

# Opinion Writing Passages

Level: M  
Opinion Writing  
Name: Julie Bachese  
Date: 9/14  
Source 2: Connection at Your Fingertips

Level: 8  
Opinion Writing  
Name: Julie Bachese  
Date: 9/14  
Source 3: Convenience

Level: M  
Opinion Writing  
Name: Julie Bachese  
Date: 9/14  
Source 1: The Dangers of Technoference

Technology is a part of our everyday lives. Many people are attached to their cell phones. They spend every few minutes checking their phones. Did you know that constant cell phone use is damaging our relationships?

Technoference is when technology interferes with a person's relationships. In a survey of fifty percent of families reported that technoference occurred at least three times a day. Twenty-four percent said that it occurred twice a day. Seventeen percent reported technoference at least once. Only eleven percent reported no interruptions due to technology.

When a person uses his or her cell phone in the company of family, friends, or children, the other person feels rejected. The person feels as though he or she is less important than the cell phone.



Brigham Young University conducted a study with 143 couples. The majority of them reported that technology was significantly disruptive in their relationships.

Another study of 200 families found that parents who were on their phones were much more likely to have children with behavioral problems. Thirty-two percent of the fathers admitted being distracted by their cell phones, always thinking about incoming calls or texts, or using their phones during family time.

How do you feel if you are conversing with a person and they are constantly checking their phone? You likely feel as though you are not important to the conversation. Work on conversing and communicating with those you care about without distractions.

**W.4.1 & W.5.1**

Opinion Writing		Evidence & Elaboration	
Score	Purpose, Focus, & Organization (4 points)	Evidence & Elaboration (4 points)	
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The essay is consistently focused on its purpose, audience, and task.</li> <li>The author's opinion is clearly stated.</li> <li>The essay has an effective organizational structure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The essay has thorough and complete support and evidence that support the author's opinion.</li> <li>The author uses sources, facts, and relevant evidence integrated into the text.</li> <li>References to sources are used to demonstrate a clear understanding of the topic.</li> </ul>	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The essay is mostly focused on its purpose, audience, and task.</li> <li>The author's opinion is stated.</li> <li>The essay has an organizational structure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The essay includes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a clear opinion, though some loosely related details may be included</li> <li>some transitional strategies to show relationships between ideas</li> <li>a progression of ideas from the beginning to the end</li> </ul> </li> <li>an introduction and conclusion</li> </ul>	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The essay is somewhat focused on its purpose, audience, and task.</li> <li>The author's opinion is insufficient or unclear.</li> <li>The essay has an inconsistent organizational structure.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The essay includes:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>an opinion that is insufficient or unclear</li> <li>inconsistent transitional strategies</li> <li>an uneven progression of ideas</li> </ul> </li> <li>The essay may include:                             <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>support facts, or details</li> <li>weak evidence</li> </ul> </li> </ul>	



# Opinion Writing

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# Source 1:

## Understanding the “Organic” Label

As you browse the aisles of the grocery store, you probably notice the increasing number of products with the green “USDA Organic” label. What does this label mean?

Labels help us make decisions about the foods we purchase. They can give us information about where our foods come from. It is important to understand these labels because they don't always mean what they appear to mean.



The U.S. Department of Agriculture's organic seal means that a product is certified as organic. These products are regulated by the government and are required to meet certain standards.

- Organic crops cannot be genetically modified. Genetically modified organisms are created in laboratories. GMOs can present both health and environmental risks.
- Organic crops cannot be grown with synthetic fertilizers, pesticides, or sewage sludge.
- Animals can only eat organically grown feed without animal byproducts.
- Animals can't be treated with synthetic hormones or antibiotics.
- Animals must have access to outdoors. Ruminants, or hooved animals such as cows, must have access to pastures.
- Animals cannot be cloned.

For food products to be labeled as organic, a government-certified inspector inspects the farm to ensure that the farmer is following all of the rules to meet USDA organic standards.

## Source 2: Eat Organic

When you devour a crisp apple, you probably think that you are eating healthy. Think again. What is in the foods you eat? Unless you're eating organic foods, chances are that your foods are jam-packed with chemicals.

Organic foods are much healthier than conventional foods. Did you know that your great-great-grandparents ate organically? In modern times, farming has changed. Conventional farming uses genetically modified organisms, fertilizers, pesticides, and herbicides. Despite the changes in farming methods, our bodies have not changed. We are not built to consume harmful chemicals. Foods labeled as organic meet standards. Organic foods cannot be treated with pesticides, fertilizers, antibiotics, growth hormones, or other chemicals. Conventional animals that are farmed for consumption are raised on soy and corn, which is 90% GMO. Their food has hormones and antibiotics. Cows are given growth hormones. This makes them produce more milk. Hormones cause cows to get infections. Infections need to be treated with antibiotics. All of these chemicals make their way into your food when you consume a cheeseburger or hot dog.

Many conventional farms treat their animals appallingly. Animals are overcrowded. They live in unsanitary conditions. They are overfed and pumped with hormones to profit the farmers. Many animals raised at conventional farms never see the light of day. Organic farms have higher standards for animals. Organic farmers cannot use antibiotics or growth hormones. The feed for the animals must be organic. They are required to live in clean and safe conditions. Animals are cage free. Organically raised animals must have access to the outdoors and pastures. Cows are required to graze on grass for at least one third of their lives. Animals that are raised organically are healthy and happy.

Organic foods are better for our environment. Organic farmers do not use synthetic fertilizers, weed killers, or pesticides on their crops. These chemicals cause pollution. The National Water Quality Inventory conducted a study. They found that pollution from agriculture in the United States is the largest factor affecting the water quality of rivers and lakes. Also, a lot of organic foods are distributed locally. Less energy is needed to transport the food. This helps reduce global warming.

Next time you go grocery shopping, look for the green "USDA Organic" symbol. Choosing organic foods supports a healthier you, healthier animals, and a healthier environment.



## Source 3: The Organic Myth

Eating organic foods has become very popular over the past several years. Many people believe that organic foods are better than conventional foods because organic foods have health, ethical, and environmental benefits. Although there are benefits to eating organic foods, eating conventional foods is a better choice.

Growing organic produce and raising organic livestock puts pressure on the environment. Conventional foods have a lower impact because more food can be produced with less effort. Conventional fruits and vegetables benefit from genetic modification. This makes them more resilient to disease and drought. Conventional plants grow faster and larger than organic plants. Therefore, farmers are able to grow more food with equivalent resources.

More space is needed to raise organic livestock than conventional livestock. Organic animals require open land for the animals to roam. Conventional livestock can be kept in small areas, allowing farmers to keep more livestock within the same space. Farmers are able to reduce the impact that conventional livestock have on the environment by keeping them in small barns or cages.

Growing organic produce and raising organic livestock is more expensive than conventional foods. These expenses are passed through the supply chain and to the consumer. People who buy organic foods pay more for their food than people who buy conventional foods.

Conventional foods and organic foods contain the same nutrition levels. People claim that conventional foods are unhealthy because they are treated with chemicals; however, the pesticides and herbicides used in conventional farming are all approved by the FDA. These chemicals have been used for a long time. There is no evidence that they have unhealthy impacts on the people who consume treated foods. The chemicals make conventional farming more efficient.

Organic foods have become a big business. The increasing popularity of organic foods has made the companies that sell organic foods very profitable. Organic food companies spend a lot of money to market to the perceived benefits of their products. Conventional foods are healthy, inexpensive, and have environmental benefits.



Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

## Writing Prompt

The debate about whether or not it is important to eat organic foods is becoming more popular. Write an essay in which you give your opinion about whether people should or should not support organic farms. Use information from the passages in your essay.

Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- read the passages
- plan your response
- write your response
- revise and edit your response

Be sure to include:

- an introduction
- support for your opinion using information from the passages
- a conclusion that is related to your opinion.

Your response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Write your response in the space provided.

Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

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Name: \_\_\_\_\_ Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Handwriting practice lines consisting of 20 sets of three horizontal dashed lines.

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