

## ACT Sample Writing Test

Demand for more credits, community service, and better grades runs many high schoolers ragged. For many anything but the best is simply unexceptable. In a society that constantly tells it's youth they must have the highest pay check and newest car to be happy, why wouldn't this be the case? A fifth year of high school would give students more oppurtunity to take classes they would enjoy, take stress off of teenagers, and give the youth of our nation a chance to develop good priorities.

Schools are always adding new and interesting courses, but for many, like the college bound student, there just isn't the time. Though an arts and crafts class might sound like fun, something like AP Music Theory would probably look better on a transcript. Since there is no time to take both the student will probably take the harder class even if it is just to keep up appearances. Fifteen years old seems to early to start making "career" choices over things that wold be fun. But it happens and it causes stress.

Teenagers in the country have an ever growing load of stress being placed upon them. Starting before high school teens are faced with the questions: Where are you going to college? How are you going to get there? What are you going to be? All these questions are extremely daunting and often stress students out. Also, with the price of college so high many students take on a job during high school which only adds to the stress. With an extra year of high school not only would students have time to think through big decisions, but they would also be better able to balance work with school.

Time is so fleeting in this day and age. There is never enough time. No time for family, no time for relaxing, no time for sleep. Even if some time is stolen to recooperate, aren't the youth told that if they rest at home or sleep too much they are lazy and worthless? While too much "vegging" could be a problem, teens need to know what is important and necessary for their mental and physical health. At the pace of many highs schoolers lives, this generation is sure to be one full of workaholics. Is that really what are society needs? When the lesson students learn in school is one that exhausts them and sets them up for an unhealthy lifestyle in their future, it is time for a change.

With such a high demands placed on the youth of our nation, it seems only fair that they are given more time. They are only young once. Teens should not be forced to grow up at such a fast pace. An extra year of high school will allow students to enjoy their education by giving them the gift of time, time to relax, time to take classes at their own pace and maintain a healthy lifestyle, time to discover the fun and interest in school. More time in high school will benefit students now and in the future.

## Explanation About Scoring on this Writing Prompt

This essay takes a position in favor of extending high school and offers a broad context for discussion by situating high school effort within a larger society that values excellence and high achievement (In a society that constantly tells it's youth they must have the highest pay check and newest car to be happy, why wouldn't this be the case?).

The essay demonstrates recognition of complexity with discussion of the complications of the issue in the fourth paragraph. First, the writer establishes that students never have enough time, then anticipates the stereotype of the lazy teenager who “sleeps too much,” then attempts to solve the acknowledged complication that “too much ‘vegging’ could be a problem.” The essay thus demonstrates an ability to treat the complexity of the issue without undermining the essay's position or logic.

Development of ideas is specific and logical. The essay moves between general ideas (Schools are always adding new and interesting courses, but for many, like the college bound student, there just isn't the time) and specific examples (Though an arts and crafts class might sound like fun, something like AP Music Theory would probably look better on a transcript). Moreover, some ideas are developed fully as the writer draws critical conclusions from the discussion (Fifteen years old seems to early to start making “career” choices over things that wold be fun).

The essay has a simple structural organization, but generally demonstrates logical progression of ideas, especially through the second and fourth paragraphs. Transitions between ideas are well crafted both between paragraphs (But it happens and it causes stress... Teenagers in the country have an ever growing load of stress being placed upon them) and within paragraphs to make logical connections between ideas.

Language use in the essay is generally clear, although misspellings of homophones (its/it's, our/are) are distracting. Some incorrect punctuation is also distracting, but the mistakes do not impede understanding. Some precise vocabulary (daunting, fleeting, generation) and a variety of sentence constructions are used effectively throughout the essay.