



English I Writing

Literary Scoring Guide Spring 2012

English I Writing Literary Prompt

Look at the photograph.



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Write a story about a challenging adventure. The adventure can be real or imagined. Be sure that your story is focused and complete and that it has an interesting plot and engaging characters.

The names of individuals mentioned in the compositions have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the students whose responses appear in this guide.

Score Point 1

The story represents a very limited writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The form or structure of the story is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are only marginally suited to the literary task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. The writer presents the story in a random or illogical way, causing it to lack clarity and direction.
- ❑ Many of the details do not contribute to the story. The writer's lack of focus on a specific character, event, or idea weakens the unity and coherence of the story.
- ❑ The writer's presentation of the story is weak. Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the story line. At other times the lack of meaningful transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections makes one or more parts of the story unclear or difficult to follow.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of the story is weak because the details are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient. They do not contribute to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.
- ❑ The story is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt may be vague or confused. In some cases, the story as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the story.
- ❑ Sentences may be simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, weakening the effectiveness of the story.
- ❑ The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

COMPOSITION #3

A challenging adventure for me would probably be a relationship for me because I've never really been on an adventure yet. Adventure is full of episodes, experiences, events, phenomenon, development, chances; pass, circumstances and risks. Some challenges when it comes to being in a relationship are trust, it's a challenge for me because a person has to reach certain boundaries. Being faithful is a challenge because I always let loose, and being faithful, I need to know my limits. Being honest is a challenge because I tend to lie a lot. It's a challenge because you put yourself, your heart, and emotions at risk. It's a challenge because you have to stay committed, to yourself, and your partner. It's an adventure because you challenge yourself to take chances, chances to let loose, and free fall for a while. You challenge yourself to develop certain feeling you haven't developed before. You challenge yourself to shift; to adjust to all of your challenges. You challenge yourself with the "type" of person you're with. You challenge yourself to know right from wrong. It always depends on the challenges the person chooses to take.

Score Point 1

The writer of this very limited writing performance explains how a relationship can be both a challenge and an adventure. The expository organizational structure that the writer chooses for the essay is inappropriate to the purpose and specific demands of the prompt. The writer does not address the key literary elements of character development, conflict, or point of view and demonstrates a lack of understanding of the literary writing task.

COMPOSITION #3

I inline skate for a hobby, and its not just a hobby its a lifestyle. There was a competition coming up with a cash prize of 150 dollars. First up, Jeff Jeffries, He spine transfers to a F-50 stall for a score of 8.96. Next up Mike Michaels. He quickly hops in, spines, egg plant stalls, and grinds. His score is 9.07. Finally it was my turn. I hop in, grind a spine, fishbrain stalled, and 360'd a gap. My score was... 9.61!

Score Point 1

In this very limited writing performance, the writer tells a story about an inline skating competition. The development of the story is weak because details are insufficient and do not contribute to key literary elements, such as character development, conflict, or point of view.

COMPOSITION #3

I am about to tell a challenging adventure I went on in the summer. The riding to Disney World was a long drive. I was tired when we got to hotel in Disney World, I was tired. In the morning I went to the admission studios. I ride the Tower of Terror, I was scared on that ride. On the trail on the back our house, my mom, sisters, and I were walking on the trail one day. My mom saw a copperhead snake in the walk way. My mom said "To jump over the copperhead snake." We went one at a time over the copperhead snake. On my trip coming with my pawpaw, memaw, sisters, and I. I was scared about getting in the water at the lake in camp site. Because there were alligators in the water. Then one day I finally got in the water and stand in the water. The water smell bad that why because the alligators use to be that side before, there is a pool mark thing in water to block the alligators away from us. On that camping trip we went on the trail they have there. On the trail we pick close to the end of the trail we saw spider webs and spiders on there. We had duck under the spiders and the spider web.

Score Point 1

The writer of this very limited response begins with a trip to Disney World, including a scary ride on the Tower of Terror. An abrupt shift of focus occurs when the writer begins telling a story about his family's encounter with a snake. The writer then shifts to a camping trip taken with his grandparents and siblings. The lack of focus on one event weakens the unity and coherence of the story. In addition, numerous errors in conventions create disruptions in the fluency of the writing.

COMPOSITION #3

Heart Race.

My three year old cousin
Cody was born with half a
heart that works, and they told
us when he was first born
he wouldn't probly make it
passed two years old, but he
proved them wrong an him
being born with half a heart
means he can't run around
alot like a normal kid cause
their's the chance he could have
a heart attack because it can't
pump enough blood threw out
his tiny body but he plays on
a little soccer team as the goalie.
He has to have an open heart
operation every year till he's ten.
he has a huge scar to his neck
down to his belly button he's
our hero, he changed everyone
in our families life to aprecciate
him an each an everyone of us.
But everyday is a challenge for Cody.

Score Point 1

In this response the writer describes the life of a cousin who is restricted by a congenital heart defect. Basic character development is achieved through the use of a few details (he wouldn't probably make it past two years old, has to have an open heart operation every year till he's ten, has a huge scar to his neck down to his belly button). However, the response is primarily an explanation, and the writer demonstrates a very weak command of sentence boundaries and punctuation. These problems are indicative of a very limited writing performance.

Score Point 2

The story represents a basic writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The form or structure of the story is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are only somewhat suited to the literary task. The writer is able to convey some sense of the story.
- ❑ Some of the details do not contribute to the story. The writer may focus on a specific character, event, or idea but may not sustain that focus, limiting the unity and coherence of the story.
- ❑ The writer's presentation of the story is inconsistent. Sometimes repetition or wordiness causes minor disruptions in the story line. At other times transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory or weak to support the logical movement of the story.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of the story is minimal and remains at a surface level because there are few details, they are not always appropriate, or they are too general. For the most part, the details contribute only marginally to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.
- ❑ The story reflects little or no thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is sometimes formulaic. The writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates only a limited understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice may limit the quality and clarity of the story.
- ❑ Sentences may be awkward or only somewhat controlled, limiting the effectiveness of the story.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Some distracting errors may be evident, at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency or meaning of the writing.

COMPOSITION #3

I think for me, life itself is a challenging adventure that is still in progress. It can be one of the greatest, most enjoyable adventures... but can also be the worst and most challenging. Life is a bunch of little treks that make up one huge adventure. Sometimes, we go through a part of life that is very satisfying and you feel like nothing can go wrong. This could be as if you're sailing across the ocean in a big boat with all of your friends and family. You have smooth waters, calm waves, and the sun is shining perfectly. Then there's that part of life where it seems like you've lost it all and you feel as though nothing worse could possibly go wrong. This is the time where the clouds roll in and block the sunshine. The waters become rough, with the waves crashing up against the boat, rocking you back and forth, or knocking you onto the ground. But yet you still have your friends right there with you, acting as your tour guides along the way. This adventure through life is almost like a never-ending process with many challenging obstacles that you feel like you can never overcome. But then, when you do, it's like you are fine again and stronger than before, ready to accept the next trek that life brings upon you to carry on that crazy, overwhelming adventure.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer focuses on a single theme: Life is a bunch of little treks that make up one huge adventure. Although the response is more explanation than story, the writer embeds some literary elements, specifically in the form of figurative language, that serve to minimally develop the theme. Because the response is a blend of expository and literary writing, the writer demonstrates only a limited understanding of the literary task.

COMPOSITION #3

My best adventure was the day my mom took me and my little sister to newyork for the weekend. We rode on subways, visited some local land marks and we even went to a few museums to see some artwork. I really enjoyed the zoo. We saw some interesting creatures like pandas, birds, gorillas. The white alligator was my favorite. I also got to go shopping in thier four story mall. they let us ride the clear glass elevators so we didnt have to walk. One thing I loved was eating dinner with my sister and mom. new york is so beautiful at night. I thought the lights were stunning. new york is much fun! Id love to visit again. I had such a great time spending time with my mom. I love her! Nothing would have made this adventure better with out having my mom and sister there with me.

Score Point 2

The writer of this basic writing performance frames her story around a weekend trip to New York City. While focused on the trip, the writer moves quickly through different activities, hitting only the highlights. This strategy causes the sentence-to-sentence connections to be too weak to support the logical movement of the story. Although the writer provides a few details (The white alligator was my favorite; clear glass elevators), she is able to develop the narrator's character only minimally, and the overall development of the story line remains at a surface level. In addition, the sentences are only somewhat controlled, limiting the effectiveness of the presentation.

COMPOSITION #3

River rafting is many things. a hobby, a sport, a memory. But, it is mostly an adventure. If you have ever river rafted with a group of people, you know it is difficult. But, it also makes relationships with those people.

When the Harper family went river rafting in the smokies, they were very inexperienced. they thought it would be a fun family activity that would make their relationship grow. But they never realized how hard it was until they actually got into the raft. They figured out they always needed to be on their guard, they always needed to communicate and most importantly, they always had a job to perform.

During their adventure, they hit many rocks, got stuck many times and had fallen off the raft many times. But they never thought it would be that fun to work together as a family.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the Harper family members challenge themselves to the adventure of river rafting in the Smokey Mountains. Although the form and structure of the essay has an explanatory quality, the piece does tell a story about the family and does move through time. However, the development of the story is minimal and remains superficial. The details provided by the writer are mostly general (they always needed to be on their guard, needed to communicate, they always had a job to perform) and lack specific detail. For these reasons, the story line lacks substance. Overall, the writer demonstrates an appropriate control of conventions.

COMPOSITION #3

a journey around the ocean isn't easy this how
everything began. I was reading the book finding nemo
and then the fish nemo was saying "hey you with the
clothes can you hear me" and me thinking it was my sister
I faded inside the book I was swimming in the ocean with
a giant tail covering my feet. I thought to myself what's
happening I was worried I wanted to cry but I couldn't under
ocean. so I swam and swam and some body was calling my
name whispering " Abby, Abby " and I turned around
and I see nemo from the story. I was like what's happening I asked
your in the middle of getting ran over by huge whales so then
nemo grabs me and pulls me back and I said "why am I
here" nemo says " you were the choosen one to lead the ocean
now I was the queen of oceans now " I said "no this can't
beim just a simple girl not a queen" nemo said "you were the
choosen one because were going to be in a war with the
other side of the ocean because they want to take are
land." I said "OK" what do I do, nemo tells me you must guide
us a right way for we can beat the other ocean. OK.
so everybody put on your shields, and weapons were going
to snick up on them in a ballon fish, and in the night
we attack and just hope everything goes well, so we
attacked and we were able to obtain are ocean. After
they tell me thanks and now we shall crown
you queen of this ocean they scream there lungs out cheering!

Score Point 2

The writer of this basic writing performance presents a fictional story based upon *Finding Nemo* by cleverly inserting herself into the cast of characters while reading the book. The presentation of the story is adequately controlled and supports the story's logical movement. The writer supplies some specific details (a giant tail covering my feet, in the middle of getting run over by huge whales) and uses dialogue not only to advance the story line but also to develop character. However, only a partial command of conventions is evident; the writer creates minor disruptions in the fluency of the writing by making errors in sentence boundaries, grammar, and usage throughout the story.

Score Point 3

The story represents a satisfactory writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The form or structure of the story is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are adequately suited to the literary task. The writer is able to clearly convey the story.
- ❑ Most details contribute to the effectiveness of the story. The writer focuses on a specific character, event, or idea and generally sustains that focus. The story is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.
- ❑ The writer's presentation of the story is adequately controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the logical movement of the story.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ Specific details add some substance to the story. For the most part, these details contribute to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.
- ❑ The story reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is, for the most part, specific and concrete. It reflects an awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the story.
- ❑ Sentences are varied and adequately controlled, for the most part contributing to the effectiveness of the story.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar and usage conventions. Although some errors may be evident, they create few (if any) disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity of the story.

COMPOSITION #3

I love running. I normally run long distances of 5 miles or more, or sprint short distances of 200 meters or less. However, I had never expected myself to be running the 800 meter event at a track meet. The 800 is exactly 2 laps around the track, sprinting. Yes, I may enjoy long distance, but only at a steady, planned pace. This wasn't a short sprint either; I wasn't going to be running my hardest for 30 short seconds. Instead, I would be sprinting my hardest for a few minutes. Also to make it worse, I hadn't trained in over a month.

I felt nauseous at the starting line. I don't think I had ever felt this nervous before. My goal was to do my best, and NOT get last place. My heart skipped a beat as the gun fired, and we began to sprint. The majority of the girls were a few years older than me, and obviously practiced a lot. Before I knew it, I was on my last lap. I had no idea how many girls were behind me, but I could see at least 5 ahead. I could hear my friends cheering for me, and despite my burning legs and exhaustion, I began to speed up. Suddenly, a girl was right beside me, panting. "Want to run together?" she asked. I smiled and nodded, slowing down a bit. It was then that she decided to sprint, attempting to catch me off-guard! I sprinted my hardest, and beat the deceiving girl, finishing in 6th place of 15!

Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer focuses on the challenge of running an 800-meter race at a track meet. The writer clearly conveys her particular story by sustaining focus on the event and controlling the logical movement of the story. The writer develops the character of the narrator and establishes both internal and external conflicts. Some substance is added to the story through an effective use of specific language and details (My heart skipped a beat as the gun fired; despite my burning legs and exhaustion, I began to speed up). Overall, the writer demonstrates a good understanding of the literary writing task.

COMPOSITION #3

It was 2:00 pm in Austin, Texas, I was competing against David Davis for 5th rank in Mixed Martial Arts (MMA) in state out of 50,000. He was undefeated but so was I. I had a 1st degree black belt in Brazilian Jujitsu and he was a boxer. The fight started and he went straight to offense. He came at me with blinding speed. He had quick hands but so did I. I was waiting for one mistake, for him to slip then it would change. The moment came. His right hook was a little too high and he went too far in. I used a left wrist block and had a right jab to the ribs. It hurt him. BAD! He bent over clutching his side and I got him straight in the nose with my left knee. The fight was over in 2 minutes. He left with two cracked ribs and a broken nose. I left with a belt, trophy, and victory.

Score Point 3

The writer of this concise, satisfactory response tells the story of a Mixed Martial Arts fight. The story centers on the two minutes in which the fight occurs. Specific, pertinent details and concrete word choice (blinding speed, quick hands, clutching his side) add some substance to the story. In addition, the writer uses short, clipped sentences to compare/contrast the two fighters; these sentences mimic the quick nature of the fight and contribute to the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance. The logical ordering of the play-by-play and the tight focus add to the coherence of this story.

COMPOSITION #3

Dylan the Squirrel and Oscar the racoon had both had the same goal since they were very young, to find the ultimate burrito. Yes the one with the perfect blend of spices, finely cooked and of course it had to be of monstrous proportions. One Day they set out on this epic journey together each having a few ideas as to where this Mexican masterpiece could be found. Dylan's ideas were first to be taken into action. As they headed towards Taco Bell they were faced with one of lifes hardest challenges the drive through line. How could accomplish this? Well you see Dylan and Oscar were not your everyday woodland creatures they were each half robot having been part of a lab experiment gone wrong. As they drove in their GT mustang they ordered 2 5-layer burritos. Disappointed with the sight and taste of it Oscar had an idea:

"What if we're searching on the wrong planet?" he exclaimed the quickly went through years of NASA training in five minutes and headed to mars. Arriving on mars they were forced to defeat the alien armada. The alien king was so pleased and told him the key to ultimate burrito. He said you make it yourself to your standards. So they retured home to take his advice.

Score Point 3

In this response the two main characters, Dylan the squirrel and Oscar the raccoon, embark on their challenging adventure by setting out on a mission to find the ultimate burrito. Specific details add some substance and a strong sense of originality to the story. However, the writing needs a stronger focus as the story shifts to outer space (NASA training, headed towards Mars, forced to defeat the alien armada). In this section the writer glosses over a lot of information without taking the time to develop it. In addition, because this section is only generally related to the story line of finding the perfect burrito, the overall unity of the story is affected.

COMPOSITION #3

Javi Diaz

had been planning this trip for months now and he was ready to go. He packed his bags with all the supplies and tools he would need for a desert trek. He boarded the plane that would take him to his destination and when he arrived, his journey began. The sun was already high and Javi was pumped for his adventure. He started out happy and peppy, but soon became tired and fatigued. Even though he had trained for the trek, nothing could have prepared him for what he was going to experience. He could feel the hunger pains and thirst but had to ration his food; he was going to be there for three days. As he moved along, the wind started to pick up. The land was desolate and there was nothing for miles. Javi knew a sand storm was coming so he decided to lay low to protect himself from the pelting sediment. The storm lasted til the sun was well on the horizon. The air was getting colder and Javi knew he had to make shelter quickly before nightfall. Javi could still see nothing but sand so he decided to set up camp. He built a fire to warm himself and cook food and soon he fell asleep under the stars. Javi had made it through the first day.

Score Point 3

Conquering the first day of a challenging desert trek is the focus of this story. Connections between sentences and ideas are sufficient to support the logical movement of the story. The writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the literary writing task. The writer focuses development on both the character of Javi Diaz and the setting of the desert, but this development could be enhanced by more specific word choice. Overall, the writer demonstrates a good control of sentences and language conventions.

Score Point 4

The story represents an accomplished writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The form or structure of the story is appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses narrative strategies or literary devices that are particularly well suited to the literary task. The writer is able to skillfully convey the story.
- ❑ All details contribute to the effectiveness of the story. The writer focuses on a specific character, event, or idea and sustains that focus, strengthening the unity and coherence of the story.
- ❑ The writer's presentation of the story is well controlled. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the logical movement of the story.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ Specific, well-chosen details add substance to the story. These details contribute significantly to key literary elements such as character development, conflict, and point of view.
- ❑ The story is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may respond to the prompt from an unusual perspective, may use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or may connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the story in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the literary writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is vivid and expressive. It reflects a keen awareness of the literary purpose. The word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the story.
- ❑ Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the story.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of the story. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the story.

COMPOSITION #3

I was ready, I was excited & nervous but ready. Taking a long deep breath I knew this was going to be a challenge. "Is it your first time?" A tall skinny boy gazed at me. "Have many people my age have done this type of work?" I chuckled. "You're the first I've seen. Don't be nervous. I'll walk you through it." He handed me a bucket of soapy water & a sponge. With simultaneous nods we walked out into the elephants cage. "Oh boy." I thought. "Ready to wash an elephant?" The boy whispered.

Fluffy was her name, she was big & gray, pretty much like any elephant I've seen on TV. I was told Fluffy was gentle, I really hoped she liked to get bathed. I never thought I would have to bathe an elephant! I guess it was one of the perks of volunteering at the zoo, getting to have challenging adventures & what not. I stood next to Fluffy, her feet were the width of my body but they were short & kinda stubby. I patted her foot & she bowed down acknowledging.

"Ready for the fun part?" I looked at the boy as he sprayed fluffy down with a hose & at that moment my heart sank from my chest. "N-Y-A-A-G-U-H" Fluffy stamped on her two hind legs. I could hear my heart inside my chest. The boy continued to spray & I washed her with the sponge & soapy water. I moved calmly but swiftly as Fluffy continued to make a fuss. Her torso was clean, her legs were clean. & "Oh, no!" I had to wash her face! I got on the ladder & washed her trunk "N-Y-A-A-G-U-H" she stamped again, but I was done.

Excitement & nervousness crept through my skin as I washed Fluffy. She is a beautiful creature & washing her was a challenging adventure.

Score Point 4

In this light-hearted story, the writer focuses on the challenges of scrubbing down a caged elephant named Fluffy. The writer expertly articulates the story, developing the characters and establishing the story line through the use of dialogue and pertinent details. Expressive word choice contributes to the quality of the presentation, adding specificity and a whimsical tone to the story. Although a few minor errors are present, these errors do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of this accomplished story.

COMPOSITION #3

Twos a lovely day, it happened so to be Jordan's first in Wal-mart. He being the age of six and three quarters was the oldest in his class. Jordan was fascinated by the toys and bikes in the childrens section. He never wanted to leave, not ever, although his mother was calling for him. With Batman in his tiny hands, he thought of a way he could stay.

"I'll have food, there's plenty here," he said to Batman, "And there's a water fountain, and a bathroom, and a TV. All we have to do is hide until Mommy leaves." So he hid in the giant bin with all the bouncy balls and waited. His mother didn't leave though, infact, she was getting louder, and closer.

"Alright, we'll have to make a run for it," said Jordan with the utmost seriousness. He jumped out of the bin and made a dash for the bike helmets, grab one for him and Batman, and then shot over to the clothes section. "She can never find us here," Jordan said while putting the helmet on, "and if she does, she won't recognize us with these helmets and she'll leave." He looked down to place the helmet on his Batman doll and realized he had left him in the bouncy ball bin. He devised a plan to retrieve Batman back from the bin. Like a bullet, he ran as fast as Speed Racer can drive, dodged a cart, jumped a baby, slid under a wheelchair and dove back into the bin. Tossing balls here and there he couldn't find Batman.

"Jordan," his mother said, standing there with Batman in her grasp, "You can have plenty of adventures at home, now put back the helmets."

Score Point 4

In this accomplished writing performance centered on imaginative play, a young boy conspires with his Batman doll to outwit his mother and spend the night in the toy section of a Wal-Mart store. The writer sustains focus on this single event, strengthening the unity and coherence of the piece. Literary devices, such as dialogue, are used to enhance character development and reinforce the story line. Expressive word choice and details are carefully chosen to reveal the boy's innocent, childlike perspective, which remains consistent throughout the story. In addition, the overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the writing.

COMPOSITION #3

The boy admired the enormous piece of rock. He imagined what tremendous force of nature could create this outstanding and perfect piece. The boy stood up, bottle of water in one hand, pick in the other. He smashed into the side of the rock. He grabbed for an edge to get a grip upon. The boy found a solid rock and pulled up. The boy's feet left the ground. It had begun. The boy placed the water bottle inside his backpack and grabbed at convenient rocks, ascending quite quickly. The boy realized that the higher he got, the less rocks or edges there were. Still, the determined boy pressed on. He climbed gracefully, and he realized he could see the top. This excited him more, making him unaware that his right hand was on a loose rock. The rock broke, and instinct kicked in. The boy jammed the pick into the solid wall of rock as hard as he could. He stopped falling and was taking in enormous breaths. Finally, he proceeded on. More carefully, he grabbed onto rocks and edges, until he reached the final step. The rock stuck out at least three feet, and the boy hesitated. He bended on his knees, and pushed as hard as he could. His hands reached up, up, up and finally, grabbed an edge. The boy stood there, snow falling on his face, breathing hard. Finally, he pushed himself up. The boy caught his breath and sat down. The boy admired the enormous wall of rock that continued in front of him. The boy stood up, bottle of water in one hand, pick in the other.

Score Point 4

No words are wasted in this thoughtful and engaging story of a boy's mental and physical struggle to scale a rock. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the logical movement of the story. Well-chosen details add substance to the piece, and the word choice is vivid and expressive. The overall strength of the conventions also contributes to the effectiveness of the story. In addition, the story is well crafted. The last sentence purposefully echoes the beginning of the story, strengthening its coherence; and the repetition of the phrase "The boy" in the last three sentences brings the story to a dramatic and memorable close.

COMPOSITION #3

The deafening roar of the upcoming rapids drowned out anything that Shane seemed to be yelling. Macy anxiously watched his lips, gripping onto the rope that maybe she could read them. She could only pick out two words: "dangerous" and "attention." Cold panic seeped into her stomach where it fluttered around and then rose to her throat. Clinging to the rope on the sides of the neon orange raft, she made her way to Shane, inch by inch.

"Did you hear me?" he yelled above the noise. "This part is going to be a bit tricky, so pay attention." Macy nodded once to acknowledge this. Sensing the fear in her eyes, Shane gave her hand a quick squeeze and signalled a thumbs up with his other hand. Macy flashed him a grateful smile before picking up her paddle again and pushing it into the frothy water. Clearing the water in time to her swiftly beating heart, she pushed herself. Already, the faint but sure ache of fatigue plagued her arms and torso, but she refused to listen to it. After all, if she gave up now, she would never get a break from Shane whom she saw practically every day.

In an almost surreal moment, the water was crystal clear, shiny pebbles eerily glinting at her from the bottom of the river. However, within seconds, the river turned into a perilous, turbulent belt of rocky danger. Swallowing all inhibition, Macy and the rest of the people in the raft turned into one seamless human machine of pure power, expertly gliding through the most difficult areas. In sync, they rowed and paused, occasionally yelling instructions. After the most challenging thirty seconds of her life, Macy exhaled as the raft lazily floated into tranquility, the water winning at her as Shane would.

Score Point 4

The writer of this accomplished writing performance tells a story about an experience while white-water rafting. The story takes place over a brief 30 seconds of time, and this strong focus creates a unified and coherent response. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections allow the writer to skillfully convey what is happening to the characters. The writer uses well-chosen details and expressive word choice to vividly unveil the splendid beauty and awe-inspiring forces that are at the heart of the perilous river journey. Skillfully inserted dialogue punctuates the characters' predicament, drawing the reader into the story. A strong command of conventions adds to the effectiveness of this story.