

Explanation of assignment:

This is a 12th grade final exam for first semester. Seniors completed debates just prior to the final. The debate process required students to research the pros and cons of a controversial issue, develop a written outline of both sides of the argument with a minimum of six pieces of textual evidence from their research, and then craft an opening and closing argument. The final exam utilizes the same skill set to examine an AP-style writing assignment. Students first chose a topic among five different options. They spent two days reading 5-6 sources (most are excerpts of articles, although each packet also includes at least one chart or graph), highlighting the main arguments, and developing an outline of their argument. Students then write their essay in a two-hour block during final exams.

With the following writing sample, the assignment is included but the sources students read to build their argument are not included.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE AND COMPOSITION

SECTION II

Total time—2 hours

Question 1

(Suggested time—40 minutes. This question counts for one-third of the total essay section score.)

Locavores are people who have decided to eat locally grown or produced products as much as possible. With an eye to nutrition as well as sustainability (resource use that preserves the environment), the locavore movement has become widespread over the past decade.

Imagine that a community is considering organizing a locavore movement. Carefully read the following seven sources, including the introductory information for each source. Then synthesize information from at least three of the sources and incorporate it into a coherent, well-developed essay that identifies the key issues associated with the locavore movement and examines their implications for the community.

Make sure that your argument is central; use the sources to illustrate and support your reasoning. Avoid merely summarizing the sources. Indicate clearly which sources you are drawing from, whether through direct quotation, paraphrase, or summary. You may cite the sources as Source A, Source B, etc., or by using the descriptions in parentheses.

- Source A (Maiser)
- Source B (Smith and MacKinnon)
- Source C (McWilliams)
- Source D (chart)
- Source E (Gogoi)
- Source F (Roberts)
- Source G (cartoon)



Eating Locally

The locavore movement is something every community should consider to help build a healthy and efficient economy. In a locavore movement, people decide to eat locally as well as to produce food locally. Although it is not always a possibility, the potential benefits of the movement should inspire people to make an effort to support the cause. Many locavores today are contributing towards the sustainability of their own community's economy and its overall health. If locavorism is a possibility, then the opportunity should be taken advantage of.

In order for a community to go locavore, it has to meet certain requirements. Does the community have access to locally grown food? Are the people unable to produce food for themselves due to environmental conditions? Is the food that is produced locally necessary for a healthy diet? If a community can answer “yes” to the majority of these questions then it is very practical for people to eat locally. If the answers are “no” then that specific community would have to find other ways to ensure that its people are provided with healthy options, and new ways to bring money back into the community. Whether or not going locavore is a possibility usually depends on location. It is important to recognize that populated areas are less likely to have local grocery options. For example, “in the United States, 80 percent of us live in large, densely populated urban areas, usually on the coast, and typically hundreds of miles, often thousands of miles, from the major centers of food production”, which means that the locavore movement is

less likely to be very popular among these areas (Source F). That being said, in areas with more suitable conditions the locavore movement is quickly rising, especially over the past decade.

The movement's popularity is partially due to the fact that going locavore can have a positive impact on the community's economy and growth. If products are produced and then bought within the same community then the money is being cycled back, strengthening its economy. In London, a study by the New Economics Foundation proved that "a dollar spent locally generates twice as much income for the local economy", which also means that money is not leaving the community to be sent elsewhere by purchasing from external businesses (Source A). These external businesses are often major food corporations or food chains that are potentially harming the economy as well. Mass production is proven to be a cause of pollution and poor air quality. For example, in a 2009 study on the climate impact of greenhouse gas emissions produced by supply chain, the production alone was the main cause of CO₂ released into the air (Source D). The same study also shows that the transportation of mass produced products will add to the pollution, although not as much as the production. Even if the product is "organic" per say; studies show that "the miles that organic food often travels to our plate creates environmental damage that outweighs the benefit of buying organic" (Source A). If people choose to eat more locally then the amount of food produced and transported by these food chains would decrease, resulting in lesser amounts of gases damaging the economy.

More importantly, the locavore movement is inspiring people to eat healthier and higher quality food. Locavorism has proven to not only provide fresher options, but it also provides food that tastes better, food that is not subject to be affected by bioterrorism, and even a wider variety of options to choose from. If produce comes directly from within a community then it has

little to no time to spend in transportation or even just sitting in storage. According to Source A, “freshness not only affects the taste of your food, but the nutritional value which declines over time”. If the people are only purchasing food that is produced outside of their community then they are not able to receive the full nutritional potential of their groceries. When buying locally grown food there is a guaranteed freshness that cannot be matched. Locavores are pleasantly surprised by the higher quality groceries they are able to purchase from their local farms. One locavore in particular, Marion Nestle, says she “loves the taste of fresh food”, and she “loves the mystery of years when the late corn is just utterly, incredibly good, and no one can say why; it just is” (Source B). That is one reason why Marion became a dietician who advocates for local eating.

The locavore movement is becoming more and more popular each year, and is creating a happy and healthy environment around those who participate. The locavore movement is leaving people with a greater love for food in general, with new opportunities in the agricultural field, and with a sense of community. Source E quotes Anthony Flaccavento who says, “These are ordinary, middle-income folks who have become really engaged in food and really care about where their food comes from”. This is what people would like to see moving towards a less industrial future, and locavorism is the leading force behind it. That is why each and every community should stop to consider whether or not they are able to take advantage of this exciting opportunity.

This essay received a score of 4. Even though the ideas are not entirely fleshed out, this is due to the time constraints involved. With only two hours to craft a well-developed essay, the writer has been able to provide a solid, defensible claim and support it with a wide variety of sources. The writing has a clear and sharp focus, beginning with an explanation of what areas could benefit from a locavore movement and then providing several key arguments as to why eating locally would benefit these particular areas. There is a clear beginning, middle, and end to the essay, where ideas are sequenced effectively. The writing exhibits good control of grammar and conventions.

Common Core All-Subject Writing Rubric

Synthesis essay
12th grade 1st semester final

Writing Type(circle one): Argumentative Informative/Explanatory Narrative (ELA only)

CONTENT X4	The writing has a sharp focus and clarity of purpose. The ideas are developed with examples and specific details including textual evidence and are thoroughly elaborated. All elements of the prompt are addressed.	The writing has a clear central idea and a clear focus. Ideas are developed with textual evidence, even though the development may be uneven. Information is relevant. Most elements of the prompt are addressed.	The writing has a vague central idea; there are shifts in focus or digressions. Ideas are listed, information may be incomplete or irrelevant, textual evidence may be lacking, and there is little development. Some elements of the prompt are <u>not</u> addressed.	The writing has unclear or confusing ideas. The ideas are missing relevant information, there is not enough information, or there is little or no development, and little textual evidence. Significant elements of the prompt are <u>not</u> addressed.	X4
ORGANIZATION	There is a beginning, middle, and end in the writing with strong transitions between ideas. Ideas are presented in a logical order and there is a sense of completion about the writing.	There is a beginning, middle, and end in the writing with simple transitions between ideas. Ideas are presented in a logical order and the writing may have a weak ending.	There is a weak beginning, middle, and end with gaps in ideas. Ideas are presented in random order, there may be significant repetition, and the writing may have no ending.	There is no beginning or end with severe gaps in ideas. Ideas are presented in a random or repetitive order. There may be too little information to demonstrate organization.	
SPELLING & GRAMMAR (Conventions)	The writing exhibits superior control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. If there are errors present, they do not appear to be part of a pattern of errors.	The writing exhibits proper control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. If there are errors present, they do not appear to be a part of a pattern of errors.	The writing exhibits weak control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The errors minimally affect the meaning of the writing.	The writing exhibits little to no control over grammar, spelling, punctuation, and capitalization. The errors greatly affect the meaning of the writing.	
Teacher Feedback:		{{Student Reflection on Back}}		Total Points Earned	
				Score <i>4</i>	