Ohio Department of Education

OHIO GRADUATION TESTS

Writing

Practice Test for Ninth Graders
Scoring Guidelines and Sample Papers

2004

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Writing

Question 1

2004

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 1

Some high schools require a drug test of those who want to play sports or participate in other school activities. Before adopting this policy, your superintendent has decided to ask students for their opinions.

Write to the superintendent stating your opinion. Persuade him/her to agree with your view. Write your response in the **Answer Document**. (18 points)

Writing Applications 6-Point Rubric

6	This is a superior piece of writing. The prompt is directly addressed, and the response is effectively adapted to audience and purpose. It is exceptionally developed, containing compelling ideas, examples and details. The response, using a clearly evident organizational plan, actively engages the reader with a unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response consistently uses a variety of sentence structures, effective word choices and an engaging style.
5	This is an excellent piece of writing. The prompt is directly addressed and the response is clearly adapted to audience and purpose. It is very well developed, containing strong ideas, examples and details. The response, using a clearly evident organizational plan, engages the reader with a unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response typically uses a variety of sentence structures, effective word choices and an engaging style.
4	This is an effective piece of writing. While the prompt is addressed and the response adapts to audience and purpose, there are occasional inconsistencies in the response's overall plan. The response is well developed, containing effective ideas, examples and details. The response, using a good organizational plan, presents the reader with a generally unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response often uses a variety of sentence structures, appropriate word choices and an effective style.

3	This is an adequate piece of writing. While the prompt is generally addressed and the response shows an awareness of audience and purpose, there are inconsistencies in the response's overall plan. Although the response contains ideas, examples and details, they are repetitive, unevenly developed and occasionally inappropriate. The response, using an acceptable organizational plan, presents the reader with a generally unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response occasionally uses a variety of sentence structures, appropriate word choices and an effective style.
2	This is a marginal piece of writing. While an attempt is made to address the prompt, the response shows at best an inconsistent awareness of audience and purpose. When ideas, examples and details are present, they are frequently repetitive, unevenly developed and occasionally inappropriate. The response, using a limited organizational plan, does not present the reader with a generally unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response is exemplified by noticeable lapses in sentence structure, use of appropriate word choices and a clear, readable style.
1	This is an inadequate piece of writing. There is a weak attempt made to address the prompt. The response shows little or no awareness of audience and purpose. There is little or no development of ideas, or the response is limited to paraphrasing the prompt. There is little or no evidence of organizational structure. The response is exemplified by severe lapses in sentence structure, use of appropriate word choices and a clear, readable style.
0	The following are categories of papers that cannot be scored: off task (complete disregard for the writing task identified by the prompt), completely illegible, in a language other than English, or no response.

Writing Conventions 3-Point Rubric

3	The written response is free from errors that impair a reader's understanding and comprehension. Few errors, if any, are present in capitalization, punctuation and spelling. The writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.
2	Occasional errors may impair a reader's understanding of the written response. Some capitalization, punctuation and spelling errors are present. The writing displays some understanding of grammatical conventions.
1	Errors are frequent and impair a reader's understanding of the written response. Numerous errors in capitalization, punctuation and spelling are present. The writing displays a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions.
0	The following are categories of papers that cannot be scored: completely illegible, in a language other than English, or no response. OR The length and complexity of the response is insufficient to demonstrate the writer has control over standard English conventions.

Writing

Question 1

2004

Sample Papers

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear: Superintendent

I Strongly agree that students who want to participate in sport should take drug test. I believe that because if there willing to play sports the should be willing to not put there lives in danger and take drugs.

Applications Score Point: 1

This "1" response takes a clear position in favor of drug testing. Even though a clear reason is given to support the position (those willing to play sports should be willing also to not put their lives in danger), the development remains inadequate. Additional ideas, examples and/or details are needed to make this response eligible for a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 0

This response is insufficient in length and complexity to demonstrate that the writer has control over standard English conventions. The writer attempts to provide two sentences. The first sentence is structurally correct yet contains two errors in forming plurals (sport for sports, test for tests). The second sentence is a fragment due to two major errors (there for they're is an error that leaves the dependent clause with no subject or verb, and the for they is an error that causes the last independent clause to have no subject). This frequency of errors in such a brief response results in a score of "0."

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

my opinion of high school sports to require a drug test is pretty good. I know students who play and do drugs and I really don't want someone on my team who is on drugs so I want it

Applications Score Point: 1

This "1" response does attempt to address the prompt by taking a position in favor of drug testing (pretty good). A reason is added to support the position (don't want someone on my team...). A related detail is provided (I know students who play and do drugs) but is not further elaborated. The lack of further development keeps this response from achieving a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 0

This response is insufficient in length and complexity to demonstrate the writer has control over standard English conventions. The first sentence is a complete but simple sentence that is awkwardly worded. Although the writer's attempt at a second sentence may be an effort to provide a compound sentence, the absence of any necessary punctuation makes that impossible to determine.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

I dont think we should take drug tests Because no kids should be doing drugs. They are only 15 - 18 years old they need to concentrate on school work.

Applications Score Point: 1

Although a position is taken against drug testing in this "1" response, the elaboration to support the position (they need to concentrate on school work) is too brief to be considered anything but inadequately developed.

Conventions Score Point: 1

While this response is very brief and concludes with a run-on sentence, its first sentence is of sufficient length and complexity to allow the writer to display a very minimal understanding of grammatical conventions. While this sentence does contain one error in punctuation (no apostrophe in don't), it is structured as a complex sentence and provides ending punctuation.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

I think it is a good idea because alot of kids that play sports take steroids and think they are king of the hill and take drugs.

Applications Score Point: 1

This "1" response takes an inferred position in favor of drug testing. The elaboration to support the position (take steroids and think they are king of the hill) is inadequate. More details and/or examples (to further develop the ideas of the response and provide some evidence of an organizational plan) are needed to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 1

This response achieves sufficient length and complexity to move beyond the "0" score point to the "1" by providing one complete sentence of the complex variety. One spelling error is present (alot for a lot) but capitalization, punctuation and usage (subject-verb agreement, pronoun agreement with antecedents) are correct. To achieve a higher score point, the response would need to provide further evidence of the writer's ability to construct multiple sentences, without serious errors, and at the same time continue to spell and punctuate relatively accurately.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

I don't think that they should test for drug use because more and more people are doing it. If you test for drugs you might not have enough people to particapate to make a team. But on the other hand I understand where your coming from because you want them to set a good example for are school and others. If you have people doing drugs on a sports team other kids my try it and thats not good. So I guese that it is better to test for drugs so that you can set a good example for other kids.

Applications Score Point: 2

After initially opposing drug testing, this "2" response reverses course (But on the other hand...) to support it. Some detail is provided to develop the idea of setting a good example for others but it is insufficient, making this response a marginal piece of writing. More consistency in the overall plan and a clearer sentence structure and presentation are needed for this response to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 1

Although this response presents a variety of sentences, indicative of some understanding of grammatical conventions, it also contains numerous errors in spelling (are for our, my for may, guese for guess), usage (your for you're) and punctuation. The failure to use commas appropriately within the sentences affects their clarity and impacts the reader's understanding of the response. The frequency and severity of errors result in writing which displays a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

I think that there Should be no drug testing in the School unless You are playing Sports because it is your decision if you want to do drugs and screw up your life or not. It should not be up to to the School to try and run you life. It Should be up to your parents to decide how to run your life not the Schools at all.

Applications Score Point: 2

A position against drug testing is taken in this "2" response. Although the writer's initial statement suggests an exception for athletes, the remainder of the response consistently conveys an opposition to any testing by the school. There is some attempt at a persuasive tone (it is your decision, should be up to your parents ... not the schools at all), but the response is not elaborate enough to move beyond marginal development.

Conventions Score Point: 2

Errors are present in this brief response. Although only three sentences in length, the response demonstrates some understanding of grammatical conventions. The complexity and "clean" presentation of the first sentence displays some facility with conventions. The second sentence's error (you for your) and the errors in and awkwardness of the third sentence (no comma after life and school for school's) indicate, however, that the writer has not attained a consistent understanding.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Mr. Superintendent,

I'd like to offer my opinion on drug tests for those that want to play sports. I believe it is a good idea. It would not only keep sports fair. It would save the lives of some students.

There are several tynes of performance enhancing drugs that some atheletes could use to give them an advantage. This is not only untain to other atheletes it is dangerous. If these drug tests are implemented it will greatly improve high school sports.

Applications Score Point: 2

This "2" response takes a clear position in favor of drug testing. The idea of fairness, however, is minimally developed (by referring to the possible advantage gained through performance enhancing drugs), and the response is repetitive, uneven and limited in its organizational plan. It is a marginal piece of writing.

Conventions Score Point: 2

In this response a few errors are present in punctuation and spelling. The writer's understanding of some grammatical conventions is conveyed. The lack of punctuation, however, for sentences that include dependent clauses or are comprised of two independent clauses conveys an inconsistent understanding. An overall lack of variety in sentence structure further limits this response.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Drug testing for sports is a good idea. Why should people who do drugs be chosen over people who don't? Athletes represent our school, they shouldn't be doing drugs and drinking. It's not fair if athletes who do drugs get scholarships over those who give 100%. If they show up on drugs, they set a bad example and can't give it their all. Drug testing should be required to play sports.

Applications Score Point: 2

This "2" response takes a position supporting drug testing and presents several details to develop the position (athletes represent our school, it's not fair, they set a bad example). The lack of a coherent sequence of ideas and expounded key issues limits the organizational plan and keeps the response from achieving a higher score point.

Conventions Score Point: 2

This brief response is free of errors in capitalization, punctuation and spelling. One sentence error is present in the form of a run-on/comma splice (Athletes represent our school, they shouldn't be doing drugs and drinking). A few sentences move beyond the "simple sentence" level (If they show up on drugs, they set a bad example and can't give it their all). Overall, the writing displays some understanding of grammatical conventions; greater length and complexity in the response would be needed to establish that the writer can indeed display a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dr

Your desicion of whether to drug test, will effect many people. In my opinion, drug testing is a good idea. Students should not be permitted to participate in school activities if he or she has been using drugs. I believe it is a principle. Athletes and other active students represent our school and stand for the entire student body. If they are using drugs, they should not have the priveledge to play sports or other activities. When a student, especially an athlete is found to be doing drugs, society looks down on them and they are no longer special or important. Athletes are also role models to younger children. When involved students are looked down upon then the entire student body is looked down upon. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Applications Score Point: 3

A clear position in favor of drug testing is stated in this adequate "3" response. The idea that athletes represent the school and should be held to certain standards is developed with several details. While the idea of athletes as role models to children is introduced, it receives no elaboration. There is evidence of an organizational plan, as the response uses transitions between sentences to present a generally unified and coherent sequence of ideas. More evenness in development of ideas is needed for this response to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 2

This response provides a variety of sentence structures by interspersing simple and complex sentences to good effect (In my opinion, drug testing is a good idea. Students should not be permitted to participate in school activities if…). However, a number of errors in punctuation, spelling (desicion for decision, priveledge for privilege) and usage (effect for affect, pronoun-antecedent disagreement) are present as well. Overall, the writing displays evidence of some understanding of grammatical conventions. Better control of the basic conventions is needed for the response to achieve a higher score.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

First of all, This shouldn't even be a problem, especially with athleets. Why would they want to harm their bodies? It will hinder Their performance eventually. Secondly, Drugs are illeagal. No one should be using them, especially kids in highschool, Which brings me to my Third point. If they are using drugs, they can get help so as not to become adicted to them or Other more powerful drugs.

Some people might see mandatory drug testing as a violation of rights, but they dont have the right to use drugs.

Applications Score Point: 3

A position in favor of drug testing is asserted in the last sentence of this "3" response. The prompt is generally addressed and several ideas, examples and details are present (will hinder their performance, drugs are illegal, can get help so as not to become addicted). There is some evidence of a capable writer at work (occasional use of a variety of sentence structures and appropriate word choices). There are, however, inconsistencies in the writer's awareness of audience, purpose and overall plan. For example, though ultimately drug testing is supported, the first point of the response actually indicates that athletes are likely to act in their own best interests and never start using drugs (thus negating any need for testing). A better awareness of audience, purpose and plan, as well as further development of ideas, are needed to make this response eligible for a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 2

Some understanding of grammatical conventions is displayed in this response. There are no punctuation errors, but several words are misspelled (athleets for athletes, illeagal for illegal, adicted for addicted). Some skill in constructing sentences beyond the simple level is evidenced (Some people might see mandatory drug testing as a violation of rights, but they don't have the right to use drugs). In a response this brief, however, more consistency in the complexity and structure of the sentences would be needed to achieve a higher score.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear Mr.

I am a student at High School. I am involved in many extracurricular activities, three of them being sports. I play volleyball, basketball, and softball.

has always had a reputation for sports. Many people enjoy coming to watch us play. In fact, it is said that we have the "Tradition of Excellence". Would you want this image to be ruined? I would not.

I know many people who participate in Athletics and are involved in drugs/alcohol. This is very upsetting. This is why I think it is a good idea to require a drug test of those who want to play sports or participate in other school activities. You would think the same, if you want to keep the tradition here at alive. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,

Applications Score Point: 3

This "3" response takes a position in favor of drug testing. The writer displays an awareness of audience and engages the reader with an effective style that features the use of rhetorical devices (Would you want this image to be ruined? / You would think the same, if you want to keep the tradition...). Initially, the school's reputation for sports is developed with details and examples. As the response proceeds, however, inconsistencies in the writer's overall plan become apparent. The importance of the school's tradition and image receives emphasis, but an explanation for how drug testing helps to uphold its tradition is brief and general. This unevenness in development suggests a loss of focus to the writing (to persuade the superintendent of why drug testing should be required). More even development and consistency in the overall plan for writing are needed for a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response, though brief, displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions through its error-free use of capitalization, punctuation and spelling, as well as the variety of sentences provided. In particular, effective use of commas (to set off dependent clauses) contributes to variety and complexity in several sentences. Variety in sentence formation is also achieved through interspersing shorter sentences and longer sentences.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Superintendent of High School:

I strongly approve of the school's recent decision to require drug-testing prior to participating in extra-curricular activities. It is important that these students represent our school well throughout the town and state. This policy would not only provide motivation to stay off drugs, but reason to quit using drugs as well.

It is known that drugs are a prevalent problem throughout high school students. Any effort to prevent and lessen this problem is well worth it. It is true that this may seem to be a threat to student privacy, but if the student does not want to comply, they can easily refrain from joining the activity. This policy could only help the problems our students are facing daily.

Thank you for taking an interest in the well-being of our students and joining the effort to keep our school drug-free. I appreciate you taking your time to read this. I am only one of the many students

that recognize the great service you are doing for our school.

Sincerely,

Applications Score Point: 3

This "3" response takes a clear position in favor of drug testing and is attuned to audience and purpose. A variety of sentence structures contribute to fluency in the writing. The response contains several clear ideas about the positive effects of drug testing (students will represent school well, motivate to stay off drugs, help to quit drugs). Examples and details in support of those ideas, however, are weak. The issue of invasion of privacy is addressed yet developed through rebuttal (if the student does not want to comply, they can easily refrain from joining the activity). Although this part of the response shows the ability to elaborate on an idea, it also works against the unity of ideas up to that point (all focused on how drug testing will help). This inconsistency in the student's overall plan makes this response only adequate.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions. It is free of errors in capitalization, punctuation and spelling. Complexity and variety in sentence structure is seen throughout the writing. Awkwardness in word choice (drugs are a prevalent problem throughout high school students, policy could only help the problems) and incorrect pronoun-antecedent agreement (If the student does not want to comply, they can…) do occur but have little to no impact on the writing.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear Mr. Principal,

I understand that you are considering instituting a drug-test policy for athletes at our school. I am of the opinion that this is a good idea. Let me explain my reasoning.

Firstly, I think such a policy would reflect well not only on our athletics program, but on our school in general. Such a policy would show other schools that we have nothing to hide from them, and that we do not take advantage of performance-enhancing, or even worse, illegal, drugs in our athletic program. Therefore, this can only better our school's image as a whole.

Secondly, this policy would discourage drug use among the student body; since a large number of students participate in sports, marching band, and other such school activities. Since they could not use drugs and participate in their favorite activities at the same time, it would be a good deterrent if students knew that

they could be discovered if they were to use drugs.

These are both reasons why the school would benefit from implementing these policies, and I would ask you to consider implementing such a policy. Thank you.

Applications Score Point: 4

This effective "4" response clearly addresses the prompt by stating a position in favor of drug testing and adapts to the audience. The writer uses a good organizational plan and presents a unified, coherent sequence of ideas. The two reasons offered for drug testing (better the school's image, deter drug use) are supported with effective details. There is evidence of a capable writer at work, found in the use of a variety of sentence structures and appropriate word choices (reflect well not only on our athletics program but..., have nothing to hide, good deterrent). The writer is able to produce a well-developed response within a relatively brief piece of writing. To achieve a higher score, the response needs more ideas, examples and/or details.

Conventions Score Point: 3

No errors in capitalization or spelling are seen in this response. Some commas are used inappropriately or are missing but do not impair understanding. The incorrect division of the word activities at the end of a line affects the clarity of the writing but is a minor disruption. Both complex and compound sentences are used at various points in the response, contributing to the effectiveness of the writing. The writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear Mr. Superintendent,

I'm writing to you to inform you of my feelings toward the drug test. I believe the drug test is a good idea.

I understand that some students don't agree with this policy you are considering and their reason is that schools should trust their students and if they really want to play the sport, they aren't going to do drugs. This may be true for some students, but not all.

There are many professional and unprofessional athletes that have been caught using drugs and there is always the chance that students could be using drugs. The school should be able to trust its students and believe them when they say they aren't doing drugs, but the sad and unfortunate truth is it can't. Some students do do drugs and lie about it. Because of them, the school cannot trust its students.

The drug test is a good idea and should be the policy at the school for athletes. If they want to be an athlete bad enough and participate in athletic programs, they'll stay away from drugs. Participating in an athletic program is a priveledge, not a right. The tests are also the only way to ensure fairness in athletics. If some athlete is using steroids, it could drastically increase performance. That would be unfair to other athletes.

I appreciate you taking the time to read this and I want to tell you that I strongly believe this will be a good program.

Sincerely

Applications Score Point: 4

This "4" response contains a thoughtful approach to the issue of drug testing. After stating that drug testing is a good idea, it shifts its focus from the idea that schools should trust students to the reality of the need to test nonetheless. Other ideas that follow (privilege vs. right, fairness) are also supported with some examples or details. The writer presents these ideas in a generally unified and coherent sequence. This is in part achieved through a good organizational plan that includes effective use of an introduction, conclusion and transitions. Further development of most of the main ideas is needed for this response to be eligible for a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

The presence of a few errors in punctuation (mostly concerning the use of a comma to separate independent clauses), spelling and usage does not impair understanding or comprehension of this piece. The variety and sophistication of sentences used throughout offer evidence of a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions. Sentence structures are compound, complex and of the compound-complex variety (The school should be able to trust its students and believe them when they say they aren't doing drugs, but the sad and unfortunate truth is it can't), giving the writing an overall impression of sophistication and control.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

March 17, 2004

Dear Mr. Superintendent,

Hello, my name is . I am writing to you today to express my feelings to you about adopting the drug-test policy for those who want to participate in sports. I feel this policy should be adopted and as soon as possible. I feel this way for a few reasons.

The first reason that I believe the policy should be adopted is because we want our athletes to represent High School in a positive manner. An athlete using recreational drugs or an athlete using steroids to enchance his or her performance does not represent High School in a positive manner. Students who try out for sports should be tested to make sure that they are not doing anything against the law or against that sports' official guidelines.

The second reason is because drugs and steroids are illegal. No one should be using them, yet stories are heard about using these illegal substances. By adopting this policy, High School will be helping to make the United States of America and our area a cleaner and better

place to live.

The third and final reason I think that the policy should be adopted is to help the students out in their lives. If an athlete needs help then he should get help. By doing drug testing, students who have been using illegal substances will be able to get help and get back on the right track in life. A track that includes a drug and steroid free life.

By adopting this policy, you will be doing a great thing for our country, our community, and our school. Not adopting this policy would be a great injustice. This policy enhances sportsmanship, school representation, and the lives of our student/athletes. This policy must be adopted.

Sincerely,

Applications Score Point: 4

This "4" response uses a good organizational plan to present three reasons in support of drug testing (represent school in a positive manner, drugs and steroids are illegal, help students out in their lives). Each idea is presented with a persuasive tone (reflecting the student's adaptation to purpose) and a variety of sentence structures that contribute to an effective style. The response is well developed, with effective details and examples for the first and third reasons in particular. To achieve a higher score, stronger ideas, examples and details are needed. A clearer organizational plan may be achieved by engaging the reader more and structuring the sequence of ideas more from the very beginning.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response contains very few errors. A fragment, a missed comma, a misused apostrophe and perhaps an overuse of the relative pronoun that are the only conventions concerns. Otherwise, the response displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions, both through typically appropriate word usage and a variety of sentences of differing lengths, structures and complexity.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

The policy of drug testing at our high school, I believe, is a very wise choice. There are so many benefits to the plan that overshadow the downside. With drug testing, we will become a more honorable and careful student body.

As you know, drugs are not hard to come by in today's society. Every single day students are faced with pressure from sources like music, the media, and even their peers that tell them that drugs are completely acceptable. These sources make drugs appear appealing, fun, and safe. With so many witnesses, these young people are tempted, and quite often give in to using dangerous drugs. If it takes extreme measures to solve this problem, then these measures should, and need to be taken.

Another great aspect of drug testing is better students. If students fear they will be caught using drugs, they are more likely to turn them down. By not using drugs, they will most likely do better

in school, and just at life in general. These tests could help motivate young people and make them much more aware of the consequences of drugs.

If students at this high school feel responsible and worthy enough to participate in extra activities and represent us outside of the building, they shouldn't be doing drugs. It is the schools obligation to see that measures are taken to ensure that honorable students are representing this facility. Even though some may argue a violation of privacy, I believe it is very necessary that drug tests become mandatory here at

Applications Score Point: 4

This "4" response takes a clear position in favor of drug testing. The response uses a good organizational plan with effective transitions between ideas to create a fluent presentation of the reasons in support of drug testing (reduce pressure to do drugs, better students, school's obligation). While the sudden introduction of the privacy issue at the end results in a somewhat disjointed finish, the response is generally unified and coherent. Overall, the response is well developed with several effective, specific ideas and examples interspersed among the general ones. Stronger ideas, examples and details across the entire response along with a more coherent organizational plan are needed for the response to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

Very few spelling (appealling for appealing) and punctuation errors (a missing apostrophe to show possession and a couple of unnecessary commas) are present in this response. Those that are have little to no impact on the writing. The writer's control over conventions of grammar is consistent, as evidenced by many well-constructed sentences.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear Mr.

I'm writing to you on behalf of some of my fellow students regarding the drug testing issue. We all sat down and talked about it, and we came to a decision, we don't think there should be drug tests for athletes. Yes, I know most of my friends and I are athletes, and it may sound kind of fishy for us to be against this, but we just don't think it's right. Here are some reasons why.

The most important reason is that it's an invasion of our privacy. We think that what we do out of school is our business and we don't have to get tested all the time for it. We feel, as of now, that we haven't given you any problems with drugs before, so we don't understand why we need the testing.

Another thing is that, some parents are willing to let their kids do stuff as long as they are in their supervision. If our parents would let us do that, and we would test positive for something, don't you think that's a little unfair? Yes, I know about the

school policy and everything, but wouldn't you think your parents permission should override that?

We also thought of the kids in school that are 18, play sports, and of legal age to buy tobacco products. If they're legal to buy these products, according to the state, then why should you get tested for them? They have that permission granted to them by the state when they turn 18, to buy those products. Don't take that away from them.

Finally, we thought of the rest of the school that doesn't play sports. If they're out there doing drugs, no one says anything or does anything. Isn't that kind of like discrimination? Shouldn't it be, we're going to have drug tests on the whole school, or no one at all? Just because people aren't athletes, doesn't give them the right to do drugs either. If you test athletes for drugs, you should test the whole school.

Hopefully, after you have read this, you understand where we are coming from. We're not just trying to get out of getting tested, we're trying to make it fair for

all of us. We just hope you think about this and make the right decision. Thank you.

Sincerely,

and friends

Applications Score Point: 5

This excellent "5" response uses an engaging persuasive style as it presents four reasons (privacy, parental rights, legal issues, discrimination against athletes) in opposition to drug testing. The student clearly adapts to the audience and purpose and effectively employs direct address and rhetorical questions. The response is very well developed with strong ideas, examples and details. A clear organizational plan is also evident. The consistent use of a variety of sentence structures gives evidence of a confident writer at work.

Convention Score Point: 3

Only a few isolated errors in usage (if they're legal to buy these products...then why should you get tested) and punctuation (parents permission) are present in this two-page response. While there is occasionally an awkward sentence or an unnecessary comma, they occur infrequently compared to the number of well-constructed and sometimes complex sentences. Overall, the writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear Superintendent,

Your proposed plan to test high school athletes for drugs is causing great controversy among the student body. Whether for or against the policy, students are very opinionated on the subject. Since this is such an import decision that will directly influence many of the students, I am very pleased that you have decided to hear the voices and opinions of the students.

As for my own personal opinion, I greatly support the drug-testing of high school athletes. Drug use is a serious problem among today's athletes. It is reported on news and sports broadcasters that there is a significant percentage of high school players that use performance enhancing drugs. High

school sports are very competitive these days, and athletes look for any advantage that will elevate their performance to a higher level. Because athletes are competing for starting roles, wins, and ever college scholarships, many choose to cheat by illegally making themselves stronger, faster, and bigger. It is for certain that some athletes do take drugs, and it is a problem that must be stopped.

There are many reasons why drug use should be impeded. Most students do not take performance enhancing drugs like steroids. They work hard in the weight room, on the track, and on the field for hours on end both during the season and the off-season. It is not fair that some athletes cheat by using drugs and are able to become better athletes without giving the same effort as most athletes. There should be a level playing

field where hard work, not drug use, is rewarded with victory.

Drugs are also very dangerous. Steroids have been shown to have many negative side effects. Many steroid users have died from heart failures directly caused by their drug use. Teenage athletes are at a critical point in their physical developement, and therefore cannot having these dangerous chemicals interferring with the body.

There is also a question of image and morality with drug use. Athletes are representitives of our school. Both on and off the field, people will judge the morality and character of our school based on the conduct of these athletes. If our athletes are found to be drug users, it would greatly damage the reputation of our school, and bring a bad name to our proud heritage. We should not allow a few cheaters to determine the

character of our fine school.

Based upon these reasons, we should not allow drug use to be present in our school. The only sure way of ensuring this is to test the students. In this manner, we will identify the culprits and bring them to justice. This will also discourage future athletes from ever wanting to use theses drugs and create a fair and safe opportunity for students to participate in sports. Therefore, I hope you do indeed decide to implement drug testing.

Applications Score Point: 5

This "5" response uses an engaging persuasive tone and style in arguing in favor of drug testing. The response is very well developed, establishing that drugs are indeed a serious problem and presenting three reasons in support of the decision (not fair to non-users, prevent dangerous effects of drugs, image of the school). There is ample evidence of a capable writer as the response demonstrates effective word choice (level playing field, proud heritage) and a variety of sentence structures. A clear organizational plan is evident.

Conventions Score Point: 3

Because of the amount of writing (three and one-half pages), there are relatively few errors in this response. Two errors in punctuation are evident, and only isolated miscues are present in usage. Several spelling errors are present but they do not impair comprehension or understanding. The writer also provides a variety of sentence structures. These include many complex and compound-complex structures (High school sports are very competitive these days, and athletes look for any advantage that will elevate their performance to a higher level). A consistent understanding of grammatical conventions is displayed throughout the writing.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear Mr. Superintendent:

In response to your query about drug testing in schools for afterschool activities, I have written you to inform you of my opinion on the subject. I believe that participants in school sports and extra curricular activities should be drug tested. I hold this view for several reasons. First of all, I believe that this is simply a good way to uphold the law of the government in today's youth. Secondly, I believe that extracurriculars are a privelege, and that schools should be able to uphold whatever standards they wish when dealing with participants. Lastly, I believe that drug testing helps keep a school well represented to the public, as only the students who obey the rules will participate. All of these reasons show why we should enforce the drug testing policy.

At the very base of this policy is the law. It is a schools job to uphold the law and its statutes in any way possible. It should certainly enforce laws

pertaining to drugs in its own activities. If the schools do not drug test, it will send a message of apathy to all who observe the workings of the district. This would also give youths the idea that it is alright to break the law as long as no one catches you, which, without drug testing, will not happen. Overall, enforcing a policy of always drug testing extra-curricular activities sets a good precedent for upholding the law at all costs.

An important thing to remember while considering whether or not to drug test is that extracurriculars are a privilege. The school does not have to have extra curricular activities, though most think this. Youths should not take these activities for granted and should not keep pushing for more and more leniency when it comes to drug testing. If a school wishes to have drug testing in activities that it organizes, there should be no complaint from the students, who should have nothing to worry about if they obey the principles of the school. If the students

do not wish to be drug tested, they can simply not partake in the activity. Extracurricular activities are a privilege, and should be treated as such.

Possibly the most important thing that pertains to this subject is that drug testing keeps a school well represented. If a sports team consists of only individuals who break the law and act badly, the school will gain a reputation for that behavior, even if the opposite is true. Those involved in extracurricular activities are the emissaries of that school, and should be kept in a place of good representation of their school. The school should have an option whether or not to send a positive message out to its community. Drug testing is a good way to ensure that a positive message is being emitted by the participants of the school's extra-curricular activities.

Our school despearately needs to enforce drugtesting for extracurricular activities. The school needs to uphold the law in any way possible as a governing authority. Extracurriculars are a privilege than can be revoked if need be by the school. Drug

testing also helps to keep our school in good sight with the surrounding areas. Although drug testing would not totally correct all of the schools problems, it would help the school take great steps towards making a better community.

Sincerely,

Applications Score Point: 5

This very well-developed "5" response elaborates on three reasons to support drug testing (uphold the law, extra-curricular activities are a privilege, keeps a school well represented to the public). The response shows evidence of a clear organizational plan and uses a variety of sentences and word choices (query, message of apathy, emissaries) to demonstrate an excellent persuasive tone and style.

Conventions Score Point: 3

Because of the amount of writing (three and one-quarter pages), opportunities for making conventions errors are great. This makes the fact that very few spelling and punctuation errors occur noteworthy. The writer's use of standard English conventions is strong and consistent, as exemplified by many well-constructed and complex sentences. While the response contains some poor word choices and has a few examples of awkward phrasing and sentence construction, its overall impression of control over conventions is very strong.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear Superintendent,

While I agree that a drug-free environment is important to provide for the student body, I believe that asking the athletes in this school to participate in a drug-test before they can play is intringing on the rights of those students, as well as being yet another cost to our already much too thinly spread budget.

I think that the only instance that a drug test should be administered is when the athlete is under the suspicion of using such illegal substances, why should a student, for no reason, be forced to give hair or urine when even in a criminal investigation there must be a court issued warrant to obtain these things? By asking that everyone who wishes to participate in athletics in this school to also participate in a drug-test, you are simply violating the privacy and the rights of the innocent students.

There are many scholarship opportunities available through school organized sports programs and it provides the students who are perhaps not as gifted in academics the opportunities to do great things with their lives. You wouldn't even think of

valedictorian of the senior class to take a drug test, would you? So why should our athletes be treated any differently than the rest of the students? Unless a student is suspected strongly of using performance enhancers or other illegal substances, I find even the thought of a drug test unnecessary.

As for cost: imagine what we could do with the money that would be used on something as unnecessary as a drug test. It seems to me that our budget simply says that we cannot afford this action, so what important groups are you going to stop funding? The ethnic and religious diversity groups, maybe? Or perhaps you wish to give up a scholarship or two by using the money on "more important things, but I ask you, what is more important: making sure that students are drug-free for the moment, or ensuring them an opportunity to make something out of themselves with the rest of their lives?

Thank you for time and hope that you take my pleas into consideration.

Sincerely,
a student.

Applications Score Point: 5

This "5" response develops two reasons against a drug testing policy (infringing on rights, hurting the budget) using a strong organizational plan. An effective use of rhetorical questions, word choice and a variety of sentences demonstrate an excellent persuasive style that engages the audience.

Conventions Score Point: 3

The writer of this response displays a very strong and consistent control over standard English conventions, as exemplified by no errors in capitalization and very few errors in spelling, punctuation, usage and sentence construction. While the writing in this regard is "clean," the response is especially rich with sophisticated and complex sentences that are so well constructed that the reader is rarely impeded. In a few instances, the writer has omitted a word or two or constructed an awkward sentence, but these in no way interfere with the reader's ability to understand the writing.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear

The school district is on the verge of making what could be one of the most important decisions seen in years. Before deciding whether to pass the new drug testing policy I ask you to please hear me out in this letter.

I understand that drugs are an issue and I understand why the school district feels these steps to be necessary for student protection, but I think there are much better ways to target drug use. Tests are often faulty, turning up false-positives and failing when drugs do exist. The impact of a false-positive on an innocent student could be absolutely devastating to reputations and futures.

Many students who are drug users could easily stop using drugs a period before the test, passing undetected and undeterred from their dangerous choices. If a student is addicted to steroids a simple test will not be enough to persuade them to stop. These students need help and a drug test won't always reveal

who they are.

Of course there is the omnipresent issue of privacy. Our athletes are protected under the United States Constitution and robbing citizens of their rights in the name of safety should not be tolerated. Even the police must have proper authorization and paperwork to do drug busts or investigate illegal activity. If these criminals are still given a right to privacy, why shouldn't students, most of whom aren't even doing any wrong? It's simply unfair to punish students.

Therefore, I feel you should give this issue further thought. Instead of testing, a better way to protect students and to target drug use might be to increase drug education in the lower grades. For those students who use or are addicted to drugs now, an offer of help, through treatment, might be more effective than the threat of testing and punishment. Thank you for taking what I've said about this proposed policy into consideration. I hope you will agree with me that there are better ways to deal with drugs and to protect students from them.

Applications Score Point: 6

This superior "6" response displays a strong sense of audience and purpose as it employs an engaging persuasive tone in arguing against drug tests. The response, though not lengthy, is exceptionally developed. This degree of development is achieved in part through the writer's command of language, exemplified by precise, powerful word choices (absolutely devastating to reputations, passing undetected and undeterred, omnipresent issue of privacy). Also, there is a clearly evident organizational plan which is executed with great control, allowing the writer to present compelling ideas and details not only clearly but succinctly. This plan results in a unified and coherent response. The inclusion of alternatives to testing in the conclusion does not detract from the response's cohesiveness, as the writer skillfully relates these options to main ideas discussed previously.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response has only a few errors in punctuation and usage (occasionally lacking commas after dependent phrases, <u>them</u> referring to <u>student</u>), none of which impair the reader's understanding. It consistently presents well-constructed sentences which vary in length and complexity (Many students who are drug users could easily stop using drugs a period before the test, passing undetected and undeterred from their dangerous choices / If these criminals are still given a right to privacy, why shouldn't students, most of whom aren't even doing any wrong?). Overall, the writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Dear

All kinds of students want to participate in athletic activities. However, not all students deserve the honor of being an athlete. Students who take illegal drugs should not be allowed to represent their school in athletic competition. Therefore, drug tests should be administered to help wean out these drug takers, reward those students worthy of playing, and teach all students about the harmful effects of drugs.

Administering drug tests will allow the sports teams to exclude those that take drugs. Even though some of these individuals may want to work hard, participating in athletics as a team member requires more than just desire. Drugs such as cigarettes and alcohol damage the body internally and make vigorous activity much more difficult for people to sustain. As a result of the damage that drug users have done to their bodies, they could not work as hard as the other players on the team. This could significantly affect the way that particular team competes. Therefore, these drug takers should not be allowed to play and hurt the performance of that team.

Drug tests could also be a way to reward those who remain drug-free. By passing the drug test,

students know that they have made a smart choice to stay off of drugs. These tests could thus serve as a "confidence booster." Those that pass the test should be allowed to play (pending actual tryouts). Even though some of these students who tryout for a team may not make it, the satisfaction of being drug-free should be more than enough of a reward for them. These students will know that they gave their best effort and that they did it "the right way" — without putting their health at risk due to drug use.

In addition, drug tests can teach all students about the harmful effects of drugs. For those who choose to use illegal drugs, they soon are very likely to suffer firsthand the negative consequences of mixing drugs and sports. Once these students' tests come back "positive" for drug use (and they are banned from athletics), they will have to face the fact that their own bad choices have prevented them from doing the one thing they probably want to do the most. Other students will see the price these former athletes have had to pay, and will themselves be just that much more determined to keep saying no to drugs. Also, there may be athletes who have thought about or have tried quitting their drug use, but just have not quite

been able to do so. The reality of drug testing that they face may give them the extra push they need to "get clean."

The drug test would prove to be a good thing because athletic teams can eliminate the drug takers, drug-free students can be rewarded for their choices, and all students can learn about the dangers and consequences of drugs. This drug test could teach everyone many things, and it should be implemented so we can start learning today and keep learning tomorrow.

Applications Score Point: 6

This "6" response effectively adapts to purpose as it strongly argues that drug tests be required. The writer's organizational plan is clearly evident from the introduction of the response's main points to the summary conclusion, and results in a unified and coherent sequence of ideas. The response is exceptionally developed with compelling ideas, examples and details. An engaging style emerges as the writer uses a variety of sentence structures (This drug test could teach everyone many things, and it should be implemented so we can start learning today and keep learning tomorrow) and effective word choices (wean out, vigorous activity, "confidence booster").

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response has few or no errors in capitalization, punctuation and spelling. Rules of grammar and usage are consistently observed. A variety of correctly written sentences are used. Many of these are complex sentences of some length, but the writer is able to present them so that they are readily understood and error-free (Even though some of these individuals may want to work hard, participating in athletics as a team member requires more than just desire). Throughout the response, a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions is displayed.

Writing

Question 7

2004

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 7

Officials in your school district are concerned that high school students are not learning as much as they could be with the current high school schedule. The officials are considering extending the school day by an hour for high school.

You are planning a letter to your principal either supporting or opposing the extension of the school day. Identify two arguments you would use to support or oppose a longer school day. Write your response in the **Answer Document**. (2 points)

Sample Response for Question 7 (Short Answer):

Supporting:

(1) Extending the school day would give college-bound students opportunities to take an additional course to help them prepare for college.

(2) Students who need help with their schoolwork would have a chance to receive that help during the school day.

Opposing:

(1) Extending the school day would be a hardship for athletes since practices and games would have to be held later in the day. Athletes would have longer days and less time at home for their schoolwork.

(2) Many high school students take care of their younger brothers and sisters after school. With an extended high school day, these younger children would get home before their high school siblings and would spend time at home without supervision.

Scoring Guidelines for Question 7

Score point	Description
2 points	Response uses two arguments appropriate to the target audience (principal) supporting or opposing the issue.
1 point	Response uses one argument appropriate to the target audience (principal) either supporting or opposing the issue.
0 points	Response indicates no understanding of the task.

Writing

Question 7

2004

Sample Papers

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

Here is one argument I would be concerned with. If we have the maxinum hours we need in the school day how can the extend it an hour for high school. This is my opposing argument.

Here is the other argument. If we don't have the maxinum hours in a schod day, I think we should lengthen the school day an hour. That is my supportive argument.

Score Point: 0

This response purports to give arguments both for and against a longer school day (this is my opposing/supportive argument). However, the arguments, as such, do not address the merits or problems of extending the day. Rather, the writer's statements focus narrowly on whether it is actually possible or permissible to lengthen the school day. No real understanding of the task is displayed; thus, the response receives a score of "0."

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

I would go up to the principal and say that we are not learning as much as a normal high school students should. I think we should have more challenging classes our the teacher needs to give us harder work to make us smarter our we just can't learn with the stuff the teacher is giving us.

Score Point: 0

While this response certainly addresses the target audience (the principal), it fails to touch at all on the issue of extending the school day. Instead, it focuses almost entirely on part of the first sentence of the prompt (officials are concerned that students are not learning as much as they could be). The response demonstrates no understanding of the task and receives a score of "0."

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

Dear Principle,

I would have to oppose your idea of keeping school in for an extra hour. I think what you should really be doing is getting you teachers on task they are the ones incharge of the students and if students aren't learning then teachers aren't teaching the right way.

sincerely,

a Student

Score Point: 0

This response states opposition to the longer school day but then leaves that topic to propose a solution to the problems the writer perceives with teachers. No attempt to link the two issues is apparent. Because the response offers no arguments for or against extending the school day, it receives a score of "0."

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

3/19/04

Dear principal,

Their is a lot of talk going one about longer days of school, but isn't that bad when we have to go untill June 10th. I think if we have longer School days we should have to go for two months.

YOUR,
Student,

Score Point: 0

Although this response indicates opposition to extending the school day (isn't that bad when you have to go until June 10th), it never attempts to provide an argument against it. Rather, the longer school day is linked to the length of the school year and a solution/compromise is offered (longer school day/ shorter year). No understanding of the task is indicated, resulting in a score of "0."

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

I don't think that we need more hours of school a day. We come here from 8:05 AM - 3:05 P.M. I would say that is long enough. We already have 8 classes a day and I speak for myself and others that that is quite enough learning for a day. Atleast we come and do what we're told to do, and more. If you don't think we are smart then test us.

Score Point: 1

This response presents one basic argument opposing the longer school day (day is long enough). It reinforces that argument with additional details (here from 8:05-3:05, 8 classes a day) but does not provide a second argument. While the response ends by directly addressing the audience, the content at that point is not relevant to the task.

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

No, I don't think that school should be an hour longer. If the teachers can't teach the students what they need to know in an hours time, then either the students aren't listening or the teachers aren't doing their job, in which I think it is both. So instead of sending the kids that get introuble for tardies & minor things like that to "In School Suspension" They should send all the kids that don't wanna learn down there, and let those of us who actially do wanna learn stay and participate in class.
So I guess what I am really tried to say is, if a kid is a couple minutes late to class who cares? as long as he or she is there befor the teacher starts teaching it should be o.k. School has a lot of things wrong with it that they should be focusing on and I don't think extending school for an hour is going to help anything, because if they did extend school for an hour that would just be a couple extra minutes in each class. What would be the point of that.

Score Point: 1

This lengthy response addresses the task in its last two sentences by arguing that a longer school day would be pointless because it actually would not result in very much additional instructional time (per class). Initially, the response does take a position in opposition to extending the school day. Then, however, it relates a series of problems with school in general (students aren't listening, teachers aren't doing their job) rather than presenting arguments against a longer school day. Solutions for some of the school's problems are offered (send all the kids that don't want to learn to In-School Suspension). Because only one of the response's various statements directly addresses a reason for opposing a longer school day, it receives a score of "1."

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

Dear Mr.

my name is

and I am writing you in Regards to the one hour extension of the school day. I speak for many of my fellow classmates when I say that this may not be such a bad idea after all. I do feel that we do not learn everything we should be learning in the regular school day. To extended the school day by an hour is extending the knowledge we need to make it through life. So I am for the issue of extending the school day by an hour. I support the issue in every way.

Sincerely,

Score Point: 1

A position in favor of extending the school day is taken in this response. One argument consistent with that stance is provided (will extend the knowledge we need to make it through life) but no other arguments are attempted.

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

I thinK that they shouldn't eXtend the School day because some people might have to worK after School and if you extend the day they that would cut peoples hours down.

Score Point: 1

This response uses one clear argument opposing the extended school day (would cut people's hours down, on their after-school jobs). No other arguments are identified, resulting in a score of "1."

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

I think that school days should not have another hour added onto them because some people can not handle another hour of school. It could be to stressful on students. They would not like it and would not do as well on homework and things like that. There are other things that you could do like have a cuple more school days added onto our year or something like that. People have jobs and sports to do then to sit in school for an other hour. So that is why I think we should not have another hour put on to the day.

Score Point: 2

A position against the extended school day is stated. The response initially argues that a longer day would be too stressful for students, resulting in them not liking it and not doing well on homework. A second argument in opposition refers to the impact on after-school jobs and sports. The response also offers an alternative proposal or solution (add a couple more days onto our year) which is not relevant to the task. Since two valid arguments are provided elsewhere, however, the response achieves a score of "2."

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

Dear Principal

I was notified that the school might be considering a major change in the school schedule. Rumors suggest that officals are considering extending the school day by an hour. I believe that there are many reasons not to allow this extension of the school day to happen. For example, there will be less time for students to complete their homework. Hours of homework is given by every teacher in the school. It is hard enough to complete the homework with so little time we have.

Another reason is that students are involved in sport or club activities. These practices or meetings usually take place after school, meaning the times would be pushed back later into the night. This also contributes into not having time to finish homework. I hope these reasons persuade you to make a clear decision.

From,
Student

Score Point: 2

This response uses two arguments appropriate to the target audience and in opposition to the longer school day (less time for homework, later times for sport or club activities). The arguments are specific and clear.

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

Dear Principal,

I have heard the school district is considering extending the school day by an hour. I think this should not happen because classes are long enough and school is getting hard. I do not know of any students who would like this extra hour. It will take away from our extracurricular activities such as sports and for some people, work time. Please ask the district to reconsider this from a students view.

Sincerely,

Score Point: 2

Two clear arguments opposing the extension of the school day (classes are long enough, take away from extracurricular activities/work time) are provided in this response. The arguments are appropriate to the target audience (principal).

12. Write your response to question 12 in the space below.

To whom it may concern,

I believe that the extension of the school day is a bad idea. If we extend the school day the kids will just get tired of learning and zone out. Also, kids might no have enough time for the homework that will be given. I believe you should take this into consideration.

Sincerely,

Score Point: 2

This response takes a position against the extension of the school day. It provides two specific and clear arguments to oppose a longer day (get tired of learning and zone out, not enough time for homework).

Writing

Question 13

2004

Question and Scoring Guidelines

Question 13

Think about your favorite season of the year. It may be your favorite because of the weather, or a memory associated with the season, or certain activities that take place during the season. Explain why this one season of the year is your favorite. Be sure to support your essay with specific examples and details. Write your response in the **Answer Document**. (18 points)

Writing Applications 6-Point Rubric

6 This is a superior piece of writing. The prompt is directly addressed, and the response is effectively adapted to audience and purpose. It is exceptionally developed, containing compelling ideas, examples and details. The response, using a clearly evident organizational plan, actively engages the reader with a unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response consistently uses a variety of sentence structures, effective word choices and an engaging style.

5 This is an excellent piece of writing. The prompt is directly addressed and the response is clearly adapted to audience and purpose. It is very well developed, containing strong ideas, examples and details. The response, using a clearly evident organizational plan, engages the reader with a unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response typically uses a variety of sentence structures, effective word choices and an engaging style.

4 This is an effective piece of writing. While the prompt is addressed and the response adapts to audience and purpose, there are occasional inconsistencies in the response's overall plan. The response is well developed, containing effective ideas, examples and details. The response, using a good organizational plan, presents the reader with a generally unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response often uses a variety of sentence structures, appropriate word choices and an effective style.

3 This is an adequate piece of writing. While the prompt is generally addressed and the response shows an awareness of audience and purpose, there are inconsistencies in the response's overall plan. Although the response contains ideas, examples and details, they are repetitive, unevenly developed and occasionally inappropriate. The response, using an acceptable organizational plan, presents the reader with a generally unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response occasionally uses a variety of sentence structures, appropriate word choices and an effective style.

2 This is a marginal piece of writing. While an attempt is made to address the prompt, the response shows at best an inconsistent awareness of audience and purpose. When ideas, examples and details are present, they are frequently repetitive, unevenly developed and occasionally inappropriate. The response, using a limited organizational plan, does not present the reader with a generally unified and coherent sequence and structure of ideas. The response is exemplified by noticeable lapses in sentence structure, use of appropriate word choices and a clear, readable style.

1 This is an inadequate piece of writing. There is a weak attempt made to address the prompt. The response shows little or no awareness of audience and purpose. There is little or no development of ideas, or the response is limited to paraphrasing the prompt. There is little or no evidence of organizational structure. The response is exemplified by severe lapses in sentence structure, use of appropriate word choices and a clear, readable style.

0 The following are categories of papers that cannot be scored: off task (complete disregard for the writing task identified by the prompt), completely illegible, in a language other than English, or no response.

Writing Conventions 3-Point Rubric

3	The written response is free from errors that impair a reader's understanding and comprehension. Few errors, if any, are present in capitalization, punctuation and spelling. The writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.
2	Occasional errors may impair a reader's understanding of the written response. Some capitalization, punctuation and spelling errors are present. The writing displays some understanding of grammatical conventions.
1	Errors are frequent and impair a reader's understanding of the written response. Numerous errors in capitalization, punctuation and spelling are present. The writing displays a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions.
0	The following are categories of papers that cannot be scored: completely illegible, in a language other than English, or no response. OR The length and complexity of the response is insufficient to demonstrate the writer has control over standard English conventions.

Writing

Question 13

2004

Sample Papers

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite season is Spring. It's not to hot and not to cold. I like to play baseball and football in the Spring. My birthday in in the Spring so I like spring because of my birthday. I like to sleep abt.

Applications Score Point: 1

This inadequate "1" response makes a small attempt to address the prompt by writing about spring. While a few reasons are given to explain why spring is the favorite season, these ideas are not supported with examples or details. The minimal amount of writing prevents discerning an organizational structure. There is little to no display of awareness of audience or purpose. No apparent evidence of a capable writer is at work because of lapses in sentence structure and simple, repetitive word choice.

Conventions Score Point: 1

This response, although brief, is sufficient in length and complexity to allow the writer's control over Standard English conventions to be assessed. Relatively few errors in capitalization and punctuation are present (omitted a separating comma in a compound sentence). However, errors in usage are committed (to for too, in for is). These errors, combined with the use of mostly simple sentence structures within such a brief response, indicate a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite time of the year is Spring because its nice and very preety. Its my favorite because were out of school and I can go out of town where I want.

Applications Score Point: 1

This sparse "1" response makes a very small attempt to address the prompt in choosing spring as the favorite season. Very few ideas are presented, and those are very general to vague in nature (nice, pretty, can go out of town where I want). Details and examples are lacking to support the ideas. The response is too brief to provide evidence of an awareness of audience and purpose. To achieve a higher score, the response would need more development of ideas with supporting examples/details. Such development could allow the writer to begin to display a sequence and structure of ideas, and an organizational plan, through connections between those ideas or the sentences in which they are presented.

Conventions Score Point: 1

This very brief response displays a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions. Given the brevity of writing, errors are frequent in punctuation (omitted apostrophes in the contractions it's and we're) and spelling (preety for pretty). Although the second of the two sentences provided is a compound sentence, the separating comma between school and and is omitted.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Summer is my famite season because it's warm outside. I also like summer because I love to play softball and I love going swimming.

Applications Score Point: 1

This "1" response attempts to address the prompt by choosing a season. There is a very limited presentation of ideas (warm outside, play softball, going swimming). This inadequate development precludes the response from exhibiting awareness of audience and purpose or showing evidence of organization. More ideas and examples/details are needed to provide evidence of those areas in order for the response to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 1

Although "clean" in regard to capitalization, punctuation and spelling, this response is too limited in length and complexity to determine if the writer can display more than a minimal understanding of the larger array of grammatical conventions. Also, with only two sentences provided, the writer's ability to use multiple types of sentence structures can not be discerned.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Spring is my favorit season because that is when all of the trees start to turn green again and it begins to get warm again and all of the beautiful flowers start to come out again and right after spring is here and gone summer comes again

Applications Score Point: 1

This "1" response does address the prompt by writing about spring as the favorite season. Although several details elaborate on why the student chooses spring (trees start to grow, begins to get warm, beautiful flowers start to come out), the development shows no controlling structure. There is no evidence that the writer can construct a sentence. To achieve a higher score, the response would need to display at least a limited organizational plan and some use of correct sentence structure.

Conventions Score Point: 1

This response displays a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions. Only one spelling error is present (favorit for favorite), but punctuation is not supplied anywhere within the response, including ending punctuation for the one sentence attempted. Very limited understanding of correct sentence formation is exemplified by the use of the conjunction and to combine four independent clauses into one sentence.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite season of the year is winter. The reasons that I like that like of the year is because winter is the time when you play basketball. And everyone that knows me know that I am in love with basetball.

The memory that I have from that time of the year is that it had just gotten winter a basketball tryout's were going on. The tryout's were three days long they were all fun and I enjoy them alot. This all took place my 9 grade year. so back to what I was say the 1st was great because that was the day that we were suppose to show him if we could go right or left could go both ways because he had told us to work on that, that whole summer and I was looking good out there to the coach.

The 2nd day came and this was the day when you go one on one with someone trying to play the same thing you are. It was only 4 of us trying to get the starting position, and at the time I was

only 6'1 and everyone else was 6'2 or 6'2½ so I had my work cut out for me I was great on the first 2 boys I played when that last boy came he had gave me a fight. The game was for one to five it was 4 to 4 next point wins and that was the person who would start. He took a shoot and miss I got the ball then I had took a short and made it so I would start in the game tomorrow. Most of the people that would start would make the team.

The last day came and we were playing 5 on 5 full court. The game was going to 15 by 1 the game was 10 to 8 and we were losing we had came back because of my friend hit a 2 pointer. 10 up and we both had five points to go to win. I had 4 point in the game by the time we got to 12. By this time the game was 12 to 14. We was up an we needed was 1 point and we win. My boy Tim had stole the ball and pass it to me for a fast break I was all by my self and

everyone was telling me to drunk the ball before that I had only drunk the ball one time in my life. so I told my self o.k. and I jump as high as I could I got all the way up there and drunked it to win the game. evenyone was happy for me I was the game M.V.P with 5 point 4 rebond and 1 steal.

The coach told us to wait for 20 mins and he would put who made the team on the board he had said the higher you name the more you would play. The first 5 would start. It was only 12 places on the team and 25 kids was there, so the time came and he put it up my name was number 2 and I was so happy for my self so that is why I like winter so much.

Applications Score Point: 2

This "2" response purports to explain why winter is special through a story about basketball tryouts. However, after initially referring to the season, the response is devoted almost totally to the sport itself thereafter. Rather than using basketball as a supporting example for why winter is the writer's favorite season, the response focuses on the game as the writer's favorite activity (with winter merely the season with which the game is associated). Thus, only a very small attempt to address the prompt is made. Also, after noting the writer's love for basketball, the response lapses into narrative mode, presenting an extended story about the tryouts. The response fails to clearly tie the elaboration in the story back to basketball as the favorite activity. This response demonstrates little or no awareness of the persuasive purpose. Although the story is well developed with a generally coherent sequence of ideas, the limited attempt to address the prompt and lack of persuasive purpose make this response marginal.

Conventions Score Point: 1

This response contains numerous errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling, grammar and usage. Frequently these errors have a major impact on the writing and seriously impair the reader's understanding of the response. There are many run-on sentences with no conjunction or punctuation to separate the clauses. Errors in subject-verb agreement (everyone know, reasons is) and verb tense (he took a shot and miss, Tim had stole the ball and pass it to me) are present as well. The density of errors within the response indicates a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite season of the year is spring. Spring is when all the flowers begin to grow. The temperature isn't too hot or too cold. I like the mild spring rains, too. My favorite day of the year is in spring - my birthday! Easter is also in the spring. Carnivals are all around this time of the year. I get to eat cotton candy and snow cones. This spring I get my license. I like spring because of the weather, holidays, and carnivals. There's only one thing I don't like about this season, tests like these.

Applications Score Point: 2

This "2" response addresses the prompt by writing about spring. Although ideas are presented to develop why spring was chosen (temperature, birthday, Easter, carnivals), they are not elaborated with details or examples. Also, omitting transitions prevents the ideas from falling into a coherent sequence and limits the organizational structure. Further development and a better organizational plan would be needed for this response to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 2

This response is consistently successful in its application of capitalization, punctuation, spelling and usage rules. However, it displays a limited variety of types of sentences. Although there are no sentence errors such as run-ons or fragments, the great majority of sentences provided are simple in their formation. The writing overall displays some understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

The Summer, yes the beautiful, warm, sunny days. What's not to enjoy about having no school or being able to swim and hang out with your friends. That is my main reason for picking summer, because I love snow and would rather be to cold than to hot. Having no school. I also go to summer camps which are quite fun. Also when it is summer you know it is closer to football season and I am a all out die hard football fan. I love everything about it, it's my life. Watching it, playing it it doesn't matter. That is why I choose the summer as my favorite season.

Applications Score Point: 2

This "2" response presents several reasons why the writer likes summer (no school, summer camps, closer to football season). However, a limited organizational plan hinders its flow of ideas and its cohesion. Ideas move from one to another quickly, often with little or no apparent connection. One reason (having no school) in the introduction is repeated (as a sentence fragment) about halfway into the response. Also, the writer seems unaware of purpose, referring to loving snow (would rather be too cold than too hot). This acknowledgement of winter clashes with the goal of explaining summer as the favorite season. A more consistent organizational plan and better awareness of purpose would be needed for this response to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 1

No spelling errors occur in this relatively brief response, but there are numerous errors in punctuation (omitted question mark and hyphen in <u>all-out</u>, several omitted commas). Usage errors are present as well (rather be to cold than to hot, a all-out fan). While the writing includes one compound-complex sentence, there are also several fragments (most notably, "Having no school."). Overall, errors are frequent and impair the reader's understanding. Thus, this response displays only a minimal understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Many people like summer for one reason! There's no school, but that is not my reason. My reason is baseball. I love baseball. I've been playing baseball for about 10 years!. That is the only reason I love summer. I could care less if I had school or not, but summer is my favorite.

I like going down town to watch the Indians play ball. I like watching it being played on TV. I also like going to my baseball games, having fun and being with my friends. I love baseball. It's the best sport of all. That is why I LOVE summer.

Applications Score Point: 2

This "2" response centers on summer and a love for baseball. Although there are several details to develop why the love of baseball exists (playing for about 10 years, watching the Indians play, going to my baseball games), this information is minimally connected to its season. As such, baseball becomes the focus. At best this represents only a small attempt to address the prompt. In responses such as this, achieving a higher score could result from focusing more on how the season and activity relate and complement one another.

Conventions Score Point: 2

This response displays some understanding of grammatical conventions. While almost error-free in capitalization, punctuation and spelling, the majority of its sentences are simple in structure. Occasionally compound sentences are used (There's no school, but that is not my reason / I could care less if I had school or not, but summer is my favorite), but more often simple sentences are provided (many beginning with I). More variety and complexity in sentence structure are needed to achieve a higher score.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Summer is probably my favorite season because I don't have school. I also like it because I get to visit with my cousin Chris, my Aunt Carol and Uncle Chip. Almost every year, in July, either we go visit them in New Jersey for a week or they come down to Ohio for a week.

Last summer was too busy for everyone, so they didn't come and we didn't go. They are for sure coming down this year. But I'm not as certain about Chris though. He went to the Air Force and right now he's in a air traffic controlling tower or on a base in North Dakota and I don't know when he will be home.

Even though I have to come to Northland over the summer, it isn't for real school work, it is just for summer band and band camp. We also do a Fourth of July parade, so I'm excited about that.

I also like summer because I can wear shorts and t-shirts instead of pants and hoodies all day. I can also wear sandals all the time and go to the beach and stuff. But the number one thing I love about summer is swimming. I'm not very good at it but I love just sitting

there cooling off for a long time. I also like playing and splashing and jumping of diving boards. We go to Wyndot Lake every summer. My favorite slide there is either Zuma Falls (the white one) or Jet Stream (the black one). The one thing I like the most about Wyndot Lake is the wave pool. Whether I'm on a raft or just standing there, it is the most ausome thing there. And that's why I love summer!

Applications Score Point: 3

This "3" response chooses summer as the favorite season. The four reasons given (visit with family, band camp, clothes, swimming) are each supported with details and examples. However, the development falters, as more elaboration focuses on visiting with family and swimming than band camp and clothes. Also, many of the details about the family visits are inappropriate for explaining why the visits help make summer the writer's favorite season (the details in the second paragraph are tangential). Transitions are used occasionally, making a generally coherent sequence of ideas. However, inconsistencies appear in the writer's overall plan. Not having school is the first reason noted in the introduction, but by the third paragraph the writer admits having to come to school, although it is just for band. Overall, the writer's acceptable organizational plan does not result in a generally unified response.

Conventions Score Point: 3

Few errors are present in this response, and none of those impair the reader's understanding. A variety of sentence structures are used successfully (Almost every year, in July, either we go visit them in New Jersey for a week or they come down to Ohio for a week / I'm not very good at it but I love just sitting there cooling off for a long time). The only exception is a run-on sentence in the third paragraph. Overall, the writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Falling Leaves

Fall is my favorite season of the year because of Lacrosse, School, and the beautifulness of nature. Fall is a most wonderful time of year.

Fall begins Lacrosse season. La Crosse is my sport, I love it with a passion. I train off season, but that is not like the games or intense practices before tournaments. During the Fall, a lot of my time is devoted towards practice and working out.

Fall also begins school. School is fun because I get to see my friends, plays and musicals begin, and I get to watch football games. Seeing my friends is very fun. During the Summer, people go on vacation and camps, but I get to see them when I come back to School. Also, the plays and musicals start. I love the theatre and going to see School Drama Productions are fun. Last, School football games are fun to go to. It is amazing to see my friends play against other schools.

Finally, fall is amazingly colorful. The leaves change color, pumpkins are displayed, and the weather becomes beautiful. I rake leaves into piles and remember being a kid and jumping in those piles.

All in all, fall is my favorite season. Lacrosse begins, schools starts, and the leaves are beautiful. Fall is the best thing of all time.

Applications Score Point: 3

This "3" response focuses on fall and three reasons it is the favorite season (lacrosse, school, beauty of nature). There is evidence of an acceptable organizational plan as the response previews the reasons in the first paragraph. Each reason is elaborated with examples and details, but development across the reasons is uneven. Ideas and details are repetitive at times as well. Overall, more depth and evenness in explanation are needed to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions. Errors in capitalization, punctuation, spelling and usage are few and have a minor impact on the writing. A variety of sentences are used mostly successfully. Some difficulties with parallel structure are present (School is fun because I get to see my friends, plays and musicals begin, and I get to watch football games) but do not significantly impact the reader's understanding.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Out of the Four seasons, Autumn is my Favorite. The smells, sounds and sights are wonderful in Autumn. The trees are so colorful with warm hues. Sometimes they shimmer red and orange like they are on Fire. The wind Feels so pleasant as I walk around outside, with leaves Flying all around. The best days to me are when it rains and I get to stay inside and relax until the Sun comes back out.

It is sad to think about Fall ending, and winter Starting. All the barbeques and bon-Fires, parties and celebrations are more Fun in Fall. You can play games outside without sweating, or rake leaves into a huge pile to jump in. It is not too hot, nor too cold. It's perfect. The most perfect thing about Autumn is that my birthday Falls in it. No season can be better than that.

Applications Score Point: 3

This "3" response adequately develops, with some fluency through sentence structure, that autumn is the favorite season. Some specificity in detail and word choice (warm hues, like they are on fire, leaves flying all around) offers evidence of the development of a capable writer. More depth in development of ideas and better connections between them are needed to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response contains a few errors in punctuation (commas between items in a series and within a compound sentence) but is otherwise "clean" in its mechanics. It provides a variety of sentences of differing lengths, formations and complexity (The wind feels so pleasant as I walk around outside, with leaves flying all around / The best days to me are when it rains and I get to stay inside and relax until the sun comes back out). The response demonstrates a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Summer in my opion is the best. I love warm weather. Warm, sunny weather is associated with my favorite actives. One of my favorite activities and also a family tradition is dirt track racing. Alot of my family races and those who don't race wont to. Right now three of my cousins race and my two uncles race. This season though I am going to race I will be the youngest in my family ever to start racing. My uncle gave me a Ford Tempo to race in the endurance class. Endurance class last one hundred and fifty laps. Most of my family races in the Bomber class. Bomber classes are V-8 engines that can be bored out. This weekend actually I am going to put a roll cage in

my car. The summer brings
in good weather to go
fishing to. I like to catch
about any kind of fish but
carp and catfish are my faverite. They
put up a really good fight.
I sometimes enter tournaments and win
money for the biggest fish caught
each hour at the pay lake. The
summer is a good time
to ride my all terrian vehicle
too. I have a Honda Rancher
Electric Shift four wheel drive. It
has a lot of power for just
350 cubic centimeter engine. I
have put over two-thousand miles
on it in a little over a year.
I need new tires on it but
besides that it is an awesome
All Terrain Vehicle. My dad has
a older Dodge 4x4 truck that has
forty four inch tires on it we
can go about anywhere we
want to in it. He used it
take it Rock crawling but

does not anymore he said he
is too old and it is too dangerous.
As you can see summer is
my fovorite season. This summer
is going to be a very busy
one.

Applications Score Point: 3

In discussing the reasons why summer is the favorite season, this "3" response provides a good amount of information. There is adequate development in explaining three activities that make summer fun (dirt track racing, fishing, riding all-terrain vehicles) and details about each activity are mentioned. However, a better organizational plan and better cohesiveness throughout the response are needed to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 2

This response displays some understanding of grammatical conventions. Some errors in spelling are present (opion for opinion, witch for with, wont for want) along with one error in subject-verb agreement (Endurance class last for lasts). Punctuation errors (especially the omission of commas) are more frequent throughout the response. Many of these omissions occur within compound sentences. While some understanding of sentence structure and variety is indicated by these and other sentences in the response, several run-on sentences are also present. Thus, on the whole, the writing does not display a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite season of the year is winter. The reasons why winter is my favorite season of the year are first there are no bugs. Also my birthday is in the winter. Another reason why I like winter the most is you don't get sunburns.

Its not that I don't like bugs, they are an important part of the ecosystem. Some of them are even pretty like lady bugs. Its just the annoying ones and the hurtful bugs I don't like. Flies are anoyin because they will often times buzz around your head and not leave you alone. Also flies will land on something nasty like a dog dropping and then fly and land on your food when you are eating. The bad bugs like misquitos and ticks spread disease and sickness by sucking your blood.

In the winter every year my birthday

is celebrated. It is nice to have family and friends celebrate with me. Everyone eats cake and icecream while laughing and talking together. Its also nice to have my birthday because it brings you one year closer to becoming an adult. You don't feel much different, but its nice to be seen as more responsible and adult like.

One thing that it is very hard to get in the winter is a sunburn. Getting sunburns again and again causes cancer, which is life threatening. I have very fair skin, so it is easy for me to get burnt out in the hot summer sun. Sunburns are not only dangerous but they hurt and don't look very good on a person.

These are the reasons why winter is my favorite season. There are no dirty, stinging bugs around to annoy you. My birthday is in the winter. Also you don't get sunburns from the sun.

Applications Score Point: 4

This "4" response is well developed in addressing three reasons why winter is the favorite season (no bugs, birthdays, don't get sunburns). The response demonstrates a good organizational plan and attention to audience through a useful conversational tone. There is evidence of a capable writer at work. There is, however, a familiarity or repetitiveness in word choices, and there are only occasional variations in sentence structure. More variety in these areas is needed for the response to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

Relative to the amount of writing, few errors in capitalization and spelling are found in this response. A somewhat greater number of punctuation errors are present, most notably omitted commas for sentence phrases and clauses. However, a variety of sentence structures are employed. Particularly in the second half of the response, complex and compound sentences are effectively used (Everyone eats cake and ice cream while laughing and talking together / I have very fair skin, so it is easy for me to get burnt out in the hot summer sun). Overall, the writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite season of the year is winter. I enjoy winter the most because I love the weather. Snow is my person favorite for many reasons, but mostly because it provides a rare opportunity for a break from school. After an especially heavy snow fall, it seems like the entire city shuts down. Schools, work, and stores have to close and forces people to take some time off. Snow also allows people to take a sled ride down a huge hill. You cannot do this except during winter. Snowmen and snow forts appear in almost every front yard. While snow can cause huge problems for commuters and those who have to shovel the driveway, it still provides hours of entertainment.

Another reason why I love winter is the holidays. Winter begins with Thanksgiving, an excuse to fill up on the best foods. Pumpkin pie, turkey, and cranberry sauce are just some of my favorites. Then, there is Christmas. Gifts pour in from almost every relative and it is just another chance to eat some of my favorite foods. Some of the best memories I have are of my family together on Christmas. A few days after Christmas, it is time to celebrate the new year. You can stay awake til midnight and try some champagne. Finally, the winter season seems to end in February. Valentine's Day comes, and with it comes plenty of candy. Chocolates, lollipops, and every other kind of candy can be found on sale to send to your sweetheart.

The winter season is a time to cherish your friends and family, which is why I enjoy it so much. Aside from the snow and holidays, winter forces people to stay inside and connect with those they are close to. This probably why I enjoy winter so much.

Applications Score Point: 4

This "4" response is well developed in explaining the reasons why winter is the favorite season (snow, holidays). Each reason is elaborated with appropriate word choice (rare opportunity, gifts pour in, a time to cherish) that demonstrates an attention to audience. Also, the use of transitions and a variety of sentence structures show evidence of a good organizational plan. The response needs additional details and examples to become very well developed and then achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response contains very few errors in punctuation and spelling. It displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions, especially in its use of a variety of sentences of differing lengths, structures and complexity throughout (Valentine's Day comes, and with it comes plenty of candy / Aside from the snow and holidays, winter forces people to stay inside and connect with those they are close to).

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Winter is my favorite season of the year. The weather prevents school on occasion, and the darkness is extraordinarily useful for extended sleep. Everyone stays inside more, so I get the chance to spend more time with my family. My friends and I get to have fun together more often in the winter, as we are less frequently away for extra curriculars.

In the winter, I like to go hiking with my cousins and friends in the woods near my home. We often bring sleds to utilize a secluded hill nearby. For hours we stay out, having adventures and talking. Only when we lose feeling in our feet do we head home.

When we get there, there is nothing better than walking in to a roaring fire and warm cocoa. The feeling is simply sublime. Inside, we continue our conversations and arguments, sometimes watching a movie too. The camaraderie is like a comforting shield against the wind.

While our clothes and coats dry, we sometimes make our way to the basement. There, with the warmth of home in contrast to the cold outdoors, we play computer games and board games and all other manners of fun things. After a few hours, our things are dry once again and we can set out to build more snow structures. Times change, but winter never will.

Applications Score Point: 4

This "4" response develops why winter is the favorite season by explaining the memories of days spent with cousins and friends. A variety of sentence structures and good word choices (utilize a secluded hill, simply sublime, camaraderie is like a comforting shield against the wind) is often used, showing evidence of attention to audience and an effective tone. The response also demonstrates a good organizational plan that often uses strong transitions to aid cohesion and coherence in structure. To achieve a higher score, the response needs to be further developed using additional examples and details and better organized with a conclusion that leaves a stronger sense of closure.

Conventions Score Point: 3

In addition to being almost error-free, this response effectively employs punctuation, spelling and grammatical conventions to produce a variety of well-constructed sentences frequently sophisticated in their complexity (There, with the warmth of home in contrast to the cold outdoors, we play computer games and board games and all other manners of fun things / Only when we lose feeling in our feet do we head home). The writing consistently displays a thorough understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite season of the year is summer. I mean, who doesn't like summer? I love the hot weather, how pretty everything gets outside, and the soccer season. To me summer time seems to bring everyone a smile.

I love the hot weather that summer promises to bring. With the sun beating down on me, I'm sure to get a great fresh new tan and a bikini tan line to go along with it. Speaking of tan lines, hot weather brings the swim time too. Catching laps at the pool is something I like to do to pass time and burn a few calories while I'm at it. It's really great to run around with all your friends in short shorts and a tank top with no care in the world while the sun beats down on your body like a warm sponge bath tickling you all over. The warm weather is just the beginning of why summer is so great.

Another reason why I love summer is how everything gets so pretty. The

flowers are all in bloom and with the different beatle bugs and insects floating around, the world looks like a painted picture thats came to life. The trees are really beautiful too. I love when they are big and green with their branches thick and evenly grown all the way around. The animals make it come to life more than anything. The rabbits hopping around and the birds singing all day it just adds to the beauty of it and makes me happy to have woke up that morning.

My all time favorite reason for loving summer is soccer. I love them both with a passion. Soccer is the greatest, to me its what makes summer so fun and looked foward to. I usually have practice all the time and scrimmages at least twice a week. My coaches are great too, I really enjoy spending every summer with them. We usually find out ways and work together to get better for the upcomming season. Beside playing soccer, I also referee little

kids soccer games. They are the cutiest. Sometimes the really little kids get tired of playing from the hot summer weather that they just sit down on the field. It's so funny. To me it's one of the most important things that make my summers so special.

Summer is a time for me to just relax and take a break from my life. Although I'm usually always on the go rather than really relaxing, I feel energized and ready everyday to do the things I love. Summertime makes me feel like I'm free and can do anything I want to as long as I have a smile on my face.

Applications Score Point: 4

This "4" response is organized around three reasons summer is the favorite season (hot weather, how pretty everything is, soccer season). Each reason is well developed with specific details. The response also often uses effective word choice (like a warm sponge bath tickling you all over, a painted picture that came to life) and a variety of sentence structures (especially in the first half of the response), providing evidence of a capable writer at work. More consistent use of such word choices and sentence structures throughout the response is needed for it to achieve a higher score.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions. Only a few errors in punctuation and spelling are present. Instances of awkwardness in sentence formation (Sometimes the really little kids get tired of playing from the hot summer weather that they just sit down on the field) are few in comparison to the number and variety of well-constructed sentences of considerable grammatical complexity (It's really great to run around with all your friends in short shorts and a tank top with no care in the world, while the sun beats down on your body like a warm sponge bath tickling you all over).

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Each of the four season is remembered for something different. When you think of Winter, thoughts of snow and Christmas come to mind. In autumn, leaves are changing color and football begins. In spring, the flowers are blooming and everyone begins to think of my favorite season, summer.

The summer is my favorite season for many reasons. During the summer the weather is almost always warm. Since the weather is so warm, I have the opportunity to go golfing with my friends. We always have fun when we get together to play a round of golf in the warm sun.

Also in the summer is the County Fair. At the fair, I am actively involved in showing sheep and helping to judge. But when Friday night rolls around, everyone gets together and walks around talking about how much fun the fair has been and what we plan on doing next year.

Many of my friends play softball and I enjoy going to see them play in their games. Usually there are a bunch of us

bring out the lawn chairs and set up a cheering section. Everyone who comes to watch the games knows how much the games mean to the players. After the game, we all load up in someones car and go to the Dairy Queen for ice cream.

Although all of these things would be enough to make the season of summer special, there is one memory I have that makes it the best season of the year. Last year, my best friend and I decided to go to a festival to see what it was like. When we got there, we walked around for a while and decided that the festival was a bust. We started to walk towards the car when a woman came on stage and announced to the crowd that Joe Nichols had decided to do a free concert for us. That grabbed our attention and we ran back to the stage. A few minutes later, Joe came on stage and started singing his songs. He is one of our favorite artists and getting to see a whole concert of him was exciting and made the festival a lot better than what it was before.

There are lots of other memories of other seasons, but the best memories I have always seen to happen in the summer. Although the other seasons are good, they just can't compare to the things warm weather has to offer. That is why I think summer is the best season there is.

Applications Score Point: 5

This very well-developed "5" response chooses summer as the favorite season. Each reason (warm weather, County Fair, softball, the memory of a festival) flows smoothly from the previous one using strong transitions and a variety of sentence structures to show a coherent sequence and a unified response. The consistent conversational tone is evidence of an engaging style that draws in the audience to the student's summertime experiences.

Conventions Score Point: 3

Only a few isolated errors in punctuation and spelling are present in this response. Standard English conventions of grammar and usage are observed and successfully applied throughout the writing. Sentence structures of varying lengths and complexity are provided successfully and consistently (In spring, the flowers are blooming and everyone begins to think of my favorite season, summer).

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

When asked to think of my favorite yearly season, my response would have to be summer. Summer is the season of freedom, freedom from school, freedom from bed times, freedom from curfew. In the summer you don't get lines such as "No you can't go out, you have homework!" Summer is the one season a year where there is no work utterly required to be done.

On the other hand, in reality there is work to be done, lawns to mow, dogs to walk, and summer jobs to be had. But I feel there is just something about summer that makes all those things easier, probably the weather.

Yes, the weather. One of the things I love most about the summer. Some complain it's "too hot" but I beg to differ, after all, air conditioning and fans were created for a reason. Summer in Ohio is the only season that which you can walk around, outside, without a jacket on, at eleven o'clock, and not freeze. I like that in a season.

Summer was just made for the outdoors. I myself am rather partial to outdoor swimming. Some of my earliest childhood memories pertain to swimming in my neighbors pool every summer. I spent countless summers involved in "YMCA Day Camp" spending whole days at their swimming facilities.

Summer gives a home to one of my favorite activities, tennis. Summer is the time for the infamous tennis conditioning, shin splints, pulled hamstrings, and twisted ankles; somehow though, you love every minute.

For me, summer means slumber parties. It's the time to become a kid again. My friends and I toss away practicalities and regress back into small children. We'll spend weeks at a time at one anothers houses, we stay up late watching scary movies, shoving our faces with popcorn, and just being kids.

Birthdays happen for me in the summer which only makes my love of summer greater. Being an August baby has always meant I could have outdoor birthdays, pool parties, and sleep overs no matter the day of the week. It also means I've never had to be in school on my birthday.

Volunteer work is also something only the summer can offer to me. I work at Saint Charles Child Development Center during the summer. I devote myself to the two year old room and have a great time. Twenty screaming two year olds three days a week would not be many peoples idea of a good time, but I love it.

Therefore I would choose summer as my favorite season. It just has so much to offer. A fun constructive summer creates so many memories and preps you to return to school in the best way.

Applications Score Point: 5

This "5" response utilizes an engaging style to explain why summer is the favorite season. This is an excellent piece of writing, one that presents strong ideas (toss away practicalities and regress back into small children) and an organizational plan that engages the reader with a unified and coherent sequence of ideas. The specificity in word choice (beg to differ, countless summers, infamous tennis conditioning), in conjunction with the many ideas, examples and details presented, makes for a very well-developed response.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions. A few errors are present in punctuation but none in spelling. The writer consistently attempts to present a variety of sentences, typically beyond the "simple-sentence" level. In a few instances, usage or punctuation errors prevent sentences from succeeding fully. However, more often the sentences are well constructed (Summer is the time for the infamous tennis conditioning, shin splints, pulled hamstrings, and twisted ankles; somehow though, you love every minute).

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

My favorite season of the year is Fall, specifically Early Fall. Fall has perfect weather, beautiful scenery and fun activities!

In early Fall the weather is just right. There is no snow yet and the temperature is between 60° and 70°. This is the perfect weather for wearing my favorite clothes, a sweatshirt or T-shirt and jeans. It's not hot enough for shorts and it's not cold enough to need a jacket, it's just perfect!

Also, in Early Fall it is still the boating season, so my family and friends can spend time at the boat club or on Lake Erie. Boating is one of my favorite activities that my family does together. We all enjoy the cool water, soft breezes, warm sun and gentle swaying of the waves. Boating is the most relaxing activity I participate in and Fall is the perfect time to spend on the boat.

Early Fall is also wonderful because the scenery is gorgeous. The leaves have just begun to change color on the trees. Driving through my neighborhood and seeing the rich auburns and fiery oranges of the flutterin leaves is one of the most amazing things I have ever seen. In Early Fall, the leaves have not turned brown or fallen to the ground so there is not yet a need for raking them. Fall's scenery is beautiful.

One of the best parts about early fall is that school has not yet begun. The anticipation of buying new clothes and supplies and seeing old friends again is just beginning to surface but we don't have to worry about homework or grades yet. In early fall we are still able to enjoy the activities without fretting over an upcoming test or research paper due date

Fall is the perfect time to appreciate the joy of not having school but also to look forward to the upcoming schoolyear with aspiring hopes and expectations.

I enjoy early Fall for many reasons, the weather, activities, lack of school and scenery. For these reasons Fall is my favorite season of the year.

Applications Score Point: 5

This "5" response is very well developed in exploring three reasons why fall is the favorite season (perfect weather, fun activities, beautiful scenery). The response has a clearly organized plan that results in a unified and coherent sequence of ideas. The writer's engaging style can be seen through excellent imagery (gentle swaying of the waves, rich auburns and fiery oranges, fluttering leaves) and precision in detail through word choice (anticipation, fretting, aspiring hopes). There is ample evidence of a confident writer at work.

Conventions Score Point: 3

The few spelling and punctuation errors in this response have very little impact on the reader's comprehension of the writing. The writer's control over Standard English conventions of grammar and usage is strong and consistent, as evidenced in many well-constructed sentences (In early fall, the leaves have not turned brown or fallen to the ground so there is not yet a need for raking them).

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Winter, summer, spring and Fall
Mother Earth's seasons, she loves not one, but all

That's the beggining of a poem I once read, but I can't remember the rest. Unlike Mother Earth, however, I do have a Favorite. It is The season of Winter.

I do not remember when my Fascination with winter begun, probably when I was a young boy, always outside playing in the snow. It is tremendously beautiful, snow. As pure white as I suspect angels wings are, I always Felt snow was like a cleanser. All the bad in the world was muted at the end of the year, and as a new year picked up, and the snow melted, so did all the bad things, sadness, anger, pain, leaving everyone to start over Fresh for a new year.

Winter also meant that I had time to myself. No one I knew would ever spend as much time out in the cold as I did, leaving me to my own devices. I would always head straight For the woods. Never have I seen such beauty than a winter woodland.

trees covered in snow and icicles, little frozen ponds and streams, and all the animal tracks, it was overwhelming. And me, right in the middle of it, right in the middle of peace. No worries ever seemed so important then, everything just fled me, leaving me free to be happy. I could throw snow up in the air, scream till I was blue, and laugh all day, and I would. No one stopped me, not even when I became deemed too old for such childness. No one would dare.

Winter is a release. It brings joy in bounty, like christmas. All the children, walking around wide-eyed, wondering about all the magic around them. That is the reason, I suppose, I love kids. While adults associate the winter with high heating bills, freezing cars, and shoveling snow, kids think about Santa, and playing in the snow, and laughing, and magic. I'm just as enchanted, and pray I always will be so.

Summer brings sunshine and ice-cream, Spring brings flowers and light drizzles, Fall brings amazing color and glorious skies, but

Winter will always bring this peace and happiness that I even find hard to describe. I just feel whole, and myself. kind of like, nothing can happen to me, or anyone else. winter is too perfect for mundane and tragic to take hold. Pain is eased, happiness grows, and life, life is as good as it gets.

Applications Score Point: 5

This very well-developed "5" response delves, with sophistication, into why winter is the favorite season. The consistent use of an engaging style, a variety of sentence structures, and a precision in word choice (walking around wide-eyed, enchanted, world was muted, leave me to my own devices) shows that the writer adapts to the audience with great success. The clearly evident organizational structure is aided by consistent use of transitional devices as one idea naturally flows from the previous.

Conventions Score Point: 3

Though this response contains a few notable spelling errors (beggining for beginning, leving for leaving), the absence of other significant miscues, and more importantly, the abundance of different types of sentences and the complexity of their construction indicate a writer with a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Each person has their own seasonal preference. The factors of weather, activities, and experiences all contribute to the selection of a favorite season. Each season has its ups and downs, yet one rises above the rest. The period of late spring and early summer is the best time of year because of the weather, activities, and memory which occur during this fraction of the year. Here we will investigate why the season selected is the best.

The time between late spring and early summer is atmospherically superb. The temperature remains not too hot, but not chilly either. Routine heavy rains make the days seem fresh and alive. In the mornings, the dew clings to the ground and it is cool. The smell of fresh cut grass permiates the air like a potently seductive fragrence. The soft earth seems to preclude the warmth to come. In these surroundings, one feels as if he has found a place that trancends the natural order of time itself. As the shell of morning disolves, the bright

Sunshine beams rays of vitality on the plyable earth, fortifying it for the day's trials. The steady breeze maintains an ideal climate for outdoor activity, blowing against the legs, now sheathed in shorts. Late spring's weather is indeed the best.

The activities of the spring and summer are always outside. Baseball, airsoft, and paintball are played outside in the new found surroundings. School no longer hinders what is good for the mind- freedom. Early morning mass greets the soul, just as the sun is rising. What a site it is to see the rays shine through the panes of the stained glass! Long walks in the gardens and fountains allow one to reflect on life and get in touch with God. Hanging out with friends, and jamming late into the night, as if time did not exist: this is what freedom is about. Freedom is the privlidge of educating yourself, free of curriculums and slant opinions. These are the activities of the season.

Lastly, spring and summer both carry age old memories. The excitement of those last few days of school and the sadness of having to leave old friends, the memories of a first job, and the responsibilities of being a "man"; how could one forget them? We experience the wonder of youth and the spirit of living in those three short months. The memories of summer last forever.

Concluding, the times spent over the late part of spring and Early summer ~~have~~ leave an indelibled mark on one's experience. The weather, activities, and memories connected to it are lasting. As summer approaches one cannot help but long for its arrival. The seasons late spring and early summer are the best times of the year.

Applications Score Point: 6

This "6" response exceptionally develops the time of late spring and early summer by focusing on three aspects that make this time memorable (weather, activities, past experiences). A compelling approach is seen in the fluent presentation of ideas, even though some transitions are clumsy. A consistently engaging style is evident through use of sophisticated sentence structures and a powerful precision in word choice (clings, potently seductive, transcends, dissolves, pliable, indelible). The powerful use of language draws the audience into sensing why the student feels late spring and early summer is a special time of year.

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions. The writer's control over Standard English conventions is evident throughout, as punctuation, usage and grammar are applied skillfully within a variety of well-constructed, complex sentences. The response contains only a few errors. A notable example of one usage error is in pronoun-antecedent agreement (Each person has their own seasonal preference) which occurs in the first line of the response. Thereafter, usage and other errors are seen infrequently.

13. Write your response to question 13 in the space below (pages 9 to 12).

Each season of the year has its pleasures as well as its inconveniences, from the rainshowers in spring to the snowstorms in winter. The one season, though, that I always look forward to and consider my favorite is summer.

First of all, summer is filled with the most enjoyable activities to take place throughout the entire course of the year. Every summer, I swim, camp, go on vacation etc. You usually don't have to stay imprisoned inside unless it's storming and I love summer storms as well. Summer is a time for fun and games, such as water-balloon fights, fishing, caving, diving, sleepovers, sleeping in, late-night movies etc.

Nature itself is at it's best, in all it's beauty and glory, during summer. There are magnificent sunsets and sunrises, the birds wake you up each morning with their soft, sweet melodies. You never have to retreat indoors to hot cocoa and a fire in fear of becoming frost bitten.

Basking in the sun lazily with not a single thing to do or a single place to be is my definition of summer. It's a vacation from tiring work and a time to regain strength and rest. The plants and greenery are perfect and are at their prime.

Summer is my favorite season because, for me, personally, it holds a lot of precious memories. Every summer, when I was a child, I would set up lemonade stands with my friends. I remember feeling so grown up and proud as we walked to the store and made purchases without the consent of our mothers. It gave us a sense of freedom. Another memory from my summer years is of camping and fishing. At least twice a month, we would pack up our camper, load the truck or Explorer, and set off for a new round of adventure. We did everything from caving to staying by a beach to horseback riding. The activity I loved the most was fishing. Early

in the morning, my dad would wake me up and he would hand me a cold Mountain Dew. He'd hitch up the boat to the truck as I sleepily stood by, rubbing my eyes and stretching. Then we'd drive to the lake, launch the boat into the water and we would stay out on the water until it began to grow dark. My scrapbooks and collages display numerous pictures of the fish we've both caught, catching the look of triumph in our eyes and most importantly the love between a father and his daughter.

When I think about every other season, nothing spectacular or extremely important comes to mind. Spring, fall, and winter are just times of the year that hold no significance and involve no memories for me. When I think about them, they are just a gray blur, blending together and showing no detail.

Summer is a refreshing time of year and is by far the most enjoyed. Not only does it involve my favorite

activities and nature at its best, but to me, summer brings memories, both good and bad, from many years in my life. To me, summer is not just a season ... it's life.

Applications Score Point: 6

This "6" response is a superior piece of writing. It is effectively adapted to audience and to the expository purpose. The response presents in detail the writer's memories of several activities associated with summer (setting up a lemonade stand, camping and fishing). In doing so, it never loses sight of the reason for describing these activities—to explain why summer is the writer's favorite season. The response is exceptionally developed throughout and provides compelling examples, details and ideas (Spring, fall, and winter are just times of the year that hold no significance and involve no memories for me / To me, summer is not just a season ... it's life). The writer uses a clearly evident organizational plan (activities, nature, memories) that for the most part results in a unified and coherent sequence of ideas. In its closing paragraphs, the response is somewhat less cohesive due to a lack of transitions that would help to unify the thoughts presented. Overall, however, there is strong evidence of a confident writer at work, one who consistently uses a variety of sentence structures, effective word choices and an engaging style (My scrapbooks and collages display numerous pictures of the fish we've both caught, catching the look of triumph in our eyes and most importantly the love between a father and his daughter).

Conventions Score Point: 3

This response contains a few minor errors in punctuation and one run-on sentence. Otherwise, the response is characterized by a variety of well-constructed sentences, many of considerable complexity (I remember feeling so grown up and proud as we walked to the store and made purchases without the consent of our mothers / When I think about them, they are just a gray blur, blending together and showing no detail). Overall, the writing displays a consistent understanding of grammatical conventions.