

**TSI Essay: The Texas College and Career Readiness Writing standards ask students to write essays that “demonstrate clear focus, the logical development of ideas in well-organized paragraphs, and the use of appropriate language that advances the author’s purpose.”**

## **I. Overview:**

The essay gives you an opportunity to show how effectively you can develop and express your ideas in writing. You will first read a short passage and an assignment question that are focused on an important issue. You will then write an essay in which you develop your own point of view on the issue. You should support your position with appropriate reasoning and examples. The position you take will not influence your score.

## **II. Essay Writing Tips: ( Time Limit: 1 Hour)**

1. Carefully read the prompt; determine the issue; determine your point of view.
2. Divide the essay into at least four (4) paragraphs:

### **A. Paragraph I: Introductory Paragraph:**

Address the prompt; state the issue covered by the prompt.

Make a claim; state your point of view concerning the issue addressed in the prompt.

Support the claim; state what evidence will be used in the essay to support your claim; use at least two examples or reasons that will be discussed in the Body Paragraphs.

### **B. Paragraph II: Body Paragraph:**

Discuss the first example or reason that supports your point of view. Be sure to give specific details

### **C. Paragraph II: Body Paragraph:**

Discuss the second example or reason that supports your point of view. Be sure to give specific details

### **D. Paragraph IV: Concluding Paragraph:**

Summarize your essay: Summarize your examples and point of view.

3. Carefully reread the essay; correct obvious errors and awkward sentences.

### III. Sample Prompt and Essay:

**Passage:**

*An actor, when his cue came, was unable to move onto the stage. He said, "I can't get in, the chair is in the way." And the producer said, "Use the difficulty. If it's a drama, pick the chair up and smash it. If it's comedy, fall over it." From this experience the actor concluded that in any situation in life that is negative, there is something positive you can do with it.*

Adapted from Lawrence Eisenberg, "Caine Scrutiny."

**Assignment:**

*Can any obstacle or disadvantage be turned into something good?*

**Sample Essay:**

An obstacle or disadvantage may appear to be a setback, though either has the ability to be turned into something good. For instance, Rosa Parks participated in the Civil Rights Movement in the 1950s and 60s and was jailed for her involvement. Though her jail time was initially a setback and an obstacle she had to overcome, it eventually led to the Montgomery Bus Boycott and the gradual desegregation of the United States. Similarly, the Dean of Students at my school has to overcome the obstacle of paraplegia each day, yet he describes himself as a stronger and more sensitive individual as a result. Rosa Parks and my Dean are clear examples of obstacles being turned into something good.

In Montgomery, Alabama during the Civil Rights Movement, African Americans were required to sit in the back of public buses. One day Rosa Parks refused to sit in the back of the bus and was sent to jail for her acts of civil disobedience. This action resonated with African Americans nationwide but particularly in Montgomery. The African American people staged a boycott and contributed to the desegregation which was a goal of their movement. Rosa Parks served as a symbol of what was possible if one would simply take a stand and turn their situation from unjust and degrading to one that made a profound difference in today's society.

The Dean of Student at my school, was an English teacher, a track coach, and the Dean of Students before the roof of his barn collapsed on him a few years ago. He had always been a strong man who genuinely cared for his students. Who respected and loved him. After his accident, he lost the use of his legs and feet and his life drastically changed. He had become unable to care for himself and lost great-amounts of self esteem. He ultimately decided he had to get his life back so he learned how to live independently through physical training courses, he learned to drive a car, and he returned to school. His experience which could have destroyed him and the goals he had actually allowed for him to build strength he never knew he had. Through his actions he made a severe disadvantage into a very positive life change.

Through their varying experiences, Rosa Parks and my dean demonstrate that any obstacle or disadvantage can be turned into something good.