

TAKING THE COMPOSITION HIGH ROAD

Presented By : JR Segundo

Sharyland ISD | Region 4 Contest Director



INTRODUCTION

My name is Raul Segundo, an English teacher at Sharyland High School in the Rio Grande Valley. I serve as the Region 4 Ready Writing contest director and contribute to activities at the state level. My objective is to ensure that the Ready Writing contest aligns seamlessly with the standards upheld at the state level.



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FOUNDATION

Feedback from my writers have revealed two main factors in what they perceive to be successful essays.

Factor One

**Deeper Message:
The prompt inspires the
writer to examine their place
in the world.**

Factor Two

**Writing for Understanding:
Ready Writing is a way to
convey argument/meaning**

COMPLEXITY

Complexity extends beyond the use of sophisticated vocabulary; it encompasses the manner in which we structure our sentences and transition between examples and commentary. Embracing complexity steers us away from formulaic writing.

THE APPROACH

- **Reading the Prompt**

Use the prompt as a springboard. Read for a deeper meaning.

- **Responding to the Prompt**

Have students respond to the prompt instead of quoting or explaining it.

THE CONTEST

- 1** Do not focus on other writers. Some writers intentionally finish quickly in attempt to intimidate opponents.
- 2** Examine the first thought that comes to your mind, then toss it. If you thought of it first, then chances are that almost everyone else in the room did as well.
- 3** Take the extra time to brainstorm if needed. We do want to be mindful of the time, but it should not be at the cost of rushing our thoughts.

THE ESSAY

● Introductions

All types of introductions should be considered valid. Having the student choose their style helps them break the ice.

● Commentary

Do they examine their place in society? Do they make text-to-self and text-to-world/society connections? Do they explain how their examples relate to their thesis?

● Examples

Examples can be subjective. Students should look to apply them appropriately first. MLK was influential but used too much.

● Style

Use metaphors, symbolism, irony, etc. Step out of the comfort zone and experiment with the language. Let them figure out what to bend. Break the formula.

THE “PROBLEM”

Is Ready Writing subjective? Indeed, it is. Students and coaches may perceive their efforts as flawless despite not achieving the desired outcome. Certain students might present impressive evidence of extensive reading without offering substantial analysis. Nevertheless, when considering the collective input of judges, a consensus is reached regarding the standards of effective writing.

SAMPLE ESSAYS

**Scan the QR Code to
view the 4A State
Champion Essay**



WORDS FROM A WRITER

District Champion

Regional Champion

Placed 4th at State

The ready writer is a young sociologist, psychologist, scientist, reader, artist, historian, musician, athlete, etc. They tie science and cancel culture; history and sociology; a Netflix show and psychology. When they allow themselves to be introspective until they find a clear direction and argument, they inspire with their pen.

-Mili Reynoso

CONCLUSION

Ready Writing is meant to give students an opportunity to engage with a piece of literature in a way that has them analyze their role in society. We must encourage students to find their voice through their interests. Instead of limiting them to formulas and overused examples, trust them to their own thinking.



COMING SOON

- **Finding Common Ground:**

Developing versatile writers through Ready Writing, Journalism, Literary Criticism, and Spelling.

- **ESL Students and Writing Studies:**

How to get ESL students comfortable with their writing abilities and in competition.

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THANK YOU

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