Historical Persona Essay

CCA10.4g Write a historical persona essay that:

* + includes a historic person
  + **defines important moments** in the historic person’s life so essay is **well-focused** and **organized**
  + **shows understanding** of the person, the events, and gathered details about the place and time
  + includes **reflections and observations** about person’s life and experiences
  + **includes the people the person might have met** and creates **accurate depictions** of those individuals
  + **uses the “I” voice** (imagined self to be the person and to be part of these events) in order to get a feel for the experience.
  + **includes thoughts** and feelings
  + **uses dialogue** to bring characters to life
  + **employs an easy-to-follow organization**.

Genre: Personal Essay

* A personal essay is a **less formal** essay genre.
* Writers of this genre convey a profound sense of authenticity and transparency because they invite readers into their lives, to share their experiences.
* They often focus on a singular moment of utter profoundness. They want to recreate that moment through the essay. In this way they are allowing readers to experience a bit of what it was like to be in that time and place.

**Historical Persona Essay**

* It is all of the above descriptors.
* In this case, **the writer adopts the persona of a historical figure** and imagines his/her experience and writes that experience in the voice of the historical figure.

**Your Task**

* Choose a historical figure **who has faced a significant challenge** (refer to our brainstorm notes)
* **Write an essay in first person with a flashback and dialogue in it**.
* Refer to checklists below.

**Your essay must include:**

* Cover page
* 5 paragraph essay (size 12 font, Times New Roman or Calibri, double spaced)
* Hand written rough copy
* Works cited page rubric

**Before Writing Activities**

🞏 Activate Prior Knowledge of personal essays.

🞏 Use graphic organizer to plan, organize, and sequence essay.

🞏 Examine effective dialogue and flashback techniques

**During/After Writing Activities**

🞏 Create draft, revise, edit/peer edit

🞏 Consider message and focus. Are they clear and well-defined?

🞏 Descriptions are accurate and relevant. Word choice is appropriate.

🞏 Point of view is consistently first person.

🞏 Includes introduction, transitions, and conclusion.

🞏 Dialogue is formatted correctly.

🞏 Check for spelling, punctuation, and so on.

Pre-Writing Organizer

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

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| --- |
| 1. Who is your persona? Where do you live? What is your family background? What is your age? What is your occupation? (include information that is especially relevant to your challenges, i.e., growing up in a racist society in which you were a minority or being the youngest of a family of twelve children might have taught the character to be a fighter or activist.) |
| 1. What challenge(s) have you faced or are you facing? If your challenges are societal, describe the kind of society in which you live. (Is it a class society? A Racist society? A rural or urban society? Is it religious? Is it discriminating in other ways?) |
| 1. How did you feel having to deal with your challenge? (Use inferences from what you’ve read to imagine the feelings) |
| 1. How have you overcome or accepted your challenge(s)? How have your challenges made you who you are? |
| 1. What are some of the highlights in your life? What achievements do you most celebrate? |
| 1. What could you tell others who are facing a similar challenge? |

Suggested outline of essay

**Paragraph One: (Box A)** Introduce *yourself* (in your persona) and the most important details of your background. Set out the purpose of the essay, i.e., to describe your challenges.

**Paragraph Two:** **(Box B)** Describe the challenge you face/are facing. If it’s a physical disability, describe how you acquired it and/or how it affects you. If it’s challenges imposed by society, describe your society and why you are underprivileged.

**Paragraph Three and more, depending on how many lines of dialogue you have): (Box C-D)** Retell an event from your life in which your challenge was significant. It could be when the challenge happened, or an experience in which the challenge hindered you, or when you overcame the challenge. **Do this as a flashback AND include some dialogue.**

**Paragraph after the dialogue and flashback: (Box E)** Describe how the challenge has affected your life, your perception of the world, your sense of safety and acceptance. Describe your feelings regarding the challenge.

**Final: (Box F)** Explain how the challenge has been important to your growth as a person. Offer a final statement about overcoming or living with a challenge. You can quote from someone, especially yourself.

**Reflection-**The final step of the writing process is to reflect on your **Historical Persona Essay.**

Assignment

\_\_\_\_I read and reread my assignment to understand the assignment guidelines.

Audience

\_\_\_\_My essay was written with an audience in mind.

Organization

\_\_\_\_My essay has a clear introduction, body, and conclusion.

\_\_\_\_My essay follows a larger organizing principle (logic, chronology, cause and effect, etc.).

Introduction

\_\_\_\_My introduction creates interest in my topic and makes my audience want to read on. \_\_\_\_My introduction addresses the who, where, why, what, and how of my topic.

\_\_\_\_The beginning sentences of my introduction logically lead up to my thesis statement.

Thesis Statement

\_\_\_\_Expresses a claim (a stance, perspective, or opinion) on my topic.

\_\_\_\_Addresses one central idea.

\_\_\_\_Justifies discussion and debate.

\_\_\_\_Previews the argument structure and evidence.

Body Paragraphs

\_\_\_\_I began each paragraph with a topic sentence which indicates that paragraph’s main idea. \_\_\_\_The main idea of every paragraph directly relates to my thesis.

\_\_\_\_\_ I have used a transition sentence at the start of my paragraphs.

\_\_\_\_I offer substantial evidence, support, and analysis to support each paragraph’s main idea. \_\_\_\_My thoughts progress from paragraph to paragraph in a clear, organized way.

Conclusion

\_\_\_\_My conclusion emphasizes my topic and thesis.

\_\_\_\_My essay comes to a logical conclusion and does not end abruptly.

Fine Tuning

\_\_\_\_I have read over my essay to check for grammar and consistency.

Citation

\_\_\_\_I have cited my sources in-text and in the Works Cited/References page.

Historical persona essay – Specific Criteria Name \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

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| **Message/ Meaning** | **Point of View** | You skillfully and confidently used a first person point of view to optimize the development of a message that reflects the experience of the historical persona. You really got inside the character’s head! | You used a first person point of view effectively to communicate the experiences of your chosen historical persona. You seemed to understand your character. | You mostly used a first personal point of view with help. Consider point of view – how can you make it unique to you and your composition? How can you tell the story more effectively as the character you are telling us about? | You are having trouble creating and maintaining a first persona point of view. How can you tell this story from your character’s point of view? How can you imagine the experience from another person’s perspective? |
| **Reflections/ observations about life experiences** | You show a deep understanding of how your historical persona’s life experiences impacted them, their world and others around them. You are able to show these reflections through implicit means within your text. | You have included reflections and observations about your historical persona’s life and experiences and how they impacted their own and other’s lives. There is an element of your own connection and response to your historical persona in your essay. | With help, you show some reflection and observation about the life experiences of your historical persona. You need to more deeply consider how your character’s life impacted their experiences and the lives of others. How can you explain this in your first person text? | You are having trouble reflecting and observing how your persona’s life experiences impacted them and those around them. Why was your persona important? What did they do? How did this affect their life? How did it affect others? How can you weave this into your essay? |
| **Language choice and conventions** | **Dialogue** | Your dialogue effectively brings characters from the essay to life by describing their thoughts and conversations while uniquely contributing to the message of the essay. | Your dialogue creates a clear picture of the characters and improves the message of the story. | Your dialogue propels the story forwards but doesn’t describe the characters enough. Consider each character- what makes them different from another? | You are having trouble using dialogue to advance your message. Create an image of the character in your head. What might that person say? What might they think? How can you work this out before you begin writing? |
|  | **Elements of an essay.** | You have successfully included all elements of an essay. Thesis statement, introduction, three- body paragraphs, conclusion, and a cover page. | You have tried to include all elements of an essay. However, a few mistakes have been made. Thesis statement, introduction, three- body paragraphs, conclusion, and a cover page. | You are missing 1-2 elements of an essay. Thesis statement, introduction, three-body paragraphs, conclusion, and a cover page. | You are missing 3 or more elements of an essay. Thesis statement, introduction, three- body paragraphs, conclusion, and a cover page. |

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|  | **Organization** | Your text reflects careful and considered planning. All ideas are effectively sequenced with strong transitions and a powerful beginning and ending. Your essay offers insight for the reader about your topic. | Your text is organized clearly. You have logical sequencing, appropriate transitions and a considered beginning and ending. | Your text shows some evidence of planning. You needed help with organization and development of your ideas. Reference / create a graphic organizer or flow chart to increase the impact of your organization. Consider more unique transitions and ways to really hook the reader. | You are having trouble organizing your thoughts in writing. More time should be spent planning the structure and organization of the text before you even begin to write. How could you organize your essay? What are all the pieces you need? How can you show smooth movement from one idea to the next? |
| **Language choice and conventions** | **Smooth transitions** | Your topic flows eloquently from one part to the next enhancing the overall enjoyment of the writing. | Your representation smoothly flows from one part to the next. You effectively use transitional words and phrases. | With help you create basic transitions from one part of your writing to the next. How can you take some risks and try some new transitions? | You are having trouble creating a flow from one part of your writing to the next. Include your plans for transition in your map. Explore ways to move from one idea to the next. |
| **Effectively uses techniques (flashback, hyperbole.etc** | You creatively use multiple techniques to enhance meaning in your message and make your writing highly engaging and interesting to read. | You effectively use techniques to add meaning to your message and engage your audience in your story. | With help you use basic techniques to add meaning to your message. How can you deliver your message using a variety of techniques? Explore new ways to express your ideas. | You need much help to you use techniques to add meaning to your message. Use your planning tool to help you include some techniques that will help others understand your intended meaning. Explore the techniques available. Be sure you understand why various techniques are used. |
| **Language cues and conventions** | Your syntax is varied and polished and your word choices show style and efficiency. Any exceptions to standard usage are used for stylistic effect. Your text adheres to accepted standards of spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. Any errors are a result of risk taking. | Your syntax is effective, with some variety in length or structure. Your common sentence constructions are correct. The words you use to describe are clear but somewhat generalized. Your spelling, punctuation, and capitalization are generally correct. Your ideas are clear despite any mechanical errors. | Any uncomplicated sentence structures are usually clear, but your attempts at more complicated structures result in awkwardness and/or obscured meaning. The word choice you used to describe is sometime vague or overused. You needed some help with aspects of syntax and mechanics. Where can you go for help with this? How can you expand on your word choices? | You are having trouble with language cues and conventions. Your sentences are incomplete, run-on, or simple in structure. What tools do you have to improve word choice? What will help with creating effective sentence structure? Where can you go for help with mechanics? |

Feedback: /80