**English 9**

**Argumentative Essay 1**

**October 2012**

*Think carefully about the issue presented in the following excerpt and the assignment below.*

Technology promises to make our lives easier, freeing up time for leisure pursuits. But the rapid pace of technological innovation and the split second processing capabilities of computers that can work virtually nonstop have made all of us feel rushed. We have adopted the relentless pace of the very machines that were supposed to simplify our lives, with the result that, whether at work or play, people do not feel like their lives have changed for the better.

-- Adapted from Karen Finucan, “Life in the Fast Lane”

**Assignment**: Do changes that make our lives easier not necessarily make them better?

**Guidelines**

* Use ideas from any experience (life, reading, etc.) to establish a claim (thesis, or main idea)
* Address counterclaims (ideas you are not arguing for)
* Use specific and relevant evidence from each passage to develop your claim
* Organize your ideas in a logical and coherent manner
* Use language and tone that communicates ideas effectively and is appropriate for your audience.
* Follow the conventions of standard written English

**Argumentative Writing:**  support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.

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| **Claim/Analysis**: the extent to which the assignment exhibits sound understanding/interpretation/analysis | | | | |
| **Claim**  (Thesis, controlling idea, hypothesis) | Introduce precise claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims | Introduce claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims | Introduce claim(s), but does not distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims | Claim is vague and does not distinguish from alternate or opposing claims |
| **Analysis** | Establishes a sophisticated & advanced understanding and relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, providing a variety of reasons, and evidence. | Establishes a clear understanding of claim(s), counterclaims, providing reasons, and evidence. | Establishes some understanding of claim(s), counterclaims, providing few reasons, and evidence. | Inaccurate understanding of claim(s), counterclaims, providing inaccurate or no reasons, and evidence. |

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| **Development**: the extent to which ideas are elaborated, using specific and relevant reasons and evidence | | | | |
| Reasons and Evidence (Facts, examples, concrete details) | Supplies a **variety** of substantial & **complex** reasons and evidence for each claim(s), and counterclaim(s) | Supplies a **variety** of reasons and evidence for each claim(s), and counterclaim(s) | Supplies **some** reasons and evidence for each claim(s), and counterclaim(s) | Supplies **few** reasons and evidence for each claim(s), and counterclaim(s) |
| Balance | Develops claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns. | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly, pointing out the strengths and limitations of both but has **little** awareness of audience. | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims **unevenly**, pointing out **some** strengths and limitations and has **little** awareness of audience. | Develop claim(s) and counterclaims unevenly, pointing out **few** strengths and limitations and has **no** awareness of audience. |

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| **Organization**: the extent to which the assignment establishes relationship amongst components | | | | |
| Designing Organization | Creates an organization that establishes **sophisticated** and clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. | Creates an organization that establishes **clear** relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence. | **Attempts to** create an organization that establishes relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence, but **relationships are not always clear.** | Relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence are **not clear or accurate**. |
| Introduction | Skillfully engages reader, provides necessary background information on topic and insightfully defines position | Engages reader, provides necessary background information on topic and defines position | Provides **little** background information on topic and vaguely defines position | Provides **little or no** background information on topic and **does not define position** |
| **Conclusion** | Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented. | Provide a concluding statement or section that supports the argument presented. | Attempts to provide a concluding statement or section that follows from or supports the argument presented, but statement is irrelevant to the argument presented | Incomplete/absent concluding statement or section |

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| **Conventions**: the extent to which the assignments exhibits conventional grammar/spelling/word usage | | | | |
| **Grammar/**  **Punctuation** | Smooth, fluid error-free punct./grammar | Mostly correct grammar; errors do not interfere with communication | Errors occasionally interfere with communication | Grammatical errors are awkward and substantially interfere with communication |
| **Spelling and Word Usage** | Correct spelling;  error-free word usage | Mostly correct spelling and word usage | Errors in spelling and word usage | Misspelled and misused words throughout |
| **Overall assignment presentation** | Correct MLA heading; unique title; professional presentation | MLA heading; appropriate title; neat presentation | Incomplete heading; average title/presentation | No heading/title; no attention to presentation |

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| **Language Use**: the extent to which the response reveals an awareness of audience and purpose through effective use of words, sentence structure, sentence variety, style and tone | | | | |
| **Language Use** | Use **sophisticated** words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. | Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. | Use **basic** words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. | Use **imprecise** words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims. |
| **Style** | Establish and maintain a **sophisticated** style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. | Establish and maintain a **formal** style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. | **Attempts** to establish a style and tone and is **inconsistent** with norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. | Does not establish style and tone and **does not adhere** to norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing. |