

**Essays Administered to 11<sup>th</sup> Graders**  
**CSU Early Assessment of College English, Spring 2004**

**TOPIC I:**

**Directions:** You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

In a recent editorial essay, a working mother of four laments being made to feel guilty for not "being there" every minute for her children. She notes, "The school nurse has taken me to task for not being immediately accessible, and my kids--who live in a world where instant gratification has become the norm--complain about my intermittent unreachability. To which I say, hey, deal with it. I'm not cavalier about my mothering responsibilities.... I'm an involved parent. We modern moms and dads are not only expected to make sure our kids are perfectly nourished, endlessly enriched, and absolutely safe at all times: now, with cell phones and pagers, we are also supposed to be instantly reachable and immediately responsive.... We cannot and should not orchestrate every moment in our children's lives for them--partly because the effort turns out to be futile, but more importantly because it prevents our kids from learning skills they need to succeed in the real world. There are times they need to ad lib. There are times they need to wait. There are even times they need to turn to someone else."

Explain the author's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with her views. Support your position by referring to the passage and by providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

**TOPIC II:**

**Directions:** You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

"It is painfully apparent today that millions of Americans who would never think of themselves as lawbreakers, let alone criminals, are taking increasing liberties with all sorts of 'minor' laws that are nonetheless designed to protect and nourish society. When it comes to tax codes, or laws against littering or speeding or noise pollution, more and more ordinary citizens are becoming scofflaws [people who casually break the law]. The slogan of the day seems to be, 'You're a fool if you obey the

rules.' Americans are used to thinking that law-and-order is threatened mainly by violent crime. But the foundations of social order are more profoundly shaken when ordinary law-abiding citizens take to skirting the law."

---Adapted from Frank Trippett's "A Red Light for Scofflaws"

Explain Trippett's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.

**TOPIC III:**

**Directions:** You will have 45 minutes to plan and write an essay on the topic assigned below. Before you begin writing, read the passage carefully and plan what you will say. Your essay should be as well organized and as carefully written as you can make it.

"Recently, major tobacco companies agreed to pay a financial settlement to several states, including California, for health problems caused by cigarette smoking and other kinds of tobacco addiction. If this course of action is right for tobacco companies, then manufacturers of other legal but harmful products such as alcohol and guns should also have to pay financial settlements in return for the problems they cause."

--Irving Coffman

Explain Coffman's argument and discuss the extent to which you agree or disagree with his analysis. Support your position, providing reasons and examples from your own experience, observations, or reading.