



Proficient | Exemplar Essay

Is It Art?

Vandalism vs. Art



Claim and Focus

This essay states a claim (“Graffiti should be considered vandalism because it is illegal and costly to remove”) and maintains focus developing that claim throughout the entire essay (“A main point in graffiti is the fact that it is illegal to go on someone else’s property”).



Support and Evidence

Appropriate evidence is cited and provided to support some of the points of the claim. Multiple sources are referenced throughout the essay; however, more detailed explanations could have been used to strengthen the argument (“This quote explains that it can cost millions of dollars just to cover something that most people don’t want”).



Organization

The writer organizes a steady argument throughout the essay. An introduction, body, and conclusion are present. Clear transitions exist throughout (“Additionally,” “On the other hand,” and “In sum”), which connect ideas and smoothly move the essay from beginning to end.



Language and Style

In this essay, sentence structure begins to vary to enhance meaning. The essay incorporates language that shows an awareness of the reader’s interests (“If graffiti artists were to put themselves in other’s shoes, I am sure they would not like strangers to come on their property and draw”) but could be more refined to add to the style.



Using Exemplars in Your Lessons

Exemplar essays are tools to take abstract descriptions and make them more concrete for students. One way to use them is to print the clean copies of the essays and allow students to use the rubric to make notes or even find examples of important elements of an essay - thesis statements, introductions, evidence, conclusions, transitions, etc. Teachers can also use exemplars to illustrate what each score point within a trait ‘looks like’ in an authentic student essay. For additional ideas, please see “25 Ways to Use Exemplar Essays” by visiting the Curriculum Resources page in Help.

Is It Art?



Vandalism vs. Art

Have you ever driven through a large city or community and seen large colorful tags everywhere? That is called graffiti, and it can be seen all over the world. While many consider graffiti to be colorful art, it is actually a form of vandalism that is taking over. Graffiti should be considered vandalism because it is illegal and costly to remove.

A main point in graffiti is the fact that it is illegal to go on someone else's property. Graffiti artists do this frequently. In the CBS video, Gary Culoti says that graffiti affects his business. Many people draw on his building, and that is illegal. Culoti pays for his business, and it is unfortunate that other people use it as a canvas for their tags. Additionally, this happens to many others. In "Is Graffiti Art?" it states, "most graffiti is placed on private property without the owner's permission." If graffiti artists were to put themselves in other's shoes, I am sure they would not like strangers to come on their property and draw. Graffiti is just an annoyance to property owners.

Next, in the article "Graffiti as Vandalism" it states in the first paragraph, "The cost for cleanup in the U.S. has not been documented definitively, but it is safe to assume that it is in the billions of dollars." This quote explains that it can cost millions of dollars just to cover something that most people don't want. In addition, if it were real art, then why would we pay that much money just to remove it? The money spent on graffiti cleanup could be used for something more productive. If graffiti were truly art, it would have more merit in museums than on the sides of buildings.

In sum, the reasons why graffiti is more vandalism than art are because it is expensive to cover, and wrong to go on other's properties. So the next time you feel like you want to express yourself through art grab a piece of paper instead.