

Organization: Do You Recognize the Difference?



The following examples were written by middle school students. Examples 1a and 1b were written by eighth graders who were responding to a guest speaker. Examples 2a and 2b are responses to the book *Tuck Everlasting*. They were written by seventh grade girls. These examples illustrate the differences between writing that is organized and writing that has “good ideas but no organization.”

Example 1a (Good ideas but no organization)

Jan Muryama

(eighth grade)

Jan Muryama works with retarded kids, and she came to tell us about it. The society and the people who set the standards of the society are not actually the strong, wise people we think they are. Kids who are retarded should be able to decide if they want to go to a home for retarded kids. The parents shouldn't be forced into anything that they feel isn't good for the kid. In conclusion, I want society to open up and let more retarded or handicapped people in.

Example 1b (Good ideas with good organization)

Euthanasia

(eighth grade)

When Jan came from the Wieland School and talked to us about the right-to-die issue, I realized that there are several sides to making the decision about euthanasia that need to be weighed carefully. First, the financial issues need to be considered. We need to know if parents can support the child and themselves. It is also important to make sure the other family members (brothers and sisters) can be taken good care of as well. Second, the patient's future should be considered. We should keep in mind the fact that the patient might never recover and be confined to life support for the rest of his or her life. The third and most important thing we need to look at is what the patient would want if he or she could tell us right now. Some people would not want to live their lives connected to a machine and would rather die than put their families through the emotional and financial trouble. Truly, these are things that must be considered when we deal with the right-to-die issue.

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Example 2a (Good ideas but no organization)

Tuck Everlasting

(seventh grade)

Tuck Everlasting is mainly about life. What I mean about this is that the Tuck family fell off the wheel of life. The Tuck family drank some water from a special spring that kept them living forever. During the story Tuck and Winnie had a talk about this. Winnie had been kidnapped by the Tucks and she could have lived with them forever. At the end of the book Winnie gives the frog the water. He then falls off the wheel of life. In conclusion, I thought the book was good and explained life very well.

Example 2b (Good ideas with good organization)

Life Is Good

(seventh grade)

When I read *Tuck Everlasting* by Natalie Babbit, I was forced to think about life, death, and the possibility of living forever. First, I learned that life is a good thing, and I shouldn't spend time thinking about dying. I also realized that I wouldn't be really happy living forever. Life is like a wheel, and if I lived forever, I would see things change but I would not change. Finally, I saw that death is not so bad. When a person dies, it's like the world is going a step further, moving on, and developing new things. Before I read this book, I was afraid to die, but now I believe it's not anything to be afraid of.