

Comment & Win Classroom Guide for Educators

GRADE LEVEL(S): 9, 10, 11, 12

≡ RELATED ARTICLES:

- “Thoughtful Approach: Developing a Questioning Mind and Spirit”
- “The Secret Life of Internet Trolls”
- “The Power of Curiosity”
- “Storytelling Infuses Your Message with Meaning and Emotion”

Comment & Win!

The Wharton Global Youth Program (WGYP) Comment & Win

(<https://kwhs.wharton.upenn.edu/competitions/kwhs-contest-comment-win/>) is an annual contest run from the end of June to the end of August. It is designed to encourage high school-age students to directly engage with WGYP articles, podcasts and videos, and to develop stronger reflective and persuasive writing skills. The program includes biweekly rounds of competition, with each round defined by a different theme.

This guide is designed for educators to provide a set of activities that can be adapted into assignments, student projects, or summer work to keep students engaged with academic subject areas.

For background, educators are invited to visit the WGYP Comment & Win page, where they can read the rules and access articles about previous commenters and round winners. These links are rich with examples of insightful and provocative comments from high school students around the world. Here’s a great [one](#) from Stephen Wang, a junior from Hanover High School in New Hampshire, on the article What It Takes to Become a CEO.

We understand that educators adapt and change resources to suit their needs, so we have built this guide with flexibility in mind. We encourage you to use what you like from this guide and adapt it for your students and classroom.

Learning Objectives

- Identify and read a WGYE article that is both personally appealing and connected to the current round theme
- Think critically about topics—often current, global events—and their relevance to people’s lives
- Organize a clear and compelling response to the article that briefly and succinctly summarizes a viewpoint about the article and adds value to a discussion about the article
- Listen to the views of others, consider different sides of arguments, and respond with a new appreciation for varying perspectives

Activities

Below is a list of suggested activities that you can use to implement the Comment & Win assignment with your students during the summer months or during the academic year. We encourage you to use and modify these activities.

Please note that students must first be registered users of WGYE to participate digitally in the Comment & Win contest. They can sign up [HERE](#).

Single Article Assignment

Assign students the task of participating in each round of the Comment & Win contest. New rounds begin every two weeks, with the final round often lasting all of August. Students should complete a comment and/or a reply to a different article on the WGYE site for each round.

Remind students of the following:

- Students may choose any article they like from the WGYE site that fits with the theme. Remind students to think about subject areas that are important to them as they explore article choices.
- When writing a comment, students should be encouraged to connect the comment and the article to personal experiences and to express unique ideas and opinions.

- They should also first give thought to why they chose an article to comment on. Reasons might include: They know something about the subject matter that wasn't included in the article and can add value to the discussion; they identify with the topic; they have a personal experience to add; or they agree/disagree with the author.
- Encourage students to develop an authentic voice in their comments, rather than trying to “sound impressive.” Expressing viewpoints, insights and opinions should draw on students' passions and personal perspectives, and be supported by experiences and other knowledge.
- Students should be mindful that this is not an essay-writing contest. They are commenting on a text, which means their writing should have a responsive and reflective tone, rather than communicate an entirely new idea or read like a stand-alone essay. It's fine to incorporate different ideas and personal experiences, as long as they relate back to the theme and content of the article.

To prepare for the contest, educators have the option to assign this WGYM article on critical thinking:

- [Thoughtful Approach: Developing a Questioning Mind and Spirit](#)

Assessment

The provided rubric (see below) can be used to assess each comment posted. Encourage students to review the rubric prior to posting.

Portfolio Project

To extend the assignment beyond a single article, a portfolio project may be assigned. Students are asked to compile all the articles and comments they compose in each round into a portfolio presentation, which can be a tool to start the academic year with a conversation about these topics. You can divide students into partners, discussion groups or teams based on topic, and encourage conversation and debate inspired by their comments. The portfolio can also be a source for reflective or persuasive writing for students. Consider the following prompts to engage students in a review of their comment collection:

- Do you see any common themes or topics with the articles you selected?

- Were your comments based on an experience you had recently, or did you reach further into your own experiences to make those connections?
- Did your comments improve from the first to the last, and, if so, how?

If certain students are particularly passionate about articles and ideas, encourage them to expand their reflective comments into first-person essays that can be submitted to Wharton Global Youth Program for possible publication. They can send a quick description of their essay pitch to the WGYP editorial team [HERE](#).

Face to face – Comment and Win (Classroom-based)

This is an alternative activity that can be done entirely in the classroom. If students have access to computers or mobile technology, then they can read and comment digitally. If not, they can take their commenting offline with the following:

Prior to class, review the WGYP website and identify enough articles for every student in the class (e.g. 20 students = 20 articles. You can select more to provide some options for the students. Print each article and spread them out on a common table or post them around the room. Choose a theme from the Comment and Win contest and share with the students. Students browse the articles and select one to write a comment on. Using Post-It Notes or small pieces of paper with adhesive, students write out a comment and connect it to the bottom of the printed article.

These can then be posted around the classroom and students can walk around the room and read the articles and comments. Each student should be provided another Post-It Note or piece of paper that he or she can use to write a reply to one of the comments on an article. Discuss the most compelling “threads” as a class. In the end, select a handful of winners.

Assessment

You can use the “WGYP Comment & Win: Grading Rubric – Single Post” grading rubric to assess this assignment for each student.

Download the WGYP Comment & Win: Grading Rubric