



Language Arts: Writing

Free Half-Length Practice Test – FPT9



Language
English

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Language Arts: Writing

Directions

Time – 85 minutes (Multiple Choice Questions and Essay)

25 Multiple Choice Questions and 1 Essay Question

This is a test of some of the skills involved in revising written material. There are five selections that present draft reports, letters, or articles. Each selection is presented twice, first in a box in a conventional format and then in a spread-out format with certain parts underlined and numbered. You will be asked to correct or improve the underlined and numbered parts. Read quickly through the boxed text to get an idea of its purpose and style. Then go on to the spread-out format.

For some of the underlined parts, there is no corresponding question in the right-hand column; instead, just four alternatives are listed. Choose the alternative that

- makes the statement grammatically correct;
- expresses the idea in the clearest or most appropriate way;
- is worded most consistently with the style and purpose of the writing;
- organizes the ideas in the most effective way.

In some cases, there may be more than one problem to correct or improve. When you have decided which alternative is best, mark your choice on the answer sheet. If you think the original underlined version is best, choose “No change.”

Other underlined parts have questions about organization or spelling in the right-hand column. In questions about organization, you will probably find it helpful to look at the boxed text. In the questions about spelling, you are to indicate which of three underlined words is misspelled, if any. If there are no errors in any of the words, choose “None.”

Work as quickly as you can without becoming careless. Do not spend too much time on any question that is difficult for you to answer. Instead, skip it and return to it later if you have time. Try to answer every question even if you have to guess.

Mark all your answers on the answer sheet. Give only one answer to each question.

If you decide to change one of your answers, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Be sure that the number of the question you are answering matches the number of the row of answer choices you are marking on your answer sheet. The answer sheet may contain more rows than you need.

You will have 85 minutes to complete the multiple-choice questions and essay question of the Writing test.

Questions 1 through 7 refer to the following selection.

Student representatives drafted an announcement for an all-school party.

Read quickly through the draft in the box below. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

WE WANT TO SEE YOU THERE!
Benning High's Back-to-School Cookout
September 6 at 7.00 P.M.

¶1 Let's have a big turnout at City Park for this year's Back-to-School Cookout.

Members of the student senate has been planning an evening of fun, food, and foot-tapping festivities to celebrate the beginning of another extraordinary year.

¶2 From 7.00 to 9.00, Faculty advisor's Robert Henderson, Joseph Weinstein, and Andrea Wu will be serving everyone's favorites hot off the grill. The International Club will provide a mouth-watering assortment of desserts from around the world.

¶3 Leading off the entertainment for the evening will be our award-winning Benny's Jazz Band, followed by a performance by our own, show choir The Benning Transfer.

¶4 Don't miss it, in that it's the year's first big party!

¶5 Admission is \$2.00 for students with an activity card. \$3.00 without one. Students having their Benning ID card along with them will only be admitted.

WE WANT TO SEE YOU THERE!

**Benning High's Back-to-School
Cookout**

September 6 at 7.00 P.M.

¶1 Let's have a big turnout at City Park for this year's Back-to-School Cookout. Members of the student senate **1** has been planning an evening of fun, food, and foot-tapping **2** festivities to **2** celebrate the beginning of another **2** extrordinary year.

¶2 From 7.00 to 9.00, **3** Faculty advisor's Robert Henderson, Joseph Weinstein, and Andrea Wu will be serving everyone's favorites hot off the grill. The International Club will provide a mouth-watering assortment of desserts from around the world.

¶3 Leading off the entertainment for the evening will be our award-winning Benny's Jazz Band, followed by a performance by our **4** own, show choir The Benning Transfer.

1 _____

- A. No change
- B. were planning
- C. have planned
- D. has planned

2 _____

Which of these words, if any, is misspelled?

- A. None
- B. festivities
- C. celebrate
- D. extrordinary

3 _____

- A. No change
- B. faculty advisors
- C. faculty Advisors
- D. Faculty Advisor's

4 _____

- A. No change
- B. own show, choir The
- C. own show choir, The
- D. own show choir The

¶4 5 Don't miss it, in that it's the year's first big party!

¶5 Admission is \$2.00 for students with an activity card. 6 \$3.00 without one. 7 Students having their Benning ID card along with them will only be admitted.

5 _____

- A. No change
- B. The first big party of the year does not want you to be missing!
- C. It being the year's first big party, don't miss it!
- D. Don't miss the first big party of the year!

6 _____

- A. No change
- B. \$3.00, for without.
- C. \$3.00 for those without one.
- D. \$3.00 for you're without.

7 _____

- A. No change
- B. Students must show their Benning ID card to be admitted.
- C. Bringing your Benning ID card is necessary because you can't get in without one.
- D. Only students will be admitted carrying a Benning ID card with them.

Questions 8 through 19 refer to the following selection.

Read through the draft of an article from a science website. Then go onto the suggestions for revisions that follow.

The numbers before the sentences in paragraph 3 are for use in answering questions.

Monarch Migration

¶1 Perhaps North America’s most beautiful natural phenomanon is the annual migration of the monarch butterfly. Each fall and spring, generations of monarchs flood the sky above certain parts of the continent. While a single monarch butterfly is only ten centimeters wide and weighing less than one gram, clouds of migrating monarchs can actually be seen in satellite imagery.

¶2 Monarchs thrive only under specific environmental conditions. With respect to the formation of the ideal monarch habitat, weather proves to be the predominant component. Monarchs require a temperate habitat; therefore, the changeable climate of the United States forces most monarchs to migrate south for the winter. No individual butterfly lives long enough to complete the entire round trip.

¶3 {1} Typical male monarchs travel eighty miles per day, though in a single day a tagged male once was reported to have covered 265 miles. {2} The season and location of a monarch’s birth can do the total distance traveled during its lifetime. {3} Consider, for example, if a monarch were born in the northern United States in late summer or early fall. {4} Such a butterfly might migrate south to central Mexico but then might complete only one-half of the return trip before dying the next spring. {5} Even in so short a lifetime, such a monarch would have traveled nearly 3,000 miles. {6} Any offspring of such a butterfly, the next generation, then will have completed the remainder of the journey back to the northern United States.

¶4 Possible tools butterflies rely on to help navigate these pathways for migration include instinct, chemical markers left along their route by previous generations, and even the sun’s position and the Earth’s magnetic pull. Scientists still lack a full explanation for this successful yearly migration. Therefore, well-documented and researched theories provide partial insights into one of nature’s most eye-catching events.

Monarch Migration

¶1 Perhaps North America's most **8** beautiful natural **8** phenomanon is the **8** annual migration of the monarch butterfly. Each fall and spring, generations of monarchs flood the sky above certain parts of the **8** continent. While a single monarch butterfly is only ten centimeters **9** wide and weighing less than one gram, clouds of migrating monarchs can actually be seen in satellite imagery. **10**

8 _____

One of the four indicated words is misspelled.

Which change in spelling corrects the error?

- A. beautifull
- B. phenomenon
- C. anual
- D. contenent

9 _____

- A. No change
- B. wide, weighs
- C. wide weighing
- D. wide and weighs

10 _____

The writer is considering whether or not to add a concluding sentence to paragraph 1.

Which choice is best?

- A. No change; the paragraph is best as written.
- B. Isn't that amazing?
- C. I know that fact surprised me.
- D. That would really be a sight to see.

¶2 Monarchs thrive only under specific environmental conditions. **11** With respect to the formation of the ideal monarch habitat, weather proves to be the predominant component. Monarchs require a temperate **12** habitat; therefore, the **13** changeable climate of the United States forces most monarchs to migrate south for the winter. No individual butterfly lives long enough to complete the entire round trip.

11 _____

- A. No change
- B. How the ideal monarch habitat formed is with the weather playing the major role.
- C. Weather plays the most important role in forming the ideal monarch habitat.
- D. Weather emerges as the main ideal monarch habitat formation factor.

12 _____

- A. No change
- B. habitat and therefore,
- C. habitat, therefore,
- D. habitat therefore,

13 _____

The writer wants to replace the indicated word with one that is both more precise and appropriate.

Which choice is best?

- A. mutable
- B. seasonal
- C. irregular
- D. uncertain

¶2 Monarchs thrive only under specific environmental conditions. With respect to the formation of the ideal monarch habitat, weather proves to be the predominant component. Monarchs require a temperate habitat; therefore, the changeable climate of the United States forces most monarchs to migrate south for the winter. **14** No individual butterfly lives long enough to complete the entire round trip.

14 _____
The writer wants to add a sentence before the last sentence of paragraph 2.

Which choice is best?

- A.** How is it that the butterflies are able to migrate so far?
- B.** It is not just the butterflies that do this, as many birds do it too.
- C.** The butterflies begin their journey in the fall, returning north each spring.
- D.** The butterflies are sensitive to temperature, so they have to migrate south every single year.

¶3 {1} Typical male monarchs travel eighty miles per day, though **15** in a single day a **15** tagged male once **15** was reported to have covered **15** 265 miles. **16** {2} The season and location of a monarch’s birth can do the total distance traveled during its lifetime. {3} Consider, for example, if a monarch were born in the northern United States in late summer or early fall. {4} Such a butterfly might migrate south to central Mexico but then might complete only one-half of the return trip before dying the next spring. {5} Even in so short a lifetime, such a monarch would have traveled nearly 3,000 miles. {6} Any offspring of such a butterfly, the next generation, then will have completed the remainder of the journey back to the northern United States.

15 _____
What is the best place in sentence 1, paragraph 3, for the indicated phrase?

- A. No change
- B. Directly after “tagged male”
- C. Directly after “was reported”
- D. Directly after “265 miles”

16 _____
The writer is considering whether or not to add the following sentence before sentence 2 in paragraph 3:

“That is a very impressive distance for a monarch butterfly to travel.”

The writer should

- A. add it; it improves the transition between sentence 1 and sentence 2.
- B. add it; it provides supporting evidence for claims made in sentence 1.
- C. omit it; it makes a claim that is contradicted in another paragraph.
- D. omit it; it states an opinion and does not belong in the paragraph.

¶3 {1} Typical male monarchs travel eighty miles per day, though in a single day a tagged male once was reported to have covered 265 miles. {2} The season and location of a monarch's birth can **17** do the total distance traveled during its lifetime. {3} Consider, for example, if a monarch were born in the northern United States in late summer or early fall. {4} Such a butterfly might migrate south to central Mexico but then might complete only one-half of the return trip before dying the next spring. {5} Even in so short a lifetime, such a monarch would have traveled nearly 3,000 miles. {6} Any offspring of such a butterfly, the next generation, then **18** will have completed the remainder of the journey back to the northern United States.

17 _____
The writer wants to replace the indicated word with one that is both more precise and appropriate.

Which choice is best?

- A. determine
- B. decide
- C. select
- D. pick

18 _____
A. No change
B. completes
C. are completing
D. would complete

¶4 19 Possible tools butterflies rely on to help navigate these pathways for migration include instinct, chemical markers left along their route by previous generations, and even the sun's position and the Earth's magnetic pull. Scientists still lack a full explanation for this successful yearly migration. Therefore, well-documented and researched theories provide partial insights into one of nature's most eye-catching events.

19 _____
The writer is considering whether or not to add an introductory sentence at the beginning of paragraph 4.

Which choice is best?

- A. No change; the paragraph is best as written.
- B. How different monarchs are able to find the same migration pathways each year is mysterious.
- C. The way that every year different migrating monarchs are able to get those pathways is a pretty big puzzle.
- D. The consistent pathways different migrating monarchs are able to follow year after year are undetermined as of yet

Questions 20 through 25 refer to the following selection.

Read through the draft of an article. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

Buying Used Cars

¶1 Buying a used car takes research as well as money. Having your license and saving enough money for an older car and insurance are just the beginning. Finding the right car will require some time and effort. Where do you start? What should you look for?

¶2 Surprisingly, your local library is good. There you can access online consumer guides that rate such things as performance, comfort, and mechanical reliability. Don't forget how helpful reference librarians can be.

¶3 When you have located a used car that you think will meet your needs, try to find out the repair history on the vehicle. Was the oil changed as scheduled to prevent wear on the engine? Has the car had any ongoing or repeated problems? Don't forget to take mileage into consideration, as well as the number of owners the car has had and also seeing if you can get information about any damage the car may have sustained as a result of accidents. It's a good idea to take the car to an independent auto mechanic for an inspection. It's worth the cost to identify potential problems. Before you make a major investment.

¶4 Finally, check the vehicle's appearance. If the body has numerous dents and scratches and the inside is ruined, chances are the engine hasn't been well maintained. If there are major rust spots, you can expect the body to deteriorate rapidly. While these suggestions won't guarantee a foolproof purchase, they can help you make an informed decision. Researching a car before making an investment is always time well spent. Remember, once you buy a used car, it's yours.

Buying Used Cars

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¶2 Surprisingly, **20** your local library is good. There you can access online consumer guides that rate such things as performance, comfort, and mechanical reliability. **21** Don't forget how helpful reference librarians can be.

20 _____

- A. No change
- B. a good place is your local library
- C. a good place to start shopping for a car is your local library
- D. for starting car shopping, your local library is a good place

21 _____

Which of the following would be the best choice for this sentence?

- A. No change
- B. Move the sentence so that it comes before the preceding sentence.
- C. Move the sentence to become the first sentence of the next paragraph (Paragraph 3).
- D. Omit the sentence.

¶3 When you have located a used car that you think will meet your needs, try to find out the repair history on the vehicle. **22** Was the oil changed as scheduled to prevent wear on the engine? Has the car had any ongoing or repeated problems? Don't forget to take mileage into consideration, as well as the number of owners the car has **23** had and also seeing if you can get information about any damage the car may have sustained as a result of accidents. It's a good idea to take the car to an independent auto mechanic for an inspection. It's worth the cost to identify potential **24** problems. Before you make a major investment.

- 22** _____
- A. No change
 - B. To prevent wear on the engine, the oil was changed as scheduled?
 - C. Oil changed as scheduled to prevent wear on the engine?
 - D. Was the oil changed to prevent wear on the engine as scheduled?

- 23** _____
- A. No change
 - B. had, also obtaining
 - C. had getting also
 - D. had. Try to obtain

- 24** _____
- A. No change
 - B. problems before
 - C. problems; before
 - D. problems: before

¶4 Finally, check the vehicle's appearance. If the body has numerous dents and scratches and the inside is ruined, chances are the engine hasn't been well maintained. **25** If there are major rust spots, you can expect the body to deteriorate rapidly. **25** While these suggestions won't guarantee a foolproof purchase, they can help you make an informed decision.

25 Researching a car before making an investment is always time well spent.

Remember, once you buy a used car, it's yours.

25 _____

Which of these sentences, if any, should begin a new paragraph?

- A. There should be no new paragraph.
- B. "If there are major rust spots, you can expect the body to deteriorate rapidly."
- C. "While these suggestions won't guarantee a foolproof purchase, they can help you make an informed decision."
- D. "Researching a car before making an investment is always time well spent."

Below you will find two passages in which the authors discuss differing views on leadership. Read both passages carefully, noting the strengths and weaknesses of each discussion. Then you will write an essay in which you explain your own opinion on the issue.

Both passages appeared in an organization’s recent newsletter, where members were asked to submit articles about the characteristics of great leaders. The first author argues for a more empathetic approach to leadership, whereas the second author argues for a stronger approach.

Passage 1: Leadership Through Empathy and Collaboration

¶1 In today’s increasingly interconnected world, the most effective leaders are those who lead with empathy and collaboration. Rather than relying on authority or charisma alone, empathetic leaders prioritize understanding the needs and emotions of their team members. This approach fosters trust, encourages open communication, and builds a sense of shared purpose. When people feel heard and valued, they are more likely to contribute meaningfully and stay committed to group goals.

¶2 Empathetic leadership is especially important in diverse environments. Leaders who listen actively and show genuine concern for others can bridge cultural and personal differences. For example, in schools and workplaces where individuals come from varied backgrounds, empathy helps leaders create inclusive spaces where everyone feels respected. Collaboration naturally follows when people feel safe expressing their ideas and concerns.

¶3 Research supports the value of empathy in leadership. In 2021, a study conducted by an American nonprofit focused on workplace inclusion. It found that 61% of employees with empathetic leaders reported being innovative at work, compared to only 13% of those with less empathetic leaders. Additionally, 76% of employees with empathetic leaders said they were engaged, versus 32% with less empathetic ones. These numbers suggest that empathy isn’t just a “soft skill” but a powerful tool for motivating teams and improving performance.

¶4 Critics may argue that empathy can make leaders appear weak or indecisive. However, true empathetic leadership involves balancing compassion with accountability. Leaders must still make tough decisions, but they do so with an awareness of how those choices affect others. This balance strengthens relationships and builds long-term loyalty.

¶5 Ultimately, leadership rooted in empathy and collaboration creates environments where people thrive. By valuing others’ perspectives and working together, leaders can inspire teams to achieve more than they could alone.

Passage 2: Leadership Through Vision and Decisiveness

¶1 While empathy and collaboration are valuable traits, the most effective leaders are those who possess a clear vision and the decisiveness to act on it. Visionary leaders inspire others by setting ambitious goals and confidently guiding their teams toward success. Their ability to make tough decisions, even in uncertain situations, sets them apart and earns respect.

¶2 History is filled with examples of leaders who changed the course of events through bold action. Figures like Martin Luther King Jr., Steve Jobs, and Shirley Chisholm demonstrated how a strong vision, paired with determination, can mobilize people and create lasting impact. These leaders didn't wait for consensus; they acted with conviction, even when facing opposition.

¶3 Quantitative data also supports the importance of decisiveness in leadership. A study published in 2020 analyzed over 2,000 leaders and found that those rated highly for decisiveness were 12 times more likely to be considered effective by their peers. Furthermore, companies led by decisive CEOs showed 20% higher profitability on average than those led by more cautious executives. These findings suggest that the ability to make timely decisions is closely linked to organizational success.

¶4 Some critics argue that decisive leaders risk being authoritarian or ignoring others' input. However, decisiveness does not mean disregarding feedback. Rather, it means knowing when to act and taking responsibility for outcomes. Visionary leaders often consult their teams but ultimately make the call when action is needed.

¶5 In conclusion, leadership grounded in vision and decisiveness drives progress and inspires confidence. By setting clear goals and making bold choices, these leaders help their teams overcome challenges and achieve extraordinary results.

Write an essay in which you explain your position on the kind of leadership you believe is the most successful.

Be sure to use specific reasons and examples from your own experience and knowledge to support your position. Evidence from the passages provided should also be used to support your ideas. Remember that every position exists within the context of a larger discussion of the issue, so your essay should, at minimum, acknowledge alternate and/or opposing ideas. When you have finished your essay, review your writing to check for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

Scored Sample Responses

Note: All responses are reproduced exactly as written, including errors, misspellings, etc., if any.

Score of 6

In a world that is increasingly diverse, fast-paced, and interconnected, the qualities that define effective leadership are evolving. While decisiveness and vision remain important, I believe that empathy is the most essential trait for a good leader. Empathetic leaders foster trust, collaboration, and resilience, qualities that are critical not only for achieving goals but for sustaining long-term success.

Empathy allows leaders to understand the perspectives and emotions of those they lead. This understanding builds stronger relationships and creates environments where individuals feel valued and heard. In the passage “Leadership Through Empathy and Collaboration,” the author emphasizes that empathetic leaders are especially effective in diverse settings, where listening and inclusion are key to team cohesion. I witnessed this firsthand in my role as a peer mentor during high school. Our program paired upperclassmen with freshmen to help them adjust to high school. The mentors who took time to listen and connected with their mentees built trust more quickly and were more successful in helping students feel confident and supported.

The impact of empathy is not just anecdotal, it is backed by data. According to the 2021 study, 76% of employees with empathetic leaders reported being engaged at work, compared to only 32% with less empathetic leaders. Furthermore, 61% of those with empathetic leaders said they were innovative, while only 13% of others said the same. These statistics demonstrate that empathy is not a soft skill. It is a strategic advantage. When people feel understood they are more likely to contribute creatively and stay committed to their work.

Of course, the second passage, “Leadership Through Vision and Decisiveness,” presents compelling examples of decisive leaders like Steve Jobs who made bold decisions that led to transformative change. Their courage and clarity of vision are admirable, and I agree that decisiveness is necessary in moments of crisis or uncertainty. However, decisiveness without empathy can lead to alienation and resistance. A leader who acts without considering the impact on others may achieve short-term results but struggle to maintain long-term loyalty and morale.

In conclusion, the most effective leaders are those who combine empathy with action. They listen deeply, understand the needs of their teams, and make informed decisions.

Score of 5

When considering what makes a good leader, many people point to qualities like empathy and collaboration. While these traits are important, I believe that decisiveness is the most critical characteristic of effective leadership. A leader must be able to make confident decisions and guide others toward a goal, especially in challenging situations.

The passage “Leadership Through Vision and Decisiveness” highlights how leaders like Martin Luther King and Steve Jobs made choices that led to major change. These leaders didn’t wait for everyone to agree, but they acted with purpose and inspired others to follow. In my own experience, I’ve seen how decisive leadership can make a difference. During a group project in history class, our team struggled to agree on a topic. One student stepped up, suggested a strong idea, and helped us move forward. Without that, we might have wasted even more time.

The passage also presents data from a study showing that decisive CEOs were 12 times more likely to be considered effective and led companies with 20% higher profitability. This evidence supports the idea that decisiveness leads to better results. Leaders who avoid making decisions can slow progress and create confusion.

That said, empathy still plays a role in leadership. The first passage explains how empathetic leaders build trust and encourage collaboration. I agree that listening and understanding others is important. However, I think empathy works best when combined with action. A leader who listens but never decides can lose the respect of their team.

In conclusion, while empathy is valuable, decisiveness is what truly defines strong leadership. Leaders must be able to act with confidence and guide others, even when the path forward isn’t easy. By making clear decisions and staying focused on their goals, decisive leaders help their teams succeed.

Score of 4

When thinking about what makes a good leader I believe empathy is the most important qualities. A leader who understands and cares about others can build strong relationships and help people work together. Yes being decisive is also important, but empathy helps leaders connect with their teams and creates a positive environment.

In the first passage the author explains how empathy helps leader listen and include different perspectives. This is important because people come from different backgrounds and have different ideas. When leaders show they care, people feel more comfortable sharing their thoughts. I've seen this at my own job. Our manager always asks for our opinions and listens carefully. Because of that, we feel more willing to work.

The passage also mentions a study that shows how empathy leads to better results. It said that 76% of employees with empathetic leaders were engaged at work, more than half!. This shows that empathy isn't just about feelings ubt helps people do better work.

The sec ond passage talks about leaders who are decicive. I agree that making decisions is important. Steve Jobs made big changes so that made most of us have iphones by acting boldly. But I think empathy can be just as important. Steve Jobs probably listens and understands others in order to make important decisions as well.

In conclusion, empathy helps people build trust and teamwork.I believe that leaders who care about others are more likely to succeed in the long run.

Score of 3

a good leader is someone who makes decisions and doesn't wait too long. Making decisions help people know what to do. Empathy is nicebut it's not enough.

In the second article it talks about Steve Jobs who made big choices. They didn't wait for everyone to agree. They just did what they thought was right. That what leaders should do. If you wait too long people get confused and nothing happens.

There was also something in the passage about a study that said decisive leaders are more successful. I don't remember all the numbers and don't have much time but it said they were better at leading and their companies made more money. That shows that being a strong leader works.

Empathy is okay too. The other article said that empathetic leaders help people feel good and work better. But sometimes you have to make hard choices and being too nice can make that hard. I think it's better to be strong and make decisions.

So I think the second article is better for leaders. It helps them lead and get things done.

Score of 2

leaders are people who lead. some are nice and some make choices. I think both are good but maybe being nice is better. it's hard to say.

The first article says leaders should be empathetic. which means they care about people. When people feel good they do good work. That's what the passage says. They did a study too. It said people work better when bosses care.

The other passage says leaders should be decisive. That means they make choices. Steve Jobs and Malala did that. They made choices and people followed them. That's good too.

I think leaders should be nice and make choices. Both are good. If you are too nice, people don't listen. If you make choices, people might not like it so, it's hard.

Leaders should be good and help people. That's what is important.

Score of 1

While empathy and collaboration are valuable traits, the most effective leaders are those who possess a clear vision and the decisiveness to act on it. Visionary leaders inspire others by setting ambitious goals and confidently guiding their teams toward success. Their ability to make tough decisions even in uncertain situations sets them apart and earns respect.

History is filled with examples of leaders who changed the course of events through bold action. These leaders didn't wait for consensus they acted with conviction even when facing opposition.

Scoring Your Essay

The Scoring Guide used for scoring essay responses is given below. One way to see how well you did on your essay in this practice test is to ask someone with experience in scoring essays to score your response using this scoring guide. We also provide sample responses to the practice prompt that have been scored by trained essay raters. You can compare your essay to these scored responses and estimate your score that way. Please remember that you must achieve a score of at least 2 on the essay portion of the Language Arts – Writing test to pass the test as a whole.

Scoring Guide

Score of 1 – *Essays at this score point demonstrate inadequate competence in writing an argument on a given topic.*

A typical response in this category exhibits ONE OR MORE of the following characteristics:

- provides little or no evidence of understanding the topic
- may present a position on the topic but provides little evidence of the ability to develop or organize a response
- copies and/or paraphrases all ideas from the provided texts
- has severe problems in language and sentence structure that persistently interfere with meaning
- contains pervasive errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that result in incoherence

Score of 2 – *Essays at this score point demonstrate limited competence in writing an argument on a given topic; their positions may be unclear, and they may develop their positions with little relevant reasoning or support.*

A typical response in this category exhibits ONE OR MORE of the following characteristics:

- is unclear or seriously limited in presenting or developing a position on the topic
- provides few relevant reasons or examples in support of its claims and/or may rely too heavily on the texts without integrating or interpreting the text information
- is poorly focused and/or poorly organized
- has serious problems in language and sentence structure that can interfere with meaning
- contains serious errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that may obscure meaning

Score of 3 – *Essays at this score point demonstrate some competence in writing an argument on a given topic and develop their positions with reasoning that may lack clarity and with support that may lack development or that is vague.*

A typical response in this category exhibits ONE OR MORE of the following characteristics:

- has an evident position on the topic, but it may be vague
- presents generalizations without specific support or reasons simplistically when developing a position; may use examples from the provided texts, but fails to integrate or misconstrues the meaning of some of them
- may lack focus and/or clear organization in places or may lack connections or transitions between ideas
- has problems in language and sentence structure that result in a lack of clarity
- contains occasional major errors or frequent minor errors in grammar, usage, or mechanics that can interfere with meaning

Score of 4 – *Essays at this score point demonstrate competence in writing an argument on a given topic and develop their positions with generally clear reasoning and relevant support.*

A typical response in this category largely accomplishes all of the following:

- presents a generally clear position on the topic
- develops a position using some relevant reasons or examples from the provided texts and/or personal experience, although some support may be uneven
- maintains adequate focus and organization, although transitions may be simple
- demonstrates satisfactory control of language, conveying ideas with acceptable clarity
- generally demonstrates competent control of the conventions of standard written English but may have some errors

Score of 5 – *Essays at this score point demonstrate clear competence in writing an argument on a given topic and develop their positions with valid and reasoned support.*

A typical response in this category largely accomplishes all of the following:

- articulates a generally clear and considered position on the topic

- develops a position well, using generally sound reasoning or examples integrated from the provided texts and/or personal experience
- presents a focused and generally well-organized position, connecting ideas appropriately
- conveys ideas clearly, using appropriate vocabulary and sentence variety
- demonstrates clear competency with the conventions of standard written English but may have minor errors

Score of 6 – *Essays at this score point demonstrate a high degree of competence in writing an argument on a given topic and develop their positions with effective and well-reasoned support.*

A typical response in this category largely accomplishes all of the following:

- articulates a clear and well-considered position on the topic
- develops a position effectively and sufficiently, using generally persuasive reasoning or examples integrated from the provided texts and/or personal experience
- presents a coherently organized position, connecting ideas effectively
- conveys ideas precisely, using effective vocabulary and sentence variety
- demonstrates a high degree of competence with the conventions of standard written English (i.e., grammar, usage, and mechanics) but may have minor errors

HiSET Answer Key and Rationales

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
1	C	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option C is correct because the sentence has a plural subject, “Members,” which agrees with the plural verb “have planned” in Option C. The verb tense also fits in more accurately in the sentence, showing that the activity has been taking place till the present communication.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
2	D	III. Writing Conventions	Easy
Rationale			
<p>Option D is correct because the correct spelling of the word is “extraordinary.”</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
3	B	III. Writing Conventions	Easy
Rationale			
<p>Option B is correct because the words “faculty” and “advisors” are not proper nouns. “Advisors” is also a plural noun, not a possessive noun.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
4	C	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option C is correct because the comma separates the description “our show choir” from the name of the choir, “The Benning Transfer.”</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
5	D	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option D is correct because "Don't miss the first big party of the year!" is a simple command, telling the reader exactly what they shouldn't miss, directly and concisely. "Don't miss it, in that it's the year's first big party!" is clunky and wordy, with an unnecessary connector, "in that," which can confuse the reader.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
6	C	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option C is correct because it eliminates the sentence fragment: "\$3.00 without one." It is more concise and clearer, resulting in a natural rhythm in the announcement.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
7	B	II. Language Facility	Easy
Rationale			
<p>Option B is correct because it is written in the active voice, making it more direct, concise, and clear, adhering to the tone and style of the announcement.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
8	B	III. Writing Conventions	Easy
Rationale			
<p>Option B is correct because the correct spelling of the word is "phenomenon."</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
9	D	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option D is correct because it follows the grammatical principle of parallelism, using active verbs (“is...wide” and “weighs”) to describe the subject (“a single monarch butterfly”).</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
10	A	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option A is correct because the paragraph is informative and objective. It does not need an opinion statement, which could confuse the reader.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
11	C	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option C is correct because it eliminates unnecessary phrasing and clearly states that weather is the most important factor in forming the ideal monarch habitat.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
12	A	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p>Option A is correct because the compound sentence effectively uses a semicolon and a conjunctive adverb (“therefore”) to connect two independent clauses: “Monarchs require a temperate habitat” and “the seasonal climate of the United States forces most monarchs to migrate south for the winter.”</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
13	B	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
Option B is correct because "seasonal" is a more precise and accurate term, indicating that the climate has distinct, predictable changes throughout the year.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
14	C	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
Option C is correct because it provides more information about the seasonal migration habits of the monarch.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
15	D	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
Option D is correct because the prepositional phrase "in a single day" clarifies the amount of time it took for the male monarch to cover 265 miles. Further, prepositional phrases of time generally tend to come at the end of the sentence.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
16	D	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
Option D is correct because this is an informational piece of writing. An opinion is not needed.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
17	A	II. Language Facility	Easy
Rationale			
Option A is correct because it is more specific, describing how the birthplace can directly affect the distance the monarch can travel in its lifetime.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
18	D	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
Option D is correct because it is a conditional statement, which matches the thoughts conveyed in the paragraph.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
19	B	I. Organization of Ideas	Hard
Rationale			
Option B is correct because all the sentences in the paragraph support the idea that the migration pattern of monarchs is a mystery. It is the best topic sentence.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
20	C	II. Language Facility	Easy
Rationale			
Option C is correct because it provides the best transition between paragraphs 1 and 2, expressing ideas about the library's usefulness clearly and precisely, using appropriate word order.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
21	D	II. Language Facility	Easy
Rationale			
Option D is correct because the general statement about reference librarians is not relevant to the topic of buying a car. It is best to omit the sentence.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
22	A	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
Option A is correct because the original wording is a well-formed question with no misplaced modifier that leads to the next question posed in the paragraphs.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
23	D	II. Language Facility	Easy
Rationale			
Option D is correct because the expression of these ideas in two separate sentences creates clarity as well as parallelism in sentence structure.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
24	B	III. Writing Conventions	Easy
Rationale			
Option B is correct because the last sentence in this paragraph is a fragment. The idea is easily combined with the previous sentence as a subordinate clause that requires no beginning punctuation.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
25	C	I. Organization of Ideas	Hard
Rationale			
<p>Option C is correct because it leaves the specific issues of paragraph 4 and returns to the general topic of the passage.</p>			