Honors Language Arts 7

*The Mark of Zorro* Creative Persuasive Letter Assignment

Throughout this unit, you have considered these essential questions:

* What is justice?
* What factors influence our perception of justice?

You will now apply your essential ideas to a 5-paragraph persuasive essay:

Write to the governor asking that Zorro either be punished or pardoned. Argue that Zorro’s actions are **just or unjust** because they are **influenced by three factors**. You will choose what those three factors are. They might be characters, events, emotions, etc. Refer to the ideas we gathered on our essential questions poster.

Assume that you are writing the letter *before* the novel’s confrontation between Zorro and the governor. You might consider the arguments made by the men in the book or you may create your own argument entirely.

Remember that the governor is your audience, so you will need to consider what appeals he will find most persuasive, both logical and emotional. You will also use personal pronouns such as “I” and “you.”

**Introduction:** Introduce “yourself” to the governor. (You may use your own name or a fake one, but you will need to invent a character. Are you a peon? a caballero? a don? Who you are will influence your tone and your argument.) End your introduction with a thesis that states your stance and your three factors.

**Body Paragraphs:** Each body paragraph must begin with a clear topic sentence stating the factor that influenced your opinion/Zorro’s decisions. You will then explain why that makes his actions just/unjust. Each paragraph must include evidence from the novel; however, you do not need to quote the novel since this is a creative assignment. Each paragraph should end with a strongly persuasive conclusion. Think about the order in which you organize your evidence; the most persuasive texts often save their most convincing piece of evidence for last!

**Conclusion:** Bring your point home! This should be the most persuasive part of the essay because you want the governor to be on your side when he finishes reading.

**\*Notes**:

* In deciding what to argue, remember that you do not have to agree with what you’re writing. Meaning, even if you think Zorro’s actions are just, you could still choose to argue against him. Why? Because sometimes it’s just more fun.
* Because this is a letter, it should be formatted as such, with a date, a header, and a closing. If you wish, you may also choose to present it creatively so that it looks like a letter (different font, size, etc.).

Zorro Creative Persuasive Letter

Rubric