



NJSLA Research Simulation Task Grade 9 Writing

Lesson 1: Introduction to the Prose Constructed Response on the Research Simulation Task

Rationale

- ✚ This lesson serves as an overview of the prose constructed response (PCR) of the Research Simulation Task (RST), which is the essay writing portion of the exam.
- ✚ The succeeding lessons in this series will delve into several aspects of the writing process and offer practice in the areas of thesis statements, outlining, paragraphing, and completing a PCR task.

Goal

- ✚ To preview the PCR on the NJSLA Research Simulation Task

Task Foci

- ✚ **CCSS W.9-10.1:** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
- ✚ **CCSS W.9-10.2:** Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
- ✚ **CCSS W.9-10.10:** Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.
- ✚ **CCSS RI.9-10.1:** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
- ✚ **CCSS RI.9-10.2:** Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.
- ✚ **CCSS RI.9-10.3:** Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them.

Objectives

- ✚ Students will understand the types of writing that they will be asked to produce on NJSLA Research Simulation Task.

Materials

- + Research Simulation Task Sample Texts (3)
- + Research Simulation Task Sample Prompt
- + Blank white paper
- + Colored pencils

Procedures

- + Explain that today you are going to introduce the class to the writing portion of the NJSLA Research Simulation Task.
- + The great innovation of NJSLA is that it creates a test-taking environment that simulates the circumstances in which real-world writing is conducted. Students have the texts they need right in front of them. Share this information with students. Let them know that this should put them more at ease with the tests. The only prior knowledge they need concerns knowing how to write a response to a prompt. The content of their responses will be drawn exclusively from the texts on the assessment.
- + Explain to students that NJSLA is a significantly different test than NJ ASK, but you as the teacher are going to guide them through the process of taking the test so that they are well prepared for test day.
- + Differences from HSPA:
 - o Test is administered on computers (schools may opt for paper tests).
 - o The writing and reading portions are combined into one comprehensive assessment. All answers, selected or written, use the same set of texts as their source, so students interact with the texts over a sustained period of time.
 - o Questions are all text-dependent. Students answer multiple-choice (EBSR & TECR) questions after reading the texts and before writing their essays
 - o Emphasis on analytical essay.
- + Distribute the sample texts and prompt.
- + Ask students if they have any questions.
- + Discuss “main idea” and explain to students that the main idea of their essay will be a statement that directly answers the prompt.
- + Next, students will create a web to brainstorm main ideas and supporting evidence.
- + Pass out paper and colored pencils.
- + Ask students to write the words “Main Idea” in the center of their paper and leave space to write their main idea below the words.
- + Direct students to come up with at least three supporting ideas. Have them find information in the texts that they can use to support their ideas. Have them write their findings in their own words on their web.
- + Discuss students’ ideas and findings if there is time. Collect their work.

Teacher Tips

- + While students are creating their webs, circulate to help any students who may be struggling and to check that their main idea is workable and that they are finding relevant information in the texts to support their ideas.

Assessment

- ✚ Evaluate students' webs. It should be evident that the student understood the reading. Check that each student was able to come up with at least three supporting ideas for their main idea.

Extension Activity

- ✚ In a following class period, as a formative assessment activity, have students answer the prompt with an essay.

An Excerpt from President John Kennedy's Inaugural Address: Part I

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We observe today not a victory of party but a celebration of freedom--symbolizing an end as well as a beginning--signifying renewal as well as change. For I have sworn before you and Almighty God the same solemn oath our forbearers prescribed nearly a century and three-quarters ago.

The world is very different now. For man holds in his mortal hands the power to abolish all forms of human poverty and all forms of human life. And yet the same revolutionary beliefs for which our forebears fought are still at issue around the globe--the belief that the rights of man come not from the generosity of the state but from the hand of God.

We dare not forget today that we are the heirs of that first revolution. Let the word go forth from this time and place, to friend and foe alike, that the torch has been passed to a new generation of Americans--born in this century, tempered by war, disciplined by a hard and bitter peace, proud of our ancient heritage--and unwilling to witness or permit the slow undoing of those human rights to which this nation has always been committed, and to which we are committed today at home and around the world.

Let every nation know, whether it wishes us well or ill, that we shall pay any price, bear any burden, meet any hardship, support any friend, oppose any foe to assure the survival and the success of liberty.

This much we pledge--and more.

To those old allies whose cultural and spiritual origins we share, we pledge the loyalty of faithful friends. United there is little we cannot do in a host of cooperative ventures. Divided there is little we can do--for we dare not meet a powerful challenge at odds and split asunder.

To those new states whom we welcome to the ranks of the free, we pledge our word that one form of colonial control shall not have passed away merely to be replaced by a far more iron tyranny. We shall not always expect to find them supporting our view. But we shall always hope to find them strongly supporting their own freedom--and to remember that, in the past, those who foolishly sought power by riding the back of the tiger ended up inside.

To those people in the huts and villages of half the globe struggling to break the bonds of mass misery, we pledge our best efforts to help them help themselves, for whatever period is required--not because the communists may be doing it, not because we seek their votes, but because it is right. If a free society cannot help the many who are poor, it cannot save the few who are rich.

An Excerpt from President John Kennedy's Inaugural Address: Part II

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To our sister republics south of our border, we offer a special pledge--to convert our good words into good deeds--in a new alliance for progress--to assist free men and free governments in casting off the chains of poverty. But this peaceful revolution of hope cannot become the prey of hostile powers. Let all our neighbors know that we shall join with them to oppose aggression or subversion anywhere in the Americas. And let every other power know that this Hemisphere intends to remain the master of its own house.

To that world assembly of sovereign states, the United Nations, our last best hope in an age where the instruments of war have far outpaced the instruments of peace, we renew our pledge of support--to prevent it from becoming merely a forum for invective--to strengthen its shield of the new and the weak--and to enlarge the area in which its writ may run.

Finally, to those nations who would make themselves our adversary, we offer not a pledge but a request: that both sides begin anew the quest for peace, before the dark powers of destruction unleashed by science engulf all humanity in planned or accidental self-destruction.

We dare not tempt them with weakness. For only when our arms are sufficient beyond doubt can we be certain beyond doubt that they will never be employed.

But neither can two great and powerful groups of nations take comfort from our present course--both sides overburdened by the cost of modern weapons, both rightly alarmed by the steady spread of the deadly atom, yet both racing to alter that uncertain balance of terror that stays the hand of mankind's final war.

So let us begin anew--remembering on both sides that civility is not a sign of weakness, and sincerity is always subject to proof. Let us never negotiate out of fear. But let us never fear to negotiate.

Let both sides explore what problems unite us instead of belaboring those problems which divide us.

Let both sides, for the first time, formulate serious and precise proposals for the inspection and control of arms--and bring the absolute power to destroy other nations under the absolute control of all nations.

Let both sides seek to invoke the wonders of science instead of its terrors. Together let us explore the stars, conquer the deserts, eradicate disease, tap the ocean depths and encourage the arts and commerce.

Let both sides unite to heed in all corners of the earth the command of Isaiah--to "undo the heavy burdens . . . (and) let the oppressed go free."

And if a beachhead of cooperation may push back the jungle of suspicion, let both sides join in creating a new endeavor, not a new balance of power, but a new world of law, where the strong are just and the weak secure and the peace preserved.

An Excerpt from President John Kennedy's Inaugural Address: Part III

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All this will not be finished in the first one hundred days. Nor will it be finished in the first one thousand days, nor in the life of this Administration, nor even perhaps in our lifetime on this planet. But let us begin.

In your hands, my fellow citizens, more than mine, will rest the final success or failure of our course. Since this country was founded, each generation of Americans has been summoned to give testimony to its national loyalty. The graves of young Americans who answered the call to service surround the globe.

Now the trumpet summons us again--not as a call to bear arms, though arms we need--not as a call to battle, though embattled we are-- but a call to bear the burden of a long twilight struggle, year in and year out, "rejoicing in hope, patient in tribulation"--a struggle against the common enemies of man: tyranny, poverty, disease and war itself.

Can we forge against these enemies a grand and global alliance, North and South, East and West, that can assure a more fruitful life for all mankind? Will you join in that historic effort?

In the long history of the world, only a few generations have been granted the role of defending freedom in its hour of maximum danger. I do not shrink from this responsibility--I welcome it. I do not believe that any of us would exchange places with any other people or any other generation. The energy, the faith, the devotion which we bring to this endeavor will light our country and all who serve it--and the glow from that fire can truly light the world.

And so, my fellow Americans: ask not what your country can do for you--ask what you can do for your country.

My fellow citizens of the world: ask not what America will do for you, but what together we can do for the freedom of man.

Finally, whether you are citizens of America or citizens of the world, ask of us here the same high standards of strength and sacrifice which we ask of you. With a good conscience our only sure reward, with history the final judge of our deeds, let us go forth to lead the land we love, asking His blessing and His help, but knowing that here on earth God's work must truly be our own.

