Graphic Organizers for Statewide Assessments

When it comes to graphic organizers for essays on statewide assessments, the California Department of Education (CDE) issued guidelines last year as to what is considered to be graphic organizers that are accommodations and those that are modifications. We shared the guidelines in the form of an e-mail to all special education staff on 4/19/10. This is a reminder of those guidelines.

When a graphic organizer provides the basic components or structure of an essay (e.g., title, introduction (1 paragraph), body (2 to 3 paragraphs), and closing), it is considered to be an accommodation (see Example 1 on page 2). When a graphic organizer includes content prompts within the basic structure (see Examples 2 and 3 on pages 3 and 4) or provides more than a simple outline (see Example 4 on page 5), it is considered to be a modification.

Given these guidelines, a student's IEP may need to be amended to accurately reflect the type of graphic organizer being provided to the student on the CAHSEE, which is currently the only statewide assessment at the high school level that includes an essay. To specify an accommodation level graphic organizer on the IEP in WISER for the CAHSEE, go to Form 3C and under CAHSEE participation, use the ELA Accommodation Lookup statement of "Graphic organizers for essay that provide basic structure only." When a modification level graphic organizer is needed, use the ELA Modification Lookup statement of "Graphic organizers for essay that include content prompts."

On the actual CAHSEE test booklet, bubble in "F" to specify an accommodation level graphic organizer or bubble in "V" to indicate a modification level graphic organizer.

Example 1: Accommodation

Graphic Organizer

Title

Introduction (1 paragraph)

Body Paragraphs (2-3)

Conclusion

Example 2: Modification

Graphic Organizer

Introduction

1. Attention Grabber
   (Ask the reader a question)
2. Introduce Topic
   (Introduce title and author)
3. Introduce Opinion/Reason for Writing
   (Why you are writing. Agree or disagree with the author)
4. Thesis
   (Opinion + because + three reasons)

Body Paragraphs (2-3)

1. Main Topic
   (Opinion + One reason from thesis)
2. Concrete Detail or Fact
   (Quote in MLA format –> "blah blah" (100). <-)
3. Commentary #1
   ("This is important because…")
4. Commentary #2
   ("Also…")
5. Conclusion
   ("So…")

Conclusion

1. Restate Your Thesis
   ("In conclusion…")
2. Restate Your Opinion
3. Wrap It Up.
   (Tell why the literature makes a difference or makes a statement)

Example 3: Modification

Graphic Organizer

Introduction

1. Attention Grabber
2. Introduce Topic
3. Introduce Opinion/Reason for Writing
4. Thesis

Body Paragraphs (2-3)

1. Main Topic
2. Concrete Detail or Fact
3. Commentary #1 (Explain concrete detail or fact)
4. Commentary #2 (Explain concrete detail or fact)
5. Conclusion

Conclusion

1. Restate Your Thesis
2. Restate Your Opinion
3. Wrap It Up

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Example 4: Modification Graphic Organizer

Introduction/Main Idea A new Principal wants some ideals to change the school to make it better. The Principal wants to talk to all students.

- Detail - Principal wants to help the kids do good in school.
- Detail - the principal goes around trying to see what he can do to make the school good.
- Detail - he could make class for the kids who need the help.

Topic - Another school building

- Detail - some students that need help can go to another building to get the help
- Detail - The students that dont need the help can stay in the one building
- Detail - class can be smaller.

Topic Activities

- Detail - Some activities they could do in have a club for sports.
- Detail - have a poem class.
- Detail - they can have a swimming team

Topic improve academic classes.

- Detail - They can make the classes smaller.
- Detail - have the teachers help the students.
- Detail - give them as much time as they need to finish there work.

Conclusion - A new principal and new school for me.

- Detail - Principal needs ideals for improving academic classes.
- Detail - principal wants to have more activities.
- Detail - principal wants to have another school building