

WRITTEN COMPOSITION

Rubrics and Sample Responses

Write an essay about the effect that someone you admire can have on your life.

The information in the box below will help you remember what you should think about when you write your composition.

REMEMBER—YOU SHOULD

- ☐ write about the assigned topic
- ☐ make your writing thoughtful and interesting
- ☐ make sure that each sentence you write contributes to your composition as a whole
- ☐ make sure that your ideas are clear and easy for the reader to follow
- ☐ write about your ideas in depth so that the reader is able to develop a good understanding of what you are saying
- ☐ proofread your writing to correct errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentence structure

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

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS AN INEFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and/or the composition as a whole are not focused. The writer may shift abruptly from idea to idea, making it difficult for the reader to understand how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has little, or no, sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion, if present, may be perfunctory.
- ☐ A substantial amount of writing may be extraneous because it does not contribute to the development or quality of the composition. In some cases, the composition overall may be only weakly connected to the prompt.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and/or paragraph to paragraph is not logical. Sometimes weak progression results from an absence of transitions or from the use of transitions that do not make sense. At other times, the progression of thought is simply not evident, even if appropriate transitions are included.
- ☐ An organizational strategy is not evident. The writer may present ideas in a random or haphazard way, making the composition difficult to follow.
- ☐ Wordiness and/or repetition may stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer presents one or more ideas but provides little or no development of those ideas.
- ☐ The writer presents one or more ideas and attempts to develop them. However, this development is so general or vague that it prevents the reader from understanding the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer presents only a plot summary of a published piece of writing, a movie, or a television show.
- ☐ The writer omits information, which creates significant gaps between ideas. These gaps prevent the reader from clearly understanding those ideas.

Voice

- ☐ The writer does not engage the reader, therefore failing to establish a connection.
- ☐ There may be little or no sense of the writer's individual voice. The composition does not sound authentic or original. The writer is unable to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ There is little or no evidence in the composition that the writer can correctly apply the conventions of the English language. Severe and/or frequent errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure may cause the writing to be unclear or difficult to read. These errors weaken the composition by causing an overall lack of fluency.
- ☐ The writer may misuse or omit words and phrases and may frequently write awkward sentences. These weaknesses interfere with the effective communication of ideas.

Movie Stars, singers, parents, and brothers and sisters are people a person usually admires. Almost everyone has a person that they admire and look up to. Usually when a person admires somebody it can have some effect on your life. It may make you want to change so that you can be like the person you admire. You may want to act like them and talk like them so that you can be someone that someone else would want to admire. It could make you be someone you're not in good ways and bad ways. Your life could be easily changed and effected if you try to be like the person you admire. If you start trying to be like that person and start changing yourself you can lose your friends and the people you love because they started liking you for you not because you are just like some one else.

There are so many more ways your life can be effected by someone you admire. We should try our best to be someone that someone else can admire also.

Score Point: 1

The writer attempts to discuss how people may want to change to be like the person they admire. The development overall is general and vague (It could make you be someone you're not in good ways and bad ways), and repetition stalls the progression of ideas (You may want to act like them and talk like them, It could make you be someone you're not, If you try to be like the person you admire, If you start trying to be like that person). Although the conventions are mostly appropriate and there is some focus, the weak progression and overall lack of development make the composition ineffective. In addition, there is little or no sense of the writer's individual voice.

It's really amazing how someone you admire can affect your life. In the story "First Day" that we just read, we see a mother who is very admirable and how she affects her daughter's life.

"The First Day" is a story about a mother who is trying to get her little girl enrolled in school. At the beginning of the story, the mother and daughter are walking down New Jersey Avenue. The little girl is all dressed up in a checkered dress and her mother has put her hair into plaits with blue barrettes. She also has on some black patent-leather shoes.

The mother and little girl walk until they get to Seaton Elementary School that is across the street from the mother's church. When they go in and talk to a woman, they find out that they are not supposed to be at that school. They are supposed to be at a school called Walker-Jones.

So they leave and go to Walker-Jones. There, they go to the auditorium where there are a lot of people. When the mother gets the forms she is supposed to fill out, she has to ask for help because she can't read or write. So a woman asks the mother the questions and then writes the mother's answers down. The mother has all the little girl's records like her birth certificate, baptismal record, and

immunization record. After all the paperwork is done, the mother gives the woman fifty cents for helping.

Next they give the form to another woman and then the little girl's teacher comes and introduces herself. The mother tells the little girl good-bye and then leaves the little girl with the teacher.

So it is easy to see that the mother had to do a lot to get her little girl enrolled in school and that's how she affected her little girl's life.

Score Point: 1

The composition is ineffective because it is, for the most part, a plot summary of the literary selection "The First Day," with almost no original development of ideas. This reliance on merely retelling the story gives the reader very little sense of the writer's authentic voice.

Ever cents I can remender I have Played Base Ball and that's when I met my Best Friend Kevin . I tall started on Autumn afternoon at Baseball pratice in pee-wee league we Played for the _____ we went undefeated that year I was a pitcher and he was a First Base man we were a Duo nothing could stop us untill two years later he moved to the rival town of _____ now insted of Best friends we became fierce rivals Battling into 13 innings in just major league. some years past his family for some reason was always moving from town to town city to city when we were older and are friend ship just faded away untill one Day he called me saying he was comming Back on the inside I was so glad I had my Best friend Back like the Duo we once had . Now we are Juniors in High school and capitans of the foot Ball team we just love sports and working out in every Day there is not a time we are Not together really even our girl friends are Best friends wich is so cool I don't know where I'd be or what I be doing if he weren't here Kevin has been my Best friend cents kindigal and he will always be.

Score Point: 1

The writer of this composition tells about his long-time friendship with a boy he met at baseball practice. Although the composition is focused and has some specific development, the variety and density of conventions errors overwhelm the composition's strengths. These errors weaken the composition by causing an overall lack of fluency.

Does it ever make you wonder if people you admire really do have some kind of an effect on your life? Well people you do admire do have a huge impact on your life in many ways. They inspire you, give you advice, and hang with you.

If you admire someone more than likely they inspire you in the same way. Whether it's because they're a movie star, music artist, or if they're just dating someone you think is really good looking. Whenever you're inspired by someone they do have a big impact on your life because you look up to them and want to be just like them. That affects you in many ways.

Also, if you admire someone more than likely you would want advice from them. Whether that's for make-up, hair, or fashion advice. You'd want good advice to be just like them in many aspects. You will listen to what they tell you and probably remember for as long as possible.

The most important way people you admire would have a big impact on

Your life is because you'd probably
want to hang out with them if you could.
People you hang out with affects
your image and how people look at
you.

Those are my many reasons how
someone you admire would have a big
impact on your life. Whether or not its because
they inspire you, give you advice, or you
hang out with.

Score Point: 1

In a perfunctory introduction, the writer states three ways people you admire can have an impact on your life (They inspire you, give you advice, and hang with you). The absence of connections between these ideas causes the response to lack coherence. Repetition within paragraphs (you want advice from them, you'd want good advice to be just like them in many aspects) weakens the sentence-to-sentence progression. In addition, the general and vague development of ideas (more than likely they inspire you in the same way, you look up to them and want to be just like them, people you hang out with effects your image and how people look at you) makes it difficult for the reader to understand what the writer is trying to say.

SCORE POINT 2

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A SOMEWHAT EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and/or the composition as a whole are somewhat focused. The writer may shift quickly from idea to idea, but the reader has no difficulty understanding how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has some sense of completeness. The writer includes an introduction and conclusion, but they may be superficial.
- ☐ Some of the writing may be extraneous because it does not contribute to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and/or paragraph to paragraph may not always be smooth or completely logical. Sometimes the writer needs to strengthen the progression by including more meaningful transitions; at other times the writer simply needs to establish a clearer link between ideas.
- ☐ The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses do not enable the writer to present ideas effectively.
- ☐ Some wordiness and/or repetition may be evident, but these weaknesses do not completely stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer attempts to develop the composition by listing ideas or briefly explaining them. In both of these cases, the development remains superficial, limiting the reader's understanding and appreciation of the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer presents one or more ideas and attempts to develop them. However, there is little evidence of depth of thinking because this development may be somewhat general, inconsistent, or contrived.
- ☐ The writer may omit small pieces of information that create minor gaps between ideas. However, these gaps do not prevent the reader from understanding those ideas.

Voice

- ☐ There may be moments when the writer engages the reader but fails to sustain the connection.
- ☐ Individual paragraphs or sections of the composition may sound authentic or original, but the writer has difficulty expressing his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ Errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure throughout the composition may indicate a limited control of conventions. Although these errors do not cause the writing to be unclear, they weaken the overall fluency of the composition.
- ☐ The writer may include some simple or inaccurate words and phrases and may write some awkward sentences. These weaknesses limit the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

Someone you admire, whether you'd like to admit or not, can have a profound effect on your life. These influences can be good or bad or a little bit of both. The way we feel, the way we think, the way we act, the way we dress and even your goals are influenced by the people we look up to.

A very common idol would be celebrities. This can include actors, athletes, musicians, and just most public figures. For instance, whenever you watch some basketball games at a nonprofessional level, you might catch one of the players perform a trick that their favorite player does. Another instance, you may hear someone use slang from a favorite television show. I am guilty of this too, because many times I have tried to play like my basketball idol, Mike Bibby of the Sacramento Kings.

Another group of people that impact us greatly would be the people in our community, such as teachers, club advisors, and parents other than our own. These people are around us daily and would have a greater impact on us than celebrities might. These people can affect what you're interested in and what your career goals are, for a few examples. My 4th grade teacher had such a profound effect on me, that I often think about her to this day. One of the parents in my 4-H circuit has also affected my way of thinking. I met Mr. WEBB, the parent, 4 years ago at our first meeting in my new club. I was very shy and had a rather cold mood towards others. Right away he came over to me and made me smile and laugh. Thanks to his influence, I'm no longer shy in front of others and I am more open-

minded.

The last, but certainly not least, group I would like to use would be our parents. Our parents are the ones that bring us up and teach us how to function in society. They are also the ones that love us no matter what, so we know it's okay if society isn't quite ready for us. They have effects on how we dress, how we speak, what we say, our behavior, morals, culture, and beliefs to name a few. Our parents are probably our greatest influence in our lives and we don't seem to notice it.

The people we admire have a much greater impact on us than we seem to realize. We need these influences, good and bad, to become healthy, strong adults. If we didn't have these influences, we wouldn't be the society we are today.

Score Point: 2

Between a perfunctory introduction and conclusion, the writer presents three groups of people (celebrities, people in the community, parents) who could influence the way we feel, think, act, dress, and set goals. This formulaic approach weakens the focus and coherence of the composition because the writer shifts quickly from paragraph to paragraph without connecting the information with meaningful transitions. Although the writer attempts to develop each paragraph, the development is somewhat general and superficial (These people can affect what you're interested in and what your career goals are).

The girl that I admired that can have an affect on my life. Would be back in Elementary school in like the fourth or fifth grade a girl walked up to me and started to talk to me, but I was to shy to say anything.

Every time I see her my heart starts to pump rapidly like the pistons on a car going about 100. She was promboly the most beautiful girl I ever saw, with her long brownish-blond hair, blue eyes, nice smile. Makes me drop to my knees and ask her to marry me right away so no one else will get her. She could of changed every thing for me. She would inspirid me to do better in school like her, she had like straight A's all through Elementary. We would of gotten a grate future of me being an Airforce pilot and her being a Country musical star.

after school we would go home and play games like tag and such, or we would go to the pond and chace ducks and swing on the swing set. Then at school we had the same class and sat by each other. Then we would talk about what we gonna be when we grow up and what college are you going to and so on. We would hope to have the same class in Junior High like we did in Elementary, but we didn't.

Her father was diagnost with cancer I didn't know which one, but it was bad. She didn't speak to me at all in school, because of her dad's condition. She was

so depressed for several months until he healed. By that time I thought she would be happy, but no. She had to move with her parents to Florida. Her mother had some great job opportunity over there for her.

The last time I ever got to see and speak to her was on the moving day when she kissed me and said goodbye. Then got into the car and left. That was my first kiss. I never saw her yet, but I hope that I would run into her again someday.

Score Point: 2

The writer reflects on how a girl he admired in elementary school might have affected his life. For the most part, the composition is focused and sounds authentic as he describes his feelings and hopes (Every time I see her my heart starts to pump rapidly like the pistons on a car going about 100). However, the variety of conventions errors indicates limited control of the English language and keeps the response from being more than somewhat effective.

There are those who play a role in your life. Most of the time these people are mentors, teachers, or just a friend. This person you admire will have an affect on your life and could even change it completely.

The person who had an affect on the narrator's life in the story "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" was the person he had admired throughout the whole story, his teacher Miss Bessie. She helped him get as much education as he could while he attended her class. She always told him "you might not have a whole lot in life but you have a brain." She knew of his dreams of becoming a writer so she made him read lots of books to help him towards his goals. In one of her many words of wisdom, she once told him "if you can't read then you can't write. You might as well forget about your dreams." He would always go home and read the books she would provide for him. He didn't have electricity so he would read them with the aid of his oil lamp. He took her words of wisdom and later on excelled on to bigger and better things in life. He reached his dreams of becoming a writer. He owed a lot of thanks to his teacher Mrs. Bessie.

Another example of how a person who someone admires helps them in life is in the story "The First Day." The narrator's mentor was her mother.

She helped change her life by getting her enrolled in school. Her mother, not able to read and ~~and~~ write, knew how important it was and did anything and everything to get her enrolled in school.

These women were both good examples of how someone you admire can help make a life change. Throughout both stories they had trouble to overcome and they both followed the person they admired to get them there. That is how a person you admire could have an affect on your life.

Score Point: 2

In this somewhat effective response, the writer purposefully uses parts of the plot from both "The First Day" and "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" to show how someone who is admired can help a person in life. Although the response is focused and the writer provides some original analysis of the reading selections (She knew of his dreams of becoming a writer so she made him read lots of books to help him toward his goals; Her mother, not able to read and write, knew how important it was and did anything and everything to get her enrolled in school), the overall development remains superficial.

Having a role model or just someone you admire can have an effect on your life. For example, I have always admired my grandpa. When he was growing up, he had a very difficult life. With three other brothers, himself being the oldest, and no steady father figure in their lives, he took the role as man of the house. At age fifteen, tragedy struck and his mother died of cancer. That left them to live with his aunt who he had only met once and rarely ever spoken to. After they had all finished school and moved out, my grandpa went into the armed forces. He served in the Marines for three years and in the Navy for two. When he got out of the service, he met a beautiful young girl with whom he would fall in love and marry a year and a half later. After nearly two years of marriage, they had their first son, my dad. Another two years passed and they had another bouncing baby boy who would be followed by a beautiful baby girl four years later. From that point on, their entire lives revolved around their kids. Which now revolves around the grandkids.

Even in his old age, my grandpa is a man of much courage, wisdom, and respect. I have always admired him and always will. Despite all the hardship he had as a child, he has still led an honorable life. His actions as well as his words have made a huge impact on my life. He is most definitely one of the biggest role models in my life and also one of my best friends.

Score Point: 2

In this somewhat effective composition, the writer admires "grandpa" because he overcame hardships. The writer uses a biographical strategy to develop the idea that the grandfather led a successful life, married, and produced a family despite a tragic and difficult childhood. The chronological organization helps to insure logical progression of thought from sentence to sentence. However, the events of the grandfather's life are only briefly explained, leaving the reader without a full understanding of how the grandfather made such a "huge" impact on the writer's life.

SCORE POINT 3

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A GENERALLY EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and the composition as a whole are, for the most part, focused. The writer generally shows the clear relationship between ideas, making few sudden shifts from one idea to the next.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has a sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion add some depth to the composition.
- ☐ Most of the writing contributes to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is generally smooth and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and the links between ideas are logical.
- ☐ The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses are generally effective.
- ☐ Wordiness and/or repetition, if present, are minor problems that do not stall the progression of ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer attempts to develop all the ideas included in the composition. Although some ideas may be developed more thoroughly and specifically than others, the development overall reflects some depth of thought, enabling the reader to generally understand and appreciate the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer's presentation of some ideas may be thoughtful. There may be little evidence that the writer has been willing to take compositional risks when developing the topic.

Voice

- ☐ The writer engages the reader and sustains that connection throughout most of the composition.
- ☐ For the most part, the composition sounds authentic and original. The writer is generally able to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ The writer generally demonstrates a good command of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. Although the writer may make minor errors, they create few disruptions in the fluency of the composition.
- ☐ The words, phrases, and sentence structures the writer uses are generally appropriate and contribute to the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

In a mind filled with numbers, percents, and students names and desk, I sit back at my large square desk and look back at my life. There's the sandbox where all the latest gossip took place, the gigantic slide where we used to have contests, and the infamous "teacher's row" where all the teachers would stand at recess. My favorite was Mrs. Goss. She inspired me in ways unimaginable.

Even though I didn't think so at the time, Mrs. Goss was an inspiration in my life. As I sat back in math class daydreaming about what I was going to be when I grow up, or recess, or lunch, Mrs. Goss always kept me on task. She could make adding $1+1$ into the most interesting thing on earth, and at that time I was pretty much amused by anything that made me feel like school wasn't as "schooly".

One day in particular sticks out in my mind, "Career Day". This wasn't your typical "career day"; this was a day when my teachers made us write^{an} essay on what we wanted to be. Thoughts raced through my head "Police officer... no, accountant... no, teacher... yes! I want to be a teacher."

So finally I began writing. Mrs Goss walked the classroom making sure we were working, and ^{as} she passed she looked and said "Good Job", as she always said to me when I looked half-way interested in something. Days passed, and Mrs. Goss finally returned our essays. I was so excited I was sure I got at least a "B+", and to my surprise an "A+" laid on my desk; however, there was a lot of teacher writing on it. "How can this be an "A+"?" I thought. As I returned to my seat I read the teacher print neatly written in red ink on the front of my sheet, "Great Job! I know you will become a fantastic teacher one day." These words inspired me throughout school and to this day.

As I look at each student's desk in my own classroom, I realize how much I admire Mrs. Goss and all her teachings, how she cared, nurtured, and educated me. With her words of wisdom, I strive to be the "fantastic teacher" Mrs. Goss wanted me to be.

Score Point: 3

In this generally effective composition, the writer admires a teacher and decides to become a teacher also. The progression of ideas is generally smooth and controlled as the writer moves from a general description of the teacher to the teacher's encouraging remarks about an essay written for career day. Each sentence in the composition adds to the reader's understanding of the writer's ideas. The composition is authentic and engaging, and the good control of conventions adds to the effectiveness of the response.

Her tears stabbed my heart, her sobs rang in my ears, and as I sat there holding her, I felt as though I was watching myself crumble. Slowly the dreamworld claimed her, peace was granted to her fatigued mind, and I was left to piece together my heart. The drying tears only served to remind me of her humanity. Her strength was a mask, which she applied daily in order to protect her soul. Today was a day I would never forget, today I had seen the unveiling of my older sister, the person who showed me how to survive the cruelty and unfairness of life.

The admiration I hold in my heart for my sister is more than that of a "little sister." The closeness we share is that of two kindred spirits who would die for each other. The trials she's faced in life, would have killed my ability to trust, to love, and to live; while, the sadness I battle daily would have quickly claimed her soul by now. To put it simply, she's my Yin and I'm her Yang. While I teach her to love herself more, she shows me how to love others. She preaches "carpe Diem," and I lecture looking to the future for opportunities. Our personalities play a harmonious song together which leads us through life.

I do not walk behind or in front of my sister; I walk beside her. We are equals who

will continue to dry each others tears and watch one another's back through life.

Score Point: 3

The writer uses literal and symbolic tears in the introduction and conclusion to frame this response. As she moves from the shattering image of her sister breaking down (her tears stabbed my heart, her sobs rang in my ears) to the future when they dry each other's tears, the writer presents her feelings but does not share the details of this particular incident. The writer weaves descriptive phrases (the unveiling of my older sister, two kindred spirits, our personalities pay a harmonious song together) into a philosophical narrative that reflects the contrasting world view of the sisters (she's my yin and I'm her yang). The writer attempts to explore these differences (I teach her to love herself more, she shows me how to love others), but the development of ideas remains at a "generally effective" level. Although awkward in places (I lecture looking to the future for opportunities), the conventions contribute to the overall effectiveness of this response.

When we think about the person we admire we always think of the reason we admire them and what it will take to become them. Therefore, that person can have an enormous effect on your life.

Many admire the "rich and famous" that seem like they have it all. The person I admire is neither rich nor famous. To me it is more important to admire someone you truly know and love rather than someone you only see the glitz and glam of. I admire my dad, the most caring and unselfish person I know. He always puts his family, friends, or anyone that needs help before himself. Everyday I tell him "I love you" and mean it with everything in my heart because I admire him for who he is and for the way he effects the person I have become. The person I admire has taught me patience. When he is faced with a complicated task he responds with calmness and strategy. Watching my dad has helped me stay level-headed when I come to an obstacle in life. Another way the person I admire effects

my life is by teaching me to love unselfishly. When someone teaches you this you learn to throw yourself out there and expect nothing in return but still hope and strive for it. The people we admire should also teach us motivation. They teach us to "shoot for the moon" so if we miss we will still fall among the stars. Motivation effects our lives by wanting only the best for ourselves and getting just that. Also they can effect us by teaching us to be strong and to be our own person not to "go with the flow". This helps us defeat peer pressure and makes us stand up for ourselves.

As you can tell I highly admire my dad and all the positive ways he has effected my life and only hope everyone could be so lucky to have someone like him to admire. We all get to choose the person we admire so make the choice that will help you to be the best you can be and will bless your life in positive ways.

Score Point: 3

The writer of this generally effective composition explores the thesis that other people are admirable because of the lessons we can learn from them. This thesis is developed with some depth by describing the father's admirable qualities and his effect on the writer (taught me patience, helped me stay level-headed, teaching me to love unselfishly). The writer shifts from the specific example of the father's influence to the broader discussion of how "people we admire" motivate us. Although a more meaningful transition would have strengthened the connection between the two examples, the link between the ideas is logical. The writer's individuality is clearly present in this engaging response.

Who I admire and who affects my life the most is not a single person, but the entire company of Pixar Animation Studios. The values, goals and ideals they uphold motivate me to be more like them, because I want to help them do what they do, which is create art that inspires people to do their best, which is what they have done and still do for me.

Pixar affects what I want to do with my life. I want to work at Pixar someday and in order to do that, I want to attend the college that some of the ^{company's} most distinguished workers went to. In order to go, I will be far from home and must be very skilled and dedicated to be accepted and to graduate. Pixar has inspired me to devote myself to getting into that college or another excellent one. I will continue to make art and improve my skills as an artist in order to get into a college I want to go to and then to be talented enough to meet Pixar's high standards.

Pixar also influences what values I choose to uphold. I strive for quality in my work just as they do. I'm always searching for and testing ways to improve things. I've also strengthened my open-mindedness because of them. I value this quality greatly because it is what allows for great new ideas and opportunities to form. A great animator once stressed how important it is to "always explore the possibilities". I've taken this advice to heart because it is what keeps the creativity and inspiration necessary for the work Pixar does and ^{for} the work I intend to do. Also, even while Pixar is hardworking and has high standards, it is always supportive and light hearted as well. These are all qualities that I value and have myself because Pixar has shown me how good it is to have them.

My greatest goal in life is to work at Pixar because it has inspired me to do so. This motivation is what drives me to devote my life to achieving this goal and to have the values and qualities that the company possesses. I admire those who inspire me, and nobody inspires me more than the people at Pixar do.

Score Point: 3

In an effective introduction, the writer states admiration for the entire company of Pixar Animation Studios because they have inspired people to do their best. This theme is developed with specific examples of how Pixar has influenced the writer's goals and values (I will continue to make art and improve my skills as an artist in order to get into a college I want to go to). Despite the lack of meaningful transitions, the links between ideas are logical and the development overall reflects some depth of thought. Varied sentence structure and effective word choice contribute to the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

SCORE POINT 4

EACH COMPOSITION AT THIS SCORE POINT IS A HIGHLY EFFECTIVE PRESENTATION OF THE WRITER'S IDEAS.

Focus and Coherence

- ☐ Individual paragraphs and the composition as a whole are focused. This sustained focus enables the reader to understand and appreciate how the ideas included in the composition are related.
- ☐ The composition as a whole has a sense of completeness. The introduction and conclusion are meaningful because they add depth to the composition.
- ☐ Most, if not all, of the writing contributes to the development or quality of the composition as a whole.

Organization

- ☐ The writer's progression of thought from sentence to sentence and paragraph to paragraph is smooth and controlled. The writer's use of meaningful transitions and the logical movement from idea to idea strengthen this progression.
- ☐ The organizational strategy or strategies the writer chooses enhance the writer's ability to present ideas clearly and effectively.

Development of Ideas

- ☐ The writer's thorough and specific development of each idea creates depth of thought in the composition, enabling the reader to truly understand and appreciate the writer's ideas.
- ☐ The writer's presentation of ideas is thoughtful or insightful. The writer may approach the topic from an unusual perspective, use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or make interesting connections between ideas. In all these cases, the writer's willingness to take compositional risks enhances the quality of the content.

Voice

- ☐ The writer engages the reader and sustains this connection throughout the composition.
- ☐ The composition sounds authentic and original. The writer is able to express his/her individuality or unique perspective.

Conventions

- ☐ The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the composition. The writer demonstrates a consistent command of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, usage, and sentence structure. When the writer attempts to communicate complex ideas through sophisticated forms of expression, he/she may make minor errors as a result of these compositional risks. These types of errors do not detract from the overall fluency of the composition.
- ☐ The words, phrases, and sentence structures the writer uses enhance the overall effectiveness of the communication of ideas.

The first time I was in his presence, I sat in awe. I was so intimidated by the way he carried himself, I was speechless. I was so scared that I might say the wrong thing, and this was so out of the ordinary for me. I was opinionated BLAIR, I had something to say about everything. This was not a matter of social status either, I was wealthy and popular and he was just a "normal kid". We lived totally different lives and came from very different backgrounds. My life has always been very structured and I've followed a set schedule since I can remember, but that was not his case. He introduced himself as JAMES and we had small talk for the next few days. I was elated to find such a carefree person with dreams and goals so profound. JAMES was a very determined and strong willed person and nothing could stop him from being 100 percent himself.

As the days went by our small talk led to hour-long in-depth conversations. School wasn't my source of learning anymore; each day I yearned to get to 5th period where I could sit and talk with him. When we were having a conversation, I blocked out the rest of the world, because at those moments only he mattered to me. He spoke words that were so real, words that lingered in my head. It's like he had gotten the key to my mind and stolen my deepest thoughts. It didn't seem real, how could this be? I had seen him around since I was in 5th grade and now all of the sudden he stumbled into my life to change the person I was. All these years I was deprived of a person so alive and vivid.

One day he trusted me with his life, a book; it was a collection of his thoughts, memories, poems, & songs. That's when I realized we had a trust; anything could be shared between us. I rushed home that night and threw aside my homework to read his book. I sat there for hours so intrigued by his works. He had asked me to write an entry in the book. I thought sure, that would be easy and fun, I liked to write. After reading his many entries I felt kind of dumfounded. I didn't write about life and destiny; I wrote about silly childish things. So that's when I decided to explore my thoughts and not be scared to ignore the rhyming format I was taught in school. When I finally let go I amazed myself.

The next day at school he suggested that I get my own book. I did. I started writing and became addicted. When I took out my book I could escape and let my mind wander. Soon my book became my comfort, my pride, & a collection of my life. JAMES had inspired me to engage on a path of self-discovery. Today I stand a completely different person all because I let someone show me how to beat down my own path of life and discover the true BLAIR.

Score Point: 4

In this highly effective response, the writer reflects on a blossoming friendship with a boy from school. The strength of progression and specific development as the writer moves from their introduction (The first time I was in his presence, I sat in awe) through their deepening relationship (at those moments only he mattered to me) to the point at which the depth of the boy's writings leads to a growing self-awareness in the writer (Soon my book became my comfort, my pride; James had inspired me to engage on a path of self-discovery) add to the reader's understanding and appreciation of the writer's growth. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the composition.

We encounter people every single day, whether in the workplace or at school, it is inevitable. However, few actually impact us in ways only ourselves can understand. These tend to be the people of great stature in modern society; this is ironic considering we will never actually meet the people we admire most. For me, it is Napoleon Bonaparte to whom I owe my deepest respect and admiration. It is Napoleon that has inspired my love of history and many more items in my life.

Napoleon was a man born to a somewhat rich family on the small island of Corsica. Napoleon entered military school around the age of 13, and was so dedicated he finished his military training and education in three years, almost half the time it would normally take. Now while something as miniscule as completing military school in three years seems non-important, it is very much an inspiration in my life. Napoleon clearly showed that he was far more than just dedicated to his school, which is something I try to implant into my everyday schoolwork.

Ruling a country is definitely something that every small boy wants, but conquering the majority of Europe and part of Russia is completely different. Napoleon was crowned Emperor of France and gained an empire not witnessed since the Holy Roman Empire. If a single man were to capture that much land, I believe I can achieve any of my future aspirations and goals in life. Napoleon has led me to believe that I can achieve anything, something your parents or teachers tell you, but much more reassuring when you realize it for yourself.

When Napoleon was exiled to Corsica he managed to escape and return to France only to find that Louis XVIII had been restored to the

throne. This did not sway Napoleon, and he was still determined to reconquer his empire. As he was traveling towards Paris, soldiers ordered by the King were to shoot Napoleon or take him back to Corsica. Witnessing the first regiment sent to kill him, Napoleon dismounted from his horse, opened up his jacket to reveal his stomach and stated "You have your orders, but I am your emperor, so shoot if you must." Upon stating this soldiers flocked to Napoleon and he was greatly welcomed back into Paris; King Louis ~~xviii~~ fled before Napoleon reached the city. A man who can command that much respect and at the same time bravery deserves admiration from everyone. This is what I admire most about Napoleon; he managed to face his fears and in the end benefitted greatly from it. I try to live my life following this deed Napoleon committed, but I always find myself falling short of Napoleon's bravery and respect.

Napoleon was a man of sheer greatness, respect, and bravery. He faced his fears, and enemies, with enormous courage and he has earned all of my respect and admiration for that. Napoleon is the one person who influenced me in so many ways that my life will never be the same again.

Score Point: 4

The writer of this response uses a biographical approach to communicate how the life of Napoleon Bonaparte is something to be admired. The student uses an organizational strategy that enhances the clarity of the response by interweaving stages in Napoleon's life with thoughtful observations about how each stage has influenced the writer's life. The introduction and conclusion add depth to the composition and strengthen the reader's understanding of how the ideas are related. Thorough and specific development allows the reader to truly appreciate the writer's ideas and unique perspective.

It is easy to talk about the effect that someone you admire can have on your life. What is not easy to say is the effect that someone you admire has had on your life. Think about a person who is admired by another. The admired is someone looked up to; someone whose example is followed; someone who teaches by actions or words like the mom in "The First Day" or Miss Bessie in "The Unforgettable Miss Bessie." The admirer is the one looking up; the one following an example; the one learning from those actions and words. With all the connections between the admired and the admirer, let us not examine the effects someone can have on your life. That would easily take up more space than given. Instead, let us talk about the effects that someone you admire has had on your life.

Think back to the selection "The First Day." The selection is mainly about a mother registering her daughter for school so her daughter can get an education. "Wow, you're thinking." "Almost every parent does that." True enough. But does every parent face humiliation in order to give opportunities to their children? Not to the extent that the mother did. She tolerated rejection and humiliation when enrolling her daughter in school, but she did not accept them. Think about the amount of strength and devotion the mother showed! The daughter now has a prime example of not giving up or letting pride stand in the way of getting something she wants. Her mother had that effect on her. There is not an understanding of why the daughter "learned to be ashamed of [her] mother..." Maybe later teenage angst gets in the way of her appreciation of her mother. Hopefully when she gets over that angst she can recall that first day of school. She probably did not know it at the

time, but the daughter was taught love and devotion that day. And that is something to be admired, not ashamed of.

In "Unforgettable Miss Bessie," the narrator wastes no time giving evidence that Miss Bessie's love and devotion for her students made her someone to be admired and respected as well. As a teacher, she obviously taught school subjects. Yet she also taught her students "... a lot more than [they] realized." As an African American teacher teaching "economically challenged" African Americans through two world wars, the Great Depression, and the Civil Rights movement, Miss Bessie had plenty of obstacles that could have obstructed her teaching. But because of her love and devotion for her students, she never relented. She never wavered. She never gave up on anything, namely her students. Through her prime examples of dedication, vigilance, and compassion, her students made something of themselves and rose above the "rising tide of mediocrity." Miss Bessie had a very pivotal and influential effect on her students. That's why she was very admired.

Admiration can have substantial effects on one's life. If a person who is admired does something righteous and good, a person who admires them respects and admires them more so for it. The mother in "First Day" and Miss Bessie are women to be admired. They taught lessons of love and devotion and for those whose lives were affected by them, it worked wonders.

Score Point: 4

The writer provides in-depth analysis of "The First Day" and "Unforgettable Miss Bessie" to develop the thesis that showing love and devotion brings positive results. The progression of thought is smooth and controlled and is further enhanced by a very meaningful transition (In "Unforgettable Miss Bessie," the narrator wastes no time giving evidence that Miss Bessie's love and devotion for her students made her someone to be admired and respected as well) that effectively ties the two examples together. The writer's thoughtful presentation of ideas contributes to the thorough development and sense of authenticity, and the strong control of conventions adds to this highly effective response.

Admiration is a powerful feeling. It can make us do things we would not normally do. When we admire someone else, we can lose sight of our own identities. We may begin to act in a way that is not true to our own character. To admire someone else is to ignore the unique qualities we all possess.

Many young girls today admire the thin, beautiful women they see everyday in the media. In movies, tv shows, commercials, music videos, ^{and} advertisements the image of the stick figure woman is repeatedly shown and cemented into young girls' minds. They admire these beautiful and skinny women, because they believe this image is how they should look, in order to be accepted and successful. ^{The media forces} them to accept this image as the perfect female form. The effect of admiring the women of this image can be deadly. It is believed that many young girls develop eating disorders, because they desire to look like their favorite actress, model, or singer. An example would be the greatly admired Mary-Kate and Ashley Olsen. Both the Olsens are role models for young girls, and both are drastically thin. In fact, Mary-Kate has sought treatment for her own problem with the eating disorder known as anorexia. Young impressionable girls admire the Olsens, and many ^{other} women of the Olsen's size, and because of their admiration for these women many girls

want to look like them. However, only a very small portion of the human race is naturally "stick thin." Sadly, many girls will try anything to look like the stars they admire. This admiration causes young women to ignore their own unique qualities. They are so obsessed with images of people ^{that} society deems worthy, that they forget about what makes them special. Young girls, targeted by the media forget that differences make us special and beautiful on our own.

The effect ^{that} someone you admire can have on your life can be negative. Young women and girls who admire women that the media holds as "ideal" are in danger of low self-esteem, body dissatisfaction, and even eating disorders. We as a society should not have to admire anyone else. We should admire ourselves, our uniqueness, our individuality, our own bodies. Admiration is a powerful feeling; we should use it wisely.

Score Point: 4

In this fluent, coherent response, the writer combines expository and philosophical strategies to explore how admiration of others can encourage young girls "to ignore the unique qualities we all possess." The progression of thought is smooth and controlled, with meaningful transitions strengthening the progression from the media's role in promoting the perfect "stick figure woman" to the specific case of the Olsen twins and the danger that obsession with body image poses for young girls today. Development is thorough and specific, and a strong sense of the writer's voice enhances the effectiveness of the composition.