



Proficient | Exemplar Essay

Letter to the Editor: Social Media

The Evolution of Communication



Claim and Focus

The writer introduces the topic with relevant information and narrows to a clear and specific claim (“social networking has brought us together as a society and works to keep us safe”). Both points of the claim are thoroughly addressed and a counterclaim is refuted. A more interesting or precise claim would move this to a 4.



Support and Evidence

Clear and relevant evidence supports each point in the claim (Facebook/ cousin anecdote, Boston bombing example) and the weakness of the counterclaim is exposed (“bullies existed long before social media”). Cited evidence supporting the claim would move this to 4.



Organization

Clear transitions are employed to show the relationships between claim, evidence, and counterclaim (“Social media also helps bring you closer,” “Like any new advancement, there is a downside”). Related ideas are grouped into paragraphs and progress forward from introduction to body to conclusion.



Language and Style

A clear perspective and strong voice are present as well as a command of conventions. Word choice and tone are appropriate for the intended audience and sentences are varied throughout.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait ‘looks like’ in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see “25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays” by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

Letter to the Editor: Social Media



The Evolution of Communication

Humans have gone from simple tools to complex computer systems to medicine that heals the deathly ill. Our communication has also evolved, from the men who rode their horses all day with a handwritten letter to messages on the internet. Social media is a way for all types of people to contact one another, no matter where they are in the world. This type of social networking has brought us together as a society and works to keep us safe. If you look at what social media has brought to us, it is clear that the pros outweigh the cons.

The main reason social networks like Twitter, Snap Chat, and Instagram were created was to help people share their story and personality with other people. Most people do just that, by sharing their happy moments with a picture and a word or two. Social media also helps you to keep up with people that may not live close by. For example, I have a cousin who lives in California and I rarely hear from or see. I found out on Facebook that she got engaged the day that it happened! Without being connected on Facebook, I would not be as informed of what's going on in my family or friends' lives.

Social media also helps bring you closer to the information you want and need to know. If you follow a news station, they tweet the news, weather, traffic, etc. Even President Barack Obama and Pope Francis have Twitter! By notifying people about news and traffic, this can reduce the amount of car crashes, which translates to less overall deaths on the road. Recently, I was finishing baseball practice, and on Twitter I found out about the Boston Marathon Bombing. It was good to spread the word about the bombers because everyone was notified to stay inside and stay safe.

Like any new advancement, there is a downside. Some people use these networking sites to send hurtful messages from behind their computers. However, I think it's fair to say that bullies existed long before social media. Unfortunately, there will always be people who will say mean things whether they have the internet or not! We can't let a few bad apples ruin all of the benefits that social media brings.

I strongly believe that social networking is vital to staying informed and connected to family and friends. It also helps people young and old express themselves. I am not saying that we should always be glued to the screens of our phones, but it is important. If we can focus on using it for good instead of bad, it will continue to be a great innovation that helps humanity.