

**ANNOUNCING THE 8TH ANNUAL
STUDENT ESSAY CONTEST
SPONSORED BY CT COLT ~ 2019**



Goals of the Essay Contest are:

1. To offer students a voice with regard to world language education and policies, in addition to recognizing excellence in research, documentation and writing.
2. To have an exemplary piece of writing that CT COLT may use for advocacy; to that end, the essay needs to be in English.



**2019 CT COLT ESSAY
CONTEST AND TOPIC:**

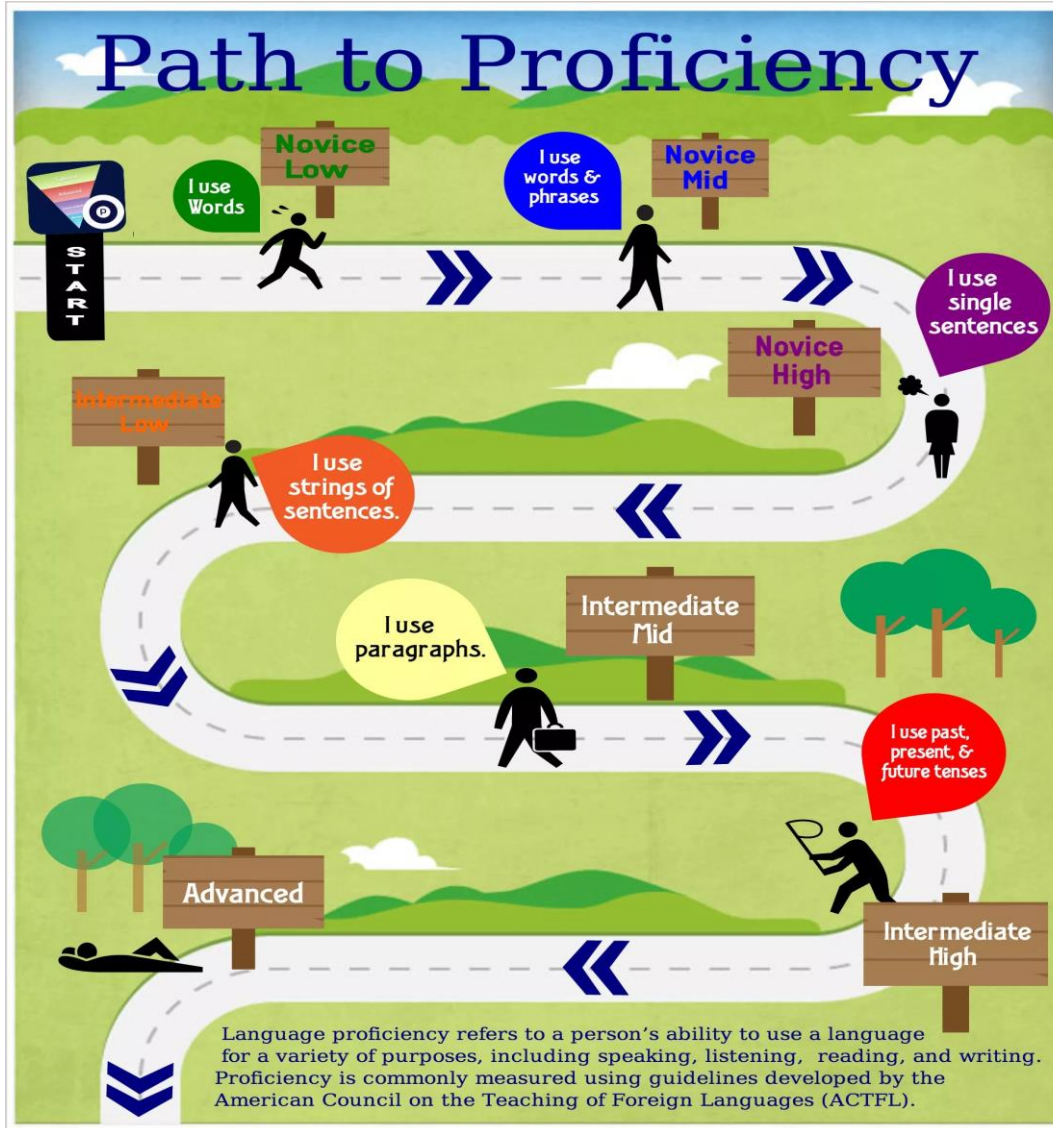


ESSAY TOPIC: The Journey to Proficiency

Background Information

View the following infographic entitled, “***Path to Proficiency***” which depicts a person’s journey on how his/her language develops at various levels.

Source: www.path2proficiency.com



DESCRIBING LANGUAGE ABILITY

Language learning is a complex process, which concerns many factors that impact how well language learners will acquire communication skills and how quickly they will reach different ranges of performance and proficiency. Some of these factors concern where the language learning takes place, if the setting is immersive, at what age the learning occurs, the purpose for language learning, etc. In describing language ability, the terms **performance and proficiency** both refer to evidence of what a language user is able to do with language. There are also significant differences between performance and proficiency with regard to language learning and teaching.

PERFORMANCE

Performance is the ability to use language that has been learned and practiced in an instructional setting.

PROFICIENCY

Proficiency is the ability to use language in real world situations in a spontaneous interaction and non-rehearsed context and in a manner acceptable and appropriate to native speakers of

the language. Proficiency demonstrates what a language user is able to do regardless of where, when or how the language was acquired.

Again, the essay topic is **The Journey to Proficiency**. Write an essay in which you consider the following questions/topics. Before you start, you should do some independent research about **proficiency-based language learning**. Any research needs to be documented and cited appropriately. (See below).

When writing, you should describe your own journey - path towards linguistic proficiency, as a context for the following topics.

- (1) Consider the difference between **proficiency and performance**, as well as the case in support of **proficiency-based language learning** to better argue and support your contentions. Remember to give specific and precise evidence to support your claims.
- (2) Is the focus and instruction of your foreign language class **proficiency-based**? How has this differed from any language instruction or language learning that you have experienced in the past?
- (3) What are the benefits of **proficiency-based language learning** for language learners?
Which benefits have you seen in your own school and/or with your own language learning?
- (4) Have felt empowered and more engaged in the language-learning process as a **proficiency-based language learner**? How have you been personally involved in charting your journey to language proficiency? How informed are you about your language-learning progress and of areas that you need to work on (speaking, writing, viewing, listening, reading)?
- (5) How has **proficiency-based language learning** helped you to reach your personal and academic goals thus far? How will it assist you in reaching your professional goals in the future?
- (6) Do you have any recommendations or advice for students and teachers in a school district that has not adopted **proficiency-based language learning**? Is this something that should be embraced by the entire US?

Tasks and Requirements of the Student:

- Write an essay of no more than two (2) typed, 12 point font, double-spaced pages, in which you address the designated topic.
- The essay should be in a letter format, with an imagined audience of a school board or politician.
- It is recommended that you employ standard writing practices, such as creating an outline before writing the essay fully.
- Feel free to use your imagination; we encourage creativity and analytical thinking as part of the organizational and writing processes.
- We also require you to do research and provide evidence for some of your statements (use **official citation format**). Thus, you should give credit to any words and ideas from another author to which you refer. Ask your teacher for advice when you have questions about how to cite correctly. In addition to citing within your essay, you should provide a List of Citations at the end of your essay, after your concluding paragraph. (at least 2)
- Include your Full Name, Name of School, Name of Teacher, Year of Graduation and Name of Class on top of your first page.
- Provide a hard copy of your essay to your teacher.

Tasks and Requirements of the Teacher:

- **CT COLT MEMBERSHIP REQUIREMENT:** Teachers participating in the Essay Contest **MUST** possess a current and paid membership with CT COLT. If you are unsure about your membership status, you may check the mailing sticker on your latest copy of the CT COLT Newsletter, or email Paul M. St. Louis (pmsaint1946@comcast.net)
- There is **NO FEE** for participating members' students to enter the contest.
- Inform your students about the **2019 CT COLT Essay Contest**, with special consideration to the contest requirements.
- Select your students who will participate in the **2019 CT COLT Essay Contest**.
- Administer the **2019 CT COLT Essay Contest** as a research and writing assignment after careful explanation of the essay and rubric requirements.
- Collect and compile the completed essays from your students.
- **DUE DATE FOR ESSAY SUBMITTALS:** Friday, April 5, 2019
- **ESSAY LIMIT.** Evaluate your essays using the rubric contained herein – **NOTE:** Each teacher may submit **A MAXIMUM of FIVE (5) essays only** for final judging by the 2019 CT COLT Essay Committee Members. Thus, the pre-screening process on the part of the participating teacher is essential, in order to achieve the 5-essay limit for contest entry.

- **ESSAY SUBMITTAL FORMAT:** Participating teachers must PDF-scan (preferred) all submitted essays (limit = 5) and forward one (1) PDF electronic file via email to John R. Rook at: rookj@glastonburyus.org.
- The prize for the winning essay is \$50 as well as a \$50 *Carlex* voucher to teacher. *Carlex* is a leading distributor of FL classroom and curricular materials.
- **SPECIAL NOTE:** Any and all essays submitted may be used by CT COLT for advocacy purposes. The winning essay will be posted on the CT COLT Website (<http://www.ctcolt.org>)
- **NOTIFICATION AND ANNOUNCEMENT OF CONTEST WINNER.** The teacher of the essay winner will be notified in addition to a notification placed on the CT COLT Website: (<http://www.ctcolt.org>) by May 1, 2019.

Questions and Concerns:

- Regarding the **ESSAY CONTEST:** Contact John R. Rook (rookj@glastonburyus.org)
- Regarding **CT COLT MEMBERSHIP:** contact Paul M. St. Louis (pmsaint@verizon.net).

THANK YOU ☺

FOR YOUR CONTINUED SUPPORT AND INVOLVEMENT IN CT COLT

ESSAY EVALUATION RUBRIC

CT COLT 2019 Essay Contest

| | Excellent 20-25 points | Good 16-19 pts | Fair 12-15 pts | Poor under 12 pts |
|--------------------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Accuracy of facts cited | several accurate facts are presented and correctly cited | some accurate facts are presented and cited | few accurate facts are presented and/or are not cited | no real back up is made for claims |
| Persuasiveness | piece contains both objective (fact-based) and subjective (personal experience based) arguments- these are effective and relevant | piece contains both objective (fact based) and subjective (personal experience based) arguments- these are mostly effective and relevant | piece contains either objective (fact based) or subjective (personal experience based) arguments- which are mostly effective and relevant | piece does not present relevant and effective arguments |
| Conventions of writing | conventions of grammar, spelling and punctuation are observed- voice is appropriate to audience | conventions of grammar, spelling and punctuation are usually observed- voice is mostly appropriate to audience | conventions of grammar, spelling and punctuation are sometimes observed- voice is mostly appropriate to audience | errors in English grammar and spelling or lack of sense of audience detract from piece |

| | | | | |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|---|
| Organization of piece | arguments are well organized and flow logically | arguments are mostly well organized and flow logically | arguments are well organized in places | piece does not show enough organization to flow easily for reader |
|------------------------------|---|--|--|---|