



**GRADE 4**  
**Writing**

**Administered April 2014**

**RELEASED**



# WRITING (DAY 1)



# WRITTEN COMPOSITION



## WRITTEN COMPOSITION #1: Personal Narrative

Look at the picture below.



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Sometimes it can be hard to decide between one thing and another.

Write about a time when you had to make a choice.

Be sure to —

- write about a personal experience
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

USE THIS PREWRITING PAGE TO  
PLAN YOUR COMPOSITION.

MAKE SURE THAT YOU WRITE YOUR COMPOSITION ON  
THE LINED PAGE LABELED "COMPOSITION #1"  
IN THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.

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REVISING  
AND  
EDITING

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.**

*Devin was curious about the history of the sneaker. After doing some research, he wrote this paper. Read Devin's paper and think about how he should revise it. Then answer the questions that follow.*



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## **A Comfortable Invention: The Sneaker**

(1) Almost everyone has a pair of sneakers. (2) We wear them for playing sports. (3) We wear them for everyday walking. (4) We wear them for PE class. (5) And we wear them to be stylish. (6) But sneakers haven't always been commonplace.

(7) The first rubber-soled shoes were made in England in the 1830s. (8) They were called sand shoes because people wore them to the beach. (9) The shoes quickly became popular because they were comfortable, and they were popular because they were easy to clean.

(10) In 1840 a U.S. inventor came up with a new process to make rubber, and companies used this rubber to create new types of shoes.

(11) Many years of improvements led to Keds, the first mass-marketed athletic shoes. (12) Not only were Keds comfortable, but they were also very quiet. (13) In fact, the rubber soles made them so quiet that people could sneak up on one another. (14) People were referring to the new shoes as sneakers, and the name stuck.

(15) In 1917 a company called Converse invented an athletic shoe for basketball players. (16) These shoes changed the sports-shoe industry. (17) Other companies began making specific shoes for specific sports. (18) Before long, there were tennis shoes, running shoes, and baseball shoes.

(19) In the 1950s people other than athletes began wearing sneakers. (20) Young people especially enjoyed wearing them, but movie stars were seen walking around in them, too. (21) Famous sports stars were paid to endorse certain shoes. (22) These shoes sold in record numbers and were responsible for huge profits. (23) The sports shoe craze had begun.

(24) Today's athletic shoes are very different from the first rubber-soled shoes. (25) Shoe manufacturers use high-tech materials to make shoes that are good for them. (26) These shoes are lightweight and may help prevent injuries.

(27) If you travel to other countries, you'll see many different styles. (28) However, in most places they aren't called sneakers. (29) In England they're called trainers. (30) In Canada they're known as runners. (31) And in South Africa people call them tackies.

(32) Whatever they're called, sneakers are likely to be around for a very long time. (33) They're comfortable, affordable, and fashionable, which means that someday even your grandchildren will probably enjoy wearing them.

- 1 What is the **BEST** way to revise sentence 9?
- A The shoes quickly became popular because they were comfortable and easy to clean.
  - B The shoes quickly became popular because they were comfortable, they were also easy to clean.
  - C Quickly popular because they were comfortable, the shoes were also easy to clean.
  - D Because the shoes quickly became popular, they were comfortable and easy to clean.

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- 2 Which transition word or phrase could **BEST** be added to the beginning of sentence 14?
- F For example
  - G However
  - H Soon
  - J In conclusion

- 3 Devin wants to add a sentence to tell more about the idea he has expressed in sentence 15. Which of these could **BEST** follow and support sentence 15?
- A People everywhere enjoy playing and watching basketball.
  - B This was in the beginning of the 1900s that this happened.
  - C It had a higher top to support the ankle.
  - D Basketball had been invented in 1891.

- 
- 4 The meaning of sentence 25 is unclear. Devin can improve this sentence by changing **them** to —
- F sneakers
  - G others
  - H big companies
  - J people's feet

- 5** Devin needs a topic sentence for the seventh paragraph (sentences 27–31). Which sentence could come just before sentence 27 and help open this paragraph?
- A** Sneakers are now worn all over the world.
  - B** A lightweight shoe is better for your foot and ankle.
  - C** In other countries there are many different styles of shoes.
  - D** There are sneakers in England, Canada, and South Africa today.

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.**

*Samantha imagines that her pets talk to one another the way humans do. This gave her an idea for a story. Read the story Samantha wrote and look for any corrections she needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## **Oliver's First Night**

(1) Oliver had been in the animal shelter for two long weeks. (2) Other dogs had come and gone, but Oliver had never been chosen by a family. (3) Then one day it happened. (4) A mom, a dad, and a little girl named Lauren pointed at him. (5) They took Oliver out of his pen and put him in there car. (6) Oliver was finally on his way to a place he could call home!

(7) All that day Oliver played with his new family. (8) He wrestled with toys, nipped at ankles, and chased balls. (9) Oliver was happier than he had ever been.

(10) Then night fell. (11) While the people went upstairs. (12) Oliver was left to sleep downstairs in the basement. (13) Oliver was scared! (14) Where was his family? (15) He didn't want to be by himself.

(16) "I can't sleep *alone*," he thought. (17) He howled a long, loud cry. (18) That was when Oliver learned that he wasn't alone after all.

(19) "What's the problem, buddy?" someone asked in a raspy voice.

(20) Oliver's ears stood up on his head. (21) He growled, trying to sound tough. (22) He looked across the room and saw a big glass box with a light inside it. (23) There was water in the box, too. (24) Three small things seemed to be gesturing to him from the box! (25) They weren't people, but they weren't dogs either.

(26) Oliver's loneliness was replaced by curiosity. (27) "What are you?" he asked.

(28) "We're pets!" replied a creature with long legs and a lanky body. (29) "I happen to be a shrimp."

(30) "I'm a clown fish," a striped orange-and-white thing said with a giggle."

(31) "And I'm a piece of coral," sang something that looked like a colorful rock with many arms.

(32) The three began to play. (33) The shrimp swam after the clown fish, the coral cheered, waving its arms wildly. (34) The shrimp tagged the fish and turned back to Oliver. (35) "What do they call you?" he asked.

(36) "Oliver," barked the pup.

(37) "Oliver, you look like you need some bedtime friends," said the clown fish.

(38) "That's us!" the coral chimed in.

(39) Oliver wagged his tail in delight. (40) Suddenly sleepy, he rested his nose on his paws. (41) Then he glanced again at his new friends and let out a contented sigh. (42) "Thank you," he mumbled softly.

(43) That night, and every night after that, Oliver snoozed in the glow of the fish tank. (44) He no longer felt lonely. (45) Mom, Dad, and Lauren was upstairs. (46) They would be back in the morning. (47) But for now he had a talkative shrimp, a funny clown fish, and a pretty coral to keep him company. (48) Oliver had found two new families, one for day and another for night.

6 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 5?

- F Change ***took*** to ***take***
  - G Insert a comma after ***pen***
  - H Change ***there*** to ***their***
  - J No change should be made.
- 

7 What is the correct way to write sentences 11 and 12?

- A While the people went upstairs, Oliver was left to sleep downstairs in the basement.
  - B The people went upstairs, and Oliver was left. To sleep downstairs in the basement.
  - C The people went upstairs, Oliver was left to sleep downstairs in the basement.
  - D Sentences 11 and 12 are written correctly in the story.
- 

8 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 20?

- F Change ***Olivers*** to ***Oliver's***
- G Change ***stood up*** to ***standed up***
- H Change ***on his head*** to ***they were on his head***
- J No change should be made.

- 9 How should sentence 30 be changed?
- A Change *striped* to **stripped**
  - B Change *said* to **says**
  - C Delete the quotation marks after the period
  - D The sentence should not be changed.

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10 What is the correct way to write sentence 33?

- F The shrimp swam after the clown fish. The coral cheering and waving its arms wildly.
- G The shrimp swam after the clown fish, and the coral cheered, it waved its arms wildly.
- H The shrimp swam after the clown fish, and the coral cheered. Waving its arms wildly.
- J The shrimp swam after the clown fish. The coral cheered, waving its arms wildly.

**11** What change, if any, should be made in sentence 41?

- A** Delete *he*
- B** Change *glansed* to *glanced*
- C** Insert a comma after *friends*
- D** Sentence 41 should not be changed.

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**12** How should sentence 45 be changed?

- F** Delete the comma after *Mom*
- G** Change *Dad* to *dad*
- H** Change *was* to *were*
- J** No change should be made.

BE SURE YOU HAVE RECORDED ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS  
ON THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.





# WRITING (DAY 2)



# WRITTEN COMPOSITION



USE THIS PREWRITING PAGE TO  
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REVISING  
AND  
EDITING

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.**

*In the following paper Angela tells about a neighborhood project. Read Angela's paper and look for any revisions she should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*



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## **Friendship Garden**

(1) There's a big empty lot next to my house. (2) For years the lot had been filled with weeds. (3) When new neighbors moved in across the street, they suggested that we turn the empty lot into something special.

(4) In the spring our two families had a meeting and then got right to work. (5) First we had to clear all the weeds out of the area. (6) Then we had to loosen the hard soil and remove the rocks. (7) Finally we were ready to plant. (8) We planted corn, peppers, beans, tomatoes, pumpkins, and even a few watermelon seeds. (9) We finished planting. (10) Then we had a tasty picnic at a table we had set up under a tree. (11) It was fun to celebrate the beginning of our new project together.

(12) Over the next few weeks, the garden turned out to be a bit more work than we had expected. (13) We had to make sure that all the plants were receiving just the right amount of water. (14) And we had to keep the weeds out of our garden. (15) They kept popping up no matter what we did to stop them. (16) Sometimes my cat would stroll into the garden and slink around. (17) Every afternoon, at least one of us had to spend time pulling the weeds that would interfere with the growth of our precious plants.

(18) Eventually the hard work began to pay off as a bounty of produce appeared before our eyes. (19) Later in the summer we feasted on salsa made from our own tomatoes. (20) We sank our teeth into the juiciest watermelons in town. (21) And in the fall we picked pumpkins and carved jack-o'-lanterns together.

(22) At the end of the season, we got together with our neighbors for another picnic. (23) As we enjoyed the fruits—and vegetables—of our labor, we discovered something.

- 13** Angela wants to add a sentence that clearly states the topic of her paper. Which of the following should Angela add after sentence 3 to accomplish this goal?
- A** Neighbors need a way to become friends.
  - B** We decided to plant a garden.
  - C** It needed to be special for everyone.
  - D** The new neighbors had come from Chicago.

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**14** What is the **BEST** way to combine sentences 9 and 10?

- F** After we finished planting, we had a tasty picnic at a table we had set up under a tree.
- G** We finished planting, then we had a tasty picnic at a table we had set up under a tree.
- H** Finishing planting, we had a picnic at a table we had set up under a tree that was tasty.
- J** We finished planting and had a tasty picnic it was at a table we had set up under a tree.

**15** The third paragraph (sentences 12–17) is hard to follow because one of the sentences does not belong. Which sentence should Angela delete from this paragraph?

- A** Sentence 13
- B** Sentence 15
- C** Sentence 16
- D** Sentence 17

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**16** Which sentence should Angela add after sentence 23 to create the most effective closing for her paper?

- F** That is the end of our garden story.
- G** Friends can be the best and worst parts of life.
- H** Our garden had helped us cultivate a lot of new things, for which we were very happy.
- J** Not only had we grown some amazing food, but we had also made some special friends.

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.**

*Tyler loves his cat and wants to convince others that cats make better pets than dogs. He has written this paper to share his thoughts. Read Tyler's paper and look for the corrections he should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*



## **Cats Are Better**

(1) Everyone says that dogs are man's best friends. (2) You don't have to look hard to find a story about a dog that has saved someone's life. (3) Now don't get me wrong. (4) I like dogs. (5) I just think they get a little too much attention. (6) In my opinion cats are just as wonderful as dogs. (7) In fact, in some ways I think they are even better.

(8) First of all, cats are much easier to take care of than dogs. (9) Dogs that live inside have to be taken out a few times a day. (10) This means that their owners have to come home throughout the day. (11) My cat, on the other hand, is quite comfortable staying inside, and using her litter box. (12) Dogs also have to be bathed, but cats keep themselves clean. (13) Most dogs have to be fed on a

regular schedule. (14) However, we put food in my cat's bowl, she eats whenever she's hungry. (15) There's also no barking with a cat. (16) A cat is quiet and polite. (17) And you won't never see a cat tip over a trash can and shred its contents. (18) Cats just don't get into the same mischief that dogs do. (19) Most cats are perfectly happy playing with a plastic bottle cap or a crumpled sheet of paper.

(20) Second, a cat can be a loyal and helpful friend. (21) If you look past all the dog hero stories, you will find a lot of cat heroes, too. (22) For example, Cathy Keesling's cat Winnie jumped onto her bed one night and started meowing loudly. (23) At first Keesling was annoyed, but she soon realized that she felt sick and couldn't wake up her husband. (24) She dialed 911, and paramedics rushed to the house. (25) They discovered that it was filled with carbon monoxide, a dangerous gas. (26) The family was treated and soon recovered, thanks to the warning from their cat. (27) Cats have also been known to warn residents of house fires, fight off attackers, and protect their owners from deadly snakes. (28) One cat in Columbus, Ohio, actually dialed 911 when its owner fell out of his wheelchair. (29) Over and over, cats have come to the aid of their owners. (30) And proved that they are heroic, loyal companions.

(31) So the next time you hear someone listing the reasons that dogs are better than cats, remember that having a cat for a pet has its advantages. (32) They are easy to take care of, and they can be helpful and loving. (33) In my opinion, cats are truly man's best friends.

**17** How should sentence 5 be changed?

- A** Change *get* to **got**
- B** Change *too much* to **to much**
- C** Change *attention* to **attention**
- D** Sentence 5 should not be changed.

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**18** What change, if any, should be made in sentence 11?

- F** Change *quite* to **quiet**
- G** Delete the comma after *inside*
- H** Change *and using* to **she uses**
- J** Sentence 11 should not be changed.

**19** What is the correct way to write sentence 14?

- A** However, we put food in my cat's bowl, and she eats. Whenever she's hungry.
- B** However, when we put food in my cat's bowl. She eats whenever she's hungry.
- C** However, we put food in my cat's bowl. And eats whenever she's hungry.
- D** However, we put food in my cat's bowl, and she eats whenever she's hungry.

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**20** What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 17?

- F** Change *never* to **ever**
- G** Change *and shred* to **they don't shred**
- H** Change *contents* to **contints**
- J** No change needs to be made.

**21** What is the correct way to write sentences 29 and 30?

- A** Over and over, cats have come to the aid of their owners and proved that they are heroic, loyal companions.
- B** Over and over, cats have come to the aid of their owners and proved. That they are heroic, loyal companions.
- C** Over and over, cats have come to the aid of their owners, they have proved that they are heroic, loyal companions.
- D** Sentences 29 and 30 are written correctly in the paper.

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**22** How should sentence 31 be changed?

- F** Change *hear* to **heard**
- G** Change *reasons* to **reason's**
- H** Change *remember* to **rember**
- J** Change *it's* to **its**

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.**

*Marsha wrote this fictional story in response to a class assignment. Now she would like you to proofread her story and look for any mistakes she has made. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.*



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## **Sprout**

(1) After the big fire the forest looked different. (2) Dead trees lay on the ground next to the bare trunks of burnt trees that were still standing. (3) A layer of ash covered the once-green forest floor. (4) It seemed impossible that anything would ever grow there again. (5) But one morning a bright-green shoot sprouted up from the ground.

(6) In the maze of charred trees. (7) A tiny seedling began to grow. (8) It leaned toward the sun and stretched out its tiny branches. (9) The little plant thought about what a beautiful place the forest must have been before the fire.

(10) The sun kept shining, and the little plant kept growing.  
(11) As its hungry roots dug into the rich soil, the plant grew stronger.  
(12) Its delicate stem became a woody trunk and its bare branches were soon filled with pointy pine needles. (13) By the end of the Summer, the tiny sprout had become the first new tree in a brand-new forest.

(14) All around the young tree, green grasses and other small trees began to grow, first one and then another. (15) Before long the charred ground was covered with new growth. (16) The forest was coming back to life.

(17) Winter came, and the little tree was blanketed in snow.  
(18) Eventually the snow melted, and the bright sun came out to shine on the little tree. (19) It grew bigger and bigger, and so did the forest around it. (20) Color slowly returned to the area as new grass swayed in the wind. (21) Bright-red berrys began to grow on shrubs, and tiny wildflowers started to dot the landscape. (22) Birds returned, filling the forest with their joyful songs again. (23) Woodpeckers pecked at bugs in dead trees, and blue jays plucked juicy fruit from live ones.  
(24) Rodents scurried about looking for places to make their homes.  
(25) The tree was thrilled to hear all the busy sounds of the forest.

(26) As the years went by, the tree got taller and taller. (27) As the tree grew, it watched a new forest spring up all around them. (28) Tall pines reached upward, and mighty redwoods stretched out their branches. (29) Squirrels chased one another up and down tree trunks, birds nested on high perches, and black bears lumbered about looking for their next meal. (30) In time the tree could hardly tell where the fire had left its mark. (31) The forest was alive and healthy again.

**23** What is the correct way to write sentences 6 and 7?

- A** In the maze of charred trees, there was a tiny seedling. Which began to grow.
  - B** In the maze of charred trees, there was a tiny seedling, it began to grow.
  - C** In the maze of charred trees, a tiny seedling beginning to grow.
  - D** In the maze of charred trees, a tiny seedling began to grow.
- 

**24** How should sentence 12 be changed?

- F** Insert a comma after **trunk**
  - G** Change **bare** to **bear**
  - H** Change **filled** to **fill**
  - J** Sentence 12 should not be changed.
- 

**25** What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 13?

- A** Change **Summer** to **summer**
- B** Change **had become** to **becoming**
- C** Insert a comma after **tree**
- D** No change needs to be made.

**26** What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 21?

- F** Change *berrys* to **berries**
  - G** Delete *and*
  - H** Change *wildflowers* to **wildflower's**
  - J** No change needs to be made.
- 

**27** What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 23?

- A** Change *pecked* to **peeked**
  - B** Delete the comma
  - C** Change *plucked* to **plucking**
  - D** No change needs to be made in sentence 23.
- 

**28** What change, if any, should be made in sentence 27?

- F** Change *grew* to **grows**
- G** Change *spring up* to **sprung up**
- H** Change *them* to **it**
- J** No change needs to be made in sentence 27.

BE SURE YOU HAVE RECORDED ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS  
ON THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.









**STAAR  
GRADE 4  
Writing  
April 2014**