*Buckeye Community Hope Foundation*

**10th Annual Student Writing Challenge**

**6th-8th Grades. 2024-2025**

**TECHNOLOGY AND YOU**

**Guidelines Packet**

**STUDENT AUTHORS ARE NEEDED TO PARTICIPATE!**

To encourage preparation for assessments and mastery of common core state standards in English Language Arts, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation is sponsoring its seventh annual student writing challenge. Challenges are offered for grades at the following levels: Grades 3, 4, 5, 6, 7, 8, 9, 10, 11, 12.

Schools may each submit **one essay per grade** to the Buckeye Hope Writing Challenge. School-level contests to determine each grade’s submission(s) are encouraged.

BCHF will recognize individuals who demonstrate high achievement on this project by cash awards to the school, student trophies, and student participation ribbons.

This packet will explain the guidelines for each level of the challenge. Additional questions may be sent to:

Ms. Mindy Farry, BCHF Writing Challenge Coordinator, [mfarry@buckeyehope.org](mailto:mfarry@buckeyehope.org).

**Please note that some procedures have changed, and that the due date for entries (to be submitted electronically) is March 15, 2025. No extensions for snow days, delays, spring break etc.!**

**Entries must be sent electronically on the Google form at this link:**

[**https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8**](https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8)

**Writing Challenge Submission for GRADE: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Cover Sheet**

**From:**

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| **Author Name**  ***Type or print legibly.*** | **Author**  **Grade Level** | **Author**  **Teacher Name** | **Author**  **School Name** |
|  |  |  |  |

**Author Signature:**

***I/we are stating that this is an original piece of writing:***

**Parent Signature:**

**Parent or guardian authorizes by signature that if selected, the child’s picture and name may be used in Buckeye Community Hope publications.**

Participants and their parent/guardian agree to:

* Public announcement of recognized authors and their schools by Buckeye Community Hope Foundation (“the Sponsor”)
* Publication of essays submitted in newsletters, anthologies, press releases, posters, or web pages of the Sponsor

**PARENT SIGNATURE:**

**Title of Entry: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Word count: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_ Date of submission: \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_**

**Attach to this page: Essay; Draft versions and edits; Prewriting**

**Must be sent electronically by March 15, 2025, to:**

https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8

**2024-25**

**10th Annual Writing Challenge**

**Grades 6-8**

GRADE LEVEL/ELIGIBLE STUDENTS: One submission per school per grade will be accepted from an individual student enrolled in grades 6-8 in an Ohio community school sponsored by Buckeye Community Hope Foundation at the time of submission. Many schools run school-wide contests and send in their best writing for each grade.

PURPOSE: To encourage preparation for new Ohio assessments and mastery of the Ohio learning standards in English Language Arts, Buckeye Community Hope Foundation is sponsoring its seventh annual writing challenge for grades 6-8. We will recognize individual students who demonstrate high achievement on this challenge.

GENRE/PRODUCT: ARGUMENTATIVE ESSAY

Choose 3 of these short readings all showing the effects of technology on our relationships and our lives.

**"How Has Technology Changed the Way We Connect with Each Other?"**

**Explanation:**

In this essay, students can explore how the use of technology, like texting, social media, and video calls, has impacted their relationships with family, friends, and peers. They can reflect on:

* How easy it is to stay in touch with people using technology
* Whether digital communication has helped them build stronger friendships or created challenges in connecting with others
* The differences between talking to someone face-to-face versus texting or messaging them
* Positive and negative effects of using technology to communicate

This prompt allows students to think about their own experiences and observations while connecting to a broader topic about how technology affects human relationships. It encourages both personal reflection and an understanding of the social changes happening around them.

There are several middle school-appropriate articles that explore how technology affects human connection, communication, and relationships. These readings can help students understand the broader implications of technology and digital communication on our social lives.

1. **"How the Internet is Changing the Way We Communicate"** <https://owlcation.com/social-sciences/How-the-Internet-is-Changing-the-Way-Humans-Communicate-in-the-21st-Century>
2. **"Social Media and Communication"**
   * <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=najiOPaR37I>
3. **" Social Media’s Effect on the Teen Brain”** [**https://mcpress.mayoclinic.org/parenting/social-media-affects-teens-brains/**](1.%09https:/mcpress.mayoclinic.org/parenting/social-media-affects-teens-brains)
4. **“Do Social Media and Smartphones Make Your Friendships Stronger?**

<https://www.nytimes.com/2023/02/13/learning/do-social-media-and-smartphones-make-your-friendships-stronger.html>

1. **“Is Technology Helping or Hurting Your Friendships?”**

<https://www.canadianliving.com/life-and-relationships/relationships/article/is-technology-helping-or-hurting-your-friendships>

1. **“Kids and Screen Time” (video)**

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=najiOPaR37I>

**Short Stories:**

1. **"The Veldt" by Ray Bradbury (from *The Illustrated Man*)**
   * While this short story is set in a futuristic world, it offers a cautionary tale about the effects of technology on family relationships. The children in the story use a high-tech nursery that becomes a surrogate for real human interaction, leading to tragic results. It’s an excellent text to discuss how over-reliance on technology can affect our emotional connections.
   * Read aloud: <https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=JKuCli-ozUE>

Your final copy should be proofed for grammar, mechanics, and structure.

Your paper should have the following structure:

1. **INTRODUCTION** TO THE THREE READINGS/VIDEOS YOU’VE CHOSEN, THE AUTHORS, AND A BRIEF SUMMARY OF EACH.
2. **YOUR ARGUMENTATIVE STAND ON** TECHNOLOGY’S EFFECT ON FRIENDSHIPS…A THESIS STATEMENT WHICH ARGUES WHETHER YOU THINK TECHNOLOGY IS BENEFICIAL OR DETRIMENTAL TO RELATIONSHIPS.
3. HOW WILL YOU SUPPORT YOUR POINT OF VIEW ABOUT TECHNOLOGY AND RELATIONSHIPS? ---THIS SECTION COULD BE 3-5 PARAGRAPHS

1. **A CONCLUSION** WHICH REPEATS YOUR STAND AND SUMMARIZES YOUR FINDINGS

BIG HUGE HINT! Make sure your paragraphs 3, 4, and 5 are not merely plot summaries, but rather USE the text to prove your point about technology.

Be sure to use the writing process of DRAFTING (multiple drafts), REVISING, EDITING, FINAL COPY…. Those steps will be included in your submission.

GUIDELINES:

1. The prompt may be read aloud and explained to students by teachers or others. Students however must originate all the written work individually.

Entries must be sent electronically as **ONE** PDF document to [**https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8**](https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8)

and must include the finished piece of writing and all prior drafts, and prewriting (

brainstorms, webs, outlines, etc.)

1. Students are required to support their opinions with three or more outside readings, videos, or by independent research.
2. Essays should be between 500 and 1000 words.
3. Students are encouraged to use peer review processes to refine their piece of writing. Teachers may proof or provide guidance in final editing of spelling, grammar, etc. but teachers *may not* write any portion of the work, nor may they contribute content.
4. Entries must not have been published previously and must follow guidelines for academic honesty by including only original student writing. Facts or supporting information should not be copied from informational sources unless appropriate attribution is given (i.e., quotations marks and acknowledging the source of the information). Entries that do not follow standards of academic honesty will be disqualified. Teachers should be mindful of instructing students as to the appropriate selection and use of credible sources from electronic media.
5. The author’s name, school and grade, and the entry’s word count, must be written ***legibly*** on the cover sheet template (see attached). We encourage teachers and school administrators to review the cover sheet carefully, or to type in names in advance before the students sign, so that the names can be easily read. The authors’ names should not appear on the other pages of the entry.
6. The contest is open to all students in grades 6-8 enrolled at the time of submission in an Ohio community school operated by the Buckeye Community Hope Foundation.
7. Entries will not be returned.

JUDGING AND RECOGNITION:

One entry in each grade will be selected for recognition by a team of independent judges using Ohio’s English Language Arts Writing Rubrics available at:

<https://education.ohio.gov/getattachment/Topics/Learning-in-Ohio/English-Language-Art/Resources-for-English-Language-Arts/Holistic-Argumentative-Writing-Rubric-Grades-6-HS.pdf.aspx?lang=en-US>

The recognized author of the grade band (6-8) will be announced by May 1, 2025. The recognized authors’ school will receive a $200 prize in cash and a trophy from Buckeye Community Hope Foundation. Based on response, additional recognition awards may be given by the Sponsor for honorable mention.

RIGHT TO RELEASE:

Participants and their parent/guardian agree to:

* Public announcement of recognized authors and their schools by Buckeye Community Hope Foundation (“the Sponsor”)
* Publication of essays submitted in newsletters, anthologies, press releases, posters, or web pages of the Sponsor.
* The entry form also serves as a written release for publication of the work and author names, grades, and schools.

Essays must be sent electronically by midnight March 15, 2025, to:

[**https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8**](https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8)

**TEACHERS, THIS IS A GUIDELINE AS TO HOW YOU COULD APPROACH INFUSING THIS CHALLENGE INTO YOUR CURRICULUM. YOU CAN MAP OUT A PLAN OF IMPLEMENTATION USING YOUR OWN DATES. USE WHATEVER WORKS FOR YOU!**

|  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- |
| DATE | ACTIVITY | PRODUCT |
| 1-10-25 | Introduce the Writing Challenge to students.  Introduce the Rubric used to grade  Have students brainstorm in groups, advantages and disadvantages of TECHNOLOGY*.* Each idea goes on a separate sticky note or index card  Ask each table to organize their ideas into an affinity diagram and to label their categories.  Have each group place their affinity charts on the wall. Students then visit their classmates’ charts in a gallery walk—placing sticky note comments on each chart | Group brainstorm list  Affinity diagram chart  Feedback remarks from gallery walk |
|  | Class is given time to read all readings and make decisions about which 3 they will use in their paper. Write a blurb for each reading and have students choose 3 from the ideas.  Have students create their own questions (3 comprehension; 3 analyze; c-c; c-e; predict)  Socratic Seminar or Fishbowl with guided questions about technology? | Graphic organizer on all readings  Socratic seminar notes; pre-planned questions  Exit tickets from students |
|  | Preliminary Draft:  Mini lesson on introductory paragraph:  Reader Hook | Draft of introductory paragraph |
|  | Group students into “speed groups”—students who’ve chosen the same Reading. Give time to discuss and gather ideas about the facts from the reading. Then, like “speed dating,” students switch to a group with Reading #2, etc.  Narrow the list down and have students choose which ones they will write about. | Project Lists  Individual Selections and contract |
|  | Mini lessons on:  Drafting a plan  Citing textual evidence | Draft of Sections III, IV, and V of the Writing Challenge |
|  | Review of peer review process and expectations  (If this has not been taught before, it is essential that time is spent on how peer review works—considering giving students a list of “look fors”; ask students to list 3 parts they really liked and 2 suggestions for improvement; use the video “Austin’s Butterfly” to show student that even very young students can effectively give specific, kind feedback. | Peer Review Notes and Feedback. |
|  | Personal conferences with students using the rubric and including the peer review feedback  Class works on a draft putting all parts except the conclusion together | Teacher comments  Draft #2 |
|  | Mini lesson on writing a persuasive conclusion  Students drafting the final essay |  |
|  |  |  |
|  | Peer Review; Teacher Personal Conferences for entire draft | Peer Review sheets  Teacher notes |
|  |  |  |
|  | FINAL COPY DRAFTING | Final Copy |
|  |  |  |
| March 10 | SCHOOL STAFF DESIGNEES READ ENTRIES AND DETERMINE A WINNER PER GRADE LEVEL (6, 7, 8) |  |
| March 14 | Winning submissions submitted to BCHF  [**https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8**](https://forms.gle/k5XfmWrJDHLAFJyD8) | ONE PDF including these items in this order:  \*Cover sheet with all signatures  \*Final Draft  \*All preparatory work (brainstorms, story board, peer critique comments, feedback sheets). |