it took the people longer to realize, Gandhi proved that civil disobedience and non-violent resistance can be a more effective way of fighting back.*
- **establishes and maintains a formal style and objective tone (although there are some lapses into overly colloquial language, such as *kicked off* and *figured*).**
 - *Civil disobedience is the refusal to follow an unjust law.*
- **provides a concluding statement that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.**
 - *Eventually he got all of India going against Britain’s unjust laws. . . . Britain finally let India have its independence.*
- **demonstrates good command of the conventions of standard written English (with occasional errors that do not interfere materially with the underlying message).**