

## Polished Blog Edit Answer Key

### Edited Version:

Our school's debate team had an amazing weekend at the state tournament! **Despite** the long travel hours and early mornings, everyone showed up with energy and determination. We faced some really tough schools, but our focus never wavered **despite** the pressure. I was especially proud of our captain, Jordan, who spoke clearly and confidently **despite** losing his voice the night before. The judges were impressed, and our team ended up in the finals. It was a weekend of learning and teamwork, **despite** the exhaustion by Sunday night.

### Teacher's Guide

- **Skill Focus:** Helps students identify the difference in tone between **despite** (formal) and **in spite of** (informal or conversational).
- **Differentiation Tips:**
  - Model the tone difference by reading a sentence aloud both ways and discussing how the word choice changes the style.
  - Allow struggling learners to underline the phrase first before rewriting for clarity.
- **Engagement Ideas:**
  - Let students "publish" their edited version as a class blog post on a school wall or online forum.
  - Have groups work as "editorial teams," scoring each other's revisions for formal accuracy.
- **Extension Activities:**
  - Challenge advanced students to create their own informal-to-formal rewrite on a topic of their choice (sports, art, or school life).
  - Discuss why tone and word choice matter when writing for different audiences, such as teachers, peers, or the public.