**2020 Essay Contest**

Prizes: (1st) **iPad**, (2nd) **Nintendo Switch Lite**, (3rd) **Bluetooth noise cancelling headphones**

Deadline: **May 12** (Tuesday), 11:59PM (late submissions NOT accepted)

Word count: **1200 words MAXIMUM**

Submission details: (1) **Do not include your name**. Only include student ID number. (2) Submit essay to gistlec.essay@gmail.com. In the subject line, write “**Essay Contest 2020”**.

**TOPIC: What are you grateful for?**

Use this handout to get started if you are not sure how to begin.

I. **Brainstorm and make lists**. Answer the following questions by making lists. You do not need to include your answers to all of these questions in your essay. Just use these questions to help you think of ideas.

1. What makes you happy?

2. What can you not imagine living without?

3. Have you ever lived abroad or visited an unfamiliar place? What did you miss about home?

4. Is there someone who you rely on? What do you rely on them for?

5. What do you enjoy doing in your free time?

6. What inspires or motivates you when life seems difficult? What helps you endure rough times? When you're having a bad day, what makes you feel better?

7. When you have money to spare, what do you spend it on?

II. **Circle the things in your lists above that you want to write about**. What would you enjoy writing about? What ideas and experiences are you willing to share with other people? What do you think others would want to read about?

III. **Consider the things that you circled, and quickwrite** about the following questions. When you quickwrite, don’t worry about your grammar or spelling. Just write your ideas as fast as you can. You do not need to include your answers to all of these questions in your essay. Just use these questions to help you think of ideas.

1. What qualities do you appreciate about the things you circled?

2. What do these things give you?

3. How do these things make you feel?

4. If you did not have these things, how would your life be different?

5. What experiences or anecdotes can you share to help readers understand why you are grateful for these things?

6. What have others said (such as quotes from famous people, quotes from characters in books/movies, song lyrics) about these things?

7. What are you grateful for?

**IV. Continue quickwriting to develop your ideas and organize your ideas into an essay**. Read your essay several times and **revise** your content, organization, and grammar, so your main ideas can be understood by readers.