



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

Grade 8 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 8 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 8 Reading Passage with Extended Constructed Response and Short Constructed Response

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

How Maglev Trains Work

- 1 Maglev trains are some of the world’s fastest trains. They can reach speeds of 400 miles per hour (mph)! Aside from going fast, these trains are smoother, quieter, and use about 30% less energy than regular trains. So how do they accomplish all of this?
- 2 *Maglev* is short for “magnetic levitation.” Maglev trains use the physical forces of magnetism and electromagnetism to not only levitate the train but to push and pull it forward. Maglev trains are a great example of how engineers use science to design an incredible piece of technology.

Diesel and Electric-Powered Trains

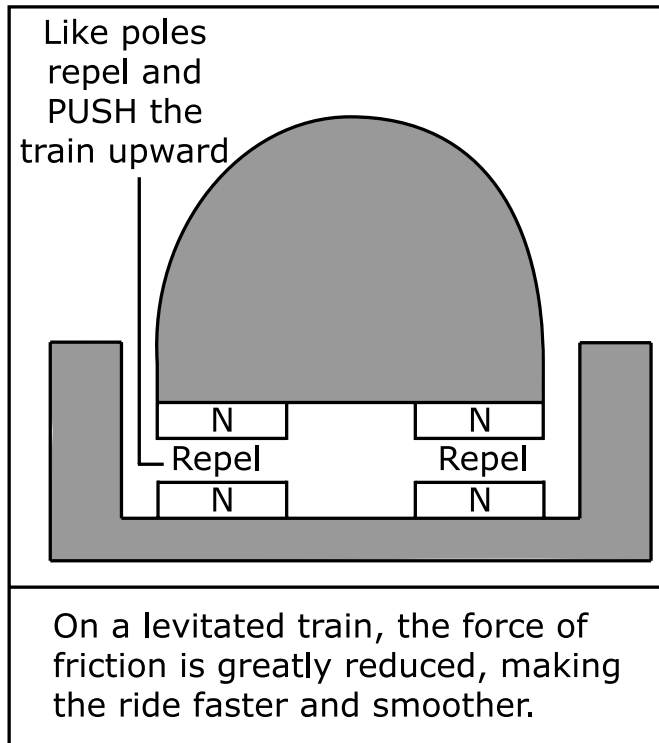
- 3 Most trains in the United States are powered by either diesel gasoline or electricity, and if you have ever ridden on one, you know that they are noisy. That’s because these types of trains have steel wheels that run on steel tracks.
- 4 Trains use the force of friction to slow them down. Friction is created when surfaces slide against one another. When a train engineer applies the brakes, the friction created from the steel wheels sliding against the steel tracks produces a loud screech! In trainspeak that’s called rail squeal.
- 5 Diesel and electric-powered trains are also quite bumpy. That’s because of the conical shape of the train’s wheels. Train wheels are designed this way to help them make turns. As the wheels move from side to side along the track, they make for a bumpy ride.
- 6 Finally, even though diesel and electric-powered trains are more fuel efficient¹ than trucks, they still use a lot of energy. In 2016, freight trains consumed about 3.4 billion gallons of diesel fuel.

Magnetism

- 7 Magnetism is one of the forces engineers use to design and build maglev trains. Permanent magnets are objects made of iron, nickel, or cobalt that exist naturally on Earth. These types of magnets produce a force called magnetism.

¹fuel efficient—Fuel efficient refers to the ability to produce power, heat, etc., at a rate considered optimal with regard to the amount of fuel consumed.

Levitation

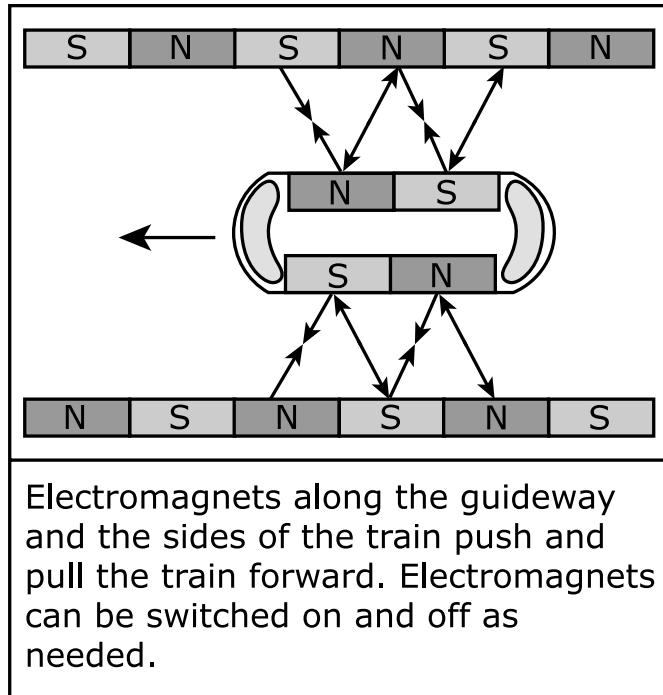


- 8 If you have ever experimented with magnets, you know that they have both a north and a south pole. The poles of a magnet can either attract other magnets toward them or push them away.

Electromagnetism

- 9 Electromagnets are magnets that get their magnetism from a moving electrical charge. Electromagnets produce a force called electromagnetism. Electromagnets do not produce a permanent magnetic force. The magnetism they produce is temporary and can be switched off and on depending upon what is required. Engineers use electromagnetism in the design and construction of maglev trains.

Propulsion

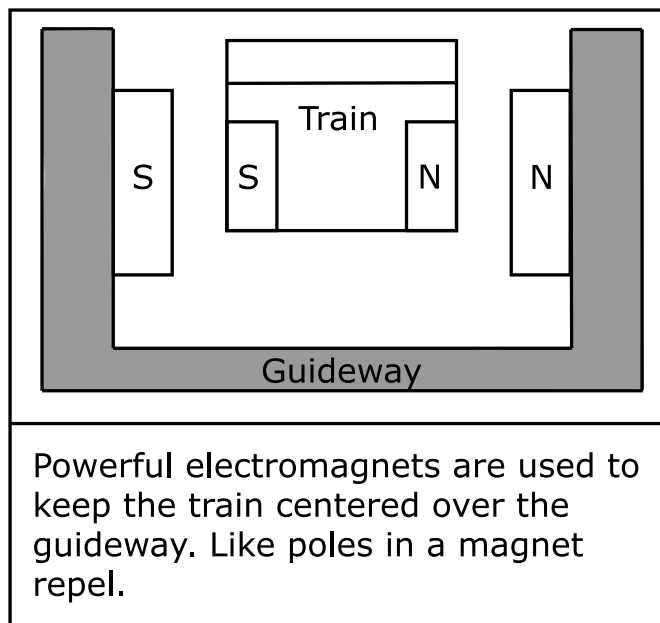


- 10 An example of electromagnetism is the common battery. Batteries store electrical energy. If you attach a wire to the ends of the battery, you will create a path through which that electrical energy can flow. If you wrap the wire around an iron nail, the electrical energy will flow around the wire and magnetize the nail.
- 11 If, however, you disconnect one end of the wire from the battery, the electrical flow will stop, and the nail will no longer be magnetized.

Guideways

- 12 Maglev trains do not have steel wheels and do not run on steel tracks. Instead, they operate on guideways. While there are a few different types of maglev trains, they generally operate the same way.

Guidance



- 13 While there are many advantages of maglev trains, there is also one large disadvantage. They are very expensive to build. Because maglevs do not use traditional steel tracks, new guideways would have to be constructed in addition to building the trains that run on electromagnetism.
- 14 Currently, there is a proposal to build a maglev train from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore, Maryland. The new train would cut the current travel time from 30 minutes to 15 minutes. The estimated cost for the project, however, is between 10 to 15 billion dollars.
- 15 Amtrak, the United States' national passenger railroad, has roughly 22,000 miles of train track. With an estimated cost of about 50 to 200 million dollars to build one mile of guideway, it is unlikely that we will have a system of maglev trains anytime soon.

Courtesy of the San Diego Model Railroad Museum.

Grade 8 Reading Extended Constructed Response

Prompt



ESSAY: Write your essay in the empty box below.

Read the article “How Maglev Trains Work.” Based on the information in the article, write a response to the following:

Argue whether the United States should invest in maglev trains or focus on improving train systems that already exist.

Write a well-organized argumentative essay that includes a counterargument and uses specific evidence from the article to support your response.

Remember to —

- clearly state your claim
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- use evidence from the selection in your response
- include a counterargument
- 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 8 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. For grades 8 through EII, counterarguments are identified and refuted. 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 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from both texts. 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. For grades 8 through EII, counterarguments may be identified but are not refuted. Organization is limited A purposeful structure that includes an introduction and conclusion is present. An organizational structure may be apparent, but it 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 some 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. For grades 8 through EII, counterarguments are not identified. • 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. For pairs in grades 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from only one text. 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

trains are the fastest type of transportation that can reach up too about 400 miles per hour. Trains run on diesel gasoline and electricity, trains are mainly made of science and engineer supplies. Trains are the loudest type of transportation with all the screetching they make and how fast they are but personally i wouldnt say trains are the best type of transportation because most likely trains can break down or something can heppen while on the tracks.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

The writer does not offer a claim in response to the prompt, which requires comparing Maglev to traditional trains. Instead, the writer offers comments about trains in general versus all other types of transportation (“i wouldnt say trains are the best type of transportation because most likely trains can break down or something can heppen while on the tracks”). The writing is mainly organized as a list rather than an argumentative response. The writer does not mention Maglev trains at all. Evidence is irrelevant because an argument is not evident. Expression of ideas is often unclear (“trains are mainly made of science and engineer supplies”). The response reflects a lack of understanding of the argumentative writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

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.

Response 2

In the story of how maglev trains work. The maglev trains speed can reach up to 400 mph and they use 30 percent of their energy than some of the regular trains. Then they are too expensive to build and the trains are smooth. The things on the side of the train can push or pull the train which means that it can stop the train and make the train go. It takes a long time to build those type of trains.

The trains have a lot of energy they just don't use all of it and the magnetism and electromagnetism is the things that pull and push the train. Then the train has steel wheels that run on steel tracks. The trains use magnetism to design the trains and levitation is something that makes the trains move faster. The story is really good and it is interesting.

The story is telling us how the trains work and what type of things they use to make those type of trains. Then they are giving us pictures of how some of the things on the train are and what they are used for. The way they are explaining how the train is makes us think that the train is fast. The permanent magnets are objects that are made of iron and nickel and these type of magnets produce a force called magnetism.

The trains operate on guideways and it is a different type of maglev trains. The different type of maglev trains operate the same and they are building a new maglev train from Washington DC and the new one makes the travel time way shorter. The old one travel time was 30 minutes and the new one makes it 15 minutes.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

In this response, no claim is present. The writing only provides a summary of the features of the Maglev train ("In the story of how maglev trains work . . . The story is telling us how the trains work and what type of things they use to make those type of trains"). This organizational structure of summarized information does not contribute to an argumentative response. Text evidence is irrelevant because no opinion is offered for the evidence to support. Overall, the response reflects a lack of understanding of the argumentative writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

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.

Score Point 1

Response 1

I think the united states should start making more maglev trains and the reason is because they dont use so much energy neither gasoline which causes pollution in the ocean thats one reason but i have one more reason why i think they should make these type of trains and the reason is that people would acctually enjoy going to trains more and they would not be making sounds and its more advanced then some trains we have righth now those are my reasons some people may argue or dissagree but thats why i think and want.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, a claim is offered (“I think the united states should start making more maglev trains and the reason is because they dont use so much energy neither gasoline which causes pollution”), but it is not developed. Organization is minimal, including a conclusion that is general and does not contribute a clear closing idea (“those are my reasons some people may argue or dissagree but thats why I think and want”). Ideas are not developed appropriately in response to the writing task, and support is insufficient. Little text evidence is presented, and explanations of statements made are lacking. A counterargument or rebuttal is not identified. Expression of ideas is ineffective because words and phrases are repeated (“the reason is because . . . but I have one more reason why i think they should make these . . . and the reason is”). Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

Student writing demonstrates no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including little use of correct punctuation (“dont,” “one reason[,] but,” “we have righth now[.] those are”), capitalization (“united states,” “i think”), and spelling (“acctually,” “righth,” “dissagree”). Correct sentence structures are lacking in the writing, which consists of one extended run-on sentence. The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writer’s thoughts.

Response 2

I think the united states should keep the maglev trains the friction is greatly reduced the train is much faster, smoother & the friction is greatly reduced and the reason why i know this is because in the text it says " Maglev trains are some of the worlds fastest trains. They can reach speeds of 400mhp aside from going fast these trains are smoother, quieter, and use about 30% less energy than regular trains." & gas powerd trains and Electric powerd trains uses up 3.4billion gallons of diesel of fuel the Gas powerd trains and Electirc powerd trains have a squeak when they hit the breaks/when the wheel slides against the steel tracks.One major down side of the Maglev trains is they are very expenseive to build a one mile of guideway will cost around 50-200million dollars. So yes i think a maglev will be very useful the train is very fast & very quiet but they are very very expensive.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

A claim is evident ("I think the united states should keep the maglev trains the friction is greatly reduced the train is much faster, smoother & the friction is greatly reduced") but not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. A counterargument is present ("One major down side of the Maglev trains is they are very expenseive to build a one mile of guideway will cost around 50-200million dollars") but not specifically refuted. Organization is weak with a one-sentence conclusion, no introduction, and no logical development structure. Evidence is relevant to the claim but insufficient. Text evidence is presented in the form of a quote and then additional paraphrased evidence. Despite this relevant evidence, there is no explanation. Expression of ideas is ineffective. Word choices are vague, limited, and repetitive ("the friction is greatly reduced . . . & the friction is greatly reduced"), impeding the clarity of the essay. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writing demonstrates little command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Errors in spelling ("powerd," "breaks," "expenseive") and grammar ("uses") combined with more frequent errors in punctuation (missing terminal punctuation, apostrophes, and commas) and capitalization ("united states," "maglev," "Electric," "i") result in a high rate of errors in this writing. The response demonstrates repeated errors in sentence construction, including multiple run-on sentences throughout the writing. These errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

Score Point 2

Response 1

I think that the United States should have an investment in Maglev trains. The United States train system is not the best with diesel or electricity as fuel for the trains wich can hurt the environment. For exampel "Most trains in the United stater are powered by either diesel gasoline or electricity." This proves that a lot of fuel is going to the a lot of trains, but Maglev Traines ues Magnetic Levitation it does not ues any fuel at all which is better for the environment. That why I think the U.S. should invest in Maglev.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, the writer offers an evident claim ("I think that the United States should have an investment in Maglev trains"). Ideas are not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. A counterargument or rebuttal is not present. Organization is weak, as the introductory sentence and conclusion are formulaic. Evidence is provided ("This proves that a lot of fuel is going to the a lot of trains, but Maglev Traines ues Magnetic Levitation it does not ues any fuel at all which is better for the environment"), but any explanation of it is minimal. Expression of ideas is limited, impeding the clarity of the essay. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

Student writing demonstrates partial command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Errors include missing or misplaced words at times ("a lot of fuel is going to the a lot of trains"). Spelling errors are also present ("wich," "exampel," "Traines," "ues," "That"), but overall, the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

Response 2

in the informatinal text "how maglev trains work" it talks about diffrent types of trains and the ups and downs that come with these trains. the united states has been worrying about improving train systems that already exist. doing this takes a lot more time macanics have to fix the trains that are already built and figure out what the problem with them in paragraph 3 it states that "most trains in the united states are powerd by etheir diese gasoline or electricity, and if you have ever ridden on one, you know that they are noisy.thats beacuse these types of trians have steel wheels that run on steel tracks" in the paragraph it's stating that these types of trains are very noisy and loud. this is beacuse the steel is rubbing on steel when to things of the same force rub on eachother it can be very difficult to do so.

in my personal opionion i think that the united states should try out maglev trains. and my reason for that is beacuse in paragraphs 1 throught 2 it says "maglev trains are some of the worlds fastest trains. they can reach speeds of 400 miles per hour aside from going fast, these trains are smoother,quieter, and use about 30% less energy than regular trains so how do the accomplish all of this maglev is short for "maganic levitation". maglev trains use the phisycal forces of magnestism and electromagnetism to not only levitate the train but to push and pull forward. maglev trains are a great example of how engineers use sience to design an incredible peice of technolagy" these 2 paragraphs state how marglev trains work smoother and better bacuse they are more faster and have dont have a lot of probllems as the other trains. these trains are better for the inviorment and dont do as much damage as many other types of trains.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

An evident claim is offered in the second paragraph and partially developed ("in my personal opionion i think that the united states should try out maglev trains"). No counterargument is identified in the response. Organization is limited as there is no introduction present, and sentence-to-sentence connections are lacking. The conclusion adequately restates the argument ("marglev trains work smoother and better bacuse they are more faster and dont have a lot of probllems as the other trains"). Support focuses primarily on the fact that "'most trains in the united states . . . are noisy.'" Text evidence supports the argument for maglev trains ("they can reach speeds of 400 miles per hour aside from going fast, these trains are smoother,quieter, and use about 30% less energy'") with partial explanation of the cited text. Expression of ideas is basic and consists mostly of paraphrased or quoted text. Overall, the response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

Student writing demonstrates little command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including infrequent use of correct sentence construction as a number of run-ons are present, and capital letters are not used to begin sentences or proper names ("united states"). Frequent spelling errors ("diffrent," "trians," "'maganic'") are present. Overall, the response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

Score Point 3

Response 1

Although diesel and electric-powered trains are cheaper, they use a whole lot of energy. In paragraph 6 it states that “In 2016, freight trains consumed about **3.4 billion gallons of diesel fuel.**” Not only that, the train rides are unpleasant. They are noisy and bumpy.

Maglev trains use around 30% less energy than diesel and electric-powered trains, and have smoother, quieter rides. They are also one of the fastest trains in the world. They reach speeds of about 400 mphs. It is clear these trains are more efficient, but the cost is a big problem.

There already is a proposal to building a maglev train from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore, Maryland. This would cut the travel time from 30 mintues to 15 minutes. Unfortunately, this will cost around 10 to \$15 billion. I totally agree that we should start building these trains more, but given the cost, it is highly unlikely they will begin to build a system of maglvev trains.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

A claim is presented at the response’s conclusion (“I totally agree that we should start building these trains more”). Organization is generally weak for the task, as the writing moves from being in favor of Maglev trains to raising the concern of high costs against Maglev trains and back. The writer provides a simple compare-and-contrast organizational structure; therefore, it is a weak argument with limited effectiveness as the writer does not offer a strong opinion. Text evidence is offered in paraphrased form, but the writer offers limited explanation. The expression of ideas is often ineffective and interferes with the writer’s intended meaning because of limited word choice. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the argumentative writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

Student writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including mostly correct sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. There are a few minor misspellings (“disel,” “mintues,” “maglvev”). The response has few errors, and those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

The United Sates should focus on improving the train systems we already have.

Investing in to maglev trains would cost a lot of money to build them, even though the maglev trains are fast and are able to get you to places faster, it would take a lot of money just to build one maglev train.

The reason why we should improve the train systems we already have is that if we improve the trains that are already built then we could save a lot of money and just stay way more out of debt instead of investing towards the maglev, we could be saving money for things that the United States could actually need later on and stay out of debt.

Although there are some ways that investing into the maglevs as the text states “being much quieter, being smoother then the trains we have already and use about 30% less energy then regular trains” even though building maglev’s would cost a ton of money it would benefit a lot people to getting to places faster then the regular trains.

The United States should focus on improving the train systems we already have instead of investing into maglevs to keep the United States from being out of debt.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer presents the claim that “The United States should focus on improving the train systems we already have instead of investing into maglevs to keep the United States from being out of debt.” The writer offers partial development of ideas, concentrating only on the financial aspect for persuasive purposes. The writer includes a counterargument (“even though the maglev trains are fast and are able to get you to places faster”) and then refutes it (“it would take a lot of money just to build one maglev train”). The organization includes an introductory sentence stating the opinion, a concluding statement, and paragraphing to distinguish the counterargument section. Sentence-to-sentence connections help the progression of ideas as meaningful transitional words and phrases ensure flow (“even though,” “The reason why,” “Although there are some ways”). Expression of ideas is basic, and evidence is limited in part because of redundant use of the concepts “a lot of money” or “stay out of debt” being repeated in each paragraph. Consequently, the writer does not sufficiently explain some ideas, and word choice becomes repetitive. Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

Student writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including limited use of correct sentence structures. Run-on sentences are common throughout the response (“and just stay way more out of debt[. Instead] of investing towards the maglev, we could be”). Punctuation and spelling are mostly correct aside from minor errors (“maglev’s,” “United Sates,” “then [than]”). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Response 3

I believe that the United States should invest in Maglev trains. The reason believe in the Maglev trains is because like in paragraph one states "they can reach speeds of 400 miles per hour these trains are smoother, quieter and use about 30% less energy than regular trains" so with that information I think that since the Maglev trains are faster they could make transporting goods more efficient, and with them being quieter you could put them in more populated places for faster routes without disturbing the people living there.

Maglev trains are also safer than a normal diesel and electric train because a diesel and electric train use the force of friction to slow down the train which works but it takes longer to slow down the train and makes a noisy sound called railed squeal. Maglev trains on the other hand are much easier to stop with the magnets on the train pushing each other away to make it go forward you can switch the magnetic push into a pull and that will slow down the train much faster and more efficient. Maglev trains are also a smoother ride unlike normal trains, they use magnetism instead of the normal coned shaped wheels normal trains use.

Maglev trains use guided ways not normal tracks, they don't use steel wheels that run on steel tracks instead they operate on guideways. While there are multiple advantages to using Maglev trains there is a disadvantage that lots bring up, for instance the Guideway for the Maglev trains are very expensive to build since the maglevs don't run on traditional steel tracks. New guideways would have to be constructed in addition to building the trains that run on electromagnetism, the United States national passenger railroads has about 22,000 miles of train tracks and to build one mile of guideway it would cost 50 to 200 million dollars to build one mile.

With all of the reasons not to build the guideway of the maglev trains I still think if we put in the money we could earn it back with how fast we could transport the goods and along with the speed we could get more goods from farther away faster. Along with how fast the train is going it could also be a good way of transportation for short distances instead of driving you could take the train and cut time and by selling the tickets you could get back some of the money from the cost of the guideway.

So in conclusion maglev trains should be built because their speed would be more efficient and how quiet they are could help by building guideways in more populated places to be more efficient and they are smoother so more people would want to travel by train the maglev train also uses 30% less energy than a normal train. The maglev train is also safer because it can stop faster with electromagnetism pull.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer's argument presents a clear claim ("since the Maglev trains are faster they could make transporting goods more efficient, and . . . you could put them in more populated places for faster routes without disturbing the people living there"). Focus is consistent throughout ("Maglev trains are also safer than a normal diesel and electric train because . . . use the force of friction to slow down"). A counterclaim is identified ("a disadvantage that lots bring up, for instance the Guideway for the Maglev trains are very expensive to build since the maglevs don't run on traditional steel tracks"), and a full rebuttal paragraph is presented ("With all of the reasons not to build . . . I still think if we put in the money we could earn it back with how fast we could transport the goods and along with the speed we could get more goods from farther away faster"). Organization provides a purposeful multi-paragraph structure that includes an introduction, conclusion, and logical progression. Ideas are fully developed with sufficient evidence that is text-based, well-chosen, and relevant. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the argumentative writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

Student writing demonstrates little command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including infrequent use of correct sentence construction, punctuation (“regular trains[. So] with”; “trains are faster[,] they could”; “dont”; “steel tracks[;] instead[,] they”), capitalization (“train. the maglev train is also safer”), grammar (“railroads has about 22,000”), and spelling (“becaseu,” “magnitism,” “transportain,” “instince,” “desterbing,” “poposes,” “conslution”). The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Score Point 4

Response 1

I think the U.S. should invest in maglev trains because, the trains in the U.S. take way too much fuel and they are too loud. Then again maglev trains can reach up to 400 miles per hour and they are smoother which would be a huge upgrade! In the passage it states that the trains in the U.S. are noisy and that in 2016 they took 3.4 billion gallons of diesel. This information shows why the U.S. should invest in getting a new train.

Also if the United States did invest in a maglev then it would take a whole bunch of time, money, and energy. The author says the train they are making in Washington D.C., to Maryland will cost nearly 15 billion dollars! Also it moves by electromagnets which is made out of iron, nickel, or cobalt and where is the United States going to get all those from for thousands of miles. This explains some bad features about the maglev and why it would be hard the United States to invest in a maglev.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The response begins with the claim that “I think the U.S. should invest in maglev trains”, but it is only partially developed. The focus is not consistent and not easy to follow with the writer’s focus shifting between the argument and the counterargument. An organizational structure is apparent, but it is not consistent and does not always support the logical development of the opinion. Sentence-to-sentence connections and clarity are lacking. The evidence mostly centers on details and data about the trains (“400 miles per hour and they are smoother”; “3.4 billion gallons of diesel”; “nearly 15 billion dollars”; “is made out of iron, nickel, or cobalt”) with insufficient explanation (“This information shows why the U.S. should invest in getting a new train”). Expression of ideas is basic as word choices are imprecise and general at times. Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. There are capitalization errors (“united states”) and punctuation errors (“because, the trains”; “are smoother[,] which”). The response has few errors, and those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

The United States should invest in maglev trains for many reason.

So start, maglev trains are much faster than diesel and electric powered trains. In paragraph 14 of the artical "How Maglev Trains Work" it says "there is a proposal to build a maglev train from Washington, D.C., to Baltimore, Maryland. The new train would cut the current travel time from 30 minutes to 15 minutes." This would positivly effect many people, and would help to move other goods that people need quicker.

Next, maglev trains use less energy and less fossil fules. In paragraph 6 of the artical, it says "In 2016, freight trains consumed about 3.4 billion gallons of diesel fuel." That shows how much resorces other types of trains use. Other types of trains are also creating a lot more polution, and that is not good for all the enviorments that the trains might go threw.

Althought maglev trains have many advantages, they do have one large down side. These trains are extreamly expensive to build. In paragraph 15 it says "an estimated cost of about 50 to 200 million dollars to build one mile of guideway, it is unlikely that we will have a system of maglev trains anytime soon." That is much more expansive than diesel and electric trains, and could really effect the economy of our country.

Despite the disadvantage, maglev trains would be a great way to advance the tecnology in the United States and could benefit many citizens day-to-day lives.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The response begins with the claim that "maglev trains are much faster than diesel and electric powered trains". Focus is consistent throughout ("Next, maglev trains use less energy and less fossil fules"). A counterclaim is identified ("Althought maglev trains have many advantages, they do have one large down side. These trains are extreamly expensive to build"), and a rebuttal is offered in the writer's conclusion ("Despite the disadvantage, maglev trains would be a great way to advance the tecnology in the United States and could benefit many citizens day-to-day lives"). Paragraph organization provides a purposeful structure that includes an introduction and conclusion. The paragraphs are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways ("So [to] start, " "Next, " "That shows"), others are meaningful and enhance understanding ("Althought, " "Despite"). Ideas are fully developed with text evidence that is well-chosen and relevant. The writer crafts sentences to convey a point of view, which contributes to the overall quality of the response and the clarity of the message. Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the argumentative writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

Student writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including spelling errors ("positivly," "fossil fules," "artical," "polution," "enviorments," "extreamly," "tecnology") and frequent usage errors ("for many reason"; "So start"; "effect many people"; "much resorces"; "go threw"; "expansive [expensive]"; "citizens [citizen's]"). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

Score Point 5

Response 1

Have you ever been on a train? Did you hate the screeching noise and the constant bumpiness? Maglev trains would change all of that. The United States should invest in maglev trains because they are quieter, more fuel efficient, and allow for a more comfortable ride than old diesel and electric-powered trains.

First, maglevs are quieter than other trains. Diesel and electric trains are noisy due to the constant friction of the steel wheels on the steel tracks, and the use of friction to slow and stop the train. This causes a screech when the train slows down. However, maglevs use magnetism to levitate above the tracks, greatly reducing the force of friction and eliminating this screeching sound. This makes it much better for both passengers and conductors.

Maglevs are also much more fuel efficient than old trains. Freight trains used around 3.4 billion gallons of diesel fuel in 2016 alone. Maglevs, however, don't use any fuel. They run using magnetism to propel them forward. This is better for the environment than using diesel and electric-powered trains.

Finally, maglevs are much more comfortable than other types of trains. Diesel and electric trains have conical wheels that make the ride extremely bumpy and uncomfortable. Maglevs provide for a smooth and comfortable ride due to the levitation of the train, which makes it a more enjoyable ride.

In conclusion, the United States should build more maglev trains all over the country because they are quieter, more fuel-efficient, and more comfortable than traditional trains. Some people might argue that maglevs are too expensive to build on a large scale, but maglev trains wouldn't need fuel, which would actually save money in the long term. Therefore, maglevs are clearly much better than traditional trains.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The response begins with the claim that "The United States should invest in maglev trains because they are quieter, more fuel efficient, and allow for a more comfortable ride than old diesel and electric-powered trains". Focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. A counterclaim is identified ("Some people might argue that maglevs are too expensive to build on a large scale"), and a rebuttal is included ("but maglev trains wouldn't need fuel, which would actually save money in the long term"). Organization provides a purposeful structure that includes an original introduction and conclusion. The paragraphs are logically connected in a purposeful and highly effective way ("First," "Maglevs are also," "Finally," "In conclusion"). Ideas are fully developed with text evidence that is well-chosen and relevant. Furthermore, the writer makes specific word choices that are purposeful in enhancing the argument. Sentences are skillfully crafted to convey the writer's point of view, contributing to the overall quality of the response and the clarity of the message ("However, maglevs use magnetism to levitate above the tracks, greatly reducing the force of friction and eliminating this screeching sound"). Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the argumentative writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

Student writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including correct punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. The response has few errors, and those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

The United States should invest in Maglev trains because they are more efficient, better for the environment, and help the country grow technologically.

The first reason why the United States should invest in Maglev trains is because they are more efficient. In the article *How Maglev Trains Work* it states "The new train would cut the current travel time from 30 minutes to 15 minutes." That means that Maglev trains would cut the travel time to 50% of the original travel time which would make public transportation much quicker and more people would use it, causing more profit to help run the trains. The Maglev trains would also be more efficient because they would be more comfortable to ride. They wouldn't be as bumpy or make so much noise, disrupting peoples lives.

The second reason why the United States should invest in Maglev trains is because they are better for the environment. In the article it states "In 2016, freight trains consumed about 3.4 billion gallons of diesel fuel." Consuming that much fuel and more every year for trains is detrimental to our environment especially when global warming is so prominent now days. Making the switch to Maglev trains would be the intelligent thing to do, because it would decrease the amount of fuel used since Maglev trains run on an electromagnetism.

The third reason why the United States should invest in Maglev trains is because it would help the country grow technologically. Eventually, Diesel and Electric-Powered Trains will have been innovated to the max, unable to make more improvements without just completely switching the Maglev trains. That will end up costing lots of money, probably even more, for not as good results then if the US just switched to Maglev trains now, spending the money and time to build and then reaping the rewards later. In the long run the Maglev trains would give the most bang for your buck.

Some people might argue that the building process of replacing the diesel and electric powered trains with maglev trains all around the country would be even worse for the environment than simply sticking with diesel and electric powered trains. However, in the long run this wouldnt be the case. The huge construction task this would take would be gradual, not all at once, spacing out the damage done so that there is enough rest in between, and just sticking to diesel trains would end up being far worse to the environment if no action is made. In the end the Maglev trains would be less harmful.

The United States should invest in Maglev trains because of how efficient and benifitting they are for the country and world.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The response begins with the claim that “The United States should invest in Maglev trains because they are more efficient, better for the environment, and help the country grow technologically”. Ideas are fully developed. Focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. A counterclaim is identified (“Some people might argue that the building process of replacing the diesel and electric powered trains with maglev trains all around the country would be even worse for the environment than simply sticking with diesel and electric powered trains”) and refuted (“However, in the long run this wouldn’t be the case. The huge construction task this would take would be gradual, not all at once, spacing out the damage done so that there is enough rest in between”). Organization is effective and uses a purposeful structure that includes an introduction (“The United States should invest in Maglev trains because they are more efficient, better for the environment, and help the country grow technologically”) and conclusion (“The United States should invest in Maglev trains because of how efficient and benefiting they are for the country and world”) that are not simply perfunctory but add meaning and insight. Evidence is specific and well chosen (“In 2016, freight trains consumed about 3.4 billion gallons of diesel fuel”). Relevant text evidence is clearly explained and focused on the support and development of the argument (“Consuming that much fuel and more every year for trains is detrimental to our environment especially when global warming is so prominent now days”). The expression of ideas is clear. Word choices are specific and purposeful and enhance the response. Almost all the sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer’s ideas and contribute to the overall quality of the response and clarity of the message. Overall, the writing reflects a thorough understanding of the argumentative writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

Student writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including mostly correct sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. The response has few errors, and 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

up in the mountans the weather gose below zero because of the atmosphere the more taller it gets the colder it will be some mountans are so hight that when you go to the top it will be very hard to berath so thats why you need specil gear to reach the mountan to reach the top. in mount everest allot of people try to reach the top but some of the people die trying to some have made it alive but when they try to go down it will be tricky and if they manage to survive then some will probably become legends

Response 2

They can be dificult to brind to stop.

Show the reader that one of the forcess used in magleuv is also used in a familiar objetive
change warn to worn.

Change to needed to neds .

Since Colonel Ludington coulnd't leave his post, he called on his daughter sybil to gather the men to report for duty

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

Board Games Are Good for You

- 1 Imagine playing a board game with a group of friends. It's a great evening. You're all talking and playing and eating snacks. Everyone is having fun, until someone calls out, "You can't do that!" The game stops, and the room is suddenly quiet. All of you look down at the board. Then an explosion happens. Someone reaches for the box, gesturing at the rulebook, but it doesn't say what to do in this exact situation. People start taking sides. Google gets involved. Someone else calls out, "But LAST time . . ." You settle back, take a deep breath, and then, holding your hands up, you try to sort through the mess. Eventually, the game gets back on track.
- 2 Despite the kerfuffle, what just happened demonstrates a positive aspect of board games. When a question comes up, players research, discuss, and eventually agree on which rule applies to their situation. If there is no rule, they decide what's logical and fair. Then they apply their decision and move on with the game. According to a 2021 study published in the *Scandinavian Journal of Psychology*, this process has benefits. Researchers studied the effects of playing board games on children ages four to six. They concluded that these games promote cooperation and positive social behaviors.
- 3 These types of activities help you learn "soft skills," such as problem-solving, creativity, flexibility, and the ability to work as a team. Successful adults incorporate these behaviors in their everyday lives. Employers eagerly seek to hire people with these abilities. Soft skills help you negotiate daily minor conflicts. Many children and teens first learn these important skills by playing board games.
- 4 The benefits of playing board games go beyond soft skills. Playing these games can teach you patience and the ability to focus. When you explain to others the rules of a game, you work on public-speaking skills. As you try to predict what other players will do next, you learn to recognize and interpret facial expressions. And perhaps most importantly, you learn to handle a win or loss with a positive attitude.
- 5 A growing body of research reveals that playing board games also promotes brain development and could even improve performance in school. In 2019 a study published in *BioPsychoSocial Medicine* found that playing board games helps players improve

their thinking and learning abilities, as well as increase their desire to learn.

- 6 Playing board games has benefits for adults too. A 2019 Scottish study involving individuals in their 70s found that participants who regularly played nondigital games performed better on memory and thinking tasks. In addition, playing board games can strengthen relationships between generations. Board games provide a way for adults to have brain-boosting fun while connecting with important people in their lives.
- 7 Video gamers may argue that online gaming makes board games old-fashioned and obsolete. And it's true that many board games have video game remakes. However, while video games are popular, they cannot replace the experience of playing board games. Online gaming removes face-to-face interactions. You lose the connection that comes with sitting down with someone.
- 8 Board games have near-universal appeal. Players can find games for nearly every age, interest, and ability. No matter your interests, there's a game you will love. Classic games such as checkers and chess barely scratch the surface.
- 9 Playing board games enhances creativity. It provides an entertaining way to meet new people and strengthen relationships. Regular play teaches new skills and exposes players to games they can share with others. We have a world full of distractions, but taking the time to play together helps us learn and grow.

Grade 8 Reading Short Constructed Response

Prompt

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

How does the author support the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer? Support your answer with evidence from the selection.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 2

A complete response may include, but is not limited to, one of the following responses about how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer:

- The author makes the argument that playing games regularly helps people develop skills that employers look for in their employees.

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:

- *Playing board games promotes cooperation and positive social behaviors.* (paragraph 2)
- *Playing board games helps you learn skills such as problem-solving, creativity, flexibility, and the ability to work as part of a team, which are soft skills that employers consider valuable because they help people negotiate daily minor conflicts.* (paragraph 3)
- *Playing board games can teach patience and the ability to focus, as well as public-speaking skills.* (paragraph 4)
- *People also might learn to recognize and interpret facial expressions and learn how to handle a win or loss with a positive attitude.* (paragraph 4)
- *Older adults who regularly play board games perform better on memory and thinking tasks. Board games also provide a way to have brain-boosting fun.* (paragraph 6)

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 the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer.

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

They want to make board games more fun to people and bring them back because they are starting to not be as popluare anymore because now every one at the age of like 10 gets there first phone and they dont let go of it from there they always have there phone in there hand 24/7

In this response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer about how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer (“They want to make board games more fun to people and bring them back because . . . now every one at the age of like 10 gets there first phone”), and no relevant text evidence from the selection is provided.

Response 2

That would not happen board games are just games to play like monopoly thats not a job you could get there just boards games to play wiht freinds and familys every board game is not like a job we have today.

In this response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer about how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer (“board games are just games to play like monopoly thats not a job . . . every board game is not like a job we have today”), and no relevant text evidence from the selection is provided.

Response 3

the auther supports the claim because he was right in all of it

In this response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer about how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer (“he was right in all of it”), and no relevant text evidence from the selection is provided.

Response 4

The author supports the claim by adding the lines of “Players can find games for nearly every age, interest, and ability. No matter your interests, there’s a game you will love.”

In this response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer about how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer. The writer provides irrelevant text evidence that does not support an accurate answer (““Players can find games for nearly every age, interest, and ability. No matter your interests, there’s a game you will love””).

Score Point 1

Response 1

It can help a person be more social with others and help them know how to work with other people.

In this partial response, the writer provides an accurate answer to how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer ("It can help a person be more social with others and help them know how to work with other people") but does not provide relevant text evidence from the selection to support the answer.

Response 2

The author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer by stating "They concluded that these games promote cooperation and positive social behaviors".

In this partial response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer to how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer. However, the writer provides relevant text evidence ("They concluded that these games promote cooperation and positive social behaviors").

Response 3

Because it helps with memory and time manegment .

In this partial response, the writer provides an accurate answer to how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer ("Because it helps with memory and time manegment") but does not provide relevant text evidence from the selection to support the answer.

Response 4

In paragraph 4 it says "Playing these games can teach you patience and the ability to focus" this tells me that board games can be appealing to a future employer.

In this partial response, the writer does not provide an accurate answer to how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer. However, the writer provides relevant text evidence ("Playing these games can teach you patience and the ability to focus").

Score Point 2

Response 1

In the passage *Board Games Are Good for You* the author tells the readers that board games help improve life skills. In paragraph 2 it states, "They concluded that these games promote cooperation and positive social behaviors."

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer for how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer ("the author tells the readers that board games help improve life skills"). The writer supports the answer with relevant text evidence ("They concluded that these games promote cooperation and positive social behaviors").

Response 2

The author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer by enhancing skill and making you a better person. In the text it says, "When you explain to others the rules of a game, you work on public-speaking skills." This shows that they would help people in a job interview because they would help with people's speaking skills.

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer for how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer ("by enhancing skill and making you a better person"). Additional explanation is offered at the end of the response ("This shows that they would help people in a job interview because they would help with people's speaking skills"). The writer supports the answer with relevant text evidence ("When you explain to others the rules of a game, you work on public-speaking skills").

Response 3

The author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer by stating many skills that a person can acquire. For example, the text states, "These types of activities help you learn soft skills such as problem-solving, creativity, flexibility, and the ability to work as a team." and, "Soft skills help you negotiate daily minor conflicts." In other words, certain skills you learn from board games can help you get a job.

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer for how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer ("by stating many skills that a person can acquire"). The writer supports the answer with relevant text evidence ("These types of activities help you learn soft skills such as problem-solving, creativity, flexibility, and the ability to work as a team"; "Soft skills help you negotiate daily minor conflicts").

Response 4

The author backs up the claim of how board games can make a person more appealing to future employer by listing the benefits from playing board games. In paragraph 3 the author claims that employers look for those with skills like “problem-solving, creativity, flexibility, and the ability to work as a team”. The author builds off of this idea because board games allow one to learn how to work and play in a cohesive environment where you must adapt in order to succeed.

In this complete response, the writer provides an accurate answer for how the author supports the claim that playing board games can make a person more appealing to a future employer (“board games allow one to learn how to work and play in a cohesive environment where you must adapt in order to succeed”) with relevant text evidence (“employers look for those with skills like ‘problem-solving, creativity, flexibility, and the ability to work as a team’”).

Grade 8 Writing Short Constructed Response

Grade 8 Writing Short Constructed Response

Passage: “Summer with Uncle Jed”

Original Paragraph:

(26) Uncle Jed interrupted gently and reminded me, “Julian, I may not know much about cats or vegetarian diets, but I know dogs, and I especially know this dog. (27) The key to his heart is food.” (28) Uncle Jed then encouraged me to follow his lead with Duke. (29) He promised that I would soon have the dog literally eating out of my hand.

Prompt

Julian wants to combine the ideas in sentences 28 and 29. In the box 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 expresses the ideas in a clear and effective way.

Score: 0

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

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

Uncle jed, then encoureged me to follow his kead with Duke. He promised that i would have the dog eating out of my hand.

This response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer simply transcribes the two sentences with the period after sentence 28 remaining. To complete the task, the revised sentence must include all the important information from sentences 28 and 29 in one new complete sentence.

Response 2

my uncle wanted me to try and follow duke, soon he'd be eating out of my hand.

This response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way. Key ideas are not included, and the meaning is changed. The information in sentence 28 states that Uncle Jed wants Julian to follow his lead but not to literally follow Duke the dog. For a response to earn credit, the original meaning of the two sentences must be maintained, and they must be written as one complete sentence.

Response 3

Uncle Jed then encouraged me to follow his lead with Duke, he promised that i would soon have the dog literally eating out of my hand.

This response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer simply transcribes the two sentences and replaces the period after sentence 28 with a comma. This approach creates a comma splice, wherein a comma is used to link two independent clauses. The result remains two separate sentences written together as a run-on sentence, which does not complete the combination task.

Response 4

Uncle Jed encouraged me to try getting over my fears and letting the dog eat out of my hand.

This response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way. Some of the ideas from both sentences are not included. Specifically, a key idea from 28 is missing: "to follow his lead with Duke." Instead, the writer states that Uncle Jed told Julian he should "try getting over my fears," which is not directly based on sentences 28 and 29. The essential ideas in both sentences need to be included and combined correctly in one new sentence.

Score Point 1

Response 1

Uncle Jed then encouraged me to follow his lead with Dukel, and he promised that I would soon have the dog literally eating of my hand.

This response illustrates a clear and effective combination of sentences 28 and 29. The writer successfully combines the two sentences with the conjunction “and,” thus creating clarity for the reader. The misspelling of Duke (“Dukel”) and missing word (“[out] of my hand”) are considered editing errors that do not affect the score of this revising task.

Response 2

Uncle Jed encouraged me to follow his lead with Duke, promising that I would have him literally eating out of my hand.

This response illustrates a clear and effective combination of sentences 28 and 29. The student changes the wording from “He promised” at the beginning of sentence 29 to “promising.” This approach creates a participial phrase (“promising that I”) that is used to correctly combine the ideas in both sentences.

Response 3

After Uncle Jed encouraged me to follow his lead with Duke, he said that Duke will be eating out of my hand in no time.

This response combines ideas from both sentences in a clear and effective way. The use of the subordinating conjunction “After” at the beginning of the response creates a dependent clause (“After Uncle Jed encouraged me to follow his lead with Duke”) that is clarified with the independent clause (ideas from sentence 29). The misspelling (“encourged”) is an editing error that does not affect the score of this revising task.

Response 4

Promising that I’d soon have the dog literally eating out of my hand, Uncle Jed encouraged me to follow his lead with Duke.

This response combines ideas in a clear and effective way by beginning the sentence with a participial phrase (“Promising that I’d”). Reversing the order of information from both sentences is acceptable if the sentences are effectively combined; all the ideas are present, and the original meaning is retained in this successful performance of the revision task.