

TOPIC I:

Directions: You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

In a recent editorial essay, a working mother of four laments being made to feel guilty for not "being there" every minute for her children. She notes, "The school nurse has taken me to task for not being immediately accessible, and my kids--who live in a world where instant gratification has become the norm--complain about my intermittent unreachability. To which I say, hey, deal with it. I'm not cavalier about my mothering responsibilities.... I'm an involved parent. We modern moms and dads are not only expected to make sure our kids are perfectly nourished, endlessly enriched, and absolutely safe at all times: now, with cell phones and pagers, we are also supposed to be instantly reachable and immediately responsive.... We cannot and should not orchestrate every moment in our children's lives for them--partly because the effort turns out to be futile, but more importantly because it prevents our kids from learning skills they need to succeed in the real world. There are times they need to ad lib. There are times they need to wait. There are even times they need to turn to someone else."

Explain the author's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with her views. Support your position by referring to the passage and by providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Sample student essay with a score of 6:

In life there are few encounters and influences which have the power and ability to absolutely change our lives. These encounters might be with other individuals, experiences, and so on. But whether we wish to admit it or not, the most influential and life-changing relationship we will ever experience, on a human level, will be the one established with our parents. Whether positive or not, our parents have a great influence on us, their children. The lady in this prompt seems to be a single-parent raising four kids. Her argument is totally understandable, considering her circumstances. If there is no father present, then her role has significantly changed. She has become both mother and father. Therefore her perspective is quite different from those who have a spouse to help raise the children with. Her argument is both self-justified and understood and in many ways I do agree with her. However, in some areas I disagree.

The main argument of this working mother is that she feels that just because she isn't easily reachable, that does in no way label her a "non-involved" parent. In this argument I would agree. There are millions of parents who love their children and wish to ensure their future. These parents are concerned like any other parent and take steps to ensure that they themselves are involved in the nurturing and raising of their children. However, these parents are also faced with situations and circumstances which aren't common. Such as working one or more jobs, being a single parent, and various other "uncommon" circumstances. Their time is spent trying to provide for their families, and to say that they are anything less than a good and involved parent is absolutely wrong.

My mother works two jobs. She usually comes home about eight o'clock at night. Her time is consumed with work and trying to provide for me. She isn't always reachable at her job, but she has always been involved in my life and will continue to be. She is always there when I truly need her and has made it her goal to provide for me what she can. Despite how tired and weary she may be. To say my mother was a "non-involved" parent would be a total lie. Just because a parent isn't always reachable it has no indication on whether or not they are involved with their children's lives.

I would also agree with the ladies statement concerning about "always being there." "We cannot and should not orchestrate every moment in our children's lives..." This statement is so true. As we continue to grow and develop, part of these two processes is learning how to become independent. This isn't to say that we will never need help from anyone, but rather we need to learn how to survive in the game of life without that "help." We need to "spread our wings" as the popular cliché states. This ideal is totally relevant in my life. Next year I'll be going to college. I couldn't have made it this far without the help of both God and my mother. Nonetheless, I wouldn't be as prepared for living on my own if my mother had guided me every step of the way. Along this path of mine I had to break free from the grasp of my mother and learn some lessons of my own. These independent experiences are in truth the reason why I am able to grow and develop.

However, in one area of the ladies argument I would disagree with. The lady states: "There are even times they need to turn to someone else." To some extent this may be true, but to me it would seem that as a parent I would want to make sure that these other people were positive influences. I understand that parents do not have all the answers. Who does? And that in some cases children should seek other advice, but the problem with that is that this "other advice" might be the wrong advice. To combat this problem, I believe that this lady, and all parents in general, need to tell their children good advice and explain to them that they need to be careful about who tells them advice. Therefore, the child beforehand will have an idea about what to look for and what to not.

The argument of the mother is, in my opinion, totally understandable. To look at things from her perspective one must realize that raising four kids is hard. And if she is a single-parent, which I assume she is, the task can be even more difficult. Parents are the first teachers their children have. As parents their goal should be to at all times be there for their kids when they need them. However, because of the complexity of life this goal isn't always attainable. So in this case parents should try and do their best. A parents involvement shouldn't be based on time and availability, but rather the love, dedication, influence, and conditions of which the parent operates under and provides. Love is love in all respects.

Comment on the "6" essay: *This is an example of superior, confident writing. The essay is written in a fluent style, with clearly organized paragraphs and sentences. This writer clearly understands the passage and refers to its details frequently throughout his response. He agrees with most of the mother's opinions but delineates his area of disagreement with apt reasons and examples drawn from his own experience. He makes certain assumptions about the author (e.g., being a single parent) but clearly shows how his analysis is based on those assumptions.*

He specifies the degree to which parental involvement is important and when it might be too much. In concluding he makes the fine point that involvement should not be based solely on time and availability, but on the love and concern the parent has for the child.

The essay is not without some flaws--an occasional sentence fragment, missing commas, unmarked possessives, and several pronoun agreement problems. But these are not consistent errors and would probably be corrected in a second draft.

Sample student essay with a score of 5:

Being able to handle responsibility is one of the greatest feelings. A sense of accomplishment rushes through you as you complete a task by yourself when others run to their mom for help. The so-called "involved parent" is sometimes the one who steps back and lets their child discover the difficult tasks on their own. The same parent has the child who learns to conquer the obstacles and venture into the world aware of imperfections. Although some children may need their parents by their side, the best is for them to live life through their own eyes.

Personally, I can relate to this issue on many levels. I struggled through my childhood--being raised by nannies, neighbors and grandmas--this when the nannies were no longer affordable. My mother at work, and my father looking for work in other cities, left my older brother and I alone after school. I am living

truth that "what doesn't kill you, only makes you stronger." At a young age we learned to get by without my mother at our beck-and-call. Granted we had access to her while she was at work but that whole 15 minute drive home nowadays would be unbearable. On her way home we couldn't call her in a frenzy as to where our favorite toy was--we had to wait 15 minutes! A little ridiculous, but very true.

The author confesses that they aren't the "cavalier" parent--who is? She claims she's involved enough so that her children can depend on her but not at all hours of the day. I can relate. I succeed in school primarily because I learned to handle obstacles on my own. When some school assignment needed to be done, I did it. If I had questions, I asked. I took the initiative. Speaking from experience, I know that dependency on your parents is not effective--nor going to bring you to a University where so much is expected from you, not your parent. I hear stories nightly about my mom's boss--an attorney--with a sophomore son who still does homework with his mom, every night for five hours. The mother claims it will help him--meanwhile, he's learning nothing and still receiving C's and D's. Tell me then, what good is that mother at his beck and call, that runs to his school when he forgot an assignment? When will parents like that "let go" and let their children learn for themselves?

There are many views and definitions of a "good parent," the "ideal parent." One suggestion is the one who works hard for their family, there for them enough for the kids to know they're loved--beyond that the grey areas appear. As the school nurse claims--the parent must be "reachable." But what good is reachable when the kids have no sense of self-worth or accomplishment. What good is that when the child's accepted to a 4 year institution--because of their mother's work--and has no idea how to handle due dates, deadlines or to manage time?

In an ideal world--one which will never again exist--and for good reason--the mother could be home for their children. If the income was so that the mother didn't need to work two jobs, that would be great. If the women didn't feel the desire to get out of the house of bratty kids, that would be acceptable, but that's not how things are. I grew up with kids who had their mom home at every given moment. I think mine was the only one who worked. And while I was jealous for all those years of a mom that made cookies and snacks, I now realize that I'm a better person because of the lack of involvement from my mother. I have yearbook deadlines, school reports, two jobs. I can handle a lot more than other students--primarily because I've learned to accept responsibility.

She was always there for me. Whenever I had a bad day or needed to chat--I could always call her at her office. But I learned a lot from her working. She came home every night, cooked dinner, helped with homework and managed to remain sane, all while I took responsibility into my own hands and did what I needed to do. I'm now capable of overcoming the obstacles, strive to

achieve my full potential and accept that my parents were always there for me--in essence, and supported me every step of the way.

Comments on the "5" essay: *This is an example of strong writing. The writer provides a strong defense of the author's position and reinforces this defense with clearly expressed examples from her own experience. The essay shows some complexity of thought: the writer compares her positive experience with a mother similar to the author of the passage, and then contrasts this mother with the type of oversolicitous mother who has a detrimental effect on her child.*

The essay is generally well-organized and shows a clear understanding of the passage: the writer most often conveys this understanding through implication rather than summary or paraphrase of the passage. The essay is strengthened by its lively tone and personal examples.

There are some errors, but they are not serious enough to distract or confuse the reader.

Sample student essay with a score of 4:

The main point that the author is trying to bring up in the passage is that the parents are quite busy in today's world. She says that because of this they can't devote all of their time to their children. Also, she says that because they are busy, it should not be taken for granted that they don't love their children. She says that the nurse had blamed me for not being immediately available to their kids, and her kids complain that she is difficult to get in touch with.

I agree with the author's viewpoint. The children need to face the daily problems on their own. If the child is small, like three years old, then it is the sole responsibility of the parents to take their care, but as the child grows old they should try to take care of themselves. They should not run to their parents with every problem they come across. If they do this, they won't be able to create a niche for themselves in today's fast pace world. They wouldn't know how to tackle problems. Also, the children wouldn't be able to express themselves, either in school class or a business meeting.

I would like to present an example of my friend, who was solely dependant on his parents, and the parents didn't mind that. They never told him to do some work or do even homework without their help. When he was fourteen years old, his parents died in a car accident. Now, my friend was living with his grandparents, who were into their eighties. The whole responsibility of the house dropped on his shoulders. He had to run the house, make money, and to take care of his grandparents. It was because he was not independent, he was always looking around for someone who could help him. Sometimes, he trusted persons, who later robbed him of money and put him into trouble. Although, after

a couple of years he learnt how to handle problems, but his innocence had cost him a lot by that time.

It is very much clear from my real life experience that how interdependence can cost you a lot. I believe that the children need to face the world on their own. The author has put quite clearly in the passage that sometimes the children need to wait until their parents are available and sometimes they need to look for someone else for help.

Comments on the "4" essay: *This essay is just adequate. It demonstrates a generally accurate understanding of the passage, but it does not explore the passage in much depth. There is little syntactic variety in the sentences: in paragraph 1, for example, the student begins three sentences with "She says...", repeating the author's words rather than conveying her ideas in his own words. The topic is also treated simplistically. Compared to the 5 and 6 papers, this essay is minimally developed and does not provide a range of examples.*

There are some errors that distract the reader, but they do not significantly obscure meaning. The writer generally demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Sample student essay with a score of 3:

As for a young adult, which I strongly disagree with the author's point of view toward modern moms and dads. Even though the kids can take care of their own and play an important role in their parent's lives, they still need the love from parents. We as children cannot succeed in life with our parent showing the way to success.

As for me, I am an adult, I don't have cell phones or pagers, but I do have a car. My mother still support the fact that I'm going to go to a university. I wanted to move out when I go to college, which my mom refuse my decision. She thought that I wanted to move out, because I wish to get away from home. She shows me that, she loves me very much.

My two sisters and my beloved mother had purchase a 94 integra LS for me last year. The car was in excellent condition. I always wish to have a manuel car. That was one of the most happy moments of my teenage life. My two sisters, which I admire and love them eversince the day my mother gave birth to me. My inspiration and courage come from my beloved sisters. I admire the fact that they both got married at age seventeen. I inherited their bravery and as a leader.

My mother had taken a great care of me eversince I was born. She cook a splendid dinner every night. The essence of our chines recipe is delicious.

She a dish called "Lobster with ginger." This is a very spectacular dish that she had learned from restaurants. She is the greatest mom ever, and I like the fact that she is very nice and generous toward my friends. My mom treat my friends like their own sons.

My experience proved to be strongly disagree with the author's point of view. Nevertheless, no matter how the author shows that mother are careless and becoming irresponsible for their siblings, but my parents is the greatest.

Comments on the "3" essay: *The writer of this essay shows developing competence. The essay, though, has a number of weaknesses which keep it out of the adequate range. The student has limited control of the syntax of longer sentences, as in sentence one of the first paragraph. In the next two sentences, the meaning is not clear, and the reader has to guess the writer's intentions. In paragraphs three and four the writer utilizes short "primer" sentences with little complexity in language or syntax. The writer praises her mother's cooking and generosity in paragraph four, but these traits are not related to the passage, and the paragraph reveals a fundamental misreading of the passage.*

The essay has an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that sometimes interfere with meaning.

Sample student essay with a score of 2:

I agree with the mother view about the children, how the school nurse has taken her to task for not being immediately accessible, and her kids.

I feel about her point of view is that children should be taught perfectly by themselves because they have the responsibility to do why is right for them. If there is a problem where your kids need help, parents should say "sure" and parents should teach them the right way.

Parents should give love to their kids because if you don't they would turn you down. It's like when you have to train the dog how to sit and potty train. It's much easier train human because humans are more likely to understand what you are saying.

It's a good thing that parents care about kids because they would respect you back, the way you did.

I feel that parents would be the one for their children because when their children grow up they would do the same thing to their children. I would think children would understand what parents want them to do and when they do, they would stay out of trouble. Also children would get a good education in high school and even in college.

Comments on the "2" essay: *This essay is seriously flawed. The writer reveals a limited understanding of the passage and does not know how to develop a response. He cannot appropriately summarize the issues raised. The essay has a number of simplistic generalizations, such as "parents should teach them the right way." This writer is unable to draw upon examples from his own life or reading. Paragraphs of only one or two sentences are a sign of the student's inability to develop his ideas. Inadequate control of syntax, very limited vocabulary, and numerous basic grammatical errors frequently interfere with meaning.*

Sample student essay with a score of 1:

In the passage the author argues that the parents should not stay with their kids all the time. Sometimes they don't give the kids a chance to learn how to be alone and take care of themselves. The children also have their own life and friends. They need time for themselves. Of course, the parents can not leave their kids alone all the time but give them a phone call and talk to them when they need help. Nobody could be succes without practise, same as the kids. If the parents stay with the kid every minutes, and take care of everything for them, the kids might used to it. When there is problems, they won't know how to solve it, but call for help from their parents. Kids would never grow up if they have this kind of live. I am agree with her view. I think the parents should give their kid a chance to gain experience the parents actions do, to the kid are very effective.

Comments on the "1" essay: *This essay demonstrates fundamental deficiencies in writing skills. It suggests an inability to respond meaningfully to the topic. The essay is very brief, and largely made up of generalizations. While the essay does not contain the persistent errors in grammar or usage that mar some "1" papers, it is scored low because it does not provide a focused response, and it lapses into incoherence in the last sentences.*

TOPIC II:

Directions: You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

"It is painfully apparent today that millions of Americans who would never think of themselves as lawbreakers, let alone criminals, are taking increasing liberties with all sorts of 'minor' laws that are nonetheless designed to protect and nourish society. When it comes to tax codes, or laws against littering or speeding or noise pollution, more and more ordinary citizens are becoming scofflaws [people who casually break the law]. The slogan of the day seems to be, 'You're a fool if you obey the rules.' Americans are used to thinking that law-and-order is threatened mainly by violent crime. But the foundations of social order are more profoundly shaken when ordinary law-abiding citizens take to skirting the law."

---Adapted from Frank Trippett's "A Red Light for Scofflaws"

Explain Trippett's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Sample student essay with a score of 6:

Frank Trippett is one of the few American citizens that is able to see what has happened to our society. In the remarkable passage from his, "A Red Light for Scofflaws," he makes some excellent points on Americans and how they have become accustomed to breaking the law and, even worse, thinking that it is okay to do so. From a young teenage girl's perspective, I myself can say that I strongly agree with him and that things are getting worse in American society; it all starts right where I am now: the adolescent years.

Teenagers are very impressionable and their young minds can be easily influenced by society. It doesn't mean that they don't know right from wrong, but they do look to others for answers and guidance so that they will know how to survive in this sometimes seemingly cold world. When teenagers get their driver's license, it is exciting and somewhat scary being a first time driver. I remember the first time I got onto the road by myself. I was a little scared with all those cars zooming around me. I noticed, though, as I got more comfortable, little by little I would go a little faster to keep up with the flow of traffic. My mom one time noticed I was going 60 in a 45 mph zone, and needless to say was less than thrilled. It seems, though, that if you don't go that speed you'll get eaten

alive by others. People will ride your behind or flip you off and it shouldn't be that way. As a society, we've made it okay for people to do that to us and not suffer any consequences. Everyday people get away with road rage and unsafe driving. Sometimes it is very scary to be on the road when you constantly feel that someone is going to get mad at you because you aren't going fast enough or that they think you cut them off. In high school, if you go the speed limit you apparently drive like a grandma and are considered a loser. How did we come to these conclusions? Who is making this stuff up?

Another big problem here in society is littering. My biggest pet peeve in the whole wide world is stepping on gum. To me, it is the most disgusting and revolting thing to step in someone else's gum. I don't think that I should have to constantly look down at my feet just so I can avoid stepping in gum. My aunt once went to Singapore and said it was the most beautiful country she had ever seen. Do you know why? It is spotless. There is not a single piece of trash on the ground or any signs of gum stains on the sidewalks. Why do you think that this is? Singapore has laws that if you litter you will be fined \$1000. If you get caught more than once, you could be sent to jail. Let me tell you, that is reason enough to not even think of littering. Singapore jail cells make America's prison cell's look like day spas. They are dirty, small, and have no lighting. All people have to do is see that and instead of throwing something on the ground, they'll walk to the trash can. But kids at my school spit out their gum all the time and there are no consequences for it. Without consequences for disobeying minor laws our social order is weakened, as Trippett suggests.

Not only is there a problem with gum, but with littering trash in general. I get so infuriated taking my dog for a walk because there is trash she can pick up, or, even worse, broken glass that she can step on. I feel I can't even take a leisurely walk with her because I'm constantly steering her away from the trash and broken glass. If everyone obeyed the littering laws, our environment would be a much better place to live.

When it comes to noise pollution, the nosiest kids seem to be the high school and college kids. I personally think that most kids are arrogant in that they play loud music and don't care if anyone wants to hear it or not. These kids blast their music 24/7, and if someone asks them to turn it down, they become the bad guys. Adults also like to play their music loud at parties and don't really care if it is disturbing the neighborhood or not. Again, the social order is affected when we don't have respect for the rights and comforts of our fellowmen.

I think the reason so much of this is happening is because as a whole American society has grown soft when it comes to social conduct. We've become so wrapped up and worried about the violent crimes that everyone forgets about the other laws that are being broken. All it takes is a little effort and things will improve. Recently, a bunch of cops staked out a street that kids, and adults as well, speed down. About 150 people from my school got tickets,

including teachers. How cautious do you think they are now? Everyone is so afraid that the police will be there randomly, so they actually go the speed limit on that street. See? That is all it takes to putting a stop to all these problems. If we were strict like they are in Singapore, that would eliminate the littering problem, and if we were firm and laid down rules for noise pollution, with significant punishment for violations, that would slow down too. As I said, all it takes is some effort and rules that are strictly enforced and we could have our American society in shape again. I want my kids to grow up in a nice, clean, and safe country with a slogan that says, "It's cool to follow the rules." Hopefully, that will change in time. As long as our attitudes change and our rules are stricter, than I believe a change is possible. I believe in America and I believe we can do this.

Comments on the "6" essay: *In a 45-minute, first draft essay, this student demonstrates superior writing. She clearly understands the topic and responds effectively. With carefully chosen supporting examples, she explores the issues thoughtfully and in depth. She has an effective, fluent style marked by syntactic variety and a command of language. She is clearly engaged with her writing. The essay is not perfect: in a second draft, the writer would probably have weeded out some of the colloquial language ("bunch of cops," "stuff," etc.) and repetition, but for first draft writing this is a remarkable accomplishment.*

Sample student essay with a score of 5:

Imagine a place where everything is perfect, no crime, no violence, just a perfect world where nothing ever goes wrong. It would be our ultimate utopia, but living in today's society isn't such a perfect utopia. There are many crimes, murder, drugs, insubordinate teenagers rebelling against their parents, and all for what, just to be another person labeled as a law breaking citizen. Today, more and more people are lowering their values and believes and giving into the false impressions of being a "bad person." Even though there are some genuine people out there with beliefs that can't be broken, but on the other hand, I agree with Trippett's argument against the slogan, "You're a fool if you obey the rules."

Now a days, more and more teenagers are getting into the habit of breaking the law. Teenagers, ordinary, young citizens that someone wouldn't think of them committing a crime, does. Why is that? In todays world, teenagers are being egged on with the help of peer pressure. There are many times in which I have gone to parties and seen people call a person, "chicken" or "stupid" just because they don't want to drink or do anything. Peer pressure is helping young adults commit crimes and break the law only because "Its the cool thing too do." I am almost sure that parents know their children drink, and I believe children drink only because they had to, or they wanted to look cool. Young adults would rather ruin and harm their body, rather than have the courage and guts to say no to breaking the law.

Its understandable that people in todays society want to have fun, and they want to party once in a while, but at the same time, too much partying can lead to unwanted and devastating consequences that shouldn't have to be in the first place. Just recently, a boy from a nearby university jumped off a bridge, right above a beach with mothers and children. How could anybody know of such an unforeshadowed death? I realize, he just wanted to have fun, but on the other hand, he broke the law and ended up paying the consequences. Most teenagers don't realize the consequences, but they would rather be cool than protect themselves. Breaking the law, and breaking the rules can give you a harder consequence than pleasure.

I believe breaking the law today is becoming more of an addiction than anything. When ordinary people see movie stars, or our idols, breaking the law, we automatically assume that its ok for us, using them as an excuse for our behavior. Breaking the law of speeding or polluting or even littering has become more of an ordinary part of our lives that we automatically do it. We always figure, "I can't get caught, it won't happen to me," so we keep on doing it because everybody else is doing it. When we realize more ordinary people are helping corrupt our world, we begin to see a little more of our what-was-known-as-utopia fade away.

The saying shouldn't be "You're a fool if you obey the rules." It should be "You're a fool if you don't." Its easy to see that teenagers are going to do whatever their friends are going to do, and one should realize that people are going to eventually run a red light, or speed, but people shouldnt be making excuses for their actions, or as to why they decided to break the law. The social order in our society is depleting more and more everyday because of peoples careless behavior and insubordinate actions. The values that our parents had and have tried to pass on to us are slowly fading always into our own corrupt thoughts and beliefs. Life is a complicated journey that involves many unwanted and unseen obstacles. Its only our choice as to how to solve and get through those obstacles is how we shape ourselves. Breaking laws, and committing crimes can only foreshadow harder times coming your way. So, in the end, when your behind bars, killed, or even facing the wrath of your parents, you can simply ask yourself the question, "Who's the fool now?"

Comments on the "5" essay: *This essay demonstrates clear competence in writing. The student addresses the topic clearly and shows his understanding of Trippett's position by providing appropriate examples of how wrong it is to say or think "You're a fool if you obey the rules." The essay is well developed. The writer thoughtfully provides reasons why people become scofflaws which he goes on to develop and support: we are influenced by peer pressure to break laws, we don't think about possible consequences of unlawful behavior, and we are so used to breaking the law that it's become an addiction. The style of the essay is fluent; the writer has control over complex structures, and his sentences show syntactic variety.*

The essay has occasional errors in spelling, some commas are omitted, and some contractions and possessives are not appropriately punctuated. These errors are typical of first draft writing, and they are not serious enough to distract or confuse the reader.

Sample student essay with a score of 4:

I agree with Frank Trippett's analysis on Americans breaking the law, written in "A Red Light for Scofflaws." I do believe that ordinary law-abiding citizens are breaking more and more laws, somewhat flirting with the concept of rebellion. I disagree however with Frank Tripett's argument that "...the foundations of social order are more profoundly shaken when law-abiding citizens take to skirting the law," as opposed to the violent criminals.

It is very obvious that most Americans break minor laws on a day-to-day basis. If one does not believe they will get caught, it feels they are free to do whatever they want. The speed limit, is really no such limit anymore. Knowing that most officers of the law will not distribute tickets for driving a few mph over the speed limit, us Americans speed to discover how much we can get away with; 5 mph over, 10, 15, etc. Everyday offenses go far beyond the roadways. Americans seems to think that they can do anything in the privacy of their own home, and issues of underage drinking and illegal substances provide little threat to today's teenagers. Many citizens think that their small offenses are not considerable compared to major criminals and without punishment, they will probably not stop committing them.

Although I do believe that local authorities should spend some time on enforcing the small offense laws, I do believe that most of their effort should go to preventing major life-threatening and violent crimes from taking place. Trippett refers to the harm of noise pollution in his argument from "A Red Light for Scoflaws." Personaly, I would much rather live in a neighborhood with a high noise level than a high crime level. It is when a citizen feels threatened or in danger, that is most important for the local authorities to be available.

Frank Tripett's statement, "You're a fool if you obey the rules," is definitely the way most Americans view life these days. I think we need to try to follow the law, so police officers can work on bigger issues.

Comments on the "4" essay: *The writing in this essay is adequate, but not as fully or clearly developed as in a 5 paper. The writer slights some aspects of the task: he states a fundamental disagreement with Trippett, but fails to develop the reasons for her disagreement.*

The essay has some errors, but generally the writer demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.

Sample student essay with a score of 3:

Many Americans today break the law. The numbers are increasing every year. People break laws everyday at every minute. Sometimes people don't even know that they are breaking the law. There are a lot of people who break the law simply by speeding or littering. Frank Trippett's argument is a strong point, that many people may agree or disagree to.

I agree with Franks statement. He states clearly that millions of Americans, like criminals are committing more crimes. Many laws are broken, even the ones that we don't think we are breaking. Everyone litters. You know that you are not suppose to litter, but people still do it anyway. Same with speeding, now many people haven't went a few miles more?

In the slogan "You're a fool if you obey the rules," is sometimes true. In observing classmates, I hear many things. I hear people saying that they want to drink over the weekend, and someone may say that they would rather not. Everyone gets all worked up about it and bugs the one who doesn't want to drink. They are basically saying to break the law and drink. Many times you can be made fun of if you obey the rules. I don't agree with "You're a fool if you obey the rules." Many people do agree with it, but everyone has their own thoughts and feelings. It's your decision on whether you want to break the law, but remember the consequences.

In conclusion, people break laws everywhere. There is an increase in laws that have been broken. Little things like speeding or littering are laws that most people don't really care for. Americans think that law and order are due to violent crime.

Comments on the "3" essay: *In this essay the student demonstrates the lack of focus and simplistic thinking that characterize a "3" paper. He agrees with Trippett that there are many scofflaws in our society, but his thinking does not go beyond this agreement.*

He demonstrates some understanding of the passage, but he makes limited use of it in developing a weak response.

Sample student essay with a score of 2:

As trippett mentions, "You're a fool if you obey the rules," this really is the belief of most of the Americans nowadays. People do not feel bad for breaking

laws besides criminal laws. There are few of people ever consider the importance, as Trippett concludes, of those "minor" laws. However, I, as one of the "foolish" people in others' eyes, totally agree with Trippett's claim. "Minor" laws are just as important as criminal laws to a society.

Although a "minor" law violation does not get the same level of penalty as a criminal committee, violating "minor" laws can also cause serious harm. For instance a murder kills an innocent people while a speeder may cause more injuries or deaths. Even though they have different motive, planned and accident, they both have serious outcomes.

In addition, "minor" codes are the base of laws to a soceity. People who without understanding and obeying the "minor" laws, show.

In addition, if all people not obey those "minor" laws, they will end up living in a chaos condition. Try to imagine a society in which people ignore traffic rules, tax codes, and noise pollution controls. Then even walking across streets will be life-risked acts, and the government will have nothing to pay for any public goods.

Even though people call most of the laws besides criminal laws, they are not minor indeed. If people think about the resons and purposes behind these "minor" laws, they would find how great the benefits are for obeying them.

Comments on the "2" essay: *This essay is seriously flawed. It lacks focus and coherence, and it demonstrates a very poorly developed response to the Trippett passage. Because the writer has inadequate control of syntax, the reader must complete, or guess, the meaning of many of the sentences. The essay is marred by numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.*

Sample student essay with a score of 1:

Frank Trippett claims in this part that millions of Americans would never think of themselves as lawbreakers. He thinks that Americans are used to think that law and order are threatened by violent crime. Every day, laws are broken. It doesn't matter if those are minors or not.

Americans break laws as if a daily task like eat, do shopping, work... They become lawbreakers inconscienly for minor laws against littering, speeding or noise pollution. If minor laws are not broken, life will be the same. Human beings are not machine which are programed to be lawbreakers.

But by an other way, violent crime which imply human beings life (murders...) would be prohibited. Frank Trippett think that Americns become more and more scofflaws.

Laws were created but we don't now if those are right. Minor laws are the daily tasks which change a life.

Comments on the "1" essay: *This essay is "unfocused, illogical, incoherent, and disorganized." The writer's command of English is so slight that he is unable to respond meaningfully to the topic.*

TOPIC III:

Directions: You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

"Recently, major tobacco companies agreed to pay a financial settlement to several states, including California, for health problems caused by cigarette smoking and other kinds of tobacco addiction. If this course of action is right for tobacco companies, then manufacturers of other legal but harmful products such as alcohol and guns should also have to pay financial settlements in return for the problems they cause."

--Irving Coffman

Explain Coffman's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

Sample student essay with a score of 6:

To what extent are manufacturers of harmful products liable for the damage their products cause? Tobacco litigation, which pays out large sums from tobacco companies to victims of smoking-related illnesses, would give the precedent that producers are liable completely for said damage despite the fact that the consumer chose to use the product. Following this mindset, Irving Coffman and other opinionated speakers believe that manufacturers of other similarly hazardous products should incur the same judgments as tobacco companies. While Coffman's all-inclusive argument may be ethically sound at first glance and spurring a whole new wave of punitive litigation, it remains implausible and avoids the truth of the issue by instead aiming for the obvious target.

In John Grisham's *The Runaway Jury*, the worth of the fictional Pynex Corporation, a tobacco manufacturer being sued for a smoker's death, is given by the prosecuting attorney as eight hundred million dollars. Jury foreman Nicholas Easter correctly deduces that to make a real impact on Pynex, the jury must award a large settlement that will shake the company. Assuming that this holds true for manufacturers of guns and alcohol, if such settlements were made, it would be impossible for these companies to remain financially solvent. Before considering their collapse as a benefit, Coffman and his concurring parties must remember that these companies are also conglomerates with far-reaching effects. Anheuser-Busch, which is a leading alcohol producer, also owns a

nationwide string of educational parks. We cannot bankrupt the evil of a company without capsizing the whole, and with that collapse goes employment, education, and more. Coffman does not consider how implausible it is to crush economic mainstays in the name of moral right and thus by extension harm the people he it is crusading for, making his plan detrimental at least.

Back in Grisham's jury room, the second flaw in Coffman's plan it is on display. Several members of the Wood v. Pynex jury are smokers; one even starts during the due process of the trial. ON the day where they witness what lung cancer caused by cigarettes did to Jacob Wood, all these people are disgusted but keep smoking. They cannot magically quit. Coffman's theory does not comprehend that smoking and alcoholism are addictions which money can't solve. The money will go to purchasing alcohol if given to the "harmed" alcoholic because that it is the nature of addiction. Coffman merely funds what he seeks to defeat.

Coffman also lacks a true grasp on the ideas of danger and choice. He forgets that everything is potentially dangerous and it is the person using it who makes it one way or the other. When Martin Blank kills a man with a pen in *Grosse Pointe Blank*, does Coffman want a payout from the pen company and/or the realtor who gave Martin the pen? His scope of liability it is undefined and unfocused, making it difficult to enforce. The largest void, however, lies again with Grisham's jurors, who have a hard time delivering a plaintiff's verdict because of freedom of choice. Jacob Wood heard all the warnings they heard about smoking and its hazards, and he chose to smoke. Companies do not hold responsibility for wrongful death if, against their warnings, the victim persists in the harmful activity. They control the product; the person controls himself or herself.

Irving Coffman wants what seems to be a true good by holding companies accountable for the wrongs of their products. But if he damages the economy while funding these vices inadvertently, and can't quantify who to blame but won't hold those individual participants responsible for their own lives, it is his idea of hazardous product liability really a good or simply a narrow-minded extreme?

Comments on the "6" essay: *This essay represents superior writing. The writer of this essay demonstrates a thorough critical understanding of the passage and develops an insightful response. He provides coherent organization, beginning the essay with a question, the answer to which provides his response to Coffman's argument: "To what extent are manufacturers of harmful products liable for the damage their products cause?" He then attempts to show that Coffman's argument is flawed by discussing a complex liability case in a John Grisham novel that raises these issues.*

The writer explores the issues thoughtfully and in depth. He argues that we must look beyond the harm to victims and see the harm done to the economy when

manufacturing restrictions are in place. While many readers might not agree with his position, he supports that position well. The writer has a remarkable grasp of the issues, a sophisticated vocabulary, a fluent style, and mature sentence structures. The achievement is remarkable given the fact that the student only had 45 minutes to write this first draft.

Sample student essay with a score of 5:

Thousands of people die each year due to tobacco addictions and many people have died due to guns and alcohol addiction each year too. So what's the difference? Should these different "killers" be treated the same? Irving Coffman thinks they should, but I definitely would have to disagree. There is no way that you can classify these different problem causers in the same category. Throughout my life I have seen many negative repercussions that tobacco addiction can cause and these outcomes are far worse than any other. Therefore, I disagree with Coffman that these different companies should have to pay for problems they cause because they are different and tobacco addiction is far worse than the rest.

Guns are used for safety, to protect yourself, family, and others. These devices come with strict guidelines but unfortunately are not always followed. Many accidents have resulted in death because people leave loaded guns out or are haphazardly playing with them. Although guns are deadly and have caused many problems, I do not feel that the companies should have to pay financial settlements because of these problems. Guns were invented for safety purposes and it is the American public who is to blame for not following the rules. The companies do not produce these so that civilians can kill each other for no reason. They are meant for emergency and for protection. Also, for the police who look out for our well being and military men who are fighting for our country. Gun problems are far different than alcohol or tobacco addiction because these companies are not out to get you addicted or to kill people to make a buck.

Although alcohol is a very addictive product, you can stop. To fight the addiction of alcoholism is a tough one, but there are ways to end it, like AA meetings, "cold turkey," or near death experiences due to being under the influence. The problems that are caused by alcohol are bad and definitely life threatening, but I do not feel that it is to the extreme that tobacco addiction is. I have seen what alcohol addiction can do to a person, how it can take over their lives, but I feel that there is still hope to end that addiction. Once again, I do not feel that the companies should be treated in the same manner as tobacco companies, because although it is deadly and addictive, the American public is not following the rules provided by the companies and the laws set by the states.

Although all three products are life threatening, none are like tobacco and its addiction. In my life, I have seen slight addictions, teenagers fighting to fit in

addictions, and deadly addictions. My grandfather, who lives three hours away, whom I seldom see, was unable to come to our recent family reunion. He was unable to come because he cannot walk more than a block without sitting down and resting. Due to a tobacco addiction one of his lungs collapsed, which now makes it very difficult for him to breathe. Yet he keeps smoking. Knowing that an addiction like that can stop you from be present at significant family gatherings just kills me inside. all these tobacco companies want is money! They do not care about how many people they kill each year. They just want to be filthy rich and get more people "hooked." I feel that this is the difference between tobacco companies and the others. they do not care about anything but their own well being and financial status. I feel that they should definitely have to pay many financial settlements because maybe it will be an eye opener and they will realize how horrible they are.

Guns, alcohol, and tobacco; three products our country could live without but three products that make our economy turn. Although guns were intended for safety, those rules are not followed and alcohol was intended to relax you but that is also taken overboard. These companies have warned us and tried to help us, but not tobacco companies. They suck the American public for all its worth, taking our family members away from us and blackening our lungs. I disagree with Coffman and I feel that we should do all we can to close tobacco companies and save the future health of America.

Comments on the "5" essay: *This essay demonstrates clear competence in writing. The writer addresses the topic clearly; she disagrees with Coffman's position and provides substantial reasons to defend her own position. The essay shows some depth and complexity of thought. The essay is very well-organized, with separate paragraphs devoted to the discussion of guns, alcohol, and tobacco. The essay has a few errors in spelling and mechanics, but these errors are not serious enough to distract or confuse the reader.*

Sample student essay with a score of 4

Irving Coffman's argument is stating that the tobacco companies are responsible for the health problems of consumers. In Coffman's argument, he states that other manufacturers that produce harmful and legal products should also have to pay restitutions because they are also responsible. Coffman finds that the alcohol companies and the gun makers are responsible for the problems that they cause.

In some ways, I agree with Coffman. I do agree that other manufacturers should pay financial settlements. The manufacturers make a product that they know will produce health issues. I agree that manufacturers who do such a thing should be and are responsible for the damage inflicted.

Where I do disagree is with the extent of the responsibility. The tobacco companies had to pay financial settlements because they were selling a product that was known to be addicting. Now, if they were producing a product that wasn't addicting and the consumer can stop using the product at anytime, then the responsibility lies within the consumer. Also, if the cigarette companies were neglectful and forgot to post warnings on their products about the health consequences, then they are also liable. Alcohol is another substance that can become addicting, and so the alcohol companies should pay lawsuits. But gun manufacturers, those are not an addictive product, the harm caused is either in defense or in the wrong hands. In the situation of guns, the responsibility lies within the person who pulled the trigger.

Another point to bring up is about the warning labels. If maybe, the tobacco and alcohol companies did accept the facts that their products are addictive and warned consumers about their product being addictive, then where does the responsibility lie? it is between the consumer and the producer.

In conclusion, I agree with the opinion that Coffman has made. I agree that manufacturers of such deadly products should be responsible for financial restitutions. But where I disagree is how far do we blame. The responsibility belongs to those who produce an addictive product that causes health problems. Tobacco and alcohol manufacturers are at blame for any health problems caused to addicted consumers. But with guns, the blame goes to the trigger finger.

Comments on the "4" essay: *This essay is adequate. It does not display the facility with language and the development of ideas that characterize the 5 and 6 papers, but the writer does demonstrate a generally accurate understanding of the passage and has a clear sense of his agreement and disagreement with Coffman's position. The organization is adequate but not strong: it seems that the writer did not think through the organization before beginning the essay (e.g., "Another point to bring up is..."). The essay does have some errors, but the writer generally demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.*

Sample student essay with a score of 3:

There is not one day in our society in which we find a world empty of drugs, alcohol, and guns. You can walk down your neighborhood and see how many people you know that smoke, go to the park and people are smoking there too, enjoying a nice day at the beach walking barefooted over a whole stack of cigarette butts. When going to buy groceries for your grandmother you find rows of liquor bottles and young people trying to get away with buying them, and when you go to your friends house you see the great big collection of hunting rifles and hand guns their parents own. Why is our society so interested in the most dangerous things? And when an "accident" happens we ask ourselves the most ingenious questions as to how the accident could have been prevented.

Tobacco companies over the years have used many techniques to lure young adults. Most of the time they have succeeded in converting innocent young adults into raging tobacco addicts. When the years pass by these customers become the industries number ones with smoking more than one pack a day. There always comes a time when their best customers become their enemies since they get hit with lung disease and are very ill. By receiving money these sick people will not gain the twenty years they could of had. Tobacco companies want to make the sick people believe that a cash settlement is wonderful just how they made them believe in cigarettes.

When you are seventeen and in high school you begin to realize who you are and where you can take your goals. When you live in a culture different from the American you feel pressured to become stronger in all the aspects of life. You see other teenagers trying things out so you want to also. When you experience that first time smoking you wish to have taken it back. Limiting it is the only way out. Knowing that around your parents it is not possible to smoke, for a smart person you would be able to get to know your parents more and know that without them aware of you trying to quit they are helping. Only by imagining that in twenty or thirty years you could end up real sick and even die before your elders it is when you realize who you are.

Any company that in any way produces harmful items should think in what their lives could end up to be if an accident would occur and what they would feel towards their life if it was hurt by something very much preventable.

Comments on the "3" essay: *This essay demonstrates developing competence. The writer demonstrates some understanding of the passage, but she doesn't use it as a framework for her response (no mention of Coffman or his argument). Her ability to control syntax is inconsistent. Occasionally, as in the last sentence, the syntax is so garbled that the reader has difficulty making out the meaning.*

Sample student essay with a score of 2:

If the tobacco companies pay a financial settlement, that would be good. For other companies would be good that they pay a financial settlement. Also if they pay that, it could be better or helpful for the people.

it is a good idea that the tobacco companies pay a financial settlement because they know that, the cigarettes are not good for people's health. That money could help people who have cancer for smoking cigarettes. If they are agreed to pay a financial settlement, that is a good step.

For other companies who produces alcohol, guns, etc. will be good for the society that they pay a financial settlement. That will be good because there will not be more violence. The point of this is that, those companies are not already agreed.

If all the companies who produces adictions for people. There were no more people who die for that products who kills people. Also those products makes the people change in their personality. If they a financiel settlement for everything that their products causes, they maybe will produce less products.

The point is that they produce things that are no good for people's health. I hope that they pay for damage for every person that makes people die.

Comments on the "2" essay: *This essay is seriously flawed. The thinking is simplistic, and the writer does not use the passage appropriately in developing a response. The vocabulary is very limited (the writer's favorite word is "good"), and he has inadequate control of syntax. The essay is marred by numerous errors in sentence structure, grammar, usage, and mechanics.*

Sample student essay with a score of 1:

In this essay are opposing point of view because the tobacco effects human longs and can cause death.

If a women it is pregnant they could cause birth effect to there children.

So health problems caused by cigarette smoking and other kind of tobacco adiction.

Sometimes alcohol cant cause serious problems one of the most important it is depression and when your under the influence of alcohol you can commite suicide or other things. also alcohol can name you a violent person and a person without respect to nobody even itself.

That it is why I think that alcohol and tobacco have to be illegal, because this two cause serious problems fsical and mentally

Comments on the "1" essay: *This essay demonstrates fundamental deficiencies in writing skills. The student has little sense of how to go about composing an essay. The student's writing is unfocused and at times incoherent. The essay contains serious and persistent errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that severely interfere with meaning.*

Scoring Guide

The following Scoring Guide is used for both the California State University English Placement Test and the CSU/CDE Early Assessment Program

At each of the six score points for on-topic papers, descriptors of writing performance are lettered so that:

- a = response to the topic
- b = understanding and use of the passage
- c = quality and clarity of thought
- d = organization, development, and support
- e = syntax and command of language
- f = grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 6: Superior

A 6 essay is superior writing, but may have minor flaws.

A typical essay in this category:

- a. addresses the topic clearly and responds effectively to all aspects of the task
- b. demonstrates a thorough critical understanding of the passage in developing an insightful response
- c. explores the issues thoughtfully and in depth
- d. is coherently organized, with ideas supported by apt reasons and well-chosen examples
- e. has an effective, fluent style marked by syntactic variety and a clear command of language
- f. is generally free from errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 5: Strong

A 5 essay demonstrates clear competence in writing. It may have some errors, but they are not serious enough to distract or confuse the reader.

A typical essay in this category:

- a. addresses the topic clearly, but may respond to some aspects of the task more effectively than others
- b. demonstrates a sound critical understanding of the passage in developing a well-reasoned response
- c. shows some depth and complexity of thought
- d. is well-organized and developed with ideas supported by appropriate reasons and examples
- e. displays some syntactic variety and facility in the use of language
- f. may have a few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 4: Adequate

A 4 essay demonstrates adequate writing. It may have some errors that distract the reader, but they do not significantly obscure meaning.

A typical essay in this category:

- a. addresses the topic, but may slight some aspects of the task
- b. demonstrates a generally accurate understanding of the passage in developing a sensible response
- c. may treat the topic simplistically or repetitively
- d. is adequately organized and developed, generally supporting ideas with reasons and examples
- e. demonstrates adequate use of syntax and language
- f. may have some errors, but generally demonstrates control of grammar, usage, and mechanics

Score of 3: Marginal

A 3 essay demonstrates developing competence, but is flawed in some significant way(s).

A typical essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- a. distorts or neglects aspects of the task
- b. demonstrates some understanding of the passage, but may misconstrue parts of it or make limited use of it in developing a weak response
- c. lacks focus, or demonstrates confused or simplistic thinking

- d. is poorly organized and developed, presenting generalizations without adequate and appropriate support or presenting details without generalizations
- e. has limited control of syntax and vocabulary
- f. has an accumulation of errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that sometimes interfere with meaning.

Score of 2: Very Weak

A **2** essay is seriously flawed.

A typical essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- a. indicates confusion about the topic or neglects important aspects of the task
- b. demonstrates very poor understanding of the main points of the passage, does not use the passage appropriately in developing a response, or may not use the passage at all
- c. lacks focus and coherence, and often fails to communicate its ideas
- d. has very weak organization and development, providing simplistic generalizations without support
- e. has inadequate control of syntax and vocabulary
- f. is marred by numerous errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that frequently interfere with meaning

Score of 1: Incompetent

A **1** essay demonstrates fundamental deficiencies in writing skills.

A typical essay in this category reveals *one or more* of the following weaknesses:

- a. suggests an inability to comprehend the question or to respond meaningfully to the topic
- b. demonstrates little or no ability to understand the passage or to use it in developing a response
- c. is unfocused, illogical, or incoherent
- d. is disorganized and undeveloped, providing little or no relevant support
- e. lacks basic control of syntax and vocabulary
- f. has serious and persistent errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that severely interfere with meaning

Non-response essays (those that reject the assignment or fail to address the question) were given to the Table Leader.

Readers were instructed not to penalize writers excessively for slight shifts in idiom, problems with articles, confusion over prepositions, and *occasional* misuse of verb tense and verb forms, so long as such features do not obscure meaning.