

LITERACY TEST PRACTICE

Writing a series of paragraphs
to express an opinion

WHAT IS AN OPINION?

- ◉ Opinions are personal beliefs or judgements
- ◉ cannot be “scientifically proven” with evidence or facts, but it can be well supported with examples (or “proofs”)
- ◉ subjective; up to each individual; no “right” or “wrong” answer
- ◉ emotion over logic



WHERE DO WE FIND OPINIONS?

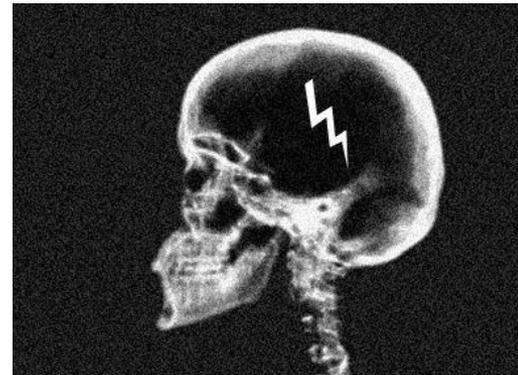
- ◉ advertisers
- ◉ politicians
- ◉ letters to the editor
- ◉ daytime and late-night talk shows
- ◉ you, your teachers and your peers express opinions in class, sometimes without realizing it



HOW TO WRITE AN EFFECTIVE SERIES OF OPINION PARAGRAPHS

STEP 1: PLANNING

- ◉ Decide on your personal opinion based on the provided topic
- ◉ Choose only one side of the argument (agree or disagree)
- ◉ Brainstorm—T-chart, mind map, dot jot, etc.
- ◉ Think of specific, concrete examples to support your argument
- ◉ Draft a thesis statement



STEP 2: WRITING

- Write an introduction that includes the following:
 - A topic sentence (introduces the general topic of the series of paragraphs)
 - Your thesis statement (your opinion or argument; what you are trying to prove)
 - Your discussion points (the examples or proofs you will use to support your argument)



WRITING CONTINUED

- ◉ Write one or more body paragraphs that include the following:
 - Point: A topic sentence/point introduces the point to be proven in this paragraph
 - Proof: specific examples that will support the above point (you may have two or three)
 - Explanation: explains how your proof supports your point and/or your overall argument
 - Concluding/transitional sentence: this will lead into your next paragraph

WRITING CONTINUED



- Write a conclusion that includes the following:
 - Restate your thesis statement
 - Provide a final commentary or suggestion for further action
 - Write a strong concluding sentence to show that your series of opinion paragraphs is finished

STEP 3: REVIEW

- ◉ Reread your series of opinion paragraphs
- ◉ Make any necessary corrections to spelling, grammar, or sentence structure
- ◉ Be sure that you have actually provided points, proofs, and explanations that support your thesis



WRITING TIPS

- ◉ identify each paragraph with a clear indent
- ◉ support all ideas with specific examples
- ◉ three paragraphs minimum are needed: an introduction, at least one body, and a conclusion
- ◉ each paragraph must be longer than 1 sentence (ideally 3-5 sentences) though longer is okay
- ◉ **Do not argue both sides of the opinion**