PSSA Writing prompts

What types of writing prompts will we see on the PSSA??

- Text-dependent analysis questions
- Informative/Explanatory prompt
- Argumentative prompt
- Narrative prompts

Text-dependent analysis question

What type of writing is this?

Expository writing
- Goal: to provide information about a given topic using evidence to support the information that is being provided

What structure will I use to answer this type of question?

ACER essay!!
- Break your ACER paragraph into separate paragraphs!!
- A - introductory paragraph
- C/E - paragraph
- R - conclusion paragraph

ACER essay for TDA question - Answer (introductory paragraph)

- Turn your answer into at least two sentences!
  - Write a broad statement about the topic. (1-2 sentences)
    - Broad statement = a general statement about your topic
  - Write your A statement (1 sentence)
    - Must include three reasons you chose your answer...these will be the topics of your body paragraphs (C/E's)

Example: Identify the central theme in “The Treasure of Lemon Brown” and use two examples from the text to support your answer.

Authors write stories not only to entertain the reader but also to deliver a message. Theme is the message the author intends the reader to take away from a story. After reading “The Treasure of Lemon Brown” by Walter Dean Myers, it is evident that the central theme in the story, sentimental treasures are more valuable than materialistic treasures, is developed through Lemon Brown’s actions and symbolism.
ACER essay for TDA question - C and E (body paragraph)
- Take each C and E (remember, we must never split them up!) and make it a paragraph!
  First, the central theme in the story is sentimental treasures are more valuable than materialistic treasures because Lemon Brown put his life in danger to protect his treasure.....
  Lemon’s actions can be supported by the text when it states, “......”

ACER essay for TDA question - C and E (body paragraph)
- Take each C and E (remember, we must never split them up!) and make it a paragraph!
  Additionally, the central theme in the story is sentimental treasures are more valuable than materialistic treasures because Lemon Brown’s treasure was not just a harmonica and newspaper clippings, it represented his love for his son.....Lemon’s treasure as a symbol can be supported by the text when it states, “......”

ACER essay for TDA question - R (Conclusion paragraph)
- Turn your R into at least two sentences!
  Therefore, the central theme in the story is sentimental treasures are more valuable than materialistic treasures. The author effectively develops this theme through Lemon Brown’s actions and the symbolic meaning of his treasure.

TDA essay - your turn!!
- Choose an ACER paragraph (must be at least an ACECER) from this class or another LION TEAM class and turn it into an ACER essay!

Informative/Explanatory prompt
What type of writing is this?
- Expository writing
  - Goal: to provide information about a given topic using evidence to support the information that is being provided
What structure will I use to answer this type of question?
- ACER essay!!
  - Break your ACR paragraph into separate paragraphs!!
  - A - introductory paragraph
  - C - paragraph
  - R - conclusion paragraph
TDA question vs. informative / explanatory question

What is the difference?

- TDA question will have a passage/reading to go along with it, which means you need to back up your answer with an example/quote
- Informative/explanatory prompt will NOT have a passage/reading to go along with it...NO EXAMPLE/QUOTE
  - Also, you will begin with an attention grabber!

ACER essay for informational prompt- Answer (introductory paragraph)

Turn your answer into at least three sentences!

- Write an attention grabber. (1-2 sentences)
- Write a broad statement about the topic. (1 sentence)
- Write your A statement (1 sentence)
  - Must include three reasons you chose your answer...these will be the topics of your body paragraphs (C/E’s)

An introduction is the first paragraph of any written work.

An introduction does the following:

- captures your audience’s attention
- gives background on your topic
- develops interest in your topic
- guides your reader to your thesis.

Intro Paragraph

Introduction paragraph writing order!

Attention Getter (3)
Broad Statement (2)
Thesis (1)

Thesis

A thesis states the main idea of the essay.

- It is your subject! It must be specific!
- It contains “supporting” evidence that will be turned into your body paragraphs.
- It is written with detail and sophistication.

Thesis - Informative /explanatory

Identify three skills that a successful student should possess.

- Example: Three skills a successful student should possess are organizational skills, time management skills, and communication skills.
Broad Statement

*Now that you have the thesis, it’s time to write a general sentence about your topic, otherwise known as the broad statement.*

Example: Many students have the desire to do well in school but lack the necessary skills.

Image Attention Getter

Example: Frankie can’t wait to share the great news with his mom. He has just aced his math test and is looking forward to dinner at his favorite restaurant as a reward.

ACER essay for informational prompt- Answer (introductory paragraph)

Introductory paragraph

Frankie can’t wait to share the great news with his mom. He has just aced his math test and is looking forward to dinner at his favorite restaurant as a reward. Many students have the desire to do well in school but lack the necessary skills. Three skills a successful student should possess are organizational skills, time management skills, and communication skills.

ACER essay for informational prompt- C (body paragraph)

Take each C and turn it into a paragraph

First, a successful student should possess organizational skills because...

Additionally, a successful student should possess time management skills because...

Finally, a successful student should possess communication skills because...

ACER essay for informational prompt- R (Conclusion paragraph)

Turn your R into at least two sentences!

Therefore, in order to be a successful student, one should possess organizational, time management, and communication skills. These skills will not only help you to become a successful student but also help you throughout the rest of your life.

Informational essay - your turn!!

Most of us have all of our senses: sight, hearing, touch, taste, and smell. Think about the role each of these senses plays in your life and write an essay that explains which sense would be most difficult to live without. Be sure to use details and examples to support your ideas.
Argumentative Question / Prompt

What type of writing is this?

- Argumentative writing
  - Goal: To get the reader to acknowledge that your side is valid and deserves consideration as another point of view.

What structure will I use to answer this type of question?

- ACER essay!!
  - Break your ACER paragraph into separate paragraphs!!
  - A - introductory paragraph
  - C - claim
  - C - claim
  - C - counterclaim
  - R - conclusion paragraph

ACER essay for Argumentative prompt - Answer (introductory paragraph)

- Turn your A (answer) into at least three sentences!
  - Write an attention grabber. (1-2 sentences)
  - Write a broad statement about the topic. (1 sentence)
  - Write your A statement (1 sentence)
    - Must include two reasons you chose your answer...these will be the topics of your claims (do NOT include your counterclaim)

An introduction is the first paragraph of any written work.

An introduction does the following:

- captures your audience’s attention
- gives background on your topic
- develops interest in your topic
- guides your reader to your thesis.

Intro Paragraph

- Introduction paragraph writing order!

  Attention Getter (3)
  Broad Statement (2)
  Thesis (1)

Thesis

- A thesis states the main idea of the essay.
  - It is your subject! It must be specific!
  - It contains "supporting" evidence that will be turned into your body paragraphs.
  - It is written with detail and sophistication.
Thesis - Argumentative

- Should schools ban teachers from assigning homework?
- Example: Schools should ban teachers from assigning homework because it takes away from time spent with families and interferes with extracurricular activities.

Broad Statement

*Now that you have the thesis, it’s time to write a general sentence about your topic, otherwise known as the broad statement.*

- Example: Homework is becoming an increasing problem for students.

Image - Attention Getter

- Example: It’s midnight, and Susie is still awake; she needs to finish typing her essay for English class. She knows she will never be able to stay awake in class tomorrow, but she has no other choice.

ACER essay for Argumentative prompt- Answer (introductory paragraph)

- Introductory paragraph

  It’s midnight, and Susie is still awake; she needs to finish typing her essay for English class. She knows she will never be able to stay awake in class tomorrow, but she has no other choice. Homework is becoming an increasing problem for students. Schools should ban teachers from assigning homework because it takes away from time spent with families and interferes with extracurricular activities.

ACER essay for argumentative prompt- C = claim

- Your next paragraph should include claims in support of your answer.
  - be sure to explain your reasoning

  First, homework should be banned because families need to spend more time together. In a society where divorce rates are at a record high, it is important that family time is a priority. Students are in school all day, while many parents are at work; the evenings should be a time for families to relax together and prepare for the next day. Family dinners, board games, and playing outside are all great ways a family can grow together. Families are already extremely busy during the week, and adding homework on top of everything else, leads to unnecessary stress that can affect students during the school day.
Additionally, homework should be banned because students need time to relax and unwind by participating in extracurricular activities. Some students may be involved in organized activities outside of school, while others may just prefer to play outside with friends or read for enjoyment. Whatever their preference, students should have time to just be kids. Having this time to unwind and relax is just as important as learning new academic concepts.

ACER essay for argumentative prompt- C = counterclaim
- The last C should be the counterclaim...
  - Acknowledge the other side of the argument, but then bring the reader back to the thesis statement.

  Although homework interferes with family time and extracurricular activities, it does provide students with an opportunity to reinforce learned concepts. The extra practice that homework provides, along with parental support, may help a struggling student master a concept. However, not all students will receive the support they need at home; in addition, some parents may not have the background knowledge needed to help their children.

ACER essay for argumentative prompt- R (Conclusion)

  In conclusion, while homework has the potential to be beneficial, it is clear that the potential benefits do not outweigh the costs. Students need time to be with their families, to be outside exercising and enjoying fresh air. This will lead to a well-rounded individual who will be more likely to perform better in school.

Argumentative essay - your turn!!
- Write an argumentative essay supporting your claim about whether students should or should not be required to wear uniforms. Be sure to use reasons and evidence to develop your argument.