

Guidelines for Revising Your Pre-Test Essay on “The Man in the Water”

Introduction

1. **Hook:** Begin with an attention-grabber or hook to capture the reader’s interest (a quote, a description, a question, a statement to make people think, etc.)
2. **TAG:** Follow the hook with a TAG (title, author, genre). Your TAG sentence could start several different ways:

Examples:

- In the article “The Man in the Water,” Roger Rosenblatt describes a devastating plane crash and the heroic actions of...
- Roger Rosenblatt’s article “The Man in the Water” describes...
- Paying tribute to a man who sacrificed his life in order to save others, Roger Rosenblatt, an award winning journalist, recounts how... in his article “The Man in the Water.”

Note: Your hook could also lead into your TAG:

Example:

“For at some moment in the water he must have realized that he would not live if he continued to hand over the rope and ring to others.” And yet, in his article, “The Man in the Water,” Roger Rosenblatt tells us that this is exactly what one man did.

1. **Summary Statement-Conflict:** As a part of the TAG, or right after the TAG, include a brief summary of the story and its conflict. Usually two or three sentences are enough to give background information to the reader about the story and the conflict.
2. **Thesis Statement:** The thesis statement in an essay is the claim the writer makes in response to the prompt. The thesis statement is the "key" that will "drive" your essay. Do people go on a trip with no idea of where to go? No, they look at a map or check the internet for driving directions. Your job as a writer is to "map" your essay for the readers. Tell the reader where you will take them.

Main Body

Pay special attention to:

A) Rosenblatt's description of the man in the water's actions after the plane crash

For this paragraph, you will need to describe the plane crash in order to zero in on the man in the water's actions after the plane crash.

You may want to use transition words:

- first
- next
- then
- finally
- when
- after that
- following
- immediately
- meanwhile
- suddenly

You may want to use adjectives and strong verbs to make what happened sound dramatic:

| Adjectives | Verbs |
|-------------|-----------|
| devastating | plunged |
| horrifying | grabbed |
| terrifying | raced |
| destructive | sprang |
| tragic | braced |
| heroic | struggled |
| valiant | battled |
| brave | endured |
| courageous | |

B) The language Rosenblatt uses to describe nature and the relationship between the man in the water and nature (including similes, metaphors, symbols, personification, or other figurative language).

For this paragraph, you will need to analyze the author's use of language, point out specific types of figurative language he uses, and discuss why he makes these

comparisons. You will want to use academic words, to quote from the text, and write commentary sentences.

| Words to Introduce Quotes | Academic Words to Use When Discussing Language Use | |
|---|--|--|
| Rosenblatt states, points out, comments, remarks, explains, concludes, stresses, maintains, insists that, | To discuss what the author does: depicts portrays suggests illustrates personifies compares likens describes refers to contrasts | To give examples: For example, For instance, Another example of _____ occurs when _____ says _____ Also, In addition, Furthermore, |

Words to Use After a Quotation

This suggests that _____
 This is significant because _____
 The author stresses that _____
 Rosenblatt's point is that _____
 In other words, Rosenblatt believes that _____
 These words communicate that _____

C) Rosenblatt's response to the fact that the man in the water lost his life in the process of saving others.

In this paragraph, you need to focus on what Rosenblatt thinks of the man in the water and how he feels about him. You should quote from the text to support your point of view.

Words to Indicate the Author's Thoughts and Feelings

admires
 respects
 appreciates
 is inspired by
 is in awe of

is proud of
holds in high esteem
is impressed by
is heartened by
is encouraged by
is motivated by

You also need to consider whether Rosenblatt believes that the man in the water lost the battle with nature because he lost his life. Was he defeated or was his act of courage a victory?

Although the man in the water ultimately lost his life, Rosenblatt believes

D) When a journalist's purpose is strictly to inform, he or she will present the facts objectively, without trying to influence the reader. However, Rosenblatt does more than that. Discuss Rosenblatt's purpose in writing "The Man in the Water."

In this part of the conclusion, you are asked to consider why Rosenblatt wrote this article. What was his purpose?

| Purposes of Journalism |
|----------------------------|
| to inform |
| to instruct |
| to persuade |
| to celebrate |
| to honor |
| to condemn |
| to expose |
| to pay tribute |
| to call to action |
| to comment |
| to share newsworthy events |

Sample Sentence Starters:

While a journalist's purpose is often strictly to inform, he will just report the facts. However, Rosenblatt has a higher purpose. In essence, he wants to _____.

Rosenblatt's purpose in writing "The Man in the Water" is to _____.

In describing how the man in the water battled the elements and sacrificed his life for others, Rosenblatt's aim is to _____.

E) What message does he want his readers to take away from reading his article and why is it especially significant?

Here you are asked to restate the author's theme and to say why it is important. How does it apply to all people and not just the man in the water? What does the man in the water's story teach us?

Sample Sentence Starters:

To sum up, Rosenblatt's message is _____.

Rosenblatt wants us to come away from his article believing that _____.

In conclusion, Rosenblatt's article teaches us that _____.

Ultimately, the central lesson we learn from Rosenblatt is _____.

This is especially important because _____.

This is significant because _____.

We can all learn from this because _____.