



English II

Persuasive Scoring Guide

April 2021

English II

Persuasive Prompt

WRITTEN COMPOSITION: Persuasive

Read the following quotation.

Don't spend so much time chasing your future
that you run over your present.

—*Carlos Wallace*

Some people focus so much on the future that they do not enjoy the present. Others spend so much time living in the present that they do not prepare for the future. Carefully consider this statement.

Write an essay stating your opinion on which is more important: preparing for the future or focusing on the present.

Be sure to —

- state your position clearly
- use appropriate organization
- provide specific support for your argument
- 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 persuasive 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 issue specified in the prompt, but the writer's position is missing, unclear, or illogical. The writer may fail to maintain focus on the issue, 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 argument is ineffective and unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position 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 persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the persuasive purpose and does not establish a tone appropriate to the task. 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.

I would focus on my future more than the present because the present will soon be the past and the future will always be the future because you want a better future than the present and sometimes you're going to have to be in the present and not thinking about the future all the time because like the quote says "Don't spend so much time chasing your future that you run over your present" because that quote is very true if you don't watch out what happens now because what you do in the present will affect your future a whole lot like if you get in trouble with the law you could have a bad future because it could mess up your whole career. The future really depends on your present and past.

Score Point 1

The writer provides the unclear position that “I would focus on my future more . . .” The absence of a functional organizational structure and the lack of transitions (“ . . . the present will soon be the past and the future will always be the future because you want a better future than the present and sometimes you’re going to have to be in the present and not thinking about the future all the time . . .”) make the writer’s essay difficult to follow. The writer’s reasons (“you want a better future than the present and sometimes you’re going to have to be in the present and not thinking about the future all the time”) are vague and illogical and do not support the assertion that it is better to focus on the future. Furthermore, the writer’s limited word choice (“the future will always be the future,” “watch out what happens now,” “you could have a bad future”) and uncontrolled sentences (the entire response consists of two sentences, one of which is a run-on) significantly limit the effectiveness of this very limited writing performance.

I think you should think about what happen
ing in the present more than the future.
Once you will do think about the future
you will mostly likely start making
plan for it but once you plan it
could always change from what happening in
present. Than you have to make another
which just a waste of time because
you will never know what could happen we
can only predict it could go our way. I
believe just go with the flow. First you
got succeed from what happening
right now. Once you do that improve
your situation tired to get the
out of everything. Socialize to people
you don't make as much friend you
can. The more you socialize the more
opportunities you get from succee.

Score Point 1

The writer offers the position that “I think you should think about what happening in the present more than the future.” Although most of the writer’s ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, the inclusion of extraneous information about socializing leading to opportunity (“Socialize to people you don’t make as much friend you can. The more you socialize the more opportunity you get from succee”) weakens the coherence of the essay. The absence of sentence-to-sentence connections (“... once you plan it could always change from what happening in present. Than you have to make another which just a waste of time because you will never know what could happen we can only predict it could go our way. I believe just go with the flow. First you got succeed from what happening right now. Once you do that improve your situation tired to get the out of everything”) causes the writer to present ideas in a random, illogical way, making the essay difficult to follow. The writer’s reasons and evidence (“you will mostly likely start making plan for it”; “you will never know what could happen we can only predict it could go our way”; “Socialize to people you don’t make as much friend you can”) are vague and insufficiently developed and do not defend the idea that one should think about the present more than the future. Awkward and uncontrolled sentences (“Once you do that improve your situation tired to get the out of everything”) limit the effectiveness of the essay. Furthermore the writer has little command of sentence boundaries (“Than you have to make another which just a waste of time because you will never know what could happen we can only predict it could go our way”) and serious, persistent errors (“mostly likely,” “you got succeed from what happening,” “as much friend,” “succee”) cause disruptions in the fluency and interfere with meaning in this very limited writing performance.

We should start to prepar for the future. YOU never know what's gonna happen but you should always be prepar for it, no matter what if it's gonna be good things or bad things that will come to you life. We have to think about what's gonna happen on the future. If you is doing something good Righ now you neve know if your next move it's gonna be some good or something wrong you will only know once you is doing it. But if you did something wrong you neve know if the pay back it's gonna be a good one or a bad one.

Score Point 1

The writer takes the position that “We should start to prepar for the future.” However, repetition of the idea that “We have to think about what’s gonna happen on the future” causes serious disruptions in the flow of the essay. The development of ideas is weak because instead of providing reasons and evidence to support the position, the writer offers the vague assertion that people should prepare for the future because you cannot predict if your “next move” will be “some good or something wrong.” The writer’s lack of control of spelling (“prepar,” “think,” “Righ,” “neve”) and usage conventions (“If you is doing something good,” “once you is doing it”) creates disruptions in the fluency and interferes with meaning. Overall, this response represents a very limited writing performance.

In my opinion I think that focusing on the present is more important. The present time is so much important than the future because the present represent whats gonna happen in your future life and it also affect what happens with your career and everything else. If your life isnt being focused then focoused on present then your future is looking bad and could end up bad. All the choices you make in your future looks horrible and nothing that you do matters and there is no point in worrying about your future it also makes your future good. So if you focusing on what happens today it could change what happens tomorrow. It could leave you with some good opportunities for the future and it could lead you to a successful career and good work.

Score Point 1

The writer presents the unclear position that “The present time is so much important than the future because the present represent whats gonna happen in your future life and it also affect what happens with your career and everything else.” Although most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, the lack of a clear position and the abrupt shifts from idea to idea (“If your life isnt being focused then focoused on present then your future is looking bad and could end up bad all the choices you make in your future looks horrible and nothing that you do matters and there is no point in worrying about your future it also makes your future good”) weaken the coherence of the essay. The writer’s reasons and evidence (“your future is looking bad,” “your future looks horrible,” “there is no point in worrying about your future it also makes your future good”) are too vague to support the idea that “the present time” is more important than the future. The writer’s limited word choice (“whats gonna happen,” “what happens,” “could end up bad,” “makes your future good,” “what happens tommorow”) impedes the quality and clarity of this very 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 persuasive task.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, but the writer’s position is weak or somewhat unclear. The lack of a clear, effective position 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 argument is superficial and largely unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position 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 persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer’s word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the persuasive purpose but does little to establish a tone appropriate to the task. 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.

Preparing for the future is more important than focusing on the present. The few years of the present you don't enjoy comes with with a rewarding many years of happiness. The future will treat people better if they prepared for it than those who didn't.

People who live on a calendar seem to be more productive. They are more productive, and got their time managed. but it is stressful. Living this life style is hard for a normal person and that is why not many people live like this.

Those years people lived not the most happy person comes with live a joyfull life. After working hard and preparing for this, now you can finally retire. The person can finally travel the world and live the best live possable.

Those years the person spent working hard and preparing can finally enjoy life. Knowing how much time was put in makes it better.

Score Point 2

The writer takes the position that “Preparing for the future is more important than focusing on the present” and uses a cause-and-effect organizational structure to present the argument that preparing for the future leads to greater productivity and a more joyful life. Although the essay does reflect a little thoughtfulness (“Living this life style is hard for a normal person and that is why not many people live like this”), the writer’s reasons (“They are more productive, and got their time managed, but it is stressful”; “After working hard and preparing for this, now you can finally retire . . . travel the world and live the best live possable”) are too partially presented to support the idea that focusing on the future leads to positive outcomes. Awkward and only somewhat-controlled sentences (“Those years people lived not the most happy person comes with live a joyfull life”; “Those years the person spent working hard and preparing can finally enjoy life”) further weaken the effectiveness of this basic writing performance.

In my opinion focusing on the present is the most important thing because you have to be wary of your surrounding and and all your work.

To begin with, you have to be focus on the present to be vigilant of your surroundings. Then when you are driving or walking you could be secure of all the dangerous obstacles. Also when you are alone in a room with someone else stay on guard and keep an eye to what the other person is doing. Also you should be focused in the present when you are at work.

Second of all, you have to be focus on the present when you are at work because you are going to have to finish all the work your boss gives you. After that you could do whatever you want but if you don't finish then you will not get paid. Also you will have to like the job you are in to be focus on the present.

In retrospect, being focused on the present is important because it protects you of your surroundings and it help you out at work.

Score Point 2

The writer offers the position “In my opinion focusing on the present is the most important thing because you have to be wary of your surrounding and and all your work.” However, the inclusion of irrelevant information to support the idea in the third paragraph (“After that you could do whatever you want but if you don’t finish then you will not get paid . . .”) interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay. Perfunctory transitions (“To begin with,” “Second of all,” “In retrospect”) list instead of show the relationships among ideas. The writer’s evidence is too partially presented and not always appropriate (“ . . . when you are driving or walking you could be secure of all the dangerous obstacles”; “. . . when you are alone in a room with someone else stay on guard”; “. . . if you don’t finish then you will not get paid . . . you will have to like the job you are in”) to support the idea that being wary and hard-working depends on focusing on the present. The writer demonstrates only a partial command of sentence boundaries and punctuation (“Then when you are driving or walking you could be secure of all the dangerous obstacles”; “Also you will have to like the job you are in”), creating minor disruptions in the fluency of this basic writing performance.

Many people spend too much time either planning for the future or only living in the present. Both are important to living a healthy, happy life.

If you spend too much time living in the present in a couple years you might wish you had spent time planning for your future. Whereas if you spent too much time planning for your future you might wish instead of doing all this planning you had lived a little bit more in the present.

Though both doing both is important you need to have a healthy balance of both in order to enjoy life to its fullest capacity of enjoyment. If you live in the moment but still save some time to help further and better your future. And if you spend so much time planning for your future you should stop and have some fun hang out with friends, go on a road trip or a trip.

In order to enjoy your life and the present you need to spend some time planning for the future.

Score Point 2

The writer takes the weak position that “Many people spend too much time either planning for the future or only living in the present. Both are important to living a healthy, happy life.” However, it is unclear which argument the writer is supporting. The writer first presents the drawbacks of focusing too much on either the present or the future (“If you spend too much time living in the present . . . you might wish you had spent time planning . . . if you spent too much time planning . . . you might wish . . . you had lived a little bit more in the present”) and then offers advice on how to maintain balance between the two perspectives (“If you live in the moment but still save some time to help further and better your future. And if you spend so much time planning for your future you should stop and have some fun . . .”). However, the writer’s ideas are too partially presented to effectively support the position that a balanced perspective leads to a “healthy, happy life.” Sentences are awkward and only somewhat controlled (“Though both doing both is important you need to have a healthy balance of both in order to enjoy life to its fullest capacity of enjoyment. If you live in the moment but still save some time to help further and better your future.”), creating minor disruptions in the fluency of this basic writing performance.

It's more important on Focusing on the Present. Because you will worry less and also think less.

Focusing on the Present is the best way to live life because you won't be thinking about what's going to happen next. You also get to learn a leason as you go.

For example in this show called "living single" their was a girl named kyla. Kyla was a good girl she always kept her grades up and she never did anything fun like go to parties, Football games like normal highschool kids. Because she was so scared something mad would happen that would mess up her collage opportunity. She couldn't live life because she was so busy preparing herself for the future. She didnt realize that she really has no control over the future. And her mom told her it's okay to live a little. Make a few mistake because will learn from them and stop trying to live the future and live the present. You worry less when you focus on the Present.

Score Point 2

The writer offers the position that "It's more important on Focusing on the present. Because you will worry less and also think less." However, the development is minimal because, instead of providing reasons that support how focusing on the present causes one to "worry less and also think less," the writer offers an inappropriate example ("... in this show called 'living Single' ... a girl named Kyla ... never did anything fun like go to parties, Football games like normal highschool kids") and a formulaic response ("make a few mistake because will learn from them and stop trying to live the furture and live the present") that demonstrate only a limited understanding of the persuasive writing task. Furthermore, the writer's use of sentence fragments ("Because you will worry less and also think less"; "Because she was so scared something mad would happen that would mess up her collage opportunity"; "And her mom told her it's okay to live a little") demonstrates only a partial command of sentence boundaries, and errors in spelling ("leason," "collage," "furture," "prsent") and grammar ("on Focusing on," "their was a girl," "something mad," "a few mistake," "because will learn") at times create minor disruptions in the fluency and meaning 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 persuasive task.
- ❑ The writer establishes a clear position. Most ideas are related to the position and are focused on the issue 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. The argument is largely convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and appropriate.
- ❑ 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 persuasive 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 persuasive purpose and establishes a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are reasonably varied and adequately controlled, contributing for the most part 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.

Preparing for the future is very important because later on you can be ready for anything and be ahead of the majority of people. Not everyone wants to put their time and energy in preparing for the future, but people that do are prepared for what's to come. School, for instance, you have the option to take AP classes, also known as advance classes that are college level. My cousin Helen, took AP classes in high school in preparation for college and was accepted into a top university. If it wasn't for her preparation for her future, then she wouldn't have been so successful. In doing so, one can be ahead of everyone. An example of this was when I was planning to join the cross country team in my freshman year. I had planned to join a while ago and just so I could be ahead, and more fit, I worked out the whole summer before cross country season began. Due to me preparing early, I earned a spot on the varsity team. Preparing for the future is easier said, than done. But, at the end, you'll see that going through all of that trouble is worth it. In conclusion, preparing for the future is vital because you are for anything and as well, ahead of everyone.

Score Point 3

The writer takes the position that “Preparing for the future is very important because later on you can be ready for anything and be ahead of the majority of people.” The writer appropriately organizes the essay around the two ideas introduced in the position by presenting two anecdotes: how the writer’s cousin achieved success by taking AP classes in high school and how the writer’s preparation led to a spot on the school’s cross-country team. Sufficient sentence-to-sentence connections (“I had planned to join a while ago and just so I could be ahead, and more fit, I worked out the whole summer before cross country season began. Due to me preparing early, I earned a spot on the varsity team”) clearly show how preparation helped both the writer and the cousin to reach their goals. The argument is largely convincing because the anecdotes, in which Helen’s decision to take AP classes led to acceptance into a top university and the writer’s decision to work out led to a spot on the cross-country team, are specific and appropriate to support the idea that preparing for the future leads to success. The writer concedes that “Preparing for the future is easier said, than done” and addresses this opposing view with the claim that “at the end, you’ll see that going through all of that trouble is worth it,” demonstrating a good understanding of the persuasive writing task. Reasonably varied and adequately controlled sentences (“Not everyone wants to put their time and energy in preparing for the future, but people that do are prepared for what’s to come”; “My cousin Helen, took AP classes in high school in preparation for college and was accepted into a top university”) contribute for the most part to the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance.

In my opinion focusing on the present is far better than planning on the future. Living in the now connects people together and there's far less stress to it.

These days most people are consumed by all the thoughts of what needs to be done or what they're going to do later. Focusing on the present brings people to the moment together. Take summer camps for instance, a group of people together "for a" week or more. These campers focus on whatever game or activity they're doing. They're enjoying those moments as they're happening instead of thinking about another day and time. In these moments the campers get to bond and make memories which connects them. If they would've been focusing on the future that wouldn't have happened.

Secondly focusing on the present reduces stress about things that are later in life. I get super stressed in school about work or projects that are due. If I have to also add colleges, SAT, and other exams I would be even more stressed. Instead just focusing on the little things that are due is less stressful. The less stress the better I feel, and the better I do in life too.

Preparing for the future can prepare yourself and while that is true it also means there's a chance you miss something special happening now. In the end it's just better to focus on the now instead of the later. Connecting with people and less stress far outweighs being prepared anyways. Let tomorrow deal with tomorrow and you deal with today.

Score Point 3

The writer offers the position “In my opinion focusing on the present is far better than planning on the future. Living in the now connects people together and there’s far less stress to it.” Using an appropriate compare-contrast organizing structure, the writer first argues that during summer camp, campers focus on the present, allowing them to “bond and make memories.” The writer contrasts this hypothetical example with the assertion that focusing too much on academics results in stress. The writer develops these reasons by elaborating on how the attendees of summer camp “focus on whatever game or activity they’re doing,” which leads to bonding and creating memories, and arguing that “focusing on the little things” instead of worrying about schoolwork, tests, and college reduces stress. The writer addresses the opposing viewpoint that “Preparing for the future can prepare yourself” with the argument that “while that is true it also means there’s a chance you miss something special happening now.” Although somewhat awkward, this rhetorical technique demonstrates a good understanding of the persuasive task. While some errors are evident (“would of,” “wouldn’t of,” “outways”), they do not affect the clarity of this satisfactory writing performance.

The future is an unopened gift. It is wrapped neatly with a bow on top. This gift is wrapped because it does not need to be opened yet. It will be opened someday. In the meantime, focus on the present so one will be prepared to open this gift.

The present is the key to putting one's life together. My parents always said to me, "Focus on yourself now. Train yourself to be great right now, and your dreams will come true." A quote like this really shows how the dreams one wants for themselves in the future will come true if you focus on your present life. Even if one thinks their dreams will come no matter what, it is still necessary to build oneself up right now. The sooner the better.

The present is the time to make memories. I went on a trip to Hawaii last summer. Before I left, my parents told me, "Take lots of pictures!" Throughout that trip, I barely took any pictures. I was too busy focusing on what is to come, rather than being happy in the moment. Now, in the future, I am less satisfied with the trip because I can't remember what all had happened.

The present is like snow. It brings happiness and joy. Don't stay inside when the snow comes. Enjoy the moment, the present, and one will be happy for an eternity.

Score Point 3

The writer takes the position that one should "focus on the present so one will be prepared to open this gift." The use of several different comparisons throughout the response ("The future is an unopened gift," "The present is the key," "The present is like snow") results in minor lapses in focus, but the essay is coherent overall due to the writer's unifying idea that parental advice ("Focus on yourself now . . . and your dreams will come true"; "Take lots of pictures!") has influenced the writer to appreciate the present. The writer sufficiently develops the idea-based argument that the present is "the key to putting one's life together" by presenting the claim that one should "build oneself up right now. The sooner the better." The writer further elaborates on the importance of making memories by lamenting a trip to Hawaii where the writer was "too busy focusing on what is to come" to memorialize the trip with pictures, and as a result is "less satisfied with the trip." Sentences are reasonably varied and adequately controlled ("A quote like this really shows how the dreams one wants for themselves in the future will come true if you focus on your present life"; "Enjoy the moment, the present, and one will be happy for an eternity"), contributing for the most part to the effectiveness of this satisfactory writing performance.

Many people focus all their time on the present and later will not know what to do in the upcoming future. Preparing for the future is more important because one can help and impact others as well as developing a stable life for oneself.

When preparing for the future one can take steps to create a life where they are benefiting other peoples' well-being instead of wasting time in the present doing nothing to improve themselves or others. Former President Obama prepared himself early on by receiving an education and spending his time wisely to create a better future. In the end his efforts payed off when he became the president of the United States. President Obama then impacted so many lives and developed a better future for himself.

When getting ready for the future one may have a more stable life. By receiving an education and working hard they can improve their lives significantly. By learning and studying hard this can result in high-paying jobs, which can support oneself financially. The outcome of this is not worrying about financial issues and living a happy and fulfilling lifestyle.

By making preparations for the future one may be able to obtain a stable life and help impact lives of themselves and others to a larger degree. Getting ready for the future will lead to a better position in life.

Score Point 3

The writer takes the position that “Preparing for the future is more important because one can help and impact others as well as developing a stable life for oneself.” Using an appropriate cause-effect organizing structure, the writer elaborates on the two ideas presented in the position by showing how working towards the future results in a positive impact on others and achieving financial security that enables one to live a “happy and fulfilling” life. Sufficient sentence-to-sentence connections (“Former President Obama prepared himself early on by receiving an education and spending his time wisely to create a better future. In the end his efforts payed off when he became the president of the United States. President Obama then impacted so many lives and developed a better future for himself”) support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas. The writer’s development of ideas is sufficient, and the argument is largely convincing because the evidence (“President Obama then impacted so many lives and developed a better future for himself”; “By learning and studying hard this can result in high paying jobs, which can support oneself financially”) the writer uses appropriately supports the position. Although some spelling errors are evident (“benefiting,” “receiving,” “payed,” “fulfilling”), they create few disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity 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 persuasive task.
- ❑ The writer establishes a clear position. All ideas are strongly related to the position and are focused on the issue 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 highly effective. The argument is forceful and convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and well chosen.
- ❑ The essay is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may choose to recognize the complexities of the issue, consider opposing or alternate points of view, use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer’s word choice is purposeful and precise. It reflects a keen awareness of the persuasive purpose and maintains a tone appropriate to the task. 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.

From movies like *Back to the Future* to cartoons like *Meet the Robinsons*, it is shown that the future is something the world values. For the most part, our futures are seen in its most ideal light, and that's why we prep our best for it. Preparing for what's to come next is most favorable over focusing on the present because without it it would be impossible to set goals and progress out of old habits.

There is no arguing that goal setting is what sets the path to where you want to be in life; with that being said, it is important to comprehend that preparing for the future and goal setting go hand in hand. Take Serena Williams for instance. As a young girl living in a poor conditioned neighborhood, she grew up loving the sport of tennis and knew she could be something great with her burning passion, but, in order to do that, she had to put in work beforehand to achieve that dream. As time progressed, Serena got older, stronger, faster, and morphed into the ultimate Queen of the Court we love today. The actions Serena made in advance to achieve her goal is what made her a champion, not living in the moment.

In addition, preparing for the advancement of something possesses the ability to progress a body of people out of old ways; a prime example of this is Dr. Martin Luther King Jr. Dr. King is an American activist that fought for equal rights for all people through peaceful acts of protest. Ever since he was a small boy, he was aware of the segregated tensions in the US, and when he grew up he planned to change it with his words of reform. One of MLK's famous speeches was the "I Have a Dream" speech stating what he sees for the future, but, most importantly, the action necessary beforehand to make this dream true. A drastic change in society would not occur overnight, so Dr. King prepped in advance and eventually made the US a better place for people of all colors.

In conclusion, preparing for the future is what gets us from point A to point B in any situation; without it, the world would just sit still and look pretty.

Score Point 4

The writer offers the position that "Preparing for what's to come next is most favorable over focusing on the present because without it it would be impossible to set goals and progress out of old habits." The writer maintains focus on personal and social progress by organizing the essay around two examples of people who have succeeded due to their preparation for the future: Serena Williams and Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr. The writer thoughtfully develops these reasons by connecting the idea of preparing for the future ("... knew she could be something great... she had to put in work beforehand to achieve that dream"; "... the 'I Have a Dream' speech stating what he sees for the future, but, most importantly, the action necessary beforehand to make this dream true") with the end results of personal achievement and social advancement ("Serena got older, stronger, faster, and morphed into the ultimate Queen of the Court we love today"; "Dr. King... eventually made the US a better place for people of all colors"). The writer's purposeful and precise word choice ("burning passion," "morphed," "ultimate") reflects a keen awareness of the persuasive purpose by emphasizing the link between goal-setting and progress. For these reasons, this response demonstrates an accomplished writing performance.

As a modern society, we spend an excessive amount of time trying to make everything perfect, but we forget that sometimes the best moments of our lives happen because we were able to let go of the cookie cutter expectations of how life is supposed to go. Being brave enough to live life as it happens, as well as letting go of the anxiety inducing expectations of life, creates the ultimate success; happiness. Focusing on the present is the way to live the happy and fulfilled life that we all dream to have.

If you spend your entire life tiptoeing around, constantly fearful of making the wrong decision, you are missing out on the opportunity and experiences that can come from taking a risk. Letting fear dictate every decision you make will hold you back from achieving your greatest ambitions! Trying to live your life according to rigid and unforgiving expectations is the reason why anxiety is so common, now more than ever. Last year, I started highschool with the expectation that I would take overwhelmingly difficult classes with ease, have no friend drama, succeed in sports, and get enough sleep every night all while being in the top one percent in my grade. Looking back now, it sounds painfully unrealistic, but at the time, it felt like my only option, so I worked myself until I physically and mentally broke. I was disgusted with myself for not being able to achieve everything I set out to do and every day I told myself I wasn't good enough. Having gone through this eye opening experience, I realized how miserable I was making myself by focusing so hard on my future, that my life that year had completely passed me by. I learned how important it is to enjoy living every day and not worry about unrealistic standards.

Focusing on how life is "supposed" to go takes away your freedom to be brave and experiment with your goals in life. Having flexibility and improvising will dramatically improve the quality of your life, and prevent you from breaking down over imperfections in life. The only way to be fulfilled in life is to enjoy it, and stop obsessing over what's to come in the future.

Score Point 4

The writer provides the clear position that "Focusing on the present is the way to live the happy and fulfilled life that we all dream to have." Strong sentence-to-sentence connections ("Looking back now, it sounds painfully unrealistic, but at the time, it felt like my only option, so I worked myself until I physically and mentally broke. I was disgusted with myself for not being able to achieve everything I set out to do and every day I told myself I wasn't good enough. Having gone through this eye opening experience, I realized how miserable I was making myself by focusing so hard on the future, that my life that year had completely passed me by") clearly show the destructive effect of focusing too much on the future at the expense of the present. The writer includes one well-chosen anecdote ("Last year I started highschool with the expectation that I would take overwhelmingly difficult classes with ease, have no friend drama, succeed in sports, and get enough sleep every night . . . I was disgusted with myself for not being able to achieve everything I set out to do"), resulting in a thoughtful and engaging essay that includes the writer's unique experience to create a forceful argument that "rigid and unforgiving expectations" for the future lead to a negative outcome. The writer's purposeful and precise word choice ("cookie cutter expectations," "tiptoeing," "painfully unrealistic," "eye opening") emphasizes the damaging effects of being focused on the future. Purposeful, varied, and well-controlled sentences ("If you spend your entire life tiptoeing around, constantly fearful of making the wrong decision, you are missing out on the opportunity and experiences that can come from taking a risk. Letting fear dictate every decision you make will hold you back from achieving your greatest ambitions") enhance the effectiveness of this accomplished writing performance.

Most people hear the word "future" and go on to think about flying cars and time travel. People get so caught up preparing for the future that they never stop and ask, when is the future no longer the future? It's important to slow down and focus on the present, because without it there is no future, and experiences made now are what prepares us for when the future becomes now.

Living in the present is what allows for a future. Looking back on history, if people hadn't focused on the present, we wouldn't be the world we are today. Take the paleolithic or "stone age" for example. Paleolithic people were nomadic, never staying in the same place for too long. They lived this way in order to survive. Without having a set home, bad bacteria could not grow, food couldn't run out, and natural disasters could not wipe out whole populations with the available "technology" of the paleolithic period, if they had settled to create societies, preparing for the future by creating a safe, constant environment for children and later generations, they wouldn't have lived through disasters and epidemic, thus wiping out the human race when it had barely begun.

Experiences made in the present give us the ability to solve problems and live life in the future. Children always want to just grow up, but if they didn't live in the moment, playing with friends, going to birthday parties, buying their first toy with their own money, they wouldn't learn responsibilities like cooperation and commitment, and they wouldn't learn how to have fun, laugh a little, be proud and excited, or make any of those one of a kind, childhood memories that can never be replaced. Children need those experiences in order to learn from the future, and the mistakes they make as a child will prove by them, aiding them in the future.

Flying cars and time travel will never happen if we don't focus on the present. Experiencing and learning from life as it is, allows for the future, and the ability to live in it. It is important to savor the present, making it memorable and full of mistakes to learn from and look back on. You must slow down and truly be yourself when the future becomes your present, cause you can't turn back the clock and try again once you get there.

Score Point 4

The writer establishes the complex position that “It’s important to slow down and focus on the present, because without it there is no future, and experiences made now are what prepares us for when the future becomes now.” The writer skillfully develops the position by focusing on two aspects of human behavior: the evolutionary view that focusing on the present helped humans survive as a species and the developmental view that children’s experiences in the present aid them later in life. The essay is unified as the writer introduces the idea that “most people hear the word ‘future’ and go on to think about flying cars and time travel” at the beginning of the essay and then returns to this idea in the conclusion (“Flying cars and time travel will never happen if we don’t focus on the present”). The development of ideas is highly effective because the writer connects the idea of human survival during the Paleolithic period (“Paleolithic people were nomadic . . . Without having a set home, bad bacteria could not grow, food couldn’t run out, and natural disasters could not wipe out whole populations”) with the importance of meaningful experiences in children’s lives (“if they didn’t live in the moment, playing with friends, going to birthday parties, buying their first toy with their own money, they wouldn’t learn responsibilities like cooperation and commitment, and they wouldn’t learn how to have fun . . . or make . . . childhood memories”), clearly illustrating both the evolutionary and developmental benefits of a focus on the present. The writer concludes by instructing the reader that “You must slow down and truly are yourself when the future becomes your present, cause you can’t turn back the clock and try again once you get there,” demonstrating a thorough understanding of the persuasive writing task. The writer’s purposeful, varied, and well-controlled sentences (“With the available ‘technology’ of the Paleolithic period, if they had settled to create societies, preparing for the future by creating a safe, constant environment for children and later generations, they wouldn’t have lived through disasters and epidemic, thus wiping out the human race when it had barely begun”), along with the overall strength of the conventions, contribute to the effectiveness of this accomplished writing performance.

Life is a tree that one must plant, nurture, and guide. If left by itself, the tree might still grow, but not nearly as tall or strong as a tree planted in good soil, watered every day, and is thoroughly planned for. It's crucial to plant a seed in the present so that the future can have a strong foundation and grow to its full potential. Preparing for the future is more important than focusing on the present because stability and success are planned for, and the future prepared for today will eventually become the present of tomorrow.

If the present was the only thing that mattered, then numerous influential historical events would have never taken place, including the American Revolution. The patriots in America could have just gone about their lives and been complacent with the tree they already had, but they knew a better future for not only them but also generations to come was not possible without planting the seed of independence. These revolutionaries planned for a war against the world's strongest empire, knowing that their present would be gritty and harsh, most likely ending in death. But without their preparation, the U.S. as we know it today would not exist, and the future they dreamed of and fought for is now our present. History-altering events such as the Revolutionary War don't just occur, they need a seed to be grown and nurtured with thorough planning and strategy.

Although the present is obviously very relevant to a person's life, the future will eventually become that present, and planning now can have massive benefits later. The tree of the future has the potential to grow taller than anything and bear the sweetest fruits, but only if it is planted and nurtured first.

Score Point 4

The writer establishes the clear position that “Preparing for the future is more important than focusing on the present because stability and success are planned for, and the future prepared for today will eventually become the present of tomorrow.” The essay is skillfully crafted around the thoughtful comparison of life to “a tree that one must plant, nurture, and guide . . . so that the future can have a strong foundation and grow to its full potential.” The writer sustains focus on the tree comparison by presenting the example of the American Revolution, which “was not possible without planting the seed of independence” and was “nurtured with thorough planning and strategy.” Meaningful transitions (“If the present was the only thing that mattered, then numerous influential historical events would have never taken place”; “But without their preparation, the U.S. as we know it today would not exist”) enhance the flow of the essay by clearly showing the relationship between preparation and the successful Revolution. The specific and well-chosen reasons and evidence (“These revolutionaries planned for a war against the world’s strongest empire”; “the future they dreamed of and fought for is now our present”) result in a forceful and convincing argument. The writer recognizes the opposing viewpoint that “the present is obviously very relevant to a person’s life” and responds that “the future will eventually become that present, and planning now can have massive benefits later,” demonstrating a thorough understanding of the persuasive writing task. The writer’s purposeful and precise word choice (“crucial,” “complacent,” “gritty and harsh,” “bear the sweetest fruits”) clearly illustrates how a focus on the future resulted in a success for Revolutionary America. Holistically, this essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

