

## 2018 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item #	Rationales	
1	Option B is correct	Adding this sentence helps build the ideas in the second paragraph because including information about a specific part of the world where the horns are used supports the main idea of the paragraph.
	Option A is incorrect	Adding this sentence introduces first-person speculation, which is a thought from the writer of the paper, and uncertainty to the paragraph. Including the information does not add a supporting detail about the historical and widespread use of rhino horns.
	Option C is incorrect	Including this unnecessary detail does not contribute to the paragraph's main idea of the historical and widespread use of rhino horns.
	Option D is incorrect	Adding this sentence would repeat an idea already presented in sentence 8 and would not build on the paragraph's main idea of the historical and widespread use of rhino horns.
2	Option H is correct	A transition is a word, phrase, or sentence that connects topics or ideas. Adding the phrase "As a result" is the best transition to add to sentence 15 because the population of rhinos is getting smaller due to people ignoring the law established to protect them.
	Option F is incorrect	Adding the phrase "In the beginning" would not be an appropriate transition because a chronological series of events is not discussed in this paragraph.
	Option G is incorrect	"In addition" is an incorrect transitional phrase to add because a separate idea is not introduced in sentence 15.
	Option J is incorrect	Adding the word "However" is not a correct transition because contradictory information is not presented in sentence 15.
3	Option C is correct	Replacing "bigger" with "stricter" in the sentence clarifies that governments are attempting to make laws that are tougher to break, not attempting to increase the physical size of the laws protecting rhinos.
	Option A is incorrect	Replacing "bigger" with "larger" does not provide additional clarity about the laws governments are trying to write.
	Option B is incorrect	Replacing "bigger" with "taller" suggests the laws governments are trying to write are growing in height and is not an appropriate replacement.
	Option D is incorrect	Replacing "bigger" with "easier" does not provide additional clarity regarding the laws governments are trying to write.
4	Option F is correct	A closing sentence of a paper captures the overall meaning of the paper. Adding this statement about how protecting rhinos can have a future impact helps tie together the ideas throughout the paper and serves as an effective closing sentence for the paper.
	Option G is incorrect	Including the information in this sentence supports only the idea in sentence 22, and the overall message of the paper is not adequately captured.
	Option H is incorrect	Personal opinions are included in this sentence ("so many people love," "probably be around"), resulting in an ineffective closing sentence for the paper.
	Option J is incorrect	Although including the idea in this sentence provides hope for the future, the idea is too general to emphasize why rhinos could avoid extinction.
5	Option A is correct	Including the idea in this sentence helps support the idea introduced in sentence 1 and adequately captures the central idea of the paper.
	Option B is incorrect	By including general information ("some movies have been made") in this sentence, the central idea of the whole paper is not captured.
	Option C is incorrect	A personal opinion is provided in this sentence, resulting in an ineffective central idea for this expository paper.
	Option D is incorrect	First-person language from the writer of the paper is used in this sentence, and there is not enough information about the paper's main content to serve as an effective central idea of the paper.

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6	Option H is correct	Combining the idea from each short, choppy sentence to form one sentence is an effective way to combine the two sentences.
	Option F is incorrect	A transition is a word, phrase, or sentence that connects topics or ideas. Although it is logical to combine the sentences with a transitional word, “since” is not the appropriate word to effectively combine the ideas of each sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	Inserting the coordinating conjunction “and” to connect the ideas of each sentence does not form a complete idea and is grammatically incorrect.
	Option J is incorrect	A run-on sentence is a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly. Combining the sentences without any punctuation creates a run-on sentence.
7	Option B is correct	Moving the preposition “about” to the middle of the sentence and rearranging the ideas eliminate the awkward phrasing in the sentence and clearly show the connection of ideas.
	Option A is incorrect	The idea that “a regular kid had been thinking about a story” is incorrect and not an appropriate revision.
	Option C is incorrect	The idea that Kinney had been thinking of two separate ideas, “a regular kid and a story,” is inaccurate and not an appropriate revision.
	Option D is incorrect	This revision is incorrect and results in a run-on sentence, a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly.
8	Option F is correct	A topic sentence is a sentence that captures the meaning of an entire paragraph. Adding specificity and clearly introducing the idea that readers ask why Kinney’s books are popular, which is the focus of the fifth paragraph, result in a more effective topic sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	Adding “some stuff” to the sentence results in a vague idea and lacks the emphasis necessary for a topic sentence.
	Option H is incorrect	The idea in this sentence is inaccurate, and the focus of the fifth paragraph is not adequately captured in this sentence.
	Option J is incorrect	The details in this sentence are vague, and the information included lacks the emphasis necessary for a topic sentence.
9	Option A is correct	The past-tense verb “served” should be replaced with the present-tense verb “serve,” since the sentence begins with the word “Today,” indicating a shift from the past to the present.
	Option B is incorrect	Inserting the phrase “they are” before “called” would create a run-on sentence, a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly, and is grammatically incorrect.
	Option C is incorrect	Changing the period to a comma would create a run-on sentence and is grammatically incorrect.
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 5 unchanged would not correct the grammatical error in the sentence.
10	Option H is correct	A possessive is a noun or a pronoun that shows possession. The third-person possessive singular pronoun “his” should be replaced with the third-person possessive plural pronoun “their” to agree with “monkeys.”
	Option F is incorrect	A participle is a verb that is used to indicate a past or present action. Changing the verb form from “come” to the present participle “coming” would create a grammatical error in the sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	Changing “and” to “they” would create a run-on sentence, a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly, and is grammatically incorrect.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 7 unchanged would not correct the pronoun- antecedent agreement error in the sentence.
11	Option A is correct	A comma should be inserted after “brown” to separate “golden brown” from the other listed characteristics of temple monkeys.
	Option B is incorrect	The spelling of “weigh” is correct and should not be changed.
	Option C is incorrect	The verb “are” in sentence 9 is present tense and consistent with the other present-tense verbs in the paragraph. Changing “are usually around” to “were usually around” would create a grammatical error.
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 9 unchanged would not correct the punctuation error in the sentence.

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12	Option G is correct	Sentence 11 is a fragment, which is a group of words that is not a complete sentence. The correct way to combine sentences 11 and 12 is to replace the period after sentence 11 with a comma.
	Option F is incorrect	Although the first sentence is a complete sentence, the second sentence is a fragment.
	Option H is incorrect	A run-on sentence is a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly. This revision is grammatically incorrect because including the phrase “these are in the tropical forest” creates a run-on sentence.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving these sentences unchanged would not correct the sentence-construction error.
13	Option D is correct	A run-on sentence is a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly. Changing “these troops” to the conjunction “that” eliminates the run-on sentence and creates a correct, complete sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	This revision is not correct because the sentence lacks a subject and forms a fragment, which is a group of words that is not a complete sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	The second sentence lacks a subject and is not a complete sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Both sentences are fragments and do not form complete sentences.
14	Option F is correct	A possessive is a noun or a pronoun that shows possession with the addition of an apostrophe. Changing “member’s” from the possessive form to the plural form “members” removes the unwarranted apostrophe from the sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	A participle is a verb that is used to indicate a past or present action. Changing the verb form from “gather” to the present participle “gathering” would create a grammatical error in the sentence.
	Option H is incorrect	The spelling of “cozy” is correct and should not be changed.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 21 unchanged would not correct the punctuation error in the sentence.
15	Option D is correct	A proper noun is a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event. Capitalizing the title of the movie “ <i>Monkey Kingdom</i> ” is correct because the title is a proper noun and should be capitalized.
	Option A is incorrect	The past-tense verb “spent” is used correctly in the sentence. “Spended” is not a word and is not the correct past-tense form of the verb “spend.”
	Option B is incorrect	The spelling of “making” is correct and should not be changed.
	Option C is incorrect	Changing “which” to “it” would make the sentence incorrect because it creates a run-on sentence, a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly.
16	Option F is correct	The correct spelling of the word “families” should replace the incorrect spelling “familys.”
	Option G is incorrect	The spelling of “off” is correct and should not be changed.
	Option H is incorrect	Changing the sentence to include a pronoun before “travel” is unnecessary and creates a grammatical error in the sentence.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 1 unchanged would not correct the spelling error in the sentence.
17	Option B is correct	Including the adverb “more” before the adjective “closer” is grammatically incorrect and should be removed from the sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	A participle is a verb that is used to indicate a past or present action. Changing the verb form from “look” to the present participle “looking” would create a grammatical error in the sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	The spelling of “closer” is correct and should not be changed.
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 3 unchanged would not correct the grammatical error in the sentence.

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18	Option J is correct	A run-on sentence is a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly. Adding a period after the word “country” creates two complete sentences and corrects the run-on sentence.
	Option F is incorrect	The second sentence lacks a subject and is not a complete sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	This revision is grammatically incorrect because including the phrase “that is” creates a run-on sentence.
	Option H is incorrect	The incorrect placement of a period disrupts the meaning of the second sentence and creates a sentence fragment, which is a group of words that is not a complete sentence.
19	Option C is correct	The comma after “room” should be deleted since “and” does not connect an independent clause, which is a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	Changing “It” to “And” creates a sentence fragment, which is a group of words that is not a complete sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	A possessive is a noun or a pronoun that shows possession. The word “your” is used correctly and should not be changed from its possessive form.
	Option D is incorrect	The spelling of “produces” is correct and should not be changed.
20	Option H is correct	A sentence fragment is a group of words that is not a complete sentence. Changing “A museum that” to “This museum” eliminates the sentence fragment and creates a correct, complete sentence.
	Option F is incorrect	The second sentence is a fragment and cannot stand alone as a complete sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	Adding a period after “Texas” creates two sentence fragments.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 11 unchanged would not correct the sentence-construction error.
21	Option C is correct	The correct spelling of the word “battles” should replace the incorrect spelling “battels.”
	Option A is incorrect	The subject in the sentence is clear, and changing “and listen” to “you will listen” would create a run-on sentence, a sentence in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly.
	Option B is incorrect	The word “to” is used correctly and should not be changed to the adverb “too.”
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 12 unchanged would not correct the spelling error in the sentence.
22	Option J is correct	A proper noun is a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event. The “Texas Spirit Theater” is a specific location; thus, it is a proper noun requiring capitalization.
	Option F is incorrect	The word “no” is used correctly and should not be changed to the verb “know.”
	Option G is incorrect	Changing the adjective “complete” to the adverb “completely” would create a grammatical error in the sentence.
	Option H is incorrect	Changing “without a visit” to “without no visit” introduces a double negative, which occurs when two negative words are used in the same sentence. The double negative changes the intended meaning of the sentence.
23	Option A is correct	The correct usage of the word “than” should replace the incorrect usage of the word “then” since the number of bats is being described.
	Option B is incorrect	The verb “will come” is consistent with the other future-tense verbs in the paragraph. Changing the verb tense would create an agreement error.
	Option C is incorrect	An independent clause is a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence. Inserting a comma after “bridge” is incorrect because there are not two independent clauses.
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 20 unchanged would not correct the grammatical error in the sentence.

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24	Option F is correct	A possessive is a noun or a pronoun that shows possession. The contraction “it’s” should be changed to the possessive pronoun “its” since the city’s features are being described.
	Option G is incorrect	The comma after “lakes” should not be deleted because it separates a list of nouns.
	Option H is incorrect	The spelling of “swimming” is correct and should not be changed.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 25 unchanged would not correct the grammatical error in the sentence.