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## Essays – Middle School – High School



**Thank you for  
joining today's  
writing workshop!**

When we are  
finished, you will  
know exactly how  
to write a short  
essay no matter  
what ...  
**IF YOU PRACTICE!**



Writing model will work for:

- **Opinion/persuasion essay**
  - Provide evidence or reasons to prove or support your point
- **Informative essay**
  - Explain and inform – teach the reader something
- **Essay questions on tests**
- **Many creative essays**

## Session 1

- Personal Opinion/persuasion essay

## Session 2

- Opinion/persuasion essay that cites evidence
- Checklists to help you write

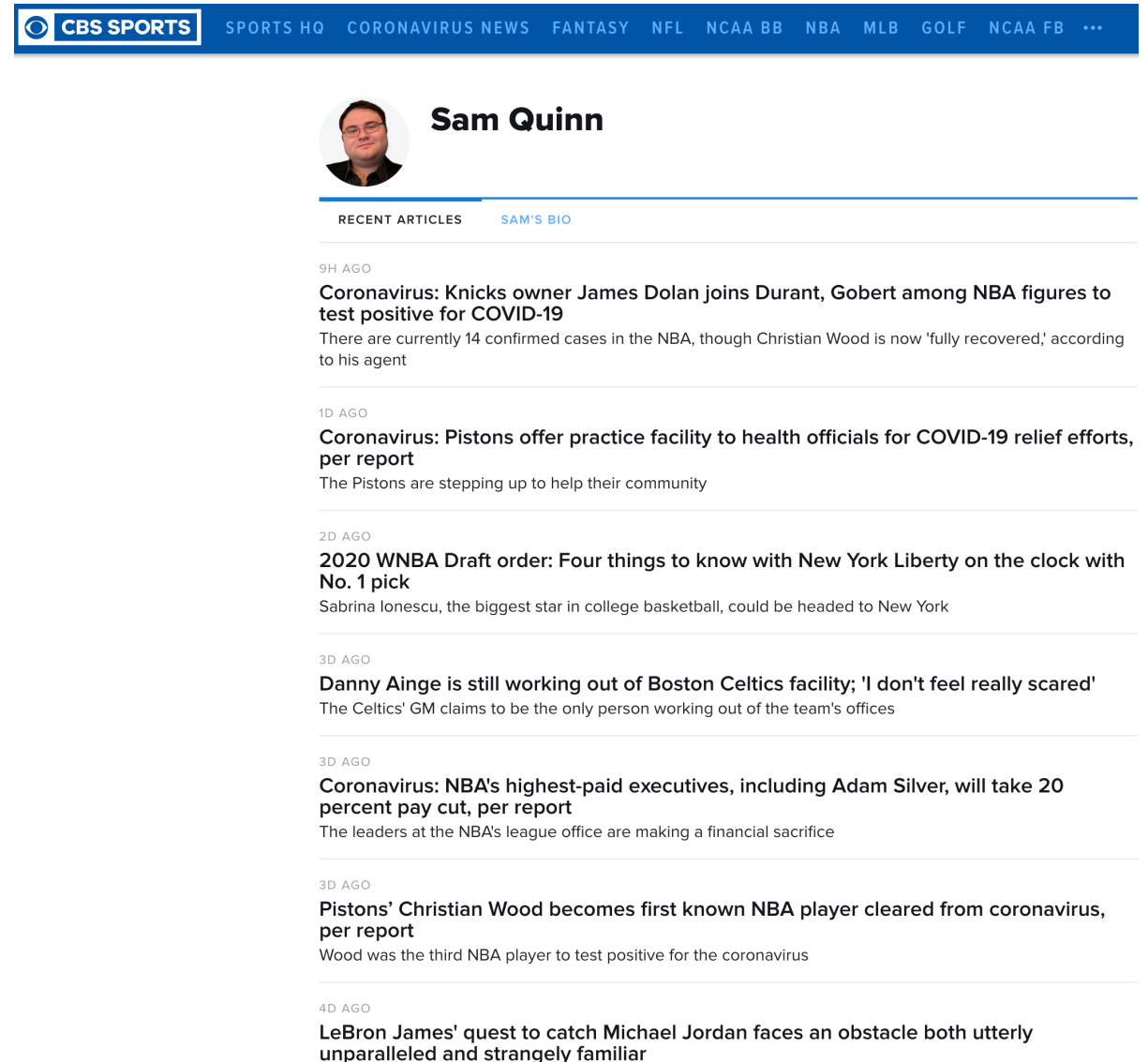
## Session 3

- Opinion/persuasion essay that cites evidence
- Citing more than one source




# Why Learn to Write?

- School
- Tests
- College applications
- Personal expression
- Jobs
- Thinking – arguing
- You’ll do it your whole life!



The screenshot shows a CBS Sports website interface. At the top is a blue navigation bar with the CBS Sports logo and links for Sports HQ, Coronavirus News, Fantasy, NFL, NCAA BB, NBA, MLB, Golf, and NCAA FB. Below the navigation bar is a profile section for Sam Quinn, featuring a circular profile picture and the name 'Sam Quinn'. Underneath the profile are two tabs: 'RECENT ARTICLES' and 'SAM'S BIO'. The 'RECENT ARTICLES' tab is active, displaying a list of seven articles. Each article entry includes a timestamp (e.g., '9H AGO'), a bolded headline, and a short introductory paragraph. The articles cover topics such as James Dolan testing positive for COVID-19, the Pistons offering a practice facility, the 2020 WNBA Draft order, Danny Ainge working out of the Boston Celtics facility, NBA executives taking pay cuts, Christian Wood being cleared of coronavirus, and LeBron James' quest to catch Michael Jordan.

**CBS SPORTS** SPORTS HQ CORONAVIRUS NEWS FANTASY NFL NCAA BB NBA MLB GOLF NCAA FB ...

 **Sam Quinn**

RECENT ARTICLES SAM'S BIO

9H AGO  
**Coronavirus: Knicks owner James Dolan joins Durant, Gobert among NBA figures to test positive for COVID-19**  
There are currently 14 confirmed cases in the NBA, though Christian Wood is now 'fully recovered,' according to his agent

1D AGO  
**Coronavirus: Pistons offer practice facility to health officials for COVID-19 relief efforts, per report**  
The Pistons are stepping up to help their community

2D AGO  
**2020 WNBA Draft order: Four things to know with New York Liberty on the clock with No. 1 pick**  
Sabrina Ionescu, the biggest star in college basketball, could be headed to New York

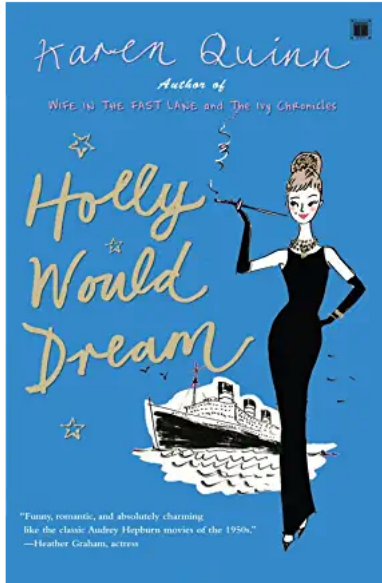
3D AGO  
**Danny Ainge is still working out of Boston Celtics facility; 'I don't feel really scared'**  
The Celtics' GM claims to be the only person working out of the team's offices

3D AGO  
**Coronavirus: NBA's highest-paid executives, including Adam Silver, will take 20 percent pay cut, per report**  
The leaders at the NBA's league office are making a financial sacrifice

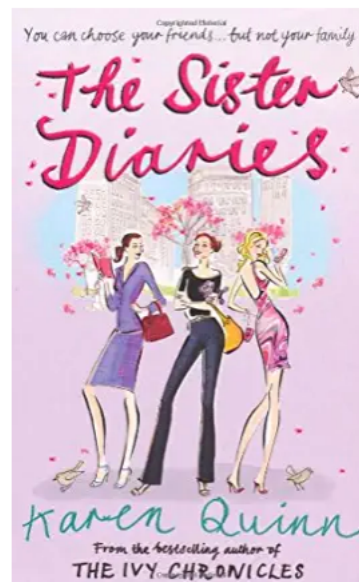
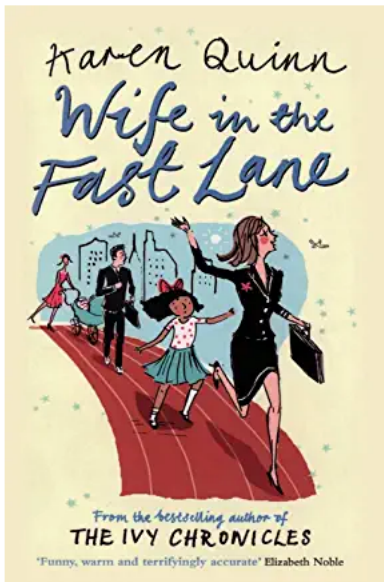
3D AGO  
**Pistons' Christian Wood becomes first known NBA player cleared from coronavirus, per report**  
Wood was the third NBA player to test positive for the coronavirus

4D AGO  
**LeBron James' quest to catch Michael Jordan faces an obstacle both utterly unparalleled and strangely familiar**

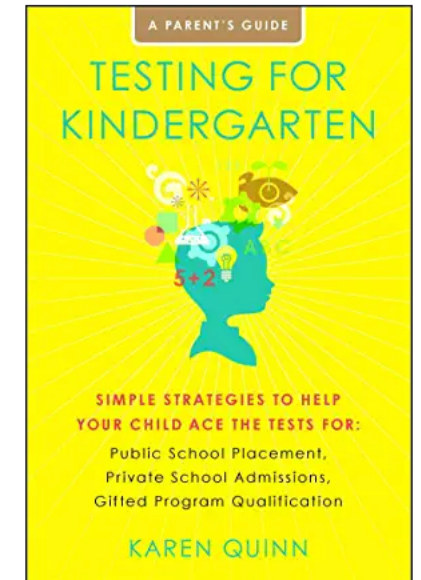
- VOCABULARY
- SENTENCE STRUCTURE
- PARAGRAPH STRUCTURE
- KNOWING GOOD WRITING



# READ A LOT



THAT'S HOW I BECAME A WRITER!



# To Write the Short Essay, Remember 1 Acronym\*...

R  
A  
C  
E  
S



\*Acronym – a series of initials that stands for something else – often used in studying/school to help you remember something important.

**R**estate the question (topic sentence)



**A**nswer the question



**C**ite evidence or details to support your answer

**E**xplain why the evidence or details support to your answer

**S**um it up (conclusion)

**R**estate the question  (Topic Sentence)

 **A**nswer the question

- Restate the question/topic and include your answer – 1 sentence.

 **C**ite evidence or details to support your answer

**E**xplain why the evidence or details support to your answer

- Main Point 1 – 1) Cite piece of information and 2) explain why it is important to your answer (in your own words)
- Main Point 2 – 1) Cite different piece of information and 2) explain why it's important to your answer (in your words)
- Main Point 3 – 1) Cite different piece of information and 2) explain why it's important to your answer (in your words)

**S**um it up (Conclusion)

**R/A** and **S** are almost the same sentence, just slightly different.



# Restate/Answer the Question + Sum it Up

## Writing Prompts From Teacher

- Write about something you would like to do to become a healthier person. Describe the plan you would follow to make that happen.



## R/A Topic Sentence

- To become healthier, I would like to eat better than I do today by adding more fruit and vegetables into my diet.



(Middle of Essay)  
C/E Goes Here

## S Sum It Up

- **In summary**, by adding more fruits and vegetables to my diet, I will be well on my way to becoming a healthier person.

- What is the best advice you ever received and how did it help you?



- When my mother told me, “be yourself, everyone else is taken,” that made me a happier person.



- **In closing**, once my mother told me to “be yourself,” I stopped trying to turn myself into someone I wasn’t just to please others, and that made me a happier person.

**TIP:** Remember, the **R/A** and the **S** are ALWAYS connected! **R/A** describes the points you’re about to make; **S** synthesizes your points to draw a conclusion. They are the same idea expressed in slightly different words.

# Restate/Answer the Question + Sum it Up

## Writing Prompts From Teacher

- If you could live anywhere in the world, where would you live and why?
- If you won a million dollars, what would you choose to do with it?
- If you could be famous for something, what would it be and why?



### R/A Topic Sentence

- If I could live anywhere in the world, I would live in Milan, Italy because that is the fashion capital of the world and I want to be a fashion designer.
- If I won a million dollars, I would choose to spend the money to help educate children around the world.
- If I could be famous for something, I would like to be a well-known Broadway performer because acting, singing and dancing are my passions.

### (Middle of Essay) C/E goes here



### S Sum It Up

- **So as you can see**, Milan, Italy would be the perfect place for me to live so I can pursue my goal of becoming a fashion designer.
- **For these reasons**, I would spend my million-dollar lottery winnings to help educate children all over the planet!
- **In conclusion**, becoming a famous Broadway performer would be my dream come true because it would allow me to do my favorite thing every night: sing, dance and act!

# Cite 1 Point / Explain Why It Supports Your Argument (Middle Sentences/Paragraphs)

## Topic Sentence (R/A)

- To become healthier, I would like to eat better than I do by adding more fruit and vegetables to my diet.

- If I could be famous for something, I would like to be a well-known Broadway performer because acting, singing and dancing are my passions.

- If I won a million dollars, I would choose to spend the money to help educate children around the world.

## Cite 1 Point or Piece of Text

- Fruits contains fiber and all kinds of vitamins. For example, oranges have vitamin C and bananas have potassium.

(Note how each statement across relates to the prior statement – i.e. don't talk about meat – it's not in your R/A.)

- There is nothing I love doing more than acting, singing and dancing.

- If you are educated, then you have the tools you need to do meaningful work in the world.

## Explain Why It Supports Your Argument

- Fiber and vitamins are an important part of a healthy diet. We know that vitamin C from oranges helps to ward off colds. Potassium from bananas is an important mineral that reduces blood pressure.

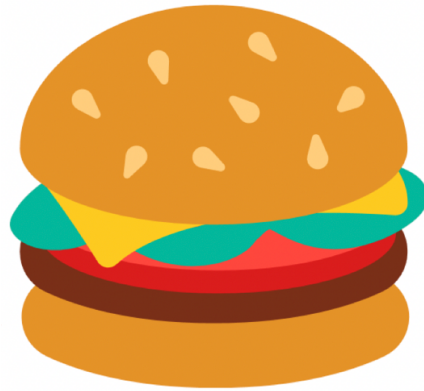
- They say that if you do what you love, the money will follow. That means that if I pursue acting, dancing and singing, I will be able to make good living.

- If more people could do meaningful work, then the world would be a better place for everyone. I would want to help make that happen.

**Essay Question:** What is the best food in the world to eat and why?

## 1) Brainstorm

- “What’s the best food to eat?”
  - Ice cream sundae, pizza, hamburger, fried chicken, ice cream cone
- “I’ll go with a hamburger!”
- “Why is that the best food to eat?”
  - You can **choose the patty – meat, fish or vegetarian**
  - Add **toppings** – changes temperature/texture
  - **Cheese** – great flavor addition
  - A **perfect combination** of ingredients
  - Best when **fresh off the grill**
  - Can add bacon, avocado, onions, etc.



## 2) Outline

- A. A burger because it’s the perfect combination of ingredients.
  - I. Choose your favorite patty – meat, fish, vegetarian
  - II. Toppings for texture, temperature, flavor
  - III. Melted cheese – intensify the flavor.
- B. Sum it up – end with 1 sentence that concludes the essay and neatly ties together everything I just said.

**Tip:** Brainstorming gives you more to say than you probably need; choose the points you think are most important.

# What is the best food in the world to eat and why?

## R.A.C.E.S – Restate/Answer, Cite/Explain x 3 + Sum it up

A hamburger is the best food in the world to eat because it is the perfect combination of ingredients.

It starts with a hot, juicy burger patty fresh off the grill. You can choose a meat, fish or a vegetarian patty, whichever you like best, to make it taste just right!

Adding cold lettuce, tomato, and onion toppings cools the sandwich and gives it good texture.

Putting a piece of melted cheese on top intensifies the flavor of the overall sandwich.

As you can see, when you combine a soft bun with a grilled patty, vegetable toppings and cheese, you have created the best food in the world.

**Sum it up (the bun on top)**

**C / E - Cite Detail or Evidence / Explain or Expand (lettuce)**

**C / E - Cite Detail or Evidence / Explain or Expand (cheese)**

**C / E - Cite Detail or Evidence / Explain or Expand (burger)**

**R / A – Restate / Answer (Foundation)  
Topic Sentence / Main Idea (bun on bottom)**

**R/A** A hamburger is the best food in the world to eat because it is the perfect combination of ingredients.

**C/E** It starts with a hot, juicy burger patty fresh off the grill. You can choose a meat, fish or a vegetarian patty, whichever you like best, to make it taste just right!

**C/E** Adding cold lettuce, tomato, and onion toppings cools the sandwich and gives it good texture.

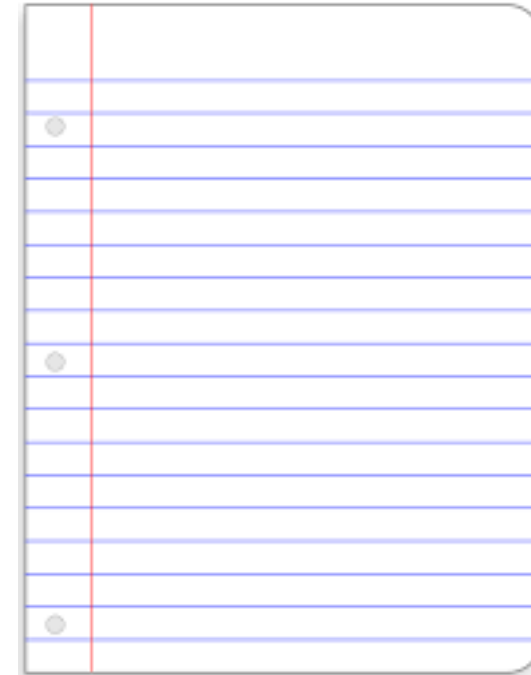
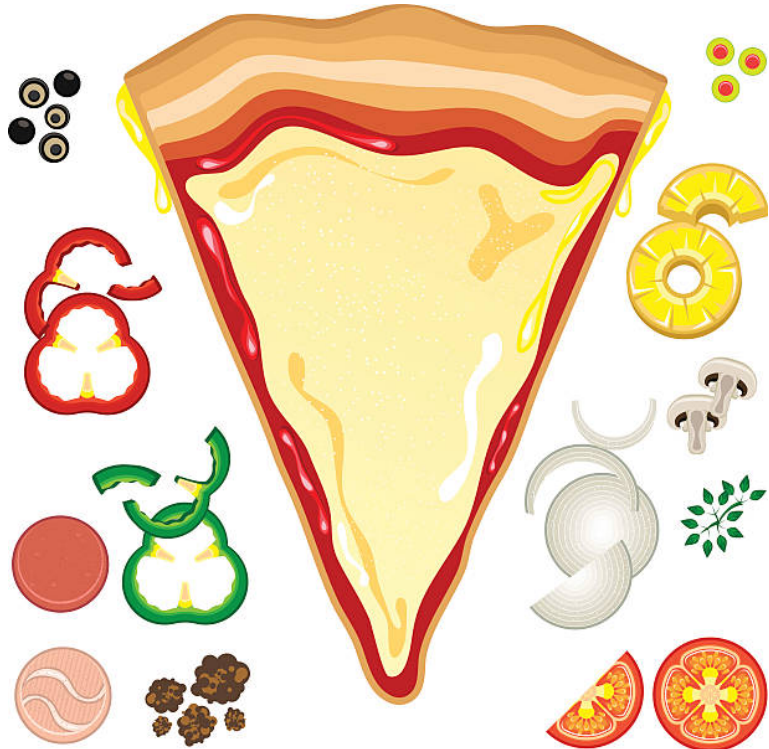
**C/E** Putting a piece of melted cheese on top intensifies the flavor of the overall sandwich.

**S** As you can see, when you combine a soft bun with a grilled patty, vegetable toppings and cheese, you have created the best food in the world.



What is the best food in the world to eat and why? (Optional)

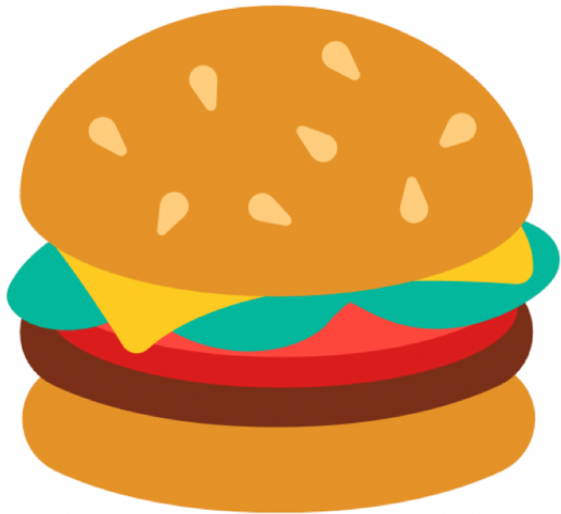
R.A.C.E – Restate/Answer, Cite/Explain x 3 + Sum it up



Try writing an essay using pizza as your "best" food!  
Follow exactly what we did on slides 11 – 12.

# Imagine Burger R.A.C.E.S When Writing Essays

## Your Short-Essay Model



→ Sum it up

} Cite/Explain  
in your own  
words x 3

→ Restate/Answer



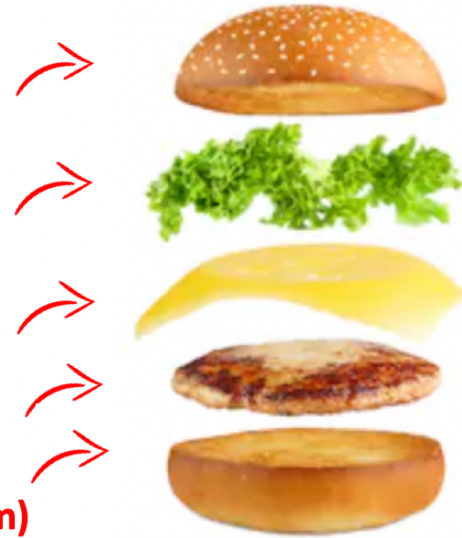
Sum it up (the bun on top)

C / E - Cite Detail or Evidence / Explain or Expand (lettuce)

C / E - Cite Detail or Evidence / Explain or Expand (cheese)

C / E - Cite Detail or Evidence / Explain or Expand (burger)

R / A - Restate / Answer (Foundation)  
Topic Sentence / Main Idea (bun on bottom)



## R.A.C.E.S.

To **explain**/add insight (links back to the point/reason you cite).

- This demonstrates that...
- This means...
- In other words...
- This supports the idea that...
- Because...
- This illustrates...
- This shows that...
- This is important because...
- This connects to...
- This reveals...

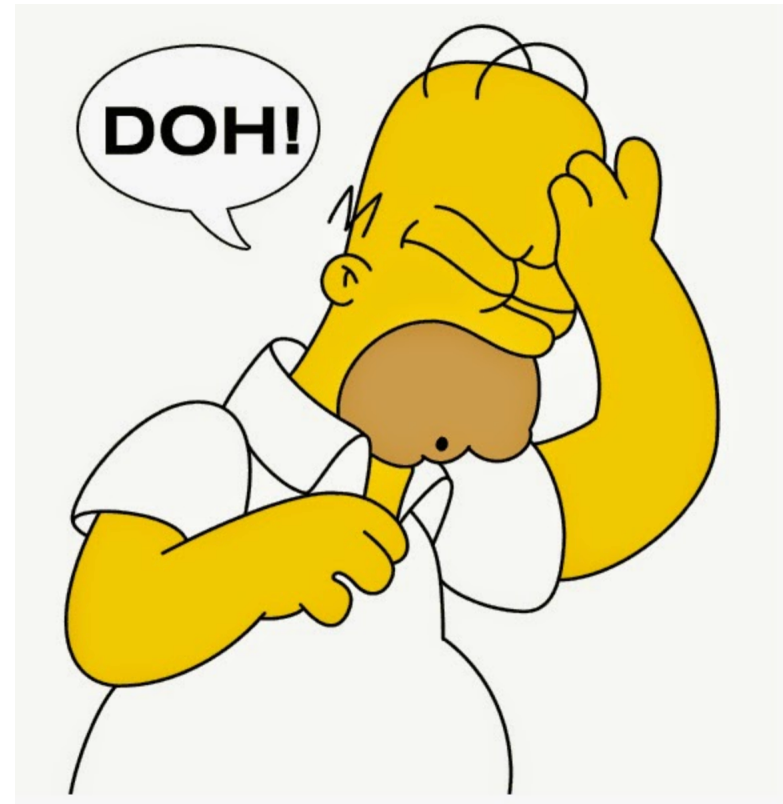
## R.A.C.E.S.

To **sum** up your answer (link back to your R/A or opening)

- In conclusion...
- Therefore...
- For these reasons...
- In general...
- In summary...
- In closing...
- So as you can see...
- So you can see, when people work together, anything is possible!



- Make sure your **Cite/Explain** relates to what you said in your topic sentence (**Restate/Answer**).
- Choose your **Cite/Explain** points carefully. Cite **ONE** point at a time and then explain it. **Do not cite every possible reason** for the point you are making.
- Use the **Cite/Explain** part to **show your own thinking**. Say why that piece of evidence proves your point **in your own words**.
- **To indent or not to indent.** If the essay is long – more than 6 total sentences, then indent each of your 5 paragraphs instead of 1 big paragraph. One big paragraph can make it hard for the reader to distinguish the points you are making.
- **Follow the instructions** in the writing prompt!



What is the biggest way the Coronavirus is impacting your life today, and how are you dealing with it? (you can pick 1 impact and 3 ways of dealing with it, or 3 impacts and how you are dealing with each 1)

## Brainstorm:

- Stay inside
- Limited outdoor activity
- No school – work at home
- My mom is a doctor, so I know a lot more about it than others
- Researching topic of interest
- Not able to see friends and no siblings
- E-learning on computers - takes getting used to
- Social distancing
- Tension at home
- Practice team sport without mates
- Stuck at home except walks
- Miss my friends
- Fear / uncertainty
- Hand sanitizer
- Celebrate birthday at home – can't be with friends
- Too much screen time
- Can't see loved ones
- Wearing masks
- Hard to shop – things aren't available
- Fun bike rides with family
- No museums or group places
- Family game night
- Missing favorite foods
- Got bad food with online shopping
- Canceling spring break – extra school
- Family member is sick

## Outline:

The Coronavirus has changed life as I knew it in every way – family dynamics, social life, and school.

1. At my house, we are stuck in a small space so we are fighting more. But also we are having game night and taking bike rides together.
2. We're social distancing so I can't see my friends. Today is my birthday and I'm missing my party. I can't do sports with my teammates. Can't see my loved ones.
3. School is out. I'm having to learn at home on a computer. Too much screen time. Harder to learn without teacher.

Conclusion – tie together all my points.

## Write (use R.A.C.E.S. Recipe):

**R/A** The Coronavirus has changed life as I knew it in every way – my family dynamics, social life, and school is completely different.

**C/E1** Our family is stuck in a small house with little room, so we're bickering with each other more than we used to. On the other hand, I have more time to spend with my family so we are taking bike rides together and having family game night. **This shows** the different ways the virus has impacted family dynamics.

**C/E2** Because of social distancing, I can't see my friends or do my team sports. Today is my birthday, and we had to cancel my party. However, we are having a zoom party instead. **In other words**, my social life has really changed.

**C/E3** School is closed and that has been hard. I now have to learn on my computer and I'm getting tired of that! **This illustrates** how school is now very different.

**S** **So as you can see**, the Coronavirus has changed my whole life. I cannot wait until my family life, social life and school life are back to the way they used to be.

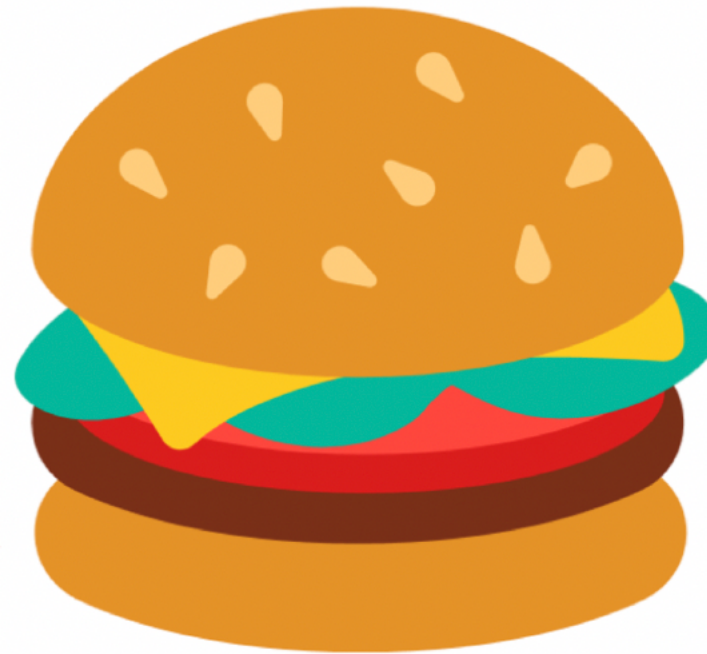
# Your Assignment (Optional)

## Your “Personal Expression” Assignment:

Write a short essay that uses the R.A.C.E.S. formula and answers any **ONE** of these questions:

- 1) Tell us about the last time you made a sacrifice. What happened? Would you make that sacrifice again? Why or why not?
- 2) What is the toughest decision you ever had to make? Describe the situation you were in, the decision you made, and how it impacted your life.
- 3) If you saw a friend do something wrong (like cheat on a test, steal something, bully someone, or something else), how would you handle it and why?
- 4) If you could live forever, would you want to? What would be good about it? What would be the worst part about it?

Use the R.A.C.E.S. recipe to write your essay – **the comments I make on your essay will be based on how well you use the R.A.C.E.S. formula.**



→ **Sum it up**

} **Cite/Explain  
x 3**

→ **Restate/Answer**

## 1) Send your essay to

Karen@Testingmom.com

– Subject: My Essay

(Include your name and grade level)

This is optional! Write it by hand and take a picture, or type it! I will send you feedback, but be patient – it may take a while!

2) **Next Week:** Opinion/persuasion essay that cites evidence from an external source (a source other than yourself)

