



# **English II**

## **Persuasive Scoring Guide**

**April 2014**

# English II

## Persuasive Prompt

Read the following quotation.

The more that you read, the more things you will know.  
The more that you learn, the more places you'll go.  
—*from I Can Read With My Eyes Shut!*  
*by Dr. Seuss*

Think carefully about the following statement.

According to Dr. Seuss, knowledge leads to new opportunities.

Write an essay stating your position on whether learning always has a positive effect on a person's life.

Be sure to —

- state your position clearly
- use appropriate organization
- provide specific support for your argument
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

## **Score Point 1**

**The essay represents a very limited writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies that are only marginally suited to the persuasive task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. The absence of a functional organizational structure causes the essay to lack clarity and direction.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, but the writer's position is missing, unclear, or illogical. The writer may fail to maintain focus on the issue, may include extraneous information, or may shift abruptly from idea to idea, weakening the coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is weak. Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times the lack of transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections causes the writer to present ideas in a random or illogical way, making one or more parts of the essay unclear or difficult to follow.

### Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is weak. The argument is ineffective and unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient.
- ❑ The essay is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt is vague or confused. In some cases, the essay as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the persuasive writing task.

### Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the persuasive purpose and does not establish a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ 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.

Everybody wants to go somewhere in life but knowledge is power. Now some people think learning can have a positive effect on you in the future. It can but it also depends on how you can take it and could you work for what you want. Now you take a look out into the world now days you have to have a degree for everything why because they want to know ok if I hire this person will he have a positive effect on anothers person life or will he just waist time you will never know until your able to open new challenges and opportunities which means being positive. my mom always told me to look at life as a obstacle yea sometimes you may have to cross paths, step over people but in the end you'll pull through and realize you become something of yourself and to always think positive and make others believe you are positive and no negative shall ever show upon you.

**Score Point 1**

The writer takes the position that learning can have a positive effect on your future, but “it also depends on how you can take it and could you work for what you want.” Although the writer attempts to provide a hypothetical example of how education will help you get a job because “you have to have a degree for everything,” the focus of the argument abruptly shifts to a discussion of being positive, overcoming obstacles, and making others realize you are positive. This entire section of the essay is only weakly linked to the prompt. An effective organizational structure is absent from the response, and the writer’s inability to remain focused significantly weakens the coherence of the piece. In addition, many sentences lack boundaries and are uncontrolled. For these reasons, this essay represents a very limited writing performance.

In my life learning always had positive effect on me. I believed learning is the best thing to do to keep track the things you know. No matter what I always have to stay focus what I'm learning. If not focus than I'll be off task. It will put me to a problem that I will struggle pretty much the whole time. For everyone, learning will put you in positive effect. All that requires is for you to keep attention, stay focus, and do your work. I believe if people listens to me, I promise you will be getting a good grade in no time. My teacher told no matter if I couldn't figure out a question. Learn and stay focus. So that how I got the positive effect on me. This is way I have to learn to make in life. I can't fool around and be lazy. I have be strong and go for my goal. If your parents told you learning will put you in positive effect. Trust me, there are right. Everyone, learning will put you in success if you keep focusing on what you doing. That positive effect.

**Score Point 1**

Although the writer of this essay establishes a position in the opening sentences and is able to stay focused on the idea that learning always has a positive effect, most sentences are uncontrolled. Serious and persistent grammar and usage errors, along with omitted words and very awkward phrases, create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and prevent the reader from fully understanding the argument the writer is attempting to make. As a result, the essay represents a very limited writing performance.

"The more that you read, the more things you will know.  
The more that you learn, the more places you will go."  
-Dr. SUESS. Let me just tell you that I am that  
kid in class who when the teacher says to read a  
book and write a paper about it, I come to class  
with a paper on Green eggs and ham. Reading  
was my least favorite thing to do I was always  
trying to get out of it, unfortunately my grade  
was showing it. I needed to read a real book  
and write about it if I was going to pass.  
Everyone told me find something that interests you  
and read about it. Impossible reading doesn't interest  
me. However I needed a book so I picked something  
I would at least enjoy a little and was kind of small.  
I came across the book "Heroes don't run" and it  
was about World War two. As for me I am the biggest  
patriot you will ever meet so I decided to read  
that. It was small and I love war history I find  
it interesting. The more I read the deeper I got into  
the book. It was about a boy too young for the army  
but wanted to join. Sounds a lot like me. I finished  
the book and it was amazing, wrote the paper and  
passed. Now I love to read. My point is you must  
walk before you run, so get a small book and  
work your way up. You will be surprised at  
the different places you can go.

**Score Point 1**

The writer begins with the quotation from Dr. Seuss to introduce a personal anecdote about the process of selecting and reading a book for a book report. Although a personal anecdote can be used effectively as evidence in persuasive writing, the organizational structure of this essay is inappropriate to the purpose and specific demands of the prompt, which require the writer to take a position on whether learning always has a positive effect on a person. Instead of focusing on this specified purpose and topic, the writer explains how reading the "small" book about World War II changed his attitude about reading. This information neither supports a position nor functions as appropriate support. Overall, the writer demonstrates a lack of understanding of the persuasive writing task.

I believe that learning does have a positive effect on peoples lives, because if people don't learn then they can't do every thing a smarter person could do meaning they would probably not get a job at all. I don't really know how learning could have a negative effect on peoples lives because if your smart you can get a job alot easier than if you weren't as smart. All in all I think that learning has only one effect on people and that is a good effect, Because if you don't have a good education then you don't have as many ways to get as good of a job.

**Score Point 1**

In the first sentence of this very limited response, the writer asserts that without learning a person “would probably not get a job at all.” Although this position is clear, the writer is unable to develop the argument beyond the singular idea that learning makes you smarter and results in a better job. The writer restates this idea in several different ways, causing the writing to be repetitious and the sentence-to-sentence progression to be weak. Because the support for the writer’s position is insufficiently developed, the argument is ineffective and unconvincing.

## Score Point 2

**The essay represents a basic writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is not always clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are only somewhat suited to the persuasive task.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, but the writer's position is weak or somewhat unclear. The lack of a clear, effective position or the writer's inclusion of irrelevant information interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is not always logical and controlled. Sometimes repetition or wordiness causes minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory or weak to support the flow of the essay or show the relationships among ideas.

### Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is minimal. The argument is superficial and largely unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are not always appropriate or are too briefly or partially presented.
- ❑ The essay reflects little or no thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is sometimes formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates only a limited understanding of the persuasive writing task.

### Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the persuasive purpose but does little to establish a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice may not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled, weakening the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ 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.

The more you read. The more things you will know. The more that you learn. The more places you will go. Can you read with your eyes shut? I know sure can not. Yes you can read the television or even a text message, but that's not the point. You go to school to learn not to throw it all away on drugs. Learning can help you with anything; can help get a job, go to collage, help your children or even keep you off the streets.

Getting an education keeps you in school. So you are not throwing it all away on drugs. Ruining your life as well as your kids lives. Most high school drop outs; drop out because of drugs. Drugs ruin your whole life. Back to what I was saying before. Going to high school or even collage can change your whole life as well as your future.

Going to collage will help you get ready for the real world. As well as get you a wonderful job. If you have kids you want to spend time with them, right? Get a successful job be for kids. So having any kind of education is a wonderful thing. Whether it is just high school, or high school and collage. Go out there and get an education. Once you get it do not throw it away on drugs.

**Score Point 2**

The writer begins the essay by unnecessarily repeating the Seuss quotation used as the stimulus in the prompt before establishing the position that “Learning can help you with anything; can help get a job, go to college, help your children or even keep you off the streets.” The writer attempts to provide a cause-and-effect argument that addresses all the points in the position statement, but the movement from point to point is not always logical or controlled because the writer “jumps” back and forth between the points. The writer’s inability to move smoothly from sentence to sentence weakens both the coherence and the flow of the essay. In addition, the writer’s word choice is general and imprecise (college can change your whole life; education is a wonderful thing), which causes the development to be superficial. The repetition of phrases such as “throw it all away” and “ruining your life” do not contribute to the quality of the argument. Overall, this essay represents a basic writing performance.

Doing well in school is the difference of you earning a two hundred thousand dollar paycheck a year, and earning minimum wage at McDonald's. Knowledge can provide you many opportunities and overall, great success.

Knowledge is power, knowledge can help you get a job through an interview, or get you through college for free. The more you know the more knowledge you have. If you do not know much about politics, or our country's army, it would be kind of difficult for you to be the president, or even the mayor to a city. The more you know the farther you will get in life. It's also kind of difficult if you want to travel to a new country, but you do not know what the language or culture is like.

In addition, not only is learning new things good for your brain, it is also great success. You might think directing a movie or TV show is easy but it's really not. You have to have the knowledge and skills it takes. If you want to succeed in life and have successful careers, knowledge really will get you there.

Maybe you should start listening next time in class because knowledge really is success and many opportunities.

### Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer provides the clear position statement that "knowledge can provide you many opportunities and overall, great success." Although the writer presents a number of ideas to support this position (the knowledge needed to become the president or mayor of a city, travel to a new country, direct a movie or TV shows), transitions are too perfunctory to clearly connect these ideas or build depth from idea to idea. Because the development of each idea is brief and unconnected, the argument is superficial and reflects little thoughtfulness.

### learning lifestyle

Learning something that nearly every person wants to do. Learning is something that can't be taken for granted. Some people don't even get to go to school where they live, yet there are people dropping out and quitting schools. I believe that everyone needs a good education. It can only lead to good things in your life.

Look at some of the important people throughout history who made a difference with their knowledge. For example, Albert Einstein, a man with a brilliant mind whose theories and work are still used in teaching to this very day. He is just one example of what a person can do with enough knowledge.

Just think of what you can do if you get a good education and try hard enough. For all we know, you, me, or anyone could do great things with the knowledge we gain. So all in all, get a good education because knowledge truly is power.

#### Score Point 2

In this essay, the writer asserts that “everyone needs a good education” because “it can only lead to good things in your life.” The support for this position focuses specifically on the example of Albert Einstein, “a brilliant man whose theories and work are still used.” While this example can be clearly linked to the idea of knowledge, the writer provides no evidence that Einstein’s contributions were the result of a good education. The lack of a clear connection between position statement and evidence weakens the effectiveness of the argument and shows that the writer has a limited understanding of the persuasive writing task. In addition, sentences and conventions are at times only partially controlled. Overall, the essay represents a basic writing performance.

Learning has quite an effect on a lot of things. Everything people do is based on what they have learned. Learning has a very positive effect on everybody because it does lead to new opportunities and helps everyone in life.

Opportunities open up the more someone learns. A person could be learning about engineering and so many jobs would want that at their company. Learning one thing can lead to many more things to learn. Everyone is constantly learning something even if they are unaware.

Everything someone does in their life is from what they have learned or picked up. They could have learned from someone else or they could have self-taught themselves. Everyone grew up learning. Reading, writing, math, and history is what people went through as a kid, maybe even in college. It might not all be the same, but we all learn in some form.

Learning helps us to know what's good or bad, right or wrong. No matter who is learning what, learning will always be a positive thing in our lives because some time it will all come into good use.

### Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer contends that learning helps everyone by providing new opportunities. The writer begins paragraph two by stating that learning engineering could lead to a larger number of job offerings. However, the writer only briefly presents this idea before shifting the focus to the universal nature of learning. In this section of the essay, the argument suffers from a lack of specificity and devolves, in paragraph three, into a general discussion of the various circumstances under which people learn (from others or themselves at different times and locations). This paragraph relates to the topic but does not clearly support the position, thereby weakening the argument.

## **Score Point 3**

**The essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

- The organizing structure of the essay is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are adequately suited to the persuasive task.
- The writer establishes a clear position. Most ideas are related to the position and are focused on the issue specified in the prompt. The essay is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.
- The writer's progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas.

### Development of Ideas

- The development of ideas is sufficient. The argument is largely convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and appropriate.
- The essay reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the persuasive writing task.

### Use of Language/Conventions

- The writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific. It reflects an awareness of the persuasive purpose and establishes a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- Sentences are reasonably varied and adequately controlled, contributing for the most part to the effectiveness of the essay.
- 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 essay.

From beginning to end, life is a learning experience. If life is composed of learning and experiencing, can knowledge turn life sour? Society has no meaning without intelligence, and so everybody must learn. Humanity would not even exist without learning. Our earliest ancestors had to learn to hunt, to form groups, and to make fire. However, something must be said for those who first discovered that touching fire is painful or that touching sharp objects causes bleeding. Didn't the process of learning such things harm them, affecting their lives in a negative way? To put the answer simply, no. They would have learned from their past mistakes and passed that information down to relatives, making such cautions common knowledge. Everything society has today, from the alphabet to traffic laws, is a positive effect of knowledge. Learning and experiencing may seem overwhelming, even frightening at times. However, learning and living are one and the same. A fear of learning is a fear of living, and who wants to spend their life afraid of what might be just around the corner?

**Score Point 3**

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer establishes the clear position that “society has no meaning without intelligence, and so everybody must learn.” The writer uses a philosophical approach to support his position, arguing that throughout history, humans could not have made the progress they did without experiencing the painful side of learning (e.g., humans learned to control fire through experiencing a painful burn). The clear connections between ideas make the argument largely convincing. The writer also demonstrates some thoughtfulness when he questions whether gaining knowledge in this way could be interpreted as negative. His refutation of this view helps to develop the link between individual lessons and the benefit of these lessons to society as a whole. In addition, the word choice reflects an awareness of the persuasive task and contributes to the quality of the essay.

Learning does not always have a positive effect on a person's life because sometimes people use things that they have learned in bad ways. Like criminals, they use the things that they have learned to their advantage. They learn how to hotwire cars, hack people's credit card information, and identity. To be able to do this you need knowledge.

When criminals hot wire cars, they basically connect a couple of wires to the correct places to turn on the car and steal it. In order for them to be able to do this they had to have learned about cars. They could have learned it in college; or a book, anywhere really, but they learned it. The same thing goes for the people that hack people's credit card information and identity, they have to know how to get the password and stuff in order to successfully hack someone. They had to learn how to hack.

So learning doesn't always have a positive effect on people's lives, because sometimes they use what they have learned for bad things. Obviously this has a negative effect on a person's life because the people doing these types of things ruin other people's lives.

**Score Point 3**

The writer of this essay establishes the position that learning can have a negative effect when “people use things they have learned in bad ways.” To support this position, the writer presents two different negative actions that require knowledge (hotwiring cars and hacking people’s information). Although the evidence provided in the second paragraph to support this assertion could be strengthened with further development, the argument is largely convincing because the two examples are appropriate, and the writer links them through a meaningful transition in the middle of the paragraph. The writer’s statement that “these types of things ruin other people’s lives” further serves to connect the two ideas. Overall, the strong focus and logical progression compensate for the somewhat general development and language use in this satisfactory writing performance.

Someone once said "too much knowledge is a bad thing." I completely disagree with this statement. I believe that learning always has a positive effect on someone's life.

As a person gains knowledge they gain the ability to do more things, in turn this will positively effect their life. In life, the people who drop out of highschool are the ones stuck behind a cash register at McDonalds. But the people who work hard through school and go on to college are the people who have a steady means to support their families. These people earned the knowledge which gave them a better job and income than the people who dropped out. And then there are the people who study harder and learn more to become a doctor or lawyer. These people are the ones who own the big houses and fancy cars all thanks to staying in school and learning all they could. Learning will always have a positive effect on a person's life.

When people learn more, they are able to get better jobs. When people get better jobs, they get more money. When people get more money, they are able to spend it on things they want and the people they love. These things are what make people happy and have a positive effect on their lives.

### Score Point 3

The writer begins the essay with the assertion that "learning always has a positive effect on someone's life." A compare/contrast strategy highlights the different levels of success of those who stay in school and gain knowledge as opposed to those who do not. Strong sentence-to-sentence connections and meaningful transitions support the flow of the essay. In the conclusion, the writer shifts to a cause-and-effect strategy, outlining the ideas from the second paragraph that best support the position that learning has a positive effect on a person's life. In addition, the writer's control of sentences and command of conventions contribute to the overall quality of response.

Knowledge opens a million doors that lead to new opportunities. It is very important for an individual going in to college to be well read because of the foreknowledge that entails. The knowledge brought on by reading a book or paying attention in class will be very instrumental for future success.

In this new day and age communication has become important in the business world. Because of the amount of communication being carried out with other countries it is important to become culturally aware. Books such as *The Joy Luck Club* by Amy Tan, *One Day in the Life of Ivan Denisovich* by Alexander Solzhenitsyn and *Night* by Elie Wiesel, provide insight on different cultures and time periods. I know these books have helped me become more aware of history and people which surround me. I am more willing to communicate with classmates who are different from me.

By expanding our awareness, we become open to new possibilities around the world. Whether it be learning a new language to communicate with people in foreign countries or becoming more culturally aware by learning history or reading a book, the expansion of knowledge always facilitates success and provides more opportunities in life.

### Score Point 3

The writer focuses the argument on the position that knowledge, specifically cultural awareness, leads to new opportunities and future success. After establishing the importance of communication in the global marketplace, the writer cites three specific literary works to support the assertion that reading culturally diverse books provides “insight on different cultures and time periods.” Although these literary works are appropriate examples, the ways in which they have personally affected the writer could be more specific and detailed. In the conclusion, the writer provides additional support for her position by shifting from a personal to a more global perspective. The word choice is clear, and a clear persuasive tone is evident. In addition, the essay progresses logically, and sentences are adequately controlled. Overall, this essay is a good example of a satisfactory writing performance.

## Score Point 4

**The essay represents an accomplished writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is clearly appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is skillfully crafted because the writer uses organizational strategies that are particularly well suited to the persuasive task.
- ❑ The writer establishes a clear position. All ideas are strongly related to the position and are focused on the issue specified in the prompt. By sustaining this focus, the writer is able to create an essay that is unified and coherent.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is logical and well controlled. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of the essay by clearly showing the relationships among ideas, making the writer's train of thought easy to follow.

### Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is highly effective. The argument is forceful and convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and well chosen.
- ❑ The essay is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may choose to recognize the complexities of the issue, consider opposing or alternate points of view, use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the persuasive writing task.

### Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is purposeful and precise. It reflects a keen awareness of the persuasive purpose and maintains a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ 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 essay. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the essay.

With technology as advanced as it is today, not one person can harness all of the knowledge that is capable of being accessed. Our connection to information allows us to be up-to-date with relevant facts at the click of a button. Certain knowledge that is obtained for an area of study can be of great use yet too much knowledge can be harmful.

Society is changing one hundred percent of the time and because of that, some say it is better to know than to go without knowing. That very statement can negatively impact a person's identity. There is so much personal information exposed to the world that it is extremely hard to find security in social privacy. Anyone equipped with the correct skillset can learn of a person's current location or even their likes and interests. And if you've been keeping an eye on social media, you should know that violent people learning of personal information doesn't lead to a few extra Hallmark cards being sent out over the holidays.

On the contrary, always learning is an extremely important aspect to the ladder in society. If you think that education stops after you get your college degree, then you're bound to fail. Being a figurehead in business requires you to learn of new things every day to get a foot hold in the competitive markets. Take, for example, the great Space Race. If the Russians weren't always on their toes about learning of new technological advancements in aerospace, they wouldn't have made it up there first.

Always learning can be both harmful and advantageous to a person's everyday lifestyle.

#### Score Point 4

In this accomplished essay, the writer takes the clear “fence-sitting” position that knowledge has the potential to be both helpful and harmful because of our accessibility to advanced technology. The writer organizes the essay by juxtaposing specific examples of online identity theft (a drawback of information accessibility) with examples of the need to continually acquire knowledge through technology (a benefit of accessibility). The progression of ideas is well controlled, and strong sentence-to-sentence connections and meaningful transitions make the flow of ideas easy to follow. The writer explores the complexities of the issue by focusing the acquisition of knowledge in the context of technology.

Throughout history and in everybody's lives education has opened doorways to new beginnings or has helped people come out of poverty. Learning kept my father off of the streets and helped my Grandpa <sup>Ellis</sup> fight his way through the Great Depression.

My father grew up in a city in Kansas named Hutchinson which, at the time, was overcrowded with salt miners who worked down in the Morton Salt Mines. With the overcrowding came a surge of crime and shady people. Many high-schoolers my Dad's age dropped out of High School and became drug addicts. My Father would have been one of those dead beats had it not been for his education. Dad was fascinated by math and by how numbers fit together to make solutions, and he also loved hearing his history teacher lecture about the past. Had it not been for my father's love of learning he would not have met my mother and I would not be alive.

Grandpa <sup>Ellis</sup>, my Aunt's father in law and a ditch digger, lived during the Great Depression. <sup>Ellis</sup> did not have a school education, but he learned something new every day that helped him survive the Great Depression. My Grandfather was not an educated man but he knew about anything and everything from how to grow corn to Einstein's theories. All of the knowledge my Grandpa acquired helped him live life to the fullest and be the greatest man I know.

Whether it be in a classroom or out digging a ditch, learning something new every day can help anyone persevere through tough times and get the best out of their lives.

"I never stop learning until the day I die" - Grandpa <sup>Ellis</sup>

#### Score Point 4

The writer tightly focuses this well-crafted essay on the role learning plays in helping a person overcome poverty. The writer develops a forceful and convincing argument through the use of detailed anecdotes about the humble beginnings of his father and Grandpa Ellis and the specific ways learning helped each of them escape hardship and live an enriched life. In addition, the varied and purposeful sentences and strong conventions enhance the effectiveness of the essay. Overall, the writer's keen awareness of the persuasive purpose and his ability to use his own background knowledge as the basis for writing make this essay thoughtful and engaging.

Children's innocence is protected by their ignorance of the impure world around them. Learning of the intense hatred in our world can sully the mind of even the purest child.

Harper Lee exemplifies this corruption in her novel To Kill A Mockingbird with the character of Jem. Jem's father is a lawyer in the south during the height of racism defending a black man.

Through the trial of this man Jem sees that even though the defendant is innocent, the townspeople's racism prevents them from setting him free. Through this Jem sees the social hierarchy of his town and realizes that hate is everywhere. Jem's loss of innocence is clearly displayed when shown in contrast to his younger sister's strong innocence. She tells Jem that there is "just one kind of folks." (Harper Lee, To Kill A Mockingbird), and Jem informs her that he used to think the same.

Some might argue that Jem's younger sister learned the same lesson through the trial. However, her youth made her innocence stronger, so she can hold onto it longer. It can be inferred that she will one day see the same lesson that Jem learned and it will stain her innocence in the same way.

In summation, learning the harsh facts about life is inevitable and often accompanied by the loss of innocence. That is why I urge informed people in this world to help restore innocence to our minds so that there won't be as many harsh truths for the youth of this world to learn.

#### Score Point 4

In the introduction of this accomplished essay, the writer states the position that "[l]earning of the intense hatred in our world can sully the mind of even the purest child." As support for this position, the student provides relevant context and details from the novel *To Kill a Mockingbird*. In paragraph two, strong sentence-to-sentence connections show the relationships between ideas: the writer contrasts the outlook of the character Jem with that of his younger, more innocent sister. In the third paragraph, the writer considers a possible counter argument to the position she takes in the essay, conceding that someday the younger sister may, in fact, think the same way as Jem. The ability to recognize alternate points of view reveals a nuanced understanding of the issue. In addition, where many responses rely on a rephrasing of the prompt to establish a position, this writer allows the strength of well-chosen evidence and the negative connotations created by word choice (sully the mind, stain her innocence, harsh facts) to help reinforce the argument that learning can have a negative effect on a person's life. Overall, the essay is skillfully crafted, and the writer demonstrates a thorough understanding of the persuasive task.

Imagine you suddenly forgot everything you knew. You forgot basic math, how to read and write, how to grade this paper, and how to walk and talk. You wouldn't get very far. As humans, our brains are built for learning, trial and error. All of the knowledge you know now is from learning. Learning always has a positive effect on one's life because you'll always improve from learning, never devolve.

From the moment you were conceived, you were learning. You learned how to open your eyes, how to move your hands and feet, and how to breathe. They might sound like basic functions, but after years and years of experience you still haven't forgotten how to breathe, move muscles, and how to see the world. Learning will always push you forward, never backward.

Many people argue that a lot of knowledge we know, we don't even use. And seeing how the human mind is only being used part of the time, that may be true. However, the learning process never hurts you. It will always be safer to know too much, than to know too little about any subject. For example, if you encounter a dangerous situation regarding a very large, angry, man-eating lion, it would be better to know way too many escape and fight scenarios and solutions, than to know nothing at all. Learning isn't just for school, it's a lifestyle, it's how we survive.

In conclusion, learning is the basis for human existence. It's how we improve and survive. Promote learning and teach others. Maybe even if you forgot everything, re-learning all that knowledge is still a possibility.

#### Score Point 4

The writer of this thoughtful and engaging essay begins with a hypothetical scenario, asking the reader to imagine life “if you suddenly forgot everything you knew.” This serves as an introduction to the writer’s position that learning is an integral part of humanity and is the mechanism that allows us to improve and survive. Strong sentence-to-sentence connections show the relationships between ideas and make the writer’s train of thought easy to follow. For example, in paragraph two the writer introduces the idea that learning begins at conception and then provides details about early lessons that “may sound like basic functions” but that “will always push you forward, not backward.” The writer’s reiteration of this idea throughout the response contributes to the focus and coherence of the essay. The writer concludes the essay with a call to action, demonstrating a thorough understanding of the persuasive task. The specific word choice and overall strength of the conventions further contribute to the effectiveness of the essay.