

# TIME TO SHINE. . . YOU CAN DO THIS!

## INFO TO GO:

1. Control what you can: make sure you are well-rested/well-fed/well-hydrated.
2. Testing begins at 7:25 and ends at 10:00. You have 120 minutes each day to complete the test.
3. Listen to the directions your proctors give you and read all directions on the screen.
4. **ELA Part I is on Thursday, April 15.** This is reading and one extended writing response. **Friday, April 16 is for Part II only.** It should also be reading and one essay.
5. Take your time (including the additional time... Don't be afraid to use it!) and use the tools that are available to you: scratch paper, online highlighters, line readers, notepad.
6. Slow and steady. This is not a race. Use the time that is available to you. **If you don't understand, breathe and re-read.**
7. Take a break if you need it. Fight the urge to make assumptions, be ok with frustrating moments, and don't make hasty decisions. Remember -- the answers are in the text.

## How to tackle multiple choice questions for ELA tests

- Consider making the passages full-screen. Be an active reader. Use the highlighter tool and scratch paper. I recommend jotting down 3-4 main points you remember after reading each passage.
- Don't be afraid to go out of order... **just remember to flag questions for review, come back, and answer all questions.**
- Read the questions and each choice carefully. Don't be afraid to read them a few times.
- For part A/B questions, invest time into making sure you're certain about part A before looking for evidence in part B. You're likely to find support for all answers there, and it can be misleading.
- Refer back to the portions of the passage mentioned in the question.
- For vocab questions, read the sentence or two before AND after the sentence containing the word in question. In fact, it may be good to look at intention of paragraph as a whole.
- Know what your ELA words like tone (attitude of speaker), structure (pattern of organization), theme (message), diction (word choice), mood (feeling created), figurative language (metaphor, simile, personification, hyperbole, etc.), rhetorical devices (anaphora, rhetorical question, euphemism, allusion, etc.)

### Tips for writing:

- Revisit the [informative/expository](#) and [argumentative/persuasive](#) rubrics. The rubrics for the informative and argumentative essays are basically identical, except the argumentative rubric calls for raising counterclaims and refuting them with a rebuttal.
- Spend time figuring out what the prompt is asking and make sure you have a thesis and a plan that covers it all.
- **Plan before you write. Use the scratch paper or notepad feature; do not do this where you are supposed to write your essay. Use the general outline you've been taught to ensure you have an organizational plan before you draft: intro, con, pro, pro, conclusion.**
- Don't spend too much time up front trying to think of a hook. If you don't have one right away, just write your thesis and move on to the body. You can come back and write your intro.
- You need two pieces of blended and attributed evidence per body paragraph.
- You need at least two sentences of elaboration following each piece of evidence.
- TRANSITIONS, TRANSITIONS, TRANSITIONS: The computer will be looking for these. Use them between and within your paragraphs.
- ***STAY AWAY*** from 1st and 2nd person pronouns. In the past it meant the difference between earning full credit and lesser credit.
- Content and organization is worth more than grammar, but an awareness of grammar is an easy way to earn 2 points. **SO PROOFREAD!**

### Essay formats

Argumentative/Persuasion

Intro (engage reader, narrow to thesis)

Concession (counterclaim **and** refutation)

Pro (claim, evidence, elaboration) \*\* BE SURE TO USE SOURCE MATERIALS AND ATTRIBUTE PROPERLY, but don't over rely on these. **Go for at least 40% of the writing/thoughts/ideas are your discussion/elaborations.**

Pro (same as above)

Conclusion

Expository/informative

Introduction (engage reader, narrow to thesis)

Claim #1 with evidence and explanation

Claim #2 with evidence and explanation

Claim #3 with evidence and explanation

Conclusion