

# Revisiting Bloom's Taxonomy: A Framework for Modeling Writing and Critical Thinking Skills

By Julie Jacobson and Diane Lapp

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Evidence continues to suggest that one's writing ability is a most reliable indicator of potential success when transitioning from K-12 to higher level school environments and real world contexts. (Assaf, 2009). "Writing is both a 'marker' of high-skill, high-wage, professional work and a 'gatekeeper' with clear equity implications. People unable to express themselves clearly in writing, asserts Kerry (2004), limit their opportunities for professional, salaried employment." Yet, notwithstanding increased attention and efforts toward improving adolescents' literacy skills, approximately 8.7 million fifth through twelfth grade students continue to struggle with state reading and writing standards (Applebee & Langer, 2009; Jeffery, 2009; Kamil, 2003; United States Department of Education, 2008). For many adolescents, progressive difficulties with reading and writing contribute greatly to a decision of whether to continue their pursuit of a high school degree (Ehren, Lenz & Deshler, 2004). Post high school dilemmas are further highlighted by Graham and Perin (2007) who relate in a Carnegie Corporation report that 70 percent of students in grades 4-12 are considered low-achieving writers and that college instructors estimate that 50 percent of high school graduates are not prepared for college-level writing.

## What Research Says About Writing Instruction

According to the National Assessment of Education Progress National Center for Educational Statistics (2003), most traditional models support 'The Writing Process' where writing begins with a prompt, followed by planning, then pre-writing, drafting, revising, and finally publishing. Most researchers more recently contend, however, that educators cannot assume that simply providing a prompt, giving students time to pre-write, or allowing students to select their own topics will provide them with the background or reinforcement they need to develop proficiencies involved in writing, nor will they learn to utilize critical thinking skills to evaluate their own writing as well as the writing they are being asked to read (Assaf, 2009; Chorzempa & Lapidus, 2009, Parton & Bailey, 2008).

Educators note the need for explicit instruction of discrete elements in writing such as self-regulation, searching prior knowledge, goal setting and organizational structuring as integral elements of the writing process (Berninger &

Win, 2008; Lapp, Fisher, & Wolsey, 2009). Research, additionally, suggests that an effective instructional approach is characterized by supportive, well-scaffolded interactive, meaning-based instruction (Baroudy, 2008; Englert and colleagues, 1991; National Commission on Writing; 2006; Schneider, 2008). During such instruction, students learn through their teachers' modeling of high quality examples coupled with a think aloud that offers an explanation about the procedures experienced writers use to generate, analyze, organize, and logically connect ideas (Assaf, 2009, Bauer, 2008; Fisher & Frey, 2003; Graham & Perin, 2007). As students' writing proficiencies develop, asserted Vygotsky (1978), the teacher gradually withdraws the supportive, instructional scaffolds.

### **English Language Learners' Needs**

Varied studies with linguistically, ethnically, and socio-economically diverse student populations have found the efficacy of approaches where educators model objectives, support student learning through interaction, and provide avenues through which students can connect to material and visualize concepts (Diaz-Rico & Weed, 2006; United States Department of Education, 2008). Because English language learners draw on their first language when writing in order to generate ideas, revise, and establish a coherency of ideas, instructional approaches designed for them should also include modeling of the thinking processes engaged in by a competent writer when writing (Berninger & Win, 2008; Needels & Knapp, 1994; Jocson, 2005). Moreover, research with culturally diverse students also reflects the effectiveness of attending to the analysis of topics and accessing students' prior knowledge and relevancy during instruction (Zarei, & Alibabae 2008; Salmani-Nodoushan, 2009).

### **Purpose**

The impetus for

developing the instructional approach and materials shared in this article occurred after analyzing Julie's students' written performance on tasks listed in Appendix A. We realized that 11<sup>th</sup> grade students' in two separate classes, although generally competent in forming sentences and summarizing basic information when writing, struggled with the ability to:

- organize and present their ideas sequentially.
- use logically connected details within a paragraph before shifting rather than transitioning to a new topic.
- expand their thinking beyond summarizing in order to critically analyze the causes and possible solutions to problems and issues they read.

As readers, several students in the classes were unable to move beyond a simple text retelling to critically analyze and explain who in society might be affected most by an identified circumstance and then in writing develop and support a

rationale for meeting the needs of the identified person or group(s) through methods they could logically justify. This concerned us since critical analysis is a literacy ability that we believe all students need in order to function in the 21<sup>st</sup> century.

### **Bloom's Taxonomy Revisited**

Wondering what to do, we turned to Bloom's taxonomy to assess the instruction these students were receiving since we believe that students generally learn what they are taught well. In *A Taxonomy for Learning, Teaching and Assessing: A Revision of Bloom's Taxonomy of Educational Objectives*, Anderson, Krathwohl, and others (2001) presented a paradigm that supports accessing and building of students' prior linguistic and experiential knowledge as a way to enhance new conceptual development. A synthesis of Bloom's Taxonomy, *The Cognitive Process Dimension* identifies six behavioral areas integral to effectively processing information. These include: 1) **Remembering** (Recognizing, Recalling, 2) **Understanding** (Interpreting, Exemplifying, Classifying, Summarizing, Inferring, Comparing, Explaining, 3) **Applying** (Executing, Implementing) 4) **Analyzing** (Differentiating, Organizing, Attributing), 5) **Evaluating** (Checking, Critiquing) and 6) **Creating** (Generating, Planning, Producing), a concept whereby students synthesize information, by combining "elements together to form a coherent or functional whole," then reorganize "elements into new patterns or structures," and finally engage in conceptual problem solving activity.

Building further on Bloom's taxonomy, Marzano and Kendall (2007) pose that by activating students' knowledge regarding the conventions of writing and then fostering discussions that blend their personal learning experiences and higher order thinking, their analytical and cognitive processes will be enhanced. Marzano and Kendall further assert that the ability to comprehend, apply, analyze and synthesize is available to any learner at any point and could promote the basic acquisition of new knowledge without necessarily following the order of a hierarchical structure.

Utilizing these insights and in an effort to provide Julie's students with an organized, comprehensive means to develop, clarify, and reinforce critical thinking skills that could be used in both reading and writing activities, we developed the *Higher Order Thinking Guide* (Chart 1). As you can see we drew from the discrete components of Anderson and Krathwohl and other's revised framework of Bloom's Taxonomy. We did so based on Marzano and Kendall's premise that students at any level of proficiency can comprehend and generate concepts at the highest levels. Our goal was to design a series of questions students could use to analyze the structure and content of model written texts we created as a means to critically construct and analyze their own compositions. This goal was based on the California State Writing Standards for 11<sup>th</sup> grade.

## The Instructional Plan

In preparation for illustrating how to use the questions shown in Chart 1 to analyze a text, we wrote model texts that could be perceived as text critiques or responses since they were derived from the themes that were being addressed in the essays and stories written by the author's the students were reading. An example of one of our model text critiques which was written in response to Donne's, *No Man Is An Island*, is included as Appendix B. Together with the students Julie read the well known essay and then used Chart 1 to analyze the thinking done in the original essay, and also what we had done in order to write a critique. Students were also provided copies of a blank 'Model Essay Guide' (Figure 1) on which they could make notes for later discussion about the discrete elements of the model critique. These model essay critiques or responses were designed to illustrate how to analyze a text and also how to write a text response.

We created other model essays in response to the works of Poe, Shakespeare, and other authors the students were reading in class. Our plan was to have Julie analyze the texts with the students. Our premise that this type of thinking practice and analysis would transfer to their writing was validated through their continued assessed growth as writers.

As they read the original text together and then the text critique Julie modeled how to use the questions to analyze the content and structure. For example when thinking aloud Julie might ask, What sentence(s) reveal the author's position on this issue? To address this she and the students would focus on how the topic sentence was developed, or the relationship among the thesis statement and supporting details, or how the author made transitions among ideas. Continuing to use Chart 1 Julie modeled posing questions to herself from Chart 1 to analyze many focus dimensions of the text.

As these elements of writing were shared through this interactive think-alouds, Julie was able to make apparent the strategies the author used to convey information. Asking students to follow along as she read a topic sentence, for example, then pausing, Julie prompted students to respond by questioning, "I'm wondering what the author's main point or central idea is in this sentence?" "I think it might be..., how about you. What do you think? Students would then volunteer their thoughts and Julie would record a student's exact words on the transparency as students copied the sentence on their Figure 1 'Model Essay Guide.' As you look at the example shown in Figure 1, please again note that it was created in response to John Donne's, *No Man Is An Island* which Julie and her students were reading.

Through this interactive approach of analyzing an array of texts with her students, Julie was able to provide immediate feedback, to clarify facts regarding the plot of a story or the thesis of an article. As she and the students noted conventional standards of writing she was also able to explain how they could delve more deeply into the essence of the

issues by relating the relevancy of each to a contemporary social issue, or to a specific subgroup of society such as to adolescents or the elderly and to then generate a solution. For example after posing the question, “What part of the sentence I just read do you think offered an example of the topic of the paragraph which was that a lack of *emotional support* can result in some societal problems?” Julie waited for students partner talk and then to respond to the whole group. As William answered that “the part about foster homes being ill prepared to sufficiently care for children is a problem”, Julie recorded his thinking. She commended him for an “outstanding” example of a current problem we had presented in our critique. She also reminded the class that when writing they might want to share clues to help their readers connect the problem and solution.

After analyzing the content of each paragraph, Julie posed questions to students with the objective of encouraging them to further analyze the author’s craft, tone, purpose or style of the paragraph. She encouraged students to evaluate the quality of supporting details for example by asking questions such as “Do you think that the author’s premise that a guaranteed higher education for all citizens would result in a stronger, more secure society is effective? Why do you or do you not agree? What other information might be included to help persuade the reader of this assertion?” The students and Julie then worked together to develop a written answer to each question. As they developed these answers they became more skilled at crafting a response.

### **Oral Analysis Supports Writing Competency**

When discussing the model essays which were based on short stories from the 11<sup>th</sup> grade text, or from novels such as *The Crucible* or *The Great Gatsby*, Julie asked students about how events made a conflict complex and how the circumstances caused the characters to react and/or change. She worked collaboratively with them in a whole class format to orally describe how a writer might outline the causes and effects or character dilemmas and then develop a creative solutions.

Together they analyzed several texts. After first discussing a model essay together like one we wrote about the characteristics of Shakespeare’s Juliet, they determined that one of the traits describing Juliet was her impetuous nature. One student was able to offer a synthesis of contexts by associating the consequences of text and authentic situations. This occurred when students were asked to relate the lesson to a real-life situation. Brianna stated that similar impulsive behaviors such as speeding in a vehicle or overspending beyond the limits of one’s budget could also result in disastrous if not deadly consequences. When asked “How can we learn from this lesson?” , Brianna further related to the class that a person of any age could avoid heartache and disappointments for himself and his family by behaving carefully in a

world that often lures people into engaging in risky behaviors. With this response Brianna demonstrated not only application, but a good beginning of describing ways an individual could manage his behavior in order to avoid the negative consequences of impulsive activity. As Julie commended the students on the creative resolutions they were presenting orally and in their writing, Brianna stated that this was the result of the thinking processes they were gaining from using Higher Order Thinking Guide. Throughout the process, students were able to refer to the model essay critiques and thinking guide as a means to reinforce their critical thinking and subsequent strategies.

## **Conclusions**

Through modeled essay writing, organizational strategies, and complex analysis of topics, Julie provided her students with opportunities to comprehend how a written text was constructed as well as the thinking processes needed to plan, outline and compose a written text. From the beginning of the scaffolding process, students were actively engaged in a teacher-student exchange regarding the analysis of a model essay and critique where in response to questions such as “who can identify an idea related to what the author is presenting as a reason that humans should not live alone without outside help,” students readily identified key concepts such as “I think one of the main ideas is that people have emotional problems,” or “A main detail is that some people need financial help.” Allowing students to be the source of the written responses, Julie explained “alright, let’s all record (student’s name) idea as a main detail for the introductory paragraph. Continually referring to the *Higher Order Thinking Guide* throughout each lesson, students demonstrated increasing motivation to write as they interacted with Julie and each other about how to best express their ideas and to critically analyze issues that arose from the topics of their essays. Through a year long observation of these students’ writing growth we noted an increase in their active engagement. They were enjoying writing because they now had a frame to support their composing. They could also more easily analyze a written text, and most importantly they became able to self analyze their own writing, and as a result were both willing and able to revise until they and their classmates felt they had a composition of substance. As a result of this modeled instruction, we found that the students in general, demonstrated the following growth in their writing. By the end of the year the majority of students were able to:

1. grasp the concept of main idea;
2. synthesize core concepts;
3. use appropriate conventions of language to convey their intended message
4. use essential elements within paragraphs (e.g. topic sentences, thesis statement, supporting details, transitions, varied sentence structures, quotes;

5. present a logical organization of body paragraphs;
6. include and analyze relevant or poignant issues;
7. share original thinking on a topic;
8. apply real world connections;
9. demonstrate and differentiate between cause and effect and correlational relationships, and
10. demonstrate unique, individual and creative solutions to problems or dilemmas which they shared in both their narrative and expository writing.

Students overall often referred to the 'Higher Order Thinking Guide' when discussing the components of the model essays and during their own writing. This in general resulted in enhancing their cohesive organization and cognitive analysis of their texts. We were thrilled since these abilities are certainly required in formal writing. Furthermore, all of the students including English language learners, those with special needs, and fluent English speakers demonstrated growth as writers. Because of this we can conclude that providing engaging, well focused, deliberate, interactive, well supported writing instruction can result in improved student writing and motivation to write. This collaborative approach, in general, served to further students' understanding of the thinking processes employed by competent writers; who they began to see as themselves.

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## Chart 1: ‘Higher Order Thinking Guide’

This guide offers a visual of how to think through the analysis or preparation of a written text.

### I) REMEMBER: Recordar

#### Retrieve – Recuperar

**Ejemplo:** ¿Puedes recuperar de la memoria algo importante del primer párrafo?  
(Can you retrieve from memory something important from the first paragraph?)

**Respuesta:** Yo puedo recuperar de mi memoria que . . . era información muy importante.

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#### Recognizing - Reconocer

**Ejemplo:** ¿Reconoces tú información que ya sabías o el significado de una palabra que puedes identificar?  
(Do you recognize information that you already knew or the meaning of a word that you can identify?)

**Respuesta:** Yo reconozco que ya sabía . . .

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#### Identifying – Identificar

**Ejemplo:** ¿Puedes identificar información que es el concepto central de la lectura?  
(Can you identify information that is the central concept of the reading?)

**Respuesta:** Yo creo (I believe) que . . . es el concepto principal.

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#### Recalling – Recordar

**Ejemplo:** ¿Recuerdas la información más interesante de la lectura?  
(Do you remember the most interesting information of the reading?)

**Respuesta:** Yo me recuerdo de que . . . es la información mas interesante de la lectura.

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#### Perceiving – Percibir

**Ejemplo:** ¿Qué percibes como el detalle más importante o interesante?  
(What do you perceive as the most important or interesting detail?)

**Respuesta:** Yo percibo que . . . es un detalle muy importante.

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#### Realizing – Darse cuenta de

**Ejemplo:** ¿Te das cuenta de que algo que le interesaría a tu mejor amigo/a?  
(Do you realize something that would interest your best friend?)

**Respuesta:** Yo me doy cuenta de que . . . le interesaría a mi mejor amigo.

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#### Connecting – Conectar

**Ejemplo: ¿Con qué información conectas más de manera personal de la lectura?**  
(With what information do you connect most personally with in the reading?)

**Respuesta:** Yo conecto . . . con la lectura.

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### Relating – Relacionando con

**Ejemplo: ¿Con que relacionas tu vida o un miembro de tu familia algo en este cuento?**  
(With what do you relate your personal life or member of your family in this story?)

**Respuesta:** Yo relaciono . . . . con este cuento.

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### Linking – Formar conexiones

**Ejemplo: ¿Puedes formar una conexión entre algo de la lectura y algo con que tienes experiencia?**  
(Can you form a connection between something in the reading and something with which you have experience?)

**Respuesta:** En cuanto a mi experiencia personal, una conexión que puedo hacer es que yo se algo de . . .

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### Knowing - Saber

**Ejemplo: ¿De qué ya sabes?**  
(About what do you already know?)

**Respuesta:** Yo sé que . . .  
(I know that . . . )

Yo sé esta palabra . . .  
(I know this word . . . )

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### Information as related to writing:

1. I recall the important factors regarding the introductory paragraph of a written essay or travel brochure.
2. I remember the factors regarding appropriate paragraph development, including the topic sentence.
3. I can develop and relate an essay to a thesis statement.
4. I am able to exhibit critical thinking skills that enhance the depth of the ideas I present in an essay.
5. I know how to transition from one paragraph to another in formal essay writing.

### II) UNDERSTAND: Entender

#### Constructing meaning – Construir el significado

**Ejemplo: ¿Puedes construir un esquema de los tres conceptos principales de la lectura?**  
(Can you construct a schema (map) of the three main concepts of the reading?)

**Respuesta:** Los tres conceptos principales de la lectura son . . . )

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### Interpreting – Interpretar

**Ejemplo:** ¿Cómo interpretarías el tema de este cuento?  
(How would you interpret the theme of this story?)

**Respuesta:** En mi opinión, el tema de este cuento es . . .

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### Clarifying – Clarificar

**Ejemplo:** ¿Puedes clarificar el mensaje principal de este cuento?  
(Can you clarify the main message of this story?)

**Respuesta:** El mensaje principal de este cuento es . . .

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### Paraphrasing – Parafrasear

**Ejemplo:** ¿Puedes parafrasear, con dos o tres oraciones, el último párrafo?  
(Can you paraphrase, with two or three sentences, the last paragraph?)

**Respuesta:** El último párrafo transmite la idea que . . .

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### Classifying – Clasificar

**Ejemplo:** ¿Cómo clasificarías el la mayoría de la información presentada en esta lectura, ficción o o cuento verdadero?  
(How would you classify the majority of the information presented in this reading, fiction or a true story?)

**Respuesta:** Yo clasificaría esta información como un cuento . . .

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### Categorizing – Categorizar

**Ejemplo:** ¿Cuáles son tres categorías que usarías para titular temas dentro de esta lectura?  
(What are three categories you would use to label themes within this reading?)

**Respuesta:** Las tres categorías que yo identificaría son . . .

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### Subsuming, Including – Incluir

**Ejemplo:** ¿Qué datos incluirías para describir un tema principal. ¿Cuál es el tema?  
(What facts would you include to describe the main theme? What is the theme?)

**Respuesta:** Los datos que yo incluiría son . . .

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### Abstracting – Sacar, Hacer succínica, Expresar la idea central

**Ejemplo:** ¿Cómo harías succínica la información de esta sección del texto?  
(How would you make the information succinct from this section of the text?)

**Respuesta:** Para hacer un resumen succínica (o Para expresar la idea central ...), yo diría que este cuento se trata de ... (To make a succinct summary (or to express the main idea...), I would say that this story is about..)

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### Conceptualizing – Conceptualizar, Entender

**Ejemplo: ¿Puedes conceptualizar . . . ?**  
(Can you conceptualize . . . )

**Respuesta:** Si, yo puedo conceptuar . . .

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### **Summarizing - Resumir**

**Ejemplo: ¿Cómo resumirías este cuento o párrafo?**  
(How would you summarize this story?)

**Respuesta: Yo diría que este cuento se trata de . . .**  
(I would say that this story is about . . . )

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1. What words reflect sensory detail such as words related to sights, smells, tastes, sounds?
2. Relate the proposed solution. Why was it effective or not?
3. What is an effect the event has on the protagonist?
4. What sentence reveals the author's position on this issue?
5. Identify the factual information that supports the premise of this paragraph?

### **III) APPLY: Aplicar**

#### **Carrying out or using a procedure - Llevar a cabo / Usar un procedimiento / Conectar**

**Ejemplo: ¿Cómo conectarías el mensaje de este cuento o información con una experiencia personal?**  
(How would you connect the message of this store with a personal experience?)

**Respuesta: Yo diría que el mensaje de este cuento es semejante a mi experiencia . . .**  
(I would say that the message of this story is similar to my experience . . . )

#### **Implementing – Implementar**

**Ejemplo: ¿Qué idea o información suplementaria implementarías en este cuento?**  
(What idea or supplementary information would you implement in this story?)

**Respuesta: Yo implementaría la idea de . . .**

#### **Applying - Aplicar**

**Ejemplo: ¿Cómo aplicarías la información de este cuento a la importancia de entender a otros?**  
**¿Cuál es el mensaje?**  
(How would you apply the information from this story to the importance of understanding others?  
What is a message?)

**Respuesta: El mensaje de este cuento es . . . Yo diría que es importante entender que . . .**  
The message of this story is . . . I would say that it is important to understand that . . .

**Generalizing**  
**Demonstrate**  
**Deriving**  
**Developing**  
**Investigating**

## **Figure1: Model Essay Guide**

The following is an example of the ‘Model Essay Guide.’ Using the essay critique (Appendix B) which was written in response to the prompt: John Donne wrote *No Man Is An Island*, please agree or disagree with this premise as it relates to modern American society. During discussion with the class Julie recorded her students’ responses as they identified the core elements of the essay and answered the questions she posed, which were intended to promote further contemplation of the topic.

### **Sample Introductory Paragraph**

**Topic Sentence:** Although asserted over two hundred years ago, current social and economic conditions provide evidence that John Donne’s phrase “No man is an island,” remains relevant even in the twenty-first century.

**Main Concept #1:** Mankind continues to be dependent upon one another in order to promote the common good and welfare of the individual and community at large.

**Main Concept #2:** The necessary support systems include emotional fostering, financial assistance and educational development.

**Main Concept #3:** Time and financial constraints increasingly impact individuals, putting at risk the social fabric derived from intergenerational communication and the development of lasting, stable relationships.

**Thesis Statement:** The three areas of personal attention, monetary provisions, and intellectual growth each function as an integral part of a balanced, orderly society and can impact the well-being of mankind in general.

**Guided Question:** What words in the ‘Main Concepts’ provide insight about the author’s assertion in the thesis statement that monetary provisions are a part of a balanced, orderly society?

**Sample Answer:** In ‘Main Concept #2’ the author states that financial assistance is necessary.

### **Sample Body Paragraph**

**Topic Sentence:** Headlines and news reports are filled with stories that demonstrate the negative effects on the young as well as the elderly when an individual suffers from a lack of emotional support.

**Detail #1:** When children are abandoned or placed into foster homes that are ill prepared to sufficiently care for them, governmental social agencies or the courts themselves must intervene to establish guardianship for children needing a loving environment within which they can grow and mature.

**Detail #2:** The elderly of our society evidence depression and loneliness sometimes turning to outside governmental agencies or the medical field for assistance.

**Detail #3:** Providing help to individuals experiencing emotional distress by providing proper medical care or aiding a community member with daily living expenses and with the help they need to maintain a healthy life style can enhance the foundations of a stable society.

**Guided Question:** What might be the effect, according to the author’s tone as shown in selected words, of ignoring the issue of the teen high school drop out rate?

**Sample Answer:** The effect would be a furthered unstable society.

### **Sample Concluding Paragraph**

**Topic Sentence:** In view of the many obstacles that can impede an individual’s path to health, happiness, and security, the importance of creating and maintaining relationships and a caring attitude continues to deserve the undivided attention of every member of society.

**Detail #1:** Through a continual process of identifying the needs of the young and the elderly, solving problems, developing socially connected agencies, and informing our citizens of the morals and values that provide for a successful and peaceful lifestyle, all community members can contribute together to a strengthened society through individual commitment.

**Detail #2:** Through a continual process of identifying the needs of the young as well as the old, solving problems, developing socially connected agencies, and informing our citizens of the morals and values that provide for a successful and peaceful lifestyle, all community members can contribute together to a strengthened society through individual commitment.

**Detail #3:** Combined commitment and self sacrifice, as portrayed by those who help meet the emotional, financial, and educational needs of others demonstrates the avenue through which others can contribute to enhancing the lives of others.

**Guided Question:** How would you evaluate the solution the author provides in order to enhance the quality of lives of America’s citizens?

**Sample Answer:** I would evaluate this solution as excellent because our country needs people who will postpone personal gratification and devote their time and resources to helping alleviate the strife and challenges others encounter in a democracy. I concur with this author’s assessment of the nation’s problems and proposed solution.

## No Man Should Stand Alone

According to John Donne, “No man is an island, entire of itself; every man is a piece of the continent, a part of the main.” Although asserted over two hundred years ago, evidence providing the truth of this statement can be seen in the twenty first century. Mankind continues to be dependent upon one another in order to promote the common good and welfare of the individual and community at large. The necessary support systems include emotional fostering, financial assistance and educational development. These three areas of personal attention, monetary provisions, intellectual growth each function as an integral part of a balanced, collaborative society and can equally impact the well-being of mankind in general as well as promote the development and maintenance of a stable society where individuals are free to enjoy life and to achieve their goals.

Headlines and news reports are replete with stories that demonstrate the negative effects on the young as well as the elderly when an individual suffers from a lack of emotional support. When children, for example, are abandoned or placed in foster homes that are ill prepared to sufficiently care for them, governmental social agencies or the courts themselves must intervene to establish guardianship for children needing a loving environment within which they can grow and mature, with the hopes of someday being adopted.. Furthermore, the aged members of our society evidence depression and loneliness through taking ever increasing amounts of antidepressant drugs. When the story finally becomes public, authorities can often trace the difficulties experienced by these people to evidence that they have been neglected or even harmed by those around them. Providing help to individuals experiencing emotional distress, aiding these individuals through proper medical care, treating physical ailments and assisting each person, regardless of age, with daily living expenses and with the help they need to maintain a healthy lifestyle can certainly enhance the foundations of a stable society.

The increasing burdens of maintaining a high standard of living for both the retired and working aged citizen continues to present a challenge to every person trying to afford a home and to support a family. With the rising cost of single family homes, families and friends must continue search for ways to help one another afford even the most basic forms of shelter. In addition, many individuals use loan services that can creatively provide individual or family with the income to afford a necessary down payment on a home or a vehicle for transportation. Without the assistance of obliging family members, friends and specified financial services, most people would find the economic burdens of today’s society an insurmountable burden to bear. Only through every avenue of support, can many of our nation’s citizens manage a successful budget and a satisfactory lifestyle both in their youth as well as well into the retirement years.

Additionally, a solid foundation of a independent society depends on a shared value system where all members agree to assist society’s members’ intellectual development. Of notable importance is being considerate in the area of sharing knowledge in formal educational environments as well as in informal working situations. As education and technological knowledge advances and is shared around the world, individuals of all ages must be prepared to adjust, with the appropriate skills, to new working environments at any stage in their life. These modifications in one’s career can only occur if the skilled professionals in every field are willing to learn new skills as well as to share their knowledge and skills with others willing to learn. As workers witness a willingness to share knowledge both within their work and outside the working environment, they will increasingly become accepting of the notion of change if the need to modify work skills arises. Certainly, the transmission of both information and moral values require a combined approach, where everyone accepts responsibility to impart and receive knowledge is a principle element to the foundations of independence, security and economic success, whether applied to an individual or to a country as a whole.

In view of the many obstacles that can delay an individual’s path to health, happiness, and security, the importance of creating and maintaining relationships and a caring attitude continues to deserve the undivided attention of every member of society. Through a continual process of identifying the needs of the young as well as the old, solving problems, developing socially connected agencies, and informing our citizens of the morals and values that provide for a successful and peaceful lifestyle, all community members can contribute together to a strengthened society through individual commitment. Combined commitment and self sacrifice, as portrayed by those who help meet the emotional, financial, and educational needs of others demonstrates the avenue through which others can contribute to enhancing the lives of others. Through continued and sustained collaborative efforts, each human from every background can certainly contribute to the resolution of society’s problems and to the continued flourishing of freedom to enjoy life to its fullest extent.

## Essay Outline Guide

Title: \_\_\_\_\_

Theme: \_\_\_\_\_

### Introduction

Topic Sentence: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail: \_\_\_\_\_

Additional Detail:

Additional Detail: Thesis Statement:

**Guided Question: What words in the 'Main Concepts' provide insight about the author's assertion in the thesis statement that monetary provisions are a part of a balanced, orderly society?**

### 2<sup>nd</sup> Paragraph

Topic Sentence:

Detail #1: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail #2: \_\_\_\_\_

Detail #3: \_\_\_\_\_

Concluding Sentence:

**Guided Question: Explain why you think this idea is appropriately placed in the second paragraph.**

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**3<sup>rd</sup> Paragraph**

**Topic Sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding Sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guided Question:** **How might the impression created by the author affect a younger person?**

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**4<sup>th</sup> Paragraph**

**Topic Sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding Sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Guided Question:** **What might be the effect, according to the author's tone as shown in selected words, of ignoring the issue of the teen high school drop out rate?**

**Concluding Paragraph**

**Summarize, Describe, Connect, Explain, Analyze, Expand, Extend, Evaluate**

**Topic Sentence:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #1:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #2:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Detail #3:** \_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Concluding Sentence:**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_

**Guided Question: How would you evaluate the solution the author provides in order to enhance the quality of lives of America's citizens?**

\_\_\_\_\_

\_\_\_\_\_