



**GRADE 7**  
**Writing**

**Administered April 2018**

**RELEASED**



# WRITING



# WRITTEN COMPOSITION

## WRITTEN COMPOSITION: Expository

**READ** the information in the box below.

According to surveys, only eight percent of Americans keep their New Year's resolutions. In fact, nearly half of Americans break their promises within the first month of the year.

**THINK** carefully about the following statement.

It is hard for some people to keep a promise, even one they make to themselves.

**WRITE** an essay explaining why it is important to keep the promises you make.

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

USE THIS PREWRITING PAGE TO  
PLAN YOUR COMPOSITION.

MAKE SURE THAT YOU WRITE YOUR COMPOSITION ON  
THE LINED PAGE 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.

*Nora wrote the following story about a boy and his special birthday event. Read Nora's story and look for any revisions she should make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## Balloon Launch

(1) Goosebumps rose on Jayden's skin in the cool morning breeze. (2) He couldn't believe this day was finally here. (3) For several years Jayden's family had attended the annual hot-air balloon launch. (4) Jayden had always enjoyed watching the balloons rise into the sky, but this year would be even more exciting than usual. (5) His parents had arranged a special gift in honor of his 13th birthday.

(6) As the sun began to peek over the horizon, Jayden found the balloon he was looking for. (7) The silky material lay flat on the ground, and a basket rested on its side nearby. (8) With the aid of a huge fan, balloonists were starting to pump air into the colorful fabric shell.

(9) Before long, the balloon was fully inflated. (10) Then a balloonist warned everyone to stand back. (11) He ignited the propane burner attached to the basket. (12) Huge flames shot out of the burner. (13) The flames heated the air inside the balloon. (14) Slowly, the balloon began to move into an upright position. (15) Soon only strong ropes held by the crew kept the balloon from taking off.

(16) It was time. (17) With a grin, Jayden and his dad waved to the rest of the family and jumped in next to the balloonist and several other passengers. (18) As Jayden counted down, crew members released the ropes, and the hot-air balloon lifted off!

(19) Up, up, up the balloon rose. (20) With each blast from the burner, the balloon grew hotter, allowing the air in the balloon to fly higher and higher. (21) When dawn fully broke, Jayden took in the view. (22) It was even better than he had imagined! (23) The balloon continued to gain altitude, making objects on the ground harder to recognize.



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(24) For more than an hour, Jayden, his father, and their fellow passengers floated high and way above the trees and the town. (25) The balloon drifted with the soft winds. (26) A part of Jayden wished that he could stay in the sky forever, but he knew that wasn't possible. (27) Before long, the balloon began to slowly descend, finally landing with a bump in an open field. (28) The balloon crew helped the riders climb out of the basket. (29) As he watched the crew deflate the balloon, Jayden looked forward to telling the rest of his family about the ride. (30) This had been the best birthday gift ever! (31) Jayden was sure that his brother and sister would want to continue the tradition when they turned 13.

1 Nora would like to close the first paragraph (sentences 1–5) with a sentence that tells what the story is about. Which of the following should Nora add after sentence 5?

- A For Jayden’s birthday they had wanted to do something special.
  - B The balloons would fly effortlessly across the sky.
  - C Today Jayden and his dad would be passengers on one of the balloons!
  - D It was time for a birthday celebration!
- 

2 What is the most effective way to combine sentences 12 and 13?

- F Huge flames shot out of the burner inside the balloon, which was heating the air.
  - G Huge flames shot out of the burner because the air inside the balloon was heated.
  - H Huge flames shot out of the burner, the flames heated the air inside the balloon.
  - J Huge flames shot out of the burner, heating the air inside the balloon.
- 

3 The transition from the third paragraph (sentences 9–15) to the fourth paragraph (sentences 16–18) is weak. Read both paragraphs again. Which sentence could BEST replace sentence 16 and improve the transition between these two paragraphs?

- A Finally, it was time for the riders to climb inside the basket attached to the balloon.
- B Even though it was time, the strong ropes kept the balloon from taking off.
- C When it was finally time, Jayden and his father smiled.
- D The time had come, but Jayden began to feel a slight twinge of fear that he hadn’t expected.

- 4 Sentence 20 does not say what Nora intended it to say. How should she rewrite this sentence?
- F With each blast from the air in the burner growing hotter, the balloon was allowed to fly higher and higher.
  - G With each blast from the burner, the air in the balloon grew hotter, allowing the balloon to fly higher and higher.
  - H With each blast from the burner, the balloon's air grew hotter, this allowed the balloon to fly higher and higher.
  - J With each blast from the burner, the balloon grew hotter, allowing the balloon to fly higher and higher in the air.
- 

- 5 Nora wants to expand on the idea she has expressed in sentence 23. Which sentence could BEST follow sentence 23?
- A The adventure of the day had only just begun.
  - B As the balloon got higher in the air, things on the ground got smaller and smaller.
  - C Soon people were the size of ants, and cars and trucks looked like toys.
  - D Everything on the ground looked different when viewed from the air.
- 

- 6 How should sentence 24 be revised?
- F For more than an hour, Jayden, his father, and their fellow passengers floated high and floated way above the trees and the town.
  - G For more than an hour, Jayden, his father, and their fellow passengers floated high above the trees and the town, which was way up high.
  - H For more than an hour, Jayden, his father, and their fellow passengers floated they were high above the trees and the town.
  - J For more than an hour, Jayden, his father, and their fellow passengers floated high above the trees and the town.

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

*Quincy's paper explores the science behind something everyone has experienced. He would like you to read this first draft and look for any revisions he should make. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.*



## Investigating the Sneeze

(1) It has happened to everyone. (2) You begin to feel a strange, itchy sensation in your nose, and before you know it . . . *aaaa-CHOO!* (3) You have sneezed. (4) Sneezing is an interesting process.

(5) The ordinary sneeze usually begins with a tickle in the nose. (6) Nerve endings pick up the message and send it to a “sneeze center” in the brain. (7) The chest tightens. (8) Air pressure in the lungs increases. (9) The eyes close, and the tongue presses against the roof of the mouth. (10) Suddenly, air shoots out of the nose with a powerful force. (11) “Achoo!” the person says. (12) Some sources claim that the common sneeze may travel at a speed of 100 miles per hour. (13) And once a sneeze is underway, everyone knows that it’s almost impossible to stop.

(14) There are some true and untrue things about it. (15) For example, it is true that people have nerve endings in the nose that direct sensations to the brain’s sneeze center, but it’s also true that there are other triggers for a sneeze.

(16) About one-third of people sneeze when they are first exposed to bright light,

and others are prone to sneeze when they are plucking their eyebrows or exercising. (17) Furthermore, it is true that sneezing can be healthy. (18) That's because the sneeze is an important part of the immune process and helps clear away irritants, pollutants, and germs. (19) On the other hand, it is a myth that a person's heart stops during a sneeze. (20) And it is definitely not true that a person's eyeballs can pop out from the force of a powerful sneeze!

(21) Sneezing has been observed throughout history by people all over the world. (22) Therefore, it isn't surprising that there is a wealth of sneeze-related trivia on the Internet. (23) For example, the iguana, a WebMD article states, sneezes more often than any other animal and more efficiently. (24) It does this to get rid of the salts it produces while it is digesting its food. (25) Another research source identifies the longest bout of sneezing. (26) Donna Griffiths earned the Guinness World Record for the longest sneezing fit in history, from Worcestershire, England. (27) Beginning in 1981 and ending in 1983, Griffiths sneezed continuously for 978 days!

(28) Some people try to suppress or quiet their sneezes, but they really shouldn't. (29) A sneeze helps clear the nose of potential bacteria and viruses, and it's a pretty extraordinary process. (30) So the next time you feel the feeling to sneeze, grab a tissue and let it go. (31) Your body will be glad you cooperated!

*Third party trademark Guinness World Records® was used in these testing materials.*

- 7 In sentence 4, Quincy has attempted to provide a controlling idea for his paper. Which of the following could replace sentence 4 and more effectively state Quincy's controlling idea?
- A Everyone has experienced the experience of sneezing, and there is so much that we can study and learn about this normal and common human activity.
  - B Although sneezing is an everyday human occurrence, it's also a remarkable function of the human body, and studies have revealed some rather interesting facts about it.
  - C In this paper, I would like to talk about sneezing, what it is, why it happens, how common it is, and what some of the strangest facts about it can be.
  - D The strange, itchy sensation is over as the sneeze is released from your body, but the cause and purpose of the activity is an amazing kind of thing.
- 

- 8 Quincy would like to add the following detail to the second paragraph (sentences 5–13).

*The sneeze center then takes charge and sends the message to the many muscles that work together to produce a sneeze.*

Where should this sentence be inserted?

- F After sentence 6
- G After sentence 7
- H After sentence 9
- J After sentence 12

- 9 Quincy is not pleased with his introduction to the third paragraph (sentences 14–20). Which of the following can replace sentence 14 and serve as a more effective topic sentence for this paragraph?
- A There are some accurate and false things that have been said about the sneeze being a normal human function.
  - B Sneezing is known to help protect health, but people don't sneeze when their body is actually sound asleep.
  - C Although it's true that a sneeze is hard to stop once it is on its way, not everything related to the sneeze is true.
  - D People have some interesting notions about the sneeze, and although some of these ideas are facts, others are myths.
- 

- 10 Quincy would like to provide some additional support for the idea he has presented in sentence 19. Which of these ideas could best follow and support sentence 19?
- F Doctors say this misconception may come from a slight change in blood pressure and blood flow during a sneeze, which may briefly change heart rhythm.
  - G This common myth, that a person's heart stops during a sneeze, is just a myth, which means that there is no truth to the idea at all.
  - H A myth is defined as a "widely held but false belief or idea," and the concept of the heart not beating during a sneeze is just that, a myth.
  - J Some people say that if you breathe through your mouth and pinch your nose when you feel a sneeze coming on, you can stop it.
- 

- 11 What is the most effective revision to make in sentence 23?
- A For example, the iguana sneezes more often and more efficiently than any other animal is what a WebMD article states.
  - B For example, a WebMD article states that the iguana sneezes more often and more efficiently than any other animal.
  - C For example, a WebMD article states this, the iguana sneezes more often and more efficiently than any other animal.
  - D No revision is needed in this sentence.

12 What is the most effective way to revise sentence 26?

- F Donna Griffiths, who earned the Guinness World Record, had the longest sneezing fit in history when she was from Worcestershire, England.
  - G Donna Griffiths earned the Guinness World Record from Worcestershire, England, for the longest sneezing fit in history.
  - H Donna Griffiths was from Worcestershire, England, she earned the Guinness World Record for the longest sneezing fit in history.
  - J Donna Griffiths, from Worcestershire, England, earned the Guinness World Record for the longest sneezing fit in history.
- 

13 Quincy has not used the most effective word in sentence 30. To improve this sentence, he should change **feeling** to —

- A tug
- B impression
- C urge
- D encounter

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

*Ethan wrote the following paper to persuade students to consider beginning the practice of upcycling. Before he submits the paper to his school newspaper, he would like you to read it and suggest any corrections he should make. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.*



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Creative Examples of Upcycling

## New Treasures

(1) "One person's trash is another person's treasure." (2) That's a common expression, but the next time you throw something away, think about a twist on the old saying. (3) What if your trash could become your own treasure? (4) Many creative, thrifty, and environmentally minded people have come up with a way to make that happen. (5) It's called upcycling, this is turning something you would otherwise throw away into a useful item. (6) Our world would be a better place if everyone would begin upcycling.

(7) Upcycling is the practice of taking an unwanted item and converting it into something you can use. (8) For example, how about that pair of jeans that has a hole in one knee? (9) It could become a hip new pillow for your bedroom or a potholder for the kitchen. (10) How about the old T-shirts you never wear anymore? (11) It could be stitched together to make a picnic blanket. (12) Or you could turn an old windbreaker into a bag. (13) To carry a swimsuit and towel to the beach. (14) Rinsed-out tin cans covered with colorful art tape make great pencil holders. (15) Did you know that you can even use the lint from your dryer to make a kind of clay. (16) All of these are examples of upcycling.

(17) Upcycling is not the same as recycling. (18) Upcycling is actually much better for the environment. (19) Recycling takes an item made of glass, paper, metal, or plastic, breaks it down to its base material, and then used that material to make another product. (20) This requires a great deal of energy. (21) On the other hand, when you choose to upcycle, the only energy you use is your own. (22) And upcycling doesn't just reduce the amount of trash that goes into our landfills it also protects natural resources, such as oil and gas. (23) Recycling is good for the environment, but upcycling is even better.

(24) Upcycling is also an economical way to make a family's budget stretch further. (25) Before you run to the store to buy something, look around your house. (26) Plastic coffee containers can make great flowerpots, and old teacups can be transformed into candles. (27) An old ladder can even become a bookshelf. (28) Of course, the idea of reusing items to save money is not new. (29) During the great depression in the 1930s, many families lived on a tight budget. (30) People had to use what they already had in order to meet their needs. (31) Flour sacks were used to make clothes, a broken door became a new table, and scraps from old clothing was fashioned into beautiful quilts. (32) Today we should follow the examples of our great-grandparents and save money by upcycling.

(33) As responsible citizens, we should all be concerned with protecting our environment and budgeting our resources. (34) Upcycling is a fun and creative way to help. (35) The next time you go to toss something into the trash can or even into the recycling bin, stop and think about what it could become. (36) Chances are, there's a brand-new item in your hand just waiting to be upcycled.

14 What is the correct way to write sentence 5?

- F It's called upcycling. Or turning something you would otherwise throw away into a useful item.
  - G It's called upcycling, or turning something you would otherwise throw away into a useful item.
  - H It's called upcycling, which is turning something you would otherwise throw away. Into a useful item.
  - J Sentence 5 is written correctly in the paper.
- 

15 What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 11?

- A Change **It** to **They**
  - B Change **stitched** to **stiched**
  - C Insert a comma after **together**
  - D No change needs to be made.
- 

16 What is the correct way to write sentences 12 and 13?

- F Or you could turn an old windbreaker into a bag to carry a swimsuit. And a towel to the beach.
- G Or you could turn an old windbreaker into a bag to carry a swimsuit and towel to the beach.
- H Or you could turn an old windbreaker into a bag you could use it to carry a swimsuit and towel to the beach.
- J The sentences are written correctly in the paper.

17 What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 15?

- A Change *lint* to *lent*
  - B Change *your* to *you're*
  - C Change the period to a question mark
  - D No change needs to be made in sentence 15.
- 

18 What change should be made in sentence 19?

- F Delete the comma after *plastic*
  - G Change *breaks* to *brakes*
  - H Change *its* to *it's*
  - J Change *used* to *uses*
- 

19 How should sentence 22 be changed?

- A Change *reduce* to *reduse*
- B Insert a semicolon after *landfills*
- C Change *protects* to *protect's*
- D Sentence 22 should not be changed.

20 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 29?

- F Change ***During*** to **Durring**
  - G Change ***great depression*** to **Great Depression**
  - H Change the comma to a semicolon
  - J No change should be made in sentence 29.
- 

21 What change needs to be made in sentence 31?

- A Change ***broken*** to **broke**
  - B Change ***became*** to **becomes**
  - C Change ***scraps*** to **scrapes**
  - D Change ***was fashioned*** to **were fashioned**
- 

22 What change, if any, should be made in sentence 33?

- F Change ***responsable*** to **responsible**
- G Delete the comma
- H Insert a comma after ***environment***
- J No change should be made in this sentence.

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

*Kelly wrote the following story for a homework assignment. Read Kelly's story and look for any corrections she needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## Choosing a Dog

(1) When the Bennett family moved to a new house, their biggest challenge wasn't adapting. (2) It was adopting.

(3) Moving from an apartment to a house meant that the Bennetts could now have a dog. (4) Their new home had plenty of room and a large fenced backyard, but they couldn't agree on what kind of dog you should adopt.

(5) Mr. Bennett insists on a dog that wouldn't leave hair all over the house. (6) "A little poodle would be nice," he said. (7) "I've read that they don't shed."

(8) "Poodles are lapdogs," scoffed Mrs. Bennett. (9) "I think we should get a big dog, like a Labrador retriever."

(10) "Ugh, I don't want a big dog jumping and drooling all over me," said Jenna. (11) "I'm with Dad. (12) Poodles are cute."

(13) Tony shook his head. (14) "We should get a friendly dog that's smart—one that can be easily trained. (15) I say we get a Lab."

(16) It seemed the only thing the Bennetts could agree on was that they should adopt a dog from the local animal shelter. (17) On Saturday they decided to visit the shelter to see what kinds of dogs were available.

(18) The attendant at the shelter took the Bennetts to a line of large cages. (19) "Here's a nice black Lab that just came in," she said. (20) The dog jumped up to greet them. (21) Sending bits of fur into the air. (22) Tony patted the dog's head, but Jenna and her father backed away.

(23) "Too hairy," said Mr. Bennett.

(24) "Too big and slobbery," said Jenna.

(25) Next they approached an area of smaller cages. (26) "Here's a little gray poodle," the attendant said. (27) "He could use some training, but he would be fun." (28) The poodle spun in circles and barked obnoxiously." (29) Tony and his mother shook their heads.

(30) "All that yapping would drive me nuts," said Mrs. Bennett.

(31) The attendant smiled. (32) "You know, I think I have just the dog for you folks," she said. (33) "Follow me." (34) She led the family to a more quieter section of the kennel and stopped in front of the last cage. (35) Resting on a blanket was a medium-size dog she had curly white hair and floppy ears. (36) The dog looked at her visitors with bright, intelligent eyes.

(37) "This is Missy," said the attendant. (38) "She's a labradoodle, a mix of Labrador and poodle. (39) She doesn't shed much. (40) And she's been well loved, so she'll make a good family pet. (41) We had to take her in when her previous owner moved overseas. (42) She's an older dog, but she's a real sweetheart. (43) Come here, Missy, and say hello."

(44) Missy delicately rised from the blanket and walked to the cage door. (45) Then she sat and lifted a paw.

(46) The Bennetts looked at Missy and then at one another.

(47) "I think we've found our dog," said Mr. Bennett as the rest of the family nodded in agreement.



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23 What change needs to be made in sentence 4?

- A Insert a comma after **room**
  - B Delete **but**
  - C Change **you** to **they**
  - D No change needs to be made.
- 

24 How should sentence 5 be changed?

- F Change **insists** to **insisted**
  - G Insert **hardly** after **wouldn't**
  - H Change **hair** to **no hair**
  - J Sentence 5 should not be changed.
- 

25 How should sentence 17 be changed?

- A Insert a comma after **shelter**
- B Change **were** to **was**
- C Change **available** to **available**
- D Sentence 17 should not be changed.

26 What is the correct way to write sentences 20 and 21?

- F The dog jumped up to greet them, sending bits of fur into the air.
  - G The dog jumped up to greet them. Which sent bits of fur into the air.
  - H The dog jumped up to greet them, this sent bits of fur into the air.
  - J The sentences are written correctly in the story.
- 

27 What change should be made in sentence 28?

- A Change ***spun*** to ***spinned***
  - B Insert a comma after ***circles***
  - C Change ***obnoxiously*** to ***obnoxously***
  - D Delete the quotation marks
- 

28 How should sentence 34 be changed?

- F Change ***led*** to ***lead***
- G Change ***more quieter*** to ***quieter***
- H Insert a comma after ***kennel***
- J Sentence 34 should not be changed.

29 What is the correct way to write sentence 35?

- A Resting on a blanket was a medium-size dog. Who had curly white hair and floppy ears.
  - B Resting on a blanket, a medium-size dog. She had curly white hair and floppy ears.
  - C Resting on a blanket, a medium-size dog with curly white hair and floppy ears.
  - D Resting on a blanket was a medium-size dog with curly white hair and floppy ears.
- 

30 What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 44?

- F Change ***delicately*** to **delicately**
- G Change ***rised*** to **rose**
- H Change ***and*** to **she**
- J No change needs to be made in this sentence.









**STAAR  
GRADE 7  
Writing  
April 2018**



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