Your Name: \_Mr. Benevento’s Per. 9 Class\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Committee Name: Health, Education, Labor and Pensions \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Before a committee of Representatives presents their bill to the House of Representatives and Senate, they must be well informed about their topic. This requires research. The format attached will allow you to gather your information and present it in an orderly manner.

* Each congressperson is responsible for completing this research packet. Make sure you complete the ENTIRE packet.
* You must cite all of your work!
* At the end you will attach a formal bibliography using Easy Bib.
* See individual rubrics for grade point requirements**.**
* This packet should be used as a rough draft of your work and your final product must be submitted in a typed format.

**Part I:** **Topic Overview** (Part I must be in your own words)

1. ***Explain your topic (5-7 sentences)***

* What is the specific issue?
* Who is involved with your specific issue?
* Why is this topic of national interest?

The specific issue of my topic is about how standardized tests do not do an effective job of measuring a students’ achievement. Teachers, students and students’ parents are impacted by standardized testing. This topic is of national interest because of the growing impact of standardized testing on schools around the country. Many people feel that schools are spending too much time preparing for standardized tests. Others think that standardized tests are good for students because it lets the teachers know the strengths and weaknesses of students. Tests also allow states to compare different schools. Many teachers and students are feeling extra stress as a result of these tests. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. ***Why does this topic interest you? (5-7 sentences)***

* Do you have any background knowledge of your topic? If so, explain.
* How does this topic affect you or your family?

This topic interests me because I had to take the NJ Ask and PARCC to see if I’m doing well. My little background knowledge of standardized tests is from taking them every year. I am aware of the backlash that took place when PARCC was implemented. Many parents allowed their children to opt out of taking the test. This topic effects me and my education. Teachers are spending time teaching to the test, and I spend many school days taking standardized tests. *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

1. ***What do you think are the current controversies surrounding your topic? (5-7 sentences)***

* Is your topic currently in the news?
* Who/what groups of people are involved with your topic?
* What are some of the different opinions regarding your topic?

The current controversies surrounding my topic are that some people support standardized testing and some want standardized tests to be banned or reduced in public schools in the U.S. My topic is currently in the news because of recent controversies surrounding the new PARCC exam. The group of people that are involved with my topic are people who are involved in education. Some people argue that standardized testing is a flawed system of improving education. Others say that tests keep teachers and schools accountable. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Part II: Preliminary Research**

1. **What is the history/origin of your topic? *(At least two paragraphs) (5-7 sentences each)***

* Why has your topic become a national concern?
* Are there specific events that led to your topic coming to the forefront of national issues?
* Is there a specific geographic region within the United States where your topic began?
* Does your topic involve a specific group of people?

Standardized tests were first used in ancient China, Greece, and Rome to determine fitness for the public and government service. Many of early testing systems tried to evaluate reading, writing abilities, and qualitative characteristics such as creativity. Standardized tests people use today are based off of seventeenth-century European psychologist and educators who were searching for a way to quantitatively measure intelligence, with the goal to identify people with learning difficulties. European psychologist Francis Galton created one of the first definitions of intelligence. American psychologist Edward Thorndike improved on Galton’s research of animal behavior to create a diversity of educational tests.

In the early years of the twentieth-century, American schools began to use Thorndike’s tests to measure handwriting and reading ability. Educators at the University of Kansas invented one of the first multiple-choice tests in 1914. This style later became the standard model for university exams. Ten years earlier, French psychologist Alfred Binet created an intelligence test based critical thinking and evaluation. My topic is of national concern because some people find standardized tests flawed and others think its a good test format for schools. There was George Bush’s “No Child Left Behind” law which was focused on an increase of standardized tests. This topic affects all fifty states. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

1. **What are the issues/problems regarding your topic? *(Include a minimum of 3 problems/issues; Minimum of two paragraphs, 5-7 sentences each)***

One problem with my topic is that standardized testing takes too much time out of instruction. Teachers spend too much time preparing students for tests, and students spend too much time taking tests. Teachers are not given the ability to teach what they want because they have to worry about students performing well, which leads to another problem with the tests. Teachers are unfairly evaluated by the results of the test. There should not be a connection made between the effectiveness of a teacher and results of standardized tests.

Another issue is that the standardized tests do not measure creativity or critical thinking skills of students. These are both very important for students in school and life after school. Standardized tests do not measure student achievement. Instead, these tests only measure how well students can recall facts. Students, teachers and schools are being unfairly evaluated based on test results. These results then affect federal funding. The increase in standardized testing has caused more harm than good for education. *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

**Part III: Narrow your Focus**

1. *Which specific issue/problem will you focus on? (5-7 Sentences)*

*\_\_\_\_*We will be focusing on the issues with standardized testing. Our research has shown us that teachers spend too much time preparing students for standardized testing. This means that teachers are not given the flexibility to teach what they want. Standardized tests do not test creativity or critical thinking skills, which are very important for students. It is unfair that teachers are evaluated on the results of standardized testing, and can possibly get fired because of these results. We want schools to focus on achievement and standardized testing is a poor way to do that. *\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_*

1. *Create a Preamble for your bill:*

***Preamble:***

\_**To:**\_Eliminate standardized testing for kindergarten through 8th Grade in public schools. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

**Part IV: Supportive Evidence**

Types of evidence could include the following: (At least **6** Pieces of Evidence Required)

* (At least 2-3) Statistics #’s (studies, polls/surveys, graphs and research results)
* (At least 1) Current events
* (At least 2) Constitutional Connections (5 Basic Principles, Amendments, Bill of Rights)
* (Optional) Court Case relating to topic
* (Optional) Previous, existing, and/or pending Legislation (Laws)

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| **Types of Evidence** | **Supportive Information-Facts** | **Significance-Relevance to your topic** | **Citation** *(use EasyBib--add source as you go)* |
| Article | Standardized tests lack creativity and critical thinking  -Standardized tests can only measure a small portion of the goals of education  -There is a statistical connection between high standardized test achievers and shallow thinking. | Article made strong arguments against standardized testing because tests do not test “achievement.” | Harris, Phillip, Joan Harris, and Bruce M. Smith. "Standardized Tests Do Not Effectively Measure Student Achievement." *Standardized Testing*. Ed. Dedria Bryfonski. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2012. At Issue. Rpt. from "Chapter 3: The Tests Don't Measure Achievement Adequately." *The Myths of Standardized Tests: Why They Don't Tell You What You Think They Do*. 2011. 33-45.*Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016. |
| Article | -Standardized testing has taken over public education.  -Standardized testing is taking away teachers’ ability to teach; getting students ready for the test.  -Standardized testing has not improved education. | This source reveals the problems with standardized testing, such as teachers focusing more and more on testing. | U  Williams, Mary Elizabeth. "Standardized Testing Is Harming Student Learning." *School Reform*. Ed. Noël Merino. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2015. Opposing Viewpoints. Rpt. from "Testing Is Killing Learning." 2013. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 28 Feb. 2016. |
| Current Event | Supporting Standardized Tests  1) A good assessment tool  2) Way to assess information that the child was learning  Opposed to Standardized Testing  1) Takes up too much classroom time  2) Too many tests  3) Takes 2-4 months for results in some districts  4) Teachers evaluate the testing | Students spend about 20 to 25 hours a school year taking standardized tests, according to a study of nation’s 66 largest school districts that was released Saturday by the council of great city schools.  Testing amounts to 2.3 percent of classroom time for average 8th grader and between pre-K and 12th grade, students take about 112 standardized exams, according to the council report. | Lederman, Josh. "Obama Wants To Limit Class Time Devoted To Standardized Tests." *Huffington Post*. Huffington Post, 24 Oct. 2015. Web. |
| 10th Amendment | “The powers not delegated to the United States by the Constitution, nor prohibited by it to the States, are reserved to the States respectively, or to the people.” | The Constitution does not give the National Government the right to deal with Education. Education issues should be left for the states. | 10th Amendment to the United States Constitution. |
| **Types of Evidence** | **Supportive Information-Facts** | **Significance-Relevance to your topic** | **Citation** *(use EasyBib--add source as you go)* |
| Federalism- One of the Principles of the Constitution. | Federalism states that the National Government has certain Powers and the States have certain Powers. | Standardized Testing should be an issue that the States decide, not the National Government | The United States Constitution |
| Article | -Standardized testing is taking up too much time in the classroom.  -Standardized testing is adding too much stress to teachers and students. | -Poor performance on standardized tests has had a negative impact on many school | Myers, Virginia. "Disappearing Act: End the Testing Fixation Before It Erases More Meaningful Education." *American Teacher* 12 (2013). Rpt. in *School Reform*. Ed. Noël Merino. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2015. Opposing Viewpoints. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 9 Mar. 2016. |
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**Part V: Opposing Evidence**

Types of evidence could include the following: (At least **5** Pieces of Evidence Required)

* (At least 2-3) Statistics #’s (studies, polls/surveys, graphs and research results)
* (At least 1) Current events
* (At least 2) Constitutional Connections (5 Basic Principles, Amendments, Bill of Rights)
* (Optional) Court Case relating to topic
* (Optional) Previous, existing, and/or pending Legislation (Laws)

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| **Types of Evidence** | **Supportive Information-Facts** | **Significance-Relevant to your topic** | **Citation** *(use EasyBib--add source as you go)* |
| Article | -Students prepare for standardized testing.  -It makes students aware of how they compare to other students.  -Standardized tests keep teachers accountable | -Shows the positive aspects of standardized testing  -Supports the use of standardized testing in schools | Walberg, Herbert J. "Standardized Tests Effectively Measure Student Achievement." *Standardized Testing*. Ed. Dedria Bryfonski. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2012. At Issue. Rpt. from "Stop the War Against Standardized Tests." *Defining Ideas: A Hoover Institution Journal* (20 May 2011). *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 28 Feb. 2016. |
| Article | 1 Standardized tests assess students based on a similar set of questions. teacher grading assessments can vary from the teacher's grading habits. When students take standardized exams a much clear view of academic mastery emerges.  2 The very objective of standardized testing yields comparably of student achievement , a desirable feature for parent and practitioners alike  3 Like it or not, standardizing tests data remain the best way to hold school accountable for their academic performance  4. Standardized tests are an objective measure to compare students and schools | This source explains that standardized tests are a better way to measure student achievement because teachers can differ drastically with their grading techniques. | "The Thomas B. Fordham Institute." *Bless the Tests: Three Reasons for Standardized Testing*. Web. 28 Feb. 2016. |
| Goal of the Preamble- “Promote the General Welfare.” | This Goal means to help all citizens. Standardized tests would improve education and help all students. | Increasing standardized tests would force schools to give their students a better education. | Preamble of the Constitution. |
| **Types of Evidence** | **Supportive Information-Facts** | **Significance-Relevant to your topic** | **Citation** *(use Easy Bib--add source as you go)* |
| Goal- “Secure the blessings of Liberty to Ourselves, and our Posterity.” | The government protects our freedoms such as education. | Standardized testing improves education, and makes our society better. | Preamble to the United States Constitution. |
| Article | -Standardized testing predicts future success  -Standardized testing makes better students and teachers  -Standardized testing also provides accountability  **-**Almost 2 thirds of colleges take sat scores into account  -At most high schools, students have the option to take one or more of these specialized tests after spending a year or two in an intensive class about the material. | -This article is important because it provides arguments that favor standardized testing, which opposes our bill. | "The Pros of Standardized Testing." *The Pros of Standardized Testing*. Web.  08 Mar. 2016. |
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**Part VI: Supportive Arguments**—***Cite your sources (Group work)***

What are the three main reasons/arguments that **SUPPORT** your topic AND choose the **TWO** best pieces of evidence to support those reasons/arguments?

1. **Main Argument**:\_\_Standardized testing is bad because standardized tests lack creativity and critical thinking skills**.**

\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Evidence:

-There is a statistical connection between high standardized test achievers and shallow thinking.

Lederman, Josh. "Obama Wants To Limit Class Time Devoted To Standardized Tests." *Huffington Post*. Huffington Post, 24 Oct. 2015. Web.

2. **Main Argument**:Teachers are unfairly evaluated on test results. \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Evidence:

**teacher pay may come from how well there students do on the test and may even get fired if the students do bad.**

-Teacher and Principal salaries are tied to test scores

Williams, Mary Elizabeth. "Standardized Testing Is Harming Student Learning." *School Reform*. Ed. Noël Merino. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2015. Opposing Viewpoints. Rpt. from "Testing Is Killing Learning." 2013. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016.

**3. Main Argument**: Teachers are spending too much time getting students ready for the test.

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Evidence:

-Testing amounts to 2.3 percent of classroom time for average 8th grader

Lederman, Josh. "Obama Wants To Limit Class Time Devoted To Standardized Tests." *Huffington Post*. Huffington Post, 24 Oct. 2015. Web.

**Part VII: Opposing**

What are the three main reasons/arguments **OPPOSING** your topic AND choose the **TWO** best pieces of evidenceto support those reasons/arguments?

1. **Main Argument**:\_Standardized Testing is good because it shows where students are academically compared to other students their age \_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Evidence:

-Standardized tests are an objective measure which allows students and schools to compare scores.

Walberg, Herbert J. "Standardized Tests Effectively Measure Student Achievement." *Standardized Testing*. Ed. Dedria Bryfonski. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2012. At Issue. Rpt. from "Stop the War Against Standardized Tests." *Defining Ideas: A Hoover Institution Journal* (20 May 2011). *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 28 Feb. 2016.

1. **Main Argument**: \_Standardized tests prepare students for later standardized tests like the SAT’\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_\_

Evidence:

Two thirds of colleges look at SAT scours when looking at students

"The Pros of Standardized Testing." *The Pros of Standardized Testing*. Web. 08 Mar. 2016.

**Part VIII: Government Spending**

“To create a new program, the government normally gets the money either by cutting funds to an existing program OR by raising taxes.” The budget has two large spending categories, mandatory and discretionary. Mandatory spending is required by law on specific programs. After those programs are paid for, the president and Congress may use the remaining money for discretionary spending on programs they choose. Each year, roughly 30 percent of the federal budget is in discretionary spending. (Note-taking format done with your group)

1. Indicate whether your Bill’s spending will be discretionary or mandatory?

The funding of our Bill will come from Discretionary funding.

B: Indicate the Department/Agency Budget Source and any other information you may have found that will provide government spending information:

Government spending will come from the Department of Education. Members from the Department of Education will make sure that school districts are following our Bill.

**Don’t forget your final Bibliography:** You must cite each section you complete. Attach your formal bibliography to the end of your typed final research. You must have at least five different sources

Works Cited

Harris, Phillip, Joan Harris, and Bruce M. Smith. "Standardized Tests Do Not Effectively Measure Student Achievement."

*Standardized Testing*. Ed. Dedria Bryfonski. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2012. At Issue. Rpt. from "Chapter 3: The Tests Don't Measure Achievement Adequately." *The Myths of Standardized Tests: Why They Don't Tell You What You Think They Do*. 2011. 33-45.*Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 26 Feb. 2016

Williams, Mary Elizabeth. "Standardized Testing Is Harming Student Learning." *School Reform*. Ed. Noël Merino.

Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2015. Opposing Viewpoints. Rpt. from "Testing Is Killing Learning." 2013. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 28 Feb. 2016.

Lederman, Josh. "Obama Wants To Limit Class Time Devoted To Standardized Tests." *Huffington Post*. Huffington Post,

24 Oct. 2015. Web.

The United States Constitution

Myers, Virginia. "Disappearing Act: End the Testing Fixation Before It Erases More Meaningful Education." *American*

*Teacher* 12 (2013). Rpt. in *School Reform*. Ed. Noël Merino. Farmington Hills, MI: Greenhaven Press, 2015.

Opposing Viewpoints. *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 9 Mar. 2016

Walberg, Herbert J. "Standardized Tests Effectively Measure Student Achievement." *Standardized Testing*. Ed. Dedria

Bryfonski. Detroit: Greenhaven Press, 2012. At Issue. Rpt. from "Stop the War Against Standardized Tests."

*Defining Ideas: A Hoover Institution Journal* (20 May 2011). *Opposing Viewpoints in Context*. Web. 28 Feb. 2016.

"The Thomas B. Fordham Institute." *Bless the Tests: Three Reasons for Standardized Testing*. Web. 28 Feb. 2016.

"The Pros of Standardized Testing." *The Pros of Standardized Testing*. Web.08 Mar. 2016.