



Grade 7 Writing

Expository Scoring Guide Spring 2012

READ the information in the box below.

In 1960, four African American college students sat down at a “whites only” lunch counter in Greensboro, North Carolina. They were protesting segregation in a peaceful way. Their action helped launch the Civil Rights movement that changed the country over the next decade.

THINK carefully about the following statement.

Sometimes rules seem unfair or unjust.

WRITE an essay explaining whether it is ever okay to break the rules.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your controlling idea
- organize and develop your explanation effectively
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

The names of individuals mentioned in the compositions have been changed to protect the confidentiality of the students whose responses appear in this guide.

Score Point 1

The essay represents a very limited writing performance.

Organization/Progression

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

Development of Ideas

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

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the expository purpose and does not establish a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

Do you think breaking the rules is okay? How do you think segregation was abolished? Sometimes it is the only way to accomplish your dreams. It is okay to break the rules!

You have to break the rules, just like you have to breathe to survive! The reason the world is like this today is because people break rules!

Next time you think about breaking the rules do it! Just think maybe it will change your life forever! It may be hard to, but just do it in a peaceful way. I know it changed my life forever!

Score Point 1

The writer of this expository essay states that it is okay to break the rules. Although the writer includes a number of ideas that are related to this controlling idea (e.g., breaking the rules is like breathing to survive; breaking the rules has made the world what it is today), they are vague and randomly presented. The abrupt shifts from idea to idea and the lack of any explanation of the ideas result in a very limited writing performance.

Ruel's

Do you think it's important to follow the rules? I think it is important to follow the rules. They are a lots of rules. But the main ones I am going to tell you are very important. If you bracke thes rules you cut loose a accident. First, when you are doing a science lab. Secorde smoking would potting gas, and threed one drinking would you are draving a

When you are on a science lab you main have goggles and gloves you most use. If something like liquede spills in your hands you are gang to have cut on hand on fager. Or maybe something could explate in enter to your eyes. And don't rone in the lab station.

When you are potting gas in your care don't ever smoke cus you could cose a explosion and you could day that way you don't smoke in gasolin station

Drinking would draving a care. If you Drive a care you could cose a axccident + liven your life to don't drink wold draving.

Its very important to never ever of the evers bracke a ruel cose you could cose a persons life even yours. Please don't smoke would puting car gas. Don't run reader play with things in a science lab. And last the most important and easy to do DON'T Drive if you are DRUNK OR have DRINKIN IN EXES. THANK YOU

Score Point 1

In this very limited writing performance, the writer's controlling idea is focused on the importance of following rules to avoid causing an accident. Examples involving science labs, smoking while putting gas in a car, and drinking while driving add some specific details to the essay. However, the serious and persistent problems with conventions, including spelling, capitalization, and usage errors, create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and at times interfere with meaning.

To me segregation is a choice, only you can decide if you want to be apart of it. As an African American I personal don't think it's right, but then again it's a choice.

Just knowing that I'll never really know what my ansester had to go through. I could never imagine myself going through that. Segregation is a huge part of my life and history. It's not easy going through life just knowing that it's not all that easy.

Even watching movies over segreagation makes me hurt, just knowing that could have been me. If people like Martin Luther King or Harriet Tubman, etc wouldn't have, stood up for us African Americans. If I could go back into time a change something's segregation would be one.

Imagine yourself walking down a side walk and signs every where say, whites only. I don't think as an African American it would give you great joy. People need to just realize that blacks aren't going anywhere, so just get over yourself. There are all types of people in this world and we all deserve equal rights. If you didn't get anything out of this story get this segregation is a choice, only you can decide if you want to be apart of it.

Score Point 1

The writer of this essay explains that segregation is a choice and that one can decide whether or not to be a part of it. While this controlling idea is clear, the essay as a whole is not responsive to the specific demands of the prompt, which require the writer to explain whether it is ever okay to break the rules. Instead of focusing on this topic, the writer explores the effects of segregation on himself and others. Therefore, most of the details provided are inappropriate, resulting in a very limited writing performance.

One sunny bright day I went to school without the dresscode. I was scared they will tell me why I was breaking the school rules and expel me from school.

Once I was in class I rapidly got to my desk so my teacher won't see me without dresscode. As soon as she got in the class I tried to hide myself but, she still noticed. So, she took me outside and asked me "Why did you break the dresscode rules?" I just stand there not knowing what to say. She told me that she was not going to take me to the office to get the punishment I deserved by breaking the rules. She also warned me for next time. She said "if I ever see you again without dresscode you are getting punished." I just stand there. So it is not always good to break the rules. From now and on, I will never break the rules again!! Also you never know if something bad happens for breaking rules.

Score Point 1

In this very limited writing performance, the writer describes a day when she went to school without following the dress code. Even though the writer provides a controlling idea at the end of the response (it is not always good to break the rules), the details and narrative structure of the piece are inappropriate to the specific demands of the expository prompt. To be responsive, the focus has to be on why it was bad to go to school without following the dress code, not on what happened in class on that day.

Score Point 2

The essay represents a basic writing performance.

Organization/Progression

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

Development of Ideas

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

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the expository purpose but does little to establish a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice may not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled, weakening the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Some distracting errors may be evident, at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency or meaning of the writing.

Breaking The Rules

Both breaking and not breaking the rules have good and bad things.

Breaking the rules could lead to problems at school, home, and in life. When you are breaking a rule, it shows you don't care what you're doing in your actions. Sometimes breaking rules shows that you don't think something is fair, but that doesn't mean you have to do something bad to feel better. Some rules are fair and some are not. We all have to face or follow rules no matter what. Almost everywhere you go there is going to be rules. When you break the rules you could end up in jail, court, or get a fine. I don't think anyone will want to do that. I sure wouldn't!

When you see someone breaking a rule, go and stop them. They might not listen to you but at least you warned them. Breaking rules is bad.

Score Point 2

This expository response exhibits an evolving controlling idea, moving from “both breaking and not breaking the rules have good and bad things” (first sentence) to “breaking rules is bad” (last sentence). Although the writer touches on the idea that people may break rules because they are unfair, most of the essay is focused on the necessity of following rules. This lack of focus creates some progression problems in that the writer’s movement from idea to idea is not always controlled. In addition, although the writer includes a few specifics, the development of ideas is minimal because he uses details and examples that are too briefly presented to go beyond a superficial explanation. The writer’s use of language is somewhat general, but the command of conventions is adequate. Overall, this writer has demonstrated a basic writing performance.

In my opinion I think its sometimes better to break the rules than to let injustices happen.

I think what the four African Americans college students did was the best thing to do. This is my opinion because it wasn't fair that people used to seperate themselves because of the difference of color on their skin. And the African Americans were just showing that it wasn't fair with their actions in a non violent way. I also think it was right that they broke the rules and sat at a "whites only" table, because it helped promote the Civil Rights movement.

I encourage people to follow rules that should be followed. But in my opinion rules should only be followed when they are fair to everyone and everything. Also in my opinion rules should be broken when they are seperating people and putting them against each other.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer's controlling idea (its sometimes better to break the rules than to let injustices happen) draws inspiration from the stimulus box on the prompt page. This is an acceptable organizational strategy for the expository writing task: the writer uses the "lunch-counter protest in Greensboro" as the basis for explaining that segregation was unfair and that rules should be broken when they "put" people against each other. However, the essay is only superficially developed with briefly presented details about the African-American college students and the Civil Rights Movement.

I don't think it is ever okay to break the rules. If rules were ever to be broken, we would live in a chaotic world. The laws, the order, the sports, and schools would be unfair. In cities, driving will not have a speed limit. And people will rob banks and steal supplies. The police will do nothing to stop this. Prisons will not exist with no laws. Technology programs will be free. Money will be non use. Government with no power. And driving where ever you want. And another way rules shouldn't be broken in, is sports. In a football game, the game would not seem as fair without the rules. With no rules in this sport, there will be no consequences, no penaltys. If there were none, players would do what ever they want. And in schools children would do what ever they want also. Bullying will be fair, everyone will want ever they want and referals would not exist.

Score Point 2

The writer bases his essay on the controlling idea that breaking the rules would result in a chaotic world. The writer organizes his ideas by listing the potential consequences of breaking laws designed to keep order, breaking rules in sports, and breaking rules at school. Although all of these ideas support the writer's controlling idea, there is no development of some of these ideas, and other ideas—particularly those related to school and sports—are only minimally developed. In addition, the writer's lack of transitions and inclusion of so many different consequences cause the flow of the essay from sentence to sentence and idea to idea to be weak. The writer demonstrates only a partial command of sentences and language conventions. Overall, this essay represents a basic writing performance.

HAVE YOU EVER BROKE THE RULES BEFORE?
WELL I HAVE AND I REGRET IT. BREAKING
THE RULES IS SUCH A BAD FEELING! WELL AT
LEAST I CAN SAY THE PUNISHMENT IS.

SO I WAS GOING TO A SCHOOL CALLED _____
MIDDLE SCHOOL IN _____. MY TEACHERS
USE TO ALWAYS SAY IT IS NOT OKAY TO BREAK
THE RULES. I DID IT ANYWAY FOR SOME
APPARENT REASON. I REALLY DIDN'T UNDER-
STAND WHAT THE BIG DEAL WAS WITH
NOT FOLLOWING THE RULES.

HERE IS SOMETHINGS THAT SHOULD TELL
YOU NO IT IS NOT OKAY TO BREAK THE
RULES! OKAY, SO I WOULD GO INTO CL-
ASS AND START ACTING LIKE A FOOL.
THEN THE NEXT DAY I WOULD DO IT
AGAIN AS IF I WAS THE CLASS CLOWN OR
SOMETHING. I DID THAT FOR EVERY LONG TIME
AND THE TEACHERS GOT FED UP WITH MY
BEHAVIOR SO THEY MADE ME GO TALK TO THE
COUNSELOR AND SHE MADE ME WRITE
"IT IS NOT OKAY TO BREAK THE RULES."
1,000 TIMES AND IT WAS DUE THE NEXT
DAY. SO AS YOU CAN SEE, I LEAR-
NED MY LESSON TO NOT BREAK THE
RULES AND I TRIED TO CONVINCE
A LOT OF OTHERS TO NOT BREAK THE RULES.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer establishes that breaking the rules is not okay because of the punishment a person can receive. The writer develops the essay by recounting a lengthy personal example about what happened as a result of continuing to act like the class clown even though her teachers told her to stop her behavior. Although the writer attempts to use this anecdote as explanation, it is only somewhat suited to the expository task because it is more focused on the details leading up to the punishment than on the lesson the writer learned from that punishment. The progression of ideas is not always logical and controlled because of weak sentence-to-sentence connections and wordiness. In addition, the writer's word choice does little to establish an appropriate expository tone. Overall, the writer demonstrates only a limited understanding of the expository task.

Score Point 3

The essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

Organization/Progression

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

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is sufficient because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and appropriate, adding some substance to the essay.
- ❑ The essay reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific. It reflects an awareness of the expository purpose and establishes a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are varied and adequately controlled, for the most part contributing to the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although some errors may be evident, they create few (if any) disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity of the essay.

sometimes rules may seem unfair or unjust but in the long run they were just what had to be done. For example, going to school. you may not think it is fair at the time, but it helps you be successful in life. If there is a rule though that truly is unfair not just to you, but to a group of people, I do believe it is okay to break it.

Rules are supposed to be guidelines that you have to follow usually to keep everyone safe or at peace. There have been a few examples when rules though have done the opposite. I personally think that segregation was an example of a rule that was so unfair it needed to be broken. Just imagine what life would be like today if this rule had not been broken? If a rule does not have any significance or is unfair to a large group of people why should we follow it? Because rules are meant to keep the world functioning. I do not believe you should follow a rule that is not fair to everyone. That is just not what rules are for. Rules were made to build us up and make us stronger. They were not made to tear our country apart.

There are many examples of rules today in the world that need to be broken. It is finding the people though who are willing to be brave and do what is right in the situation at hand. I am not trying to get across not to follow all rules, but sometimes rules are meant to be broken.

Score Point 3

The writer of this satisfactory response attempts to explore the ambiguities of the topic by acknowledging that while rules have a place in our lives, rules that are unfair to a group of people need to be broken. Using segregation as an example of an unfair rule, the writer takes a philosophical approach to the topic by posing a series of rhetorical questions to support the controlling idea. The writer adds some substance to the essay by developing his answers to these questions with appropriate details that clarify what rules are and are not meant to do. Although the development of the essay could be stronger overall, the writer demonstrates a good understanding of the expository writing task.

Rules are in every part of life, sometimes for good reasons and sometimes for bad reasons. Whether a person breaks a rule depends on whether the rule makes sense. If a rule is there to keep you safe and help you in some way, you should try to follow it. If the rule is not fair and holds people down, you should try to change it.

For example, in my school we have a rule that I think everyone should follow. If you see a classmate being bullied by someone, you have to tell a teacher so they can stop it. This rule helps everyone in our school by keeping them safe and making sure that no one feels bad. This rule teaches that you have to help someone that is having trouble.

Not all rules are good or fair. If an unfair rule was made and people don't like it, they are most likely to protest. Some might boycott and others may break the rule. In history, Rosa Parks did exactly that. She sat in the whites only section on the bus and showed people her belief. She protested peacefully and led to a change of rules for busses. She helped launch the civil rights movement that has changed America drastically.

So sometimes it's good to follow the rules and other times it's good to break them. It all depends on whether the rule is good or bad.

Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer uses two different organizational strategies to explain that whether rules should be followed depends on whether they have a positive or a negative effect on people. In the first body paragraph, the writer draws on a school experience to show how a rule related to bullying benefits all students. In the second body paragraph, the writer uses an example from history—Rosa Parks—to explain the importance of protesting against rules that are unfair. The transitional sentence between the two paragraphs (“Not all rules are good or fair”) clearly establishes the contrasting relationship between these ideas. Although the writer’s use of pronouns is not consistent, overall she shows a good control of sentences and conventions.

Rules, Rules, Rules! They're everywhere! They tell you how to act, how to look, how to play, how to build things, and lots of other things. Even if a rule seems unimportant, you don't want to break it. If you break that rule, you could be hurt or in trouble. It is never ok to break rules.

Rules have a purpose. They are there for a reason. Ever wonder why we have stoplights? They are like an unwritten rule to help keep us from having wrecks. Some rules may seem unimportant, but they're not. All rules help us whether we like it or not.

Rules also tell you how to do things. For example, say you are building a desk. The rules would be the instructions. Today, you don't feel like using the instructions, so you just improvise. Once you get done, it is stable, but as soon as you put a book on it, it breaks! Someone could get really hurt.

Rules also keep us safe. If we don't follow some rules, we might get hurt. I bet your parents have told you to never talk to strangers. That's a rule that if you break, you will definitely get hurt. If you talk to a stranger, you might get kidnapped or abused.

So see? Rules are important! You don't ever want to break one. But, if you "play by the rules", you will be a-ok!

Score Point 3

The writer of this satisfactory response establishes the clear controlling idea that it is never okay to break the rules because all rules help us. The writer develops the essay by explaining some of the things rules can do for us and offering specific examples to support those ideas. Although transitions between paragraphs need to be stronger, the progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled. The writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific, reflecting an awareness of the expository purpose and establishing a tone appropriate to the task. Sentences are varied and controlled, contributing to the effectiveness of the essay.

"Liam please don't write on the walls!" The mother pleaded to her 7-year old.

"No!" The boy replied defiantly.

He picked up a blue sharpie and wrote his name on the wall. Then, using red, he drew a mean-looking monster, labeled "MOMMY." His angry mother stormed towards him, snatched him up, and took him to have a time-out for breaking the rules.

In this case, breaking the rules was not okay. Liam only drew on the walls to be defiant. He had no reason to do it, and it harmed someone else. Breaking the rules is NEVER okay if it hurts someone else. Murder, bullying, and abuse, no matter what the reason, are never allowed. Also, rules that prevent you from doing things that hurt you, like drugs, should never be broken. However, I believe that the African American men who sat down at white's only lunch counter in Greensboro, had good reasons to break the rules; For one, they weren't hurting anyone else or, for that matter, themselves. And second, the rules they were breaking were unjust and racist. In conclusion it is never okay to break rules out of defiance or if it could hurt you or someone else. However, if you are attempting to peacefully have an unjust rule lifted, protest by breaking that rule is okay.

Score Point 3

The writer uses a compare-contrast organizational strategy to explain her belief that breaking the rules is okay only under certain conditions, which are explicitly laid out in the last two sentences of the essay. The writer uses an example of a child's defiant, negative behavior toward his mother as well as other appropriate examples of harmful actions (murdering or bullying someone; using drugs) to establish the types of behaviors that should not function as a catalyst for breaking the rules. The writer then contrasts these behaviors with the African American students who were justified in breaking the rules when they protested peacefully to have "an unjust rule lifted." Meaningful transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas. The writer's approach to the topic is original and demonstrates a good understanding of the expository writing task. In addition, the writer's word choice contributes to the quality and clarity of this satisfactory writing performance.

Score Point 4

The essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

Organization/Progression

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

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is effective because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and well chosen, adding substance to the essay.
- ❑ The essay is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may choose to use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing or to connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is purposeful and precise. It reflects a keen awareness of the expository purpose and maintains a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of the essay. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the essay.

Some people go by the saying "Rules are meant to be broken", and I don't completely disagree with that. Most rules are made for our safety and well being, so it makes sense to follow them, but there are some rules that seem unjust. In those circumstances, I believe rule breaking is okay, but there are certain ways to do it.

Breaking an unfair rule doesn't have to be violent or harmful. Sometimes, the more peaceful method gets the point across better. Protesting, making petitions, and even peaceful boycotting can be the solution.

People like Gandhi, Martin Luther King Jr., and even the African American college students all made history for breaking the rules, but they did it peacefully, and that can make all the difference. There is also power in numbers. The more people that oppose a rule, the higher chance of it getting changed or removed. It doesn't have to take violence, or any other huge force to break a rule.

In the past, there have been many, many, unfair rules that have oppressed certain people and races with cruel treatment. Today, we no longer have them because of the brave people who dared to break them. When a good cause comes out of it, and if it helps others get their freedoms or liberties, then breaking the rules might be the right thing to do.

Score Point 4

In this accomplished writing performance, the writer establishes the clear controlling idea that breaking unjust rules is okay "but [that] there are certain ways to do it." The writer focuses not on the reasons why rules are unjust but rather on the best ways of opposing unjust rules. The progression of ideas is well controlled, with the writer explaining that "sometimes the more peaceful method [of breaking rules] gets the point across better" and then providing specific examples of famous people who made changes through peaceful protest. The writer's word choice is purposeful and precise, and both the introduction and the conclusion add substance and thoughtfulness to this effective essay.

A rule is a perscribed guide for conduct or actions. I believe that sometimes it's okay to ignore the structure, or set of rules, set in place by society to keep order.

If rules are unfair to you or your peers, in my eyes, it's fine if you don't follow them.

For example, one time, in third grade, a boy sat in the corner of the classroom while everyone indulged in their snack. When the boy's grumbling stomach interrupted my conversation once more, I had had enough.

I didn't care that the boy wasn't allowed to have a snack because he made a mess last time, so I stomped over to the boy's seat. Blankly, he stared up at me. I thrust my bag of animal crackers at him and sat back down in my desk as he happily consumed the crackers without question.

So, I say that it's okay to break rules if you're standing up for what you believe in, but only if it's for a valid cause. In this case it was one of my classmates who felt hungry ^{alone.} and

No matter how much my teacher glared at me, I didn't care because I knew that if I hadn't disobeyed her orders, I would regret it for the rest of my life. Why? Because her order was unfair.

"Rules are made to be broken," encourages my sister, but I disagree. I believe that only unfair rules are meant to be broken.

Score Point 4

The writer of this accomplished writing performance uses a personal anecdote to develop the controlling idea that it is sometimes "okay to ignore the structure, or set of rules, set in place by society to keep order." This anecdote is an effective organizational strategy because the writer uses it to explain rather than to tell a story. In this anecdote, the writer establishes that rules should only be broken when there is a "valid cause," which in this particular case is giving a snack to a classmate who is forbidden to have one. While the writer admits that his action equates to disobeying the teacher's "orders," he also feels that his action is justified because the orders are "unfair." The writer's approach to the topic is unique and demonstrates a thorough understanding of the expository writing task. Purposeful word choice, well-controlled sentences, and strong conventions enhance the quality and clarity of the essay.

In 1960, four African American students sat at a "whites only" lunch counter. Although breaking the rules, they stood up for what they believed was right. That's why I think it's ok to break some rules. No one should be criticized for being independent and a leader. As long as you have your reasons and protest peacefully as these kids did, your rule breaking can lead to big changes.

To start off with, being a leader is taught to be a great trait. However, no one can be a leader when they're held back by rules. Only true leaders can stand up for themselves and everyone on their side. Those four kids were being leaders by willing to face any consequence that came their way, if it meant getting their rights.

Also, being brave enough to break a few rules can lead to a revolution. By sitting at a restricted counter those four kids started the Civil Rights Movement, which later ended segregation. So basically, if they didn't take that risk, we could be separated from each other right now fighting for our own rights.

In conclusion, a few broken rules can go a long way. Not all rules are fair and only the independent and most courageous people will fight to make it fair. Breaking certain rules for their own beliefs doesn't make someone a delinquent, it just makes them a leader who is standing for what others can't. That's why I think some rules are made to be broken. You never know what new revolution is lingering around the corner.

Score Point 4

In this accomplished writing performance, the writer portrays the African American students described in the synopsis as truly brave leaders who broke established rules to stand up for their beliefs. The essay is skillfully crafted in that the writer not only focuses on the effect of their specific actions (the beginning of the Civil Rights movement and the end of segregation) but also explains why a willingness to face the consequences for breaking unfair rules is indicative of true leadership. Both the introduction and conclusion add substance to the essay, and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of ideas. The writer's word choice reflects a keen awareness of the expository purpose. Overall, the essay is thoughtful and engaging.

Women voting, children of different races all at one school, ~~and the United States~~; we would be without all of this had it not of been for a little bit of rule breaking in history. There are some rules that need to be challenged.

In 1836 Texas declared independence from Mexico. Do you think some rules were broken in the process? Of course. Texas' independence later, ~~lead~~ to annexation of Texas to the United States in 1845. Before Texas was even thinking about that, though, the United States had its own rule-breaking escapade. They were at war with Great Britain. Okay, many events had led up to that, but some tension was caused by some rules being broken on both sides. Does anyone remember the Boston Tea Party? I'm pretty sure that was not legal. The United States, eventually, declared independence on July 4, 1776. Where would the United States be today without some minor rule breaking?

Furthermore, in our not so distant history, where we would be without the Civil Rights movement and women getting the right to vote, I am not sure. The Civil Rights movement not only gave African Americans more freedom and rights but also other ethnic groups. The women getting to vote movement is also no small matter because following women getting to vote came ~~them~~ getting to hold a seat in the house of representatives or the senate, being mayor, governor, etc. These were no small feats and rule breaking played a key role in both of them.

So, yes, it is okay to break the rules, sometimes. There is no telling where our society or for that matter our country would be today without it.

Score Point 4

The writer of this unified and coherent response thoughtfully chooses specific examples of rule-breaking in American history to explain the clear controlling idea that some rules need to be challenged. Although the writer focuses on two different events in each body paragraph, meaningful transitions make the writer's train of thought easy to follow. For example, the writer uses a transitional sentence—"Before Texas was even thinking about that, though, the United States had its own rule-breaking escapade"—to clearly connect Texas's independence from Mexico to the Boston Tea Party. Specific and well-chosen details and examples add substance to the essay. The writer maintains an engaging tone appropriate to the expository task through the purposeful and precise use of language. In addition, sentences are varied and well controlled, and the overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of this accomplished writing performance.