

NORTH BAY REGION ACADEMIC DECATHLON



A Contest of Academic Strength

*Providing academic competition to encourage,
acknowledge and reward academic excellence
through teamwork among students of all
achievement levels.*

FOR MORE INFORMATION

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ACADEMIC DECATHLON

ESSAY PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS

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PREFACE

The Academic Decathlon (AD) is a team competition in academics for high school students in grades nine through twelve. Academic Decathletes compete in teams of six to nine students. AD involves students of all levels of academic achievement; to ensure that the program is inclusive of students of varying ability levels, AD requires that each team include at least two “A,” or “honors” students; two “B,” or “scholastic” students; and two “C” and below, or “varsity” students.

SAMPLE ESSAY TESTING SCHEDULE

5-10 minutesDecathletes assemble into testing room and conduct roll call.

5-10 minutesProctor distributes essay test materials and reads aloud while decathletes follow along the essay instructions.

50 minutes.....Begin essay test. [Provide a 25 minute and a 5 minute warning during exam.]

5 minutes.....Proctor will collect essay tests before dismissing decathletes.

ESSAY EVENT

In the essay component, students have fifty (50) minutes to plan, organize, draft, pre-write, and write a final version of an essay in response to a specific prompt. After the allotted fifty minutes has elapsed, the essays are collected and secured by the proctor(s) and then delivered to the NBRAD office to be scored by Essay Readers at a later time. Essay Readers are made aware of the time that is allotted for the students to take the essay exam, so their scoring standard is set at an appropriate level, given the circumstances limiting the writing task—the standard of scoring for an essay written on demand in fifty minutes is clearly different than that for a paper written over the course of several days.

Essay Prompts

Prompts used at competition require students to write an expository essay. An expository essay is an effort to inform or explain. Its essential quality is clarity. The writer of an expository essay takes a subject and opens it up to the reader. To accomplish this feat, a writer does not strive to argue or persuade but to convey significant information clearly and accurately. Exposition requires identifying an audience, explaining the purpose in a thesis, presenting adequate content information which supports the thesis, limiting the subject by analyzing the subject into logical order or division while establishing a lively voice that uses appropriate vocabulary and tone, and mastering the conventions of Standard English mechanics, usage, and spelling through varied and sophisticated sentence structure.

To focus the exposition, the writer must establish a point of departure by introducing the subject and by providing sufficient background information so that the reader can follow the explanation. The writer’s task is to increase the reader’s knowledge of the subject, to assist the reader in understanding a procedure or process, and/or to provide the reader with an enhanced comprehension of an idea or concept. Expository writers present their information as objectively as possible.

SUPPLIES TO CONDUCT ESSAY TEST

- Stapler & extra staples.
- White board & dry erase makers.
- Watch or Clock (watch with a second hand) to keep accurate time of test.
- Essay Test (double-sided document that includes “General Instructions” on the front-side and the “Essay Prompts” on the back side.) The essay test will be sent directly to the proctor from NBRAD’s office. A sample is provided at the end of this document.
- Binder Paper (at least 5-7 pages, per decathlete).
- Blue or black ink pens (decathletes may bring their own) for decathletes to write their essay.
- Team Roster to take role call (provided by the NBRAD Office).

GENERAL PROCTOR INSTRUCTIONS

Preparing For The Test

1. Review packet.
2. Be sure that you have the necessary supplies to conduct the essay test.

Before The Test Begins

1. Arrive early to the testing room to make sure room is unlocked and ready for testing. Inspect the room to make sure there is no information displayed that could be associated with the competition.
2. As decathletes enter the classroom, have decathletes store their belongings in a designated area in the classroom and verify that each decathlete has their proper identification.
3. Desks should be separated as much as possible to provide a positive testing environment.
4. Once all the decathletes are sitting, conduct role call to account for all decathletes. Decathletes not present or listed on the role call must be noted on the role call sheet.
5. Immediately after role call distribute the Essay Test with at least 5 sheets of binder paper to each decathlete. The “General Instructions” must be placed face-up with the “Essay Prompts” on the back-side. Approximately 5-7 pages of binder paper should be placed beneath the test. Make sure decathletes do not turn over the General Instruction prior to the designated time.
6. Read the expository essay directions (see attached sample at the end of this packet, “General Essay Instructions to Decathletes”) to the decathletes.
7. Next, instruct decathletes to turn instructions over so the Essay Prompts are face up. Notify decathletes the essay is beginning and start timing.

During The Test

1. Keep exact time for the test. The essay is a 50 minute test. Write the beginning and ending time of the test on the white board. Give a warning when there is 25 minutes remaining and when there is 5 minutes remaining until the end of the test.
2. While decathletes are writing their essay, please keep your eyes on them. Regularly walk around the room to make sure that proper test taking is occurring.
3. Make sure students are completing their name, ID number and Prompt number on the pages (upper right-hand corner).
4. No material except the essay instructions, binder paper and pen are allowed at the decathletes' desks. Other items need to be collected and placed in a designated area of the classroom.

At The Completion Of The Test

1. Collect the essay test before dismissing decathletes.
2. When collecting Essays, **check to make sure decathletes have the "prompt sheet facing up (instructions side of the page facing down) on top of essay. Staple the decathlete's prompt page to the binder paper that includes the decathletes essay.**
3. **Make sure decathletes have provided their first name, I.D. number and Prompt Selection on the cover of the essay booklet.**
4. Essays must be counted after collection. Bundle them together with the Team Roster (make notes of any Decathletes that did not complete the Essay) and deliver (or mail) to the NBRAD office by **January 10, 2012**. NBRAD is not responsible for damaged packages so please be sure to package appropriately for delivery and send to the address below:

Send to: NBRAD – ESSAYS, 4522 Abernathy Road, Fairfield, CA 94534

ADDITIONAL POINTS FOR THE PROCTOR(S)_____

1. In the event a decathlete is guilty of severe infractions of good test-taking behavior, note the decathlete's name and identification number and brief description of infraction on the roster. The Regional Competition Committee will review the infraction and determine the severity of the penalty, if any.
2. Do not allow decathletes to leave the room during the exam except for emergencies. Decathletes will not be allowed back into the testing room to complete the exam. Students leaving early for an emergency must be reported on the roster with an explanation to the nature of the emergency.
3. Proctors may contact the NBRAD Office at (707) 646-7603 or e-mail kscarberry@solanocoe.net with any proctoring questions. [after hours: (707) 330-3276]



SAMPLE INSTRUCTIONS TO BE READ ALOUD TO DECATHLETES PRIOR TO TESTING

ACADEMIC DECATHLON
GENERAL ESSAY INSTRUCTIONS TO DECATHLETES
ESSAY WRITING TEST
Round 2

“DO NOT TURN THIS PAGE OVER UNTIL INSTRUCTED BY THE PROCTOR.”

There will be three (3) essay prompts based on the Language and Literature and Super Quiz materials you read and studied for this year’s Academic Decathlon. Carefully read each essay prompt and select only one (1) prompt on which to write your Expository Essay. **You have 50 minutes to write your essay.**

Print in the upper right-hand corner of all your pages, the Prompt Number that you select, your four-digit Student I.D. Number, and your First Name.

It is recommended that you number each of your pages at the bottom.

You may use only the first page as an outline and may request additional paper, if necessary. It is your responsibility to make sure your pages are stapled together in the upper, left-hand corner with the “Essay Prompt” page on top of your essay.

Use a blue or black ink pen when writing your essay.

An Expository Essay does the following:

- Primarily explains a process or idea by presenting and interpreting evidence or facts, or offering and explaining reasons
- Presents the thesis clearly and often creatively and provides background information that focuses and unifies the essay
- Supports the thesis with strong, convincing, and often original arguments
- Develops the essay with clear and relevant information and evidence
- Offers specific, concrete, detailed discussion throughout the essay
- Has organization which is focused, logical, and coherent; ends in a satisfying way, bringing closure
- Has an appropriate voice: authoritative, lively, reasonable, and convincing
- Engages and maintains the reader’s interest throughout the essay

In citing material from the literature or Super Quiz, do not merely summarize or list facts, ideas, or evidence. Select, analyze, and discuss the material in a purposeful manner to support your assertions.

IT IS CRITICAL THAT YOU ANSWER THE PROMPT.

Be sure to follow accepted rules of Standard English sentence structure, usage, spelling, grammar, and mechanics. Single space and write or print legibly on the front-side only of the pages. Allow yourself time for proofreading and correcting your essay.

You are to choose only one (1) essay prompt.

Make sure the "prompt number" you select, your four-digit I.D. number, and your First Name are written on the upper right-hand corner of all your pages, including this page.

It is also recommended to number your pages at the bottom of all your pages.

Prompt Number: _____
Decathlete's Four-Digit ID Number: _____
Decathlete's First Name: _____

ESSAY PROMPTS

SELECT ONLY ONE

- 1. Prompt 1

- 2. Prompt 2

- 3. Prompt 3

PLEASE SELECT ONE BOX BELOW:

YES! You may publish my essay. **NO!** You may not publish my essay.

For Essay Readers Use Only. Decathletes: Please DO NOT WRITE Below this Line

READER: _____

A X 8 = _____ B X 2 = _____ TOTAL = _____

READER: _____

A X 8 = _____ B X 2 = _____ TOTAL = _____

READER: _____

A X 8 = _____ B X 2 = _____ TOTAL = _____