



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

English I

Expository Scoring Guide

April 2022

English I Expository Prompt

WRITTEN COMPOSITION: Expository

Read the following quotation.

The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable. Winners can tell you where they are going, what they plan to do along the way, and who will be sharing the adventure with them.

– Denis Waitley

Successful people often set clear goals and understand the specific steps needed to achieve them. Think carefully about this statement.

Write an essay explaining the best way to achieve a goal.

Be sure to –

- clearly state your thesis
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

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 thesis statement 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 spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

What is a best way to achieve a goal?
The best way to achieve a goal is to get
a goal board and write down the goals you
want to achieve when you write down
a goal you want to achieve you make
sure you work hard and stay on top
of your goal that you want to achieve.
There's a lot of ways to achieve your
goals but the best way to achieve it is
to get a goal board and write your
goals when you finish with your goal
you cross it out.

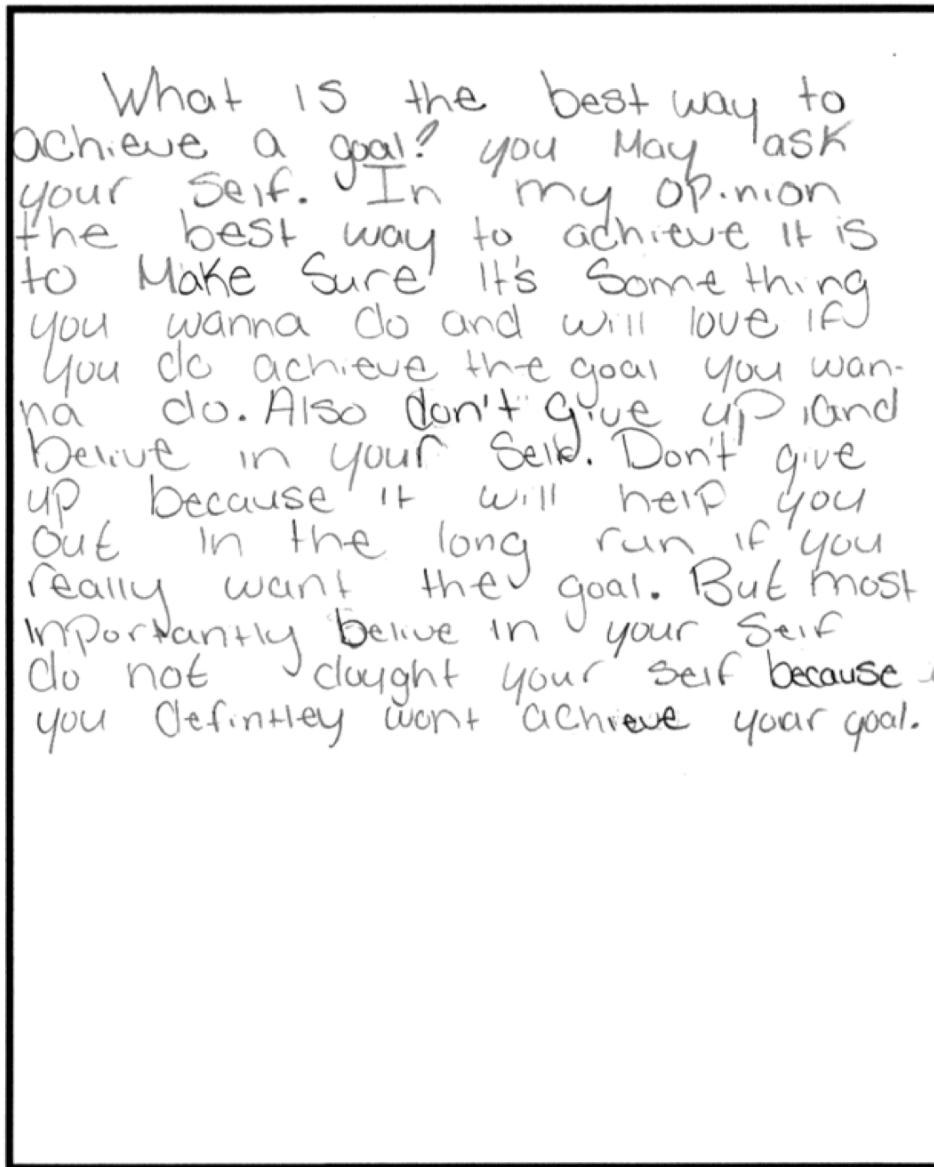
Score Point 1

The writer states the thesis in the first sentence that “The best way to achieve a goal is to get a goal board and wrote down the goals you want to achieve.” The student attempts to develop the idea using a problem and solution organizational structure (“write your goals . . . cross it out”). However, this effort is only marginally suited to the expository task. The development of ideas in the essay is weak because the vague example (“make sure you work hard and stay on top of your goals”) is insufficient to support the thesis. Repetitive and simple word choice (“wrote down the goals” and “write down the goals”) impede the clarity and understanding of this very limited writing performance.

What the quotation is talking about is saying that it wants you to reach your goals something you have been wanting + waiting for. They want you to be successful. They don't want you to be a failure. They want you to achieve your life goals + just go for it. Don't let anyone knock you down. What Denis Waffley did was achieve his goals. He achieved them + he wants every other person or child in this world to achieve their goals. If you have already planned your goals that is fascinating. When you get older you will be able to do what you want to do. I bet when Denis was a teen he got to do what he wanted to do. He got to achieve his goals + wait until he got older to you can. Achieve your goals so keep on living the life your living + don't screw it up. Always remember you can achieve your goals even if you are big or small or teen or child.

Score Point 1

The writer makes an attempt to add a very weak thesis near the end of the response (“you can Achieve your goals so keep on living the life your living & don’t screw it up”), but the idea is unclear. Parts of the prompt are repeated (“reach your goals,” “achieve your life goals,” “Denis Waitley . . . achieve his goal”), causing serious disruptions to the flow of the essay. The writer tries to develop ideas about Denis Waitley achieving his goals (“I bet when Dennis was a teen he got to do what he wanted”). However, the details (“he got to achieve his goals”) are vague and demonstrate a lack of understanding of the expository purpose. The absence of any periods in the response demonstrates a lack of command of sentence boundaries, creating disruptions in the fluency of the writing and making the writing more difficult to read. Overall, this response represents a very limited writing performance.



What is the best way to achieve a goal? you may ask your self. In my opinion the best way to achieve it is to Make Sure it's something you wanna do and will love if you do achieve the goal you wanna do. Also don't give up and believe in your self. Don't give up because it will help you out in the long run if you really want the goal. But most importantly believe in your self do not doubt your self because you definitely won't achieve your goal.

Score Point 1

In this response, the writer's thesis is that the best way to achieve a goal is "to make sure it's something you wanna do and will love." However, the progression of ideas is weak because the writer shifts abruptly to other themes ("Also don't give up and believe in your self"). Furthermore, the essay is underdeveloped and insubstantial because the student uses inappropriate examples ("Don't give up . . . long run"; "Most importantly believe in your self") that are vague and insufficient. In addition, awkward word usage and spelling ("your self," "wanna," "beliv," "defintly") create disruptions in the fluency of the writing. Holistically, this response represents a very limited writing performance.

every one has a goal its just will
every one accomplish this goal. for
instins I have many goals. one is
is to, Be a military metal worke
for the army. the others are
to de a paratruper wich Jump
off of plans for the army,
and to de a door guner / a
door guner is when you are in
a helicopter or a plan or in
a heat guting for the army.
for me to achieve my goals
is to do something, stop being
lazy and do something so what
I did is. I wond rotc and
my eletives or welding. so
the Best way to achieve a
goal is to stop being lazy
and do it.

Score Point 1

The writer offers a very weak thesis found at the end of the response (“the Best way to achieve a goal is to. Stop being lazy and do it”). However, the writer fails to maintain focus on the topic (“Be a military metal worke,” “de a paratrooper,” “de a door guner”), weakening the coherence of the writing. Additionally, the absence of a functional organizational structure causes the explanation to lose focus and results in a response that lacks clarity and direction. While the writer makes some attempts to develop a few thoughts (“a door guner is when you are in a helicopter or a plan or in a jeat shuting for the army”; “I jond rotc and my eletives or welding”), these attempts are confusing and very difficult to understand due to the variety and density of errors throughout the response. These errors are pervasive and include uncontrolled sentences and badly misspelled words, significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay. Moreover, issues with sentence boundaries, especially with randomly placed periods, create serious disruptions in the fluency of the essay. Overall, the writer produces a response that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the expository writing task and represents a limited writing performance.

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 thesis statement is weak or somewhat unclear. The lack of an effective thesis 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 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.

People give up on their dreams because they don't have the motivation that pushes them. Motivation can help you achieve your dream goals.

Have you ever dreamt of a difficult goal you really want to achieve? It takes a ton of motivation. Motivation keeps that dream shining bright in your brain. Without the motivation, your dreams will start to fade until you finally give up. Motivation is the reminder of how much you want your goals. Motivation pushes you. No matter how difficult the journey will be, with motivation you will get to your goal. Motivation is what picks you up when you have fallen. I dreamt of playing football as a girl. I always told myself, "Go for it. You want it? Work for it!" I worked hard to actually play good. With my own motivation, I completed 2 years of playing.

There will be bumps and bruises, and many times you will be discouraged. But with the right motivation, it will all pay off at the end.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer offers the thesis that “Motivation can help you achieve your dream goals” and organizes the response around answering a rhetorical question (“Have you ever dreamt of a difficult goal you really want to achieve”). Repetition, though, shows that the progression of ideas is not always logical or controlled (“Motivation keeps that dream”; “Without the motivation”; “Motivation is the reminder”; “Motivation pushes you”), causing minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. To develop the thesis, the writer uses superficial statements (“keeps that dream shining bright”; “start to fade”; “no matter how difficult the journey will be”; “picks you up after you have fallen”) that reflect little or no thoughtfulness. However, the example of “playing football as a girl” is minimally developed (“I worked hard to actually play good . . . I completed 2 years of playing”). Throughout the response, word choice is mostly general or imprecise (“a ton,” “worked hard,” “play good”) and does not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.

Goal setting is important for one to achieve success. To achieve a goal, you must practice and have perseverance. Practice is always important. When you practice, you get better. "Practice makes perfect" is a common term. For example, take a basketball player. Michael Jordan is a prime example of this. He was cut from his high school team, but practiced after and is now recognized as one of the greatest players of all time. This shows how practice leads to great things in life. Another reason to achieve goals is by using perseverance. When you persevere, you push through anything no matter the circumstances. One example of this is Martin Luther King Jr. Despite facing hatred and racism, he stood up for what he believed in, and changed the world in the process. This demonstrates an effect by perseverance by showing what it can do. In conclusion, achieving goals have many benefits. When you achieve a goal, you are bound for success.

Score Point 2

The writer of this response provides an identifiable thesis that is responsive to the prompt (“To achieve a goal, you must practice and have perseverance”). Throughout the essay, transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory and do not always show the relationships among ideas (“Another reason to achieve goals”; “Another example of this is”; “In conclusion”). To develop the ideas of practicing and persevering, the writer uses two examples, Michael Jordan and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr., and even though the examples are relevant, they are only partially presented (“He was cut from his high school team, but practiced after and is now recognized as one of the greatest players of all time”; “Despite facing hatred and racism, he stood up for what he believed in, and changed the world in the process”). This limits our understanding of the writer’s ideas. In addition, word choice is general and at times repetitive (“Practice is always important,” “When you practice,” “Practice makes perfect,” “but practiced”) Overall, this essay reflects a basic awareness of the expository purpose and a basic writing performance.

Achieving a goal is like planning a future that constantly changes. Then once you have it down your set.

First you want to think about your future and how it would affect you. Then you think about what sacrifices you have to make. Next think about what you need to study for or practices to achieve your goal. After that look at schools that can help you or family member that can support you. Later write you ideas down and motivate your self to achieve this goal. Then talk to your parents or re-search a way to get started.

So now that you have this done your goal is almost achievable. Next look for a school that best helps you reach your goal. Then in your future job you want to raise enough money to back you up. Also if friends are also going for the same goal, you can help each other out. Last keep your self motivated and confident.

Achieving a goal is like planning a future that constantly changes, but once you have it never let it go!

Score Point 2

After presenting the thesis that “Achieving a goal is like plaining a future that constantly changes. Then once you have it down your set,” the writer uses a step-by-step approach to explain how best to achieve a goal. However, the thesis is somewhat unclear and imprecise, interfering with the coherence of the essay. The development of ideas is minimal because the student moves quickly from one idea to the next without explaining or elaborating (“Next look for a school that best helps you reach your goal. Then in your future job you want to raise enough money to back you up”). In addition, the sentences tend to be rather simply constructed with little variation, and some sentences are awkward (“Also if friend are also going for the same goal, you can help each other out”). Holistically, this essay represents a basic writing performance.

The best way to achieve a goal is to work hard on it and know that you are capable of accomplishing a goal that you have set for yourself.

If you work hard on a goal that you have set you can achieve it. For example once I set a goal that I was going to buy some shoes but when I got to the store that they were selling them at I was 100 dollars short so I had to go and work with my dad at his job and we work on a house for like a week and by that time I was half way there. So I went to go and work with him another week and at the end of that week I had 150 more dollars and with that I bought a shirt and a pair of shoes.

The other part of achieving a goal that you have is to believe and have the mindset that you can accomplish your goal and if you keep that mindset you can achieve anything that you put your mind to.

That is the best way to achieve a goal. And the best way to achieve a goal is to work hard on your goal and have that mindset that you know your going to accomplish that goal.

Score Point 2

In this response, the writer presents the thesis in the introductory sentence (“The best way to achieve a goal is to work hard on it and know that you are capable of accomplishing a goal that you have set for yourself”). In an effort to keep the writing moving forward, the student uses several transitional phrases, but these are sometimes repetitive and generally too perfunctory (“so I had to go,” “and we work,” “So I went,” “and at the end of the day”) to support the flow of the essay. In addition, wordiness (“for example once I set a goal that I was going to buy some shoes but when I got to the store that they were selling them at”) causes minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. To develop the thesis, an anecdote about setting a goal to buy a pair of shoes is used to illustrate the writer’s point that you must work hard to achieve your goal. The use of this personal example is appropriate, but the writer offers little elaboration on the details that could have given the reader some insight into the writer’s ideas (“So I went to go and work another week . . . and with that I bought a shirt and a pair of shoes”). This results in an essay that is mostly superficial. In addition, the writer’s word choice is general (“work hard,” “achieve anything”) while sentences are long and only somewhat controlled (“for example once I set a goal that I was going to buy some shoes but . . . so I had to go and work with my dad at his job and we work on a house for like a week and by that time I was half way there”). Holistically, this essay represents a 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 thesis statement. Most ideas are related to the thesis 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 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.

You have to crawl before you can ever learn to walk. Taking baby steps is necessary to accomplishing the big picture; therefore, the best way to achieve a goal is by setting minor goals in between.

You made an investment and now owe the bank 10,000 dollars. It can be intimidating because of how much money you owe. If you were to split the \$10,000 up over time, you would be happier and not get discouraged as easily. When you complete a goal, your brain releases endorphines into your body which lighten your spirit. So, by setting multiple easily-attainable goals, you will also become more cheerful over time. You might even find that it seems quicker or easier to reach your main intent when you take it one step at a time. This is because you are not stressing about how far away you are from your original ambition, instead, you're focusing on how close you are to your smaller plans.

After time, these smaller projects add up to what you were bargaining for in the beginning. The best way to achieve a goal is by taking baby steps. Before you know it, you'll be walking; now, you're free to run!

Score Point 3

The writer establishes a clear thesis at the end of the first paragraph that the best way to achieve a goal “is by setting minor goals in between.” Most ideas are related to that theme (“If you were to split the \$10,000 . . . not get discouraged as easily”; “The best way to achieve a goal is to take baby steps”) and are focused on the topic specified in the prompt. Appropriate details (“So, by setting multiple easily-attainable goals . . . cheerful over time. You might . . . one step at a time”) add some substance to the essay, and the writing reflects some thoughtfulness and originality. Clear and specific word choice (“baby steps,” “big pictures,” “intimidating,” “discouraged,” “endorphins,” “intent,” “ambition”) contribute to the quality and clarity of the response. The writer also demonstrates adequate command of spelling, punctuation, and grammar, contributing to the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance.

Achieving a goal is what most people desire, but some don't grasp it. The reason for that is because believing in something doesn't mean it will come true. It takes way more than that. Achieving that goal is the result of many steps for that goal to come true.

First, you have to make a plan. A rocket ship isn't a rocket ship without blueprints. It has to be a strict, thought out plan. Don't also think you have to be alone. If someone wants to help you or you need help, by all means. The next step is to block all distractions in your way. Distractions can stop you from achieving a goal for a short, to a long period of time. Social media, parties, drugs, and drinking can all be considered as distractions.

Last but not least, you have to have will to make it happen. If you don't, that rocket isn't going very far. A rocket ship can't take off without gas. That gas will be your will and determination and if you have enough, I assure you, Mars won't be as far as you think.

Score Point 3

In this philosophical response, the writer presents the clear thesis that “Achieving that goal is the result of many steps for that goal to come true.” Relevant transitions (“First, you have to make a plan”; “Last but not least, you have to will it to happen”) aid in the logical progression of the essay. Furthermore, strong sentence-to-sentence connections (“Don’t also think . . . alone. If someone wants . . . by all means”) show the relationships among ideas. The writer’s response to the prompt is engaging (“A rocket ship . . . without blue prints. It has to be . . . plan”; “A rocket ship . . . gas. That gas . . . determination”) and exhibits a good understanding of the expository task. The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries, spelling, and usage conventions. Overall, this essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

The last day of school and achieving a goal are like the same because they're both great experiences. The best way to achieve a goal is by working hard and having a routine to stick to everyday.

The best way to achieve a goal is by working hard. Working hard doesn't just help you achieve your goal, but it also helps you have a good mindset towards life. For example, in the movie, "Gridiron Gang", juveniles played on a football team, but their football team was terrible because there were rivalry gang members. The coach really didn't care about winning he just wanted the team to get along with each other and stop fighting. After a couple of months of being around each other and working hard together, they started to create bonds, there were no more fighting and the football team started to win games. Working hard really changed the gang members. Working hard could help you become a better person.

Another good way to achieve a goal is by having a nice routine. Having a routine can keep you in check and keeping your mind right. For instance, in a New Zealand film, "Boy", Boy's father Alamein, buried a lot of money in their yard. Alamein didn't remember exactly where he buried it so him and Boy made a routine to where every three holes they made they'd switch. It took them quite a few weeks but they finally found it. Without that routine they would've gotten tired easily and would've found the money later.

Overall, without hard work and having a routine life could be very hard for many people.

Score Point 3

The writer establishes a clear thesis at the end of the first paragraph, stating that the best way to achieve a goal “is by working hard and having a routine to stick to everyday.” The cause-and-effect organizational structure emphasizing how working hard leads to positive results is adequately suited to the expository task. Specific and detailed examples (“in the movie, ‘Griddiron Gang’ . . . football team was terrible . . . rivalry gang members. The Coach . . . stop fighting”) add some substance to the essay. Sufficient development of both anecdotes (“‘Griddiron Gang’”; “‘Boys’”) enhances the quality of the essay. The conclusion sums up the idea that “without hard work and having a routine life could be hard for many people.” The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries, spelling, and conventions. Although there is some awkward word usage (“there were no more fighting”), these instances create few disruptions and do not detract from the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance.

We've all been there. You think of a big goal that you're really excited about. You want to lose 20 pounds. You want a promotion. You want to start eating healthy. But as time goes on that big idea gets lost in everyday drudgery. This is the problem with our goalmaking process. We think of an ideal and hold onto it without realizing the key to achieving our goals is splitting it up into bite sized pieces. For example, in my competitive swimming career my big picture goal is to get an olympic trials cut. That goal is way to huge to be applicable with my everyday life. So I split it into bite sized pieces. I think of little things I can do during my day that can help push ^{we} towards my goal. Maybe I stretch every night before bed. Maybe at swim practice I do three dolphin kicks off every wall instead of two. These small actions add up but at the same time they're not overwhelming. The reason they're not overwhelming is because they are small. This is the key to dreaming big and achieving our goals. Splitting an ideal into digestable pieces and then applying those pieces to your life. If we all do this there's no reason we can't get what we want.

Score Point 3

The writer offers a clear thesis that appears in the eighth sentence of the essay (“the key to achieving our goals is splitting it up into bite sized pieces”). Strong sentence-to-sentence connections (“You . . . healthy. But . . . drudgery. This . . . goalmaking process”) are sufficient to support the flow of the response and show the relationships between ideas. The writer uses appropriate examples (“little things . . . sketch every night . . . do three dolphin kicks . . . they’re not overwhelming”) and develops the essay in a manner that demonstrate a good understanding of the expository writing task. The student’s clear and precise word choice (“drudgery,” “bite sized,” “dolphin kicks,” “digestible”) contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay. In addition, the writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries, spelling, and punctuation, contributing to the effectiveness 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 thesis statement. All ideas are strongly related to the thesis 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 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.

"Work like there is someone working 24 hours a day to take it away from you," a quote by Will Smith. We all aspire to be something greater in our lives, but only those that believe in themselves can truly obtain it. The best way to achieve a goal is to work hard and learn from our mistakes.

First off, it is essential to continuously persevere towards one's goals. We have to push ourselves past our limits, especially when we feel like stopping. If it was easy, then it wouldn't be referred to as 'hard' work. The first step would be to establish one's dream and confirm that it isn't too ambitious, yet it requires discipline. For example, when I had an incoming piano competition, I needed to practice at least 2 hours a day because I felt that I wasn't prepared. Even on the days where I was occupied with other activities, I forced myself to rehearse. In the end, I was ecstatic and proud of my hard work, for I got the sweet taste of victory.

In addition, we need to learn from our mistakes in order to improve ourselves. The one who chooses to quit after a mishap will never be successful in life. The world should realize that failure and success go hand in hand, so we need to accept failure as a stepping stone to help us reach our full potential. For example, Beethoven the music composer, has written countless works, from symphonies to solo pieces. If he had given up because someone rejected his music or degraded him because he wasn't good enough, then we wouldn't be left with the wonderful masterpieces we have today.

In conclusion, having tenacity and being able to grow from our lack of success will enable us to obtain our goals. If we truly want something, we won't allow ourselves to rest until we exceed our goals. Furthermore, it is significant to remember that in order to achieve, we must believe.

Score Point 4

In this accomplished writing performance, the writer establishes a clear thesis from the outset (“The best way to achieve a goal is to work hard and learn from our mistakes”). All ideas are strongly related to this thesis, and the writer creates an essay that is unified and coherent. For instance, the two examples used in the response (“When I had an incoming piano competition”; “Lalo, the music composer”) are both about music, and both examples skillfully connect not only to the thesis but to the opening statement as well (“Work like there is someone working 24 hours a day to take it away from you”). The development of ideas is effective because details and examples are specific and well chosen. The writer discusses working hard, adding the personal anecdote of practicing for a piano competition and focusing on the hard work and effort put into preparation for the competition. Similarly, the next section is about learning from mistakes and not giving up. The example of Lalo Schifrin makes that point clear. While there are minor errors, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing. Word choice is purposeful and precise (“sweet taste of victory,” “stepping stone,” “tenacity”), strongly contributing to the quality and clarity of the essay.

Goals are like rubix cubes; they can be extremely challenging to figure out when there is no strategy involved. A plethora of individuals wish to complete their objectives, but are not sure how to. The finest way to accomplish a goal is to formulate a plan.

Achieving your dreams consists of being able to think of steps to assist you along the way. To illustrate, in the world-famous novel The Hunger Games, Katniss Everdeen is a teenager who, in an attempt to save her sister, volunteered to be a tribute in her country's annual Hunger Games. She along with fellow district tribute, Peeta Mellark, are forced to compete against twenty-two other individuals in an ultimate survival showdown where only one person can reign victorious. Towards the completion of the games, only Katniss and Peeta remain alive, and they must quickly create a strategy in order for both of them to continue living; with Katniss' quick mind, she uses poisonous berries to convince the game creators that they will both die if they can't win together. Reluctantly, the game creators allowed the two of them to live, but it would have been impossible if Katniss didn't form a plan. In a separate instance, my dance team recently went to an NDTC (National Dance Team Championship) competition at Walt Disney World in Florida. We went up against 15 teams in our division, each one of them has been there before. Although we only had twenty-five days to clean our routine, we ended up as 8th in the entire United States. Without our plan consisting of bi-weekly and in-sched practice, not looking at other teams, and saving energy throughout the dance, we never would have been able to place in our first NDTC competition.

Without planning ahead, obtaining achievements would be exceedingly difficult. If people can strategize their dreams, they can easily be one step closer to figuring out the rubix cubes that are their goals.

Score Point 4

The writer offers the clear thesis that “The finest way to accomplish a goal is to formulate a plan” and strongly maintains focus on this idea throughout the essay. Both examples, the fictional novel *The Hunger Games* and the anecdote of a National Dance Team Championship competition, tell the story about achieving a goal through planning. This helps unite the writing into a cohesive whole. In addition, both of these examples are thoroughly explored (“Reluctantly, the game creators allowed the two of them to live, but it would have been impossible if Katniss didn’t form a plan”; “Without our plan consisting of biweekly and in-school practice, not looking at other teams, and saving energy throughout the dance, we never would have been able to place in our first NDTC competition”) and add substance to the essay, significantly adding to our understanding of the writer’s ideas. Word choice is purposeful and precise (“Goals are like rubix cubes,” “ultimate survival showdown,” “strategize their dreams”) while sentences are varied and well controlled, further enhancing the effectiveness of this accomplished writing performance.

"The reason most people never reach their goals is that they don't define them, or ever seriously consider them as believable or achievable" ~ Denis Waitley

Many people have something they strive for in their life, but because they don't set a specific goal and create a plan to reach that goal, they lack the motivation it takes to fulfill their desires. The most efficient way of achieving a goal is by knowing exactly what and how you want to accomplish your dream and having the determination to do whatever it takes to get there.

One of the biggest goals I ever set for myself was to make an A on the algebra final exam in eighth grade. At first I had thought it was a hopeless cause even trying to improve that wretched D- I had in the one class I decided going to every day. The numbers and equations and formulas swam around in my head until I felt that I would explode. Then one day my mother sat down and explained the severity of my situation. She said if I didn't get my grade up to passing, I would have to quit playing volleyball, my one true passion that kept me functioning properly in my hectic life. From that moment on, I knew exactly what I was going to do. Not only was I going to pass this class, I was going to get an A on the upcoming final exam to prove to my mom I could completely overcome this difficulty. I created a plan to reach my goal, setting checkpoints for myself that I was determined to pass. I studied every night, even if just for a little bit after practice. I did every single piece of homework and I finally went to my teacher to ask for help on concepts I struggled with. Over time I began to see how easy algebra was when I had a positive mindset, and I learned to understand and appreciate the subject.

It was one of the best days of my life when I learned I received an A on the exam. The feeling of accomplishment and seeing how proud my mom was made me realize how much my effort and determination paid off. By setting a clear goal and knowing exactly how you are going to achieve it and having the motivation to reach your goal, you can accomplish anything.

Score Point 4

The writer of this essay establishes the clear thesis that “The most efficient way at achieving a goal is by knowing exactly what and how you want to accomplish your dream and having the determination to do whatever it takes to get there.” Throughout the essay, the progression of ideas is logical and well controlled because meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance its flow (“At first I had thought it was a hopeless cause”; “Then one day my mother sat down and explained the severity of the situation”; “From that moment on, I knew exactly what I was going to do”). The student’s unique experience of striving to achieve an A on the algebra final exam serves as an extended piece of evidence to develop the student’s thesis. This well-chosen example allows the writing to be connected in interesting ways (“Not only was I going to pass this class, I was going to get an A on the upcoming final exam to prove to my mom I could completely overcome this difficulty”). In addition, this personal example is thoroughly explored (“that wretched D- I had”; “I would have to quit playing volleyball”; “I created a plan to reach my goal”; “I studied every single night”). The word choice used is purposeful (“wretched,” “The . . . formulas swam in my head,” “volleyball, my one true passion”), allowing the writer’s relatable and authentic voice to be heard throughout the essay. In addition, sentences are varied and well controlled, and there is a consistent command of the conventions of the English language which contribute to the effectiveness of this accomplished writing performance.

Every time New Year's rolls around, most people make resolutions, like going to the gym more often or eating less junk food. However around 99% of the time, people are unable to completely follow through with their goals. So how does that 1% manage to achieve their goals? They have a clear goal. The best way to achieve a goal is to start out small and create a plan.

One major conflict that many seem to run into when trying to achieve a goal is that their goals take a long duration of time to achieve. One classic example of this issue is the "I want abs" goal. So many people expect that just a couple of exercises will turn their flabs into abs, but the truth is that getting abs can take months or years depending on the intensity of the exercises. Once people realize this, they find themselves losing hope of ever achieving their goals, which leads to quitting. Instead of setting a goal that takes a long stretch of time to achieve, it would be wiser to set smaller goals, or short-term goals. This way, every small goal achieved will feel like a victory. In the case of exercise, instead of setting one giant goal of getting abs, one can set goals pertaining to the number of reps per set or lifting a certain weight. As these small achievements accumulate, achieving the long term goal becomes more and more possible.

To help stay on track when achieving a goal, it is essential to make a plan and stay organized. By setting up a schedule, people are forced to persevere and adhere to their goals. This is because a plan will detail what steps need to be taken in order to achieve the goal. For instance, if a student's goal is to get an A on every test, they can either take two approaches: study without a plan or study with a plan. Studying with a plan that details what needs to be studied, how it needs to be studied, and when it needs to be studied is much more reliable than just choosing to study without a clear vision in mind. By looking at a clear, thought-out plan, not only will there be more motivation when it comes to achieving a goal, but it also ensures the greatest efficiency and clarity.

Through setting short-term goals and developing a plan of action, any goal can be achieved with enough perseverance and effort. Having a clear vision of a goal is, without a doubt, an important part of success.

Score Point 4

The writer provides the clear thesis that “The best way to achieve a goal is to start out small and create a plan.” Using a philosophical approach, the essay is very well organized around this concept. Strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the natural progression of ideas (“To help stay on track when achieving a goal, it is essential to make a plan and stay organized. By setting up a schedule, people are forced to persevere and adhere to their goals. This is because a plan will detail what steps need to be taken”) and clearly show how they relate to each other. The ideas of starting out small and having a plan are effectively developed because the details and examples are well chosen and thoroughly explained (“By looking at a clear, thought-out plan, not only will there be more motivation when it comes to achieving a goal, but it also ensures the greatest efficiency and clarity”). Specific word choice adds a layer of sophistication to the writing (“flabs into abs,” “find themselves losing hope,” “feel like a victory”), and sentence structures are varied, purposeful, and well controlled (“Instead of setting a goal that takes a long stretch of time to achieve, it would be wiser to set smaller goals, or short-term goals. This way, every small goal achieved will feel like a victory”). Overall, this essay reflects an accomplished writing performance.