

**GRADE 4**  
**Writing**

**Administered March 2015**

**RELEASED**



# WRITING (DAY 1)



# WRITTEN COMPOSITION



## WRITTEN COMPOSITION #1: Personal Narrative

Look at the picture below.



Sometimes we can do anything if we are determined.

Write about a time when you tried your hardest.

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.**

*Roland wrote the following paper about an animal that could be a good pet. Read his paper and look for any revisions he should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*



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## **Hedgies**

(1) Are you thinking about getting a new pet? (2) Would you like to try something a little different? (3) Get a hedgehog.

(4) A hedgehog is a mammal, and it is about the same size as a guinea pig. (5) It has bright eyes and a pointy snout. (6) The outside of a hedgehog is contained with sharp quills, but the underside of this animal is soft and fluffy.

(7) Hedgehogs, or hedgies as some people call them, are affectionate, and they form strong bonds with their owners. (8) For example, it's important not to frighten a hedgehog, especially when it's still getting to know you. (9) If it feels threatened, it might stick you

with its quills. (10) But once a hedgehog considers you a friend, it will become a perfect companion.

(11) These animals don't shed the way some dogs and cats do.

(12) They don't bark, scratch the furniture, or have to be taken out for a walk on a rainy night. (13) They like to play at night but can be trained

to play in the daytime, so whatever your schedule, you'll be able to enjoy spending time with your hedgie. (14) And these animals live

longer than gerbils, hamsters, and guinea pigs, which means that you'll be able to enjoy your pet for many years.

(15) Hedgehogs are also easy to care for. (16) They eat high-quality cat food, although an occasional treat, such as bits of a banana or a

scrambled egg, is just fine. (17) They need to be bathed with baby shampoo and a soft nailbrush only once every couple of months.

(18) Best of all, most hedgehogs can be trained to use a litter box, just like a cat.

(19) If you're seriously considering getting a hedgehog, you need to know that you won't find one in an ordinary pet store. (20) Hedgies are

considered exotic pets, so you'll have to go to a hedgehog breeder.

- 1 The central idea of Roland's paper is weak. Which of the following could replace sentence 3 and provide a better central idea for this paper?
- A For my paper I would like to tell you that you should definitely and for sure get a hedgehog this time.
  - B Everyone likes to try different things, so this time don't do the same thing again and get a hedgehog.
  - C Instead of choosing a traditional pet, such as a dog, a cat, or a guinea pig, you might want to get a hedgehog.
  - D Because you would like to try something that isn't very normal, get a hedgehog.

- 
- 2 The word **contained** is not the right word for sentence 6. Which word would better help describe the outside of the hedgehog?

- F included
- G covered
- H wrapped
- J colored

- 3 Roland needs to use a more appropriate transition at the beginning of sentence 8. Which of the following should replace ***For example***?
- A Therefore
  - B However
  - C In fact
  - D After that

- 
- 4 Roland would like to add a sentence to the beginning of the fourth paragraph (sentences 11–14) to introduce the ideas in this paragraph. Which of the following would be the **BEST** sentence to add just before sentence 11?
- F A hedgehog is a hard pet to care for.
  - G Hedgehogs don't shed, bark, or scratch the furniture.
  - H The hedgehog will be the perfect companion for you.
  - J There are many reasons why hedgehogs make great pets.

- 5** Which sentence should Roland add to the end of his paper to bring it to a better close?
- A** For people who don't think that they want a hedgehog for a pet, we can talk about another unusual animal next.
  - B** I'm going to look on the Internet to find a hedgehog breeder right now.
  - C** If you're in the market for something unusual, this little animal could be the perfect pet for you!
  - D** And it seems like the perfect time for me to close this paper by saying that hedgies are great!

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

*Leon's teacher asked him to write a story about a time when he learned a new skill. Read Leon's story and look for any corrections he should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## **Making Pancakes**

(1) My mother does most of the cooking around our house, but on Sunday mornings, it's all Dad. (2) I'm not sure why Sunday breakfast is my father's job, but I'm glad that it is. (3) My sister and I love the steaming stacks of buttery, syrupy goodness he puts on our plates.

(4) One Sunday morning my father called me into the kitchen to help make the pancakes. (5) I was thrilled. (6) "What do I do first," I asked eagerly. (7) My hands moved almost instantly toward the spatula.

(8) "First you need to read the directions on the back of the box," my father answered.

(9) "Surely you can just tell me what to do," I responded matter-of-factly.

(10) "Yes, but then you wouldn't remember later, would you?" he asked. (11) I knew he was serious, so I got down to reading. (12) Soon I had measured out the right amount of mix from the pancake box and added the milk and eggs.

(13) "Make sure that you don't leave any lumps," Dad instructed while I stired the mixture. (14) "If you do, there will be little powder bombs inside the pancakes." (15) As I finished mixing, I took special care to break up all the lumps. (16) Finally the batter was ready. (17) I made a move for the griddle, but my father stopped me.

(18) "I thought we were ready to start cooking," I complained.

(19) Dad explained that we needed to wait for the light on the griddle to come on. (20) Otherwise, the pancakes would stick to the surface, we would have a big mess to clean up then.

(21) When the light came on, Dad showed me how to pour the correct amount of batter onto the griddle.

(22) It didn't seem like such a small amount would be enough to make a pancake but I soon realized just how

much the batter spreads out. (23) I also realized how important it is to properly space the pancakes so that they don't run together. (24) My father was very clear about how long to wait. (25) Before trying to flip the pancakes over. (26) "Look for solid bubbles to form on top of each pancake," he instructed.

(27) "This one looks ready," I blurted out. (28) Before he could stop me, I smeared the undercooked pancake with my spatula. (29) While I scraped my impatience off the griddle, Dad showed me what he meant by "solid bubbles" and then taught me how to flip the pancakes correct. (30) I was impressed by his skill. (31) I tried to mimic his actions when I got a second chance at flipping.

(32) Before long Dad and I had a nice stack of pancakes. (33) As I served them with pride to my mother and sister, I began to understand why my father likes to make breakfast on Sunday mornings. (34) It's fun to see how much other people enjoy your creations. (35) And I discovered something else that morning, too. (36) I learned that cooking takes more patience and attention to detail than I had ever dreamed!



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- 6 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 6?
- F Change the comma to a question mark
  - G Delete the quotation marks after the comma
  - H Change ***eagerly*** to **eager**
  - J Make no change
- 

- 7 What change should be made in sentence 13?
- A Change the comma after ***lumps*** to a period
  - B Change ***instructed*** to **instructing**
  - C Change ***stired*** to **stirred**
  - D No change should be made in sentence 13.
- 

- 8 What is the correct way to write sentence 20?
- F Otherwise, the pancakes would stick to the surface. And have a big mess to clean up.
  - G Otherwise, the pancakes would stick to the surface then we would have a big mess to clean up.
  - H Otherwise, the pancakes would stick to the surface, and we would have a big mess to clean up.
  - J The sentence is written correctly in the paper.

9 What change should be made in sentence 22?

- A Change *didn't* to *did'nt*
- B Insert a comma after *pancake*
- C Change *spreads out* to *spread out*
- D Sentence 22 should not be changed.

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10 What is the correct way to write sentences 24 and 25?

- F My father was very clear about this. How long to wait before trying to flip the pancakes over.
- G My father was very clear. About how long to wait before trying to flip the pancakes over.
- H My father was very clear about this he told me how long to wait before trying to flip the pancakes over.
- J My father was very clear about how long to wait before trying to flip the pancakes over.

**11** How should sentence 29 be changed?

- A** Change *scraped* to **scrapped**
- B** Insert a comma after *bubbles*
- C** Change *taught* to **teached**
- D** Change *correct* to **correctly**

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**12** What change needs to be made in sentence 36?

- F** Change *that* to **this**
- G** Change *takes* to **take**
- H** Insert a comma after *patience*
- J** Change *then* to **than**

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





# WRITING (DAY 2)



# WRITTEN COMPOSITION



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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.**

*One day while flipping through a magazine, Kenny saw photos of some artwork that fascinated him. After researching the artist, he wrote this paper. Read Kenny's paper and look for any revisions he should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## Pencil-Tip Art

(1) Dalton Ghetti is a carpenter by trade. (2) He spends most of his time at work remodeling homes. (3) He spends his free time, however, on a very unusual hobby. (4) He creates sculptures from the tips of pencils.

(5) When Ghetti was a child growing up in São Paulo, Brazil, he and his friends used pocketknives to sharpen their pencils. (6) Ghetti learned how to carve his friends' names into pencils. (7) He would then give the pencils to his friends as gifts. (8) As he grew older, he carved large pieces from wood, but he was always much more interested in small pieces. (9) One day he decided that into the tip of a pencil he would carve a miniature sculpture. (10) Ghetti's unique hobby was born!



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Some Examples of Art That Ghetti Has Created on the Tips of Pencils

(11) Today Ghetti uses only three tools to create his sculptures: a razor blade, a sewing needle, and a sculpting knife. (12) He now lives in Bridgeport, Connecticut. (13) Among Ghetti's many creations are a tiny chair, a shoe, a mailbox, and a church. (14) He has even carved a miniature Elvis Presley into the tip of a pencil. (15) Most sculptures take several months for Ghetti to create. (16) However, some projects take longer. (17) Ghetti once carved a pencil into a series of 23 interlocking chain links. (18) That project took two and a half years!

(19) Ghetti doesn't sell his work. (20) He just enjoys making things for himself and his friends. (21) Occasionally, though, some of his miniature art is displayed in museums. (22) This pleases Ghetti because he wants people to notice small things.

(23) Ghetti used to get frustrated when they would break. (24) But a change in attitude has helped him. (25) Now he accepts the fact that delicate pieces are sometimes going to break. (26) As soon as he begins each project, he thinks, "I wonder how far I can get before it breaks!"

**13** What is the **BEST** way to combine sentences 6 and 7?

- A** Ghetti learned how to carve his friends' names into pencils, which he would then give to his friends as gifts.
- B** Ghetti learned how to carve his friends' names into pencils, he would then give the pencils to his friends as gifts.
- C** Ghetti learned how to carve his friends' names into pencils after he would give the pencils to his friends as gifts.
- D** Ghetti learned how to carve his friends' names into pencils that would then give the pencils to his friends as gifts.

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**14** What is the **BEST** way to revise sentence 9?

- F** One day he decided to carve into the tip of a pencil, he would carve a miniature sculpture.
- G** One day he decided that he would carve into the tip of a pencil where he carved a miniature sculpture.
- H** One day he decided to carve a miniature sculpture into the tip of a pencil.
- J** The sentence does not need to be revised.

- 15** Kenny realizes that there is a sentence in the third paragraph (sentences 11–18) that does not belong. Which sentence should Kenny delete from this paragraph?
- A** Sentence 12
  - B** Sentence 13
  - C** Sentence 14
  - D** Sentence 17

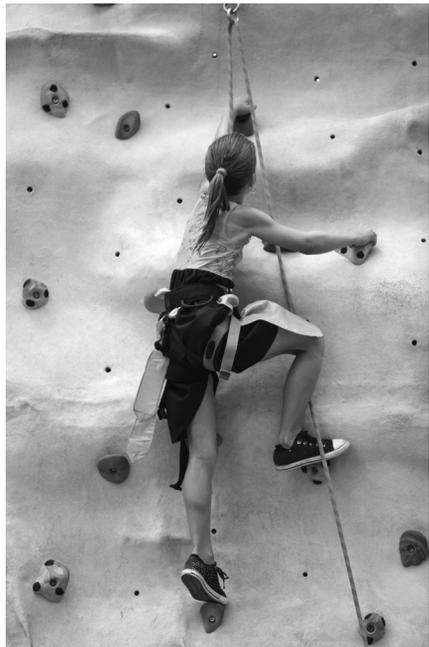
- 
- 16** The meaning of sentence 23 is unclear. Kenny can clarify the meaning of this sentence by changing *they* to —
- F** the stuff he worked on
  - G** this and that
  - H** items and things
  - J** his pencils and pencil tips

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

*Jason wrote this paper to share an idea he has for an addition to his school's playground. Read Jason's paper and look for any corrections he should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## **We Need a Rock-Climbing Wall**

(1) Ask any kid what the best part of the school day is, and he or she will probably choose recess. (2) I look forward to the recess bell like everyone else, but every time I go Outside, I think about how recess could be even better. (3) I've done some research on school playgrounds, and I believe I have come up with a great idea for improving ours. (4) We should add a rock-climbing wall.



(5) With its swings, slides, and climbing gyms, our playground is great for younger kids. (6) But there really isn't much for us older kids to do. (7) Some of my friends play soccer or football on the field, but these unorganized games usually consist of one or two kids hogging the ball and everyone else just running around chassing them. (8) Other

boy's and girl's are so eager for a challenge that they end up breaking rules by climbing on restricted parts of the jungle gyms, such as the roofs and slide covers. (9) A rock-climbing wall would give older students something fun to do. (10) It would provide a safe climbing challenge, and students wouldn't have to worry about breaking the rules.

(11) Furthermore, rock climbing is a great workout. (12) It improves muscle strength, endurance, and flexibility. (13) If we had a rock-climbing wall on our playground. (14) It could also be used for PE classes. (15) Teachers could help students set fitness goals and reach new levels of physical endurance. (16) Climbing experts say that the sport also helps kids develop focus and concentration. (17) These are two qualities that are essential to success in school. (18) Clearly, a rock-climbing wall on the playground would benefit students both physically and academically.

(19) Some people might argue that a rock-climbing wall is dangerous and that it would require too much adult supervision. (20) However, students could be taught safety rules for climbing just like the ones they are taught for other playground equipment. (21) Teachers could be assigned to the wall during recess to make sure that students are using it correctly and safely. (22) As an added safety measure, pads could be placed on the ground below the wall. (23) With proper instruction and supervision, the fourth and fifth graders at our school would really benefit from the addition of a rock-climbing wall to our playground. (24) And recess would be something we can all look forward to.

17 What change should be made in sentence 2?

- A Delete ***but***
  - B Change ***Outside*** to **outside**
  - C Change ***better*** to **more better**
  - D No change should be made.
- 

18 What change should be made in sentence 7?

- F Change ***play*** to **plays**
  - G Change ***soccer or football*** to **Soccer or Football**
  - H Change ***chassing*** to **chasing**
  - J No change should be made in sentence 7.
- 

19 What change needs to be made in sentence 8?

- A Change ***boy's and girl's*** to **boys and girls**
- B Change ***are so eager*** to **is so eager**
- C Change ***they end up*** to **you end up**
- D Change ***by climbing on*** to **they climb on**

**20** What is the correct way to write sentences 13 and 14?

- F** If we had a rock-climbing wall on our playground, it could also be used for PE classes.
  - G** We could have a rock-climbing wall on our playground. Which could also be used for PE classes.
  - H** We could have a rock-climbing wall on our playground, it could also be used for PE classes.
  - J** The sentences are written correctly in the paper.
- 

**21** What change, if any, should be made in sentence 19?

- A** Insert a comma after *dangerous*
  - B** Delete *and that*
  - C** Change *to much* to **too much**
  - D** Make no change
- 

**22** What change should be made in sentence 23?

- F** Change *proper* to **propper**
- G** Change *graders* to **grader's**
- H** Change *from* to **it would be from**
- J** No change should be made in sentence 23.

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

*Cassie's teacher asked her to write a story from the perspective of an animal. Read Cassie's story and look for any corrections she should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*



## **A Day in the Life of an Ant**

(1) "Everything seems so big and bright out here!" I exclaimed.  
(2) It was my first day out of the dark, warm surroundings of the ant nursery, and as I looked around, I was amazed. (3) There were bushes, trees, and flowers in every direction. (4) I was thrilled to be out in the world and especially excited to be a worker ant. (5) I would be making an important contribution to my colony. (6) Suddenly I felt a jolt as the ant behind me crashed into my back.

(7) "Move," she said. (8) "Your holding up the line."

(9) "Sorry," I apologized. (10) "I can't stop looking at all the beauty around me."

(11) "Just get out of the way!" she yelled.

(12) My antennas shook with embarrassment as I quickly ran along the path. (13) I soon caught up to the ant in front of me. (14) The cracks in the ground didn't slow me down at all. (15) My six legs and clawed feet gave me great balance. (16) I felt as though I could do anything. (17) And was even thinking about running up the next stalk of grass.

(18) "Keep moving," griped the angry ant behind me.

(19) "Sorry," I apologized again.

(20) "What's the problem here?" grumbled another ant. (21) I turned my head to see one of the biggest, meanest-looking ants I had ever saw. (22) She had long legs and a pair of large, jagged jaws. (23) I assumed she was one of the soldier ants that my nursemaid ant had warned me about. (24) The soldier ant scolded, "the queen and our baby sisters are counting on you to bring back food, so there's no time for messing around! (25) You two get moving, or you'll have to answer to me!" (26) The other worker ant gave me a look that made all six of my legs shake with fear.

(27) "Yes, ma'am!" we called out at the same time. (28) We lowered our heads and sped down the path. (29) I decided right then that I needed to keep my mind on my work. (30) If I kept making mistakes, I would probably be yelled at again by one of the soldier ants. (31) The image of those powerful jaws made me shiver. (32) Most importantly, the thought of letting down the queen and our little sisters was too much to bear. (33) From now on I would keep my eyes on the trail and my thoughts to myself. (34) I would try my hardest to gather plenty of food, I wanted to become the very best worker ant our colony has ever had!

**23** What change needs to be made in sentence 8?

- A** Delete the quotation marks at the beginning of the sentence
  - B** Change ***Your*** to ***You're***
  - C** Change the period to a comma
  - D** No change needs to be made.
- 

**24** What change should be made in sentence 15?

- F** Insert a comma after ***legs***
  - G** Change ***gave*** to ***given***
  - H** Change ***great*** to ***grate***
  - J** Change ***balanse*** to ***balance***
- 

**25** What is the correct way to write sentence 17?

- A** And was even thinking about running. Up the next stalk of grass.
- B** I was even thinking about running up the next stalk of grass.
- C** I was even thinking about running, I would go up the next stalk of grass.
- D** Sentence 17 is written correctly in the story.

**26** How should sentence 21 be changed?

- F** Change ***to see*** to **there was**
  - G** Change ***biggest*** to **bigest**
  - H** Change ***meanest-looking*** to **most meanest-looking**
  - J** Change ***saw*** to **seen**
- 

**27** What change needs to be made in sentence 24?

- A** Delete the comma after ***scolded***
  - B** Change ***the*** to **The**
  - C** Change ***there's*** to **theirs**
  - D** No change is needed in sentence 24.
- 

**28** What is the correct way to write sentence 34?

- F** I would try my hardest to gather plenty of food because I wanted to become the very best worker ant. That our colony has ever had!
- G** I would try my hardest to gather plenty of food because I wanted to become. The very best worker ant our colony has ever had!
- H** I would try my hardest to gather plenty of food. Wanting to become the very best worker ant our colony has ever had!
- J** I would try my hardest to gather plenty of food. I wanted to become the very best worker ant our colony has ever had!

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



**STAAR  
GRADE 4  
Writing  
March 2015**