

PREPARING TO TAKE THE WSA

**AN INTERACTIVE WORKSHOP PRESENTED
BY THE UW BOTHELL WRITING AND
COMMUNICATION CENTER**

WSA WORKSHOP GOALS

- **To review the format of the WSA**
- **To understand how the WSA is scored**
- **To practice WSA sample questions**
- **To share information and strategies for improving your score on the WSA**

WHAT DO WE ALREADY KNOW ABOUT THE WSA?

- **What do you know about the WSA? How do you know this?**
- **What questions do you have about the WSA?**
- **What makes you nervous?**

THE BASICS

- **WSA=Writing Skills Assessment**
- **Timed writing test – 90 minutes long**
- **You handwrite your answers**
 - 3 sheets of paper per task
- **You have two “tasks” – a position task and a persuasion task**
- **Each task carries equal weight**
- **The test is scored on a scale of 1-6**

PERSUASION TASK

- **Based on workplace scenario**
- **Written for a specific person/people**
- **Basics of directions:**
 - “In the role of X, write to Y persuading...base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.

PERSUASION TASK

- **Based on workplace scenario**
- **Written for a specific person/people**
- **Basics of directions:**
 - “In the role of X, write to Y persuading...base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.
 - There is no “right” view on this issue.

PERSUASION TASK

- **Based on workplace scenario**
- **Written for a specific person/people**
- **Basics of directions:**
 - “In the role of X, write to Y persuading...base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.
 - There is no “right” view on this issue.
 - Your goal is to argue persuasively.

PERSUASION TASK

- **Based on workplace scenario**
- **Written for a specific person/people**
- **Basics of directions:**
 - “In the role of X, write to Y persuading...base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.
 - There is no “right” view on this issue.
 - Your goal is to argue persuasively.
 - Consider the pros and cons of your position, and **directly address objections.**

PERSUASION TASK

- **Based on workplace scenario**
- **Written for a specific person/people**
- **Basics of directions:**
 - “In the role of X, write to Y persuading...base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.
 - There is no “right” view on this issue.
 - Your goal is to argue persuasively.
 - Consider the pros and cons of your position, and **directly address objections.**
 - **You may assume any information that may be helpful.”**

POSITION TASK

- Based on an assertion
- Written for a general audience

POSITION TASK

- Based on an assertion
- Written for a general audience
- The directions read:
 - “On the statement of your choice, write a unified essay in which you do the following:

POSITION TASK

- Based on an assertion
- Written for a general audience
- The directions read:
 - “On the statement of your choice, write a unified essay in which you do the following:
 - Restate *write the statement in your words*

POSITION TASK

- Based on an assertion
- Written for a general audience
- The directions read:
 - “On the statement of your choice, write a unified essay in which you do the following:
 - Restate *write the statement in your words*
 - Explain what you think the statement means.

POSITION TASK

- Based on an assertion
- Written for a general audience
- The directions read:
 - “On the statement of your choice, write a unified essay in which you do the following:
 - **Restate** *write the statement in your words*
 - Explain what you think the statement means.
 - Discuss why you would accept, reject, or alter it.

POSITION TASK

- Based on an assertion
- Written for a general audience
- The directions read:
 - “On the statement of your choice, write a unified essay in which you do the following:
 - Restate *write the statement in your words*
 - Explain what you think the statement means.
 - Discuss why you would accept, reject, or alter it.
 - Support your position with reasons and examples from your own experience or observations, current affairs, academic studies or other sources.”

WSA SCORING GUIDE:

ADEQUATE (5)

A paper in this category demonstrates adequate competence, although it will have occasional errors and lapses in quality. Such a paper exhibits most or all of the following characteristics:

- addresses the writing task

WSA SCORING GUIDE:

ADEQUATE

A paper in this category demonstrates adequate competence, although it will have occasional errors and lapses in quality. Such a paper exhibits most or all of the following characteristics:

- addresses the writing task
- is organized and adequately developed

WSA SCORING GUIDE:

ADEQUATE

A paper in this category demonstrates adequate competence, although it will have occasional errors and lapses in quality.

Such a paper exhibits most or all of the following characteristics:

- addresses the writing task
- is organized and adequately developed
- in style and tone is generally easy to read and appropriate for **(Persuasion)** the intended reader or for **(Position)** a general audience

WSA SCORING GUIDE:

ADEQUATE

A paper in this category demonstrates adequate competence, although it will have occasional errors and lapses in quality. Such a paper exhibits most or all of the following characteristics:

- addresses the writing task
- is organized and adequately developed
- in style and tone is generally easy to read and appropriate for **(Persuasion)** the intended reader or for **(Position)** a general audience
- displays **adequate but inconsistent facility** with written English (grammar, syntax, vocabulary, punctuation, spelling)

POSITION TASK

- Based on an assertion
- Written for a general audience
- The directions read:
 - “On the statement of your choice, write a unified essay in which you do the following:
 - Restate *write the statement in your words*
 - Explain what you think the statement means.
 - Discuss why you would accept, reject, or alter it.
 - Support your position with reasons and examples from your own experience or observations, current affairs, academic studies or other sources.”

POSITION EXAMPLE (11)

Cats are better than dogs

- Written for a general audience
 - Restate
 - Explain
 - Discuss
 - Support

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Position | |
|---|---|
| Accept | Reject |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• |

POSITION TASK (10)

- Read the position task
- Outline your response

Then,

- Share your answers with your neighbor
- You may be asked to share with the group

Then,

- Review the sample answers and score them
- Be prepared to defend your score
- Learn the score the essay actually received

POSITION EXAMPLE (11)

You can't judge a book by it's cover

- Written for a general audience
 - Restate
 - Explain
 - Discuss
 - Support

PERSUASION TASK

DIRECTIONS (7)

- **In the role of Tomi Clark, write a letter to Cathy Aarts persuading her of the direction you think she should take.**

PERSUASION TASK

DIRECTIONS

- **In the role of Tomi Clark, write a letter to Cathy Aarts persuading her of the direction you think she should take.**
- **Base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.**

PERSUASION TASK

DIRECTIONS

- **In the role of Tomi Clark, write a letter to Cathy Aarts persuading her of the direction you think she should take.**
- **Base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.**
- **There is no "right" answer.**

PERSUASION TASK

DIRECTIONS

- **In the role of Tomi Clark, write a letter to Cathy Aarts persuading her of the direction you think she should take.**
- **Base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.**
- **There is no "right" answer.**
- **You may assume any information that might be helpful.**

PERSUASION TASK

DIRECTIONS

- In the role of Tomi Clark, write a letter to Cathy Aarts persuading her of the direction you think she should take.
- Base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.
- There is no "right" answer.
- **You may assume any information that might be helpful.**
- Consider the pros and cons of your position,

PERSUASION TASK

DIRECTIONS

- In the role of Tomi Clark, write a letter to Cathy Aarts persuading her of the direction you think she should take.
- Base your writing upon analysis rather than simply restatement of information in the problem.
- There is no "right" answer.
- **You may assume any information that might be helpful.**
- Consider the pros and cons of your position,
- **directly address objections** Cathy might have to your arguments.

PERSUASION TASK

- Read the persuasion task
- Outline your response

Then,

- Share your answers with your neighbor
- You may be asked to share with the group

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Situation 1 | | Situation 2 | |
|---|---|---|---|
| Pros | Cons | Pros | Cons |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Situation 1- Ornament | | Situation 2- Real Estate | |
|--|------|--------------------------|------|
| Pros | Cons | Pros | Cons |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Success:• Passion• Creativity• Sales• Fixed expenses • Hire employees | | | |

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Situation 1- Ornament | | Situation 2- Real Estate | |
|--|------|--|------|
| Pros | Cons | Pros | Cons |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Success:• Passion• Creativity• Sales• Fixed expenses <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Hire employees | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with adults• Make more money | |

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Situation 1- Ornament | | Situation 2- Real Estate | |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|------|
| Pros | Cons | Pros | Cons |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make more money• Be around adults | | |

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Situation 1- Ornament | | Situation 2- Real Estate | |
|-----------------------|--|--------------------------|--|
| Pros | Cons | Pros | Cons |
| | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make more money• Be around adults | | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most businesses fail• Appraisal business at peak• Upfront expenses |

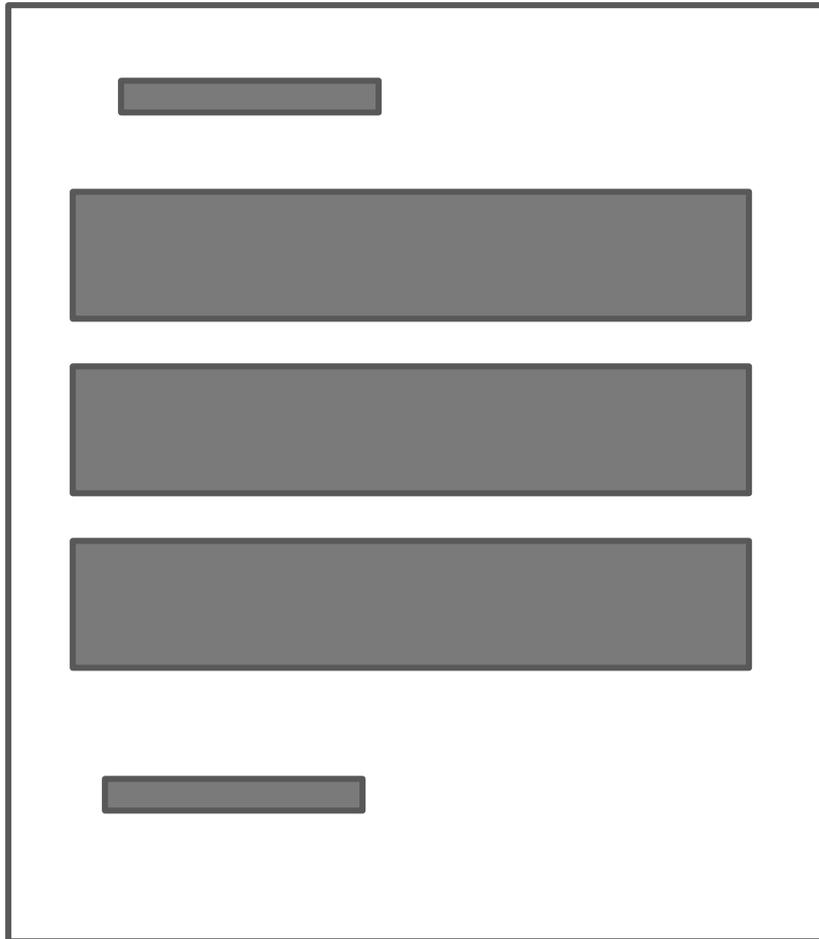
ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Situation 1- Ornament | | Situation 2- Real Estate | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Pros | Cons | Pros | Cons |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Success:• Passion• Creativity• Sales• Fixed expenses • Hire employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make more money• Be around adults | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with adults• Make more money | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most businesses fail• Appraisal business at peak• Upfront expenses |

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Situation 1- Ornament | | Situation 2- Real Estate | |
|--|--|--|--|
| Pros | Cons | Pros | Cons |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Success:• Passion• Creativity• Sales• Fixed expenses • Hire employees | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Make more money• Be around adults | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Work with adults• Make more money | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Most businesses fail• Appraisal business at peak• Upfront expenses |

OUTLINING A RESPONSE



- Who are you writing to?
- Outlining your recommendation
- Backing up your claim with evidence
- Further evidence. & Summary of recommendation
- Who are you asked to be?

OUTLINING A RESPONSE (13)

Dear Cathy, **Who are you writing to?**

Throughout the last three years you have demonstrated to me that you are passionate about your ornament business. I see that the artistic creativity you have cultivated is an essential outlet for you. The doubling of your sales in the last year is a strong indication that your ornaments have a demanding market; your start-up idea does not afford you this luxury.

I am sure you are aware that nine of ten new businesses fail. Remaining in the real estate business I have seen the rapid growth of appraisal services. Many agree that this is due to the spike in new home builds. This factor is tied directly to the strength of the economy (new home building starts are a leading economic indicator). I do not know when the bottom will fall out of the appraisal market. However, what goes up must come down. The dot.com boom duped many wise business men and women. Remember when Amazon. Com was valued at \$160/share without any observable profits? Cathy, I believe the appraisal business is at its peak, and must retreat soon. I don't want you to get burned by this.

You have told me that you want to work with adults more frequently and would like to make more money. I have a suggestion that will take care of both the former and the latter. Your sales have doubled in the last year. If this trend continues you will soon have more work than you can handle. If you hire a few employees now, you will never hit the barrier, and you will be working around adults (of your choosing too!) In fact, the doubling of growth is so exciting to me, I would happily donate some of my time to have a part in your company.

The giant step of expanding our, as of yet, small independent business may be daunting to you. You probably are held back by fear of not being able to afford employees. From what you told me, though, most of your expenses have been fixed (painting and manufacturing machines). Because you have mainly fixed costs, your increasing sales should generate direct increased profits. This all but guarantees you will be able to afford your expansion.

Cathy, your passion for this business and the market demand have been demonstrated. Why risk losing this?

Very best,

Tomi

Who are you asked to be?

OUTLINING A RESPONSE

Dear Cathy,

Who are you writing to?

Throughout the last three years you have demonstrated to me that you are passionate about your ornament business. I see that the artistic creativity you have cultivated is an essential outlet for you. The doubling of your sales in the last year is a strong indication that your ornaments have a demanding market; your start-up idea does not afford you this luxury.

I am sure you are aware that nine of ten new businesses fail. Remaining in the real estate business during the rapid growth of appraisal services. Many agree that this is due to the spike in new home builds. This factor is tied directly to the strength of the economy (new home building starts are a leading economic indicator). I do not know when the bottom will fall out of the appraisal market. However, what goes up must come down. The dot.com boom duped many wise business men and women. Remember when Amazon. Com was valued at \$160/share without any observable profits? Cathy, I believe the appraisal business is at its peak, and must retreat soon. I don't want you to get burned by this.

Outlining your recommendation



You have told me that you want to work with adults more frequently and would like to make more money. I have a suggestion that will take care of both the former and the latter. Your sales have doubled in the last year. If this trend continues you will soon have more work than you can handle. If you hire a few employees now, you will never hit the barrier, and you will be working around adults (of your choosing too!) In fact, the doubling of growth is so exciting to me, I would happily donate some of my time to have a part in your company.

The giant step of expanding our, as of yet, small independent business may be daunting to you. You probably are held back by fear of not being able to afford employees. From what you told me, though, most of your expenses have been fixed (painting and manufacturing machines). Because you have mainly fixed costs, your increasing sales should generate direct increased profits. This all but guarantees you will be able to afford your expansion.

Cathy, your passion for this business and the market demand have been demonstrated. Why risk losing this?

Very best,

Tomi

Who are you asked to be?

OUTLINING A RESPONSE

Dear Cathy,

Who are you writing to?

Outlining your recommendation

Throughout the last three years you have demonstrated to me that you are passionate about your ornament business. I see that the artistic creativity you have cultivated is an essential outlet for you. The doubling of your sales in the last year is a strong indication that your ornaments have a growing market, your start-up idea does not afford you this luxury.

I am sure you are aware that nine of ten new businesses fail. Remaining in the real estate business I have seen the rapid growth of appraisal services. Many agree that this is due to the spike in new home builds. This factor is tied directly to the strength of the economy (new home building starts are a leading economic indicator). I do not know when the bottom will fall out of the appraisal market. However, what goes up must come down. The dot.com boom duped many wise business men and women. Remember when Amazon. Com was valued at \$160/share without any observable profits? Cathy, I believe the appraisal business is at its peak, and must retreat soon. I don't want you to get burned by this.

You have told me that you want to work with adults more frequently and would like to make more money. I have a suggestion that will take care of both the former and the latter. Your sales have doubled in the last year. If this trend continues you will soon have more work than you can handle. If you hire a few employees now, you will never hit the barrier, and you will be working around adults (of your choosing too!) In fact, the doubling of growth is so exciting to me, I would happily donate some of my time to have a part in your company.

The giant step of expanding our, as of yet, small independent business may be daunting to you. You probably are held back by fear of not being able to afford employees. From what you told me, though, most of your expenses have been fixed (painting and manufacturing machines). Because you have mainly fixed costs, your increasing sales should generate direct increased profits. This all but guarantees you will be able to afford your expansion.

Cathy, your passion for this business and the market demand have been demonstrated. Why risk losing this?

Very best,

Tomi

Who are you asked to be?

Backing your claim with evidence



OUTLINING A RESPONSE

Dear Cathy,

Who are you writing to?

Throughout the last three years, you have demonstrated to me that you are passionate about your ornament business. I see that the artistic creativity you have cultivated is an essential outlet for you. The doubling of your sales in the last year is a strong indication that your ornaments have a growing market, your start-up idea does not afford you this luxury.

Outlining your recommendation

I am sure you are aware that **nine of ten new businesses fail**. Remaining in the real estate business I have seen the rapid growth of appraisal services. Many agree that this is due to the spike in new home builds. This factor is tied directly to the strength of the economy (new home building starts are a leading economic indicator). **I do not know when the bottom will fall out of the appraisal market. However, what goes up must come down.** The dot.com boom duped many wise business men and women. Remember when Amazon. Com was valued at \$160/share without any observable profits? **Cathy, I believe the appraisal business is at its peak, and must retreat soon. I don't want you to get burned by this.**

You have told me that you want to work with adults more frequently and would like to make more money. I have a suggestion that will take care of both the former and the latter. **Your sales have doubled in the last year.** If this trend continues you will soon have more work than you can handle. **If you hire a few employees now,** you will never hit the barrier, and you will be working around adults (of your choosing too!) In fact, the doubling of growth is so exciting to me, I would happily donate some of my time to have a part in your company.

The giant step of expanding our, as of yet, small independent business may be daunting to you. **You probably are held back by fear of not being able to afford employees.** From what you told me, though, most of your **expenses have been fixed** (painting and manufacturing machines). Because you have **mainly fixed costs, your increasing sales should generate direct increased profits.** This all but guarantees you will be able to afford your expansion.

Cathy, your passion for this business and the market demand have been demonstrated. Why risk losing this?

Very best,

Tom

Who are you asked to be?

Backing your claim with evidence



OUTLINING A RESPONSE

Dear Cathy,

Who are you writing to?

Throughout the last three years you have demonstrated to me that you are passionate about your ornament business. I see that the artistic creativity you have cultivated is an essential outlet for you. The doubling of your sales in the last year is a strong indication that your ornaments have a growing market, your start-up idea does not afford you this luxury.

Outlining your recommendation

I am sure you are aware that nine of ten new businesses fail. Remaining in the real estate business I have seen the rapid growth of appraisal services. Many agree that this is due to the spike in new home builds. This factor is tied directly to the strength of the economy (new home building starts are a leading economic indicator). I do not know when the bottom will fall out of the appraisal market. However, what goes up must come down. The dot.com boom duped many wise business men and women. Remember when Amazon. Com was valued at \$160/share without any observable profits? Cathy, I believe the appraisal business is at its peak, and must retreat soon. I don't know if you believe this.

Backing your claim with evidence

You have told me that you work with adults more frequently and would like to make more money. I have a suggestion that will take care of both the former and the latter. Your sales have doubled in the last year. If this trend continues you will soon have more work than you can handle. If you hire a few employees now, you will never hit the barrier, and you will be working around adults (of your choosing too!) In fact, the doubling of growth is so exciting to me, I would happily donate some of my time to have a part in your company.

The giant step of expanding our, as of yet, small independent business may be daunting to you. You probably are held back by fear of not being able to afford employees. From what you told me, though, most of your expenses have been fixed (painting and manufacturing machines). Because you have mainly fixed costs, your increasing sales should generate direct increased profits. This all but guarantees you will be able to afford your expansion.

Cathy, your passion for this business and the market demand have been demonstrated. Why risk losing this?

Very best,

Tomi

Who are you asked to be?

Summary of recommendation



PERSUASION ANSWER 2

Throughout the last three years you have demonstrated to me that you are passionate about your ornament business. I see that the artistic creativity you have cultivated is an essential outlet for you. The doubling of your sales in the last year is a strong indication that your ornaments have a demanding market; your start-up idea does not afford you this luxury.

I am sure you are aware that nine of ten new businesses fail. Remaining in the real estate business I have seen the rapid growth of appraisal services. Many agree that this is due to the spike in new home builds. This factor is tied directly to the strength of the economy (new home building starts are a leading economic indicator). I do not know when the bottom will fall out of the appraisal market. However, what goes up must come down. The dot.com boom duped many wise business men and women. Remember when Amazon. Com was valued at \$160/share without any observable profits? Cathy, I believe the appraisal business is at its peak, and must retreat soon. I don't want you to get burned by this.

You have told me that you want to work with adults more frequently and would like to make more money. I have a suggestion that will take care of both the former and the latter. Your sales have doubled in the last year. If this trend continues you will soon have more work than you can handle. If you hire a few employees now, you will never hit the barrier, and you will be working around adults (of your choosing too!) In fact, the doubling of growth is so exciting to me, I would happily donate some of my time to have a part in your company.

The giant step of expanding our, as of yet, small independent business may be daunting to you. You probably are held back by fear of not being able to afford employees. From what you told me, though, most of your expenses have been fixed (painting and manufacturing machines). Because you have mainly fixed costs, your increasing sales should generate direct increased profits. This all but guarantees you will be able to afford your expansion.

Cathy, your passion for this business and the market demand have been demonstrated. Why risk losing this?

POSITION TASK (10)

- Read the position task
- Outline your response

Then,

- Share your answers with your neighbor
- You may be asked to share with the group

Then,

- Review the sample answers and score them
- Be prepared to defend your score
- Learn the score the essay actually received

ORGANIZING INFORMATION

| Position | |
|---|---|
| Accept | Reject |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• |

ORGANIZING INFORMATION (15)

| Position: The opinion of the majority is not the final proof of what is right | |
|--|---|
| Accept | Reject |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Doctors said I would be brain damaged and to abort, but mom listened to godmother and I was fine | <ul style="list-style-type: none">•• |
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Everyone in my life told me to go to private school but I wanted to try public school and it was the best decision | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• |

POSITION ANSWER 1 (15)

The statement “the opinion of the majority is not the final proof of what is right” has certainly been true during the course of my life. A story that has often been told in my family provides an excellent example. In the months before my birth, routine medical examinations of my mother began to show a series of concerning abnormalities. While the details have never been made clear to me, the popular opinion of the doctors was that I would be born severely brain damaged. They considered the risk so great that my mother was repeatedly advised that an abortion may be the best choice.

In the midst of clamoring doctors, ill-fated test results, and all the associated emotions of fearing for the health of her unborn son, my mother called her best friend—my godmother. By this point, the birth was imminent and the majority opinion more sure than ever, but my godmother dissented and advised my mother that all would be well. Acting on renewed faith, my mother decided to ignore the popular medical opinion. The rest, as they say, is history.

As you can see, from birth the notion that a majority opinion is not necessarily the final indicator of what is right has resonated strongly with me. Further proof for this belief came some years later. After attending a very small private middle school for three years, I was faced with the decision of where to attend high school. I spoke with my academic advisors, parents, and friends and discovered that the vast majority seemed to be pushing me to continue along the private school route. However, the decision was not as simple for me.

The size of my private school had always bothered me. Though the school officials strove to promote diversity, I felt like I was missing out on possible social interaction. In short, I felt myself becoming increasingly introverted, a fact not aided by the heavy work load of a rigorous private school education.

Remembering my mother’s decision to ignore the majority and act, in part, on faith, I decided to attend the much larger public high school. I will never regret the decision as I feel it was crucial to shaping who I am today and will continue to serve me well in the future.

These are but two of the many examples I could cite in support of the statement given. Certainly the majority should never be ignored. All opinions must be duly considered when making an important choice. However, it has been my experience that a blind reliance on majority opinion may cost you important life lessons, or in my case, life itself.

OUTLINING A RESPONSE (15)

The statement “the opinion of the majority is not the final proof of what is right” has certainly been true during the course of my life. A story that has often been told in my family provides an excellent example. In the months before my birth, routine medical examinations of my mother began to show a series of concerning abnormalities. While the details have never been made clear to me, the popular opinion of the doctors was that I would be born severely brain damaged. They considered the risk so great that my mother was repeatedly advised that an abortion may be the best choice.

In the midst of clamoring doctors, ill-fated test results, and all the associated emotions of fearing for the health of her unborn son, my mother called her best friend, my grandmother. At that point, the birth was imminent and the majority opinion more sure than ever, but my grandmother dissented and advised my mother that all would be well. Acting on renewed faith, my mother decided to ignore the popular medical opinion. The rest, as they say, is history.

Mention statement and provide position

As you can see, from birth the notion that a majority opinion is not necessarily the final indicator of what is right has resonated strongly with me. Further proof for this belief came some years later. After attending a very small private middle school for three years, I was faced with the decision of where to attend high school. I spoke with my academic advisors, parents, and friends and discovered that the vast majority seemed to be pushing me to continue along the private school route. However, the decision was not as simple for me.

The size of my private school had always bothered me. Though the school officials strove to promote diversity, I felt like I was missing out on possible social interaction. In short, I felt myself becoming increasingly introverted, a fact not aided by the heavy work load of a rigorous private school education.

Remembering my mother’s decision to ignore the majority and act, in part, on faith, I decided to attend the much larger public high school. I will never regret the decision as I feel it was crucial to shaping who I am today and will continue to serve me well in the future.

These are but two of the many examples I could cite in support of the statement given. Certainly the majority should never be ignored. All opinions must be duly considered when making an important choice. However, it has been my experience that a blind reliance on majority opinion may cost you important life lessons, or in my case, life itself.

OUTLINING A RESPONSE

The statement “the opinion of the majority is not the final proof of what is right” has certainly been true during the course of my life. A story that has often been told in my family provides an excellent example. In the months before my birth, hospital blood examinations of my mother began to show a series of concerning abnormalities. While the details have never been made clear to me, the popular opinion of the doctors was that I would be born severely brain damaged. They considered the risk so great that my mother was repeatedly advised that an abortion may be the best choice.

Mention statement and provide position

In the midst of clamoring doctors, ill-fated test results, and all the associated emotions of fearing for the health of her unborn son, my mother called her best friend—my godmother. By this point, the birth was imminent and the majority opinion more sure than ever, but my godmother dissented and advised my mother that all would be well. Acting on renewed faith, my mother decided to ignore the popular medical opinion. The rest, as they say, is history.

As you can see, from birth the notion that a majority opinion is not necessarily the final indicator of what is right has resonated strongly with me. Further proof for this belief came a few years later. After attending a very small private middle school for three years, I was faced with the decision of where to attend high school. I spoke with my academic advisors, parents, and friends. I discovered that the vast majority seemed to be pushing me to continue along the private school route. However, the decision was not as simple for me.

Example 1 to support position

The size of my private school had always bothered me. Though the school officials strove to promote diversity, I felt like I was missing out on possible social interaction. In short, I felt myself becoming increasingly introverted, a fact not aided by the heavy work load of a rigorous private school education.

Remembering my mother’s decision to ignore the majority and act, in part, on faith, I decided to attend the much larger public high school. I will never regret the decision as I feel it was crucial to shaping who I am today and will continue to serve me well in the future.

These are but two of the many examples I could cite in support of the statement given. Certainly the majority should never be ignored. All opinions must be duly considered when making an important choice. However, it has been my experience that a blind reliance on majority opinion may cost you important life lessons, or in my case, life itself.

OUTLINING A RESPONSE

The statement “the opinion of the majority is not the final proof of what is right” has certainly been true during the course of my life. A story that has often been told in my family provides an excellent example. In the months before my birth, hospital blood examinations of my mother began to show a series of concerning abnormalities. While the details have never been made clear to me, the popular opinion of the doctors was that I would be born severely brain damaged. They considered the risk so great that my mother was repeatedly advised that an abortion may be the best choice.

Mention statement and provide position

In the midst of clamoring doctors, ill-fated test results, and all the associated emotions of fearing for the health of her unborn son, my mother had a dear friend—my godmother. By this point, the birth was imminent and the majority opinion more sure than ever, but my godmother dissented and advised my mother that all would be well. In renewed faith, my mother decided to ignore the popular medical opinion. The rest, as they say, is history.

Example 1 to support position

As you can see, from birth the notion that a majority opinion is not necessarily the final indicator of what is right has resonated strongly with me. Further proof for this belief came some years later. After attending a very small private middle school for three years, I was faced with the decision of where to attend high school. I spoke with my academic advisors, parents, and friends and discovered that the vast majority seemed to be pushing me to continue along the private school route. However, the decision was not as simple for me.

The size of my private school had always bothered me. Though the school officials strove to promote diversity, I felt like I was missing out on possible social interaction. In short, I felt myself becoming increasingly introverted, a fact not aided by the heavy work load of a rigorous private school education.

Remembering my mother’s decision to ignore the majority and act, in part, on faith, I decided to attend the much larger public high school. I will never regret the decision as I feel it was crucial to shaping who I am today and will continue to serve me well in the future.

These are but two of the many examples I could cite in support of the statement given. Certainly the majority should never be ignored. All opinions must be duly considered when making an important choice. However, it has been my experience that a blind reliance on majority opinion may cost you important life lessons, or in my case, life itself.

Example 2 to support position

OUTLINING A RESPONSE

The statement “the opinion of the majority is not the final proof of what is right” has certainly been true during the course of my life. A story that has often been told in my family provides an excellent example. In the months before my birth, medical test and examinations of my mother began to show a series of concerning abnormalities. While the details have never been made clear to me, the popular opinion of the doctors was that I would be born severely brain damaged. They considered the risk so great that my mother was repeatedly advised that an abortion may be the best choice.

Mention statement and provide position

In the midst of clamoring doctors, ill-fated test results, and all the associated emotions of fearing for the health of her unborn son, my mother had a close friend—my godmother. By this point, the birth was imminent and the majority opinion more sure than ever, but my godmother dissented and advised my mother that all would be well. In renewed faith, my mother decided to ignore the popular medical opinion. The rest, as they say, is history.

Example 1 to support position

As you can see, from birth the notion that a majority opinion is not necessarily the final indicator of what is right has resonated strongly with me. Further proof for this belief came some years later. After attending a very small private middle school for three years, I was faced with the decision of where to attend high school. I spoke with my academic advisors, parents, and friends and discovered that the vast majority seemed to be pushing me to continue along the private school route. However, the decision was not as simple for me as it may seem.

Example 2 to support position

The size of my private school bothered me. Though the school officials strove to promote diversity, I felt like I was missing out on possible social interaction. In short, I felt myself becoming increasingly introverted, a fact not aided by the heavy work load of a rigorous private school education.

Remembering my mother’s decision to ignore the majority and act, in part, on faith, I decided to attend the much larger public high school. I will never regret the decision as I feel it was crucial to shaping who I am today and will continue to serve me well in the future.

These are but two of the many examples I could cite in support of the statement given. Certainly the majority should never be ignored. All opinions must be duly considered when making an important choice. However, it has been my experience that a blind reliance on majority opinion may cost you important life lessons, or in my case, life itself.

Summary of position

PACING: USING YOUR TIME

| | Persuasion Task | Position Task |
|--------------------|-------------------|-------------------|
| Reading & Thinking | 10 | 5 |
| Outlining | 5 | 5 |
| WRITING | 35 | 20 |
| Editing | 5 | 5 |
| TOTAL | 55 Minutes | 35 Minutes |

NEXT STEPS

1. Use the sample prompts to outline your ideas
2. Meet with a tutor at the Writing and Communication Center:

www.uwb.edu/wacc

Work with the online prep guide provided by Foster:

<http://www.foster.washington.edu/academic/undergrad/WSAworkshop/Pages/OnlineWSAWorkshop.aspx>