



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

Grade 3 Reading Language Arts

Constructed-Response Scoring Guide

Spring 2026

General Information

Beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, reading language arts assessments include an extended constructed response, or essay, at every grade level. They also include short constructed-response questions. Students are asked to write the essay in response to a reading selection and write in one of two modes: informational or argumentative.

This State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) constructed-response scoring guide provides student exemplars at all score points for extended constructed-response and short constructed-response prompts from the STAAR reading language arts grade 3 operational test. The prompts are presented as they appeared on the test, and responses were scored based on the rubrics included in this guide, which were developed with the input of Texas educators. Essays were scored using a five-point rubric. Short constructed responses in the reading domain were scored using a two-point prompt-specific rubric. Short constructed responses in the writing domain were scored using a one-point rubric.

The five-point rubric for extended constructed responses includes two main components: organization and development of ideas and conventions. A response earns a specific score point based on the ideas and conventions of that particular response as measured against the rubric. The annotation that accompanies each response is specific to that response and was written to illustrate how the language of the rubric is applied to elements of the response to determine the score the response received. Extended constructed responses are scored by two different scorers, and the scores are summed to create a student's final score, so students may receive up to 10 points for their essay.

The responses in this guide are actual student responses submitted online during the testing window. To protect the privacy of individual students, all names and other references of a personal nature have been altered or removed. Otherwise, the responses appear as the students wrote them and have not been modified.

Grade 3 Reading Passage with Extended Constructed Response and Short Constructed Response

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

The Texas Cowboy

- 1 Cowboys have been a part of Texas culture for generations. The first cowboys were Vaqueros, Mexican cowboys, who brought the job to Texas. For as long as people have desired beef, cowboys have worked with cattle.

Who Were Cowboys?

- 2 In the 1800s, being a cowboy was a popular job! People came from all over the country to states like Texas to be cowboys. They worked on ranches raising and caring for cattle. Once the cattle were old enough, they were sold. Cowboys were needed to gather the cattle and take them to market. This process is called herding.

Herding on the Open Range

- 3 In the mid-1800s, people all over the country wanted to buy Texas cattle. During this time, there was not a lot of private land in Texas. Cattle freely wandered public land, called the open range. The open range had flat stretches of dry, gold-colored grass, dotted with cattle.
- 4 There were a few markets in Texas. People in the northeastern United States relied on Texans for cattle. Ranchers knew they could make more money selling their cattle in the Northeast. They could make four times more money in the Northeast than in Texas! The only problem was figuring out how to get the cattle there. Cars and trucks had not been invented yet. Not many railroad tracks had been built in Texas.

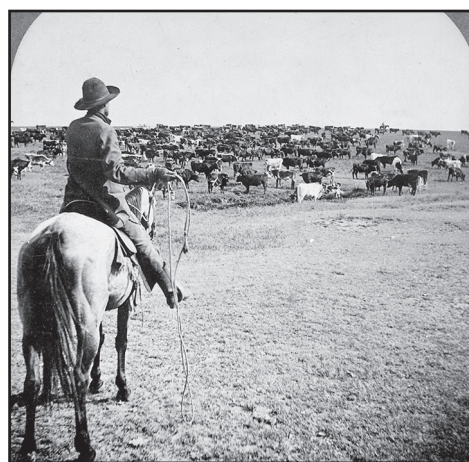
The Long Drive

- 5 In 1866, ranchers decided they could move the cattle toward railroad stations in nearby states. This became known as the long drive. These journeys could take over two months. Cowboys herded over 2,000 cattle hundreds of miles. One famous long drive was the Chisholm Trail. The trail was from San Antonio, Texas, to Abilene, Kansas. It was first developed by Cherokee fur trader Jesse Chisholm and his Lenape travel guide Black Beaver. Starting in 1867, the pair herded thousands of cattle on the trail. Many cowboys followed. After cowboys dropped off their cattle in Kansas, the cattle were sent by train to the Northeast.

The Chisholm Trail Route



- 6 Cowboys could make more money on the long drive. However, it was difficult and dangerous. Cowboys often faced bad weather. Sometimes people stole their cattle. At times, they were attacked by others. Cattle got diseases. Cowboys needed a better way to move their cattle.



A Cowboy Herding Cattle

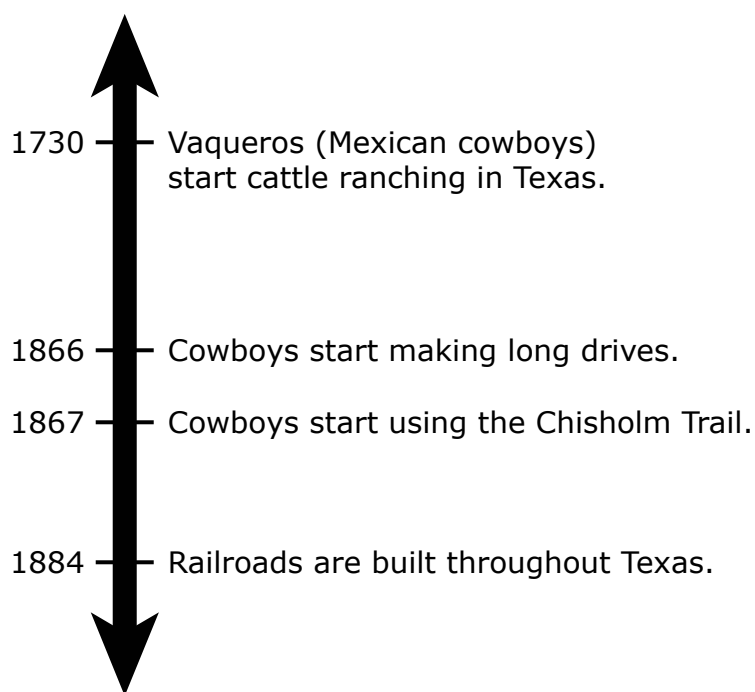
National Archives

The Growing Railroad System

- 7 Between 1880 and 1890, over 70,000 miles of railroad tracks were built across America. By 1884, there were railroad tracks

throughout Texas. Cowboys did not have to travel hundreds of miles any longer. They could take their cattle to train stations in Texas. Then, the cattle could be sent on the train to the Northeast. This was faster and cheaper. But the railroads meant there was less of a need for cowboys. They did not need to organize long drives anymore. They did not need as many people for cattle ranching. The railroad system connected Texas to the rest of the country. Today, there is a huge system of railroad tracks. Trains still carry food to all parts of the United States. Some people are still cowboys today, but the typical long drive is a thing of the past.

Timeline of How Cowboys Changed Texas



Grade 3 Reading Extended Constructed Response

Prompt



ESSAY: Write your essay in the empty box below.

Read the article “The Texas Cowboy.” Based on the information in the article, write a response to the following:

Explain if life was better or worse for cowboys before 1884 when more railroad tracks were built in Texas.

Write a well-organized argumentative essay that uses specific evidence from the article to support your answer.

Remember to —

- clearly state your claim
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- use facts and evidence from the selection in your response
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar

Manage your time carefully so that you can —

- review the selection
- plan your response
- write your response
- revise and edit your response

Write your response in the box provided.

Grade 3 Reading Passage with Extended Constructed Response

Argumentative/Opinion Writing Rubric

Score Point	Organization and Development of Ideas
3	• Argument/Opinion is clear and fully developed The argument/opinion is clearly identifiable. The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. • Organization is effective A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and conclusion is evident. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the argument/opinion. The sentences, paragraphs, or ideas are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways. • Evidence is specific, well chosen, and relevant The response includes relevant text-based evidence that is clearly explained and consistently supports and develops the argument/opinion. For pairs in grades 3–5, evidence is drawn from at least one text. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose. • Expression of ideas is clear and effective The writer’s word choice is specific, purposeful, and enhances the response. Almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer’s ideas and contribute to the overall quality of the response and the clarity of the message.
2	• Argument/Opinion is present and partially developed An argument/opinion is presented, but it may not be clearly identifiable because it is not fully developed. The focus may not always be consistent and may not always be easy to follow. • Organization is limited A purposeful structure that includes an introduction and conclusion is present. An organizational structure may not be consistent and may not always support the logical development of the argument/opinion. Sentence-to-sentence connections and clarity may be lacking. • Evidence is limited and may include some irrelevant information The response may include text-based evidence to support the argument/opinion, but it may be insufficiently explained, and/or some evidence may be irrelevant to the argument/opinion. For pairs, evidence is drawn from at least one of the texts. The response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose. • Expression of ideas is basic The writer’s word choice may be general and imprecise and at times may not convey the writer’s ideas clearly. Sentences and phrases are at times ineffective and may interfere with the writer’s intended meaning and weaken the message.

Score Point	Organization and Development of Ideas
1	• Argument/Opinion is evident but not developed An argument/opinion is present but not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. • Organization is minimal and/or weak An introduction or conclusion may be present. An organizational structure that supports logical development is not always evident or is not appropriate to the task. • Evidence is insufficient and/or mostly irrelevant Little text-based evidence is presented, or the evidence presented is mostly extraneous and/or repetitious. Explanation of any evidence presented is insufficient and may be only vaguely related to the writing task. The response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose. • Expression of ideas is ineffective The writer's word choice is vague or limited and may impede the quality and clarity of the essay. Sentences and phrases are often ineffective, interfere with the writer's intended meaning, and impact the strength and clarity of the message.
0	• An argument/opinion may be evident. • The response lacks an introduction and conclusion. An organizational structure is not evident. • Evidence is not provided or is irrelevant. The response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose. • The expression of ideas is unclear and/or incoherent. <i>Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Development and Organization of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.</i>

Score Point	Conventions
2	Student writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including correct: • sentence construction • punctuation • capitalization • grammar • spelling The response has few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.
1	Student writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including limited use of correct: • sentence construction • punctuation • capitalization • grammar • spelling The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.
0	Student writing demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including infrequent use of or no evidence of correct: • sentence construction • punctuation • capitalization • grammar • spelling The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

life was beter becuse thay cood be hoppy. IT is a good time.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

In this response, the writer presents a claim (“life was beter becuse thay cood be hoppy”), but it is not developed in relation to the prompt. No evidence is given, and an organizational structure is not evident. Overall, the response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

Response 2

Now i know that cowboys are popular from the text
one raeson i know that in parghrap 3 it kinda has all the emfo.
another reason is it seys in 1800 beang a cow boy was popular.
last reason is peaple come from all over countrys.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

In this response, there is no clear claim. Although the writer attempts to provide an organizational structure with transitions (“one raeson,” “another reason,” “last reason”), the evidence provided is irrelevant and not related to the writing task (“in 1800 beang a cow boy was popular”). Furthermore, the expression of ideas is unclear (“parghrap 3 it kinda has all the emfo”; “peaple come from all over countrys”). Overall, the response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

Score Point 1

Response 1

it would be worse because they had to walk more and their cattles would get stolen even more and they would be tired even more and they would get mad because their cattles would get stolen and they walk so much already they dont have to walk even more they also walk but then they ride cows now and its actually cool but their cows would get diseases but righ now they use cars

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, the writer presents a claim (“it would be worse”), but it is not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. An introduction and conclusion are not evident, and the organizational structure is too weak to support logical development as the focus shifts abruptly from one idea to the next. The little text-based evidence is repetitious and insufficiently explained (“they had to walk more and their cattles would get stolen even more . . . they would get mad because their cattles would get stolen”; “they also walk . . . but their cows would get diseases”). The expression of ideas is vague and unclear (“they dont have to walk even more they also walk but then they ride cows now and its actually cool”), which impedes the quality and clarity of the writing. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The response is a single run-on sentence with no punctuation or capitalization. A grammatical error (“cattles”) and missing apostrophes (“dont,” “its [it’s]”) further weaken the response. There are many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Response 2

I thick that it's better that railroad tacks were built beuces cowboys some times die beuceas they walk miles in the sun and they had no whater and food in paergapa it said cowboys could make more money on the long drive. However it diffcult and dangerous. so i thick that it better that they made railroad tacks in Texas.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, the writer presents the claim that "it's better that railroad tacks were built," but it is not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. The limited organizational structure lacks a clear introduction but includes a minimal conclusion ("so i thick that it better that they made railroad tacks in Texas"). Ideas are loosely connected and lack transitions, resulting in a lack of focus. Evidence is insufficiently explained ("in paergapa it said cowboys could make more money on the long drive . . . it diffcult and dangerous"). The expression of ideas is ineffective, and overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The response demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Errors in sentence construction include sentence boundary problems because of the lack of properly placed punctuation between sentences along with missing commas within sentences. Missing capitalization ("in paergapa," "so i thick"), grammatical errors ("However it diffcult," "so i thick that it better") and misspellings ("thick [think]," "tacks," "beuces," "whater," "paergapa," "diffcult") further weaken the response and impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

Score Point 2

Response 1

After reading the texas cowboy it is evident that life was better when more railroads were built in texes because they would put there cattle on the train.

First, in the story it states that“ The cattlecould be sent on the train to the Northeast. This was faster and cheaper.

inconclusion.thats why when they built more railroads in texas because they would put the cattle on the train so would not have to ride thereself.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, the writer presents the claim that “life was better when more railroads were built in texes,” which is not fully developed. The organizational structure is limited and includes a brief introduction and an attempt at a concluding sentence. The logical development of the claim is minimal. The text-based evidence provided (“ ‘The cattlecould be sent on the train to the Northeast. This was faster and cheaper’”) is insufficiently explained to further the development of the response. The expression of ideas is ineffective (“they would put the cattle on the train so would not have to ride thereself”) and at times repetitive (“put there cattle on the train . . . The cattlecould be sent on the train . . . they would put the cattle on the train”), impeding the quality of the essay and the writer’s intended meaning. The response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writing demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Sentence construction is weakened by errors in punctuation (“thats”) and missing words (“so would not have to ride thereself”). Capitalization is inconsistent (“the texas cowboy,” “it states that,” “The cattlecould,” “inconclusion”), and several misspellings and grammar errors (“texes,” “there [their],” “thereself”) are evident. The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Response 2

I think it was wors befor the 1884 becoause in the 1884 they had just invented rell rode trackes.

One way I think it was wors befor the 1884. when the cowboys wher traveling peple wher stilling ther catel.this evedens proves that it was hader in the 1884.it says somtimes peple stoll ther cattel I fond this in pargraf 6.

Another way I think it it was harder for cowboys in the 1884.Is the wather was not alwas good so it made it harde. This evedens proves that it made the jurne longer and harder in 1884.I fond this in pargraf 6 it telse me that cowboys often facted bad weather.

This is way I thinkit was hard in 1884 for cowboys.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

In this response, the writer presents a general claim ("I think it was wors befor the 1884"), but it is not fully developed. A purposeful structure is present, including a brief introduction and a conclusion that restates the claim. Although the writer attempts to connect ideas with paragraph and sentence-to-sentence connections ("One way . . . this evedens proves," "Another way . . . This evedens proves"), there is some repetition as well as minor confusion as the response moves from "befor the 1884" to "in 1884." Evidence is limited, and the insufficient explanations mainly repeat the text evidence ("peple wher stilling ther catel . . . it says somtimes peple stoll ther cattel"; "the wather was not alwas good so it made it harde . . . it made the jurne longer and harder . . . it telse me that cowboys often facted bad weather"). The expression of ideas is basic. Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Sentence construction is affected by misplaced and missing punctuation ("befor the 1884. when the cowboys"; "peple stoll ther cattel I fond this"; "in the 1884.Is the wather"). Grammatical errors include the misuse of the article "the" ("befor the 1884," "in the 1884"), and many misspelled words are evident ("befor," "becoause," "rell [rail]," "peple," "wher [were]," "stilling [stealing]," "wather [weather]," "evedens," "jurne [journey]," "facted [faced]"). There are many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

Score Point 3

Response 1

Life was better because when the railroads were built, it was much easier. For example, in the text it said, "Cowboys did not have to travel hundreds of miles any longer. They could take their cattle to train stations in texas. Then, the cattle could be sent on a train to the northeast. This was faster and cheaper."

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, the writer presents a clear claim in the first sentence ("Life was better because when the railroads were built, it was much easier"), but it is not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. The organizational structure has an introduction that is limited to the claim but lacks a conclusion. Development consists of evidence that is directly cited from the selection, but the writer provides no explanation for the information. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

In this brief response, the writer demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The writer places commas correctly and includes correct punctuation for cited material. The response exhibits generally correct sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. Although there is a minor error in capitalization ("texas"), this error does not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

Life was better for cowboys before 1884 when the railroad were populated. Because in parigraph7 it said this was faster and cheeper. But the railroads ment less need for cowboys. This evidence shows that life was better before the railrodes grew. In parigraph 6 it said cowboys could make more money on the long drive. This evidence shows that cowboys do not like the railroads. In parigraph 2,7 it said in the 1800, being a cowboy was a popular job! but in parigraph 7 it said but railrodes ment a less need for cowboys This is why cowboys do not like railroads.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer presents an evident claim (“Life was better for cowboys before 1884 when the railroad were populated”), but it is only partially developed. The organizational structure is limited, with an introduction that doubles as the claim, a brief conclusion (“This is why cowboys do not like railroads”), and some evidence of connecting phrases (“parigraph 6 it said”; “This evidence shows”; “In parigraph 2,7”; “in parigraph 7”; “This is why”). The writer includes relevant text-based evidence (“this was faster and cheeper”; “railroads ment less need for cowboys”; “cowboys could make more money on the long drive”; “being a cowboy was a popular job”), but it is insufficiently explained and does not always support logical development of the writer’s claim (“This evidence shows that cowboys do not like the railroads”). The writer’s word choice is imprecise (“when the railroad were populated,” “cowboys do not like the railroads”), and the expression of ideas is ineffective, impacting the strength and clarity of the message. Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. There are repeated errors across most categories as well as missing periods at the end of a few sentences. The response includes some grammatical errors such as subject-verb agreement errors (“when the railroad were populated”). Capitalization is mostly correct with some errors present (“but”), and there are several spelling errors throughout the response (“populeted,” “parigraph,” “cheeper,” “ment,” “railrodes”). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Response 3

Based on the passage The Texas Cowboy life was probobly worse before 1884 and I have evedince
one peice of evedince from parograph 6 it says "Cowboys needed a better way to move their cattle"
this shows that they didn't have a very good way to get around because they didn't have trains it was
hard to transport cattle.

Another piece of evedince from paragraphn 5 says "These journeys could take over two months" this
shows that cowboys were willing to walk with cattle for two months strait now you could just take a
train.

Okay i've given you my evedince and my opinion now do you belive me that life was worse before
1884.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

In this response, the writer presents a clear claim that "life was probobly worse before 1884," but it is only partially developed. The organizational structure includes an introduction, a concluding statement ("Okay i've given you my evedince and my opinion now do you belive me that life was worse before 1884"), and some evidence of connecting phrases ("one peice of evedince," "Another piece of evedince"). The writer includes text-based evidence ("Cowboys needed a better way to move their cattle"; "These journeys could take over two months"), but it is insufficiently explained, weakening the logical development of the response, as one explanation is unclear ("this shows that they didn't have a very good way to get around"), while the other is somewhat repetitive ("this shows that cowboys were willing to walk with cattle for two months strait"). The expression of ideas is basic, with general word choice ("didn't have a very good way," "it was hard"), and sentences are at times ineffective, interfering with the clarity of the message. Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. There are repeated errors across most categories, including sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. Errors in sentence construction include unclear sentence boundaries created by run-on sentences ("this shows that they didn't have a very good way to get around because they didn't have trains it was hard to transport cattle"; "Okay i've given you my evedince and my opinion now do you belive me"). Missing commas are evident after introductory elements ("Based on the passage The Texas Cowboy life was probobly worse before 1884 and I have evedince"). Capitalization is inconsistent ("i've," "do you belive me"). There are several spelling errors throughout the response ("evedince," "belive," "strait," "probobly," "parograph," "paragraphn"). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

Score Point 4

Response 1

Life was worse for cowboys before 1884 because they had to go a long way just to get cattle, but it got better.

Paragraph 6 states "Cowboys could make more money on the long drive. However, it was difficult and dangerous."

This proves that life was worse for cowboys before 1884 because they had to go a long way just to get cattle, but it got better.

The author states in paragraph 6 that "At times, they were attacked by others. Cattle got diseases."

This proves that life was worse for cowboys before 1884 because they had to go a long way just to get cattle, but it got better.

In paragraph 7 it says "But the railroads ment there was less of a need for cowboys."

This proves that life was worse for cowboys before 1884 because they had to go a long way just to get cattle, but it got better.

This proves that life was worse for cowboys before 1884 because they had to go a long way just to get cattle, but it got better.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer presents a clear claim ("Life was worse for cowboys before 1884"), which is partially developed. A purposeful structure that includes an introduction and conclusion is present. The writer separates ideas into body paragraphs, but organization is limited. The organization does not always support the logical development of the claim, and the focus may not always be easy to follow. Sentence-to-sentence connections and clarity may be lacking. The writer repeats the claim throughout the response ("This proves that life was worse for cowboys before 1884 because they had to go a long way just to get cattle, but it got better") but insufficiently explains the connection between the repeated sentence and the text-based evidence from paragraphs 6 and 7 ("But the railroads ment there was less of a need for cowboys' . . . life was worse for cowboys before 1884 because they had to go a long way just to get cattle, but it got better"). Although the writer uses text-based evidence to support the claim, the evidence is limited because it is insufficiently explained and is often repeated rather than developed. The expression of ideas is basic as the writer repeats themselves throughout and the word choice is general and imprecise at times. Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Sentence construction is generally correct, and quotations are punctuated correctly. The response has few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

I belive that it was better for cowboys before 1884 because: in paragraph 2 it states that in the "mid 1800s, being a cowboy was a poupopular job," This means that there where lots of cowboys, but that also means that there where lots of people that needed cowboys. So that means that cowboys had lots of money they could earn. In paragraph 7 it states that "railroads ment there was less of a need for cowboys," meaning that there is less money for cowboys to earn as long as railroads are around. Although the paragraph also stats that "Some people are still cowboys" at the end of that cuncluding sentance it states that "the typical long drive is a thing of the past," which is a bummer to cowboys because in paragraph 6 it states that "Cowboys could make more money on the long drive." It also states why the railroad was invented though. It does so by stating that the cattle they herded long miles got diseses or where stolen.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer presents the claim ("I belive that it was better for cowboys before 1884 because"), which is fully developed. The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the claim. The writer has a clear introduction and an effective conclusion, and the sentences, paragraphs, or ideas are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways. Specific and relevant text-based evidence is provided with quotations and paraphrasing and is clearly explained ("mid 1800s, being a cowboy was a poupopular job," . . . there where lots of people that needed cowboys . . . that means that cowboys had lots of money they could earn"; "'the typical long drive is a thing of the past,' which is a bummer to cowboys . . . 'Cowboys could make more money on the long drive'"). The expression of ideas is clear and effective. Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Sentence construction and grammar are at times correct. There are several errors in spelling ("belive," "poupopular," "cuncluding," "diseses"). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

Score Point 5

Response 1

I think life was better because, the cowboys didn't have to do a lot of work and were able to rest more. The cowboys didn't have to go on the long drive that was dangerous and and difficult. In paragraph 6 it says, the long drive was dangerous and difficult. Cowboys often faced bad weather, and people stole their cattle. At times, they were attacked by others, and cattle got diseases. This means, the long drive was not easy at all, and it was full of danger. I'm sure it was very tough for the cowboys. In paragraph 7 it says, between 1880 and 1890, over 70,000 miles of railroad tracks were built across America. The railroads meant there was less of a need for cowboys. This means, the cowboys were not a lot of need anymore. The cowboys did not have to do the long drive, and they did not need a lot of people for cattle ranching. This is why I think life was better. The cowboys were able to rest more, and they didn't have a lot of work to do.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer presents the claim that "I think life was better because, the cowboys didn't have to do a lot of work and were able to rest more," which is fully developed. A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and conclusion is evident. The sentences, paragraphs, or ideas are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways. Ideas are focused and support the logical development of the claim. Specific, relevant text-based evidence is presented that is clearly explained and expanded upon ("it says, the long drive was dangerous and difficult. Cowboys often faced bad weather, and people stole their cattle . . . they were attacked by others, and cattle got diseases . . . I'm sure it was very tough for the cowboys"). Nearly all sentences are crafted to convey the writer's ideas and contribute to the overall clarity of the response, resulting in the expression of ideas that is clear and effective. Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Sentence construction, punctuation, and capitalization are generally correct. The response has few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

In my opinion, life was worse for cowboys before 1884. Let me tell you the reasons why!

One reason why life was worse for cowboys before 1884 is because they didn't know how to get the cattle to the northeast. In the text it said, "The only problem was figuring out how to get the cattle there." This explains that thinking about how to get the cattle there will be hard. This is one reason why life was worse for cowboys before 1884.

The second reason why life was worse before 1884 is because it was difficult and dangerous. In the text it said, "Cowboys often faced bad weather." This explains that they needed to find a better way. This is the second reason why life was worse for cowboys before 1884.

The last reason why life was worse for cowboys before 1884 is because it took over 2 months. In the text it said, "These journeys took over two months." This explains that it was a long drive to get to the northeast. This is the last reason why life was worse for cowboys before 1884.

In conclusion, these are the reasons why life was worse for cowboys before 1884.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

In this response, the writer presents a fully developed claim ("life was worse for cowboys before 1884"). The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and conclusion is evident. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the claim. The sentences, paragraphs, or ideas are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways, and ideas are focused and support the logical development of the claim. Specific, relevant text-based evidence is presented that is clearly explained and expanded upon ("The only problem was figuring out how to get the cattle there." This explains that thinking about how to get the cattle there will be hard"; "Cowboys often faced bad weather." This explains that they needed to find a better way"). Most sentences are crafted to convey the writer's ideas and contribute to the overall clarity of the claim, resulting in an expression of ideas that is clear and effective. Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The response has few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Condition Code: Off Topic

During the scoring process, the Automated Scoring Engine (ASE) assigns a “condition code” to student responses that are determined to be non-scorable by the ASE. The following student responses included language patterns that reflected an off-topic response and received the associated condition code. Responses that do not address the prompt receive a score of zero.

Response 1

my life is better becaus theas days you can go to the growcry store and get all this stuffand you dont have to hunt thees days .

Response 2

THE SONG

One day there was a little girl and her name was Emma.She loved to sing.She would sing at school,home,and at the park!One day there was a poster outside and it said“A party at the park where you can sing and dance”.This made Emma so happy she could sing. The party was in two weeks!Emmawas going to the party!The next day Emma got hurt!She broak her leg!It really hurt her mom said that she could not go to the party!One week had passed and the party was in one week now!Emma was really,really,really sad she sang a little but she was not better.Even singing could not cheer her up!Then she thought adout her favrite song.And then she sang and sang and sang.she felt a lot better. The party was that night. When Emma got on stage(at the party) in her weelchair she sang and sang and sang out loud.And never stoped singing. When she got older she was a famous singer
!!!!!!!

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

The Need for Referees

- 1 A referee is a person who makes sure that players follow the rules of a sport. Most sports can be played without referees. Some people think games are more fun that way. But referees are important because they make sure all players are respectful, safe, and fair. Referees should be a part of any organized sport.

Respect

- 2 One job of referees is to encourage players to respect each other. This helps both teams have fun. Referees help players learn acceptable behavior. This is especially true for children's teams. Players should help their competitors on the other team get back up when they fall down. They should tell each other when they make a good play. Part of a referee's job is noticing when players show good sportsmanship.
- 3 Referees also help players learn not to get too upset when they break rules or lose points. Referees take extra time to make sure young players understand the rules of the game. They may tell players what they can do to improve.

Safety

- 4 Sports need referees to keep players safe. Referees check the equipment before games. They make sure it is safe for players to use. During the game, they watch for any hurt players. If someone gets hurt, they stop the game. Then they can send the player to a coach or doctor.
- 5 About 30 million children play organized sports in the United States. Of these, 3.5 million get hurt each year. Imagine there are 10 players on a team. One or two of them will probably get hurt during the season. Referees cannot stop all accidents. But they can make sure injured players stop playing and get help. That way, their injuries will not get worse.

Fairness

- 6 A player or person cheering for one team cannot always make fair decisions about a game. Players are busy doing their job on the field or court. They cannot always see what everyone else is doing. If someone else breaks a rule, they may not notice. Also, players and fans want their team to win. They may not admit when their

team breaks a rule. They may even disagree about what the rules are.

- 7 Referees pay attention to everything that happens in a game so they can decide if someone breaks the rules. That way, the teams do not have to argue with each other. Referees know the rules of the game better than anyone else. Their job is to make sure that both teams play by the rules. They do not cheer for one team or the other. Instead, they think like a judge. Both teams get the same treatment.
- 8 There are times when referees make decisions that people disagree with. Referees can make players, coaches, and fans very angry. Some people believe that referees make too many wrong calls. However, since referees focus on the rules, they are usually right when they say one is broken. The National Football League (NFL) looks at how referees perform their job in every game. The NFL states that referees made fewer than five mistakes out of about 160 plays in each game. Referees make few mistakes, so people should trust them.
- 9 Organized sports should not be played without referees. Referees make the game more enjoyable. They can stop arguments between players. They make sure everyone is safe. Sports would not be the same without referees.

Grade 3 Reading Short Constructed Response

Prompt

Read the question carefully. Then enter your answer in the box provided.

What is the most likely reason the author wrote this selection?
Support your answer with evidence from the selection.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 2

A complete response will provide one of the following explanations about why the author wrote the selection:

- To describe the different parts of a referee's job
- To help the audience understand the importance of the role that referees play in sports
- To convince people that referees should be included in organized sports

A complete response will include at least one piece of supporting evidence from the text.

A complete response may include, but is not limited to, the following evidence cited or paraphrased from the text:

- *But referees are important because they make sure all players are respectful, safe, and fair.* (paragraph 1)
- *Part of a referee's job is noticing when players show good sportsmanship.* (paragraph 2)
- *Referees take extra time to make sure young players understand the rules of the game.* (paragraph 3)
- *Sports need referees to keep players safe.* (paragraph 4)
- *Their job is to make sure that both teams play by the rules.* (paragraph 7)

Evidence is accurately used to support the response.

The response and the evidence to support it are based on the text.

Score: 1

A partial response may include one of the answers expected in the complete response. However, the evidence included does not support the answer stated, or no evidence is provided.

A partial response may cite or paraphrase relevant text evidence, but the student does not include an accurate answer about why the author wrote the selection.

Score: 0

- The response is incorrect.
- The response is not based on the text.
- No response is provided.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

he wanted to entirtaian you and inform you and perswade you.

The writer does not provide an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection (“he wanted to entirtaian you and inform you and perswade you”), and no relevant text evidence from the selection is provided.

Response 2

What I think about the author

I think the author is also a refree because he or she knows alot about referees

The writer does not provide an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection (“I think the author is also a refree because he or she knows alot about referees”), and no relevant text evidence from the selection is provided.

Response 3

The most likely reason the author wrote this selection is because if the author did not know about referees why would he right about referees.

The writer does not provide an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection (“The most likely reason the author wrote this selection is because if the author did not know about referees why would he right about referees”), and no relevant text evidence from the selection is provided.

Response 4

The reason that the author wrote this is because so people can know what to do . If we know we can reread.

The writer does not provide an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection ("The reason that the author wrote this is because so people can know what to do . If we know we can reread."). No relevant text evidence from the selection is provided.

Score Point 1

Response 1

The reason the aurther wrote this selection was to show that referees are important to sports.

In this partial response, the writer provides an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection ("The reason the aurther wrote this selection was to show that referees are important to sports."). However, the writer does not provide relevant text evidence from the selection to support the answer.

Response 2

The most likely reason the authorn wrote this selection is because in paragraph 1 it says"But referees are important because they make sure all players are respectful,safe,and fair".

In this partial response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection. However, the writer provides relevant text evidence ("But referees are important because they make sure all players are respectful,safe,and fair").

Response 3

I think the author wrote this selction for showing how Referees really can be useful.Most people I have seen dont like Referees,and they respect them but are always annoyed with them.I am glad the author wrote this selection to really prove that Referees are great people.

In this partial response, the writer provides an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection ("I think the author wrote this selction for showing how Referees really can be useful."). However, the writer does not provide relevant text evidence from the selection to support the answer ("Most people I have seen dont like Referees,and they respect them but are always annoyed with them.").

Response 4

the evidence is referee is a person who makes sure that players follow th
rules of a sport.

In this partial response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection. The writer provides relevant text evidence (“the evidence is referee is a person who makes sure that players follow th rules of a sport”).

Score Point 2

Response 1

The author most likely wrote this selection to teach People about referees and why they're so important. In the text it says "One job of referees is to encourage players to respect each other." And "But referees are important because they make sure all players are respectful, safe, and fair."

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection ("The author most likely wrote this selection to teach People about referees and why they're so important"). The writer supports this answer with relevant text evidence ("One job of referees is to encourage players to respect each other." And "But referees are important because they make sure all players are respectful, safe, and fair").

Response 2

The author most likely wrote this selection because the author wanted to inform why referees are important and why we need more. According to the text, "Sports need referees to keep players safe." This evidence shows me that referees keep us safe.

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection ("The author most likely wrote this selection because the author wanted to inform why referees are important and why we need more"). The writer supports this answer with relevant text evidence ("Sports need referees to keep players safe").

Response 3

The ather wrote this selection because they think referees are so important. In paragraph 4 it talks about how the referees keep the players safe when hert.

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection ("The ather wrote this selection because they think referees are so important"). The writer supports this answer with relevant text evidence ("In paragraph 4 it talks about how the referees keep the players safe when hert").

Response 4

The author wrote this passage to explain to the reader why referees should be in sports. The author said "A referee is someone who makes the players play by the rules."

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer about the most likely reason the author wrote this selection ("The author wrote this passage to explain to the reader why referees should be in sports"). The writer supports this answer with relevant text evidence ("A referee is someone who makes the players play by the rules").

Grade 3 Writing Short Constructed Response

Grade 3 Writing Short Constructed Response

Passage: “The Alarm Clock”

Original Paragraph:

(4) She handed me a box. (5) It had a bow wrapped around it. (6) Confused, I quickly unwrapped the box and then opened it. (7) I stared at the gift inside.

Prompt

Anita wants to combine the ideas in sentences 4 and 5. In the space provided, write a new sentence that combines these ideas in a clear and effective way.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 1

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way.

Score: 0

The response is not a complete sentence or does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

she handed me a box i grabed it and opened it had a bow around it

The response does not combine the two sentences in a clear and effective way. The writer removes the period between the two sentences but creates a run-on sentence. Without the correct punctuation or words to connect the two original sentences, the response results in an ineffective sentence revision.

Response 2

it had a bow in it and i got exsitid

The response does not combine the two sentences in a clear and effective way. Essential details from sentence 4 are missing ("She handed me a box"). The writer also adds additional information to the revision ("i got exsitid"), which alters the original meaning. In sentence 6, Anita mentions being "confused" instead of "excited." The overall revision does not align to the task of combining sentences 4 and 5 effectively.

Response 3

She handed me a box the box had a bow wrapped around it.

The response does not combine the two sentences in a clear and effective way. The writer replaces the word "It" from sentence 5 with "the box," which is acceptable. However, without the correct punctuation or connecting words to connect sentences 4 and 5, a run-on is created, resulting in an ineffective revision.

Response 4

She handed me a box, it had a bow wraped around it.

The response does not combine the two sentences in a clear and effective way. The writer simply rewrites the two sentences and replaces the period at the end of sentence 4 with a comma. Without an appropriate conjunction after the comma, the result is a run-on sentence with a comma splice, which does not effectively complete the revising task.

Score Point 1

Response 1

She handed me a box that had a bow wrapped around it.

The response combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer removes the period between sentences 4 and 5 and replaces the word “It” with “that” to form a complete sentence with an appropriate revision that maintains the meaning of the original two sentences.

Response 2

she handed me a box whith a bow rapped around it.

The response combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer removes the period between sentences 4 and 5 and replaces the words “It had” with the preposition “whith [with]” to form an appropriate revision, consisting of a complete sentence (sentence 4) joined together with a prepositional phrase (“whith a bow rapped around it”). The missing beginning sentence capitalization and misspellings of “with” and “wrapped” are editing errors that do not affect the score of this revising task. This concise revision maintains the meaning of the original two sentences.

Response 3

She handed me a box, and it had a bow wrapped around it.

The response combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer removes the period between sentences 4 and 5 and adds a comma followed by a conjunction (“, and”) to form a compound sentence with an appropriate revision that maintains the meaning of the original two sentences.

Response 4

She handedme a box and the box had a bow wrapped around it.

The response combines the ideas in a clear and effective way with the conjunction (“and”) to form a compound sentence. The writer replaces the word “It” with “the box,” which does not alter the original meaning. The missing space between “handed” and “me” and the missing comma before the conjunction in a compound sentence are editing errors that do not affect the score of this revising task.