**Subject area/course**: English/Language Arts

**Grade level/band**: 11

**Task source**: Inquiry by Design in collaboration with Stanford Center for Assessment, Learning, and Equity (SCALE); Authors: Dennie Palmer Wolf and John McMillan

**Employing the Personal**

**TEACHER'S GUIDE**

1. **Task overview**:

In this task students read and discuss core texts about personal values from literature, examine how this tradition continues in contemporary essays and in radio broadcasts and filmed interviews, and analyze the techniques an author or speaker uses to develop and support his or her personal values throughout the essay, speech, or interview. Students will then write a critical response to one of the model texts and write, record, or film a compelling personal statement like one of the core texts about a value they hold strongly, using some of the strategies from the model essays.

1. **Aligned standards:**
2. **Common Core State Standards**

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.3](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RI/11-12/3/) Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.RI.11-12.7](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/RI/11-12/7/) Integrate and evaluate multiple sources of information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words in order to address a question or solve a problem.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.2](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/2/) Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.W.11-12.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/W/11-12/4/) Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.1](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/11-12/1/) Initiate and participate effectively in a range of collaborative discussions (one-on-one, in groups, and teacher-led) with diverse partners on grades 11-12 topics, texts, and issues, building on others' ideas and expressing their own clearly and persuasively.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.4](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/11-12/4/) Present information, findings, and supporting evidence, conveying a clear and distinct perspective, such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning, alternative or opposing perspectives are addressed, and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose, audience, and a range of formal and informal tasks.

[CCSS.ELA-LITERACY.SL.11-12.5](http://www.corestandards.org/ELA-Literacy/SL/11-12/5/) Make strategic use of digital media (e.g., textual, graphical, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest.

1. **Critical abilities:**

Analysis of Information:Integrate and synthesize multiple sources of information (e.g., texts, experiments, simulations) presented in diverse formats and media (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) in order to address a question, make informed decisions, understand a process, phenomenon, or concept, and solve problems while evaluating the credibility and accuracy of each source and noting any discrepancies among the data.

Communication in Many Forms:Use oral and written communication skills to learn, evaluate, and express ideas for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences. Develop and strengthen writing as needed by planning, revising, editing, and rewriting while considering the audience.

Interpersonal Interaction and Collaboration:Develop a range of interpersonal skills, including the ability to work with others, to participate effectively in a range of conversations and collaborations.

1. **Time/schedule requirements:**

Depending on the amount of scaffolding required for a given class, this task should require between 2.5 and 3.5 weeks.

1. **Materials/resources:**

Core Text Options(Teachers select “Model Texts”; Students select individual text for analysis):

*Essays, Letters, and Recorded Essays*

* Written model texts:
  + Sojourner Truth: “Ain’t I a Woman?”
  + Chief Seattle’s “Letter to All”
  + Excerpt from Martin Luther King’s Stride Towards Freedom
* Selections from National Public Radio’s series “This I Believe”
* Current examples from local, national, or global media

*Speeches and Interviews*

* Angel Gil-Ordonez ‘s (and other) filmed interview about music, in the “On Being” series: <http://specials.washingtonpost.com/mv/onbeing/47/>
* Current examples from local, national, or global media

1. **Prior knowledge:**

None listed.

1. **Connection to curriculum:**

None listed.

1. **Teacher instructions:**

The required tasks are numbered below. Instructional supports for student performance appear in shaded boxes. The suggested instructional steps in shaded boxes are **optional for the teacher, and may be adapted for the particular needs of a class**. While they increase the overall length of the task, they can help a wider range of students to demonstrate their mastery of the literacy skills involved.

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| *Draw on previous readings to create background knowledge for the tasks* | *In a whole class discussion, ask students to recall texts that they have read earlier in the year (or in past years) where the writer or speaker has made a powerful statement of their values (e.g., Huck Finn’s internal monologue about going to hell). Encourage them to think across subjects and times (e.g., Lincoln’s Gettysburg Address, Martin Luther King’s “I Have a Dream” speech, or a recent speech or editorial they have heard or read in local or national media). Ask students to do a quick write about why that speech or essay “sticks” in their minds. Record their ideas on wall charts for later use.* |
| **1. Listen/read critically**  Study and analyze the model texts  *NOTE: You may want to require students to take notes on the first two model texts.* | MODEL TEXT 1: As a whole class, listen to or read one of the written model texts. As they read students mark their copies of the text to highlight the techniques the author uses to explain why the value they are discussing matters. *As a class* discuss:   * Who is the author of this text? * What is the core idea, issue, or value that this writer is discussing? * How is the writer’s perspective shaped by personal experience? * In what specific ways does the writer use language to convince an audience of his or her perspective?   MODEL TEXT 2: Repeat this same process for a non-print text (audio or video). This time ask how the speaker uses the properties of spoken language (e.g. volume, expression, gestures, etc.) to convince an audience of the importance of this value.  Finally, discuss the techniques that work well in written and spoken texts.  Record the strategies for written and oral texts on a wall chart for later use. |

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| Use graphic organizers  Introduce rhetorical devices or other format-specific strategies | Students use a graphic organizer to diagram how an author or speaker identifies and develops the importance of a particular personal value. Students keep these diagrams to guide their later work.  As students work as a class to identify specific language (e.g., rhetorical devices) or strategies used in the model essays and speeches, introduce the formal terms used to describe these devices and strategies. Model ways of describing how those devices and strategies serve to enhance the message or intent of the author/speaker. Create a “word wall” with examples of these devices to remind students of these devices and strategies. |
| **2. Write a Short Critical Analysis of a Model Text** | Students write a short (250–400 word) critical response to an additional model text of their choosing. Students select their own texts with teacher support and approval. *They should NOT select a model text discussed previously in class.* For their analysis of this text, they should answer the following questions:   * Who is the author/speaker of this text? * What is the core idea, issue, or value that this author/speaker is discussing? * How is the author/speaker’s perspective shaped by personal experience? * In what specific ways does the author/speaker use language to convince an audience of his or her perspective? * Do you find the author/speaker convincing? Why or why not? |
| Formulate a topic | Ask students to compose a short journal entry/quick write about a personal value that matters to them. Remind students that their personal values/experiences do not have to be monumental or newsworthy to be considered significant. |
| **3. Write an Essay Employing the Personal** | Students draft a 400–500 word essay on a personal value that matters to them.  In this essay they:   * Identify an idea, issue, or value that is important to them * Draw on their personal experiences in communicating a perspective * Make a compelling case for their personal perspective using some of the strategies authors and speakers used in the model texts that students examined. |
| Review model texts and notes  Work with peer editors | Based on their work with model texts and the notes that they have taken on authors’ and speakers’ strategies, students select the format they want to use to present their personal statements. Additional teacher-directed study of these models with a focus on techniques and strategies that support effective use may be required.  Students work with peers to revise their essays with these techniques in mind. |
| **4. Present the Essay** | Students create presentations of their essays using a specific medium to highlight their message. They may select ONE of three choices:  **CHOICE A:** A written essay, carefully edited and formatted so that the layout (e.g., font, layout, colors, etc.) supports the message you want to convey to your audience.  **CHOICE B:** A recorded audio monologue similar in form, structure, and length to the audio model you studied in Part One.  **CHOICE C:** A filmed interview similar in form, structure, and length to the video you studied in Part One.  Whether students select Choice A, B, or C they should also include:   * **A written reflective commentary** that describes the challenges and successes students experienced in completing the assignment, comments on their experience working with the essay, audio, or video format for presenting their essay, and any lessons they learned for future assignments. If students selected Choice B or C, they may choose instead to include an audio recording of their reflective commentary on the submitted CD or DVD. |
| Exhibit the work | Students create a display of the resulting work in a public space at the school (e.g., an entry way) or on the school website. The work can be displayed all at once as a class project, in thematic groups, or individually as a weekly or monthly feature. |

1. **Student support:**

* In a class discussion, ask students to recall texts that they have read earlier in the year (or in past years) where the writer or speaker has made a powerful statement of their values.
* Periodically ask students do quick writes or journaling throughout the task.
* Have students use a graphic organizer to diagram how an author or speaker identifies and develops the importance of a particular personal value.
* Create a “word wall” with examples of rhetorical devices to remind students of these devices and strategies.

1. **Extensions or variations:**

None listed.

1. **Scoring:**

Student work can be scored using the Ohio Performance Assessment Project English Language Arts Inquiry and Communication Rubric.