



# **teacher guide**

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2<sup>nd</sup> edition (2005)**

## **What?Why?How?: Intro to Level 5 Writing Guides**

The Level 5 Writing guides are a compilation of five teachers' experience over six years of teaching Writing in Slovakia without textbooks or detailed syllabi. Thanks to John Graham, Dave Griffin, Carolyn Smith, and Christy Staggs for handing over all their material and giving suggestions. These guides were created to give students a "textbook" and teachers more details.

**Before you start teaching, make sure you have the Student Guide, Teacher Guide, and Handouts for Teachers to Modify.**

The **student guide** is a collection of explanations and exercises. It covers everything the students should know (writing process, descriptive essay, persuasive and argumentative essays, using source material, critical analysis essay, and editing/proofreading practice). You may have to lecture and/or do the exercises in class about some topics; you may just assign some topics as reading homework. And you may skip some pages. You will have to choose what is necessary for your students. There is definitely too much in the guide because I included a review of Level 4 Writing basics for new students.

Because every teacher has a different style and methods, the student book does not detail a course schedule nor give much instruction on how to use the material. It is more of a reference for students (and you).

Do whatever is best to get the students to meet the course objectives (writing academic essays, making arguments, refuting arguments, quoting, paraphrasing, summarizing, revising, editing, and proofreading) and complete the course assignments (descriptive essay, argumentative essay, critical analysis essay, writing assignments, and final exam) successfully.

The **teacher guide** (this guide) was written so that a teacher with little experience could successfully teach this class in Slovakia. It has "Explanations of Assignments and Grading," a "Week by Week Guide," and lists of possible topics/assignments at the end.

Teachers with more experience, more resources, and/or a different location should not feel obligated to follow the weekly guide, but should read the explanations of assignments. These explain the purpose of assignments, the requirements (if any), and the grading criteria.

The weekly guide gives ideas, suggestions, and sometimes even lesson plans to fill each week. Each week lists the pages from the student book (underlined) and handouts (in bold) that can be used and talks a little about how to use them.

And that brings up the last part of the course – **handouts for teachers to modify**. They are all Word documents; get your own copy from the Instructional Materials Coordinator. There are writing assignments (homework) and peer feedback sheets, editing tasks, and grade sheets for all essays. They are not in the student book so that you can change them or not use them at all.

## Explanation of Assignments and Grading

The course is organized around the three main assignments – descriptive essay, argumentative essay, and critical analysis essay. For each of these essays, there are guidelines, example essays, pre-writing worksheets, and checklists in the student book and peer feedback forms, editing and proofreading tasks, and grade sheets in the teacher **handouts**. So if you want more information, look in both of those places too.

### Descriptive Essay

This type of essay was chosen because it meets these two objectives:

1. Review the basic structure of the essay – introduction, body, conclusion, thesis statement, and topic sentences. It's helpful for new students and good review for those returning. Yet at the same time, students become aware that an essay does not have to have 3 body paragraphs. (You could even point out that the thesis statement doesn't have to be the last sentence of the introduction, but that may be too radical right now.)
2. Get the students used to revising, editing, and proofreading. After they have written a first draft, students need to start considering every sentence and then every word that they write (not as they write, which would be frustrating, but after they have written it). It's easier to do this with a descriptive essay because they don't have to deal with reasons and logic and evidence yet.

So this essay is not about strong arguments and deep thought; be more concerned with students' grasp of essay structure and their writing style.

### Grading the descriptive essay

The descriptive essay grading criteria are on the next page. You could use the **Descriptive essay grade sheet** or make your own. The checklist format means you don't have to write so many comments – check what they did well, and leave blanks or circles by what they are missing.

Ideally, we should have a rubric to make giving points easier, but until one is made, the giving and taking away of points is up to you. You may create a system and decide how much each thing is worth. Or you may consider each part and ask yourself whether the student deserves a 100, 90, 80, 75, or below for that part and give points accordingly.

It's hard to grade essays at first, but it will get faster. Read the essay quickly first without a pen in your hand and think about its strengths and weaknesses. This will prevent you from putting too many comments all over the paper. Just focus on a few key points in your comments rather than pointing out everything that's wrong. Make sure you always compliment what has been done well (but be careful about complimenting bad papers too much – if the student later doesn't pass the course, he/she will not understand why).

Remember that 75% is passing, so if the student has not met the assignment objectives, the grade should be below that. Don't be afraid to be a tough grader. Some comments on the grading criteria:

**Clear objective and thesis:** Most students should get 10/10 here, but students who don't follow the assignment, lack a thesis statement, or cannot stay on topic should lose a lot of points. If there is no thesis statement, give a zero for thesis.

**Development of ideas:** In this essay, you don't have to worry much about questionable logic or unsound arguments, so grading development should be fairly simple. Pay attention to basic essay structure and good specific detail. The returning students shouldn't have trouble with the structure, and hopefully, they have worked to make their essays specific. If there's nothing more to add to the essay, if it leaves you with no "why?how?what?" questions, then it's good.

How you weight each category and how much you take off is up to you. You could give 5 points each for the Intro, Conclusion, and Coherence, and 15 for support. Or you could just grade development as a whole.

**Organization:** This should be an easy 10 for returning students who had organization drilled into them in Level 4. But you'll still be surprised....

**Writing Style:** This assignment emphasizes style. Students should have worked hard to be creative, specific, clear, and unique. Their essays should not sound like everyone else's (which happens so often in the IEP), and those who have spent time and effort to improve their writing style should be rewarded here. This is a hard one to grade – make sure you can back up your comments here.

**Format:** This is the "following directions" grade, and it's amazing how many students can't or won't do that. So to get them to realize that directions should be followed is to give them 0 for format if they can't do it right. (OK, format isn't so important, but this inability to follow directions comes back to hurt them in later assignments)

**Grammar...:** Don't be afraid to give low grades for grammar; students should graduate from the IEP with good English. Since they have had enough time to revise, edit, and proofread this essay, there should not be too many mistakes. If there are, this first low grade will be an indication that they should do more on future assignments.

I sometimes photocopy the essays and do the grammar separately (so the paper is not covered with marks). Count each error as a half point and subtract the amount from 25. Depending on the length of the paper, it could be done for one page or the whole paper.

Take off points for real errors, not for stylistic choices (the grammar is right, but you think it would sound better another way). Some instructors take off more points for unclear phrases or sentences. You could also not take off points for the same specific error if it repeats (i.e. using a that-clause after "cause") or for errors made when using advanced English. Some instructors set a limit on points taken off for articles or give extra points for having good articles. I usually give students a small cushion (the first 5 errors do not count or soemthing). *Whatever your strategy, make sure it's clear to them before they turn in their papers.*

It's also a good idea to photocopy the paper and mark the grammar separately so the paper is not covered with marks. And instead of correcting errors, circle them and mark them with correction symbols to let the students correct them and learn from their mistakes. You could use the **Correction symbols** handout or use your own.

## *Grading Criteria for Descriptive Essay*

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**Clear Objective and Thesis Statement** **/10**

easy to find easy to understand (after 1 reading) point of view is clear	purpose is clear answers essay question states ONE main idea of piece
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**Development of Ideas** **/30****Introduction**

inviting hook  
introduces subject well  
all sentences relate to each other

**Conclusion**

restates thesis  
summarizes essay  
strong, appropriate closing statement

**Support**

each BP supports topic sentence  
each paragraph has enough supporting points  
each paragraph is descriptive  
each paragraph has specific details  
each paragraph has enough details for reader to experience it  
no repetition

**Coherence/Cohesion**

thesis is supported in every BP  
no irrelevant information  
all ideas relate to each other

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**Organization** **/10**

intro, body, and conclusion are clear each paragraph connects to others essay follows a clear, logical order each BP has one main paragraph idea	appropriate topic sentences details are logically ordered in BPs each BP has appropriate last sent
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**Writing Style** **/20**

written simply and clearly appropriate tone for audience, purpose sense of personal style vivid descriptions writer's attitude clearly expressed	appropriate sentence structure for L5 variety in words, sentences appropriate word choice no wordiness (every word, sent. counts)
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**Format** **/5**

double-spaced Times New Roman 12-point 1-inch, unjustified margins title page with name, course, instructor, assignment, date	indented paragraphs appropriate title header with short title and page #s on every page
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**Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, Sentence Structure, Clarity...** **/25**

Errors: \_\_\_\_\_ X ½ = \_\_\_\_\_

## **Argumentative Essay**

After the descriptive essay, the course goes back to the more academic essay – reviewing the 5-paragraph essay structure.

In their diagnostic essays at the beginning of the term, students will write an in-class persuasive essay. They will then revise this essay as they learn about academic essays. This will prepare them to write their argumentative essay.

In this class, the difference between persuasive and argumentative essays is that persuasive essays just persuade the reader about the writer's opinion, while argumentative essays not only defend the writer's opinion but also counter the arguments against the writer's opinion.

You could even have them write their argumentative essay about the same topic as their persuasive essay if you think that would benefit their writing (but they could get bored). Otherwise, there are many topics listed at the end of this guide. The focus of this assignment is on argument, support, organization, and of course, English. Because of this, the students will not do research and cite sources, which takes the focus away from their writing. Pick topics that do not require research and really encourage students to choose topics that they can make strong arguments for based on their own knowledge and experience (or primary research around the university).

### **Grading the argumentative essay**

Grading criteria for the argumentative essay are on the next page. It has the same format as the **Argumentative grade sheet**.

Again, read the students' essays without a pen first to get an idea of their strengths and weaknesses. After some experience, you will have a good idea of what kind of grade the paper deserves after the first reading (which will help in the allocation of points). Consider whether the essay convinced you or not. If it did, it's probably good.

The focus of this essay was on making and supporting an argument, so logical development is really important. Now you have to look at not only their words, sentences, and essay structure, but their ideas as well. Yet look at it as a writing instructor, and focus on how they present and support their ideas, even if an idea is ridiculous. Rather than writing that an idea is wrong, write "you haven't proved this" or "this idea needs more support."

Pay attention to the overall impact of the whole paper as well as breaking it down into parts. If it's convincing, it's a good paper, but it could still have major problems in one paragraph. On the grade sheet, I often write separate comments for each body paragraph because they often all have different strengths and weaknesses.

Grammar is still important here, and hopefully it will be better than their last essays.

Focus may also be a problem with this essay. Be sure to take points off only once for this, not in every place (you could conceivably give lower grades in Clear Objective and Thesis, Logical Development, and Organization for this).

Again, compliment the good parts, especially if you have noticed improvement.

## *Grading Criteria for Argumentative Essay*

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### **Clear Objective and Thesis** **/10**

easy to understand	states main idea of essay
point of view is clear	answers essay question
purpose of paper is clear	

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### **Logical Development** **/40**

#### **Introduction**

inviting hook  
introduces topic well  
all ideas relate

#### **Conclusion**

restates thesis  
no new information  
strong, appropriate closing statement

#### **Arguments**

logical  
strong and convincing  
avoids logical fallacies

#### **Refutation**

strong con arguments chosen  
refutation is valid and convincing  
refutation is well-supported

#### **Support**

topic sentence supported in each BP  
each BP has (enough) supporting points  
each BP has (enough) specific details  
details are logically ordered  
examples used to clarify points  
details are developed and explained  
no repetition

#### **Coherence/Cohesion**

thesis is supported in every BP  
no irrelevant information  
all ideas relate to each other

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### **Organization** **/10**

clear intro, body, and conclusion	each BP has appropriate last sentence
each paragraph connects to others	introduction introduces arguments
each BP has a topic sentence with 1 argument	conclusion summarizes arguments

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### **Format** **/5**

double-spaced	indented paragraphs
Times New Roman 12-point	appropriate title
1-inch, unjustified margins	title page with name, course, instructor,
header with short title and page # on every page	assignment, date

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### **Writing Style** **/10**

written simply and clearly	appropriate sentence structure for L5
appropriate tone for audience, purpose	variety in words, sentences
sense of personal style	appropriate word choice
third person only	no wordiness (every word, sent. counts)

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### **Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, Sentence Structure, Clarity** **/25**

Errors \_\_\_\_\_ X ½ = \_\_\_\_\_

## **Critical Analysis Essay**

The next part of the course introduces using others' written work. Students will practice quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing. They will then use these skills in their critical analysis essay, in which they focus on refuting arguments.

This is the hardest part of Level 5. Spend a lot of time looking at students' work before the essay is due. Check them every step of the way to make sure they're heading in the right direction.

In this essay, students respond to an opinion essay/article. Although there are many different ways of writing a critical analysis, it seems best to stick to one style in Level 5 – just analyzing the arguments of the piece. Students decide whether they agree or disagree with the author and support or refute the author's arguments. Again, they will use their own ideas, not outside sources, to do this.

You could let students find their own opinion essays/articles for the critical analysis assignment, but we have found that the assignment works better if the instructor provides students with a choice of articles. Find opinion essays on controversial issues, especially ones that students will be familiar with and have opinions about. It's time-consuming to find articles, but you can re-use them each term or pass them on to future instructors. There are some **Critical analysis articles** in the handouts for this course.

### **Grading the critical analysis essay**

Grading criteria are at the end of this section.

Read the essay first without a pen in your hand and think about it. It's a tough one. The **Crit Analysis grade sheet** lists all the paragraphs separately because it might be easier to deal with the essay in parts.

Focus on the students' refutation of the argument.

The grammar grade dropped to 20 points here to give more points to "reference methods," which in this case are not a reference page and in-text citations, but rather the use of the article – introducing and integrating quotes, using quotation marks correctly, paraphrasing properly, and making clear the difference between the student's ideas and the author's ideas.

## *Grading Criteria for Critical Analysis Essay*

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### **Clear objective and thesis** /10

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> easy to understand               | <input type="checkbox"/> purpose of essay is clear |
| <input type="checkbox"/> student's point of view is clear | <input type="checkbox"/> states main idea of essay |

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### **Logical development of body and thesis** /40

#### **Summary**

- |   |   |
|---|---|
| <input type="checkbox"/> name of article                    | <input type="checkbox"/> author's point of view is clear      |
| <input type="checkbox"/> name of author                     | <input type="checkbox"/> student didn't add info or opinion   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> main ideas of article              | <input type="checkbox"/> gives adequate amount of information |
| <input type="checkbox"/> vocabulary different from original | <input type="checkbox"/> grammar different from original      |

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#### **Paragraph 1**

- opinion of article is explained correctly
- opinion of article is explained completely
- student opinion is clear
- used facts, examples, experiences to support opinion
- support is relevant
- support is explained
- students' points are convincing
- supports thesis

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#### **Paragraph 2**

- opinion of article is explained correctly
- opinion of article explained completely
- student opinion is clear
- used facts, examples, experiences
- support is relevant
- support is explained
- students' points are convincing
- supports thesis

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#### **Paragraph 3**

- opinion of the article is explained correctly
- opinion of the article is explained completely
- student opinion is clear
- used facts, examples, experiences to support opinion
- support is relevant
- support is explained
- students' points are convincing
- supports thesis

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#### **Conclusion**

- restates thesis
- no new information
- strong and appropriate closing statement

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### **Organization** /10

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> intro, body, conclusion are clear            | <input type="checkbox"/> each BP begins with author's ideas    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> each paragraph connects to others            | <input type="checkbox"/> topic sentences with student's ideas  |
| <input type="checkbox"/> essay follows a clear, logical order         | <input type="checkbox"/> each BP has appropriate last sentence |
| <input type="checkbox"/> introduction introduces main paragraph ideas | <input type="checkbox"/> conclusion summarizes para. ideas     |

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### **Writing Style** /10

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> written simply and clearly             | <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate sentence structure for L5   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate tone for audience, purpose | <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate word choice                 |
| <input type="checkbox"/> sense of personal style                | <input type="checkbox"/> variety in words, sentences             |
| <input type="checkbox"/> third person only                      | <input type="checkbox"/> no wordiness (every word, sent. counts) |

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### **Format and reference methods** /10

- |   |  |
|---|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> double-spaced                                    | <input type="checkbox"/> indented paragraphs                   |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Times New Roman 12-point                         | <input type="checkbox"/> appropriate title                     |
| <input type="checkbox"/> 1-inch, unjustified margins                      | <input type="checkbox"/> name, course, instructor, assignment, |
| <input type="checkbox"/> header with short title and page # on every page | <input type="checkbox"/> date on title page                    |
| <input type="checkbox"/> author is cited as appropriate                   | <input type="checkbox"/> correct use of quotations             |

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### **Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, Sentence Structure, Clarity** /20

Errors \_\_\_\_\_ X ½

## Homework (Writing Assignments)

The last major assignment is homework, which is composed of Writing Assignments. These short assignments are mainly to keep the students writing and give them a chance to practice the skills covered in class without being graded (except on following directions and completing the assignment on time).

Students should keep all their assignments together (like a journal), and it's up to you how often you check them.

The Writing Assignments are all in a **handout** so you can decide how many to give and what to require. There are 18 different ones prepared, but you could certainly do fewer (or more...). The most important ones are in bold letters.

- |  |   |
|--|---|
| #1: Introduction                           | #10: A short story (clarity)            |
| <b>#2: Audience</b>                        | #11: ??                                 |
| <b>#3: Being specific</b>                  | <b>#12: Refuting an Argument again</b>  |
| #4: ??                                     | <b>#13: Summarizing an article</b>      |
| #5: Interesting introduction               | #14: Summarizing another article        |
| <b>#6: Revising your persuasive essay</b>  | <b>#15: Responding to an article</b>    |
| <b>#7: Revising persuasive essay again</b> | <b>#16: Critical analysis outline</b>   |
| <b>#8: Refuting an argument</b>            | <b>#17: Getting ready for the final</b> |
| <b>#9: Clear directions</b>                | #18: The end??                          |

They correspond to what the students are doing in class each week, if you follow the basic course schedule.

## Final Exam

The final exam for this class should be an in-class persuasive or argumentative essay. It could be 2 or 2.5 hours. Give them a choice of 3-5 topics at the exam.

You can choose whether to make the essay a persuasive or argumentative one. It might be difficult to write a good argumentative essay without advanced preparation, however.

We have used the "Agree or disagree with a quotation" questions a lot on final exams. They usually get interesting responses, but if students have not seen this type of question before, they might not understand how to answer it (that's what Writing assignment #17 was for).

## Grading the final exam

Grading criteria are on the next page. It's similar to other essays except for the "appropriately narrowed topic." Those 10 points were taken from format and grammar. An in-class exam is a good test of their ability to stay focused on the topic.

Don't spend hours and hours grading the final exam. Read the essays once to get a feel for them, and then just use the checklist on **Final grade sheet** to grade. Often, students do not pick up their final exams, so don't write a lot of comments.

However, spend more time on those who are on the edge of passing or failing. The final exam is their chance to show that they deserve to pass the class – that they can write a strong, clear, thoughtful, organized, well-supported, persuasive essay. Unfortunately, you have to be the one to make that decision. Make comments on the papers which might be questioned by students, especially if they do not pass the class.

## *Final Grading Criteria*

### **Clear objective and thesis** /10

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- easy to understand
- point of view is clear
- purpose of essay is clear
- states main idea of piece (thesis accurately reflects what is in the body of the essay)

### **Appropriately narrowed topic that answers the question** /10

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- not too general
- stays on the topic throughout
- answers the essay question
- no irrelevant information or ideas

### **Logical Development** /40

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#### **Introduction**

- inviting hook
- introduces topic well
- all ideas relate

#### **Conclusion**

- restates thesis
- no new information
- strong and appropriate closing statement

#### **Arguments**

- logical
- strong and convincing
- avoids logical fallacies
- ideas are thoughtful
- purpose of each BP is clear
- each argument supports thesis
- no repetition of ideas

#### **Support**

- topic sentence supported in each BP
- each BP has (enough) supporting points
- each BP has (enough) specific details
- details are logically ordered
- examples used to clarify points
- details are developed and explained

#### **Cohesion**

- all ideas related to each other

### **Organization** /10

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- clear intro, body, conclusion
- each paragraph connects to others
- essay follows a logical order
- appropriate topic sentences
- information is in right paragraph
- appropriate last sentences of BPs
- introduction introduces arguments
- conclusion summarizes arguments
- handwriting is legible

### **Writing Style** /10

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- written simply and clearly
- appropriate tone for audience
- sense of personal style
- appropriate sentence structure for L5
- appropriate word choice
- variety in words, sentences
- no wordiness (every word, sent. counts)

### **Grammar, Spelling, Punctuation, Sentence Structure, Clarity...** /20

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- Errors X ½ =

## Week 1

*The objectives for this week are to get an idea of your students' writing, review the writing process and essay basics, and then assign the first essay – a descriptive essay. Much of the student guide in the first three weeks is review from Level 4, especially written for new students in Level 5. If you have many new students, you may have to do more lecturing in class; if most students are continuing from Level 4, they can read the material on their own as necessary to review the basics of an essay.*

### **Pages from the student guide**

The writing process  
Writing a thesis statement  
Making an outline  
Descriptive essay  
The Garden of Eden  
In fear of my students

### **Handouts to modify**

Student survey  
Diagnostic essay  
Descriptive topics  
Writing assignment #1: Introduction  
Writing assignment #2: Audience

### **First day of class**

1. Go through the syllabus with the students, especially discussing the assignments, the attendance policy, your late paper policy, and scholastic honesty.
2. Have students fill out an information form (use the **Student survey** if you want) for you to keep.
3. Talk about the writing assignments.
  - This guide assigns 2 writing assignments every week. You can follow these, or change the number and type of assignments as you feel is appropriate.
  - Set your own requirements (typed or handwritten, appropriate length) and try to have regular due dates.
  - Grading should be based on completing the assignment according to the directions (50%) and finishing it on time (50%).
  - It's up to you how often you collect assignments (but do it enough so that students feel that the assignments are worthwhile). Sometimes you could collect them; other times just check to see that they were completed.
  - It's also up to you how much you comment on each student's assignments. Students always appreciate feedback, but it's time-consuming to respond to each one all the time. In general, be positive and respond to their ideas and style, not grammar. If they have to worry about grammar too, they will not write as much.
4. Assign **Writing assignment #1** so they can tell you more about themselves. Add your own writing assignment guidelines and requirements to the handout.

### **Second day of class**

1. Give students the whole class time to write the **Diagnostic essay**. You will need to choose topics for a persuasive essay (see "Persuasive/Argumentative Essay Topics for Level 5" at the end of this guide). While they write, you can go through their first writing assignment.
2. Assign homework – Read The Writing Process and The Garden of Eden or In fear of my students (your choice of which one to assign – the first is written by a student; the other one, by an instructor, has a five-paragraph essay structure.)

3. Read the diagnostic essays quickly so that you can make general comments the next day about their understanding of what an essay is. Also get an idea about the students' levels, especially students who are new to the program. Don't hand their essays back. Keep them until Week 3, when the students will practice revising as a writing assignment. Don't make too many comments on the essays because the students should be able to evaluate the strengths and weaknesses themselves later.

### **Rest of the week**

1. The Writing Process – Students should read this as homework. These ideas will be repeated again and again in the course, so you don't need to lecture about it; it's much better to learn it by doing. That's why the descriptive essay assignment (and all essay assignments in this class) goes through each of these steps with the students. For now, stress pre-writing and re-writing because students tend to avoid these points. Ask how many students made an outline for their diagnostic essay? How many read it again to find grammar mistakes?  
  
Obviously, the writing process is not as simple and organized as this handout. The steps can be done in different orders, writers can go back and forth along the list, and some need to focus more on certain steps than others. However, all of these steps should be done at some point in the writing process, which must be stressed (nicely and in a fun way) to students.
2. Audience is something else to mention while looking at the writing process. Students can explore it in **Writing assignment #2**.
3. Review the basics of an essay (introduction, body, conclusion, thesis statement, and topic sentences) by going through either The Garden of Eden or In fear of my students with the students. Just be concerned with showing that these basics exist; don't go into detail about how to write them.
4. However, if students are having trouble with the idea of a thesis statement, have them read and do Writing a thesis statement. You could also give students sample essay questions and have them make thesis statements for them (and even outlines or topic sentences). This should not be necessary unless you have a lot of new students.
5. Hand out topics for the descriptive essay assignment. **Descriptive topics** has a list of possible topics. You may want to hand out topics the day before you discuss the assignment to give them a chance to think about the topics.
6. On the last day of the week, assign the descriptive essay. The students have the directions in their guide (Descriptive essay).
7. Descriptive Essay leads the students through the writing process. Do this in class so that you are there to give advice. For those from Level 4, it may be hard to break away from the structure they know. New students will have trouble staying focused in each paragraph, so really encourage outlining – they can look at Making an outline as well.
8. They must bring their completed, typed, double-spaced essay to class on the first day next week (for peer feedback). Stress that they should follow the

directions on the descriptive essay assignment and not worry about grammar...yet.

(While we usually don't have problems getting students to bring their drafts to class, some students may think it's not important because there is no real "grade" for the draft. So remind them that it's for their own good and can only improve their final essay grade. It's also part of their Class Contribution grade. If students continually ignore these ungraded deadlines, perhaps their low final grades will influence them. Or you can start giving rewards (extra points on final essay grade) or punishments (minus points on final essay grade). Hopefully, you won't have to take these measures to encourage them.)

## Week 2

*Week 2 is focused on revising, being specific, using a dictionary, and editing. Students should work with their own and others' descriptive essays and also do some practice editing.*

### **Pages from the student guide**

Descriptive essay checklist  
Being specific in your writing  
Cohesion  
Revising  
Editing  
Formatting your papers  
*Word choice*  
*Spelling*

### **Handouts to modify**

Descriptive peer review  
Descriptive feedback  
Descriptive editing  
Writing assignment #3: being specific  
Writing assignment #4

### **First day of class**

1. Every student should have his/her typed, double-spaced descriptive essay.
2. Briefly discuss the importance of re-writing. The first step is revising – go through what it is and ways to do it (a brief summary of Revising). There are many strategies – today in class they will try peer feedback.
3. Peer feedback is tough because students sometimes answer the question as quickly as possible, only write “it's good,” and avoid criticism and suggestion. So this first session has to work – stress that they are helping their classmates, tell them that fixing other's papers will make them better writers themselves. Go over with them exactly what they should be doing and looking for. There are two different handouts you could use - **Descriptive peer review** or **Descriptive feedback**. The peer review is very structured and the feedback is more open. Try one, try both, change them as you wish.
4. Put students in pairs or groups of three to exchange papers or just collect everyone's papers and randomly pass them out. There may be enough time for each student to get 2 readings of his/her paper, but then the first reader at least should not write on the paper.
5. Walk around and help. You should also borrow papers from students and read a section of each paper and write comments.
6. When students finish, have them read Revising in their guide. Their homework will be to revise their papers. They should look carefully at what their classmates have said, try other revising strategies, and look at the Descriptive essay checklist. Give them 2-3 nights for revision and then they should bring their revised, typed paper to class for an editing session on the last day of the week. Remind them that you have office hours.

### **Middle of the week**

1. Being specific in your writing – This worksheet should help students make their writing less general and non descriptive. Show that specific details are more memorable and interesting. Readers like names, numbers, descriptions (not too many, but enough to understand the point better).
2. Go through it with them, doing Exercises 1-2 as a class or in pairs.

3. When they are doing Exercise 3 , walk around the class reading their answers and keep pushing them to be MORE specific, asking, "How? Why? In what way? How much? How long? etc."
4. Also in this assignment, you could point out how they could use a dictionary or thesaurus to make their words more specific. Of course, warn them that if they find a word in a thesaurus, they should then look it up in a dictionary to make sure it's the right word.

Carolyn Smith found a good activity that works well with this exercise, called "Teamwriting." Students work together in small groups at the board to complete the assignment. When they're done, the class offers corrections and suggestions, and then the instructor goes over the sentences as everyone listens in. She said students liked it and benefited, and it works well for other exercises too. More information can be found on Dave Kees web page at <http://www.davekees.com/index.php?option=content&task=view&id=65&Itemid=26>

5. They should go home and read their descriptive essay again, making sure they have been as specific as possible.
6. A short **Writing assignment #3**, in which they focus on being as specific as possible, would be good to do after the being specific class.
7. Spend some time on how to use a monolingual dictionary when rewriting – hopefully they already know how to use one, so you can focus on how to use one when editing or proofreading. The worksheets Word choice and/or Spelling both require the use of a dictionary to edit/proofread and contain common mistakes found in student essays.
8. For homework before the last day, they should read Cohesion in the student book. Ask them to go through their essays making sure that every sentence connects to the one before it. New students may need more explanation.

### **Last day of the week**

1. Go over Cohesion if necessary.

2. Briefly explain what editing is and what its benefits are.

Peer editing session - there are many different ways to do this – in groups, in pairs, passing papers around the class.... Students could edit whole papers or just paragraphs. Make sure you have a plan before coming to class.

The **Descriptive Editing** handout has possible tasks to give to students for peer editing. Students should try all of these eventually, but don't overwhelm them all at once. You could probably do 3 or 4 of the tasks in class. Definitely try General Editing; most students will probably never try reading out loud unless they have to during class. Also, since one of the goals of this week is getting students to use their dictionaries, the Word Choice option is a good one for in-class editing. And perhaps Cohesion, since they have read about it.

3. Walk around and help. You could read a section of each and offer comments. Before class ends, encourage students to edit at home. What they have done in class is not enough. They should read Editing in their guide and see what else they can do. (You could give the unused editing tasks as homework).
4. And of course, they must edit their descriptive essay over the weekend and bring their perfect, edited, typed, and formatted paper to the first class next

week. Have them read Formatting your paper in the student guide so that they can format their papers correctly.

(Sometimes I tell students that the final draft is due on the first day of the week, instead of telling them that they will spend the class proofreading, as this seems to make their essays better.)

5. You could also throw in an easy **Writing assignment #4** to keep them writing.

## Week 3

*In Week 3, students proofread the descriptive essay and turn it in. Then there is a closer examination of an academic essay. Again, there are pages in the guide which are just review and will not be necessary unless you have many new students. The main focus should be on making and supporting an argument in an essay. Finally, the students will get back the persuasive essay they wrote for the diagnostic test and will revise it according to what they cover this week.*

### Pages from the student guide

Proofreading  
A standard 5-paragraph essay  
Sample outline of a persuasive essay  
Five days of Intensive English at CU...  
Analyze "Five days of..."  
Persuasive essay checklist  
Writing body paragraphs in academic...  
Writing academic essay introductions  
Writing interesting introductions  
Writing academic essay conclusions

### Handouts to modify

Descriptive proofreading  
Descriptive grade sheet  
Argue, argue, argue  
Writing assignment #5: interesting intro  
Writing assignment #6: revising pers. essay

### Divide between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> weeks

*Prepositions*  
*Subject-verb agreement*  
*Verb tenses*

### First day of the week

1. Every student should have an edited, formatted, typed descriptive essay. They may feel that it's ready to turn in.
2. However, there is one more step in the writing process – proofreading. Briefly discuss what it is and when it should be done (when the student feels the paper is finished, and after taking a break from the paper).
3. Give each student a classmate's paper and the **Descriptive proofreading** handout. You could have them proofread whole papers or just paragraphs. They could proofread more than one paper as well.
4. After each paper has been proofread once, this would also be a good time to go over any common errors that you've noticed. Discuss the error and have them read another paper, focusing specifically on finding that error.
5. OR You could focus on one of the types of errors from their guide – Subject-verb agreement, Prepositions, or Verb tenses – and go through part of one of those before moving on to proofreading the essays.
6. Give them 1-2 more days to proofread their descriptive essay, and tell them to read Proofreading in their guide. Think about whether you want students to get proofreading help from native speakers or not and make your opinion clear. If they do get help, give them restrictions (here in Slovakia, some instructors do not allow students to get help with their English, but only with their ideas – their paper's grammar is their own responsibility. Other instructors set limits – a single reader can only look at one paragraph (so to get proofreading help with a 5-paragraph essay requires 5 readers) and the reader is supposed to circle errors, not correct them.)

7. When you finally collect the essays, use **Descriptive essay grade sheet** (modified if you want) to grade them.
8. Students should also read Five days of intensive English at CU, an example of a persuasive essay, for homework.

### **Middle of the week**

1. Spend a day discussing academic essays which make an argument. Use Five days of intensive English at CU to go over the basics. There are many ways to use this essay:

- Analyze "Five days of intensive English at CU" as in-class group work or homework

- Discuss these questions:

Do you agree or disagree with essay? Why?

Did you change your mind or consider changing your mind?

How is it organized? Why?

Is it memorable? What do you remember most? (hopefully the specific examples...)

- Follow A standard 5-paragraph essay or write essay components on the board and see how the example essay does these things:

#### **Introduction.**

- Hook sentence – story/example, surprising fact/idea, contradiction, quotation. NOT GENERAL

- Background about topic – introduce it, any necessary info.

- Summary of main paragraph ideas (2-3 sentences) also possible to put in thesis if not awkward.

- Thesis

#### **Body Paragraph**

- Topic Sentence ( Thesis idea + Main paragraph idea + connection to previous sentence)

- Variety – use different vocab and structure to say the same thing – look at all topic sentences

- Support

- Explain clearly and completely (reader is slow, doubting, stupid, always asking "why/how?"

- Supporting details: examples, facts, descriptions, expert opinions, ideas, etc. (SPECIFIC).

- Explanation of why/how detail proves topic sentence/thesis.

- More Support

- More Support

- Cohesion – All sentences connect with 1) a few connecting words, 2) repetition of words, 3) repetition of ideas, 4) pronouns (this, that, these, those, he/she/it/they). Use variety.

- Concluding sentence

#### **Conclusion**

- Connection to last body paragraph (repetition of ideas is better than "in conclusion")

- Re-state thesis and summarize three main paragraph ideas. Use variety

- Closer/Wow statement – prediction/recommendation/solution/big idea (must fit and sound right. Make the reader say, "Wow, I'm glad I read that essay." It's hard to do, but if you succeed, the reader IS really glad.)

- Connect conclusion to intro (not necessary, but works well). Refer to hook sent. idea

2. Another day should be spent discussing how to make and support essay arguments. Students may not have done much persuasive writing, especially using specific details and logic to support their point. So focus on making and supporting an argument in an essay. Use the example essay to go over ways to support arguments, use of examples, explanation, etc. Writing body paragraphs discusses this more and you could use it to evaluate the body paragraphs from the sample essay. You could also use **Argue, argue, argue** – give students possible essay questions, let them look at both sides, choose a side, and write logical reasons and evidence to support it. Focus on getting them to take a side and only argue for that side.

3. Writing academic essay introductions and Writing academic essay conclusions are in the guide to help new students. Continuing students should get all the review they need from going through the sample essay.
4. Writing an interesting introduction would be helpful for all students. **Writing assignment #5** asks students to read this page and write two interesting introductions.

### **Last day of the week**

1. Hand back the students' diagnostic essays and have them read them in class. Because they have taken such a long break from this essay, they should be able to look at it from a new way and evaluate it clearly.
2. **Writing assignment #6** asks them to revise this essay over the weekend by using the Persuasive essay checklist. There are many different things you could do in class to prepare them for this:
  - Ask them what they liked and didn't like, what they did well, what they didn't do and should have...
  - Ask if they still agree with what they wrote. Does the essay convince them now? Have they thought of more support to add?
  - Give everyone a chance to check their thesis statements and write them better (remind them of what a thesis must do, and also to be aware of grammar and punctuation). Write everyone's thesis statements on the board for the class to evaluate and help out.
  - Have students analyze the organization of their essay. First, check the thesis. Then find the three main paragraph ideas. Are these ideas in their introduction? Is each idea in a topic sentence at the beginning of a paragraph? Are these three ideas summarized in the conclusion?
  - Check for the focus of the essay. Ask a student what the thesis is. Ask the student to summarize a body paragraph and how it relates to the thesis statement. Ask him/her to show you where in the paragraph he/she explains the relationship to the thesis statement.
  - Ask students to write a word or two in the margin next to each paragraph that sums up the ideas in that paragraph. If they must write more than a few words, the paragraph talks about too many things.
  - Ask students to evaluate the content of each body paragraph. Read the topic sentence (or find the main idea if there is no topic sentence). See if each sentence in the paragraph relates to the main idea. They should mark sentences which do not relate to the main idea and/or thesis. They will have to delete or re-organize these sentences to make them relevant.
  - Or you could have them try to make an outline of their essay (using Sample outline of a persuasive essay) as a guide. This is also a good way to see what needs to be revised.
  - As they work, you could talk to them individually as well.
3. Go over the assignment with them, and remind them that this is a longer assignment than a regular writing assignment. They should use the checklist provided and revise their essay over the weekend.

## Week 4

*Students revise their persuasive essay one more time and then prepare to write their argumentative essay.*

### Pages from the student guide

Argumentative essay  
Speech class: A scary but necessary...  
Argumentative essay pre-writing worksheet

### Handouts to modify

Persuasive peer review  
Persuasive peer feedback  
Correction symbols  
Argumentative topics  
Writing assignment #7: revising essay again  
Writing assignment #8: refuting argument

### First day of the week

1. Students should have their typed, revised persuasive essay. Do a peer feedback session using **Persuasive peer review**, **Persuasive peer feedback**, or your own creation.
2. Walk around and help. You could also read a paragraph from each paper and offer suggestions.
3. **Writing assignment #7** asks students to revise this essay one more time. Definitely collect it then so you can give feedback on their ability to support their arguments and on how much they have improved their essays.
4. Hand back the descriptive essays. If you used correction symbols on the essay, also give students a copy of the **Correction symbols** which you used. As homework, the students could correct the errors on the pages you marked.
5. It's up to you whether to allow students to fix their essays for a better grade or not. With so much work put into rewriting, it should not be necessary. However, if you think it will help them, ask them to fix their essays or even just part of it. Remember that this means another grading session for you and perhaps too much help to someone who would benefit from a second time in Level 5.

### Rest of the week

1. Give students **Argumentative topics** early in the week so that they have time to choose a topic. Choose some from the end of this guide, think of your own, or let them think of topics.
2. Put students in groups and have them discuss possible arguments for and against the essay topics – they could do a worksheet like Argue, argue, argue from the previous week.
3. Read Speech class in class or as homework and discuss the essay – how it supports its argument, how it's organized, why it has a counter-argument paragraph and where it is, how effective it is, etc.
  - Especially go over how and why to refute an argument (argue against the opponent). Analyze the way it was done in the example essay. You could also write some arguments on the board and have students try to refute them.
4. **Writing assignment #8** asks students to write a paragraph arguing against another student's persuasive essay (or their own). This will give them practice at refuting an argument.

5. Assign the argumentative essay – all the directions are on Argumentative essay. You will need to go over this with them, particularly the focus and the organization. A common error is to write an informative essay – giving a lot of information about the topic and the arguments for both sides without the student's own opinion. Stress that they must have an opinion and argue for it. As for organization, generally their essays should start with their main arguments and end with the refutation of counter-arguments, but sometimes there may be counter-arguments that need to be refuted immediately (so the second organizational style should be followed). There is also a third way to organize argumentative papers which is not included on the assignment: each body paragraph begins with the counter-argument and then refutes it with the student's arguments. If an especially good student has this idea or a student has ideas well-suited for this kind of organization, you could bring it up.
6. Students should do the Argumentative essay pre-writing worksheet. This takes them through the writing process for the argumentative essay. Give them a class and a half for this. You could also have them trade pro/con charts to see if their classmates can add any more arguments. If the topic is something familiar to them or related to the university/education, encourage the students to do some of their own primary research – interview someone, do a small survey, etc.
7. These writing workshop days should not be completely relaxing for you though; check each student's thesis and main arguments before the weekend to make sure they are on the right track. Ideally, they will have an outline to be checked....They should be able to state the thesis and their main paragraph ideas in complete sentences in which the point of view is clear. They should also be able to explain why they ordered their paragraphs in the way they did.
8. You can also introduce some helpful transitions for the con paragraph (which could also be used in the critical analysis essay)
  - Incorrect argument: It's not true that...; They claim that...but in fact...
  - Irrelevant argument: It may be true that...but...; Even if...; Even if it's true that...
  - Argument is not strong enough: While it's true that...; There is some truth to the argument that... However; It is true that... However,
9. Their homework is obviously to write their argumentative essay and bring it, typed and double-spaced, to class next week. They should also read Logical fallacies at home.

## Week 5

*This week, students will revise and edit their argumentative essays, focusing on logic and clarity.*

### **Pages from student guide**

Argumentative essay checklist

Logical fallacies

Clarity

Tricky words in English

### **Handouts to modify**

Argumentative peer feedback

Argumentative editing

Writing assignment #9: clear directions

Writing assignment #10: short story

### **First day of the week**

1. Every student should have his/her argumentative essay at the first class.
2. Talk about Logical fallacies, which they should have read about at home. Logical fallacies make writing weak and reveal weaknesses in opponents' arguments. Put students in pairs to do the exercise in the student guide.
3. Have students read their own essays or exchange essays and read – paying attention to the arguments and their support – to find any logical fallacies.
4. This is a difficult subject for students – the more examples you have (especially from their own work), the easier it will be.

### **Rest of the week**

1. Another peer feedback session, using **Argumentative peer feedback**, or your own creation. Remind students to check their essay using the Argumentative essay checklist in their student guide. They should bring the typed, revised paper to class by the end of the week for an editing session.
  - You should find time during class this week to look at parts of their essays as well. While students are working in class, ask each one to show you the most troublesome part in his/her essay and offer your advice. Especially look at the development inside body paragraphs – do they have enough support? Is the support logically ordered? It helps if you write a list of the information as it appears in the paragraph. Then discuss with them whether it is enough and how to re-order this information in a more logical way.
2. Focus on clarity – writing sentences that are clear and understandable on the first reading.
  - **Writing assignment #9** has students write simple directions as clearly as they can so that the reader can do exactly what they say.
  - A lot of problems with clarity come from direct translations from the students' native language. You could introduce common errors that you've noticed, or use Clarity which includes common errors made by Slovak students. Tricky words in English also covers some of these common errors.
3. Peer editing. **Argumentative editing** has the same editing tasks as the descriptive essay editing handout. Choose the tasks for students to do in class. Definitely do Clarity in class. And give them specific editing to do at home as well (they'll be more likely to do it if they have guidelines).
4. Over the weekend, they must edit their essays and bring their perfect, edited, formatted argumentative essays to the first class next week.
5. You could also throw in **Writing assignment #10** to write a short narrative about something, focusing on making the story as clear as possible to the reader.

## Week 6

*After students proofread their argumentative essay, the focus turns to using other people's written work. First, an understanding of plagiarism, then how to use quotations, and finally, the beginning of paraphrasing. You can connect all this to the argumentative essay by saying that in the future, when they write an argumentative essay, they won't just be relying on their own ideas, but also finding information from other sources.*

### Pages from student guide

Plagiarism and how to avoid it  
Using quotations in your writing  
Paraphrasing

### Handouts to modify

Argumentative proofreading  
Argumentative grade sheet  
Writing assignment #11: ??  
Writing assignment #12: refuting again

### Divide between the 3<sup>rd</sup> and 6<sup>th</sup> weeks

*Prepositions*  
*Subject-verb agreement*  
*Verb tenses*

### First day of the week

1. Every student should have his/her edited, typed, formatted argumentative essay. Use the **Argumentative proofreading** so students can proofread each other's papers. Or make them proofread their own.
2. Again, as they finish proofreading, choose some common errors to go over (make your own handout or visual aid) or use Prepositions, Subject-verb agreement, or Verb tenses to practice editing and proofreading for these types of errors. Then have students look at the essays again, paying close attention to this type of error.
3. Give them 1-2 days to proofread their essays before turning them in for a grade. Again, set clear guidelines on whether they can receive help or not.
4. When you finally collect the essays, use **Argumentative essay grade sheet** (or a modification of it) to grade.

### Rest of the week

1. Continue the idea of clarity in **Writing assignment #11** or do something different.
2. Plagiarism and how to avoid it – This page says what needs to be said and has exercises for the students to do. They could read the first page at home, you could discuss plagiarism with them in class, and then do the exercises in pairs or as a class. Prepare yourself to discuss why scholastic honesty is so important – students will have lots of doubts and challenges for you to respond to.
3. The plagiarism handout introduces the concepts of quoting, paraphrasing, and summarizing, so now you have to go through these concepts. Students are expected to understand each of these, when to use them, and how to do them in Level 5, but don't expect them to be masters of any of these concepts at the end of Level 5. Reward honest attempts to avoid plagiarism.
4. Using quotations in your writing – Everything is here too, and it can be gone through in a day of class, with the last exercise given as homework or even worked on the next day. Really stress integrating quotations into their writing

and introducing the speaker. Also make them get out their dictionaries to understand the quotations.

- Plain, boring facts don't need to be quoted when you could write it yourself just as effectively.
- Quote special words or phrases. "Nonsense" or "born in minds affected by the excessive consumption of alcohol" have a distinct opinion and sarcastic tone. Saying "they were drunk" just wouldn't be the same.
- Changing words like "clown" or "uncrowned king of humor" would be difficult. These are special.
- Another example to use to discuss mechanics:

On board, write *The building was a dark gray monster with spying eyes*. Ask students to help in the following cases and go through rules as doing it

1. This is a quotation by Grisham  
*According to Grisham, "The building was a dark gray monster with spying eyes."*
2. If Mitch said it in Grisham's book  
*Mitch noted, "The building was a dark gray monster with spying eyes" in Grisham's book.*
3. If I don't like the words "dark gray"  
*Grisham noted, "The building was a . . . monster with spying eyes."*
4. If I don't like the words "with spying eyes"  
*Grisham noted, "The building was a dark gray monster" [Note: no ellipses at end. Only in middle.]*
5. If I don't want to use "the building was"  
*In fact, it reminded Grisham of "a dark gray monster with spying eyes"*  
[Note: You can take part of a sentence. No ellipses at beginning. Only in middle.]
6. If I want to let readers know that it's the Bendini building  
*According to Grisham, "The [Bendini] building was a dark gray monster with spying eyes."*

- To use a quotation is not as easy as throwing it into paper because the teacher says you need one. After you find a really good quotation and you know the right mechanics, you still have to think more. You need a point, a reason for using the quotation. What is it going to help you prove? Discuss each necessary ingredient as adding sentences to the quotation on the board:

*Detailed descriptions also add to the suspense of the novel. For example, Grisham described the Bendini building as "a dark gray monster with spying eyes." This brings an image of thousands of eyes following Mitch's every step through the walls, and the reader feels Mitch's paranoia more clearly.*

- So a quotation requires:
  - *Point – what you're trying to say (bread)*
  - *Connection to quotation (mustard/mayo/sauce)*
  - *Introduction to quotation – who said it? (vegetables)*
  - *Quotation (meat or cheese)*
  - *Connection between quotation and what comes next (mustard/mayo/sauce)*
  - *Explanation of how quotation proves your point (bread) (Don't just repeat your point. Don't just repeat your explanation. Analyze the quotation and explain how it specifically shows that your point is right).*
- Each part is not always one sentence. You can use more or less depending on what's needed.

5. Paraphrasing – Everything is here, but paraphrasing is very difficult for non-native speakers to do. Students could read the first page as homework, but you should discuss the concept and go over the examples with them too. Exercise 1 can be done in pairs in class. Then, to show students how to paraphrase, do an example (with their help) on the board, using both of the methods listed. Stress that they always need to check their paraphrased

sentence with the original after they finish. Start Exercise 2 in class and get students to share their paraphrases with each other and choose the best one. Assign the rest of Exercise 2 as homework, and go over it in class next week.

6. Besides Exercise 2 of paraphrasing, give **Writing assignment #12** for homework – to practice refuting more (since it will happen again in the critical analysis essay). Give each student a photocopied paragraph from another student's essay and have them try to refute the arguments there.

## Week 7

*Students continue practicing paraphrasing and review summarizing. Then they practice summarizing articles (in which they use quotations and paraphrases too). If possible, they should choose an article for their critical analysis essay this week.*

### **Pages from the student guide**

Summarizing  
Summarizing articles

### **Handouts to modify**

Article to summarize  
Writing assignment #13: summarizing art.  
Writing assignment #14 summarizing art.  
FIND ARTICLES FOR CRITICAL ANALYSIS

### **The week**

1. Continue working on paraphrasing – check the students' homework, give them more to practice, etc.
2. Summarizing – Go through this with students, stressing that they must understand what they are reading. They have probably already done summarizing in previous levels, so this should not be difficult for them (except for understanding the passages). Do some exercises in class and give one or two as homework.
3. Summarizing articles – This is what students will have to do a lot in the bachelor's degree program (there's the motivation). Go through this page with the students and then do Exercise 1 (summarizing a short article) together as a class. You could also have students read the article before coming to class.
4. There is one article in the student guide which can be summarized (and there is another **Article to summarize II** with the teachers' handouts) as **Writing assignment #13**. Or you can give them an article or let them choose one.
5. Students should just practice reading and summarizing articles this week to prepare them for their critical analysis essay.

It would be great if they could choose from the possible articles for their critical analysis essay this week.

Give students a choice of the articles you found (4 is enough), encouraging them to choose a topic they know something about and an opinion they disagree with. They should summarize the article for **Writing assignment #14**.

## Week 8

*Students start writing their critical analysis essay, probably the hardest assignment in the IEP.*

### **Pages from student guide**

Critical analysis  
The IEP – Four Days of Hard...  
Analyze “The IEP – Four days of hard...”  
Critical analysis pre-writing worksheet

### **Handouts to modify**

Writing assignment #15: responding  
Writing assignment #16: crit.an. outline

### **First day of the week**

1. Introduce the idea of a critical analysis. Go through the first part of the Critical analysis essay assignment so that students understand the goal of such an assignment.
2. Students will go step by step through this assignment this week. The Critical analysis pre-writing worksheet leads them.
3. The first thing to do is choose an article, read it, and understand it. Hopefully, the students are happy with the articles they chose for Writing Assignment #14. If not, let them choose again from your collection of articles.
4. Students can fill out the first page (“Reading the article”) of the pre-writing worksheet in class. For those who already summarized the article, it should go fast. But then they can get in pairs or groups with other students who summarized the same article and they can compare their summaries and choices of the main ideas.
5. In **Writing assignment #15**, students can write their immediate feelings and responses to their article.

### **Rest of the week**

1. Continue the pre-writing worksheet and do “Evaluating the arguments.” Students probably shouldn't collaborate on this because you'll get very similar essays, but you should walk around and keep them on the right track.
2. Read the The Intensive English Program – Four days of hard work..., an example of a critical analysis essay, and discuss the organization and focus of the essay. (Use the critical analysis assignment for information on how it is organized).
3. Put students in pairs to do Analyze “The IEP – Four days of hard work” and discuss the answers with them. Especially look at the fact that the essay does not argue for the student's opinion of the topic; it just analyzes the arguments of the essay writer. Also go through the organization of the introduction and body paragraphs, making it clear what is summary (no opinion of the student) and what is the student's opinion (thesis and topic sentences). Lastly, look at the support in each body paragraph – the student used different examples than those from the essay, and the student had enough support in each paragraph. Hopefully, this will all help your students see what their essay should be like, but they will still have a lot of problems.
4. Finish the pre-writing worksheet “Responding to the argument” and check each student's progress.

5. Now they are on the Plan and Outline part of the writing process. Go over the different ways to organize a critical analysis (it's on the critical analysis assignment too). Especially remind them that if they have one paragraph which agrees and the other two disagree, it should come first.
6. They should end the week with an outline of their essay – **Writing assignment #16** – and you should check it before they go home.
7. Over the weekend, they must write their essay and bring their typed, double-spaced essay to class on the first day next week.

## Week 9

Students revise and edit the critical analysis essay and also focus on a grammar point of your choice.

### Pages from the student guide

Critical analysis essay checklist

Editing a critical analysis

*Word order or Punctuation*

### Handouts to modify

Crit analysis peer review

Crit analysis editing

Writing assignment #17: ready for final

Writing assignment #18: the end

### First day of the week

1. Once again, students give feedback on others' essays. Use **Crit analysis peer review** or your own creation.
2. Because this assignment is difficult, you might want to ask students to give you a copy of their paper too and give some suggestions yourself.
3. Give them a few days to revise. Remind them to check the Critical analysis checklist in their course guide too. They should bring their revised, typed essay to class by the end of the week for an editing session.

### The rest of the week

1. Choose between *Word order* and *Punctuation* – which has been causing more problems in your students' writing? Both have explanations and exercises to use in class and as homework.
2. The critical analysis editing session should maybe not be on the last day of the week, giving students more time to ask questions after that. They should read Editing a critical analysis in their course guide. Use **Crit analysis editing** for the editing session. It has seven possible tasks to choose from – definitely have them do the “Use of Article” one in class. Have them do peer editing in class and their own editing at home.
3. Then go back to word order or punctuation and have them search their essays for these types of mistakes too.
4. **Writing assignment #17** can start preparing them for the final – give them a few possible essay questions like those which may appear on the final, especially the quotes.
5. **Writing assignment #18**, the last one, can be something more relaxed.
6. They should bring their edited, typed, and formatted critical analysis essay to the first day of class in Week 10. OR you may want to see what they can do on their own and tell them that there will be no proofreading session in Week 10. They need to do all their own proofreading at home and turn in their final essay at the beginning of the first class.

## Week 10

*Students finish their critical analysis essay and prepare for the final. You could also review any common errors.*

### **Handouts to modify**

Crit analysis proofreading  
Crit analysis grade sheet  
Final exam  
Final grade sheet

### **First day of the week**

1. If you decided to let them proofread their critical analysis essays in class, use the **Crit analysis proofreading** handout.
2. Then give them one day to finish proofreading.
3. Use **Crit analysis gradesheet** or a variation of it to grade the assignment.

### **Middle of the week**

1. Go over any common errors you would like to talk about.
2. Do any editing or proofreading exercises that students haven't done.
3. Discuss the final exam.
  - A timed, in-class essay (2 or 2.5 hours).
  - They get a choice of 3-5 topics at the exam (not earlier).
  - They can bring their monolingual dictionaries.
  - Write the grading criteria on the board for them to see. Note that "Appropriately narrowed topic that answers the question" is 10% of the grade. This is because on essay exams, students often have trouble focusing. They are in a hurry to finish, so they don't make outlines or keep their minds on answering the essay question.
  - Encourage them to think and plan before they start writing their essay.
  - And then re-read it a few times at the end to check their focus (revise), clarity (edit), and grammar (proofread).

### **Last day of the week**

1. The **Final exam**. Choose questions from the end of this guide or make up your own. The **Final exam grade sheet** can be used to grade the final.

## *Persuasive/Argumentative Essay Topics for Level 5*

**Some of these topics may be better as position paper topics in Level 6 – if you think a topic requires students to do research, don't use it in Level 5.**

**Diagnostic Essay (persuasive)** – We usually use CU-related or education-related topics for this persuasive essay.

**Argumentative Essay** – CU- and education-related topics may be good because students have personal experience and it's possible for them to do primary research – surveys and interviews. "Should" questions as well usually work **if** the students have enough knowledge of the topic. The "other topics" may have some good questions too. For the quotations, rewrite the quotation as a question for this assignment.

**Final Exam (persuasive or argumentative)** – Choose questions that the students have knowledge about and could answer in a short time. We like to put quotation questions on the exam because it makes them think in a new way.

### **CU-related topics (some may only apply to certain locations)**

- Many students complain that the amount of money it costs to attend City University is too high. Others might argue that tuition fees are appropriate for a private school. Are City University's tuition fees too high?
- As you know (since you've read the syllabus), the Intensive English Program has a strict attendance policy. Do you think this policy is necessary in a language program or that it is inappropriate at this level of education?
- Each term in the Intensive English Program, students are mixed in different sections so that they are not with the same group in each level. At the beginning of the term, the admissions office receives many complaints from students about being separated from their former classmates. Should IEP students be mixed each term or should they stay with the same group?
- A "revolution" has been called for. Members of the City University faculty would like to make the CU building an English-speaking zone, where everyone, staff and students, should speak English. There will be no penalties for speaking Slovak, but students and staff will be encouraged to use English at all times. Is this English-only revolution a good idea?
- At City University native and non-native speakers of English teach in the IEP program. Do you think non-native speakers can teach a language as well as native speakers?
- You currently attend classes four days per week: Tuesday-Friday. In most of the world, most people study or work five days a week. So, should the Intensive English Program (IEP) have classes 5 days per week?
- City University students pay a lot of money for tuition and for the use of the facilities in this building. However, the main elevator is off-limits to students. Should students be allowed to use the elevator?

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### **General education topics**

- Some young adults continue to live with their parents while attending university. Others insist on having their own flat. Which living arrangement do you think is best?
- Some people believe that university students should be required to attend classes. Others believe that going to classes should be optional for students. Which point of view do you agree with?
- Some people think that they can learn better by themselves than with a teacher. Others think that it is always better to have a teacher. Which do you prefer?
- In some countries, teenagers have jobs while they are still students. Do you think this is a good idea?

- Some people believe that a college or university education should be available to all students. Others believe that higher education should be available only to good students. Which view do you agree with?
- Many language teachers assign homework to students every day. Do you think that daily homework is necessary for students learning a foreign language?
- Should there be no tests in school?
- Should university education be free?
- Should all students be required to take a course in computer science some time during their education?
- Should every college student take a course in public speaking?
- Should all college courses be specifically related to your future career?
- Should students have a say in the hiring and firing of teachers?

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**“Should” questions.**

- Should young Slovaks emigrate or stay in Slovakia?
- Should children be disciplined by physical punishment?
- Should you pass Level 5?
- Should a person be given another chance after s/he has been unfaithful, lied, or broken a promise?
- Should teenage children of divorced parents have the right to decide which parent to live with?
- Should using contraceptives be taught in public schools? Why or why not?
- Should National Parks be preserved and protected even though they offer valuable natural resources? Why or why not?
- Should a person tell his or her spouse about past love affairs? Why or why not?
- Should both parents assume equal responsibility in child rearing?
- Should prison inmates be allowed to take college courses?
- Should the law require automobile drivers and passengers to use safety belts?
- Should the advertisement of alcoholic beverages be banned from television?
- Should stricter laws be enacted banning billboards along our major highways?
- Should polygraph (lie detector) tests be used as a condition of employment?
- Should children diagnosed as having AIDS be permitted to attend public schools?
- Should college students be tested for AIDS?
- Should content on the Internet be regulated?
- Should smoking be banned in public places?
- Should the legal driving age be lowered to 16?
- Should animals be used in medical research?
- Should children be educated at home by their parents?
- Should doctors be allowed to provide people with means to commit suicide?
- Should convicted lawbreakers be required to serve their full sentences without parole?
- Should beauty pageants for children be banned?
- Should using a cell phone by driving be banned?
- Should employers have the right to require their employees to take drug tests?
- Should rich countries pay more for environmental damage?
- Should the use of mobile phones in cars be made illegal?
- Should famous people be given more privacy or is the price of their fame an invasion of their private lives?
- If children behave badly, should their parents accept responsibility and be punished?
- Should foreign language instruction begin in kindergarten?
- Should people with an incurable illness spend their last days in a hospital where they can receive the best medical care? Or should they be permitted to die at home?
- Should couples live together before they get married?

- Should a city try to preserve its old, historic buildings or destroy them and replace them with modern buildings?
- Should governments spend more money on improving roads and highways, or should they spend more money on improving public transportation (buses, trains, subways)?

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**Other topics**

- Which do you think has been more influential in your life—good luck (chance) or good decisions?
- What do you think has a greater effect on a person—heredity or environment?
- Name a person, place, or thing that is currently very popular but that, in your opinion, is overrated. Explain why it does not deserve its popularity.
- Do you think that most people would rather conform (be like everyone else in a group) than stand out as individuals?
- Has television brought members of the family together?
- Are robots a blessing or a curse to the labor force?
- Is it harmful for children to be in day-care centers all day?
- Is it better to know a little about many subjects than to know a lot about one subject?
- Is it better to have lived in one place all one's life than to have moved around?
- Optimists are people who always expect the best; pessimists always expect the worst. Which kind of person is it better to be?
- Has the TV remote control device been a blessing or a curse?
- Do celebrities have a responsibility to the public to act as good role models?
- Is it better to enjoy your money when you earn it or is it better to save your money for some time in the future?
- Some people think governments should spend as much money as possible exploring outer space (for example, traveling to the moon and to other planets). Other people disagree and think governments should spend this money for our basic needs on Earth. Which of these two opinions do you agree with?
- Some people spend their entire lives in one place. Others move a number of times throughout their lives, looking for a better job, house, community, or even climate. Which do you prefer: staying in one place or moving in search of another place?
- Some people believe that growing up in a large family, with several sisters and brothers, offers more advantages than disadvantages. Other people think that being an only child is more advantageous. Which position do you support?
- Some people say that computers have made life easier and more convenient. Others say that computers have made life more complex and stressful. What is your opinion?
- Some people enjoy living in foreign countries. Others would never consider living abroad. Take a position and defend it.
- More than ever before, married couples today are choosing not to have children. These couples say that children bring more misery than joy. Do you believe that the advantages of having children outweigh the disadvantages? Or, do you think that married couples have a better life without children? Choose a position and defend it.
- Some people say the Internet provides people with a lot of valuable information. Others think access to so much information creates problems. What do you think?

**Quotes to agree or disagree with.**

- "Parents are the best teachers."
- "Professional athletes are among the highest paid people in the world – and justifiably so."
- "If you want to know what a man's like, take a good look at how he treats his inferiors, not his equals." - Sirius Black, *Harry Potter and the Goblet of Fire*
- "When people succeed, it is because of hard work. Luck has nothing to do with success."

- Whom would you identify as a truly wise person? What makes him or her seem wise to you?
- "Television has destroyed communication among friends and family"
- "The best way to travel is in a group led by a tour guide."
- "Our society allows women to assume masculine roles more readily than it allows men to assume roles traditionally considered to be feminine."
- "Young people today are selfish and only concerned with money and comfort."
- "People should sometimes do things that they do not enjoy doing."
- "One should never judge a person by external appearances."
- "Businesses should do anything they can to make a profit."
- "People behave differently when they wear different clothes. What people wear influences how people act."
- "Human needs for farmland, housing, and industry are more important than saving land for endangered animals."
- George Bernard Shaw wrote, "There is only one religion, though there are a hundred versions of it."
- "Slovakia's recycling program is ineffective and more should be done to protect the environment in this country." Agree or disagree with this statement and argue for your opinion.
- "We would be ashamed of our finest acts if the world were aware of the motives behind them" –Rouchefoucault
- "Historically, most good leaders have not been people of good character."
- "Very few of us really know how to listen."
- "The best things in life are free."
- "College is a good place to find out who you really are."
- "Youth and innovation are sometimes more beneficial in politics than age and experience."
- "Music has the power to entertain, but seldom to educate."
- "Knowing the right people is necessary to succeed in a career in Slovakia."
- "Businesses should hire employees for their entire lives."
- "It is better for children to grow up in the countryside than in a big city."
- "Television, newspapers, magazines, and other media pay too much attention to the personal lives of famous people such as public figures and celebrities."
- "Attending a live performance (for example, a play, concert, or sporting event) is more enjoyable than watching the same event on television."
- "With the help of technology, students nowadays can learn more information and learn it more quickly."
- "Face-to-face communication is better than other types of communication, such as letters, email, or telephone calls."
- "The most important aspect of a job is the money a person earns."
- "A person should never make an important decision alone."
- "Grades (marks) encourage students to learn."
- "Children should begin learning a foreign language as soon as they start school."
- "Damage of the environment is an inevitable consequence of the improvement of the world's standard of living."
- "The benefits of nuclear technology outweigh the disadvantages."
- "Sports help develop good character."
- "Anger is never beneficial."
- "Computers are taking over our lives."
- "Very few of us really know how to listen."
- "People of your generation are selfish and concerned only with money and comfort."
- "Winning is not the most important thing; it's the only thing."
- "Historically, most good leaders have not been people of good character."

## ***Writing Assignments for Level 5***

*Here are some possible topics in addition to the ones already provided on the handouts. You could also look at the Collected Essay Topics or easily make up your own assignments. Sometimes you may want all students to respond to the same question; other times, you could offer them a choice.*

### DESCRIPTION/BEING SPECIFIC

- ◆ What is your favorite amusement park ride? Describe it and how it makes you feel.
- ◆ You are a new candy. Describe yourself.
- ◆ Describe the most expensive item you've ever saved money to buy. Why did you want it so much? Was it worth the money?
- ◆ Give students 2 photographs. Compare/contrast. Which do they prefer and why?
- ◆ Student must sit somewhere for half hour and write down everything he/she sees. Be very observant and descriptive.
- ◆ Describe something that is unpopular right now but that you really like.
- ◆ Describe your worst nightmare.
- ◆ Write a 300-word description of your bedroom.

### ESSAY STRUCTURE

- ◆ Choose a thesis statement out of a hat and write a short essay to support it. Example thesis statements: I am an idiot, Slovakia should return to communism, I should not have to do this homework, I hate writing class, I wish I were a hippopotamus, I want to marry \_\_\_\_\_ (Choose one person in the class), I want to be an English grammar teacher, You should trust me, Cheating in school is wrong, Money is the most important thing in life, Students should smoke in class, Birds are the best pets, People should get married when they're 16...

### PERSUASIVE

- ◆ If you could change one thing about your hometown, what would you change and why? Explain your choice, using specific reasons and details.
- ◆ Your city has decided to build a statue or monument to honor a famous person in your country. Who would you choose? Use reasons and specific examples to support your choice.
- ◆ If you could go back to some time and place in the past, when and where would you go? Why? Use specific reasons and details to support your choice.
- ◆ If you could meet a famous entertainer or athlete, who would that be, and why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.
- ◆ If you have to choose to look good or feel good, which do you choose? Why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.
- ◆ You are able to trade places with someone for a day. Who will it be and why? Use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.

### ARGUMENT

- ◆ Remember an old argument you had with another person. Write about the argument from the point of view of the other person. See the argument from his/her perspective, not your own.
- ◆ Think of something you really believe in. Now write a paragraph arguing against your belief.
- ◆ Argue both sides of an issue.

### SUMMARY/ANALYSIS

- ◆ Summarize a movie you have recently seen or a story you have read. Write for 10 minutes. Then spend 10 minutes explaining how this movie was important to you or to society.
- ◆ Summarize an article from Reading class.

- ◆ Read an article in your own language and summarize it in English.

#### OTHER

- ◆ If you could change yourself in any way what would it be?
- ◆ What is the greatest thing you ever accomplished? Remember the small things as well as the more obvious ones.
- ◆ What thoughts go through your head when you can't sleep?
- ◆ What do you know about your ancestry? Who might you have been in a former life?
- ◆ What are the little things in life that make you happy? How?
- ◆ What little things can ruin your day? How?
- ◆ Imagine a secret life for yourself. Who or what would you be?
- ◆ What are you fascinated by? What kinds of things does your mind dwell on?
- ◆ How do different kinds of music affect you? Are there songs that transport you to a different time or place? What song means the most to you?
- ◆ What was meaningful to you when you were very young?
- ◆ List ways of making the world a less irritating place.
- ◆ What faults do you have? Is it one that others notice? What would life be like if you didn't have that fault?
- ◆ Make up a conversation with anyone, living or dead, that you would like to talk to.
- ◆ Write a letter to someone you haven't seen for a while.
- ◆ Tell all the groups that you are a member of or part of, from your family to a group of friends to a religious or ethnic group. How does being a member of these groups affect you?
- ◆ What changes have occurred in your country during your life? What caused them? What has been the result? Are things better now?
- ◆ What is your special talent? What do you wish your special talent was?

## **Collected Essay Topics**

*Most of these are expository essays, which are covered in Level 4. However, if you have many new Level 5 or 6 students who have never written an essay before, you may want to review essay writing much more. Students could discuss how they would develop these essays, make outlines, create thesis statements, write different parts of an essay, etc.*

*These topics could also be used as Writing Assignment topics.*

### EXAMPLE

- ◆ Since 1989, many things have changed in Slovakia as Slovak society has become more integrated with the rest of the world. However, Slovakia has certain traditions and values that belong only to Slovaks which should not be lost. Write an essay describing the three most important values/traditions of Slovak culture which you do not want Slovakia to lose in its integration to Europe.
- ◆ Name some of your family's traditions and discuss why they are important to you.
- ◆ What things would you look for when buying or renting a place to live?
- ◆ What working conditions do you or would you look for when applying for a job?
- ◆ What factors make a job or career satisfying?
- ◆ What standards should be used to evaluate teachers fairly?
- ◆ What does someone have to do to earn your respect?
- ◆ What three things would you tell a young person just beginning to date?
- ◆ What are strange things people do for good luck?
- ◆ What are your unusual study habits?
- ◆ What do you want to improve about yourself? Write an essay explaining what you want to change about your personality or habits or lifestyle.
- ◆ Students attend school to gain knowledge and skills from teachers. But students are not the only ones who learn in the classroom. Teachers can learn too. What can teachers learn from students? Write an essay explaining what teachers learn from the students in their classrooms.
- ◆ What are the most important skills and/or values that children can learn from parents?
- ◆ What kinds of people do you enjoy most?
- ◆ What are the most important characteristics an elected official should have?
- ◆ What are some important qualities of a good supervisor (boss)? Use specific details and examples to explain why these qualities are important.
- ◆ Many students have to live with roommates while going to school or university. What are some of the important qualities of a good roommate? Use specific reasons and examples to explain why these qualities are important.
- ◆ Neighbors are the people who live near us. In your opinion, what are the qualities of a good neighbor? Use specific details and examples in your answer.
- ◆ What are the qualities of a good friend?
- ◆ What are the essential characteristics of a good parent? Write an essay describing the qualities of a good parent. Remember to use examples.
- ◆ What are some characteristics of people you try to avoid when selecting friends?
- ◆ What do you think are the best methods of disciplining children?
- ◆ How do you cope with stress?
- ◆ When you are unhappy, what do you do that usually makes you feel better?
- ◆ What are the advantages and/or disadvantages of having three generations of a family living together?
- ◆ What are the advantages or disadvantages of marrying someone significantly older or younger than yourself?
- ◆ What are the advantages/disadvantages of having a job while studying?

- ◆ What are the advantages/disadvantages of marriage?
- ◆ What are the advantages of a City University education? Write an essay explaining the benefits of attending CU.
- ◆ What problems do single parents face?

What do you think that the biggest problem(s) at City University are?

- ◆ What is a very important skill a person should learn in order to be successful in the world today? Choose one skill and use specific reasons and examples to support your choice.
- ◆ What do you hope to accomplish within the next ten years?
- ◆ What do the clothes you wear say about yourself?
- ◆ What does the music you listen to say about yourself?
- ◆ Is there a member of your family whom you wish you were not related to?
- ◆ Are there situations in which lying is appropriate?
- ◆ If you had to choose three words to describe yourself, what words would you choose?
- ◆ If you were guaranteed honest responses to any three questions, who would you question, and what would you ask?
- ◆ At what major historical event would you like to have been present?
- ◆ If your doctor told you that you had only a few months to live, how would you change your way of life?
- ◆ If you were an employer, under what circumstances would you fire an employee?
- ◆ If you suddenly found that your home was on fire and you had time to rescue only a few belongings, what would you save?
- ◆ What would be the ideal number of children for you to have in a family?
- ◆ If you could change one thing about your childhood, what would it be?
- ◆ If you could have a conversation with a famous person (living or dead), whom would you choose?
- ◆ If you could ban anything in the world, what would it be and why?
- ◆ What would you place in a time-capsule to be opened in 1000 years?
- ◆ If you were among the first colonizers of a new planet in the twenty-first century, what would you not want your fellow colonists to transport from the planet Earth?

#### DEFINITION

- ◆ What is \_\_\_\_\_ to you?
- ◆ responsibility
- ◆ good parent
- ◆ courage
- ◆ loyalty
- ◆ Who is someone you consider a modern hero or heroine and why?
- ◆ intelligence
- ◆ beauty
- ◆ freedom
- ◆ success
- ◆ A portrait of a gentlemen/lady

#### PROCESS

- ◆ How to find the ideal partner.
- ◆ How to be successful in Level 4.
- ◆ How to cheat on a grammar test.
- ◆ How to make money in Slovakia.
- ◆ How to use a mobile phone.

#### CAUSE

- ◆ What are the reasons for suicide among young people?
  - ◆ Why do you or don't you give money to beggars on the street?
  - ◆ Why did you decide to attend City University?
  - ◆ What causes success in school?
- Think of a bad habit you have. What are its causes?
- ◆ What are the causes of stress?

What are the causes of teen pregnancy?

- ◆ In recent Slovak elections, the number of people who voted was low. Now Slovakia is preparing for another election this year, and there are concerns about whether many people will participate in voting. Do you vote in elections? Why or why not? In an essay, explain the reasons you have for voting or not voting in Slovak elections.
- ◆ Why was the Slovak ice hockey team eliminated from the Olympics? What are the causes of this tragedy?
- ◆ People dress to project an image or to follow trends or to be comfortable. Discuss why you dress the way you do.
- ◆ People attend college or university for many different reasons (for example, new experiences, career preparation, increased knowledge). Why do you think people attend college or university? Use specific reasons and examples to support your answer.
- ◆ People work because they need money to live. What are some other reasons that people work? Discuss one or more of these reasons. Use specific examples and details to support your answer.
- ◆ Each culture has certain values (like a belief in the importance of family, or a respect for education, for instance) that have endured and will endure for centuries. Choose one value from your culture and tell why it has lasted and why it will last.
- ◆ Each year, many teenagers run away from home. What are the main causes?
- ◆ What are some of the reasons people have pets?
- ◆ Why are television serials ("soap operas") so popular?
- ◆ Why do some couples choose to live together without getting married?
- ◆ Beauty contests, despite some criticism, are still very popular. What are the main reasons for their popularity?
- ◆ What are the main causes of shoplifting?
- ◆ Why do people still go to movie theaters?
- ◆ Why do so many people check their horoscopes daily?
- ◆ Why do so many people like to have collections of something (antiques, coins, stamps, dolls)?
- ◆ Explain what motivates students to strive for good grades in college.
- ◆ Pick one type of music that is currently very popular and explain why it is popular.

#### EFFECT

- ◆ How has your birth order affected your personality development?
- ◆ What is the best advice you ever got? Explain its effect on you.
- ◆ Think about your time spent living or traveling in a foreign country (if you have). What did this experience teach you? (What did you gain from this experience?)
- ◆ What are the effects of stress?
- ◆ Describe the effects of a family member's problem on your family.
- ◆ What are the effects of Meciar's time in power?
- ◆ What are the effects of your parents' values on you?
- ◆ Think of an important invention and how it has changed people's lives. What have been the effects of this invention on people's lives since its creation?
- ◆ Think of a major event which happened in your life and made you change your lifestyle and/or your personality. Describe the effects of this event on your life.
- ◆ On September 11, 2001, terrorists hijacked four planes and killed thousands of workers in the World Trade Center. Has this event changed the way we live or see life? What have been the effects of this event on the lives of ordinary people?
- ◆ The end of communism in Slovakia was over 10 years ago, but its effects have not disappeared. What effects of 40 years of communist rule still exist today in your life? Describe the effects and how they influence your life.

- ◆ More and more young people spend their free time using the Internet. What are the effects of teenagers and young adults "surfing the net?" In an essay, discuss the effects of this interest.
- ◆ Have computers made our lives easier or more complicated? Explain the effects.
- ◆ How do movies or television influence people's behavior? Use reasons and specific examples to support your answer.
- ◆ Nowadays, food has become easier to prepare. Has this change improved the way people live?
- ◆ How do you expect your college education to change the rest of your life?

◆

#### CLASSIFICATION

intelligence	diseases	lies people tell
teachers you have had	magazines	books you read
smokers	diets	excuses students make up
dreams you have at night	car drivers	for missing class
movies	neighbors	
friends you have	students in your class	

#### COMPARE/CONTRAST

- ◆ Compare/contrast your life now and your life 5 years ago.
- ◆ What are the differences in men and women's communication styles?
- ◆ Have you ever visited a place you had left a long time ago and found it had changed a lot? Compare and/or contrast the "way it was" with the "way it is now."
- ◆ Compare/contrast your values with your parents' values. What is important to you in life and how is it the same as or different from what is important to them?
- ◆ When I stand in front of the classroom, you see a smiling and confident "teacher me." However, there is a serious and scared "real me" inside my head who is quite different from what you see. What about you? How does your public image differ from your private self? In an essay, contrast the way people see you and the way you see yourself.
- ◆ Have you observed any significant differences between high school teachers and CU teachers?
- ◆ Besides age, what are some major differences between an adolescent and an adult?
- ◆ How has your attitude toward your home (either town or family) changed between the time you entered college and now?
- ◆ How have your eating habits changed since you've been in college?
- ◆ What is the difference between "good" and "bad" stress?
- ◆ How are you different from your parents?
- ◆ What is the difference between courage and recklessness?
- ◆ What is the difference between love and infatuation?
- ◆ How are you different from your best friend?

#### SOLUTION

- ◆ How can Trencin be made attractive for tourists?
- ◆ Ground Zero where the Twin Towers once stood in New York is all cleaned up. Some people believe that the towers should be rebuilt. Others think that it should be made into a memorial, especially since so many bodies were never recovered. Still others believe that something completely new should fill the space. What do you think should be done with Ground Zero? Explain.
- ◆ City University has received a grant of money. Choose one way that you think that this money should be spent to improve the university. Use specific reasons and details to support your point.
- ◆ How does a person make a good first impression in an interview?
- ◆ What are the best ways to meet new friends?

- ◆ What could be done to make students more interested in learning about science?
- ◆ What tips can you give to students with poor study habits?
- ◆ What can be done to help prevent a marriage from ending in divorce?
- ◆ What can be done to make the public more aware of the dangers of drinking and driving?
- ◆ What can parents do to prepare their kids for school?

Ideas for some of these topics came from the following source: Board of Regents of the University System of Georgia. (2004, May 3). *Approved Regents' Test essay topics*. Retrieved July 12, 2004, from the Georgia State University Web site: <http://www.gsu.edu/~wwwrtp/topics.htm>

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