Slicing the Pie

Someone once said that there are two kinds of people in the world: those that divide the world into two kinds of people, and those that do not. Then again, somebody else one said that there are really three kinds of people in the world: those that can count, and those that cannot.

(Ha, ha, very funny,…) 

But seriously, folks, you can take almost anything in the world and break it down into different types or different categories. This is called “Classification and Division,” but it’s easier to understand the concept if you just think of it as “Slicing the Pie.” You take a whole group of something (everything in the pie) and break it down into different subtypes (slices of pie). It’s an interesting way to create an essay or article. It’s especially interesting when the writer has his or her own unique way of classifying things—that is, a unique way of slicing the pie.

Kinds of friends
Kinds of teachers
Ways to serve
Ways to impress your parents
Ways to show love
Kinds of essays
Ways of seeking revelation/inspiration
Ways to learn how to ______
Kinds of classical musicians
Kinds of moods (a particular person) has
Kinds of people every body likes
Ways to please (whomever)
Kinds of General Conference “go-ers”
Kinds of books
Ways to eat a (whatever)
Kinds of talents (intelligence)
Kinds of sin
Ways of taking care of a dog (cat, fish, etc.)
Kinds of dog owners (cat owners, etc.)
Kinds of snow
Kinds of Boy Scouts (Girl Scouts, etc.)
Kinds of campers
Ways to build a fire
Kinds of football players (basketball players, baseball etc.)
Ways of reacting to (a fire, earthquake, etc.)
Ways to laugh
Personality types
Kinds of baby sitters
Ways to make a ______
Ways to fix a ______
Ways to apply makeup
Kinds of television commercials
Kinds of movies

Or use the following sentence frames, fill in the blanks, and create your own topics:

There are (number) kinds of (whatever): the (label it), the (label it), the . . .

There are (number) ways to (do whatever) . . . . (You may also want to attach a label to each way.)

Hints for writing:

- Avoid traditional classifications—make your view unique.
- Give creative names or labels to your different classifications (types).
- Explain each type thoroughly devoting at least a full paragraph to each different classification.
- Create very specific and descriptive examples for each classification.
- Make the paper fun to read. Use an entertaining voice and style.
Examples of “Slicing the Pie”

- Read “Good, Better, Best” by Elder Dallin H. Oaks. Look for three kinds of things we can do.
- Read “The Spirit of Revelation” by Elder David A. Bednar. Look for several ways the Spirit of Revelation can be revealed to us.
- Read “A Prophet’s Counsel and Prayer for Youth” by President Gordon B. Hinckley. Look for several ways to be, and a description of each.
- Read “Four Titles” by President Dieter F. Uchtdorf. Look for the four titles and their descriptions.
Scoring Guide

Your paper will be evaluated on each of the “Traits of Effective Writing” using a 5-point scale:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Description</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>A good performance. Any weaknesses are minor.</td>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>An adequate performance. Has some serious weaknesses, but not enough to be below the basic standard.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Below standard performance. Problems are severe enough that the paper is not acceptable as is. Needs revision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>You have misunderstood or ignored the basic requirements. No credit without revision.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Minimal or no attempt at completing the assignment as directed. No credit without rewrite.</td>
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The assignment is worth 100 points, and your score on the paper will be the percentage of the above points you earn.

1. Ideas and Information
   - Effective writing has interesting, specific information (content).
   - It has a clear and effective purpose.
   - Ideas are well developed with specific, concrete details or examples.
   - There is a central thesis or theme (either stated or clearly implied).
   - It has an interesting and appropriate title.
   - The readers’ attention is held throughout, and the reader feels rewarded with new ideas, information, or insights.
   - The writing does not just scratch the surface of a topic, but has depth and completeness.

2. Organization
   - Regardless of what form or genre the writing takes, good writing always has a purposeful organizational pattern.
   - The various parts of the paper have logical divisions and sequence.
   - Main ideas are supported with specific, well-organized examples, explanations, definitions, and details.
   - If the writing is prose, it is organized in well-developed paragraphs.
   - If it is poetry, there is evidence of good decision making in word, line, and stanza arrangement.
   - There is a sense of order, direction, and unity in the piece. Transitions between sentences and paragraphs are smooth.

3. Voice
   - In the good writing, you can hear the writer’s own special way of expressing ideas.
   - The voice gives the writing personality and shows that the writer sincerely cares about the topic and audience.
   - Therefore, the voice must be appropriate to the intended audience or purpose. An academic essay in your history or science class, for example, would not have the same voice as a personal essay, poem, or short story.
| 4. Word Choice | Simply put, good writing contains good words which are appropriate to the purpose.  
Nouns and verbs are specific.  
Modifiers often appeal to the senses.  
Words are selected to fit meaning, not just to impress.  
Vague words and overused expressions are avoided.  
Many phrases seem fresh and original.  
The reader gets the impression that nobody has said it exactly like this before. |
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<td>Self Grade</td>
<td>Other</td>
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| 5. Smooth, Well-crafted Sentences | Each sentence is well-constructed.  
The writing flows smoothly and clearly from one sentence to the next.  
Sentences vary in length and don’t all begin in the same way.  
The sentences should not seem choppy and disconnected, nor should they ramble (or run on) without a sense of direction, order, or closure.  
When sentences are well formed, they are punctuated correctly, and there is a sense of fluency which matches the natural rhythm of language and makes it easy to follow and enjoyable to read. |
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| 6. Conventions | Good writing is carefully edited for clarity, brevity, usage, and mechanics.  
Clarity means that the meaning is clear.  
Brevity means that it is not wordy or repetitive.  
Mechanics means appropriate punctuation, spelling, and capitalization.  
Usage refers to acceptable language, word choice, and grammar. |
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| 7. Presentation | The final manuscript satisfies all length requirements (minimum of 300 words) and manuscript requirements (typed on word processor, scoring guide attached, etc.) as specified.  
Font, margins, and spacing make the paper neat and readable. Any graphics used (optional) aid the reader. |
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