**Historical Letter of Recommendation**

Your local newspaper is running a poll on the “Top Ten American Presidents.” Follow the steps below to write a letter recommending that Thomas Jefferson be included on the top ten list.

**PREWRITING**

1. Gathering Ideas about a Person’s Character Make a list of Jefferson’s character traits, based on what you have read from your textbook. Some character traits to consider are listed below.

Character Traits

• Adventuresome

• Calmness

• Citizenship

• Compassion

• Cooperation

• Courage

• Creativity

• Dependability

• Determination

• Diplomacy

• Fairness

• Flexibility

• Friendship

• Generosity

• Gratitude

• Honesty

• Individualism

• Intelligence

• Inventiveness

• Kindness

• Knowledge Leadership

• Loyalty

• Patriotism

• Perseverance

• Respect

• Responsibility

• Self-discipline

• Spirituality

• Tolerance

2. Gathering Information about a Person’s Actions List Jefferson’s outstanding actions as president. One action is entered to get you started. Some actions might suggest additional character traits. For example, you might note that Jefferson chose to keep the Bank of the United States. He thought the bank was practical, even though he had originally opposed it. From this action, you might add willing to change his mind to your list of traits.

Actions

• Approved the Louisiana Purchase, almost doubling the size of the United

States

3. Organizing your ideas

Now reorder the items in your lists from least important to most important.

The Jefferson Era Focus on Writing

4. Using a Model that will be handed out to you in class, use it to get started writing. Make certain your letter includes each part shown.

Heading:

Your address and the date

Inside Address

Salutation

Main Idea Statement

Features Editor

Local Newspaper

123 Main Street

Your City, State 12345

Dear Editor:

Thomas Jefferson deserves to be on the list of the top ten American presidents.

5. Writing your letter begins with the body of your letter and with the main idea, as shown on the other sheet. Next, review your lists of character traits and actions. Select the three or four points that best support the main idea.

Try to include a mix of traits and actions. Start with the least important point and move to the most important.

End with a strong statement about the significance of Jefferson’s presidency.

Closing

Your Signature

Sincerely,

Your Name Typed Here

**EVALUATING AND PROOFREADING**

6. Evaluating Your Letter is your letter convincing enough to persuade the newspaper’s editors to put Jefferson on the top ten list? Use the questions on the next page to evaluate and revise your letter.

Name Class Date

7. Proofreading Your Letter to perfect your letter before sharing it, check the following:

• Capitalization and spelling of all proper names—people, places, and titles before names

• Capitalization of political parties and certain historical events, such as

Democratic-Republican Party or Louisiana Purchase

• Punctuation, grammar, and spelling

Letter of Recommendation, continued Focus on Writing

• Does the body of your letter start with the main idea?

• Does the body of your letter include at least three points?

• Did you provide enough information about the significance of each point so that readers will understand?

• Is all of the information in your letter accurate?

• Is your letter well organized? Do your points move from least important to most important?

• Did you end your letter with a strong closing statement about the significance of Jefferson’s presidency?