**Constitution Day Writing Assignment**

**Using the ABC’s of Writing**

**There are three writing prompts to choose from. CHOOSE ONE of the following writing prompts/questions to answer.** Your statement must be backed up with logical argument to prove your point. Your written response will be graded on how well you support your statement based on logical argument. Your response will be graded using the rubric on the back of this sheet.

**Question One:** **Is it important for Americans to know and understand what the U.S. Constitution says regarding the power and limits of government authority (for example, the right to freedom of speech, protection from government control over religion, the right to keep and bear firearms, etc.)?**

**Question Two: Does it matter if our rights are something we make up, or if – instead – they are established by a higher truth that never changes?**

**Question Three: Some people believe there is no higher truth, that government is whatever government declares itself to be, and has whatever authority it is able to back up with police power and/or military might. Would you want to live in a country ruled by a government that claims power and authority based on no higher authority than itself?**

**NOTE: Here is an easy way to improve your writing using the “ABC’s of Writing.” Before you write, make some notes that make sure you: A) Address the Writing Prompt (e.g. the question), B) Back it Up with evidence, and C) Conclude Your Thinking.**

1. **Address the Prompt: Clearly state what your viewpoint is in the opening sentence and/or paragraph.**
2. **Back it Up: Support your viewpoint with evidence, quotes, research, data, etc. State why the other side is wrong. Use evidence.**
3. **Conclude your Thinking: Use the evidence to convince the intended audience that your viewpoint is valid.**

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**Grading Rubric**

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| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Points** | **Thesis:** **Address the Prompt.** | **Supporting Evidence:** **Back it Up.** | **Conclusion: Conclude Your Thinking** | **Style and Conventions** |
| **Exceptional** **(√+ = 100%)** | The text introduces a compelling claim that is clearly arguable and takes a purposeful position on an issue. The text has a structure and organization that is carefully crafted to support the claim. | The text provides convincing data and/or evidence to back up the claim and skillfully addresses counterclaims.  | The conclusion effectively strengthens the claim and evidence. | The text presents an engaging, formal and objective tone. The text intentionally uses standard English conventions of usage and mechanics (correct spelling and grammar). |
| **Proficient** **(√ = 85%)** | The text states a claim that is arguable and takes a position. The text has a structure and organization that is aligned with the claim. | The text provides data and/or evidence to back up the claim and addresses counterclaims.  | The conclusion ties to the claim and evidence. | The text presents a formal tone. The text demonstrates standard English conventions of usage and mechanics (correct spelling and grammar). |
| **Inadequate** **(√- = 70%** **or below)** | The text contains an identifiable claim or vague position. The text has limited structure and organization. | The text contains limited data and evidence related to the claim and counterclaims or lacks counterclaims.  | The text may fail to conclude the argument or position. | The text illustrates a limited awareness or inconsistent tone. The text demonstrates inaccuracy in standard English conventions of usage and mechanics (correct spelling and grammar). |