



English Language Arts (ELA)

Common Core State Standards (CCSS) Aligned

**PERFORMANCE WRITING TASK (PWT)**

**8<sup>TH</sup> GRADE**

2012-2013



**Student Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**School Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Teacher Name:** \_\_\_\_\_

**Room #:** \_\_\_\_\_ **Class Period** \_\_\_\_\_

**Date:** \_\_\_\_\_

## DEFINITIONS

### **graf fi ti** [gruh-fee-tee]

**noun**

1.

plural of [graffito](#).

2.

(used with a plural verb) markings, as initials, slogans, or drawings, written, spray-painted, or sketched on a sidewalk, wall of a building or public restroom, or the like: *These graffiti are evidence of the neighborhood's decline.*

3.

(used with a singular verb) such markings as a whole or as constituting a particular group: *Not much graffiti appears around here these days.*

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/graffiti>

A dictionary definition of "graffiti" (cut sample sentence in definition 2)

### **art** [ahrt]

**noun**

1.

the quality, production, [expression](#), or realm, according to aesthetic principles, of what is beautiful, appealing, or of more than ordinary significance.

2.

the class of objects subject to aesthetic criteria; works of art collectively, as paintings, sculptures, or drawings: *a museum of art; an art collection.*

3.

a field, genre, or category of art: *Dance is an art.*

4.

the fine arts collectively, often excluding architecture: *art and architecture.*

5.

any field using the skills or techniques of art: *advertising art; industrial art.*

<http://dictionary.reference.com/browse/art>

A dictionary definition of "art"







## Is Graffiti Art? by Steve Dolan

An introduction to the issues surrounding labeling graffiti as art or vandalism...

You can travel almost anywhere in the world, and you will probably see graffiti. Although graffiti art is usually more common in big cities, the reality is that it can occur in almost any community, big or small.

The problem with graffiti art is the question of whether it's really art, or just plain vandalism. This isn't always an easy question to answer, simply because there are so many different types of graffiti. Some is simply a monochrome collection of letters, known as a tag, with little artistic merit. Because it's quick to produce and small, it is one of the most widespread and prevalent forms of graffiti.

Although tagging is the most common type of graffiti, there are bigger, more accomplished examples that appear on larger spaces, such as walls. These are often multicolored and complex in design, and so start to push the boundary of whether they should really be defined as graffiti art.

If it wasn't for the fact that most graffiti is placed on private property without the owner's permission, then it might be more recognized as a legitimate form of art. Most graffiti art, however, is only an annoyance to the property owner, who is more likely to paint over it or remove it than applaud its artistic merit.

Many solutions have been put into practice around the world, with varying degrees of success. Paints have been developed that basically cause graffiti paint to dissolve when applied, or else make it quick and easy to remove. Community groups and government departments coordinate graffiti removal teams.

In some places you can't buy spray paint unless you're over 18. Cans of spray paint are locked away in display cases. In a nearby area the local council employs someone to go around and repaint any fences defaced by graffiti. A friend of mine has had his fence repainted 7 times at least, and it took him a while to find out why it was happening! Certainly the amount of graffiti in my local area has dropped substantially in the last year or two, so it appears these methods are working to a great extent.

But is removing the graffiti doing a disservice to the artistic community? Maybe if some of the people behind the graffiti art were taken in hand and trained, they could use their artistic skills in more productive ways. It hardly makes sense to encourage these artists to deface public property, and so commit a crime. But perhaps there are other ways to cooperate with the graffiti artists rather than just opposing them. Graffiti artists can create sanctioned murals for private property owners and get paid for it.

Maybe we need to start at a very basic level, and find a way to encourage the creation of graffiti art on paper or canvas, rather than walls. After all, who would remember Monet or Picasso if they'd created their masterpieces on walls, only to have them painted over the next day? Finding a solution to such a complex situation is never going to be easy, but as more graffiti art is being recognized in galleries around the world, we do need to try.

Article Source: <http://EzineArticles.com/717054>

**What is Graffiti?** by the City of San Diego**The Word**

Graffiti consists of inscriptions, slogans and drawings scratched, scribbled or painted on a wall or other public or private surface. The word "graffiti" is derived from the Latin word "graphium," which means "to write." The term "graffiti" was originally used by archaeologists to describe drawings and writings found on ancient buildings and monuments in Pompeii, Egypt and in the Roman catacombs.

**A Sign of Urban Decay**

Today, graffiti is a sign of urban decay. It has become everyone's eyesore. Graffiti generates fear of neighborhood crime and instability. It is costly, destructive, lowers property values and sends a message that people of the community are not concerned about the appearance of their neighborhoods. It is also against the law!

**Graffiti is Not Art**

Graffiti is not art; it is vandalism. It is prohibited when done without permission of the property owner. Furthermore, [San Diego Municipal Code Section 54.0405](#) requires that property owners keep all walls, buildings, fences, signs and other structures and surfaces visible from the public right-of-way free of graffiti.

**New City Ordinance**

In November 2000, the San Diego City Council amended the City's Graffiti Ordinance to revise the official definition of "graffiti" as follows:

"Graffiti means any unauthorized inscription, word, figure, picture, or design that is sprayed, marked, cut, posted, pasted or otherwise affixed, drawn or painted on any surface of public or private property."

Article Source:

<http://www.sandiego.gov/graffiti/whatis.shtml>

City of San Diego's (CA) statement about graffiti as vandalism  
(cut paragraph with heading "A Sign of Urban Decay")

### MY NOTES ORGANIZER

**Directions:** Take notes supporting each position. Include any claims, reasons, or evidence you find in the sources provided. Do not include your opinion.

Source	Graffiti is art.	Graffiti is vandalism.
<p><b>Article 1:</b> <i>Is Graffiti Art?</i></p>		
<p><b>Article 2:</b> <i>What is Graffiti?</i></p>		
<p><b>Video 1:</b> <i>Graffiti... Art or Vandalism?</i></p>		
<p><b>Video 2:</b> <i>Graffiti as an Art Form</i></p>		

## MY THOUGHTS ORGANIZER

**Directions:**

Read the questions below. Reference your notes to write answers to the questions in the "My Thoughts" section. In the "Source Evidence" column, list the evidence and cite the source to support your thoughts. After talking and sharing ideas with a classmate, complete the "My Thoughts Now" section based on your conversation.

Questions	My Thoughts	Source Evidence	My Thoughts Now
1. What arguments are made that graffiti is an art form?  2. Which source makes these arguments?			
3. What arguments are made that graffiti is vandalism?  4. Which source makes these arguments?			
5. Now, <u>you</u> state a claim. Is graffiti art? Is it vandalism? Can it be both?			



**CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE QUESTIONS**

**Directions:**  
Answer the questions below in complete sentences. You may use an extra sheet to make any notes or to draft your response. You may refer to all of your student booklet materials to help you answer the questions.

**1. In *What is Graffiti?*, how does the author define graffiti? What evidence is given?**

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**2. Compare and contrast the purpose of the two articles. What is the author’s purpose in *Is Graffiti Art?* What is the author’s purpose in *What is Graffiti?* How are they the same or different? Give examples from each article to support your answer.**

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## CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE QUESTIONS

continued

**Directions:**

Answer the questions below in complete sentences. You may use an extra sheet to make any notes or to draft your response. You may refer to all of your student booklet materials to help you answer the questions.

- 3. From all of the sources given, which two pieces of evidence are the most convincing? In other words, which examples, quotes, or images convince you that graffiti is either art or vandalism? Explain why the evidence is convincing.**

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8<sup>th</sup> grade Rubric for Argumentative Writing

	Level 4 Above Proficient	Level 3 Proficient	Level 2 Intermediate	Level 1 Novice
<b>Meas: Claim and Counterclaim</b>	<p>a. The claim is precise and thoughtful, and clearly outlines the major reasons used to address the prompt.</p> <p>b. Acknowledges and effectively addresses opposing claim(s) by pointing out limitations, or by making concessions and refutations.</p>	<p>a. The claim takes a clear position on the topic and outlines the major reasons used to address the prompt.</p> <p>b. Acknowledges and addresses opposing claim(s).</p>	<p>a. The claim takes a position on the topic, but may not outline the reasons.</p> <p>b. There is an attempt to acknowledge and address an opposing claim but it may not be effective.</p>	<p>a. The claim does not clearly take a position on the topic.</p> <p>b. Does not acknowledge an opposing claim.</p>
<b>Meas: Evidence and Elaboration</b>	<p>a. Arguments include valid reasoning and sufficient and relevant textual evidence.</p> <p>b. Gives a thorough and insightful explanation of the significance of the evidence and how it supports the claim.</p> <p>c. All sources are properly cited.</p> <p>d. Analyzes the sources of the evidence for validity and bias.</p>	<p>a. Arguments include clear reasons and relevant textual evidence.</p> <p>b. Gives an explanation of the significance of the evidence and how it supports the claim.</p> <p>c. Sources are cited.</p>	<p>a. Arguments include reasons and textual evidence. Evidence may not be sufficient or relevant.</p> <p>b. An attempt is made to explain the significance of the evidence and how it supports the claim but it may be weak or unclear.</p> <p>c. Some sources may be cited.</p>	<p>a. Reasons may be flawed. Textual evidence is missing or irrelevant.</p> <p>b. There is no attempt to explain how evidence given supports the claim.</p> <p>c. Sources are not cited.</p>
<b>Organization</b>	<p>a. Introductory paragraph provides sufficient context and includes a logically placed claim.</p> <p>b. Precise topic sentences clearly introduce the resulting body paragraphs.</p> <p>c. Reasons and evidence are organized in a way that effectively supports the claim.</p> <p>d. Transitional words and phrases are used to connect ideas and to help the writing flow.</p> <p>e. The conclusion effectively summarizes the argument and adds significance.</p>	<p>a. Introductory paragraph provides relevant context and includes a logically placed claim.</p> <p>b. Topic sentences clearly introduce the resulting body paragraphs.</p> <p>c. Reasons and evidence are organized logically.</p> <p>d. Transitional words and phrases are used to connect ideas.</p> <p>e. The conclusion effectively summarizes the argument and may add significance.</p>	<p>a. Introductory paragraph contains a claim.</p> <p>b. Topic sentences introduce the body paragraphs.</p> <p>c. The order of reasons and evidence is unclear or presented in a confusing way.</p> <p>d. Transition words are sometime used correctly to connect ideas.</p> <p>e. Conclusion summarizes the argument.</p>	<p>a. Claim is hard to identify or is misplaced.</p> <p>b. Topic sentences are unclear or missing.</p> <p>c. The reasons and evidence are not organized.</p> <p>d. If transition words are used, most are not used correctly.</p> <p>e. Conclusion is weak or missing.</p>
<b>Style / Voice</b>	<p>a. There is excellent control of language, techniques, and sentences.</p> <p>b. Maintains a formal tone throughout.</p> <p>c. Persuasive strategies / rhetorical devices are effectively used to create a compelling and convincing argument.</p>	<p>a. There is good control of language, techniques, and sentences.</p> <p>b. Maintains a formal tone with minor inconsistencies.</p> <p>c. Persuasive strategies / rhetorical devices are used to create a convincing argument.</p>	<p>a. Language not always clear or concise. Sentence formation sometimes makes it difficult to understand.</p> <p>b. Does not use a formal tone consistently.</p> <p>c. There is an attempt to use persuasive strategies / rhetorical devices.</p>	<p>a. The language and sentence formation are so unclear, it's difficult to understand.</p> <p>b. Tone is informal.</p> <p>c. There is no attempt to use persuasive strategies / rhetorical devices.</p>
<b>Conventions</b>	<p>There are very few to no errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.</p>	<p>There are some errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, but these do not interfere with meaning.</p>	<p>There are errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, some of which make the writing unclear.</p>	<p>There are many grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation errors. These errors make the paper very difficult to read.</p>

Please send any suggested revisions to nicole.knight@ousd.k12.ca.us

Version #2 by LCI 10/4/12

## MY ARGUMENTS ORGANIZER

**Directions:** Prepare at least two reasons, supporting evidence and how you will address an opposing view.

Claim: \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_



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Opposing View

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My Response to the Opposing View

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## PERFORMANCE WRITING TASK

**Directions:**

Please respond to the prompt below in writing. You may use your notes and your answers to your constructed response questions to inform your writing. You must write your entire argumentative essay on the lined paper provided by your teacher. Your essay should have a minimum of 5 paragraphs.

**Writing Prompt:**

*The City of Oakland is preparing a position statement on whether graffiti is an art form, or whether it is vandalism. The mayor has invited the public to join in the debate before they write the statement.*

***Is graffiti art or vandalism?***

*After reading the provided texts and viewing the videos on the topic, write an argumentative essay (at least 5 paragraphs) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence from the texts and videos. Be sure to acknowledge competing views.*

1. Begin with an introduction that frames the purpose of your essay and states a claim.
2. Develop your argument with clear reasons and evidence drawn from the texts and videos.  
Explain the significance of the evidence and how it supports the claim.
3. Acknowledge and address an opposing or competing view (counterargument).
4. Provide a conclusion that effectively summarizes the argument and explains its significance.

**Be Sure To:**

- Use appropriate transitions.
- Use precise language and vocabulary to inform or explain your topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Edit for spelling and grammar.
- Write a minimum of 5 paragraphs.

**Turn in this student booklet and your essay to the teacher when you complete this performance task or as directed by the teacher. Thank you.**