



OAKLAND UNIFIED
SCHOOL DISTRICT

Community Schools, Thriving Students

History Writing Task

12th GRADE

End-of-Year 2014-15

The Minimum Wage



Student Name:

School Name:

Teacher Name:

Room #:

Class Period:

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INTRODUCTION

Background:

Over the past two years, there has been renewed national and local debate around the question of what is a reasonable minimum wage. President Obama has offered his views, as have individuals and organizations from all around the country. On the local level, cities in the Bay Area have considered responses to this question. For example, Richmond has decided to raise its minimum wage to \$13 per hour by 2018. This fall, Oakland residents voted to approve a ballot initiative to raise the minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour starting March 1 of 2015.

At the state level, the current minimum wage in California is \$9.00 per hour, with an automatic increase to \$10.00 per hour set to take effect on January 1, 2016.

Some would argue that this increase is sufficient, or even too large, while others would argue that even \$10.00 per hour is not enough to support working individuals and families. Those holding the view that \$10.00 per hour is still not enough have proposed an even greater increase.

Your task is to write an essay that takes a position on the following question.

Essay Prompt:

Use what you have learned in class and the following source documents to answer the question:

Should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour?

BUILDING HISTORICAL (and ECONOMIC) CONTEXT

1. Brainstorm Prior Outside Knowledge (You know this!)

Recall what you already know. Based on what you've learned in class and out (TV, internet, reading, newspaper, relatives, friends, etc.), make a list of all that you know about the minimum wage. What concepts you've learned in Economics might connect to this issue?

2. Evidence/Argument T-Chart

Next, to help visualize your thoughts, use your prior knowledge to create a T-chart with evidence and/or supporting reasons for both sides of the argument. Do this before reading the documents. You can update this after you read the documents, as well.

YES – Raise to \$12.25	NO—Do not raise to \$12.25.

READING THE SOURCE DOCUMENTS

1. Read, Highlight/Underline, and Annotate the Source Documents.

- As you read, highlight/underline and annotate documents, decide how each can be used, and label them accordingly.
- For each document, you should try to consider: **Who** created the source? **What** type of source is this? **When** was it created? **Where** was it created? **Who** was it created for? **Why** was it created?
- Optional:* Use the guiding question after each document and/or the [document notes chart](#).

READING THE SOURCE DOCUMENTS

DOCUMENT #1: Infographic: Minimum Wage Workers

“The Truth About Who Makes Minimum Wage” Infographic from Momsrising.org, 2013.

According to their website: *MomsRising.org* is an on-the-ground and online grassroots organization of more than a million people who are working to achieve economic security for all moms, women, and families in the United States. *MomsRising* is working for paid family leave, earned sick days, affordable childcare, and for an end to the wage and hiring discrimination which penalizes so many mothers. *MomsRising* also advocates for better childhood nutrition, health care for all, toxic-free environments, breastfeeding rights ..., and a national budget that reflects the contributions of women and moms.



<http://action.momsrising.org/sign/momsraisethewage/>

Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

DOCUMENT #2: Living Wage Chart**Living Wage Calculations for California Counties (from MIT Living Wage Calculator)**

This online tool was developed as part of the [Living Wage Project](#). For more information about this tool and its development, please see the publication [Living Wage and Job Gap Study of Beaufort County, South Carolina](#). The Living Wage Calculator is a companion to the [Poverty in America website](#).

Living wage: a wage that enables people to live decently and raise their families here, taking into account area-specific cost of living, as well as the basic expenses involved in supporting a family (definition adapted from Harvard Living Wage fact sheet).

<http://livingwage.mit.edu/>

	Living Wage for 1 adult	Living Wage for 2 adults, 2 children
Alameda	\$11.51	\$22.64
Butte	\$8.82	\$18.80
Fresno	\$9.20	\$18.71
Humboldt	\$8.76	\$19.17
Kings	\$9.15	\$18.35
Marin	\$12.83	\$24.13
Mendocino	\$9.20	\$19.66
Monterey	\$10.82	\$19.42
Napa	\$11.25	\$22.44
Orange	\$13.12	\$24.23
Riverside	\$10.72	\$20.67
Sacramento	\$9.95	\$20.17
Santa Barbara	\$11.82	\$21.78
Sonoma	\$10.69	\$22.12

Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

DOCUMENT #3: Editorial Cartoon

Editorial cartoon by Gary Varvel, The Indianapolis Star, 2013.

Gary Varvel is a regular cartoonist for the Indianapolis Star and a part-time art teacher at Bethesda Christian High School in Brownsburg, Indiana.



Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

DOCUMENT #4: Editorial: Minimum Wage and Job Opportunities

“The Minimum Wage Delusion, and the Death of Common Sense” by James Dorn, Forbes.com, May 7, 2013.

Forbes is an American business magazine. The magazine’s motto is “The Capitalist Tool.”



The belief that increasing the minimum wage is socially beneficial is a delusion. It is short-sighted and ignores evident reality. Workers who retain their jobs are made better off but only at the expense of unskilled, mostly young, workers who either lose their jobs or can’t find a job at the legal minimum.

A higher minimum wage attracts new entrants but does not guarantee them a job. What happens on the demand side of the market is not surprising: if the minimum wage exceeds the prevailing market wage (determined by supply and demand), some workers will lose their jobs or have their hours cut. There is abundant evidence that a 10 percent increase in the minimum wage leads to a 1 to 3 percent decrease in employment of low-skilled workers (using teens as a proxy) in the short run, and to a larger decrease in the long run, along with rising unemployment.

There will be fewer jobs for low-skilled workers and higher unemployment rates—especially for minorities—and participation rates will fall as workers affected by the minimum wage drop out of the formal labor market.

The minimum wage violates the principle of freedom by limiting the range of choices open to workers, preventing them from accepting jobs at less than the legal minimum. It also prohibits employers from hiring those workers, even if both parties would be better off. Thus, contrary to the claims of minimum-wage proponents, the government does not increase opportunities for low-skilled workers by increasing the minimum wage. If a worker loses her job or can’t find one, her income is zero. Employers will not pay a worker \$9 per hour if that worker cannot produce at least that amount....

In a recent case study ... Joseph Sabia, Richard Burkhauser, and Benjamin Hansen find that when New York State increased the minimum wage from \$5.15 to \$6.75 per hour, in 2004–06, there was a “20.2 to 21.8 percent reduction in the employment of younger less-educated individuals,” with the greatest impact on 16-to-24 year olds....

Today black teen unemployment is more than 40 percent; nearly double that for white teens.

<http://www.forbes.com/sites/jamesdorn/2013/05/07/the-minimum-wage-delusion-and-the-death-of-common-sense/>

Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

DOCUMENT #5: Minimum Wage to Rise in Bay Area Cities

Higher minimum wage wins with big support in SF and Oakland *By John Cote, SFGate, November 4, 2014*
John Cote is a staff writer at the San Francisco Chronicle. SFGate is a news website publishing stories about the Bay Area.

San Francisco voters, keenly aware of the rising cost of living in one of the most expensive cities in the nation, voted overwhelmingly Tuesday to gradually raise the minimum wage to \$15 an hour.

Nearly complete returns showed San Francisco's Proposition J cruising to victory with more than two-thirds support. With almost 98 percent of precincts reporting, the measure had more than 76 percent support.

A similar ballot measure in Oakland had an even wider lead with almost half of the votes counted. It had 80 percent support with 44 percent of precincts reporting. Measure FF would raise Oakland's minimum wage from \$9 to \$12.25 starting in March. Both measures need only a simple majority to pass.

The issue was also championed by San Francisco's more moderate and business-friendly mayor, Ed Lee. In nearly four years in office, Lee has embraced technology companies and relentlessly pushed a job creation agenda but now presides over a city that a Brookings Institution report in March found has the fastest-growing gap between the rich and poor.

"To me, it's a bit personal," said Lee, who washed dishes in his family's Seattle restaurant growing up. "I know what (low-wage workers) are going through. I've washed those dishes. ... We are now going to be the light for the rest of the country to lead the way on a real, true minimum wage."

Prop. J would gradually raise the minimum wage from the current \$10.74 an hour to \$15 by July 2018, boosting the paychecks of at least 60,000 restaurant, retail and other minimum-wage workers by \$75 to \$197 a week, according to an analysis by the San Francisco controller's office.

www.sfgate.com/bayarea/article/Higher-minimum-wage-in-SF-leading-easily-in-early-5871304.php

Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

DOCUMENT #6: Effects of Minimum Wage Increase on Workers and Jobs

“What Really Happens When You Raise the Minimum Wage”, by Bryce Covert, ThinkProgress.org, February 18, 2014.

According to their website: *Think Progress is a project of the [Center for American Progress Action Fund](#). We produce critical reporting on Republicans, Democrats and Independents alike. We check our facts and seek multiple sources. Any errors will be promptly and transparently corrected.*

The Congressional Budget Office (CBO) released a new report on Tuesday on the impacts of raising the minimum wage to \$10.10 an hour and \$9 an hour. It found that a \$10.10 minimum wage, implemented by 2016, would mean higher earnings for 16.5 million workers, resulting in \$31 billion more in higher earnings. It would also lift nearly 1 million people out of poverty.

But it also found that an increase would reduce jobs slightly. “Once fully implemented in the second half of 2016, the \$10.10 option would reduce total employment by about 500,000 workers, or 0.3 percent,” it projects. That figure takes into account what it says would be a decrease in jobs for low-wage workers as well as an increase of “a few tens of thousands of jobs” for others thanks to higher demand. “Once the increases and decreases in income for all workers are taken into account, overall real income would rise by \$2 billion,” it says. The vast majority of people impacted, over 95 percent, will be impacted positively.

It attributes the job losses to employers increasing prices to deal with the higher wage, which would lower demand and therefore their need for more workers, as well as to some employers substituting machines or technology for workers due to the higher cost of wages.

But businesses may respond to a higher minimum wage in other ways. In a paper for the Center for Economic and Policy Research, John Schmitt argues that they can benefit from improved efficiency and lower turnover. A higher wage may lead employers to push employees to work harder, which can be preferable to cutting hours or workers. In fact, the majority of fast food restaurants in Georgia and Alabama said they would respond to a minimum wage increase with higher performance standards. A higher wage can also make it easier to recruit and retain workers, which can improve the bottom line. Dealing with turnover can be costly: replacing someone can cost as much as 20 percent of her salary.

Other studies have found that while some job losses may occur, there can still be an economic net gain thanks to the fact that so many workers will have more money to spend. A \$10.10 minimum wage would mean a direct raise for 16.7 million workers, according to the Economic Policy Institute, who would then have more money in their pockets to spend on goods and services, boosting the economy. It also found that a gradual increase to \$10.10 by 2016 would increase wages by \$35 billion, which would boost GDP growth by about \$22 billion.

<http://thinkprogress.org/economy/2014/02/18/3303201/cbo-minimum-wage/>

Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

DOCUMENT #7: Effects of Minimum Wage Increase on the Economy

“Raising the Minimum Wage is Good for Business”, by Peter Dreier and Donald Cohen, *The Huffington Post*, February 23, 2013.

According to their website: *[The Huffington Post is] the destination for news, blogs and original content offering coverage of US politics, entertainment, style, world news, technology and comedy.*

[R]aising the minimum wage is good for business and the overall economy. Why? Because when poor workers have more money to spend, they spend it, almost entirely in the local community, on basic necessities like housing, food, clothing and transportation. When consumer demand grows, businesses thrive, earn more profits, and create more jobs. Economists call this the "multiplier effect." According to Doug Hall of the Economic Policy Institute, a minimum wage hike to \$9 would pump \$21 billion into the economy.

Moreover, since most minimum wage jobs are in "sticky" (immobile) industries -- such as restaurants, hotels, hospitals and nursing homes and retail stores -- that can't flee overseas, raising the level doesn't lead to job flight. Not surprisingly, the National Restaurant Association is, along with the U.S. Chamber of Commerce, one of the fiercest opponents of a minimum wage hike.

In recent years, the nation's job growth has been concentrated in low-wage sectors, led by Walmart, the nation's largest private employer, whose pay levels are so low that many employees are eligible for food stamps. More than one-quarter of all jobs pay poverty-level wages. According to a National Employment Law Project study, the majority of new jobs created since 2010 pay just \$13.83 an hour or less. This has contributed to the nation's widening economic inequality. Nobel laureate economist Joseph Stiglitz recently said, "Increasing inequality means a weaker economy" for all of us.

http://www.huffingtonpost.com/peter-dreier/raising-the-minimum-wage- b_2750336.html

Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

DOCUMENT #8: Effects of Minimum Wage Increase on Prices

“When the Minimum Wage Goes Up, the Menu Price Also Rises”, by Venessa Wong, Bloomberg Business Week, February 25, 2014.

According to their website: *Bloomberg News strives to be the most influential source of reporting on economies, markets, companies, industries and governments 24 hours a day, 365 days a year with complete context, perspective and precision. We are dedicated to reporting the truth, without concern for any interest except the public interest and the information needs of our readers and subscribers.*



In the restaurant industry, some chains have already prepared to boost menu prices in response to minimum-wage changes in such large markets as California, New York, and Washington. At the national level, Congress and President Obama continue to grapple with increasing the federal minimum wage; progress could bring similar hikes at eateries across the country.

Restaurants are a large low-wage employer, and industry executives have grumbled that wage increases are driving up the price of doing business. To maintain profits, a number of chains have recently announced plans to partially offset the increases by passing them to consumers:

- Jack In The Box expects the higher minimum wage in California—where it has about 40 percent of its restaurants—to reduce quarterly operating margins by 0.8 percent when it rises from \$8 to \$9 in July, Chief Financial Officer Jerry Rebel. The state’s minimum wage will rise again, to \$10, in 2016. To compensate, by 2015 Jack in the Box plans to increase menu prices either 1.4 percent [for example, a Jumbo Jack with cheese, normally \$2.79, would increase in cost to \$2.83] just in California or a little less than 1 percent across all its restaurants.
- Cheesecake Factory operates about one-fifth of its restaurants in California, where it expects to sustain an additional \$2 million to \$3 million in costs from the state’s new minimum wage. This was part of the chain’s reasoning in boosting prices by 2 percent this year.
- Denny’s said it will plan on “an additional modest price increase” at its California restaurants in July, affecting about a quarter of the chain’s restaurants.

The effect of raising the federal minimum wage to the proposed \$10.10, compared to the current \$7.25, would be more widespread.

<http://www.businessweek.com/articles/2014-02-25/when-minimum-wage-goes-up-the-menu-price-also-rises>

Guiding Question:

Based on this document, should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour? Explain.

END SOURCE DOCUMENTS

TAKING NOTES on the DOCUMENTS (Pros and Cons)

Directions: Take notes supporting each position. Include any claims, reasons, or evidence you find in the sources provided. Do not include your opinion. Use these notes for your academic discussion and essay planning.

Document	YES, raise to \$12.25	NO, don't raise to \$12.25
<p>Document #1: <i>Infographic: Minimum Wage Workers</i></p>		
<p>Document #2: <i>Living Wage Chart</i></p>		
<p>Document #3: <i>Editorial Cartoon</i></p>		
<p>DOCUMENT #4: <i>Editorial: Minimum Wage and Job Opportunities</i></p>		

12th Grade End-of-Year History Writing Task

Document	YES, raise to \$12.25	NO, don't raise to \$12.25
<p>DOCUMENT #5: <i>Minimum Wage to Rise in Bay Area Cities</i></p>		
<p>DOCUMENT #6: <i>Effects of Minimum Wage Increase on Workers and Jobs</i></p>		
<p>DOCUMENT #7: <i>Effects of Minimum Wage Increase on the Economy</i></p>		
<p>DOCUMENT #8: <i>Effects of Minimum Wage Increase on Prices</i></p>		

12th Grade End-of-Year History Writing Task

Document	YES, raise to \$12.25	NO, don't raise to \$12.25
<i>OUTSIDE KNOWLEDGE</i>		
<i>OUTSIDE KNOWLEDGE</i>		

ENGAGING IN ACADEMIC DISCUSSIONS (optional)

Your teacher may now lead you in an academic discussion activity that will help you exchange ideas, analyze multiple points of view, and make a personal decision about the issue.

MY ARGUMENTS ORGANIZER

(Optional format, teacher may provide different organizer)

Directions: Prepare at least two reasons, supporting evidence and how you will address a counterclaim. There is room for you to include an optional third reason.

CLAIM:



REASON #1	REASON #2	REASON #3
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SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE	SUPPORTING EVIDENCE
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COUNTERCLAIM/CONCESSION	MY RESPONSE TO THE COUNTERCLAIM
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HISTORY WRITING TASK ASSESSMENT

Directions:

Please respond to the prompt in writing. You may use your notes and your answers to your constructed response questions to inform your writing. Your essay should have a minimum of 5 paragraphs.

Writing Prompt:

Should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour?

After reading the provided source documents on the topic, write an argumentative essay (at least 5 paragraphs) that addresses the question and support your position with evidence. Be sure to acknowledge competing views (counterclaims).

1. Begin with an introduction that frames the purpose of your essay and states a claim.
2. Develop your argument with clear reasons and evidence drawn from **at least five sources** and also from your **outside historical content knowledge** (evidence learned in class or elsewhere). Analyze the significance of the evidence and how it supports the claim.
3. Acknowledge and address an opposing or competing view (counterclaim).
4. Provide a conclusion that effectively summarizes the argument and explains its significance.

Be Sure To:

- Use appropriate transitions.
- Use precise language and vocabulary to inform or explain your topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Edit for spelling and grammar.
- Write a minimum of 5 paragraphs.

ARGUMENTATIVE SCORING RUBRIC – STUDENT VERSION PERFORMANCE

Scoring Category	What do I need to do?
<u>Argument: Claim and Counter-Claim</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> My claim/thesis statement takes a clear position on the topic. <input type="checkbox"/> My claim/thesis outlines the main arguments in my essay. <input type="checkbox"/> I acknowledge and address any <i>important</i> opposing claim(s) and conflicting evidence in my essay (when required).
<u>Evidence & Sourcing</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> I use evidence from at least half of the documents. <input type="checkbox"/> The evidence I use in each body paragraph supports my argument . <input type="checkbox"/> My evidence is grouped appropriately by paragraph. <input type="checkbox"/> I use different pieces of evidence to corroborate one another, and contradict each other (when appropriate). <input type="checkbox"/> I identify the date, author, and purpose of documents in order to determine the perspective, meaning, and reliability of the document.*
<u>Analysis & Elaboration</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> I analyze my evidence to show its significance and how it supports the arguments and claim.
<u>Historical Context*</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> I use accurate historical evidence beyond the source documents provided , including what I have read, watched, discussed, and learned in and out of class. <input type="checkbox"/> I use vocabulary from history class in my writing.
<u>Organization</u> My essay includes... a. Claim/Thesis b. Body Paragraphs c. Conclusion	<input type="checkbox"/> My introduction provides background information to set the context, and includes a claim/thesis statement . <input type="checkbox"/> My topic sentences clearly introduce each of the body paragraphs . <input type="checkbox"/> My reasons and evidence are organized logically . <input type="checkbox"/> My conclusion restates the thesis, effectively summarizes the arguments, and explains why the issue is significant
<u>Style, Voice, & Conventions</u>	<input type="checkbox"/> I use a formal tone , avoiding the use of first person when possible. <input type="checkbox"/> I use transition words to connect my ideas and paragraphs. <input type="checkbox"/> I re-read my essay to revise and correct any errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation . <input type="checkbox"/> I use persuasive/rhetorical strategies to make my argument more convincing.**

*For history essay only.

**For English essay only.

WRITTEN ESSAY

End-of-Year HWT 2014-15

Student Name:

School:

Teacher:

Class Period:

Should California raise the state minimum wage to \$12.25 per hour?

After filling in your heading information in the top right corner, begin typing your essay in the space below. You can use the Table of Contents to look back at the documents and your notes.