



# **Grade 4 Writing**

## **Expository Scoring Guide**

**April 2018**

# Grade 4 Writing Expository Prompt

**READ** the following quotation.

I do not know of anyone who has gotten to the top without hard work.

—*Margaret Thatcher*

**THINK** about all the hard work you do. It may be work you do at school, at home, or outside.

**WRITE** about one type of hard work you do. Tell about your work and explain why it is so hard to do.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your central idea
- organize your writing
- develop your writing in detail
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

## **Score Point 1**

**The essay represents a very limited writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

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

### Development of Ideas

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

### Use of Language/Conventions

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

Working Hard

Why working hard is the best.  
When I was helping my mom with the room. I like helping people because your doing something for some one. A room is were you sleep. Helping some is awesome.  
It was hard to clean the room up. Cleaning is like you speed something then you clear it up. Hard work is like you do to much. hard is cool.  
When we finished cleaning up I was tired. Tired is you dont stop doing it. finished is when your done. finished is cool.

**Score Point 1**

In this very limited writing performance, the writer offers the unclear central idea that “working hard is the best.” The writer’s ideas are related to the prompt, but the structure is only marginally suited to the task because the writer includes extraneous information throughout the response (“a room is were you sleep”; “Hard work is like you do to much”). As a result, these definitions and explanations cause abrupt shifts in focus and weaken the progression of ideas. In addition, the response is vague and confusing due to limited word choice and inappropriate details and examples (“hard is cool”; “finshed is cool”). These issues, along with simplistic sentences and persistent conventions errors, impede the quality and clarity of this expository writing task.

My type of hard work is long division. Because it is  
to many steps. I think if they make it more easier I  
would be good at it. My soft hand work is  
adding big number with even big numbers. Because  
I'm a type of person how guest don't like caring  
but I am good at adding two digit write two  
digit. I can list three thing that's hard like  
dividing big numbers, sometimes times, adding big  
numbers, and multiplying. The reason its hard  
cause I don't now them by heart. that's  
what's hard to me.

**Score Point 1**

In this response, the writer offers the central idea that long division is hard work; however, instead of supporting the central idea by explaining what makes long division difficult, the writer shifts focus and explains why adding two-digit numbers and multiplying are hard work. The random presentation of ideas (“I don’t now them by heart”) weakens coherence and makes the essay difficult to follow. Additionally, the few details provided are too insufficient to support the central idea effectively. Serious and persistent errors in conventions throughout the response (“Im atipe of person how guest dusit like caring”) further disrupt fluency and impede meaning, resulting in a very limited writing performance.

A brithday gift was the geatest gift of all. To start with, I ran outside the happiest day of my life seeing a club house I done of it. I was happy to see my brithday presnt outside. I wishing to have a club house and it happed. On the other hand, I had the club house for half a month and it was half done. Cliring over there, here, and there to built these club house is we can have these club house we put so much head work it's a master pice. One day it rain and we were in the club house we had pop sicles. In addition, we had the club for a month now and I was cring because my momny took the club houses. If were up to my mom and dad talking down the hall wether went outside and saw nonny with her car hook up to a fairler that had our club house I cry and cry to for our club house then I think about the hard work put in it. To sad to say goodbye to a gift. I wish I had it back

### Score Point 1

In this essay the writer provides the central idea that it is hard work to build a clubhouse. However, instead of explaining why building a clubhouse is hard work, the writer develops most of the response with a narrative about the gift of a clubhouse and having it for a month before a family member hauls it away. Holistically, the response is only weakly linked to the prompt because the development does not contribute to the central idea. The use of insufficient details and examples (“One day it rain and we were in the club house we had pop sicles”) demonstrates the writer’s lack of understanding of the expository task. Serious and persistent errors in spelling, grammar, and usage conventions (“her car hook up to a tairler”) further impede the quality and clarity of this very limited writing performance.

Once the teacher told us to do something and I forgot what to do and it was hard for me everybody all most finished and I did not do anything so I tried to remember and tried to get help so I remember a little and just a few people are still working and I was one of those people so a few minutes till we have to turn in and then I just needed some more but that was the hardest but then I remember how to do then I finished and I turned it in just in time so that is pretty much all the end

**Score Point 1**

In this very limited writing performance, the writer attempts to explain why a school task is hard, but the central idea is unclear. While most of the ideas are generally related to the idea of hard work, the inclusion of extraneous information about the classroom environment (“... everybody all most finished ...”; “... a few minutes till we have to turn in ...”) weakens the coherence of the essay. In addition, the development of ideas is weak because the examples the writer uses to describe the task are too vague (“The teacher told us to do something”). Furthermore, limited word choice (“I remember a little”; “... but then I remember ...”) and the absence of punctuation further demonstrate the writer’s lack of understanding of the expository task.

## **Score Point 2**

**The essay represents a basic writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

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

### Development of Ideas

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

### Use of Language/Conventions

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

Do you do martial arts? I do, here are some reasons why it is hard.

First of all, you are in constant physical strain because you are always doing stuff like the splits, butterflys, and planks. Planks are when you lay down and hold yourself up with your lower arms. Plus, sometimes they make you do pushups if you do not react fast enough.

Martial arts is when you learn a bunch of kicks and moves to defend yourself with. If anyone tries to attack you. There are multiple types of martial arts, but I learn the kwan do, the Korean version of martial arts.

The second reason the kwan do is hard is that you have to memorize everything they teach you which, is ilbadorian, one step fighting, your form, and the Korean names for the kicks they teach you.

And that, is why the kwan do is so hard

**Score Point 2**

The writer of this essay introduces the central idea that martial arts is hard. The progression of ideas is not always controlled due to a minor lapse in focus when the writer moves from describing hard work to defining martial arts and back to describing why tae kwon do is hard. Additionally, the paragraph-to-paragraph transitions (“First of all”; “The second reason”) are too perfunctory to show the relationships among ideas. The writer attempts to develop the central idea with lists of martial arts moves and concepts to memorize (“stuff like the splits, butterflys, and planks”); however, these examples are too partially presented to move the essay beyond a superficial level. In addition, general word choice (“doing stuff”; “bunch of”) and the perfunctory conclusion (“And that, is why tae kwan do is so hard”) further weaken the quality of this basic writing performance.

There are lots of hard jobs in life like mopping the living room or cleaning your room. I will tell you a hard job that I think is hard, getting groceries from your mom's black truck is somewhat hard. Because there is usually a lot of them. Some are big and might weigh a lot. When I'm getting groceries my brother helps me but calls me names. I always get to the top because my brother helps me and I grab a large amount of bags and take them inside. If you do like I do when we get groceries from the car you'll end up feeling good about yourself.

**Score Point 2**

The writer of this response provides the central idea that getting groceries from mom's truck is hard. The progression of ideas is not always controlled due to weak sentence-to-sentence connections ("When I'm getting groceries my brother helps me but calls me names. I always get to the top because my brother helps me . . ."). In addition, details are too partially presented to add substantive development to the response. Awkward and uncontrolled sentences ("Because there is usually a lot of them some are big and might weigh a lot") demonstrate the writer's partial command of conventions, further hindering the effectiveness of this basic writing performance.

One hot exosting December day I opened the door and put my backpack in my room and look at my chores list. I look what the first chore if I do it I will get five dollers. I do one chore each day there are four. The first one is do your homework and check the mail. I leave the papers on the table and my mom put 5 The money in a jar.

The next day I have to do the next one which is clean the bath room and my room. I take out the bleach I coughed because the strong smell, and the rest of the chem. Then I clean my room that took me most of the day. But when my mom comes home it is all worth it seeing her happy.

The thired day it was time to cut the grass. I got out the lawn mower and start it. an hour later I was half way done. Then I started to weed wax 2 to 3 hours later I was done. Then I vacumed the house and got paid an extra 5\$.

Then I can save my money or spend it eather way or not I worked hard all week to get my stuff

### Score Point 2

The writer of this response offers an implied central idea that doing chores is hard work. Repetitive sentence-to-sentence connections (“Then I clean . . .”; “Then I started . . .”; “Then I vacumed”) and perfunctory paragraph transitions (“The next day”; “The thired day”) weaken the flow of the essay. To support the central idea, the writer attempts to use an anecdotal approach to describe multiple tasks that must be completed throughout the week (“do your homework and check the mail”; “clean the bathroom and my room”; “cut the grass”). However, each of these ideas is only minimally developed because the writer provides a chronological list of chores instead of explaining what makes the work difficult. Awkward, uncontrolled sentences (“I look what the first chore if I do it I will get five dollers”) and the writer’s partial command of spelling conventions (“exosting”; “whorth”; “eather”) create some minor disruptions in the fluency of this basic writing performance.

“Ooow! I need to mow the lawn because its to tall. I hate cutting grass because I need to look for rock on the grass and if the gass is wet or machine will burn. It needs to have gas or it will not turn on. When you turn it on smok will come out, I need to go back and forth because the grass needs to be the same size. I was shaking like a wet chiwawa because the cutting thing was shaking a lot. When I finished with one side of my house I had to go to the other side to cute the grass you need to cute it right or it will come out wrong. I started sweding one lake you could also do it when the sun isn't out yet. When I finished I lade on the bed and all movies finished. Next time I'll try to hide save I couldn't do it.

**Score Point 2**

The writer of this essay presents an implied central idea that cutting the grass is hard work. The progression of ideas is not always logical or controlled due to repetition and wordiness (“I hate cutting grass . . . I need to look for rock on the grass . . . if the gass is wet”; “I was shaking like a wet chiwawa . . . the cutting thing was shaking a lot”), causing a minor disruption in the flow of ideas. The development of ideas is minimal because the writer uses details and examples (“you need to cute it right or you will get it wrong”) that are too briefly presented to be effective. Furthermore, awkward sentences and some distracting errors (“I started sweding one lake you could also do it when the sun isn't out yet”) weaken the effectiveness of this basic writing performance.

## **Score Point 3**

**The essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

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

### Development of Ideas

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

### Use of Language/Conventions

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

Playing drums is a type of work that may not be hard or work to some people. It's fun, though, it's harder than it looks. You have to hit the right drum, use the the right hand, (not your actual right hand on your arm) and be quick playing. Use your right hands because otherwise they will get twisted up. Getting yourself in a knot is not good. Of course, when is that ever good? If you use the right hand, you're bound to hit the right drum.

If you don't hit the right drum, it won't sound right at all! It's like, square, square, triangle, triangle, but suddenly it's square, square, circle, triangle, triangle. It is just like that, but with drums. Trust me one wrong beat, and the right way.

Once you hit the right drum and use the best hand to hit with, try making it quicker. When you're playing a song, rock, pop, country, anything, usually, requires quick bops. The drummer keeps a quick but steady tempo. Could you imagine a slow as a snail drum solo? Boom..... Booms..... crash, and so on. That's why you need to be quick or it will sound somewhat like that.

A quote from Margaret Thatcher says "I do not know of anyone who has gotten to the top without hard work." That is true, even though the work is tough stuff it pays off when you get it right.

### Score Point 3

The writer of this response offers the central idea that playing drums is hard work. The progression of ideas is generally logical with the appropriate "if/then" structure of the response. Additionally, specific examples and figurative language ("Use your right hands because otherwise they will get twisted up"; "Could you imagine a slow as a snail drum solo?") add some substance to the response by further explaining the complexities of playing drums. Sentence-to-sentence connections ("Once you hit the right drum"; "When you're playing a song . . ."; "Boom, boom . . .") are sufficient to support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas. The response ends effectively with the writer's reflection that "even though the work is tough stuff, it pays off." Varied and adequately controlled sentences contribute to the effectiveness of this satisfactory response.

Have you ever had a hard working job? Well I have. I've had to bathe my dog & it was very hard work.

The first reason it was hard work while bathing my dog was because she would splash or jump to much. It drove me crazy. I heard plops and plots. She splashed water on me & I turned as cold as my fever then bursted into flames.

The next reason it was so hard was that she was barking & squealing a lot. Steam came out of my ears. I thought that we were in tea kettle motion the way I steamed & the way she wistled. Then it was on like cat & mouse.

The last reason it was so hard was the way she almost bit me & threw a fit. She growled & I got scared. I saw her humongus teeth & got just terrified. Then I smelled her bad dog breath but I realized that I brushed her teeth so it wasn't her breath it was her chew toy. I put it in the bath tub got to bathe her.

I feel that my dog is bad at taking baths. I wish there were an easier way to bathe my dog. I've decided to let my sister take care of this from now on. Wink wink smile.

### Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer presents the central idea that bathing a dog is hard work. The writer's use of personal experience is appropriate to the expository purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. Despite the use of formulaic paragraph-to-paragraph transitions ("first"; "next"; "last"), the writer provides sufficient sentence-to-sentence connections ("Steam came out of my ears. I thought we were in tea kettle motion . . .") that support the flow of the essay and show relationships among ideas. The writer develops three reasons to support the central idea by using specific details and examples ("she would splash or jump to much"; "she almost bit me & threw a fit. She growled & I got scared"), adding substance to the essay by clearly illustrating the challenges of giving a dog a bath. In addition, clear and specific word choice ("plops and plots"; "barking & squeeling"; "humongus teeth") contributes to the quality of the essay.

Have you ever worked so hard that it all finally paid off? It could've been at school, at home, or at the gym. It could be anywhere. I reached my accomplishment at Miss **Hollie's** gym in **Houston, TX.**

Cheer practice is very hard and frustrating. I work very hard at cheer. I don't throw my head back on my back handsprings. Every time we tumble, I at least try to do my back tuck.

Every Saturday, I've been going to **Just Launched.** I work on my backhandsprings there. Sometimes, I stretch on the mats that they have in the activity room. I go into the activity room to practice my tumbling.

Tumbling is a little bit hard because you have to do all of these things at once. For example, on your back tuck you have to open your eyes, jump into the air, pull your knees over, and then you have to worry about landing.

Everybody could reach an accomplishment. You just have to try, do your best, and believe. I just wish I could hit my back tuck at every cheer practice and every tumbling day.

### Score Point 3

The writer of this essay offers the central idea that cheer practice is hard work. Most ideas are focused as the writer explains various aspects of gymnastics and cheer practice. Meaningful transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections (“Tumbling is a little bit hard . . .”; “For example, on your back tuck you have to open your eyes . . .”) sufficiently support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas. Development is sufficient with details that support the central idea and add some thoughtfulness (“Everybody could reach an accomplishment. You just have to try, do your best, and believe”). In addition, sentences are varied and adequately controlled, contributing to the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance.

Some people say that taking care of your little brother or sister is harder than taking the STAAR test. I'll tell you how difficult it is to take care of my (cousin please) baby brother.

1) To begin with when my mom goes to the store I take care of Steven. I make sure he can't find one tiny wooden block and put it in his sharp teeth. More important he can't put his little busy hands on a KWIPE or on the finger cutting BLENDER. 2) Second I live in a two story house which means Steven can climb the stairs. Last time he was climbing the stairs and BOOM! baby down. So when he climbs I climb with him as if I was his Stevens personal security guard. Also, he plays on the stairs with a metal frame that he's doing to play with. Furthermore when my mom is busy doing something I watch Steven on his every move as if I was a hawk. Every time he got near his mommy I carry him as far away and shut the room door. 3) In conclusion that is my story of taking care of my (cousin please) baby brother. Now tell me your story.

**Score Point 3**

In this response the writer presents a clear central idea that caring for a baby brother is hard work. Although the writer includes some perfunctory transitions (“Second”; “Also”; “In conclusion”), the sentence-to-sentence connections (“... I live in a two story house which means Steven can climb the stairs. Last time he was climbing the stairs and BOOM! baby down”) are sufficient to support the flow of the essay, resulting in a generally logical progression of ideas. Moreover, the writer’s use of comparisons to a “personal security guard” and watching the little brother’s “every move as if I were a hawk” add some thoughtfulness and further develop the central idea. Clear and specific word choice (“one tiny wooden block”; “sharp teeth”; “metal frame”) illustrates the difficulty in caring for a baby and contributes to the quality of this satisfactory writing performance.

## **Score Point 4**

**The essay represents an accomplished writing performance.**

### Organization/Progression

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

### Development of Ideas

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

### Use of Language/Conventions

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

Do you know that saying "practice makes perfect?" That really applies in acting. You can't get onstage and just assume you're prepared. You can not expect for a person to know their lines and tell you yours if your mind goes blank during the performance. That doesn't look professional and it gives you a bad reputation. You must remember that the rest of the cast relies on you to know your parts as well. You need to work hard and practice for it to show that you care about what you do.

For one thing, you need to make a commitment that you'll show up to practice and give it your all. You must assure the actors around you are hard working, responsible, and trustworthy. I have been told many times that acting's a team sport and you have to show you will work with others with respect. But most importantly, you must act with expression. You can NOT make it look like you're just reciting lines. If I had to look joyful, I'd try my hardest to look ecstatic like my character would. You must make your acting look realistic.

All of these tasks and characteristics equal up to a hard working actor. This makes you look ready for ANYTHING. When you work hard like so, you can play any role you want.

**Score Point 4**

In this accomplished writing performance, the central idea (acting is hard work that requires practice) is developed through descriptions related to the writer's unique experiences in acting ("I have been told many times that acting's a team sport . . . show you will work with others with respect"; "If I had to look joyful, I'd try my hardest to look ecstatic like my character would"). The progression of ideas is well controlled with meaningful transitions ("For one thing"; "All of these tasks") that support the flow of the essay. Specific, well-chosen details ("You must remember that the rest of the cast relies on you to know your parts as well. You need to work hard and practice for it to show that you care about what you do") and the writer's reflective conclusion (hard work in acting allows you to be "ready for ANYTHING") add substance and thoughtfulness to the essay. Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the response.

I have been dancing for 3 years. Let me tell you, dancing is super hard work. It is definitely harder than it looks. First of all, to be a good dancer you have to get every move right. We're not talking the simple Cupid Shuffle here. All you do there is stide and turn and hop on the floor. Anyone can do that. I'm talking about very complex ballet leaps such as the cabriol. The cabriol is a big jump where you kick one leg to the side. Then you leap from the ground and bring your other leg up to meet the first one. All of this has to be done in the air! That's MUCH harder than a simple cupid shuffle hop for sure. I practiced everyday and it seemed like it took forever to get the cabriol leap down perfectly. It is important that you get every move right, because once you're on stage, there's no turning back.

A ballet dancer also has to be flexible. I do lots of stretching to help me be more flexible. For example, I stretch my hips a lot so I can leap higher and do the cabriole successfully. One way I stretch my hips is by putting one knee on the ground and one foot on the ground and leaning forward. I do flexibility exercise every day in dance so I can keep making progress and become the best dancer I can be. One day I want to dance on stage in New York!

You can understand that dancing is the opposite of easy. Being a dancer isn't something you get right on the first try. Dancing takes hard work, and we have to do this hard work wearing point shoes!

**Score Point 4**

The writer of this skillfully crafted response identifies the clear central idea that dancing is hard work. Strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of the essay by clearly showing the relationships between ideas, such as when the student describes “very complex ballet leaps” and contrasts them with the “simple cupid shuffle.” These comparative elements make the writer’s train of thought easy to follow. The response is thoughtful and engaging due to the inclusion of the writer’s personal reflections (“I practiced everyday and it seemed like it took forever to get the cabriol leap down perfectly”; “I do flexibility exercise every day in dance so I can keep making progress and become the best dancer I can be”). Purposeful, precise word choice (“cupid shuffle”; “cabriole”; “point shoes”) illustrates the complexities of dancing, and the writer’s consistent command of sentence boundaries and conventions contributes to the quality and clarity of this accomplished writing performance.

“Twenty-five dollars!” I tried not to sound too excited when my neighbor paid me for taking care of her parrot. I didn’t think it would be such a hard job, but now I know that watching a bird is hard work. Mrs. Smith gave me a long list of instructions. I thought I would just have to put some seeds in his bowl and refill his water bottle, but Mrs. Smith told me that I would need to let Oscar out of his cage twice a day to “stretch his wings.” She said Oscar knew when it was time to go back to his cage.

By the end of the first day, I learned some important lessons. First I learned that I had to be very careful when giving Oscar his seeds or he would spill them all over his cage. I also learned that it wasn’t easy to get Oscar back into his cage. He flew around the house saying, “Ha, ha!” (I’m pretty sure he was laughing at me.) I got super tired chasing Oscar, but he finally flew back to his cage.

The second day was worse. When I was refilling the water bottle, Oscar knocked it out of my hand with his beak. Water splashed all over the floor. As I was cleaning the mess, Oscar flew up on a shelf full of dishes. I was worried he would break something. Luckily Oscar didn’t move an inch. He just looked down at me and said, “Ha, ha!” Just then, Mrs. Smith walked in and yelled, “Oscar! Get back in your cage this minute!” Oscar obeyed and flew right into his cage! Mrs. Smith said “I’m sorry. I forgot to tell you about Oscar’s tricks.”

Mrs. Smith asked me to watch Oscar again next month. Watching him was hard work. I don’t think it’s worth the money. Don’t you agree?

**Score Point 4**

In this accomplished writing performance, the writer describes the difficult task of taking care of the neighbor’s bird. The anecdotal approach is used appropriately to respond to the prompt with strong focus on the antics of Oscar the bird. Meaningful transitions (“By the end of the first day”; “I also learned”; “The second day was worse”) and strong sentence-to-sentence connections (“He flew around the house saying, ‘Ha, ha!’ [I’m pretty sure he was laughing at me]”) enhance the flow of the response by clearly showing relationships among ideas. This adds substance and creates an engaging essay that is unified and coherent. Development is effective because the writer provides specific and well-chosen examples (“I learned that I had to be very careful when giving Oscar his seeds or he would spill them all over the cage”; “When I was I was refilling the water bottle, Oscar knocked it out of my hand with his beak”) to illustrate the struggles of taking care of the neighbor’s bird. Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well-controlled (“I thought I would just have to put some seeds in his bowl and refill his water bottle, but Mrs. Smith told me I would need to let Oscar out of his cage twice a day to ‘stretch his wings’”), further enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.

There is a lot of responsibility in keeping a nice, healthy tomato garden. I, for one, think that keeping a garden is a lot of hard work.

The first reason is that you have to get a lot of preparations going. You must pick a good, healthy tomato. It must also be just the right time. Not too early, not too late, but just the right time. The last and most difficult preparation is the compost. Spending time in the hot sun shoveling dirt is not how most people like to spend their afternoon.

Secondly, all the care is hard work. You must water them at the same time every day. You also have to let them get lots of sunlight.

The last reason is all of the downfalls that come to your garden. There are caterpillars that munch the leaves and tomatoes off of the plant. The birds do the same thing, except they just eat the tomatoes.

It is very hard work keeping up with a garden. But luckily, it is kind of fun, and you get to eat plump, juicy tomatoes at the end. You can even say that you have grown a tomato before.

#### Score Point 4

The writer of this accomplished writing performance establishes the clear central idea that gardening is a lot of hard work. Formulaic paragraph-to-paragraph transitions (“The first reason”; “Secondly”; “The last reason”) do not detract from the logical and well-controlled progression of ideas because all ideas are focused and strongly related to the central idea. The writer effectively develops the response with specific examples (“There are caterpillars that munch the leaves and tomatoes off of the plant. The birds do the same thing, except they just eat the tomatoes”) and engaging personal reflections (“shoveling dirt is not how most people like to spend their afternoon”; “But luckily, it is kind of fun, and you get to eat plump, juicy tomatoes at the end”) that add substance to the essay. Purposeful word choice (“compost”; “hot sun”; “plump, juicy tomatoes”) strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.



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