

# Speak: Research Essay

Realistic fiction includes “real life” topics that people deal with every day. In *Speak* by Laurie Halse Anderson, Melinda experiences several “real life” issues that set her back. For your final essay, you will research, write, and present information on one of the topics from the story. Research ONE of the issues below and construct a 5(ish) paragraph essay that demonstrates its effect on teens, and/or school culture:

\*Peer pressure\*

\*Mental illness (anxiety, depression, etc.)\*

\*Selective mutism\*

\*Assault (sexual, physical, verbal, etc.)\*

\*Bullying\*

Criteria	20 pts. Excellent	18 pts. Proficient	16 pts. Competent	14 pts. Less than Competent
<b>Organization</b>	The essay contains a <b>logically developed</b> introduction, body, and conclusion and provides an effective and powerful analysis of a topic. Paragraphs are directed by well-written topic sentences.	The essay contains a <b>loosely developed</b> introduction, body, and conclusion and provides an analysis of a topic. Paragraphs may have topic sentences, but they don't always direct the paragraphs or connect to thesis.	The essay <b>attempts to develop</b> an introduction, body, but may lack a conclusion. It attempts provide an analysis of a topic. Topic sentences are unclear or missing.	The essay <b>altogether lacks</b> a logical organization and contains three or more paragraphs, which might attempt to provide an analysis of a topic. Paragraphs don't have any topic sentences.
<b>Content</b>	The essay demonstrates a <b>clear understanding</b> of the issue. The essay demonstrates a <b>thorough, thoughtful, comprehensive grasp of the topic.</b>	The essay demonstrates a <b>general understanding</b> of the complexities of the issue. The essay demonstrates a <b>comprehensive grasp of the topic.</b>	The essay demonstrates a <b>limited understanding</b> the complexities of the issue. The essay demonstrates a <b>limited grasp of the topic.</b>	The essay demonstrates <b>no understanding</b> of the complexities of the issue. The essay demonstrates <b>little grasp of the topic.</b>
	10 pts.	8 pts.	6 pts.	4 pts.
<b>Thesis</b>	The essay provides a <b>well-structured thesis</b> that focuses on a specific subject that is clearly expressed in the thesis. <b>Includes main points of the essay</b> , organized appropriately, and found in the <b>last sentence</b> of the introduction.	The essay provides a <b>thesis</b> that is consistent and focused. Thesis provides essay's main points, but they may be a bit confusing to the reader.	The essay may <b>provide an unclear thesis</b> that establishes tone and focus and some control. The thesis neglects to include the essay's main points.	The essay may <b>provide a weak and vague thesis</b> that fails to establish control and organization. No main points are listed.
<b>Support</b>	The essay <b>logically supports</b> the thesis and main ideas with <b>details, facts, examples, and quotations</b> from CREDIBLE SOURCES.	The essay <b>supports</b> the thesis and main ideas with details and examples. From CREDIBLE SOURCES.	The essay <b>loosely supports</b> the thesis and main ideas with <b>limited</b> details and/or examples. Credible sources are used but lacking information.	The essay <b>fails to support</b> ideas with details and/or examples. No credible sources were used.
	5 pts.	4 pts.	3 pts.	2 pts.
<b>Transitions &amp; Vocabulary</b>	The essay uses the appropriate vocabulary for that audience. <b>No overuse</b> of expressions such as “like,” “a lot,” and “well.” Essay expertly includes transitions between and within paragraphs.	The essay uses some vocabulary for that audience. <b>Occasional use</b> of expressions such as “like,” “a lot,” and “well.” Essay includes transition words between and within paragraphs, but they need some work.	The essay does not adjust the vocabulary for an audience. <b>May have frequent use</b> of expressions such as “like,” “a lot,” and “well.” Essay struggles to use transition words.	The essay uses <b>limited vocabulary</b> , and makes no adjustments. <b>Frequent use</b> of expressions such as “like,” “a lot,” and “well.” Few to no transitions were used.
<b>Grammar &amp; Sentence Variety</b>	The essay contains <b>few</b> , if any, <b>grammatical errors</b> . The essay provides a <b>variety of sentence types</b> and uses <b>precise, descriptive language</b> .	The essay contains <b>some errors</b> in the conventions of the English language. (Errors do not interfere with the reader's understanding of the essay) The essay provides a <b>variety of sentence types</b> and uses some <b>descriptive language</b> .	The essay contains <b>numerous errors</b> in the conventions of the English language. (Errors <b>may interfere</b> with the reader's understanding of the paper). The essay provides <b>few types</b> of sentences, and uses <b>basic, predictable language</b> .	The essay contains <b>serious errors</b> in the conventions of the English language. (Errors <b>interfere</b> with the reader's understanding of the paper.) The essay provides <b>no sentence variety</b> .
<b>Citations</b>	Information is <b>correctly cited and punctuated</b> IN TEXT, as well as listed appropriately on <b>works cited page</b> .	In text citations included <b>errors in format or punctuation</b> , works cited page may or may not have errors	No attempt was made to format in text citations correctly; many errors on works cited page.	<b>Wealth of errors</b> in citations and works cited page. Citations may be <b>missing or incomplete</b> .
<b>TOTAL POINTS</b>	_____ / 75 points			

