**Instructions for Administering the ELA College Prep End-of-Course Essay Exam:**

1. Designate a date, time, and quiet testing place. Allow two hours for the exam and ensure that the exam will be carefully proctored for the entire two hours.
2. Use the template provided to prepare the essay exam topics and instructions. Choose topics from the list provided or create your own. You may want to offer students two topic choices, rather than just one.
3. Students will use loose-leaf notebook paper or essay exam blue books provided by the school to handwrite their essays. The essay is not to be typed on a computer unless a student has a current learning accommodation on file with the school requiring keyboard usage for written assignments. Materials to provide: essay exam blue books or loose-leaf notebook paper, blue or black ink pens, and desktop dictionaries.
4. Have students power down and submit electronics to the teacher before the test: cell phones, tablets, iPads, laptops, smart watches, etc. Students may use desktop dictionaries provided during the essay exam.
5. The instructor may clarify the essay topics if students have questions, but students may not do any research for the essay or discuss the topics with their classmates before writing.
6. Encourage the students to use the first thirty minutes to brainstorm ideas, develop their thesis statement, and construct a scratch outline. Provide enough extra paper for these activities or instruct them to use the first few pages of the blue book.
7. Students may or may not have time to write both a rough draft and a final draft, depending on how fast they work. Reassure them that they can cross out words if needed without penalty.
8. Instruct students to write in blue or black ink, write legibly, write only on the front side of each page, and skip every other line. Make sure students know that illegible words will be marked as incorrectly spelled and the paper penalized for those spelling errors. Remind them of the word requirement, somewhere between 400-600 words, and that the essay should be four to five paragraphs long.
9. The ELA College Prep course instructor will evaluate the essays using the evaluation form and standards provided. Essays are given a pass/fail score.
10. At the end of the course, ELA College Prep instructors should mail the *original* essay exams and accompanying evaluation forms to the following address. High schools may choose to retain *copies* of the essays and evaluation forms for their own records. *Ungraded essays will be returned to the school districts.* Please mark the envelope as follows:

South Plains College

Dean of Arts and Sciences

**ATTN: College Prep ELA Exam Artifacts**

1401 S. College Ave.

Levelland, TX 79336.

**To help prepare your students for the College Prep ELA End-of-Course Essay Exam:**

1. Distribute copies of the essay evaluation form to each student several weeks/months in advance and take time to review and discuss the essay skills that will be evaluated.
2. Make sure the students are very familiar with the list of eight major errors and know how to avoid those mistakes, in particular. Note that three spelling and/or wrong word errors = one major error. Desktop dictionaries may be used during the exam.
3. *Emphasize to students that an essay with five or more major errors will not pass, no matter the quality of the essay content.*
4. Provide a few opportunities before the End-of-Course Essay Exam for students to experience in-class essay tests. Choose a few topics for practice essay exams and evaluate them using the same evaluation form, so students will know what to expect. Students can also be asked to evaluate their peers’ essays for practice in identifying the skills needed to create an effective paper.