

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
1	Option A is correct	Making this revision creates a more effective opening for the story by emphasizing that the story is going to be about fire ants.
	Option B is incorrect	The opening of the story is not improved by this revision because information that is unrelated to the main subject of the story is provided.
	Option C is incorrect	Making this revision repeats the information in sentence 3, and this does not improve the opening of the story.
	Option D is incorrect	Based on the context in the story, Daniel’s mom does not know what to do about the fire ants. The opening of the story is not improved by this revision.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
2	Option G is correct	Adding this descriptive sentence effectively supports the information in sentence 10 because it helps the reader visualize what the "swarm of ants" looks like as they "burst out from the top of the hill."
	Option F is incorrect	The information included in this sentence is inaccurate because Daniel does not know what to do about the ants.
	Option H is incorrect	An extraneous detail is included in this revision, which makes it ineffective.
	Option J is incorrect	Adding this sentence repeats the information in sentence 10 and does not provide additional supportive details.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
3	Option D is correct	Replacing sentence 23 with this sentence improves the focus of this part of the story by clarifying that the fun is over for Daniel and his family.
	Option A is incorrect	Including information that is not relevant to the ideas in the last paragraph makes this revision ineffective.
	Option B is incorrect	The idea presented in this sentence is inaccurate because it is not logical that Daniel would be sad that the fire ant attack is over.
	Option C is incorrect	The idea that the “party was going to be over soon for everyone” is not supported by the information in the story, and the focus of the last paragraph is not improved.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
4	Option H is correct	Rearranging the ideas to clarify that Daniel’s mother makes a decision after consulting the Internet eliminates the awkward phrasing in the sentence and clearly shows the connection of ideas.
	Option F is incorrect	The revision is incorrect and results in a run-on sentence, an error in which two or more clauses are joined incorrectly.
	Option G is incorrect	The idea presented in this awkwardly constructed sentence results in a confusing sentence that is inaccurate.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving the sentence unchanged does not eliminate the awkward phrasing in the sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
5	Option D is correct	Deleting sentence 9 removes an extraneous detail because “other kinds of brain conditions that people can be born with” is irrelevant to Livy’s health problems, which is the focus of the paragraph.
	Option A is incorrect	Sentence 5 is important because it is used to introduce the idea that Livy was born with health problems.
	Option B is incorrect	Sentence 7 is important because it is used to provide information about epilepsy.
	Option C is incorrect	Sentence 8 is not extraneous, as it is used to provide additional information about seizures.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
6	Option G is correct	Removing the phrase "where she drew" makes the sentence clearer and more concise by deleting repeated information.
	Option F is incorrect	Making this revision changes some of the wording in the sentence, but it does not remove the repeated information.
	Option H is incorrect	This revision results in unnecessary repetition of "painting," and it also introduces a comma-splice error, which occurs when two main clauses are connected with only a comma.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 15 unchanged does not remove the redundant wording in the sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
7	Option A is correct	A transition is a word, phrase, or sentence used to connect topics or ideas. Replacing sentence 19 with this sentence effectively transitions from the idea that Hailey helped her family by making paintings and connects it to the idea that Hailey also found "other ways to raise money for her sister."
	Option B is incorrect	Use of this sentence would indicate that "Hailey didn't want help selling her paintings," which is not an idea that is supported by the information in the selection.
	Option C is incorrect	Although there is a reference to Hailey's friend in sentence 21, the idea that Hailey's friends wanted "to help raise money" is not discussed in the fourth or fifth paragraph.
	Option D is incorrect	Use of this sentence is not an effective transition because it interrupts the logical flow of the ideas presented in the fifth paragraph.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
8	Option H is correct	A closing sentence of a paragraph should capture the main idea of the paragraph or emphasize an important message. By adding this sentence to the end of paragraph 7, the writer emphasizes the significance of an event for Livy's Hope.
	Option F is incorrect	The information in this sentence is extraneous and does not help close the paragraph.
	Option G is incorrect	The information included in this sentence does not help close the paragraph and is extraneous.
	Option J is incorrect	Including this unnecessary detail does not contribute to the ideas presented in the paragraph, resulting in an ineffective closing sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
9	Option D is correct	A comma-splice error occurs when two main clauses are connected with only a comma. Changing the comma to a period and dividing sentence 3 into two complete sentences corrects the comma-splice error.
	Option A is incorrect	Changing the comma to a period and adding "Because" introduces a sentence fragment, which is a group of words that do not form a complete sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	The general structure of this sentence is correct, but changing "search" to "searching" creates an error in verb tense.
	Option C is incorrect	Adding "and" after the comma corrects the comma-splice error, but inserting a period after "past" is incorrect because it creates a sentence fragment.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
10	Option G is correct	A possessive noun shows possession by the addition of an apostrophe. Changing the plural noun "Russias" to the possessive noun "Russia's" corrects the grammatical error in the sentence.
	Option F is incorrect	Changing "are found" to "is found" creates an error in subject-verb agreement because "sculptures" is a plural noun.
	Option H is incorrect	The spelling of "famous" is correct and should not be changed.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 6 unchanged would not correct the misuse of the noun "Russias."

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
11	Option C is correct	The correct spelling of the word "earlier" should replace the incorrect spelling "earlyer."
	Option A is incorrect	Changing "idea" to "ideas" results in the incorrect use of a plural noun.
	Option B is incorrect	A participle is a verb that is used to indicate a past or present action. Changing "had begun" to "had began" results in a grammatical error because "begun" is the correct form for the past participle tense of the verb.
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 8 unchanged would not correct the spelling error in the sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
12	Option F is correct	Inserting quotation marks before "I" correctly completes the set of quotation marks used to indicate the quotation from Polissky.
	Option G is incorrect	Changing "beautiful" to "beautiful" would introduce a spelling error.
	Option H is incorrect	The comma after "place" is used to separate a direct quotation from the rest of the sentence. Removing the comma would create a punctuation error.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 13 unchanged would not correct the punctuation error in the sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
13	Option A is correct	Sentence 21 is a sentence fragment, which is a group of words that do not form a complete sentence. Adding the subject "He" and changing the verb "wanting" to "wanted" creates a correct, complete sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	Inserting a period after the word "area" results in a sentence fragment.
	Option C is incorrect	Inserting "they could" results in a run-on sentence, which is an error in which two or more clauses are joined incorrectly.
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 21 unchanged would not correct the sentence fragment.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
14	Option H is correct	In sentence 25, there are two independent clauses, which are clauses that can stand alone as complete sentences. When two independent clauses are joined together by a coordinating conjunction such as "and," a comma is necessary before the conjunction.
	Option F is incorrect	The spelling of "example" is correct and should not be changed.
	Option G is incorrect	Changing "became" to "becoming" introduces a grammatical error since an event that happened in the past is being described in the sentence.
	Option J is incorrect	Changing "is now used" to "was now used" would introduce a verb tense error.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
15	Option B is correct	The first word in a quoted sentence is capitalized, so the word "we" should be changed to "We."
	Option A is incorrect	Changing "says" to "say's" would introduce a punctuation error.
	Option C is incorrect	Inserting a comma after the word "life" would introduce a punctuation error.
	Option D is incorrect	The spelling of "scratch" is correct and should not be changed.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
16	Option H is correct	The words "threw" and "through" are homophones, which are words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings and/or spelling. Changing "threw" to "through" corrects the error in the sentence since the passage from one point to another is being described.
	Option F is incorrect	Changing "looked" to "look" would introduce a verb-tense error.
	Option G is incorrect	The spelling of "tiny" is correct and should not be changed.
	Option J is incorrect	Changing the period to a question mark would introduce a punctuation error.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
17	Option D is correct	The sentence does not contain any grammatical, spelling, or punctuation errors and does not need to be changed.
	Option A is incorrect	The spelling of "Remember" is correct and should not be changed.
	Option B is incorrect	The sentence is in the present tense, so "is" should not be changed to "was."
	Option C is incorrect	Changing "walk" to "walking" introduces a grammatical error by using the incorrect verb form.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
18	Option G is correct	Changing "leans" to "leaned" corrects a grammatical error in sentence 10 and is consistent with the verb tense used in the rest of the paragraph.
	Option F is incorrect	The word "its" is correctly used in the sentence and should not be changed.
	Option H is incorrect	The article "a" is the correct article to use with "cottonwood," which begins with a consonant.
	Option J is incorrect	A comma is not needed to separate an independent clause, which is a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence, from a dependent clause, which is a clause that cannot stand alone as a complete sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
19	Option C is correct	Changing the period to a question mark corrects a punctuation error because Robert is asking Marcos a question; therefore, sentence 13 should end with a question mark.
	Option A is incorrect	The spelling of "friend" is correct and should not be changed.
	Option B is incorrect	The comma is correctly used to separate a direct quotation from the rest of the sentence and should not be deleted.
	Option D is incorrect	Leaving sentence 13 unchanged fails to correct the punctuation error.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
20	Option F is correct	Changing "differently" to "different" corrects a grammatical error in the sentence. The appearance of the trees is being described, so the adjective "different" is appropriate, rather than the adverb "differently," which would be used to describe an action.
	Option G is incorrect	Changing "by" to "bye" creates a grammatical error. The words "by" and "bye" are homophones, which are words that have the same pronunciation but different meanings and/or spelling. The preposition "by" is used correctly in this sentence.
	Option H is incorrect	A possessive is a noun or a pronoun that shows possession by the addition of an apostrophe. Changing "visitor's" to "visitors" creates a grammatical error by replacing a possessive noun with a plural noun.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 23 unchanged would fail to correct the grammatical error in the sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
21	Option C is correct	In sentence 29, there are two independent clauses, which are clauses that can stand alone as complete sentences. A comma should be used along with the conjunction "and" to separate the two clauses.
	Option A is incorrect	The verb "showed" is the correct verb form to use in this sentence and is consistent with the verb tense used in the rest of the paragraph.
	Option B is incorrect	The pronoun "his" is used to refer to "Marcos" and is used correctly.
	Option D is incorrect	Inserting a period after "watched" creates a sentence fragment, which is a group of words that do not form a complete sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
22	Option H is correct	Changing "colorfull" to "colorful" corrects the spelling error in the sentence.
	Option F is incorrect	The word "it's," which is the contraction for "it is," is correctly used in the sentence and should not be changed.
	Option G is incorrect	Inserting a comma after "cliffs" creates a grammatical error because there are not two independent clauses. An independent clause is a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence.
	Option J is incorrect	Ending the sentence with a question mark would create a punctuation error because the sentence is a statement rather than a question.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
23	Option D is correct	Inserting quotation marks after the comma correctly indicates that Marcos has finished speaking.
	Option A is incorrect	The word "And" is correctly capitalized at the beginning of the sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	Changing "of" to "off" creates a grammatical error. The word "off" refers to a state or a position and "of" shows a relationship.
	Option C is incorrect	Inserting a comma creates a grammatical error because there are not two independent clauses. An independent clause is a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 4 Writing Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
24	Option F is correct	Changing "grined" to "grinned" corrects the spelling error in the sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	The adverb "shyly" is correctly used to describe the way in which Marcos grinned.
	Option H is incorrect	The past tense verb "earned" is correctly used to refer to an action that took place in the past.
	Option J is incorrect	Leaving sentence 38 unchanged would fail to correct the spelling error.