

# STAAR Toolbox



# STAAR Overview: Let's Review the 4 Parts!



**Q: Why?**

**A:** Have to pass it to graduate!

**Q: How much time?**

**A:** 5 hours TOTAL

**Q: How should I do the test?**

**A:** 1st → Plan and Write your Essay

2nd → Reading Questions

3rd → Revising & Editing Questions

## Parts 1 & 2: Revising and Editing

**Q: What's the difference again?**

- o **Editing:** grammar, punctuation, spelling, capitalization
- o **Revising:** sentence structure, thesis, sentence transitions

**Q: How do I know the difference between revising and editing passages?**

**A:** If the reading passage has the **sentences numbered** then it is a revising OR editing passage.  
Look at the top \_\_\_\_\_ to find out if it is a revising passage or an editing passage:

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

*Trevor wrote this reflective essay for his English class. Read Trevor's paper and look for any corrections he needs to make before submitting it to his teacher. When you have finished reading, answer the questions that follow.*

### **Cool Dude**

(1) As any younger brother will tell you, having a big brother involves a lot of walking in someone else's shadow. (2) It just comes with the territory, especially when you have an older brother, who is the epitome of "cool."

(3) For years I wanted to do everything Tyson did, but no matter how hard I tried, my legs just weren't made to run like his. (4) I could never make better than

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

*Alicia wrote the following paper in response to a class assignment. Before she submits it to her teacher, she would like you to read it and look for any revisions she should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

### **Body Language**

(1) The expressions you make and the way you hold your body can say a great deal about your state of mind. (2) People have studied these nonverbal cues for centuries, even as far back as the times of the ancient Greeks and Romans.

(3) You've probably heard that others might draw conclusions about you by

**Q: What do I need to remember?**

**A:** 1. USE A DICTIONARY TO CHECK SPELLING CHANGES!

2. In the **YELLOW** dictionary page **A26** → punctuation and capitalization rules.

3. The answer choice "no change needed" most of the time is NOT the answer. It has only been the answer 1 or 2 times in the last 4 years!

4. Check EVERY answer choice to see if it is correct by going back to the sentence or paragraph.

## Part 2: Expository Essay

### Q: What is the expository essay again?

A: Reading the prompt, writing the thesis statement, and then proving it with examples/evidence

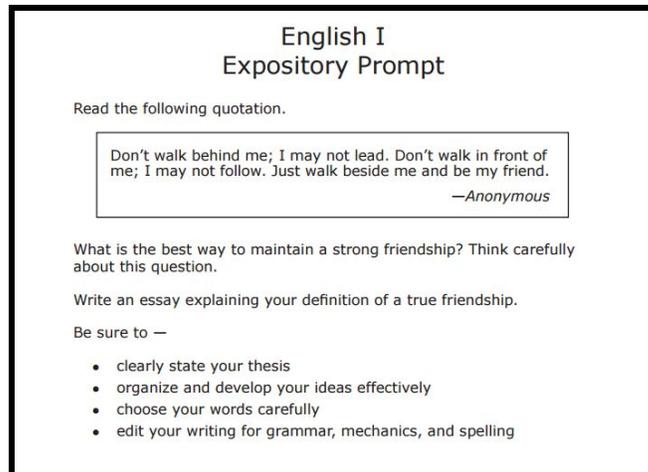
### Q: How much can I write?

A: It has to fit on the 26 lines. Write small!

### Q: How much time should I spend on the essay?

A: 30 min to plan + 30 min to write = about 1 hour

### Q: Which part of the prompt page do I look at again?



English I  
Expository Prompt

Read the following quotation.

Don't walk behind me; I may not lead. Don't walk in front of me; I may not follow. Just walk beside me and be my friend.  
—Anonymous

What is the best way to maintain a strong friendship? Think carefully about this question.

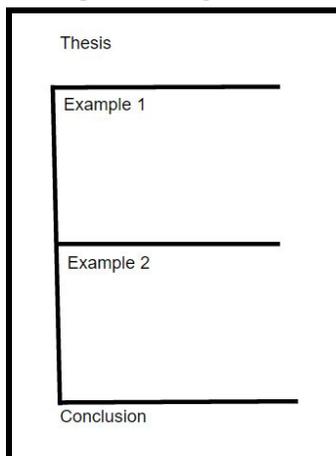
Write an essay explaining your definition of a true friendship.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your thesis
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

A: The "write" statement.

### Q: How did we practice planning the essay in class?



A: We used the "E".

### Q: Which page in the YELLOW dictionary should I look at to help me?

A: Blue page A34 ("You need \_\_\_\_\_!")

### Q: What if I don't write my essay or don't put effort into it?

A: If you don't write your essay, you will not pass! It is worth 24% of your test grade.

### Q: What do I need to remember when I write my essay?

A: Always have your thesis statement! Write about 1-2 specific examples to prove your thesis! As you write your conclusion, remember: "Now people should do or think \_\_\_\_\_" (after reading my essay).

## Part 3: Reading

### **Q: What reading passages are going to be on the test?**

**A:** Paired passages → Any 2: literary (story), informational, poetry, persuasion, or drama  
Literary → stories, poetry, or drama  
Informational → informational or persuasive articles

### **Q: What should I remember as I read?**

**A:** Read each passage and answer the questions. Take notes as you go back and forth to the story and reading passage.

### **Q: When should I use a dictionary?**

**A:** Whenever you don't know a word in the QUESTION or ANSWER CHOICE

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## Glossary

### **Q: What words could I review?**

**A:** See below by genre!

### **Elements of short story/Fiction Terms**

These terms are found in fiction (not real) text. Short stories, poems, and plays are a few fiction text these terms will be found in.

- **Plot:** sequence of events in a literary work. Has characters and a conflict.
- **Setting:** the time and place of the story.
- **Climax:** turning point of the story; character has to make a decision about the conflict
- **Resolution:** outcome of the story; ending of the story
- **Conflict:** a struggle (problem) between opposing forces
- **External conflict:** takes place outside of the character's control. There are 4.
  - a. Character vs. Character
  - b. Character vs. Nature
  - c. Character vs. Society
  - d. Character vs. Supernatural (ghost, spirit world, monsters)
- **Internal conflict:** takes place within the character's mind. Character vs. Self
- **Characterization:** the act of creating and developing a character
- **Direct characterization:** the author makes a direct comment about the character.  
"Jack is nice."                      "Sally is mean."
- **Indirect characterization:** the reader must use the context clues given by the author.
- **Irony:** surprise

- **Verbal irony:** words are used to suggest the opposite of what is meant
- **Situational irony:** the opposite happens of what is expected
- **Dramatic irony:** the audience or reader knows something a character does not
- **Point of view:** narrator telling the story
- **Omniscient Third Person** (narrator outside of the story): all knowing third person who can tell the reader all thoughts and feelings of characters
- **Third person limited** (narrator outside of the story): narrator can reveal the world through one character's eyes and thoughts
- **First person** (narrator in the story): a character in the story tells the story (uses "I")
- **Theme:** central message the author wants the reader to get after reading the text (short story, poem, play)
- **Symbol:** something that stands for something else (color, name, object, etc.)
- **Mood:** feeling created in the reader
- **Tone:** feeling created by the writer/speaker
- **Inference:** drawing conclusions about the text, characters,
- **Diction:** author's word choice
- **Imagery:** appeals to the five senses (smell, touch, hear, taste, see); creates a mental picture in the reader's mind.

### Expository Terms

The following terms are found in non-fiction (real) text such as: articles, magazines, blogs, newspaper, etc.

- **Expository:** inform and/ or explain
- **Thesis / Controlling idea:** main idea of the text; thesis
- **Inference:** drawing conclusions about the text based on the information given
- **Diction:** author's word choice
- **Author's purpose:** the reason the author wrote the text. Or the reason the author included something in the text.

### Figurative Language

These are terms used in fiction (not real) text. Authors, as well as poets, use figurative language to give their writing spice and to make the reader think critically (beyond the obvious).

- **Simile:** comparing two unlike things using like or as
- **Metaphor:** comparing two unlike things without using like or as
- **Onomatopoeia:** sounds words ("boom" "pop" "bam")
- **Allusion:** a reference to something well known in history or literature
- **Alliteration:** repeated consonant sounds at the beginning of words
- **Hyperbole:** an exaggeration
- **Personification:** giving human traits to non-human objects

## Drama Terms

These terms are used in drama, stage plays.

- **Drama**- a play
- **Act**- a section of a play
- **Scene**- a section of an act
- **Stage Directions**- instructions the playwright gives the actors and crew
- **Dialogue**- the conversation an actor has with other actors or him or herself.
- **Playwright**- the author of a play
- **Monologue**- a long, uninterrupted speech that is spoken by a single actor. In a soliloquy an actor is on stage by him or herself and speaks the lines.
- **Mood**- the feeling a piece of literature arouses in the reader/audience; happiness, sadness, peacefulness
- **Set**- term used for the onstage scenery that suggests the time and place of the action
- **Script**- the written form of the play

### Other words you may see in multiple choice questions:

- **Substantiate**
- **Primary/Primarily**
- **Author's purpose**
- **Explore**
- **Imply**
- **Exemplify/Exemplified**