

Student Name: _____

Period: _____

11th Grade Composition Pretest Text-Dependent Expository / Persuasive Composition Rubric

KEYSTONE STANDARDS

PA COMMON CORE

C.E. & C.P. 1.1.1 > **Focus** <1.4.B & H

How clearly does the composition establish and sustain a controlling position or thesis and display a clear understanding of the task, purpose/mode, and audience?	0 5 10 15 20 Score Points
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C.E. & C.P. 1.1.2 > **Content** <1.4.C & I

How specific, developed [3-page minimum], accurate, relevant, and well-cited are the details and the transitions between them? If persuasive, how well does the content of the introduction consider opposing arguments? To attain full credit for specificity and accuracy, the essay must quote and cite the texts on which the prompt depends at least [3] times.	0 5 10 15 20 Score Points
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C.E. & C.P. 1.1.3 > **Organization** <1.4.D & J

How effectively do the subtopic paragraphs, the transitions, the introduction, and the conclusion establish the organization of the composition?	0 5 10 15 20 Score Points
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C.E. & C.P. 1.1.4 > **Style** <1.4.E & K

How precise, descriptive, smooth, and varied are the word choices and the sentence structures that contribute to the tone and point of view?	0 5 10 15 20 Score Points
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C.E. & C.P. 1.1.5 > **Conventions** <1.4.F & L

How correct is the spelling, grammar, punctuation, capitalization, usage, and sentence formation?	0 5 10 15 20 Score Points
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No compositions less than the 3-page minimum will be scored. You may work on the pretest essay out of class if you feel you need extra time to complete 3 pages. No late papers will be accepted.

Total Raw % Percentage Score Conversion Chart

5	10	15	20	25	30	35	40	45	50	55	60	65	70	75	80	85	90	95	100
←				Below Basic				→ ← Basic → ←				Proficient				→ ← Advanced →			

PERSUASIVE PROMPT: Author C.P. Snow once observed, “Technology gives us a gift with one hand—while it stabs us in the back with the other.” Snow’s observation is true of many forms of modern technology: our cars, our weaponry, our medicine...and especially our computers. Think about the ways that our computer technology poses both gifts and threats, to teenagers in particular, from the blessings that come to teens in the realms of education, communication, and entertainment to the curses that arise in the shape of academic cheating, cyberbullying, and obesity. Then, write an essay in which you argue whether computer technology overall has been more of a gift or more of a curse to American teens.

While you certainly want most of your details to come from very specific personal examples to build your argument [for example, an example of cyberbullying with which you are personally familiar], you must briefly quote and cite the article at least twice to support your position. Now, review the [5] domains of the rubric on the previous page before beginning work.

“Teens' obsession with technology: harmful or beneficial?”

Posted: Wednesday, October 13, 2010 11:08 am | Updated: 6:45 pm, Mon Oct 18, 2010.
Teens' obsession with technology: harmful or beneficial?

Kyla Gersten and Haley Abramson

Our Technology: A Gift

These days when talking about technology, most people will inevitably mention teenagers. It is true – teens are obsessed with technology, but there are definitely benefits to this obsession.

Technology greatly helps a number of people. Teens use computers constantly – for school work, communication, sharing pictures and for entertainment purposes. Computers continue to change the world every day, opening countless opportunities for teens. They hold an immense amount of information; anything teens want to know is right at their fingertips. People often run errands and even shop without ever leaving home.

Teens also use the Internet to communicate effectively with others around the world. Social networking websites have mushroomed in popularity over the past several years and now represent a main line of communication for young people. Teens use sites such as Facebook, Skype and Twitter to stay connected with friends and have a good time.

However, while some might argue that the Internet provides a means for procrastination, teens also use it for schoolwork. Computers allow teens to complete work faster and more easily. Typing an essay is easier and more enjoyable than writing a report by hand or researching a subject in a book. With the speed and power of search engines, online dictionaries and encyclopedias, teens can find information anywhere and at any time.

Another method of receiving information is through the cell phone. Despite their bad reputation, cell phones are vital to teens' lives. The most common way that teens use cell phones is for ease and convenience. Like the Internet, cell phones help teens stay in contact with friends and family everywhere.

Even more than calling, people stereotype teens as constantly texting. However, texting is not the evil that many adults portray it as. Texting saves time when teens are in a hurry and allows them to multitask.

In addition to texting though, teens use their phones to send pictures, listen to music, play games and access the Internet – all of which represent the great opportunities technology offers.

Many technological advances benefit not only teens, but adults, too. Items such as electronic book readers save paper and money. Although the initial cost of this gadget is high, after about a year the savings on book prices usually pay for the eBook reader. Teens want everything fast and on the go so these electronic books are perfect. They are another way that technology provides us with instant gratification and enhances peoples' lives.

Technology in general has a positive effect on teens. Technology's benefits far outweigh any drawbacks created by fast, modern gadgets. It gives us a way to relieve stress and escape from reality, improves our tools for learning and helps us communicate with anyone around the world.

Our Technology: A Curse

As technology seeps into the life of today's teens, many begin to question how healthy these devices truly are. Forty years ago, kids spent their free time outside playing in the park with their friends. Now, we sit inside playing video games and watching the "Real World."

Some recent technological developments have affected many aspects of life, from learning methods to how kids spend their free time. Many schools have forbidden cell phones and discourage the use of computers in classrooms. These educators rightfully claim that technology introduces distractions rather than enhancing class discussions. When kids text in class, they pay no attention to the learning at hand and can even distract others when keys click and phones buzz. Soon, everyone will be focusing on their thumbs rather than on the teacher.

Screens, as we all know, are very hard to look away from. Although technology can make homework easier, the temptation to go online is yet another diversion teens use to procrastinate. Instead of getting ahead, teens waste time chatting or updating. While teens see no harm in spending hours on their Facebook or MySpace pages, they do not realize the danger they could be in.

The Internet, while expediting communication, also makes any ideas expressed public. Potential stalkers, kidnappers or bullies are just a click away from a home address and phone number. According to the *Post-Dispatch*, in 2007, 13-year-old Megan Meier committed suicide because a boy she liked started saying nasty things about her on the Internet. Little did she know, the cyberbully was actually a mother in her neighborhood who had invented this boy. Megan Meier's story stresses how troublesome and misleading the Internet can be, and that the less time spent online, the better.

According to the Kaiser Family Foundation, teens spend more than 53 hours a week on technology; teens currently spend about nine more hours a week on technology than five years ago.

When children and teens spend more time on technology, they exercise less. Using this information, one can deduce that too much time on the computer and watching TV contributes to child obesity, a larger chance of danger, and even a possibility of worsening eyesight. If these teens are the future, what will future look like? And if the average time teens spend on technology continues to increase at this rate, teens will be spending an average of 558 hours, more than 23 days, on technology in 10 years.

Although technology can provide benefits, the downsides are overwhelmingly clear. As technology asks for greater amounts of personal information, the risks increase exponentially. Without a firm grip on reality, teens may soon find themselves in a place they wish they weren't. As teens, we need to learn to use technology in moderation or risk spending our entire lives in front of a screen.

