



Grade 6

Reading Language Arts

Constructed-Response
Scoring Guide

Spring 2024

General Information

Beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, reading language arts assessments include an extended constructed response, or essay, at every grade level. They also include short constructed-response questions. Students are asked to write the essay in response to a reading selection and write in one of two modes: informational or argumentative.

This State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR[®]) constructed-response scoring guide provides student exemplars at all score points for extended constructed-response and short constructed-response prompts from the STAAR reading language arts grade 6 operational test. The prompts are presented as they appeared on the test, and responses were scored based on the rubrics included in this guide, which were developed with the input of Texas educators. Essays were scored using a five-point rubric. Short constructed responses in the reading domain were scored using a two-point prompt-specific rubric. Short constructed responses in the writing domain were scored using a one-point rubric.

The five-point rubric for extended constructed responses includes two main components: organization and development of ideas and conventions. A response earns a specific score point based on the ideas and conventions of that particular response as measured against the rubric. The annotation that accompanies each response is specific to that response and was written to illustrate how the language of the rubric is applied to elements of the response to determine the score the response received. Extended constructed responses are scored by two different scorers, and the scores are summed to create a student's final score, so students may receive up to 10 points for their essay.

The responses in this guide are actual student responses submitted online during the testing window. To protect the privacy of individual students, all names and other references of a personal nature have been altered or removed. Otherwise, the responses appear as the students wrote them and have not been modified.

**Grade 6 Reading
Passage with Extended
Constructed Response and
Short Constructed Response**

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

Passage 1:

Best friends Chip and Luther are exploring the Old Place, an abandoned farm in their town.

from The Last Wild Place

by Rosa Jordan

- 1 Beyond the bramble-filled pasture was ten acres of woods. Once Chip and Luther had tried to explore back there, but they hadn't gone more than a dozen yards when they hit a swampy area and sank up to their knees in mud. Then, while trying to get their feet out of the mud without losing their sneakers, they'd seen a coral snake. Luther had wanted to look at it up close, but Chip knew it was poison by the order of the colored bands. He'd taught Luther this verse on the spot: "Red by black, don't worry, Jack. Red by yellow, kill a fellow."
- 2 After that Chip and Luther referred to the woods as "the Jungle" and never went back. Instead, they checked out other things on the Old Place, like rabbit burrows in the thorn patch, the orange tree where a mockingbird always built her nest, and the barn owls that nested in the barn loft.
- 3 There were two good ways to count rabbits. Either you could climb the rickety ladder up into the loft and spot them from above, or you could lie in the grass in what had been the old cow pen and wait for the rabbits to come out into the open. The original Miz Rabbit wasn't afraid of the boys, and maybe she told her babies that these humans wouldn't hurt them. The young ones were wilder than Miz Rabbit, but if Chip and Luther put out a few handfuls of grain and waited, they would come nibble at it.
- 4 The only trouble with trying to count rabbits, either from the ground or the loft, was that there were so many and they looked so much alike. All were either white like Miz Rabbit or brown like their swamp rabbit papa. Since they hopped all over the place, after a while you'd get mixed up, not sure which ones you had counted and which ones you hadn't.
- 5 Chip and Luther first climbed up into the loft to check out the view. This part of South Florida was about as flat as land could get. Looking through holes where boards had fallen off the walls, they could see the fields all around, as far as the Wilson place in one direction and, in the other direction, as far as Chip's house and the highway. What they didn't see on this particular afternoon was a lot of rabbits. A few dozen at most. Normally they'd see way more than that on a nice day like this.
- 6 After about fifteen minutes in the loft, Luther started sneezing from all the dust. "Let's get out of here," he said. "If we put out grain, more will come."
- 7 They climbed back down the ladder and went into the old cow pen. Luther dug into his pocket for the goat feed he'd brought along for just this purpose. After making a line of feed on the ground, the two boys sprawled on the grass and waited. Within a few minutes rabbits started hopping up. Soon there were about thirty-five, in all sizes, nibbling at the grain.

- 8 "Not as many as usual," Luther commented.
- 9 "More will come," Chip said. More always did if they waited long enough.

From THE LAST WILD PLACE by Rosa Jordan, Peachtree Publishing Company, Inc. © 2008.

Passage 2:
A Wave of a Day

- I watch him like I always have,
on his surfboard along the horizon.
A wave carries him closer to shore:
His surfing skills are mesmerizing.
- 5 I run to meet him at the water's edge—
my brother, Xavier, visiting from college—
thrilled for him to finally share
all of his surfing knowledge.
- 10 He jumps off his board on the shore
of sunny Galveston Beach.
"All right, Abby, are you ready to learn
all that I'm able to teach?"
- 15 "Yes!" I respond loudly in the wind—
so happy that he's back home with me!
"Well, first," he laughs, "there's something to know
before venturing out to the sea.
- 20 "As you lie on the board, move your arms this way,"
—I copy his quick forward motion.
"Then you pull the water back with your hands,
and you'll feel propelled through the ocean.
- "I'll be here if you need me," he assures,
ruffling my hair with his hand.
"But I think you're ready to catch your first wave!
I'll watch you right here from the sand."
- 25 It's my turn, at last! I race to the deep,
with encouraging shouts from my brother.
Out in the water, I send a big smile—
it's been a day like no other.

Grade 6 Reading Extended Constructed Response

Prompt

Read the excerpt from *The Last Wild Place* and the poem “A Wave of a Day.” Based on the information in both selections, write a response to the following:

Explain how Chip in the excerpt from *The Last Wild Place* and Xavier in the poem “A Wave of a Day” behave **SIMILARLY** to each other.

Write a well-organized informational composition that uses specific evidence from the selections to support your answer.

Remember to —

- clearly state your controlling idea
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- use evidence from the selections in your response
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar

Manage your time carefully so that you can —

- review the selections
- plan your response
- write your response
- revise and edit your response

Write your response in the box provided.

Grade 6 Reading Passage with Extended Constructed Response

Informational Writing Rubric

Score Point	Organization and Development of Ideas
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="412 415 1433 512">• Controlling idea/Thesis is clear and fully developed The controlling idea/thesis is clearly identifiable. The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow.<li data-bbox="412 512 1433 716">• Organization is effective A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and conclusion is evident. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the controlling idea/thesis. The sentences, paragraphs, or ideas are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways.<li data-bbox="412 716 1433 919">• Evidence is specific, well chosen, and relevant The response includes relevant text-based evidence that is clearly explained and consistently supports and develops the controlling idea/thesis. For pairs in grades 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from both texts. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.<li data-bbox="412 919 1433 1089">• Expression of ideas is clear and effective The writer’s word choice is specific, purposeful, and enhances the response. Almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer’s ideas and contribute to the overall quality of the response and the clarity of the message.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li data-bbox="412 1089 1433 1224">• Controlling idea/Thesis is present and partially developed A controlling idea/thesis is presented, but it may not be clearly identifiable because it is not fully developed. The focus may not always be consistent and may not always be easy to follow.<li data-bbox="412 1224 1433 1392">• Organization is limited A purposeful structure that includes an introduction and conclusion is present. An organizational structure may not be consistent and may not always support the logical development of the controlling idea/thesis. Sentence-to-sentence connections and clarity may be lacking.<li data-bbox="412 1392 1433 1596">• Evidence is limited and may include some irrelevant information The response may include text-based evidence to support the controlling idea/thesis, but it may be insufficiently explained, and/or some evidence may be irrelevant to the controlling idea/thesis. For pairs, evidence is drawn from at least one of the texts. The response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.<li data-bbox="412 1596 1433 1764">• Expression of ideas is basic The writer’s word choice may be general and imprecise and at times may not convey the writer’s ideas clearly. Sentences and phrases are at times ineffective and may interfere with the writer’s intended meaning and weaken the message.

1	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Controlling idea/Thesis is evident but not developed A controlling idea/thesis is present but not developed appropriately in response to the writing task.• Organization is minimal and/or weak An introduction or conclusion may be present. An organizational structure that supports logical development is not always evident or is not appropriate to the task.• Evidence is insufficient and/or mostly irrelevant Little text-based evidence is presented to support the controlling idea/thesis, or the evidence presented is mostly extraneous and/or repetitious. Explanation of any evidence presented is insufficient and may be only vaguely related to the writing task. For pairs in grades 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from only one text. The response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.• Expression of ideas is ineffective The writer's word choice is vague or limited and may impede the quality and clarity of the essay. Sentences and phrases are often ineffective, interfere with the writer's intended meaning, and impact the strength and clarity of the message.
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• A controlling idea/thesis may be evident.• The response lacks an introduction and conclusion. An organizational structure is not evident.• Evidence is not provided or is irrelevant. The response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.• The expression of ideas is unclear and/or incoherent. <p><i>Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Development and Organization of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.</i></p>

Grade 6 Reading Language Arts
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Score Point	Conventions
2	<p>Student writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sentence construction• punctuation• capitalization• grammar• spelling <p>The response has few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.</p>
1	<p>Student writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including limited use of correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sentence construction• punctuation• capitalization• grammar• spelling <p>The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.</p>
0	<p>Student writing demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including infrequent use of or no evidence of correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sentence construction• punctuation• capitalization• grammar• spelling <p>The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.</p>

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

They both know stuff and they both teached a person about what they know and they are also good at what they do

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

The writer of this response presents a controlling idea, but it is not developed (“They both know stuff and they both teached a person about what they know”). The response lacks an introduction and a conclusion. In addition, organization, development, and evidence are not evident. Overall, the response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

Response 2

The story The Last Wild Place and the story A Wave of a Day are similar because both stories have a setting where makes the characters excited and also have the characters have skills like in the story The Last Wild Place the setting makes the characters excited cause they like the woods and rabbits and the story A Wave of a Day abby and her brother are at Galveston Beach and he teaches her how to surfboard and she learns how to do it

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

The writer of this response attempts to present a controlling idea (“The story The Last Wild Place and the story A Wave of a Day are similar because both stories have a setting where makes the characters excited and also have the characters have skills like in the story The Last Wild Place”), but this idea does not respond to the prompt. The introduction consists of only the controlling idea, and no conclusion is present. The writer compares the settings from each text but not the characters. Organization and relevant evidence are lacking. The expression of ideas is unclear because the writer does not connect or clarify why the settings make the characters excited and how that would make Xavier and Chip similar to one another. The response displays an overall lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

Score Point 1

Response 1

they both teach their siblings something,xhavier knows is teaching abby to surf and chip taught luther about the coral snake tto know if its venomous or not

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

The writer of this response presents the controlling idea that “they both teach their siblings something.” The introduction is limited to only the controlling idea, and a conclusion is not present. An organizational structure is not evident, and little text-based evidence is presented to support the controlling idea (“xhavier knows is teaching abby to surf and chip taught luther about the coral snake tto know if its venomous or not”). The writer’s word choice is limited, resulting in an expression of ideas that is ineffective. Overall, this response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Errors include a lack of capitalization of proper nouns (“xhavier knows is teaching abby to surf and chip taught luther about the coral snake”), a missing apostrophe (“its”), a misplaced comma, and lack of punctuation. There are many errors in proportion to the length of the response, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Response 2

They are simler cause they both are knolugbol and they teach poeple like Xavier taught his brother how to sursbord. And chip taught them how to get more rabbit.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

The writer presents a controlling idea (“They are simler cause they both are knolugbol and they teach poeple”), but it is not developed in response to the writing task. Organization is minimal as no introduction or conclusion is present, and the paraphrased evidence is insufficiently explained. In addition, the expression of ideas is ineffective because the writer’s word choice is limited (“how to get more rabbit”), which impacts the strength and clarity of the message. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Errors include missing capitalization (“chip”), incorrect grammar (“taught” instead of “taught” and a missing comma in a compound sentence), and misspellings (“simler,” “knolugbol,” “poeple,” “sursbord”). The response is brief and has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Score Point 2

Response 1

They take care of the ones the around them and tell them what to do.
Evidence of A Wave of a Day is "I'll be here if you need me".
Evidence of from the las wild place is the Chip taught Luther on what to spot if is poison.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, the writer presents the controlling idea that "They take care of the ones the around them and tell them what to do," but this idea is not developed in response to the writing task. The organizational structure is weak, as the writer simply provides a small amount of evidence from each selection without any explanation. This response lacks an introduction and conclusion. The only text-based evidence provided is a quotation from "A Wave of a Day" ("I'll be here if you need me") and very brief paraphrased information from "The Last Wild Place" ("Chip taught Luther on what to spot if is poison"). Additionally, the writer's word choice is limited, resulting in an expression of ideas that is ineffective. The response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions with several errors, including missing capitalization ("the las wild place"), sentence construction errors with awkward syntax ("the Chip taught"), and misspelled or missing words ("las," "if is poison"). Despite these errors, the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

Response 2

i think chip and xavir are similar to ech other beacus they both do things that other people wouldnt do like, how xavir knows alot of skills on surf boarding "All right, Abby, are you ready to learn all that i'm able to teach?" and how chip explores the wild " while trying to get their feet out of the mud without losing their sneakers, they'd seen a coral snake." and soem poeple would be scared of coming to as top and seeing a snake or surfing in the ocean, thats how i think they are similar

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer presents the controlling idea that "i think chip and xavir are similar to ech other beacus they both do things that other people wouldnt do." An organizational structure with a limited introduction and conclusion is evident but does not consistently support logical development of the controlling idea. The evidence provided is insufficiently explained ("like, how xavir knows alot of skills on surf boarding 'All right, Abby, are you ready to learn all that i'm able to teach?' "; "and how chip explores the wild ` while trying to get their feet out of the mud without losing their sneakers, they'd seen a coral snake' ") although this evidence does offer limited support for the controlling idea. Before the conclusion the writer provides a small amount of additional development of the controlling idea ("and soem poeple would be scared of coming to as top and seeing a snake or surfing in the ocean"). The expression of ideas in this response is basic, since word choice is imprecise at times ("both do things that other people wouldnt do"; "xavir knows alot of skills"; "chip explores the wild") and does not convey the writer's ideas as clearly as intended. This response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Errors include missing punctuation due to the absence of a period at the end of most sentences, a lack of capitalization at the beginning of each sentence and for proper nouns ("i," "xavir," "chip"), missing apostrophes ("wouldnt," "thats"), and spelling errors ("xavir," "beacus," "alot," "seen," "soem," "poeple"). These many errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

Score Point 3

Response 1

Both of the storys have siblings who love each other, and will help them learn somthing new.

In the first story the older brother (Chip) saved his younger brother (Luther) by telling him something about the coral snake they saw.

In the second story the older borthor (Xavier) teaches his younger sister (Abby) how to surf.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

The writer presents a controlling idea in the opening sentence (“Both of the storys have siblings who love each other, and will help them learn somthing new”). The introduction is limited to only the controlling idea, and the writer does not include a conclusion. A minimal organizational structure is evident (“In the first story,” “In the second story”), and while a small amount of evidence is included, the explanation of this evidence is insufficient (“In the first story the older brother [Chip] saved his younger brother [Luther] by telling him something about the coral snake they saw”; “In the second story the older borthor [Xavier] teaches his younger sister [Abby] how to surf”) and not developed. The expression of ideas is ineffective due to the writer’s limited word choice (“help them learn somthing new,” “telling him something about”). Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer displays a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions throughout the response. Although there are a few minor spelling errors, these errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

Chip and Xavier are similar because they both like advenchers. Surfing is like an advencher because you go out into the ocean not know what awaits and you just go with the waves, in Chips case he goes to a barn (The Old Place) and looks for all the rabbits with Luther and has been to the forest where the got stuck in mud. In A Wave of a Day he belives in his little sister that she can surff quiet as good as he does, in The Last Wind Place Chip belives that more rabbits will come with time. Chip and Xavier may be from different stories, but they both have the same intenchens with belife.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer presents the controlling idea that “Chip and Xavier are similar because they both like advenchers.” The organizational structure is purposeful and also includes a conclusion (“Chip and Xavier may be from different stories, but they both have the same intenchens with belife”) but does not always have strong sentence-to-sentence connections and clarity (“Surffing is like an advencher because you go out into the ocean not know what awaits and you just go with the waves, in Chips case he goes to a barn [The Old Place] and looks for all the rabbits with Luther and has been to the forest where the got stuck in mud”). Evidence is drawn from both texts, but some of this evidence is unclear in its relevance to the stated controlling idea (“in The Last Wind Place Chip belives that more rabbits will come with time”). The expression of ideas is somewhat basic since sentences and phrases at times interfere with the writer’s intended meaning. Overall, this response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of conventions, including a comma splice and a missing apostrophe in a possessive (“you just go with the waves, in Chips case he goes to a barn”), a grammatical error (“go out into the ocean not know what awaits and you”), and spelling errors (“similar,” “advenchers,” “Surffing,” “belives,” “belife”). Although there are several errors, the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Response 3

They are alike because they both like doing things like fun activities during there free time chip likes going outdoors and seeing or counting rabbits and xavier likes going outdoors on the beach to surf because he has some cool tricks and he is a really good surfer he could even teach someone to surf and he is teaching his sister. That could be something else they have in common xavier was teaching his sister, abby how to surf and chip was teaching luther in the first paragraph about the poison and said something to help luther remember, "Red by black, don't worry, Jack. Red by yellow, kill a fellow." is what chip said. Chip and xavier I would say like helping people and both like to do activities maybe they like to do more activities that involve being outside or something like nature. I think that Chip and Xavier act or behave similar by doing some activities outside and helping people. I think they like activites because chip was outside with luther counting bunnies and xavier was surfing. This tells me that chip likes to hang out with luther and do activities like counting bunnies and that xavier likes to be around his sister abby and like to help her learn how to surf or teach or some more thing it also tells me he is a surfer and loves it.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer presents the controlling idea that "Chip and xavier I would say like helping people and both like to do activities." The writer includes an introduction as well as a conclusion ("This tells me that chip likes to hang out with luther and do activities like counting bunnies and that xavier likes to be around his sister abby and like to help her learn how to surf or teach or some more thing it also tells me he is a surfer and loves it"). The organizational structure supports the development of the controlling idea as sentences and ideas are logically connected. The relevant, paraphrased, and quoted evidence that the writer includes, along with sufficient explanation, consistently supports the development of the controlling idea ("chip likes going outdoors and seeing or counting rabbits and xavier likes going outdoors on the beach to surf because he has some cool tricks and he is a really good surfer he could even teach someone to surf and he is teaching his sister"; "chip was teaching luther in the first paragraph about the poison and said something to help luther remember, 'Red by black, don't worry, Jack. Red by yellow, kill a fellow' "). The expression of ideas is mostly clear based on sentences and phrases that sufficiently convey the writer's ideas, and as a result, this response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Errors include multiple instances of incorrect sentence construction, missing or misplaced periods and commas throughout the response, multiple instances of missing capitalization of proper nouns ("xavier was teaching his sister, abby how to surf and chip was teaching luther . . . and said something to help luther remember"), and grammatical errors ("likes to be around his sister abby and like to help her"; "or teach or some more thing"). There are many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing.

Score Point 4

Response 1

After reading both passages, Chip in the excerpt "from The Last Wild Place," and Xavier from the poem, "A Wave of a Day," I realized how similarly they behave. First of all, they both provide some sort of knowledge to the other character. "Luther had wanted to look at it up close, but Chip knew it was poison by the order of the colored bands. He'd taught luther this verse on the spot: "Red by black, don't worry, Jack. Red by yellow, kill a fellow." From the excerpt. In comparison of similarity, "There's something you should know about venturing the sea." Is what xavier says before teaching his younger sister how to surf. In conclusion, Chip and Xavier both teach the other character(s) in the passage something new.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer presents a controlling idea in the introduction ("they both provide some sort of knowledge to the other character") and further clarifies and reinforces this idea in the conclusion ("In conclusion, Chip and Xavier both teach the other character[s] in the passage something new"). An organizational structure is evident but limited. Sentence-to-sentence connections are included by the writer ("First of all," "In comparison of similarity," "In conclusion"), but the introduction and conclusion are minimal. The response is only partially developed and contains text-based evidence from each selection that is not sufficiently explained ("He'd taught luther this verse on the spot: 'Red by black, don't worry, Jack. Red by yellow, kill a fellow.' "; " 'There's something you should know about venturing the sea.' Is what xavier says before teaching his younger sister how to surf"). Additionally, the expression of ideas is basic, with word choice that is mostly general ("I realized how similarly they behave"). This response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The response has a few errors with capitalization of proper nouns ("luther" and "xavier"), but the errors do not impact the overall clarity of the writing.

Response 2

Chip and Xavier behave similiary because they are both mature and smart/wise.

First they teach something to some one so it means that they are smart and wise.

I think Chip and Xavier are both mature. I think this of Chip bacuse he taught

Luther that "red by black, don't worry, Jack. Red by yellow, Kill a fellow" because they saw a sake and Chip knew it was posionous. I think this of Xavier because he is an older brother so he has to set a good example for his sibiling and he also teaches Abby how to surf in the ocean.

They are both smart/wise because Chip said to put more grain out so more

bunnies will come out and later a few more bunnies came out but not all and Chip said to Luther to wait becuse more bunnies will come out. I think that Xavier was smart/wise is becuse he came back from college, knows how to surf and gave some advice to abby to learn how to surf and comferted her since she was the slitest scared.

This is why I think Chip and Xavier so behave similer. They are mature, smart,

and taught someone so thats why I think they are similer.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer presents a clear controlling idea ("Chip and Xavier behave similiary because they are both mature and smart/wise"). The introduction is limited to only the controlling idea. A conclusion is provided, and an organizational structure is evident as the writer devotes a paragraph to each of the ideas in the controlling idea. Relevant text-based evidence from each of the selections is included to support the idea of maturity ("I think this of Chip bacuse he taught Luther that 'red by black, don't worry, Jack. Red by yellow, Kill a fellow' because they saw a sake and Chip knew it was posionous. I think this of Xavier because he is an older brother so he has to set a good example for his sibiling and he also teaches Abby how to surf in the ocean") as well as intelligence and wisdom ("They are both smart/wise because Chip said to put more grain out so more bunnies will come out and later a few more bunnies came out but not all and Chip said to Luther to wait becuse more bunnies will come out. I think that Xavier was smart/wise is becuse he came back from college, knows how to surf and gave some advice to abby to learn how to surf and comferted her since she was the slitest scared"). This evidence is clearly explained and consistently supports and develops the controlling idea. Additionally, the writer's word choice is purposeful and almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer's ideas. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The response includes sentence construction errors (“I think that Xavier was smart/wise is becuse he came back”), punctuation errors due to missing commas (“First they teach something to some one,” “he is an older brother so he has to set a good example”), a missing apostrophe in a contraction (“so thats why I think they are similer”) and several spelling errors (“some one,” “beause,” “sake” instead of “snake,” “becuse,” “comferted,” “slitest” instead of “slightest,” “similer”). Although there are several errors, the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Score Point 5

Response 1

There is a lot of evidence that shows how similar Chip's and Xavier's behavior is. One of which is in the beginning when Chip knew how to tell if a snake was dangerous by their color. Then Chip teaches Luther how to tell if it is dangerous so that means Chip is like teaching and helping Luther. This is similar to how Xavier is a pro in surfing and is going to teach Abby how to surf just like how Chip taught Luther. Next up when Chip is confident that more rabbits will come, and Xavier is confident that Abby can catch her first wave. Those are a few reasons why I think Xavier and Chip behave similar.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer presents an implied controlling idea by suggesting that both Chip and Xavier are teaching something to someone else ("Xavier . . . is going to teach Abby . . . just like how Chip taught Luther"). The response contains both an introduction and a conclusion ("Those are a few reasons why I think Xavier and Chip behave similar"). The organizational structure is appropriate to the task, as the writer provides relevant paraphrased evidence from both selections that supports the implied controlling idea ("One of which is in the beginning when Chip knew how to tell if a snake was dangerous by their color. Then Chip teaches Luther how to tell if it is dangerous so that means Chip is like teaching and helping Luther. This is similar to how Xavier is a pro in surfing and is going to teach Abby how to surf"; "Chip is confident that more rabbits will come, and Xavier is confident that Abby can catch her first wave"). Finally, the concluding statement refers back to the writer's idea that Chip and Xavier are similar. Word choice is purposeful and enhances the quality of the response ("evidence," "dangerous," "confident"). Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Although some awkward sentence construction ("so that means Chip is like teaching and helping Luther") and grammatical errors ("thats shows," "Those are a few reasons why I think Xavier and Chip behave similar") are present, overall the response has few errors, and these errors do not impact the overall clarity of the writing.

Response 2

Chip and Xavier behave very similarly to each other.

One way they are similar is that they both are very smart. Chip knew not to touch the coral snake and knew it was poison by remembering, "Red by black, don't worry Jack. Red by yellow, kill a fellow." Which could have saved his and Luther's life. Xavier acts similarly to Chip because instead of having knowledge about snakes, he has knowledge about the ocean and surfing. He teaches Abby where exactly to put your arms when surfing and teaches her how to surf. They are both very smart and are also good at teaching.

They are also both very patient. Chip knew that in order for more bunnies to come, he would have to be calm and composed. He knew it would take a while for them to trust him, not just one minute. Xavier acts similarly because Abby knew close to nothing about surfing and he required lots of patience to teach her how to surf.

Chip and Xavier are both very smart and patient, and love sharing it with their friends.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer's controlling idea is clearly stated in the conclusion ("Chip and Xavier are both very smart and patient, and love sharing it with their friends"). The organization is effective, as the writer's focus is consistent throughout, and the evidence used from both texts to support the controlling idea is specific, well-chosen, and clearly explained ("Chip knew not to touch the coral snake and knew it was poison by remembering, 'Red by black, don't worry Jack. Red by yellow, kill a fellow.' Which could have saved his and Luther's life"; "Xavier acts similarly to Chip because instead of having knowledge about snakes, he has knowledge about the ocean and surfing. He teaches Abby where exactly to put your arms when surfing and teaches her how to surf"; "They are also both very patient. Chip knew . . . he would have to be calm and composed. He knew it would take a while for them to trust him"; "Xavier acts similarly because Abby knew close to nothing about surfing and he required lots of patience to teach her how to surf"). The expression of ideas is clear and effective. The writer's word choice is specific and purposeful and enhances the response ("could have saved his and Luther's life"; "where exactly to put your arms when surfing"; "calm and composed"; "knew close to nothing"; "required lots of patience to teach her"). Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The response has a few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Condition Code: Off Topic

During the scoring process, the Automatic Scoring Engine (ASE) assigns a “condition code” to student responses that are determined to be non-scorable by the ASE. The following student responses included language patterns that reflected an off-topic response and received the associated condition code. Responses that do not address the prompt receive a score of zero.

Response 1

i was going to go on a rolar coster and it loked really scare and I didn't want to go but my sister told me that it well be allright so i went.

Response 2

A bat's night out

In an old cave in missouri, there live hunderds of fruit bats. There was a young bat, named Benita. (Ben.) Ben lived with her father and mother, Shakita and Omarii.

It was a beutiful night when the whole colony went out to find food. Ben is flying with her friend, Kalani, when they spotted a whole bush of berries. “Whoa, Kalani, look!” ben shouted. Just then Kalani came flying to her friend, “We hit a jackpot! Let’s go tell the others.”

While flying to her parents, Ben spotted something unusual. It was a peculiar looking bug. She went to tell her parents about it when it just disappered. Ben flew to her parents as fast as her wings could take her yelling, “Mom, Dad! I just saw a small little creature, and then it disappered!” “Show me.” Shakita said. Ben took her mom to the creature, and there it was. “That’s a spider.” Shakita commented. “What’s that?” Ben said, pointing to a clear sticky object behinde the spider. “That’s it’s home. It is called a web.” Shakita added.

The next night, Ben flew back to the spider to show Kalani. “Look at this!” “What is that?” Kalani screamed. “It’s a spider. It eats bugs by catching it with it’s web. My mom told me all about it.” Ben said.

“Cool!” Kalani added.

They ket visiting the spider, feeding it bugs. One night they spotted a lump on the web. “What is that?” Kalani asked. “It is the spider’s egg.” Ben added. “Where’s the spider?” Kalani asked. “Trying to find more food for the baby spiders.” Ben said.

A couple nights later, the egg was gone. there were nothing but baby spiders **EVERYWHERE**. Then Ben and Kalani were happy to keep feeding the new spider babies Along with the ptoud, new mom spider.

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

The Age of Language

1 In a tiny Chinese restaurant, the menu on the wall includes some Chinese characters. At one table, a family speaks Spanish. At another table, the waiter taps his foot along to an internationally popular French song. This kind of scene is common in some parts of America. After all, the United States has been called “a nation of immigrants.” While English may be the language used most commonly in school, the truth is that many Americans are bilingual. This means they can communicate in two languages!

2 Even for those who did not grow up speaking multiple languages, learning a second language is powerful. It helps people communicate with others from different countries. It also helps people improve their memory and problem-solving skills, according to several research studies. Since scientists suggest that language learning is easiest for young children, learning a second language at a younger age seems like a great place to start.

Younger Is Better

3 The brain of a baby is built to learn languages. As toddlers, humans take in words and remember the way they are accented even before they speak. Accents are different pronunciations of the same word, such as saying “heah” instead of “here.” People who learn words in a second language often carry over accents from the original language they grew up hearing. This can dramatically change the sound of words, potentially creating challenges between speaker and listener.

4 The ability to form accents is easiest for young kids. In a 1975 study, children ages 6–15 learning English as a second language were given a speaking test. The younger children scored highest in the ability to correctly form a particular accent. Learning a new language at a young age may help adults avoid the confusion that can arise from different accents.

But Can Young Kids Understand?

5 There are some experts, however, that argue maturity is more important to the learning process than age. Professor Sorace of the Bilingualism Matters Centre claims young children are not as prepared as older learners for studying in a classroom. Still, a sense of teamwork and excitement can drive kids at any age to success.

Continuing to Learn

6 Children can use different methods to learn. Younger kids may not understand relationships between countries, but their desire to communicate can be increased by a single person instead. For example, they can build a friendship through exchanging letters with a real person from a different country in a pen pal project.

7 Another method is called “immersion.” Immersion imitates the experience of a person moving to a new country. Studies show that foreign students who were put in an all-English-speaking environment learned English as a second language quickly. Students in an immersion program find themselves surrounded by a different language, and they often are unable to fall back on the comfort of the language they normally

use. They must use problem-solving skills to communicate even when they do not have the words. Once they have learned many new words, children in an immersion program can absorb grammar rules by hearing those words used a certain way over and over again.

- 8 In the classroom version of immersion learning, everything is spoken in the new language. This includes asking to use the bathroom or talking with friends during breaks. Immersion makes the new language useful. It also gives more opportunities for children to practice their skills.

A Future of Possibility

- 9 Strategies and abilities aside, learning a new language changes people. In today's world, many Americans no longer have to travel internationally to be exposed to different cultures. By learning languages at a young age, kids can acquire a new way to communicate. They may also increase their interest in people from different countries and cultures around the world. Finally, language learners even develop their memory and thinking skills as they learn a new language.

Grade 6 Reading Short Constructed Response

Prompt

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

What is the most likely reason the author wrote the selection? Support your answer with evidence from the selection.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 2

Exemplar:

A complete response will provide one of the following explanations about the author's purpose for writing the selection.

- The author wants to inform about the importance and benefits of language learning at a young age.
- The author wants to describe the many ways young people can learn new languages.

A complete response will include at least one piece of supporting evidence from the text.

A complete response may include, but is not limited to, the following evidence cited or paraphrased from the text:

- *"Since scientists suggest that language learning is easiest for young children, learning a second language at a younger age seems like a great place to start."* (paragraph 2)
- *"Learning a new language at a young age may help adults avoid the confusion that can arise from different accents."* (paragraph 4)
- *"Strategies and abilities aside, learning a new language changes people."* (paragraph 9)
- *"By learning languages at a young age, kids can acquire a new way to communicate."* (paragraph 9)
- *"They may also increase their interest in people from different countries and cultures around the world."* (paragraph 9)
- *"Finally, language learners even develop their memory and thinking skills as they learn a new language."* (paragraph 9)

Evidence is accurately used to support the response.

The response and the evidence to support it are based on the text.

Grade 6 Reading Language Arts
Constructed-Response Scoring Guide

Score: 1

Partial Credit

A partial response may include one of the answers expected in the complete response. However, the evidence included does not support the answer stated, or no evidence is provided.

A partial response may cite or paraphrase relevant text evidence, but the student does not include an accurate answer about the author's purpose for writing the selection.

Score: 0

No Credit

- The response is incorrect.
- The response is not based on the text.
- No response is provided.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

to enspirer people

In this incomplete response, the writer provides a single phrase. The response is not valid, because the answer is vague and does not clearly express the most likely reason the author wrote the selection. In addition, the writer does not provide supporting evidence from the selection to support the answer.

Response 2

the athour rote this pasege to inform us readers about the age of language

This response is incorrect, as it refers to the title of the passage but does not clearly answer the question. In addition, the writer does not provide supporting evidence from the selection.

Response 3

to inform us about new languages

This response is too vague and too broad. Additionally, there is no supporting evidence provided from the selection.

Response 4

The main reason is to tell about speaking a second language can change people's accents.

The writer does not accurately describe the most likely reason the author wrote the selection. In addition, the writer does not provide supporting evidence from the selection to support the answer.

Score Point 1

Response 1

to teach people about the study of children learning different languages at a young age and to let people know there are different ways to learn a new language than just in school.

In this partial response, the writer states that the author's purpose for writing the selection is to explain information about learning languages at a young age and the different ways of learning a new language. However, the writer does not provide supporting evidence from the selection to support the answer.

Response 2

I think the author wrote this selection to tell the reader how they can learn new languages through the immersion program, and how it is best to learn a new language at a young age.

This response clearly and effectively answers the question by addressing learning a new language at a young age. However, the writer does not provide supporting evidence from the selection to support the answer.

Response 3

The reason that the author wrote this selection was to inform the reader of learning a new language "*Even fo those who did not grow up speaking multiple languages, learning a second language is powerful...*".

In this partial response, the writer provides relevant text-based evidence ("*Even fo those who did not grow up speaking multiple languages, learning a second language is powerful*"), which clearly and effectively supports a response to the question. However, the writer states the most likely reason the author wrote the selection is "to inform the reader of learning a new language." This explanation does not provide a complete and acceptable answer to the question. Overall, the writer provides supporting evidence from the selection, but the answer to the question is incomplete.

Response 4

To prove that learning a new new laanguage is not only impressive, but useful, and can be a part of everyday life (see paragraphs 1 and 9)!

The writer provides an explanation about the author's purpose for writing the selection. However, citing paragraph numbers is not a sufficient substitute for paraphrased or quoted text-based supporting evidence from the selection.

Score Point 2

Response 1

I think the author wrote the selection to persuade a kid or teacher to learn or teach a second language because in the text, it says, "...learning a second language at a younger age seems like a great place to start...kids can acquire a new way to communicate."

In this complete response, the writer states the most likely reason the author wrote the selection ("I think the author wrote the selection to persuade a kid or teacher to learn or teach a second language because in the text, it says, '...learning a second language at a younger age seems like a great place to start' "). Relevant evidence is also included to support the answer ("kids can acquire a new way to communicate").

Response 2

The author wrote this selection most likely to explain that there are many different ways that could lead a child to learning a different language. Its also heavily emphasized that the younger it is the better, in paragraph 3 the author states, "The brain of a baby is built to learn languages." showing that the author believes the younger a child is the easier they will learn. The author also uses mutiple studies to prove this, as shown in paragraph 4, "The younger children scored highest in ability to correctly form a particular accent."

The writer provides an explanation about the author's purpose for writing the selection ("to explain that there are many different ways that could lead a child to learning a different language. Its also heavily emphasized that the younger it is the better"). In addition, the writer provides multiple pieces of relevant text evidence from the selection (" 'The brain of a baby is built to learn languages.' showing that the author believes the younger a child is the easier they will learn. The author also uses mutiple studies to prove this, as shown in paragraph 4, 'The younger children scored highest in ability to correctly form a particular accent' "). Overall, the writer provides an acceptable answer to the question and supporting evidence from the selection.

Response 3

The author most likely wrote this selection to tell people about teaching their kids a different way to learn a new language. Also, when kids are younger it's easier for them to learn because of how the pronunciation of the language is. In a study in 1975, children 6-15 learning English as a second language were given speaking tests. The younger children scored highest in the ability to correctly form a particular accent. Learning a new language at a young age may help adults avoid the confusion that can arise from different accents.

In this complete response, the writer states that the author "most likely wrote this selection to tell people about teaching their kids a different way to learn a new language. Also, when kids are younger it's easier for them to learn because of how the pronunciation of the language is." This is an acceptable answer that illustrates the importance and benefits of learning a new language at a young age. In addition, the writer provides relevant supporting text-based evidence ("In a study in 1975, children 6-15 learning English as a second language were given speaking tests. The younger children scored highest in the ability to correctly form a particular accent").

Response 4

The author most likely wrote this selection to encourage people to learn a second language at a young age. I think this because all throughout the passage the author writes about different ways kids learn different languages and how children can learn a second language easily. I also think this because in the last paragraph the author writes "By learning languages at a young age, kids can acquire a new way to communicate."

In this complete response, the writer provides an explanation about the author's purpose for writing the selection ("The author most likely wrote this selection to encourage people to learn a second language at a young age"). In addition, the writer includes supporting evidence from the selection ("By learning languages at a young age, kids can acquire a new way to communicate").

Grade 6 Writing Short Constructed Response

Grade 6 Writing Short Constructed Response

Passage: "My Treasures"

Original Paragraph:

(12) Whenever we go to a new place, I always choose a special rock to remember the experience. (13) I catalog the rocks based on where they are from, and I'm starting to get quite a geographical assortment. (14) In the meantime, I've personally collected rocks from 10 different states. (15) Other people have collected rocks for me too. (16) My friend Javier brought a rock back for me from his grandmother's house in Mexico. (17) My cousin sent me a Petoskey stone from Lake Michigan. (18) He is from Chicago. (19) And my uncle sent me a whole pouch of polished stones from the Texas Memorial Museum gift shop.

Prompt

Judson wants to combine the ideas in sentences 17 and 18. In the space provided, write a new sentence that combines these ideas in a clear and effective way.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 1

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way.

Score: 0

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

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

My cousin sent me a Petoskey stone from Lake Michigan, he's from Chicago.

The response is not a complete sentence and does not combine ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer simply replaces the period with a comma, which is not an effective way to combine the sentences.

Response 2

My cousin sent me a Petoskey stone from Lake Michigan from were he lives at.

The response does not combine ideas in a clear and effective way. While the sentence includes the ideas from sentence 17, the writer changes the important information "He is from Chicago" to "Lake Michigan from were he lives at" and alters the meaning of sentence 18.

Response 3

My cousin sent me a Petoskey stone from Lake Michigan from Chicago where he lives.

The response does not combine ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer uses a double prepositional phrase ("from Lake Michigan from Chicago where he lives"), resulting in an awkward sentence.

Response 4

my friend javier brought me a rock from his grandmothers house in mexico and my cousin sent me a petosky rock from lake Michigan.

The response does not combine ideas in a clear and effective way, as the writer combines sentences 16 and 17 but does not include sentence 18. The original meaning is not conveyed, as important information is omitted.

Score Point 1

Response 1

My cousin from Chicago sent me a Petosky stone from Lake Michigan.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The new sentence contains the three necessary ideas of the original two sentences: (1) my cousin sent me a stone, (2) the stone is from Lake Michigan, and (3) my cousin is from Chicago.

Response 2

My cousin sent me a Petoskey stone from Lake Michigan, and he is from Chicago.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer includes all important ideas and maintains the original meaning by adding the conjunction “and” along with a comma.

Response 3

My cousin, whom is originally from Chicago, sent me a Petoskey stone from Lake Michigan.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer flips the sentences and uses a connecting phrase (“whom is originally from”) to convert the second sentence (“He is from Chicago”) into a dependent (subordinate) clause. The incorrect use of “whom” instead of “who” does not detract from the score of this revising task as this approach is an effective way to join the two sentences.

Response 4

My cousin sent me a Peroskey stone from Lake Michigan, because he is from Chicago.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer includes all the important ideas, maintaining the original meaning, by adding the dependent conjunction “because.” The misspelling of Petoskey and the inclusion of the comma do not affect the scoring of this revising task.