Historical Persona Essay

CCA10.4g Write a historical persona essay that:

* + includes a historic person
  + **defines important moments** in the historic person’s life so essay is **well-focused** and **organized**
  + **shows understanding** of the person, the events, and gathered details about the place and time
  + includes **reflections and observations** about person’s life and experiences
  + **includes the people the person might have met** and creates **accurate depictions** of those individuals
  + **uses the “I” voice** (imagined self to be the person and to be part of these events) in order to get a feel for the experience.
  + **includes thoughts** and feelings
  + **uses dialogue** to bring characters to life
  + **employs an easy-to-follow organization**.

Genre: Personal Essay

* A personal essay is a **less formal** essay genre.
* Writers of this genre convey a profound sense of authenticity and transparency because they invite readers into their lives, to share their experiences.
* They often focus on a singular moment of utter profoundness. They want to recreate that moment through the essay. In this way they are allowing readers to experience a bit of what it was like to be in that time and place.

**Historical Persona Essay**

* It is all of the above descriptors.
* In this case, **the writer adopts the persona of a historical figure** and imagines his/her experience and writes that experience in the voice of the historical figure.

**Your Task**

* Choose a historical figure **who has faced a significant challenge** (refer to our brainstorm notes)
* **Write an essay in first person with a flashback and dialogue in it**.
* Refer to checklists below.

**Before Writing Activities**

🞏 Activate Prior Knowledge of personal essays.

🞏 Use graphic organizer to plan, organize, and sequence essay.

🞏 Examine effective dialogue and flashback techniques

**During/After Writing Activities**

🞏 Create draft, revise, edit/peer edit

🞏 Consider message and focus. Are they clear and well-defined?

🞏 Descriptions are accurate and relevant. Word choice is appropriate.

🞏 Point of view is consistently first person.

🞏 Includes introduction, transitions, and conclusion.

🞏 Dialogue is formatted correctly.

🞏 Check for spelling, punctuation, and so on.

Pre-Writing Organizer

Name: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

|  |
| --- |
| 1. Who is your persona? Where do you live? What is your family background? What is your age? What is your occupation? (include information that is especially relevant to your challenges, i.e., growing up in a racist society in which you were a minority or being the youngest of a family of twelve children might have taught the character to be a fighter or activist.) |
| 1. What challenge(s) have you faced or are you facing? If your challenges are societal, describe the kind of society in which you live. (Is it a class society? A Racist society? A rural or urban society? Is it religious? Is it discriminating in other ways?) |
| 1. How did you feel having to deal with your challenge? (Use inferences from what you’ve read to imagine the feelings) |
| 1. How have you overcome or accepted your challenge(s)? How have your challenges made you who you are? |
| 1. What are some of the highlights in your life? What achievements do you most celebrate? |
| 1. What could you tell others who are facing a similar challenge? |

Suggested outline of essay

**Paragraph One: (Box A)** Introduce *yourself* (in your persona) and the most important details of your background. Set out the purpose of the essay, i.e., to describe your challenges.

**Paragraph Two:** **(Box B)** Describe the challenge you face/are facing. If it’s a physical disability, describe how you acquired it and/or how it affects you. If it’s challenges imposed by society, describe your society and why you are underprivileged.

**Paragraph Three and more, depending on how many lines of dialogue you have): (Box C-D)** Retell an event from your life in which your challenge was significant. It could be when the challenge happened, or an experience in which the challenge hindered you, or when you overcame the challenge. **Do this as a flashback AND include some dialogue.**

**Paragraph after the dialogue and flashback: (Box E)** Describe how the challenge has affected your life, your perception of the world, your sense of safety and acceptance. Describe your feelings regarding the challenge.

**Final: (Box F)** Explain how the challenge has been important to your growth as a person. Offer a final statement about overcoming or living with a challenge. You can quote from someone, especially yourself.

Peer Revising

Peer doing the revisions: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Person’s paper you are revising: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

* + 1. Who is the historical persona?
    2. What is the focus of this person’s life? (If you can’t identify a specific focus, say this.)
    3. Is the essay’s message clear and well-defined? (In other words, does the writer stay focused on the challenge(s) that the persona faces and deal thoroughly with those challenges?)
    4. Is the point of view consistently in the first person? \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Does the voice sound like the persona? Are there places where the voice doesn’t sound right? (Mark those places.)
    5. Are there vivid descriptions? Are they accurate and relevant to the message?
    6. Is there a flashback? Does the flashback work correctly? Does it flow in and out of the narrative seamlessly? Does it contribute to the narration? (Explain/mark any problems with the flashback.)
    7. Is the dialogue formatted correctly? (Mark when it isn’t) How does the dialogue contribute to the narration?
    8. Mark any spelling, punctuation, typos, etc. that you note.
    9. What is a strength of this essay?
    10. What is one way the writer can improve this essay?

**Peer receives up to 10 marks for editing the paper.**

**You need to hand this in!!!**