

Expository Writing Samples - Examined

Write an expository essay in which you explain how American television relates to the culture of American teenagers. Be sure to provide examples to support your ideas.

Sample Essay #1

American television relates to the culture of American teenagers in many ways some examples are music videos. Teenagers learn dance moves off the videos and dance like that at parties. Another example would be talk shows such as Ricky Lake. Shows like these can influence teens for the good and as well as the bad because for the teens who treat their parents or family really bad, it shows how the kids go to boot camp and how it is to keep doing that stuff, then the majority realizes how bad their acting and straighten up.

For the bad, some might start acting worse because they see how scared some of the parents get and then they always get their way. I think television has its good and its bad sides. Sometime it makes kids lazy with shows, movies, or video games, but then you can kind of learn from it as well. I also think some learn violence from it because there's too many killing movies, or movies with smoking, cussing, or gang relations which try to make it look like that's what the tough and cool kids do for fun.

TOPIC: Scorepoint 2

Addresses only **one part, if any**, of the writing task:

- The essay **somewhat explains** the **topic**.
- Two paragraphs, 6-9 sentences.

ORGANIZATION: Scorepoint 1

- The essay has two or fewer paragraphs.
- The essay includes a sentence about the topic in a thesis statement, typically in the first paragraph.
- The essay lacks little, if any, organizational structure.
- Little to no use** of transitions.

SENTENCE VARIETY: Scorepoint 2

- Includes** some; at least **one** sentence each of **two** other sentence types besides a subject-verb sentence.

EXPOSITORY WRITING: Scorepoint 1

- The thesis statement about the topic of the writing assignment is vague.
- Main idea sentences are mostly in support of the topic, and detail sentences are mostly in support of their main idea sentences.
- Uses language that is very basic, uninteresting, or not precise.

CONVENTIONS: Scorepoint 2

- Contains **many** English convention errors.
- Errors **may interfere** with the reader's understanding of the writing.

OVERALL SCORE: 1.6

Sample Essay #2

Here in the United States of America we have several television programs that are extremely popular in high schools everywhere. A few of these shows include "Saved By the Bell," "Fresh Prince of Bel Air," "Friends," and the "Late show with David Letterman." "Opera," Music Television (MTV), and Country Music Television too. These programs differ greatly and there are many others to mention. But that just goes to show you how our taste, as high school students in the U.S., is of wide variety.

"Saved By the Bell" is a program concerning peers and it has a comical part to it. It's about high school life. "Fresh Prince of Bel Air" contains an all African-American cast of characters. It is similar to many other shows in that it shows many real life issues. There is usually a moral at the end, and there is usually a happy ending. All teens, no matter what race they are, enjoy this show.

"David Letterman" is a commonly watched show by both teens and adults. It's on really late, but it's worth waiting for because it's so funny. David gossips a lot about famous people and this makes people laugh. Sometimes he even makes fun of politicians like the President of the United States. This may seem like a bad thing, but this makes people think he's just a regular guy. This show is really funny

"Friends" is a show about friends. There are three guys and three girls who are best friends and most of them live in the same apartment building, so they are always together. If they are not at their apartments, then they are hanging out at a coffee restaurant. Most of the time, the show is about their problems with boyfriends or girlfriends. It's a good show because everyone who watches it can relate to at least one of the people. It's a lot like real life too and it makes people laugh. I think that's why it's been on television for so long.

My favorite television station is "MTV" because I really like music. This station either shows videos of singers who are showing off their recordings, or it has interviews with famous singers and musicians. This show teaches people about how hard it is to be in the music business, but it also shows that it is fun. I want to be a musician some day, so I learn a lot from this station.

There are many other shows and stations I could talk about, but it would go on forever. Generally, American teenagers like a variety of shows, but mainly, they like shows about young people, they like to laugh, and they like to listen to music.

TOPIC: Scorepoint 2

Addresses **most** of the writing task:

The essay **somewhat explains** the topic.

Five paragraphs, 15 sentences.

ORGANIZATION: Scorepoint 3

Introduction paragraph of three sentences:

Does not include a hook or sentence to interest the reader.

Includes a sentence about the topic in a thesis statement.

May include one sentence that outlines the three main ideas of the body paragraph and one sentence to transition to the body paragraph, or two sentences to transition to the body paragraph.

Three body paragraphs:

Each body paragraph includes one main idea sentence in support of the topic thesis

At least two detail sentences in support of each main idea.

Conclusion paragraph of at least three sentences:

At least one sentence that restates the thesis about the topic.

One sentence that restates at least one of the main ideas.

Concludes with an unexciting but adequate "wrap-it-up" sentence.

Little to no use of transitions.

SENTENCE VARIETY: Scorepoint 3

Includes some; at least **one** sentence each of **two** other sentence types besides a subject-verb sentence.

EXPOSITORY WRITING: Scorepoint 2

The thesis statement about the topic of the writing assignment is vague.

Many main idea sentences are not in support of the topic.

Sample Essay #2 – CONTINUED

CONVENTIONS: 3

- Uses language that is **mostly precise** and interesting.
- Contains **more than some** English language convention errors.
- Errors **do not interfere** with the reader's understanding of the writing.

OVERALL SCORE: 2.6

Sample Essay #3

One way to explain the differences between the American culture and cultures in the rest of the world is to examine the favorite television programs of American teenagers. Teens like me enjoy lots of different programs on the television. This fact is true because we probably watch more T.V. than the teens in other countries. We watch a variety of programs centering around sports, sitcoms, soap operas, and cartoons. They catch the interest of teenage viewers and this explains why American teens watch so much television.

One favorite of teens is to watch sports programs. This is probably a result of the fact that almost every sport has a home in the United States causing Americans to have the best collection of sports shows in the entire world. With its NBA, NFL, and NHL, having a number of games on T.V. during each of the playing seasons, teens are involved in hours of T.V. watching. However, the real attention teenagers pay to these sports heats up during playoff times. Viewing them is skillfully worked into their busy schedules.

Maybe it's the fact that teens like to compete that draws their interest to sports. Maybe it's the display of the great physical talent of the athletes that captures their interest. Maybe it's the fact that teens couldn't do what these athletes do, not even in their wildest dreams that keeps their interest in watching sports. But no matter the reason, teenagers like to watch sports to see their favorite teams, score the winning touchdown or basket or goal. As the score gets closer between the two teams, American teenagers sit on the edge of their seats, yelling in excitement for their favorite teams. They still watch, even if their team isn't doing well at all. They may get sad or angry, but this emotion, too, draws them to the television screen on a regular basis.

Sitcoms or situation comedies are other shows that catch the attention of most teens. There are many shows that are about young people who have problems and lives similar to real teens. This feature creates a desire to watch these funny shows every week. After the shows are aired, there is no way a teenager will be left out of ever seeing it because the shows are rerun, or shown again many times. Teens like me might see the same episode of a sitcom twenty or thirty times without getting tired of it. Since the show is something teens can relate to, it draws them to the television set on a regular basis.

Television produces numerous cartoon shows and most of them totally engross teens for hours a week. Shows like the Tazmanian Devil or the roadrunner have made teens laugh for about fifty years and they will probably continue to do so for many years to come. Teens of all ages like to laugh, and cartoons are guaranteed to make teens laugh for a long time to come.

TOPIC: Scorepoint 4

Clearly addresses the writing task:

- The essay **explains** the **topic**.
- Five paragraphs, 15 sentences.

ORGANIZATION: Scorepoint 4

Strong introduction paragraph of three sentences:

Does not include a hook or sentence to interest the reader.

Includes a sentence about the topic in a thesis statement.

May include one sentence that outlines the three main ideas of the body paragraph, or two sentences to transition to the body paragraph.

Three body paragraphs:

Each body paragraph includes one main idea sentence in support of the topic thesis.

At least two detail sentences in support of each main idea.

Strong conclusion paragraph of at least three sentences:

At least one sentence that restates the thesis about the topic in a new way.

One sentence that restates the three main ideas in a new way.

Concludes with a captivating restatement of the hook or "wrap-it-up" sentence.

Little to no use of transitions.

SENTENCE VARIETY: Scorepoint 4

Includes much; at least **two** sentences each of **two other** sentence types besides a subject-verb sentence.

EXPOSITORY WRITING: Scorepoint 4

Includes a **well-articulated** thesis statement about the topic of the writing assignment.

Main idea sentences are in **support** of the topic, and detail sentences are in **support** of their main idea sentences.

Uses language that is **precise** and interesting.

Sample Essay #3 - CONTINUED

Overall, there are many different types of television shows that teenagers like in America, and they symbolize what we teenagers are like. The sports programs show our interest to compete and our dreams of being the best. Sitcoms share what life is like for teenagers in a funny manner, and cartoons just show how much American teens like to laugh. If it weren't for television, these things would not be as well known to the world.

CONVENTIONS: Scorepoint 4

- Contains **some** English language convention errors.
- Errors **do not interfere** with the reader's understanding of the writing.

OVERALL SCORE: 4

Sample Essay #4

American television relates to American teenagers. Its what people do, act, look like, and react. For example, for what people do. If a kid or teen sees their favorite television show and on that show a good guy is smoking and acting cool. That will put an impression on the teenagers mind to smoke. On most shows such as MTV, HBO, or ABC. If a teen sees the stars with baggy pants and a black shirt with obscene language, and pictures, they will believe that is what they must do to become cool.

From these examples, show how teenagers in America are effected the American television.

TOPIC: Scorepoint 1

Addresses only **one part, if any**, of the writing task:

- The essay **somewhat explains** the **topic**.
- Two paragraphs, 6-9 sentences.

ORGANIZATION: Scorepoint 1

- The essay has two or fewer paragraphs.
- Includes a sentence about the topic in a thesis statement.*
- The essay lacks little, if any, organizational structure.
- Little to no use** of transitions.

SENTENCE VARIETY: Scorepoint 1

- Includes few**; at least **one** sentence of **one** other sentence type besides a subject-verb sentence.

EXPOSITORY WRITING: Scorepoint 2

- Includes a thesis statement about the topic of the writing assignment.
- Main idea sentences are mostly in support of the topic, and detail sentences are **mostly in support** of their main idea sentences.
- Uses language that is very basic, uninteresting, or **not precise**.

CONVENTIONS: Scorepoint 1

- Contains **serious** English language convention errors.
- Errors **interfere** with the reader's understanding of the writing.

OVERALL SCORE: 1.2