WRITING PROFICIENCY EXAM (WPE) WORKSHOP (4/07)

I. The WPE: General Information About the Exam

The WPE is a 2 and ½ hour writing exam that satisfies the CSU system-wide Graduation Writing Assessment Requirement (GWAR). This exam is necessary for students to enroll in their upper division writing intensive courses.

II: Housekeeping

Since the WPE is a CSUS requirement, large pools of students often take the exam. For this reason, the WPE Office has established an electronic process for registering the WPE. Prior to the exam’s beginning, proctors are required to verify that the student taking the exam have been signed-up using this process. For this reason, students taking the exam should plan to arrive fifteen minutes early to allow for this process. The proctor will then explain the directions for the exam and distribute the materials, which includes a blue book, blank sheets of paper, and the 1-2 page reading and prompt.

A. What to Bring:
   - Check or money order for $25 made out to CSUS – no cash.
   - Two forms of identification that displays both your picture and your signature.
   - Pens and pencils. Highlighters and white-out.
   - Dictionary (no electronic dictionaries). No thesaurus.
   - Consider writing in erasable ink to avoid recopying the first draft.

B. Result Process
   - Two to four weeks in the mail.
   - English 109W, 109M, and LS 86 may be taken depending on the exam score.

III: Nuts and Bolts: Expectations for the Exam and Scoring

A. Test Format:
   - Students will write in the blue book provided. While blank sheets are provided for drafts, the final draft must be written in ink on the blue book.
   - Students will respond to the prompt at the end of the 1-2 page reading passage.

B. Test Evaluation:
   - Faculty from a variety of disciplines in the University including those from the English Department and many other departments, such as Electrical Engineering, Mathematics, Social Work, and Communication Studies will read the exam and grade it.
   - Readers will not see the student's name.
   - Readers will only read writing in the bluebook, unless indicated otherwise (by an asterisk).
   - Readers do not write comments on your essay.

C. The Scoring:
   - Essays are evaluated based on six criteria, “Topic,” “Critical Thinking and Logic,” “Purpose,” “Development,” “Style,” and “Usage and Grammar.” These criteria are a hierarchy of values and a number an essay receives depends on how well it illustrates the six criteria. Readers will assign
a number on a 6-point scale. A score of six means the essay demonstrated each of the six criteria very well. A score of one means the essay did not demonstrate the criteria well, if at all.

- Different readers will read the essays twice. The first reader will give a score between 1-6 and the second reader will give the essay a score between 1-6. The scores are added to get a total score.
- Scores of 8 or higher pass the exam; scores of 6 or lower fail the exam.
- All essays with a marginal score of 7 are sent to the Review Board for a third and final reading.
- The Review Board determines whether essays earn a passing score of 8 or a failing score of 6.
- Marginally failing essays receive additional evaluation to ensure that writers are given a fair chance to pass the exam.

IV: Timed-Writing Strategies: Time Management

A: 30/90/30:

- 30- Spend the first 30 minutes reading, brainstorming, and prewriting.
- 90- Spend the next 90 minutes writing the essay.
- 30- Spend the last 30 minutes revising, proofreading, and editing the essay.

i. The First 30 Minutes: Reading Strategies

- Highlight or underline important passages.
- Annotate the highlighted or underlined passages. Write down opinions, questions, and ideas that arise from the passage. Indicate whether you agree or disagree with the views expressed in the reading passage and why. Briefly summarize the argument(s) surrounding the topic of the reading.
- Respond to specific points raised by the reading passage.
- Look up words that are unknown to gain a better understanding of the reading.

ii. The First 30 Minutes: Brainstorming and Pre-Writing Strategies

- Listing- Jot down all the ideas that come up about the topic.
- Clustering (or mapping) - Free associate ideas by placing a general subject in a circle in the middle of a scratch sheet of paper, and draw other lines and circles that come up from the original subject. Cluster those ideas that seem to fall together.
- Freewriting- Write whatever comes to mind about the topic for a designated amount of time (7-10 minutes) without worrying about spelling, punctuation, or grammar. Use this writing as a way of generating ideas and warming up before starting to write the essay in the bluebook.
- Looping- After freewriting, stop and reread the writing. Find the central idea that has emerged in this short writing. Now, freewrite another 5 minutes based on this central idea as a jumping off point. Each writing that emerges from a central idea is considered a loop. Doing a series of loops to generate material.
- The Boomerang- Begin by writing a statement that comes to mind about the topic and write about that subject for 5 minutes. Then write another statement that approaches the subject from another point of view; write about this statement for another 5 minutes. Continue this pattern at least two more times. This technique helps in finding a focus for a topic, but also in gaining insight into multiple points of view.
- Develop a working outline from the pre-writing. This outline is a plan of action for writing the essay.
iii. The Next 90 Minutes: Writing the Essay

- Use writing generated from the prewriting to write the essay.
- Write unified, developed paragraphs with main ideas that support your thesis.
  Develop these paragraphs with concrete details and explanations.
- Reference the reading, using information from it.
- In addition to the reading passage, use examples from your own experience, personal observations, or other readings to support your position.
- Write double-spaced in the WPE blue book.
- Address ideas in the reading passage that are contrary to the position you take in the thesis sentence of your essay. Honestly stating these contrary ideas and explaining why you believe they are wrong shows the ability to critique and deepens the meaning of your essay. A good way to incorporate such rebuttals is to make your argument first and address opposing ideas right before writing a conclusion.

a. Tips for Writing

- State thesis or focus in either the first or second paragraph of your essay. Doing so gives both you and your reader needed guidance.
- Show audience awareness by supplying all the information the reader needs to understand the thesis.
- Check the essay’s focus against the thesis as you write. A big problem with timed writing situations is gradually sliding off the topic.
- Support claims and general statements by providing examples, similarities, exceptions or contradictions. A well-thought-out example, illustration or comparison will often help an essay pass despite grammatical or other errors. Avoid simply saying, “I agree with X” or “I disagree with Y.” Instead, say “X is correct in writing _______ because ___________” or “Y seems to contradict himself when he observes __________.”
- Do not change the format of the assignment. Do not write a speech, a letter, a story about something that happened to you or someone you know. Your essay should be an argument with a thesis that addresses the prompt and with paragraphs supporting that thesis.
- Determine a structure appropriate for your discussion.
- Do not feel that the introduction should be written first. Leave a space for the introduction and come back to it after you have written the rest of the essay.
- Do not get too emotionally involved. Ground support for your thesis in logic, not emotion. Therefore, if you don’t have some specific, logical reasons for a stand, you need to rethink that position.
- Avoid overusing the handout by pulling out long quotations and stitching them together with a few of your sentences in between as quick transitions.

b. Referencing Text

- Incorporate information from the reading by paraphrasing or summarizing the ideas in your own words. Use key words from the reading passage but do not copy the whole phrase(s) or sentence(s) that do not reflect your own writing style. If you borrow whole phrases or sentences, quote and cite the author.
- Quote directly from the text—the exact words of the reading passage. Quote sparingly; too much quotation may suggest that the ideas and the language are not your own.
1. Ways to Introduce Paraphrases:
   - If you do not know the author of the reading passage, refer to it by the title.
   
   Ex: The article "Changing Times" claims that people are not keeping up with the rapidly growing electronic revolution.
   - If you know the author and the title, and the source, include both.
   
   Ex: Peter Applebone, in "Adults Think Kids Are a Mess," affirms that adults generally have negative views of teenagers.

2. Ways to Use Quotations
   - Frame a quotation properly (i.e., set up the quote and comment on it).
   
   Examples:
   a) [Name of author], in [title of work], notes, "[quoted material]."
      Bert Owens, in "Changing Times," notes, "We have several alternatives to consider."
   b) In [title of work], [name of author] observes, "[quoted material]."
      In "Changing times," Bert Owens observes, "Be cautious of extreme points of view."
   c) According to [author and/or title], "[quoted material]."
      According to Bert Owens, "Americans have recently gained in income."

iv. The Last 30 Minutes: Revising, Proofreading, and Editing Strategies
   - Read the essay slowly, pronouncing the words as they appear exactly on the paper. Listen for errors.
   - Read the essay backward, examining one sentence at a time. This technique helps to isolate errors that could otherwise be overlooked.
   - Revise the essay. Add words or phrases that could improve the essay.
   - If you run out of time, place a star or an asterisk (*) at the stopping point in your final copy and a second one at the point you left off in your rough draft. The reader of your essay will read on from the point of the asterisk in your rough draft until its end.
## Writing Proficiency Exam
### Grading Guidelines

<table>
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<tr>
<th>Grade</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Attributes</th>
<th>Notes</th>
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| 6 | Superior | A superior paper addresses the topic in a complex way and executes its plan convincingly and skillfully. It will have one or more of the following attributes:  
**Topic:** addresses topic fully and is alert to implications and broader issues.  
**Critical Thinking & Logic:** supports its own ideas and addresses opposing ideas, revealing occasional inadequacies in arguments or details of opposing viewpoints.  
**Purpose:** shows a sophisticated sense of its own purpose throughout, along with sophisticated organization.  
**Development:** shows extensive development both in terms of abstractions and details; often offers cogent or imaginative sources of information that go beyond those presented in text.  
**Style:** has variety and sophistication in both sentence structure and diction.  
**Usage and Grammar:** exhibits superiority in written English, though it need not be flawless. | |
| 5 | Strong | A strong paper addresses the topic and executes a solid plan. It will have one or more of the following attributes:  
**Topic:** addresses the topic by competent employment of many issues raised in the reading passage.  
**Critical Thinking & Logic:** supports its own ideas, and reveals awareness of opposing ideas.  
**Purpose:** shows a clearly identifiable purpose with good organization.  
**Development:** shows a fully development.  
**Style:** has effective use of sentence structures and vocabulary.  
**Usage and Grammar:** exhibits a command of written English, though there may be flaws. | |
| 4 | Adequate | An adequate paper takes a meaningful approach and handles it satisfactorily. It will have one or more of the following attributes:  
**Topic:** has engaged the primary issues raised by the reading passage.  
**Critical Thinking & Logic:** supports its own ideas.  
**Purpose:** shows a clearly identifiable purpose and an adequate organization.  
**Development:** shows appropriate, though perhaps minimal, support.  
**Style:** has adequate use of sentence structures and vocabulary.  
**Usage and Grammar:** exhibits satisfactory control of written English; the flaws it has are not overwhelming or part of a consistent pattern. | |
| 3 | Flawed | A flawed paper fails to develop or address the issue in some significant way, but demonstrates developing skills. It will have one or more of the following attributes:  
**Topic:** addresses some issues of the reading passage—but some significant aspects may be slighted or ignored.  
**Critical Thinking & Logic:** reveals contradictions or flaws in logic.  
**Purpose:** shows some focus, but occasionally wavers in its sense of purpose; often shows problems in organization.  
**Development:** shows one or more underdeveloped paragraphs, or merely echo and paraphrase uncritically elements of the reading.  
**Style:** has some sentences that are difficult to read or seem confused.  
**Usage and Grammar:** exhibits waiving control of written English, so that many readers might be annoyed by faults. | |
| 2 | Seriously Flawed | A seriously flawed paper will reveal serious and repeated problems, including confusion as to the task, uncertainty as to the plan. It will have one or more of the following attributes:  
**Topic:** addresses the reading only marginally or randomly.  
**Critical Thinking & Logic:** shows very little analysis of materials or is often illogical.  
**Purpose:** shows very little sense of focus  
**Development:** is significantly underdeveloped; often avoids expansion or explanation of ideas by comparison with higher level essays.  
**Style:** has numerous sentences that pose significant difficulties for readers; frequently misuses vocabulary.  
**Usage and Grammar:** exhibits persistent problems in grammar and mechanics. | |
| 1 | Incompetent | An incompetent paper will fail to communicate. It will have one or more of the following attributes:  
**Topic:** does not address the reading or exhibits little understanding of the writing task.  
**Critical Thinking & Logic:** reveals chaotic or nonexistent analysis of materials and serious problems in logic.  
**Purpose:** shows no sense of purpose or direction; often incoherent.  
**Development:** is radically underdeveloped. Essays in this category make little attempt at offering evidence or argument.  
**Style:** has very few sentences that are coherent or clear.  
**Usage and Grammar:** exhibits pervasive errors that regularly prevent understanding. | |

January 2004
V: Timed-Writing In Practice: Sample Prompts

Should America Put More Emphasis on Studying Foreign Languages?

Traditionally Americans have not been noteworthy internationally in their command of languages other than English. But several current groups and prominent individuals wish to change this pattern.

Former U.S. Secretary of Education Richard Riley commented, “This nation is coming up very short in teaching our children foreign languages. I believe every American child should be fluent in at least two languages. Surely we can give our children the added advantage of being better prepared for the global world of the 21st century. To achieve such an advantage would apparently take a great effort, since a 1987 national study found that ‘only 3% of high school graduates and only 5% of college graduates reach a meaningful proficiency in a second language.’ Another report in 1999 found the US lagging behind 13 other developed nations in foreign language instruction in elementary schools.”

The current state of foreign language teaching in the US, according to some scholars, is woeful. For example, Prof. R.D. Lambert complains, “We expend almost all our national resources for foreign language learning on first-tier, low-level learning for high school and college students--then watch those minimal skills decay and disappear through lack of use or reinforcement.” Similarly, Prof. James Crawford has lamented, “Despite its increasing diversity, the U.S. remains an underdeveloped country when it comes to language skills. The vast majority of native-born Americans remain stubbornly monolinguall.”

But many Americans find nothing particularly wrong with being monolingual. A senior at CSUS and ardent Internet user felt that the CSUS foreign language requirement was “a colossal waste of time,” adding, “when I surf the Internet, I find everything I want using English.” In fact, current data on the Internet support this claim. Over half of all websites worldwide, according to The Economist, are written and maintained in English. An English professor in Japan, Kenji Kitao, cites the overwhelming media presence of English. “Three quarters of all telex messages and telegrams are sent in English. Five thousand newspapers, more than half of the newspapers published in the world, are published in English.” So useful and pervasive is English, Kitao adds, that it’s “used even for internal air traffic control in countries where it is not a native language.”

Some Americans are also concerned that any new devotion to foreign language study would be costly. It could require added classrooms, teachers and labs at the secondary and college levels, serving perhaps a million students. Either this would necessitate a significant new commitment of funds in taxes, fees, or college tuition; or it would replace some other academic requirement for a year or years—such as Math, English, or History.

Another perspective, offered by those opposed to increasing foreign language study, involves a geographical analysis of the American situation. America’s situation is different than that of many European nations, which are surrounded by other countries which speak different languages. So for the typical German citizen, the prospect of hearing Italian or English or French spoken is not remote. On the other hand, two large oceans separate those in northern America from a host of speakers of other languages. The typical American citizen is unlikely to use a foreign language studied on a regular basis because of this geographical isolation. It’s important to point out, though, that the U.S. does border on Mexico, where Spanish is the main language spoken.

However, proponents of increased emphasis on foreign language learning point to a number of benefits. Individuals who study languages communicate with more people, read more literature, and benefit more fully from travel to other countries. There are also apparent benefits in related academic fields. The SAT administration reported that “students who averaged 4 or more years of foreign language study scored higher on the verbal section of the SAT than did those with 4 or more years study in some other area.”
It’s fairly clear that foreign language learning can be useful in travel. On a 1997 trip to Costa Rica, one American found that the Spanish she’d studied was invaluable. “When our team leader got lost once, I was able to ask locals for directions. They complimented me on my Spanish and showed us the way to San Jose, the capital.”

There apparently are also many pragmatic economic reasons to increase foreign language study. A 1995 survey of Latin American importers found that nearly all preferred to conduct business negotiations in their native Spanish or Portuguese. One Brazilian said European and Japanese firms earned her respect by “always sending salesmen who speak the language I understand best.” She added, “most salespeople from the U.S. don’t even try.”

The majority of people in the world are non-English speakers. Even by the most generous estimates only 15 percent of the world’s population speaks English as a first or second language. Nevertheless, English remains the national language of the U.S. and the most widely spoken second tongue in the world.

Assignment: Write an essay in which you discuss whether American educational institutions should increasingly emphasize foreign language study. Be sure to use the reading in your response, but you are also encouraged to incorporate personal experience and observation as well as previous reading to support your position.

Sample Essays with Commentary about the Scores

Following are sample essays written in response to the reading “Should America Put More Emphasis on Studying Foreign Languages?”

5826

Our children deserve the best education that we have to offer them. This includes a strong foreign language curriculum. A good education in today’s global society includes the ability, as Richard Riley noted, to speak fluently a minimum of two languages. These opportunities to learn a foreign language should be made available in American educational institutions at the elementary level and continue throughout high school and college.

There are those that say they do not need to learn another language, as many people from other countries speak English, and most literature or corporate and institutional correspondence is in English. This is somewhat true. However, English is not the only language that is widely used and there are many people in the world, even in America, that do not speak English.

Due to the transportation and technology advancements made in the 21st century, our “world” is smaller than ever. The societies of each country are becoming increasingly dependent on each other. The social and economic ties are so intertwined, that it would be foolish and dangerous to pretend that America stands alone. This was made very clear September 11, 2001 in more ways than one. The social and economic repurcussions were felt world wide.

Learning a second language encourages an individual’s exploration and understanding of that country’s culture. This exploration leads to exchanged ideas which can lead to growth in many areas: scientific, economic, political, and social. With understanding of the previously unknown, comes a loss of fear and a chance for peace.

As the economic market becomes more and more global, we can be certain that it will be advantageous for our children to be able to speak a foreign language and work with foreign corporations in their preferred “native” language.

I realize that there would be costs associated with increasing the emphasis of foreign language in our schools. However, the benefits far outweigh the costs. This is not a luxury we want to provide, but an important skill that will only become more necessary in the future.
Personally, I studied Spanish in high school as many students in America do today. I retained little from these classes, except the words for various colors, numbers, and the days of the week. Later, as an adult, I attended a total immersion Spanish program for one month, eight hours a day. This format of learning did not fail me. I did not become fluent in this class, but I gained a vocabulary that was strong enough to converse with non-English, Spanish-speakers and for each of us to understand the other.

Speaking Spanish opened many doors for me. I worked for a private aviation company, and was able to attract an extensive clientel from Mexico. After the challenge of learning a second language, I could understand some of the linguistic mistakes made by second-language English speakers. Therefore, I was not offended when commanded to do something because they did not know how to form the question correctly. This barrier that some of my co-workers felt, I did not experience. When traveling to Mexico, I received a much warmer response after learning Spanish than I had before. In Italy, many spoke English, but not all. Yet, those that could not speak English could usually speak Spanish, and I was able to converse with them.

I am now a mother and am very fortunate to live in Davis, where there is a public, total-immersion Spanish program at the elementary level. My daughter attends this school, Cesar Chavez Elementary, and is now in the first grade. She is not learning Spanish at the cost of other curriculum such as History or Math. In fact, her learning is not only enriched by second language acquisition; she is also learning more about other cultures and how they all tie together.

My daughter is lucky to have foreign language study available to her. Many other American children are not so fortunate. They are being robbed of this portion of their education. I do not increase the emphasis of foreign language studies in our schools, our children will be the ones to pay the price. They will not have the necessary skills to compete in a global economy. It will be difficult for them to cross cultural barriers on the road to peace and understanding.

Should American educational institutions increase the emphasis placed on foreign language study? This is a simple question to answers and the answer is yes. Upper level American educational institutions such as high schools and universities do have programs in place to educate Americans on foreign languages, however, there is really only a moderate emphasis at this time which begs for improvement. The benefits of foreign language study to American society are enormous; that issue of the benefits is what really should be considered. Foreign language study, for Americans, not only has the potential to increase test scores as the article suggests, but also to assist Americans in becoming more aware of other cultures around the world. American educational institutions lack the programs that promote retention of foreign language and do not place enough emphasis on the benefits of cultural awareness attained through foreign language courses.

Today’s American educational institutions, while on the track to foreign language success, could use a program overhaul. Most Americans are required to take at least two years of foreign language at the high school level. It is sometimes also offered for a short period in middle schools. However, it is not enough and this type of education should be instituted at the elementary level. Americans need to begin their education of foreign language as early as possible. The United States is a country that has always been culturally diverse and is growing rapidly more diverse all the time. There is a need for Americans to learn not only the foreign language itself, but also the wonderful culture that lies behind the language. While this is possible to learn at the upper levels, it is very late in the education process. American children should not be denied the opportunity to learn about their fellow classmates who may have just arrived to America. How wonderful it would be if elementary students already knew about the culture of future arrivals. Would this increase the child’s chances of early assimilation? It is a question that should be explored. There is not a better time to start than at the elementary level. Children are like sponges ready to absorb what is being taught. If foreign language is offered at the elementary level and then continuously reinforced in the middle school, high school and university, there would definitely be a greater retention of that language or languages into adulthood. Adults would then have the skills necessary not only to relate to others in the international business world, but also in American society.
American society is becoming increasingly more diversified than it was even ten years ago. The article discusses the fact that the United States is in geographical isolation. This really is not so, people from other countries come to the United States more than probably any other country; whether to visit, to reside, or even on refugee status. Americans are encountered daily with questions like for Spanish press #1 or for English press #2. Foreign languages are all around Americans. There are numerous immigrants living in the United States today. These immigrants are coming from all over the world speaking various languages. While, yes, the immigrants should make an effort to learn English during their residence in the United States, Americans should also know more about the cultures the immigrants are coming from. Foreign language classes teach about the culture behind the language and can be a useful tool in the fight to end racial and ethnic prejudice and discrimination in America. The more Americans know about other cultures the more we can all break down stereotypes that lead to prejudice and discrimination. This is not to say that learning a foreign language will end racism, but it can be a small tool in the fight, especially if instituted at a very early level of education.

Foreign language study is most definitely not a waste of time. There are so many wonderful things that can come out of learning a foreign language. It could make traveling the world an easier and more exciting quest. In today’s American society knowing a foreign language could mean the difference between being hired for a particular job or being denied. English may be used a a variety of places for many different reasons around the world and English is obviously a wonderful language to try to master, however, one should not limit theirself to just English. In so many different ways knowledge of foreign language can benefits Americans and can potentially open doors that Americans may never have known existed. An effort should most definitely be placed on increasing the emphasis of foreign language in American educational institutions at all levels of the education process. We should not deny ourselves the programs and therefore the benefits of knowing foreign languages.

Should America put more emphasis on studying foreign languages?

During high school learning Spanish was difficult. The verbs and millions of words to memorize was exaustiong and, I now know, a waste of my time. Later in college sign language was somewhat easier but again the only time it came in handy was during a “Starbucks stop.” A deaf man was trying to communicate the characteristics of his desired latte. The coffee girl could not understand him and was getting frustrated. I stepped up and explained to her what he wanted and both parties were happy. Other than that, both languages have bene close to useless. It is always nice to say, “I know a little Spanish and sign language” but it does not put air in my lungs or money in my pocket.

Since adding additional foreign language education at any grade level is costly and not demanded by majority of the professions in the United States, it is not in the best interest for our country and citizens to put more emphasis on learning foreign language.

Learning foreign language is good and should not be discredited. Americans should want to be cultured. The experience of traveling to other countries and learning their foreign language is exciting and a fun vacation or hobby. In this situation foreign language might be needed and desired by the foreign traveler. International business people use foreign language to communicate with their clients and it is essential to know in order to do their job. Moreover, if Americans do not have a desire to learn a foreign language or it does not interfere with an occupation, it should not be mandatory to learn a foreign language(s).

In the United States the national language is english. The United States is also a country that is viewed as a promise land. Because several countries are impoverished and often with out justice, the U.S. has become the home to millions of immigrants. While this is understandable, the U.S. should not be sympathetic to these people. If newcomers to the U.S. are wanting to live here they should also be ready to learn our native language. The U.S. should not feel responsible to accomodate to newcomers by attempting to adopt their native language in addition to english.
Additional foreign language requirements in high school and college environments would cost millions. Adding two additional foreign language requirements for a bachelors degree would be six or more additional courses. After the cost of books, the expense of the class would be close to $2500.00 or more for the students.

Many high school students struggle with their foreign language classes when they are not needed in our U.S. society. If the government supported an increase in foreign language study and spent the money to add more foreign language to the cisculum, it would take away from many other needed programs in our public education system. For example, classes that enhanced student self-esteem and promoted the value of going to college or better sex education programs would better the quality of the students coming out of the public education system. The cut back on teenage pregnancy or welfare from lack of education would be more benificial to our nation rather than foreign language.

Foreign language is not valued after the requirement is fulfilled in many high school students. Recently in the Sacramento Bee, a comic’s punchline was, “I haven’t used the four years of french since those four year of french.” The average high school student that does not go to college iwll not use their minimal foreign language skills in the “real world.”

The typical American citizen does not need to know a foreign language. It is understandable if an American has a job in international relations and foreign language is a mandatory skill for the job requirement. In America we do not use any other language on a regular basis. Offices, schools, gas stations, banks and resturants all conduct business in english. It is not mandatey for a U.S. citizen to learn a foreign language to get things, like everyday errrands, done. Therefore it is not benificial in everyday terms to learn foreign language.

While knowing foreign language(s) is useful it is not manditory to have in order to live life in the United States. It is too costly for our government when there are other programs needed that would be a greater impact on our society. Learning foreign language is nearly wearing a jacket on a sunny warm day; At some point you might need it but chances are you will end up carring it all day when you did not need it at all.

5832
Language of The 21st Century

America the land of oppertunity, the land of the free. There is no wonder why people of all ethnic groups who speak different languages want to live work and raise a family in the United States. In recent sastistics reports america is becoming more diversified. Therefore, american educational institutions should emphasize foreign language in elemeny schools for communication, the economy, and travel abrod.

Elementry schools are a place where young kids go to school. They are taught english, math, history, yet not a second language. This is the 21st century and it is time for a change. There should be at least two foreign languages a student may choose. I feel spanish an Japanese would be ideal, due to the economic demand in Japan and an overwhelming Spanish speaking population in the United States. The ciriculum would start off basic with the begining words and nouns begining in first grade through third grade. At the end of the fourth grade the students will have to take a foreign language test showing the teachers they are up to par. The benifits of a new generation speaking a foreign language is an incredible step in communication. To be able to communicate effectively enables a person to be in control of percise words when needed. The same goes for anther language. However there is the added cost to find and hire bilingual teachers, textbooks, and time to teach the class as if it were a core class such as math history and science. Therefore it would replace some other academic requirement or an elective such as art or music. Either way the benifits of speaking a foreign language outweight the cost.
The economy is very important today and it is not just local anymore, it is global, due to the internet and video conferencing. Therefore it is essential the new generation should be taught a foreign language and have a meaningful proficiency in the language. Today there are business that operate in four and more different countries. Knowing a foreign language in the 21st century will give a person the edge to get hired and succeed. The more knowledge and languages one knows will help in problem solving and management situations.

Travel abroad, when people retire many of them want to relax and go on vacations. Some choose to travel in the United States and other travel outside the territory. When vacationing in a foreign country it would be nice to know what people are saying, and to be able to read signs. Knowing the foreign language in which the country you visit will make the vacation a more enjoyable experience and probably save ones time and money.

Overall learning a foreign language at an early age is quite beneficial. Communication between different cultures makes it easier to do business, as well as get hired for knowing another language.
Summary Evaluations of Four Sample Exams

#5826: This essay should score a “12”, In other words, this essay is good enough to receive a score of “6” from two separate readers. In order to understand why, one needs to review the Scoring Guidelines. Although the essay does not quote or paraphrase the reading extensively, it still “addresses [the] topic fully and is alert to implications and broader issues.” 5826 also “addresses opposing ideas, revealing occasional inadequacies in arguments or details of opposing viewpoints.” Its use of refutation is especially apparent in paragraph #6. The essay is well developed; in other words, it stretches out over 10 pages, but it is not sheer volume of words that makes this a superlative essay. Rather, it is our opinion that #5826 reveals “extensive development both in terms of abstractions and details.” The writer’s purpose is clear from the very start. The first two sentences are a declaration of what the writer intends to prove, and the essay never loses focus. The argument stays on track and is composed of strong analysis and two extended personal examples. Finally, although there are some occasional grammatical errors, the essay still exemplifies “superiority in written English.”

#2944: This essay should score a “10,” meaning that it should receive two scores of “5”. The essay shows “competent employment of many issues raised by the reading passage,” which means that it offers a strong analysis of the topic introduced by the reading passage. However, it does not quote or paraphrase the passage, an omission that weakens the paper in terms of development. The essay could be more extensively developed; it is only four paragraphs, but an attentive reading will show that the paragraphs are quite analytical and are further expanded with strong examples. It is also quite good at critiquing the ideas of others, particularly on the issue of retention of the foreign language. Thus, we see that the essay “supports its own ideas.” The introductory paragraph does an excellent job of articulating a thesis and setting out the framework of an argument in favor of that thesis. The body paragraphs maintain that focus, and the conclusion summarizes the argument well although there is some redundancy in word usage. Still, the essay as a whole reveals “a command of written English.”

#5255: This essay should score an “8” or two scores of “4”. The opening paragraph effectively introduces the topic and offers support for a thesis yet to come because the anecdote about using sign language in Starbucks illustrates the writer’s contention that the knowledge of a language other than English is useful only in the most extraordinary of situations and that learning another language is not worth the time and money required to learn it. The thesis sentence comes in the second paragraph; indeed, it is the entire paragraph. The thesis directly addresses the prompt, offering the claim that learning a foreign language should not be mandatory in the American educational system since the implementation of such a policy would be too expensive and not required by most professions. The third paragraph shows an “ability to critique the ideas of others” when the writer concedes that learning a foreign language for personal reasons “should not be discredited.” Unfortunately, the writer misuses the transition “moreover” as he or she begins the last sentence of the paragraph. “Moreover” means that the writer is adding another idea or supporting point. Instead, the writer ought to use “however” as a way of showing opposing ideas. Still, the overall essay reveals an effective argument and adequate development although references to the reading passage could bolster that argument even further. There is occasional slippage—several spelling errors, one in the title, some dropped out articles, and the use of “are wanting” for “want” in the fourth paragraph—but not enough to slow most readers. Finally, the paper is coherent because it shows “satisfactory control of written English.”

#5832: This essay is a “6,” which means that it would receive two scores of “3”. This essay does have strengths, for example, sufficient development and a thesis sentence (located at the end of the first paragraph), which gives it focus. However, the essay “.... shows problems in organization” because it rigidly follows the thesis and offers three superficial body paragraphs as support. Thus, the essay is “underdeveloped.” In this case, the thesis does not so much guide the reader as it limits the writer. Having chosen “communication, the economy, and travel abroad,” as the three points to be discussed and, adhering strictly to the five paragraph format, the writer has no place to discuss other ideas or to address the opposing point of view. Consequently, the paragraph on communication turns into a catch-all for ideas that have no place of their own. The other two paragraphs are superficial. The writer could have supplied more details by making references to the reading passage. Last, the essay shows “exhibits wavering control of written English....” For example, the first sentence is a fragment; the second sentence contains a comma fault, and in the opening paragraph alone are four misspellings. The student repeats this pattern of error throughout the essay.