



Developing | Exemplar Essay

Protection or Privacy

The US Can Do Better



Claim and Focus

The essay introduces a text-based claim, but it is somewhat unclear (“The Patriot Act has many more cons than pros which is a big red flag to the people who are against the Patriot Act”). The essay does not stay focused on the purpose and task. A counterclaim is attempted, but is not as clear, even, and focused as it could be (“But if all this information doesn’t prevent terrorism as it is designed to do, then let’s find a better use for the resources”).



Support and Evidence

The writing uses some evidence, but demonstrates an incomplete understanding of the topic and only supports the claim superficially (“These tools even prove how sneaky and powerful the Government can truly be”). Weaknesses of the claim and counterclaims are not explicitly stated (“A better use for the millions and billions of dollars being spent could be used for something like education or healthcare”).



Organization

The essay uses a basic organizational structure. Relationships between and among ideas are not consistently clear, including the explanation of the claim and the counterclaims. Though the writing moves from beginning to end, the conclusion doesn’t distinctly connect to the claim (“I feel as if a world leader like the United States can, and should, do better”).



Language and Style

The essay demonstrates an inconsistent perspective, shifting from an objective tone to first person. A formal style is not consistently maintained (“a big red flag” and “such as myself”). Some attempts at strong word choices are made (“guarantees,” “prevention,” and “essentially”), but the sentence structure does not vary often.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait ‘looks like’ in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see “25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays” by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

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Notes

The US Can Do Better

On December 15, 1791, the Bill of Rights was added to the United State's Constitution. These amendments essentially gave citizens liberty and provided expectations of freedom. the USA Patriot Act. This act is a ten letter acronym for "Uniting and Strengthening America by Providing Appropriate Tools Required to Intercept and Obstruct Terrorism Act of 2001". The Patriot Act allows government agencies to access cellphones, bank records, and databases for the prevention of terrorism. The Patriot Act has many more cons than pros which is a big red flag to the people who are against the Patriot Act, such as myself. These tools even prove how sneaky and powerful the Government can truly be. People want privacy and liberty, not one or the other, and the Constitution guarantees both.

The White House's Privacy and Civil Liberties Oversight Board said "We have not identified a single instance involving a threat to the United States in which [bulk collection under Section 215 of the PATRIOT Act] made a concrete difference in the outcome of a counterterrorism investigation." (Source 2). This is the best argument I have against the Patriot Act. If there was a different outcome with the information gathered, I would probably say it was worth the money to continue to do so. But if all this information doesn't prevent terrorism as it is designed to do, then let's find a better use for the resources. A better use for the millions and billions of dollars being spent could be used for something like education or healthcare.

I feel as if a world leader like the United States can, and should, do better.