



New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge

Language Arts Literacy

Grade 3 and Grade 4

Guide to Criterion-Based Holistic Scoring:

A Writing and Reading Handbook

PTM #1505.60

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New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge

Language Arts Literacy

Grade 3 and Grade 4

**GUIDE TO CRITERION-BASED HOLISTIC SCORING:
A WRITING AND READING HANDBOOK**

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January 2006
PTM #1505.60

Acknowledgments

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CRITERION-BASED HOLISTIC SCORING

New Jersey has used holistic scoring to assess students' reading and writing abilities since the mid-1980s. Readers trained in holistic scoring and in the specific scoring criteria established with New Jersey's scoring rubrics adhere to established procedures that maintain the validity and reliability of scoring decisions across years. With implementation of the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK), the writing samples of students in grade 3 and grade 4 are scored with a modified version of the Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric (RHSR). Student responses to the open-ended questions that accompany each reading passage are scored with the Open-Ended Scoring Guide (OSG).

This handbook focuses on writing samples and reading responses resulting from the May 2003 administration of the NJ ASK. It presents the scoring method and criteria used to evaluate student work and provides samples for each score point to illustrate how those criteria are applied to student responses.

Criterion-Based Holistic Scoring: An Operational Definition

Criterion-based holistic scoring brings uniformity to the evaluation of student work across contents and settings by specifying salient features of the task and the levels of proficiency. The RHSR focuses on four features of writing: content/organization, usage, sentence construction, and mechanics. For any given sample, these criteria serve as an indicator of how well the writer communicated an intended message to a given audience. In criterion-based holistic scoring, these pre-determined features are anchored by descriptions that vary for different values on a scoring rubric or guide. The point values or score points describe the proficiency level or how well the student handles the features.

The modified version of the RHSR is a 5-point scale: 1 (lowest) to 5 (highest). Each score point on the 5-point scale has the same four features but with different descriptions for each level of proficiency. With the RHSR, evaluations are first made with respect to content/organization and then adjusted with reference to the other three. In this way, an integration of these descriptive features enables readers to evaluate the quality of a written response with respect to a point value on the scale. Much of the focus of the RHSR is on the content/organization of the response. Thus, the organization of a response assigned a value of "2" is not as high quality as the organization of a response assigned a value of "3".

The OSG focuses on three features of the student's response to an open-ended question: focus on the question asked, text reference, and explanation/analysis. For any given response, these criteria serve as an indicator of the student's ability to construct meaning from a given reading. As with the writing rubric, these pre-determined features are anchored by descriptions that vary for different values on the scoring guide. The point values or score points describe the proficiency level or how well the student handles these features.

The OSG is based on a 5-point scale: 0 (lowest) to 4 (highest). Each score point on the 5-point scale focuses on the same three features but with different descriptions for each level of response. With the OSG, emphasis is given first to specificity and then adjusted with reference to the completeness of the response. In this way, these descriptive features enable readers to evaluate the quality of the student's response with respect to a point on the scale. Because the

focus of the OSG is on specificity and completeness, a response receiving a score of “3” is more specific and complete than a response receiving a score of “2”.

Criterion-based holistic scoring does not rely upon the readers (scorers) inferring performance criteria from exemplars or anchor papers. Rather, the method defines consistent criteria for judging the quality of student work independent of the sample of responses. Training and qualifying sets of student papers are used to illustrate how the scoring criteria are applied across the range of possible score points. The samples and accompanying annotations included in this handbook are examples of student performance with respect to the features targeted by the two rubrics.

In summary, a criterion-based holistic scoring method:

- uses score-point criteria representing progressive levels of proficiency;
- uses consistent language across all score points;
- defines each feature at each score point; and
- provides accuracy and consistency through stringent controls on the training and qualifying of scorers.

Appropriateness of Criterion-Based Holistic Scoring

- Criterion-based scoring rubrics anchor consistent features of writing and reading independent of purpose and audience from year to year. This consistency is necessary because a different population sits for the test at each administration, and different tasks are administered each time. To assure the same meaning of score points from one administration to the next, the scoring method focuses upon invariant performance criteria. Although a task can elicit a variety of written responses in a variety of rhetorical modes (e.g., narrative, persuasive, etc.), a paper’s rating is based on the student’s facility with the identified features. This facility is anchored to a point on the score scale that describes the student’s demonstration of skill.
- The established criteria allow the anchoring of features consistently from year to year and therefore eliminate scoring procedures that are strictly normative or based on differing evaluation criteria. That is, a paper receiving a “4” one year could conceivably receive a “2” in another year if it were scored with reference to a different sample of students or to varying criteria. Scored according to New Jersey’s criterion-based method, however, a paper receiving a “4” one year will more consistently receive a “4” the next year.
- Because the criteria for scoring are set forth at each score point as descriptive features, scorer reliability can be maintained. The descriptive statements of each feature at each score point describe the quality of the (writing or reading) response assigned that score.
- The distribution of scores based on criterion-based methods permits evaluation of districts’ instructional programs because the uniform scoring criteria are published and disseminated for inclusion in these programs.

- Reader bias (i.e., a personal preference for scoring based on form, number of paragraphs, or style, etc.) is diminished because the criteria are established prior to the actual scoring of the students' responses. In addition, the criteria are essential factors within the training and qualifying papers used to select readers who can consistently and reliably apply the scoring criteria of the score scale.
- New Jersey's criterion-based scoring rubrics emphasize writing and reading as higher-order thinking skills. Writing requires knowledge of one's topic (content) and a cogent application of that knowledge (organization); use of the English language according to recognized standards (usage); the structuring of words and sentences to present a complete thought or message to the intended audience(s) (sentence construction); and the application of the conventions of the English language that serve to clarify the author's intended message (mechanics). Reading as measured by NJ ASK requires that students construct meaning from the text, analyze elements of the text, and make appropriate inferences and conclusions based on their reading.
- The two scoring rubrics permit an analysis of students' strengths and needs in writing and reading. This benefits educators by providing feedback on the effectiveness of instructional strategies with respect to the evaluation criteria expressed by the two rubrics.

CRITERION-BASED HOLISTIC SCORING PROCEDURES

Approximately 210,000 third- and fourth-grade students respond to writing and reading tasks annually through the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). Students in both grades prepare two writing samples (one narrative, one expository). Grade 3 students also respond to two passage-linked open-ended questions while grade 4 students respond to three passage-linked open-ended questions. Each writing sample and reading response is scored individually by two independent readers.

To accomplish the scoring of these writing samples and reading responses, the test contractor selects, trains, and qualifies experienced readers (scorers). All readers, regardless of experience, are required to participate in an intensive training period that is focused on application of the appropriate rubric to one particular type of task (e.g., a narrative or story based on a picture prompt). The materials used for training and qualifying the readers are scored by consensus during range-finding and then selected for use as anchors (or benchmark papers), training and practice sets, qualifying sets, calibration sets, and monitor papers. Only those readers who meet the 80 percent agreement standard qualify to score New Jersey writing samples and reading responses. By the end of training, the readers have internalized the defined criteria at each score point of the rubric by practice scoring and discussing more than 100 sample student responses.

Scoring Personnel and Procedures

Although New Jersey has begun using image (or electronic) scoring for NJ ASK, the procedures for scoring remain consistent with those used by the state since the inception of performance-based tasks in statewide assessment. All writing samples and reading responses are monitored and scored by trained, experienced personnel who have met the same rigorous standards established with the initial holistic scoring study conducted in 1986. Many individuals are responsible for ensuring the success of scoring for any large-scale assessment. Key to the process of scoring NJ ASK responses accurately and reliably are the contractor's senior project manager, chief reader, team leaders, and readers.

The contractor's senior project manager works closely with the New Jersey Department of Education throughout the scoring process. The senior project manager participates in selection of the range-finding and training papers prior to the onset of reader training. The senior project manager directs the activities of the chief reader and oversees all aspects of the project including monitoring reader performance (reader reliability and production rates), directing retraining efforts, and supervising the capture of scoring data.

The chief reader participates in the reading, scoring, and preparation of range-finding papers along with the contractor's senior project manager, New Jersey teachers, and the department's Language Arts Literacy coordinator. Additionally, the chief reader prepares annotations for the anchor papers that, along with the scoring criteria, are used to train the team leaders and, in turn, the readers. It is the responsibility of the chief reader to introduce the task, the rubrics, and the sample responses; to conduct the training sessions; and to ensure that readers score reliably and consistently throughout the scoring process. The chief reader supervises the team leaders, directs all scoring and validity procedures, reads and interprets reader quality control reports, and conducts all retraining activities. Additionally, the chief reader handles all resolution readings (when the two readers assign non-adjacent scores to the same response).

Team leaders rely heavily upon periodic individual and small-group training to correct reader drift (that is, scoring that is not in accord with the criteria). They spot-check reader scoring throughout the project and counsel readers who have a higher than acceptable discrepancy rate. A paper is considered discrepant if two independent readers assign non-adjacent scores to the same response (e.g., one reader assigns a “5,” the second reader a “3”). Every response with discrepant scores must be adjudicated, that is submitted for a third reading and resolution of the discrepant scores.

Once trained in the application of the scoring criteria to a given task, the readers’ primary responsibility is to score accurately all responses provided through the electronic system. These responses have been scanned from students’ original test booklets and sorted electronically by item type and number. Therefore, when the reader logs onto the scoring system, a randomly assembled “packet” of responses to the given task is made available for the reader to read and score electronically. As part of the scoring procedures, the reader may not be able to assign a scale score because the response is off-topic, in the wrong format, not English, or blank. In that event, the reader will assign instead one of several codes to indicate the reason that the response is not scorable. After all responses in the “packet” have been scored, the “packet” of responses and reader-assigned scores (or codes) is returned to the main system where the responses will be regrouped in other packets for a second reading. If the second reading results in non-adjacent scores, the scoring system automatically identifies the discrepancy; and the response is submitted to the chief reader for a third reading and resolution of the discrepant scores.

Readers are also responsible for recognizing and flagging “alert” papers (e.g., suspicion of child abuse) so that these papers can be handled in the correct manner. Alert papers are flagged if they reflect potential abuse, emotional or psychological difficulty, or possible plagiarism. Alert papers are scored but then forwarded to the chief reader for review. If the chief reader agrees that the student’s own words specifically state a situation that qualifies as an alert or reflects a potential risk situation for a child, the paper is copied and sent to the Department of Education for documentation and follow-up with district authorities. The Office of Evaluation and Assessment in the department brings these alerts to the attention of school district personnel.

RUBRICS FOR SCORING STUDENT RESPONSES TO NJ ASK LITERACY TASKS

**Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric (modified)
For Writing Samples**

**Open-Ended Scoring Rubric
For Reading Responses**

**Open-Ended Scoring Guide
For Reading Responses**

NEW JERSEY REGISTERED HOLISTIC SCORING RUBRIC (MODIFIED)

In scoring, consider the grid of written language	Inadequate Command	Limited Command	Partial Command	Adequate Command	Strong Command
Score	1	2	3	4	5
Content and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Minimal response to topic; uncertain focus No planning evident; disorganized Details random, inappropriate, or barely apparent No apparent control Severe/numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Attempts to focus May drift or shift focus Attempts organization Few, if any, transitions between ideas Details lack elaboration, i.e., highlight paper Numerous errors Excessive monotony/same structure Numerous errors Numerous serious errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Usually has single focus Some lapses or flaws in organization May lack some transitions between ideas Repetitious details Several unelaborated details Errors/patterns of errors may be evident Little variety in syntax Some errors Patterns of errors evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally has opening and/or closing Single focus Ideas loosely connected Transitions evident Uneven development of details Some errors that do not interfere with meaning Some variety Generally correct No consistent pattern of errors Some errors that do not interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening and closing Single focus Sense of unity and coherence Key ideas developed Logical progression of ideas Moderately fluent Attempts compositional risks Details appropriate and varied Few errors Variety in syntax appropriate and effective Few errors Few errors
Usage					
Sentence Construction					
Mechanics					

<p>NON-SCORABLE RESPONSES</p> <p>NR = No Response Student wrote too little to allow a reliable judgment of his/her writing.</p> <p>OT = Off Topic/ Off Task Student did not write on the assigned topic/task, or the student attempted to copy the prompt.</p> <p>NE = Not English Student wrote in a language other than English.</p> <p>WF = Wrong Format Student did not respond in the format (or mode) designated in the prompt.</p>
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Content/Organization	Usage	Sentence Construction	Mechanics
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Communicates intended message to intended audience Relates to topic Opening and closing Focused Logical progression of ideas Transitions Appropriate details and information 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tense formation Subject-verb agreement Pronouns usage/agreement Word choice/meaning Proper Modifiers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety of type, structure, and length Correct construction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spelling Capitalization Punctuation

Note: All unscorable responses, (NSRs), with the exception of NR, must be coded by the Scoring Director.

OPEN-ENDED SCORING RUBRIC
 For Reading, Listening, and Viewing
 (Modified)

Points	Criteria
4	A 4-point response clearly demonstrates understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides a clear and focused explanation/opinion that links to or extends aspects of the text.
3	A 3-point response demonstrates an understanding of the task, addresses all requirements, and provides some explanation/opinion using situations or ideas from the text as support.
2	A 2-point response may address all of the requirements, but demonstrates a partial understanding of the task, and uses text incorrectly or with limited success resulting in an inconsistent or flawed explanation.
1	A 1-point response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task, does not address part of the requirements, and provides only a vague reference to or no use of the text.
0	A 0-point response is irrelevant or off-topic.

Open-Ended Scoring Guide for Reading, Listening, and Viewing

Points	Guide
4	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Synthesizes the passage/story • Draws appropriate and logical conclusions that are elaborated • Makes relevant and controlled use of text • Provides appropriate details and accurate explanations
3	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May synthesize the story but specific text reference may only be implied • Provides a simple but accurate explanation • Makes relevant use of text to support or explain • Draws appropriate conclusions that may be elaborated
2	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides some text reference which may be incorrect or provides a general explanation that omits specific links to the text • May focus on irrelevant or minor details • May simply retell the story or passage • May imply story details by relating life experiences, by describing story elements, or by identifying concepts in the passage
1	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Misinterprets the task or fails to address part of the task • Presents one simple idea or detail • Provides no explanation • Does not clearly refer to the text
0	<p>A student at this score point:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Completely misinterprets the task • Merely selects key words or phrases from the task or the title • Shows no evidence of having read the story

GRADE 3 SAMPLE WRITING TASK

Writing Task 1

Using the picture on page 4 as a guide, write a story about what might be happening.

You may take notes, create a web, or do other prewriting work in the space provided on pages 5 and 6. Then, write your story on the lines provided on pages 7 and 8.

Here is a checklist for you to follow to help you do your best writing. Please read it silently as I read it aloud to you.

Writer's Checklist

Remember to

- Keep the central idea or topic in mind.
- Keep your audience in mind.
- Support your ideas with details, explanations, and examples.
- State your ideas in a clear sequence.
- Include an opening and a closing.
- Use a variety of words and vary your sentence structure.
- State your opinion or conclusion clearly.
- Capitalize, spell, and use punctuation correctly.
- Write neatly.

After you write your story, read what you have written. Use the checklist to make certain that your writing is the best it can be.





WRITING TASK 1 – PREWRITING SPACE

Use the space below and on page 6 to plan your writing.





WRITING TASK 1 – PREWRITING SPACE (continued)

Remember — your story must be written on the lines on pages 7 and 8 ONLY.



GRADE 3 STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE WRITING TASK

Description of the Narrative Writing Task and Sample Grade 3 Student Responses

The responses selected to illustrate this task were written by third-grade students who took the narrative writing section of the May 2003 New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). The responses appear as the students wrote them; no corrections have been made other than removing specific names that appear to identify the student or the student's school district.

Samples are included for each score point of New Jersey's modified Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric (a 5-point scale). These sample responses, which are grouped by score point, represent the range of approaches that third-grade students take with this writing task. Each score point is described in detail, and each response is annotated according to the score point criteria.

Students were provided a picture as a writing prompt and given 25 minutes to construct a narrative or story based on the picture or some aspect of it. Prewriting/planning was encouraged, and space was provided for this endeavor. A Writer's Checklist was also provided to encourage students to read, revise, and edit their written work. All students' writing was considered a **first draft** in this writing process since students were not permitted to confer with others nor to refer to outside resources (dictionary or thesaurus) and therefore were unable to rely on the feedback and constructive suggestions that result from strategies appropriate for classroom instruction. In this way, the test obtains a sample of each student's **baseline** writing ability within the context of consistent standards that ensure fairness to all who participate.

Score Scale Point 1

The response category indicates an **inadequate command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • may not have an opening and/or closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers, the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning. Details may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent.
- USAGE** • may display severe/numerous errors in usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice, and use of proper modifiers.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect/incomplete sentences and/or incorrect rhetorical modes. Statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.
- MECHANICS** • may display errors in mechanics so severe as to detract from the meaning of the response.

Score Point 1

This writer presents enough bare detail about the boy (on a ladder in a stable looking at a spider web) to demonstrate a minimal response to the topic.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

1

WRITING TASK 1

He is looking at a spider web
in a stable on a ladder. with his
dog.

Page 7

TURN TO THE NEXT PAGE.



Score Point 1

Although this response introduces several ideas, it presents them in a random list with no apparent sense of planning. This lack of planning, along with an assortment of severe errors in mechanics, detracts from the meaning of the response, indicating an inadequate command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

He is on a ladder.
He is looking at a wheel.
The dog is looking at the box.
The ax is in the wheel.
The dog is hungry.
He loves his dog.

Score Point 1

In this brief three-sentence response, the second and third sentences function merely to endorse the assertion made in the first sentence [*The boy is in the basement on a ladder looking at a spider web.*] Although sentence construction, mechanics, and usage are correct, the development of the ideas is limited and indicates an inadequate command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

The boy is in the basement on
a ladder looking at a spider web.
He is looking right at the spider web.
That is what he is doing.

Score Scale Point 2

The response category indicates a **limited command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • may not have an opening and/or closing. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions, making it difficult to move from idea to idea. Details are presented with little, if any, elaboration—highlight papers.
- USAGE** • may have numerous problems with usage, but they are not totally out of control.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.
- MECHANICS** • may display numerous severe errors in mechanics.

Score Point 2

The writer of this brief response makes some attempt to organize several unelaborated details [*probable looking for something. But he cant find it. Its way to messy.*] However, the ideas are presented simply as brief highlights (or lists) in a series of incomplete sentences, which do not detract from the meaning but do demonstrate a limited command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

A little boy is probbably looking for something
But he cant find it. Its way to messy. It has
logs, axes, horse caddles, mirrors, spider webs. A dog, a
ladder, a brick wall, a shelf, coats, raincoats, and
a tree log. A very messy attie. A big room
with spiders. A dusty attie. It also has
a door.

Score Point 2

This response provides a brief but organized sequence of details describing a boy who is bored and lonely. Although the text provides very little elaboration, the writer does use transitions and logical sequencing to move the reader from one idea to the next. However, the sparseness of the details in this response remains at the highlight level and demonstrates a limited command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

A little boy is lonely. He goes up to his attic and looks out the window, and see kids playing when he has to do work! He is very lonely. Then he sees a spider. He talked to the spider, and he is not lonely any more.

Score Point 2

In this narrative response, the writer attempts to organize details about the experience of a boy and his dog. The ideas are presented in a logical sequence that is strengthened by the writer's use of a couple of transitions. Although the text conveys a story, however, the details are essentially unelaborated and presented in a repetitively simple sentence structure, which prevents this response from achieving a higher score.

WRITING TASK 1

There was a boy who lived in a farm. He had a dog named Balto. They both went to the barn and saw a nice strate Spider web. It was to high to see. So the boy got a ladder. The boy and the dog saw the nice, smoothi spider web. So the boy and the the dog made a promice. Keep the web protected.

Score Scale Point 3

The response category indicates a **partial command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

CONTENT/ ORGANIZATION

- may not have an opening and/or closing. These responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus or abruptly shift focus; however, in these papers, at least one of the subjects focused on clearly meets the criteria for a “3.” For example, some “3” papers are sparse—they have several details with a little elaboration, but they are organized and controlled; some “3” papers will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas resulting in a lengthy response that would otherwise be sparse; and other “3” papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.

USAGE

- may display (a) pattern(s) of errors in usage.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- may demonstrate little variety in syntax structure and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.

MECHANICS

- may display (a) pattern(s) of errors in mechanics.

Score Point 3

This organized narrative is focused on one family's experience with mysterious noises in a haunted house. A clear opening and closing, as well as effective transitions [*One day, So, In side*], contribute to the logical progression of ideas in this story. Although the writer uses varied sentence structures to elaborate on ideas, lapses in the sequence of details create some ambiguity. These lapses, along with the pattern of errors (mechanics), indicate a partial command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

ONCE upon a time ther lived a family. This family was very Lucy because they cept hearing noises coming from the ground. This nois sounded like hors noises. One day the boy named Fredrick found a passage. So Fredrick went down to the secret pasage. In side ther was a ghostly place that had hors gear in it. Ther was a legind about the hoanted horse and his owner. So Fredrices parents wer very happy they new what the sound was. And so that is why they are so lucky because they got to live with a legind.

Score Point 3

This sparse, but organized, narrative is focused on a boy named Jack and his experience one day looking around the attic. The information is presented in three clusters that introduce the boy, describe what he is doing, and explain how he acquires a new pet. Although elaboration of details in this story is limited, the sequence of the ideas is controlled. This organization as well as the occasional use of vivid language [*glitering in the sunlight; fascinated*] indicate a partial command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

The Spider

Once upon a time there was a little boy named Jack. He lived in a little cottage with his mother and father. He was a young boy at the age of 9. He also had a little dog Mini.

One day Jack and Mini were in the attic. They were looking through old stuff. Then Jack saw something glittering in the sunlight. He decided to get a ladder and look.

So he got the ladder and went back. He got on and found a spider web. There was a spider on it. He was fascinated. So from that day on Jack had a new pet.

The End

Score Point 3

By setting this narrative within the context of cleaning the garage, this writer is able to establish a single focus for how John discovers and is able to keep an unusual pet. The text does present some varied sentence structures that help the writer to create a rather detailed sequence of ideas. The writing, however, introduces several problems (the switch from a first-person to a third-person narrative, patterns of errors both in mechanics and usage, consistent use of familiar and repetitive vocabulary), which indicate a partial rather than an adequate command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

Wow! I thought John was cleaning the garage to get money to buy a spider. John looked at the ceiling. There was a spider web he looked at it. He went in the house and asked his mom and dad if he can keep the spider. He said he found it in the garage. His mom and dad did not want John to have a spider from the wild. John was very sad. He went in the garage and spend 2 hours in the garage with the spider. When John went to bed he thought of a name for the spider he



• DAY 1

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

WRITING TASK 1 (continued)

found. John finally found
 a name. He called him
 Pinkey because he is pink.
 John thought of a way
 to see Pinkey without
 having him in the house.
 He asked his mom if
 he can see Pinkey
 in the garage. His parents
 agreed. So John went back
 to the garage everyday
 to see Pinkey.
 The End!

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 8



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Scale Point 4

The response category indicates an **adequate command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • generally will have an opening and a closing. These responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat, and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details.
- USAGE** • may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and rhetorical modes. There may be a few errors in sentence construction.
- MECHANICS** • may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern, nor do they interfere with the meaning of the response.

Score Point 4

This narrative response is generally focused on John's appreciation of the spider. The story of John's discovery and subsequent sharing of this creature unfolds in a logical progression of events. The writer uses specific details [*something silver caught his eye...He saw a spider web on his black pirate flag*] interspersed with loosely connected ideas to convey John's interest. In spite of some errors in sentence construction, the writing displays both syntactic variety and appropriate use of dialogue, which contributes to the fluency of this response and indicates an overall adequate command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

One cold day in November a 12 year old boy named John was playing in the garage when something silver caught his eye. He got a ladder because it was high up. He saw a spider web on his black pirate flag. There was lots of little eggs, one was a little bigger than the others. John ran in and got his parents, dog, and his sister they looked surprised. Finally his father broke the silence "Son do you

1

• DAY 1

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

WRITING TASK 1 (continued)

Want an egg? // Do I ever
 John replied. Over the
 weeks the egg hatched.
 On the first Monday of
 December he took
 the egg to school.
 "So can we have
 him as a class pet?"
 John asked. "Well fine"
 replied his teacher.
 "Yahoooooo!" Shouted
 everyone! Everyone fed
 and took care of the
 spider.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 8



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 4

This organized response has a single focus relating to Charlie's initial loneliness and subsequent friendship with the spider Meg. Although the elaboration of several details is uneven, the story has an overall logical sequence of ideas. The writing begins with a clear introduction of Charlie's problem and an immediate solution. The plot then expands with the introduction a potential new problem (Spicky' aggression), but the underlying cause of the problem and its affect on the ending is not clear. Although the complexity of the plot development is a strength of this response, the uneven development of the ideas indicates overall an adequate command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

Once upon a time there was a boy named Charlie. He didn't have any friends. When he went to school everyone would tease and laugh at Charlie. He would cry while doing his homework. His family didn't even like him. They would ignore him. 1

Then one night Charlie heard a voice. It was a spider by the farm door. Her name was Meg. They talked all night. That was Charlie's best night. He finally got a friend.

Charlie went to school happy but when he came home Spicky the dog was on the hay jumping and barking at Meg. Charlie was mad and yelled Spicky get down. He put him in the house. He asked "Are you okay?" Meg answered "I am fine."

The next day was a Saturday. There was no school. Charlie went to Meg.



• DAY 1

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

WRITING TASK 1 (continued)

Meg told Charlie she had eggs. Meg
died but know the dog and Charlie had
spider friends.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 8



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 4

The narrator's keen sense of observation provides the focus and unity for this tightly organized response. By proceeding methodically to describe the sequence of thoughts, conversation, and actions, the writer effectively controls the progression of ideas, creating mystery [*something caught my eye*] and sustaining the reader's sense of it [*I took one last glance at the spider. . .*]. The writer's use of meaningful dialogue as well as varied sentence structures contribute to the fluency of this response. More explicit development of the ending and vivid word choice would have yielded this writer a higher score.

WRITING TASK 1

The Spider Web

One rainy Spring day I was helping my mom clean the attic. When my mom went to carry some boxes down stairs something caught my eye it was a spider web. I went over to look at it. I saw a spider having lunch. I thought it was cool, but when my mom came back up to the attic she asked me "What are you looking at?" and I answered "Nothing, just this cool spider web." She came over to look at it also and she said "Oh that's nothing but a spider eating a bug." Come on I need your help carrying these boxes down stairs". I took one last glance at the spider and went to help my mom carry the boxes down stairs. Later I found my old camera with one picture left I took a picture of the spider and took out the film. When it was developed I hung the picture in my room because I thought it was the



WRITING TASK 1 (continued)

thing I've ever saw.

The
End

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 8



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Scale Point 5

The response category indicates a **strong command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Clusters of ideas are strongly connected. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- USAGE** • have few errors in usage.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- MECHANICS** • have few errors in mechanics.

Score Point 5

This response is focused on a time when Jimmy honors his mom's request by cleaning the attic. The writing has a single focus that is strengthened by the organization and development of key ideas, which flow logically from the beginning to the end of the narrative. The varied sentence structures as well as the contrast of character-appropriate language [*stuff; junk*] with rich word choice [*mumbled; eternity*] indicate the writer's verbal control in this fluent text. Although there are a few lapses in mechanics, the use of exaggeration [*I guess I better start now if I want to finish this year*] and humor at the end of the story [*Now it's time for the garage*] are successful compositional risks that help to unify the story and render it complete, demonstrating a strong command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

"Jimmy!" yelled Jimmy's mom. "Did you clean the attic yet?" "No. Mom, I'll do it now," Jimmy answered. Jimmy ran up the stairs his dog Billy was following him. "Why should I have to clean the attic?" Jimmy mumbled under his breath. "Most of this stuff doesn't even belong to me. It belongs to Mom or Dad." Jimmy opened up the attic door. "Look at all this junk! It will take an eternity to clean this all up." said Jimmy. Jimmy climbed up on the ladder. "Well I guess I better start now if I want to finish this year." Jimmy picked up a couple of things and threw them in some boxes. An hour later when Jimmy was all done the room looked very nice he had put all the boxes of

**WRITING TASK 1 (continued)**

things in the garage of course now the garage was a total mess. Jimmy's Mom ran up the stairs. "Jimmy you did a wonderful job!" "Thanks Mom," Jimmy said. "I got to go though I promised Jill I'd go bike riding." Jimmy started to walk out the door. "Not so fast Jimmy," said Mother. "Now it's time for the garage."

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 8



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 5

The dramatic opening of this response enables the writer to use the initial setting to establish key information about the two main characters (their excitement, sense of urgency, and anticipation of *mystery*) at the outset of the story. The writer then proceeds to develop the story, effectively interspersing appropriate details of their adventure with meaningful dialogue that contributes to the substance of the narrative. In addition to the vivid language [*shreiked, creaking, complained*] and varied sentence structures, the writer's use of tone in the repeated reference [*I wanted a real mystery!*] at the end of the story is a sophisticated compositional device that contributes to the unity and coherence of the writing. This controlled response demonstrates a strong command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

Brrring!! As the school bell rang Jessie and Mark ran out the school doors and on to their bike. They were so excited they couldn't wait! When they reached home their mom asked, "What's all the hurry?"

"We're on a mystery!" Jessie said.

"No time!" Mark explained. They both ran upstairs and got their journals, their pencils, and their backpacks and ran out the door.

"We'll be home by 6:00!" they shouted. They both kept on running faster and faster until they reached an old shed. They were trying to figure out who owned this shed, or who does own this shed. The shed had old and dusty farm junk. Mark climbed a ladder and found a spiderweb hanging down from a wood plank.

"Eww!" Jessie shrieked.

"Don't worry, it's just a spiderweb!" Mark said bravely. Suddenly, they heard a creaking noise.

WRITING TASK 1 (continued)

It was the door creaking open. Mark and Jessie hid behind some crates. Finally, a farmer came in.

"A farmer," Jessie whispered surprised, "a farmer?"

"So," Mark said, "that explains the farming junk."

"Well, there is a farm right behind the shed." Jessie remarked. Jessie and Mark decided to come out behind the crates and they did.

"Um, excuse me?" Jessie asked.

"Huh?" the farmer asked.

"Is this a farming shed?" Mark asked.

"Of course this is!" the farmer replied.

"So this is a farming shed?" Jessie asked.

"Yes, its meant for farming!" the farmer said again.

"Oh, ahh thanks anyway!" they said to the farmer. They started walking home.

"Ohh, I wanted a real mystery!!" Jessie

complained.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 5

By contrasting the beauty of the external setting (the spring weather) with the internal setting of confinement (being grounded), the writer creates a motivating context for the main character to look for an engaging activity: inventing something that would enable him to escape his feelings of being trapped. The response focuses on the development of Jack's motivation throughout [*boring house; felt like he was trapped in a dungeon; he could do something else; wanted to make a spider cage; finished his work; needed to leave because his parents would see he went somewhere*]. Sophisticated syntax and vivid word choice [*fluttering butterflies; annoyed; rusty old hardwood pieces for replacement*] contribute to a well-developed, complete composition that demonstrates a superior command of written language.

WRITING TASK 1

One marvelous Spring morning, Jack, an intelligent boy, was inside his boring house and was watching the fluttering butterflies fly gracefully across the warm sky. He was annoyed and was grounded from trying to catch a bird from the roof. He wondered if he could escape. He felt like he was trapped in a dungeon.

Jack thought extremely hard and had an idea. Maybe he couldn't go outside on a precious day but he could do something else. Jack loved to invent things like rockets and toy trucks. He had a ~~personal~~ ~~shed~~ ~~that~~ ~~was~~ ~~underground~~. He ~~printed~~ ~~and~~ ~~made~~ many objects. He skid to the enormous invention room of his and thought about what he could make.

1

• DAY 1

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

WRITING TASK 1 (continued)

He had an idea. He wanted to make a spider cage. So he took some rusty old hardwood pieces for replacement since they had just gotten there floors finished with hardwood. He worked cautiously and finally, finished his work. It was now time to paint. He climbed up a wooden ladder and saw something he didn't expect. It was a hairy tarantula spinning a web. The web had letters on it. He slowly and calmly took the paint down and finished rapidly. He took the amazing spider and placed him on the cage. He added wheels. Jack needed to leave because his parents would see he went somewhere. As the spider watched Jack go he slid to the corner of the room and made a peep (which meant bye) Jack waved back that day!

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 8



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

GRADE 3 SAMPLE READING TASK

Do not
write in
this area.



**For the open-ended question on the next page,
remember to**



- Focus your response on the question asked.
- Answer all parts of the question.
- Give a complete explanation.
- Use specific information from the story.



GRADE 3 STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE READING ITEM

**Description of the Narrative Reading Item
and
Sample Grade 3 Student Responses**

The responses selected to illustrate this task were written by third-grade students who took the narrative reading section of the May 2003 New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). The responses appear as the students wrote them; no corrections have been made other than removing specific names that appear to identify the student or the student's school district.

Samples are included for each score point of New Jersey's Open-Ended Scoring Rubric (which is a 5-point scale). These sample responses, which are grouped by score point, represent the range of approaches that third-grade students take with this reading-based question. Each score point is described in detail, and each response is annotated according to the score point criteria.

Students were provided a story and given 50 minutes to read the narrative and respond to six multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question. Before responding to the open-ended question, students were reminded to focus on the question asked, answer all parts of the question, give a complete explanation, and use specific information from the reading to support their response. Space was provided to encourage a thoughtful explanation supported by discussion of appropriate examples from the text, and students were given substantial latitude in their individual responses to the text. In this way, the test obtains a sample of each student's ability to construct meaning from his or her reading and to use that understanding to analyze key aspects of the text.

Score Point 0

This response gives no evidence that the student has read the story or understood the task. The reference to the mountain lion in the first sentence indicates only that the student may have read the title of the story or the open-ended question.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

It's mountain lion because
it helps us think more. It
gives us idea. Also helps
us do more better.
Also when we don't now
we try. We can think
better.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 0

This response provides no information that explicitly connects to the reading passage. Although learning about words [*what it means and to explain*] is related to learning how to spell words, neither of these was a challenge for Spider (who has strong spelling skills). Therefore, the discussion of words indicates only that the student has read the open-ended question.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

Each one helps he to learn more word because he could learn what it means and to explain.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 0

This response focuses on information that is provided in the title and in the open-ended question but does not provide any additional indication that the student has read and comprehended the text. The response would need to include an explanation of what the mountain lion helped Spider do to achieve a higher score.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

I think the mountain lion is the most helpful one because he knows a lot of stuff and he is brave and he helped spider.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 1

This response contains a vague reference to the text [*you need to be quite so you can listen*], revealing that the student has read the story. However, the response does not address all parts of the question. It does not convey why Spider needs to learn to be brave, nor does it explain how listening helps Spider face his challenge.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

Each one helps because you need to be brave, you need to know ways to help, and you need to be quiet so you can listen.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 1

By providing a reference to the text [*the spider was brave to fall down off it's web*], this response indicates that the student has read the story and understood that the spider is helpful to Spider. However, the response has not addressed all parts of the question, nor does it explain how the spider's bravery helps the main character.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

I think the spider was helpful to make him brave because the spider was brave to fall down off it's web that's how he got brave.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 1

This response gives some evidence [*his Dad was in Spelling Bee*] that the student has read the story but has misunderstood the task. The discussion focuses on the ways in which the dad and other family members identify with Spider's challenge rather than on the creatures and advice that inspire Spider.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

his family helped him to spell words
and his Dad was in spelling Bee
but his family was in a spelling Bee
and they were afraid to spell words.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 2

This response provides some text reference [*brave, clever, silent*] that explains how each creature helps Spider. The response also attempts to explain which creature helped most. However, the explanation does not discuss why being brave is most helpful to the main character, which demonstrates a partial understanding of the task.

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

A mountain lion helps spider because mountain lions are brave. A coyote would help because coyotes are clever. Spiders can help Spider because spiders are silent. A mountain lion is most helpful because the mountain lion is the king of beasts and because it is very brave.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 2

This response provides some text reference [*brave, clever, silent*] and implies additional story details by identifying concepts in the passage [*that's how he should act on stage*]. However, the student's understanding is somewhat confused [*he made animals to go with it* (his family's advice)]. Additionally, the explanation does not address which advice was most helpful, nor does it explain why, demonstrating a partial understanding of the task.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

They all helped spider because that's how he should be. His family gave him advice and he made animals to go with it. A lion is brave that's how he should act on stage. A coyote is clever that's how he should be on stage too. A spider is silent and that's how he should be on stage.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 2

This response conveys general understanding with some text reference [*not to be afraid; think about being clever; listening to his spirits and to be silent*]. Additionally, the student attempts to explain why the spider's advice is most helpful [*to win he has to be silent on stage*]. However, the explanation does not address how being silent on stage helps the main character, which would have resulted in a higher score for this response.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

The Mountain Lion helped him by not to be afraid on stage. A coyote helped him by letting think about being clever, and the spider helped him by listening to his spirits and to be silent. I think listen to the spirits and be silent helped him the most because to win he has to be silent on stage.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 3

This response demonstrates an alternate way to respond to the question by integrating both parts of the response in a simple but accurate explanation. Although text reference is, for the most part, implied rather than specific [*she was talking to him in her own special way*], the explanation reveals that the student has synthesized the story and drawn appropriate conclusions about the effect of each piece of advice on the main character [*Each one helps Spider by giving him a little motivation; he should listen to his spirit and he won't be afraid*].

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

Each one helps Spider by giving him a little motivation. I think that the spider was the most helpful because she was talking to him in her own special way and saying that he should listen to his spirit and he won't be afraid.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 3

This response provides specific text reference that indicates not only that the student has read and synthesized the story, but also that the student has drawn appropriate conclusions about the connections between the different kinds of advice. The explanation [*you can think better when you are silent. When you are talking you can't listen to your spirit*] reveals that the student understands why Will's advice is most helpful. Without following Will's advice, Spider would not be able to do what he "thinks the spider tells him."

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

In "Brave as a Mountain Lion" the father tells Spider to pretend to be a brave animal. The grandma tells Spider to be as clever as a coyote. Also Will tells Spider to be silent just like him when he shoots baskets. Spider thinks the spider tells him to listen to his spirit. I think Will's advice is the most helpful because you can think better when you are silent. When you are talking you can't listen to your spirit. I would do that if I were there.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 3

Although this response attempts to address both parts of the question separately, the second paragraph reveals that the student has synthesized the story and drawn appropriate conclusions that address why Spider needs to “concor his fear.” The explanation (although somewhat literal), which focuses on the shortcomings of being clever and silent [*if you turn your back on the oudeauce it would look weard and if you be scilant people may not hear you spell*], implies that Spider needs to be brave in order to face the audience at the spelling bee.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

All of being "brave as a mountain lion", "clever as a coyote, and silent as a spider" is helpful because when he thinks of those animals he can try to become brave, clever, and silent to help him conquer his fears.

I think being "brave as a mountain lion" is the most helpful because if you turn your back on the audience it would look weird and if you be silent people may not hear you spell.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 4

This response makes relevant and controlled use of the text to discuss how each creature helps Spider [*brave, clever, silent*], to explain how Spider uses each piece of advice [*help him face his fears; you can think of a good trick. . . Spider's trick was to turn around so he couldn't see the audience; be able to keep cool*], and to explain why the spider's advice was most helpful [*he came in second place*]. By providing full details and explanations, the student draws appropriate and logical conclusions that link to the text and demonstrate synthesis.

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

A mountain lion helps Spider be brave. Spider is scared so it takes bravery to help him face his fears. A coyote helps Spider because coyotes are clever. If you are clever you can think of a good trick so you will not be scared. Spider's trick was to turn around so he couldn't see the audience. Being like a spider was being silent. If he was silent he would be able to keep cool. I think the one that helped most was the spider because the spider told him to listen to his spirit. Spider did and he came in second place.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



Score Point 4

This response makes relevant and controlled use of the text to discuss how each creature helps Spider [*brave, clever, silent*], to explain why the advice about being brave is the most helpful [*gives him the corage he needs; It also tells him that he can do it*], and to explain why Spider needs to be brave [*to be in front of people on stage and spell words*]. By identifying both courage and confidence as benefits of the mountain lion's advice, this student draws an appropriate and logical conclusion that extends the meaning of the text.

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

Each one helps him because mountain lion helps him to be brave, a coyote helps him to be clever, and a spider helps him to be silent. The one that is most important is brave as a mountain lion because it helps him to be brave and gives him the courage he needs to be in front of people on stage and spell words. It also tells him that he can do it.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

Score Point 4

This response makes relevant and controlled use of the text to discuss how each creature helps Spider [*brave and strong; clever, or smart; silent*], to explain why the advice from the mountain lion is most helpful [*many people get stagefright*], and to predict what would have happened if Spider had not had the benefit of that advice [*without the mountain lion he would not have come in 2nd place*]. By considering an alternate set of circumstances and predicting a different outcome, the student draws an appropriate and logical conclusion that extends the meaning of the text.

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

DAY 1 •

2

7. When Spider thinks about the spelling bee, he thinks about a mountain lion, a coyote, and a spider.

- Explain how each one helps Spider.
- Decide which one is most helpful and explain why.

Use information from the story to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

When Spider was scared of going on stage, his family helped him by bringing up animals. The mountain lion helps him to be brave and strong. The coyote helps him to be clever, or smart. The spider helps him to be silent. I think that the mountain lion is most helpful because many people get stage fright, and without the mountain lion he would not have come in 2nd place.

The End.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 25



CLOSE YOUR
TEST BOOKLET.

GRADE 4 SAMPLE WRITING TASK

Directions to the Student

Read the poem “The Horn I Scorn” to yourself while I read it aloud to you. Afterwards, you will do a writing task. The poem may give you ideas for your writing.



The Horn I Scorn



My brother has a slide trombone—
He plays it every day.
I'd like to dig a great big hole
And hide the thing away!

His blasts assault my brain cells
Until they're black and blue!
My eardrums cry in agony
Long after he is through!

As if the horn weren't bad enough,
More racket fills my head—
The constant whimpers from our dog
Who trembles 'neath my bed!

Someday I'll play a tune myself;
Just wait till my turn comes!
I hope that we still share a room
WHEN I TAKE UP THE DRUMS!

by Jill Esbaum



myper/one



Writing Task 2

In “The Horn I Scorn,” the poet Jill Esbaum writes about a problem that comes from having to share. At one time or another, most of us have to share something with someone else. Write a composition about the difficulties of having to share something you value.

In your composition, be sure to

- describe what it is you have to share.
- discuss the problems that come from having to share it.
- explain how you solved the problems.

You may take notes, create a web, or do other prewriting work in the space provided on pages 29 and 30. Then, write your composition on the lines provided on pages 31 and 32.

Here is a checklist for you to follow to help you do your best writing. Please read it silently as I read it aloud to you.

Writer’s Checklist

Remember to

- Keep the central idea or topic in mind.
- Keep your audience in mind.
- Support your ideas with details, explanations, and examples.
- State your ideas in a clear sequence.
- Include an opening and a closing.
- Use a variety of words and vary your sentence structure.
- State your opinion or conclusion clearly.
- Capitalize, spell, and use punctuation correctly.
- Write neatly.

After you write your composition, read what you have written. Use the checklist to make certain that your writing is the best it can be.



WRITING TASK 2 – PREWRITING SPACE

Use the space below and on page 30 to plan your writing.



WRITING TASK 2 – PREWRITING SPACE (continued)

Remember—your composition must be written on the lines on pages 31 and 32 ONLY.



GRADE 4 STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE WRITING TASK

Description of the Expository Writing Task and Sample Grade 4 Student Responses

The responses selected to illustrate this task were written by fourth-grade students who took the expository writing section of the March 2005 New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). The responses appear as the students wrote them; no corrections have been made other than removing specific names that appear to identify the student or the student's school district.

Samples are included for each score point of New Jersey's modified Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric (a 5-point scale). These sample responses, which are grouped by score point, represent the range of approaches that fourth-grade students take with this writing task. Each score point is described in detail, and each response is annotated according to the score point criteria.

Students listened to a poem that introduced a familiar subject. Then they read a writing prompt and were given 25 minutes to construct a composition based on the topic introduced in the prompt. The writing prompt included suggested ideas that were provided to help students plan their writing. Prewriting/planning was encouraged, and space was provided for this endeavor. A Writer's Checklist was also provided to encourage students to read, revise, and edit their written work. All students' writing was considered a **first draft** in this writing process since students were not permitted to confer with others nor to refer to outside resources (dictionary or thesaurus) and therefore were unable to rely on the feedback and constructive suggestions that result from strategies appropriate for classroom instruction. In this way, the test obtains a sample of each student's **baseline** writing ability within the context of consistent standards that ensure fairness to all who participate.

Score Scale Point 1

The response category indicates an **inadequate command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • may not have an opening and/or closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. Others will relate to the topic but will have an uncertain focus. In these papers, the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning. Details may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent.
- USAGE** • may display severe/numerous errors in usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice, and use of proper modifiers.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • may demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect/incomplete sentences and/or incorrect rhetorical modes. Statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.
- MECHANICS** • may display errors in mechanics so severe as to detract from the meaning of the response.

Score Point 1

This response consists of a single run-on sentence relating to the sharing of a dirt bike. Although the word choice is general and repetitive [*he didn't have one now he got one*], the response presents enough bare detail to demonstrate a minimal response to the topic.

WRITING TASK 2

Before I had to share my dirt bike with my brother because he didn't have one now he got one and I don't have to share my dirt bike with him no more.



Score Point 1

Although this student introduces several ideas in a sequence [*I needed it for my project. So I found more books on his animal so I could have my book back*], the writing is quite brief and the development of ideas is limited, indicating an inadequate command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

Once I had to share a research book with
Dylan and I needed it for my project.
So I found more books on his
animal so I could have my book back.



Score Point 1

Although this response introduces several ideas and orders them in a sequence, the writing displays an assortment of severe errors in sentence construction [*My mom said share no no mom*] and mechanics [*dig piece; carft cak*], which detracts from the meaning and indicates an inadequate command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

one time I was eating a Kinish.
I Love Kinish. My mom said share
no no mom, yes you are sharing
I was so mad. My sister had a big
piece. So then my mom said there's a
piece of carrot cake you can have it I was
happy.

Score Scale Point 2

The response category indicates a **limited command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • may not have an opening and/or closing. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions, making it difficult to move from idea to idea. Details are presented with little, if any, elaboration—highlight papers.
- USAGE** • may have numerous problems with usage, but they are not totally out of control.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • may demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.
- MECHANICS** • may display numerous severe errors in mechanics.

Score Point 2

In this brief response, the writer focuses on what happens when she is forced to share candy with her older sister and brother. Although the student introduces one bit of confusion [*be nice to me, or mabie later*], the sequence overall is clear. However, the details are limited, and the key ideas are presented as unelaborated highlights, indicating a limited command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

Some times I have to share is when my older sister and brother want some of my candy. I tell them no, but they keep begging. I tell them no, but they keep begging. I tell them no. Then, I tell them to either to get away, make a bet with me, be nice to me, or maybe later. When my Mom comes home, she tells me to give them some. I whine and tell my Mom that it's mine! My Mom tells me to give them a little piece, so I do. That's still going on right now. and it's VERY annoying!

Score Point 2

Although this response begins with a personal narrative about sharing a room at the shore, the writing shifts to a discussion focused on the burden of having to share everything. The student attempts some organization with a brief closing, but the body of the response is a list of details (highlights) that become less connected as the writing continues [*he takes my covers my Mom said, "I have to share my money with him." When his bike is broken*]. The shift in focus, use of highlights, and monotonous sentence structure indicate a limited command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

I had to share a room at my share house. I can't go to sleep because my brother talks in his sleep. It's a good thing we don't share beds. My brother yells at me because I kept the T.V. on all night. My brother goes to sleep to early.

My brother doesn't know how to shup up when he sleeps. I always have to throw a pillow at him. If he doesn't go to bed early I have to share my candy. He eats all my candy. I always have to wacth what he wants to wacth on T.V.

My brother get so cold at night he takes my covers my Mom said, "I have to shore my money with him." When his bike is broken I

3 • DAY 2

NJ ASK - SECURE MATERIAL - DO NOT COPY

WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

have to share my bike. When I
have gum I have to share it. I
have to share mostly everything with
my brother. I hope I don't have to
share ever again.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 2

This response, which is focused on sharing a Playstation, draws its organization from the structure of the prompt. Each paragraph addresses one of the three parts of the prompt, but the details are undeveloped, and the language becomes repetitive as the writer attempts to expand the ideas [*Another problem is we always argue, my sister always finds something to argue about with it*]. The lack of elaboration and several errors in sentence construction (e.g., comma splices) demonstrate a limited command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

Play Station

I have to share my Playstation. Play Station is a game console that I have. I have a lot of games for it.

Some of the problems are picking a game, my sister always wants to play one game and I want to play another. Another problem is we always argue, my sister always finds something to argue about with it.

We solved the problem by getting our mom. Our mom said we could each have a certain amount of time to play it, or watch T.V. on our basement T.V.

Score Scale Point 3

The response category indicates a **partial command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

CONTENT/ ORGANIZATION

- may not have an opening and/or closing. These responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus or abruptly shift focus; however, in these papers, at least one of the subjects focused on clearly meets the criteria for a “3.” For example, some “3” papers are sparse—they have several details with a little elaboration, but they are organized and controlled; some “3” papers will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas resulting in a lengthy response that would otherwise be sparse; and other “3” papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.

USAGE

- may display (a) pattern(s) of errors in usage.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- may demonstrate little variety in syntax structure and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.

MECHANICS

- may display (a) pattern(s) of errors in mechanics.

Score Point 3

This response is focused on the sharing of a bedroom with an older sister for a brief period of time. The organization of ideas adheres to the structure of the prompt, which compensates for the writer's sparing use of transitions. Some details are given a little elaboration [*I had to share because I had the biggest room besides my mom and dad's room*], but the sentence structure displays little syntactical variety [*We had to share a bunk bed and she got the top. She used to move around all the time and the bed would shake and squeak*], and the writing overall displays a partial command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

In my house in Georgia I had to share my room with my older sister for a little bit. I had to share because I had the biggest room besides my mom and dad's ^{room} so I shared it with my sister.

My sister was always acting annoying. We had to share a bunk bed and she got the top. She used to move around all the time and the bed would shake and squeak.

We solved it by making my sister a new room. We had a room where all are costumes and things like those were stored. We moved that stuff and made it into a bedroom.

Score Point 3

This response provides a personal narrative focused on the time the narrator had to share a day and a donut with a cousin. Although the writer uses transitions to connect ideas [*When my cousin came*], the word choice is simple and results in repetitive language [*when I was breaking the donut she said she wanted to break the donut because I might break myself the big piece*] that interferes with the progression of ideas. In addition, the summary at the end introduces the idea that the entire narrative was a dream, an idea that is abrupt and inconsistent with the response generally. This lapse in organization indicates a partial command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

One sunny day I woke up and played outside. My mom called me in for breakfast. I came in. We ate eggs, bacon, and a roll. I drank some juice and went back outside.

My mom called me in again. She told me my cousin was coming over because her mother had to go to work. I told her I was going to Sasha's house. She's my friend. But my mom said I had to stay home and play with my cousin.

When my cousin came I asked her what she wanted to play? She said she wanted to play house. So we played house. I went into the kitchen to get a chocolate

WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

donut, and who came in the into the kitchen, but my Cousin. She asked me for a donut but there were no more. Then she asked for a piece of my donut. I said ok. But when I was breaking the donut she said she wanted to break the donut because I might break myself the big piece. But I told her my mom could break it and she said OK, and we both ate our donut happily ever after.

In summary, I woke up and ate. My mom told me my cousin was coming. I had a donut and I didn't want my cousin to break it, but she didn't want me to break it, so my mom broke it and we had a good time eating our donut.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 3

This response is focused on having to share the computer with an older sister. Although the student provides a clear opening and develops an organized response with a lively voice, the key ideas adhere to the structure of the prompt and are only minimally elaborated [*The problem is that my older sister Farzeen, is alway on the computer and never gives me a chance. She's usually talking to her friends, playing games, etc.*], and the writing ends without a clear closing [*First I go on, then Farzeen, I go on, Farzeen and, so on*]. In spite of the generally controlled and varied sentence structures, the writing lacks the development needed to achieve a higher score.

The Computer

WRITING TASK 2

Something I had to share that was difficult for me, was sharing the computer. My computer is windows Mellenium, ^{the latest version.} On front of the moniter it's a square. On the back it has an egg shape. Our computer is fast and good.

The problem is that my older sister Farzeen, is alway on the computer and never gives me a chance. She's usually talking to her freinds, playing games, etc. I think it is only fair if I get to go on as well.

I solved the problem by making a schedule for me and my older sister Farzeen. The schedule is like this... First I go on, then Farzeen, I go on, Farzeen and, so on.

Score Scale Point 4

The response category indicates an **adequate command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • generally will have an opening and a closing. These responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat, and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details.
- USAGE** • may display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • may demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and rhetorical modes. There may be a few errors in sentence construction.
- MECHANICS** • may display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern, nor do they interfere with the meaning of the response.

Score Point 4

This student provides a personal narrative that begins with a strong opening and ends with a continued focus on improved reciprocal sharing of toys. Although ideas progress logically, there is not a lot of elaboration, and dialogue is essential to convey necessary details [*Once, when Michael was watching TV I asked, "Can I use some of your action figures?" He replied, "No." That was it!*]. Development of the writing overall is somewhat uneven, thinning toward the end of the composition [*Well, not everything is perfect*]. With more even development and increased elaboration, this response would have achieved a higher score.

WRITING TASK 2

My mom always says, "Christina! Share your toys with your brother, Michael!" Well, I do, but sometimes Michael won't always give the toy back when I want to use it. I get very much annoyed!

When I was playing with Michael one day, I said, "Michael, why don't you get one of your Beanie Babies? Then we'll have more to play with." He answered me saying, "No, I want to keep my Beanie Babies nice." He doesn't always sharing with me!

Once, when Michael was watching TV I asked, "Can I use some of your action figures?" He replied, "No." That was it! I told my mom that I always share with him, but he doesn't share with me. Mom said to Michael that it wasn't fair. Now he shares

WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

with me, most of the time.

Well, not everything is perfect. I can't expect Michael to always share. I'm just happy that things are going a little better.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 4

This response has a single focus relating to the problem of sharing cookies with Anthony. The writing, which draws its structure from the three parts of the prompt, is organized with a clear opening and a logical progression of ideas that culminates in a fully developed closing. The details, which are elaborated, contribute meaningfully to the text, and the writing is weakened only by sentence structures that are awkward [*I started getting annoud by my brother that I just don't want to do anything else for him*] or repetitive [*He doesn't help me make them. Anthony wouldn't stop comanding me to make the cookies. He wouldn't leave me some*]. Stronger control of the language would have resulted in a higher score.

WRITING TASK 2

One day I baked fresh chocolate chip cookies and my brother had been in the living room eating the other cookies. He said, "Jasmine come here now!" I said, "I am baking more cookies." I started getting annoyed by my brother that I just don't want to do anything else for him.

The problem I have sharing the cookies with him is that he never says, "Please and thank you." He doesn't help me make them. Anthony wouldn't stop commanding me to make the cookies. He wouldn't leave me some for me.

I solved this problem by telling him "If he is a teenager he should start doing it himself." "Brother you have to learn how to do things yourself instead of commanding somebody to do it for you."

WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

I said to him. He said, "I know but I don't want to miss my show and I am so hungry." I said, "O.k."

Then he started doing things for himself. He never missed not one of his shows. Anthony started helping me bake and cook. Anthony now knows helping counts. Now he can relax, eat and watch t.v.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 4

This response begins with an engaging opening that introduces the single focus of the response: an incident with sister Molly who wanted to use the narrator's cherished toy. Simple transitions [*One time, Then, The next day*] help move the reader through the narrative, and the dialogue helps to convey the tension between the two siblings [*"No, Molly," I said. "It's brand new." "I want to play with it now," Molly insisted*]. Vivid details developed with precise vocabulary [*whined, in a stern voice, slammed*] contribute to the fluency of the story, which ends abruptly with a rather weak conclusion [*On a scale of 1-10 I'd rate Molly's driving zero*]. Greater variety in sentence structures and a more evenly developed ending would have resulted in a higher score.

WRITING TASK 2

My sister is my enemy at times. She takes things without asking. One time, when my grandpa Ray came over, he bought me a beautiful 1994 Ford Mustang in a bright red color. I put a 9-volt battery in the remote and 4 A-size batteries in the car. I did a test run in between chair legs. I tested speed, turns and brakes. Then, I tested bumps and crash tests. It didn't brake, though. The next day, mom was making dinner. Molly wanted to play with my Mustang. "No, Molly," I said, "It's brand new." "I want to play with it, now," Molly insisted. "No," I said. "I'm telling on you," Molly said.

WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

"Perry, please." Mom said.

"Mom, I whined, "it's a collectable."

"Perry," she said in a stern voice. I hate it when she does that.

"Molly get out here!" I said. "Go easy on the clutch. Molly tried the car. She slammed it in to the wall and jamm ed the motor. "That is the last time I let you drive," I said. On a scale of 1-10 I'd rate Molly driving zero

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Scale Point 5

The response category indicates a **strong command** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION** • have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Clusters of ideas are strongly connected. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.
- USAGE** • have few errors in usage.
- SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION** • demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.
- MECHANICS** • have few errors in mechanics.

Score Point 5

This response, tightly focused on the problems of having to share a little brother, demonstrates a strong command of written language. Key ideas are developed and progress in a logical sequence [*I despise seeing him in the arms of friends, unless I let them. Once I caught him in the lap of our eight-year old neighbor, Angelo*], fostering a sense of unity and coherence in the writing. Varied sentence structures contribute to the fluency of the response [*Still, all I truly want is for him to be happy, so I only do something if he's in danger, or if he's annoyed. It's just the way I am*], which is further enhanced by the use of sophisticated words and phrases [*both the best brothers anyone could ask for, despise, As quick as a flash, I snatched him back*].

WRITING TASK 2

Gabriel, the Brother I must Share

I have two little brothers, Jimmy and Gabriel, of the ages of seven and two. They're both the best brothers anyone could ask for, but I'd like to have Gabriel for myself.

Gabriel likes to ride on my back and be picked up by me, and it's fun to chase Jimmy together. But since he's the youngest, everyone wants to play with him. When I really want to give him a ride, he runs over to my parents or grandparents.

I despise seeing him in the arms of friends, unless I let them. Once I caught him in the lap of our eight-year old neighbor, Angelo. As quick as a flash, I snatched him back, although Gabriel wasn't too happy about it.

Still, all I truly want is for him to be happy, so I only do

3 • DAY 2

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WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

something if he's in danger, or if he's
annoyed.

It's just the way I am.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 5

A lively opening immediately engages the reader in this strongly written response [*“Noooo! I’m not sharring my room! with some babby person!”*]. Focused on the problem of a new sibling, the writing achieves a sense of unity and coherence by returning more than once to the idea of sharing a room and a mom. The writer establishes a tone at the beginning [*mom moved her into my room, (not my brothers room but mine)*] that is maintained throughout the response [*So we tried to settle our differences (well I tried to settle her differences!); The moral of the story is. . .*]. This humorous approach to the subject represents a successful compositional risk and indicates a strong command of written language.

WRITING TASK 2

"~~No~~ I'm not sharing my room, I with some baby person!" There was me three years old and about to get a little baby sister. Sure enough mom moved her into my room, (not my brother's room but mine) I was excited yet scared, I didn't know how to share, and I didn't want to know how to share. Pretty soon, Mom didn't have any time for me either. That's another thing I had to share, mom's attention. Pretty soon Katie (my little sister) got into every thing of mine my toys, my clothes, **EVERYTHING**. Now I got mad, really mad, I had to share my room, toys, and my mother! so we tried to settle our differences (well I tried to

WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

settle her differences!) Basically she promised never to talk to (and to) each other again. That compromise didn't work, so I tried to feed her to the dog! It wasn't pretty when mom walked in!

Today my sister and I still fight, and compromise. Katie and I still share a room and a mom.

The moral of the story is if you are going to feed your little sister to the dog don't let mom walk in!!

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 5

This well-focused response demonstrates a strong command of written language. Key ideas are evenly developed and progress in a fluent, planned, and logical sequence [*I was amazed when I got the right shell and recieved the big dog! My brother was so mad because he wanted it. So, he tried, and tried five times but still didn't get it. He threw a fit*]. Varied and complex sentence structures contribute to the coherence of the response [*Everyone was mad except for me. I was so excited that I won the dog on my first try. But, my brother on the other hand cried all the way home*]. The writer's controlled development of meaningful details builds a strong personal narrative of sibling rivalry that has a sense of unity, completeness, and sophistication.

WRITING TASK 2

One thing that I have to share is a big stuffed animal dog and I have to share it with my brother. Here is how the story goes.

My family and I were going to the Flemington Fair. There was this one game called pick the shell. What you do is you close your eyes and the person that works at the booth puts a nut under one of the shells and you have to try and guess which one he put it under. If you guess it right you get a big stuffed animal dog. I decided to do and I was amazed when I got the right shell and received the big dog! My brother was so mad because he wanted it. So he tried and tried five times but still didn't get it. He threw a fit and then my mom said "Okay that is it! We are going home!" We all got into the car. Everyone was mad

WRITING TASK 2 (continued)

except for me. I was so excited that I won the dog on my first try. But, my brother on the other hand cried all the way home.

"Quiet!" my dad yelled. "I have an idea" said dad. "Melissa." "Yes daddy" I said. "You are going to have to share that dog with your brother."

I got so mad. I finally agreed and said, "Okay dad, brother can get it today and I get the rest of the time until I decide to give it up." "No" my dad said "You two figure out a fair way to share that dog!"

When we got home my brother and I went up into my room. Adventually, we figured out a good way to share it, and that was that I got it one day, then he got it, then I got it and so on! Luckily, that was the end of that!

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

GRADE 4 SAMPLE READING TASK



For the open-ended question on the next page, remember to

- Focus your response on the question asked.
- Answer all parts of the question.
- Give a complete explanation.
- Use specific information from the article.



GRADE 4 STUDENT RESPONSES TO THE READING ITEM

**Description of the Everyday Text Reading Task
and
Sample Grade 4 Student Responses**

The responses selected to illustrate this task were written by fourth-grade students who read the everyday text in the reading section of the March 2004 New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge (NJ ASK). The responses appear as the students wrote them; no corrections have been made other than removing specific names that appear to identify the student or the student's school district.

Samples are included for each score point of New Jersey's Open-Ended Scoring Rubric (which is a 5-point scale). These sample responses, which are grouped by score point, represent the range of approaches that fourth-grade students take with this reading-based question. Each score point is described in detail, and each response is annotated according to the score point criteria.

Students were provided a reading passage and given 25 minutes to read the passage and respond to six multiple-choice questions and one open-ended question. Before responding to the open-ended question, students were reminded to focus on the question asked, answer all parts of the question, give a complete explanation, and use specific information from the reading to support their response. Space was provided to encourage a thoughtful explanation supported by discussion of appropriate examples from the text, and students were given substantial latitude in their individual responses to the text. In this way, the test obtains a sample of each student's ability to construct meaning from his or her reading and to use that understanding to analyze key aspects of the text.

Score Point 0

This response gives no evidence that the student has read the story or understood the task. The reference to “lit paper” in the first line indicates only that the student has responded to the words provided in the open-ended question.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment.
Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

because it is a lit paper a.
It is good to.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 0

This response provides no information that explicitly connects to the reading passage or to the purpose of the experiment. Although the student attempts to offer a reason for using lightweight paper [*that you can see thro*], the information is irrelevant to the activity; and the discussion indicates only that the student has read the question.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment.
Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

They use light paper so it
could see thro. The paper is
some time it good to use
light paper. Light paper it is
so light that you can see
thro.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 41



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 0

This response demonstrates a complete misinterpretation of the task. Although the student provides a clear and lengthy response, the response does not address the reason for using lightweight paper but focuses instead on the personal benefits [*have fun*] and the student's plan for sharing [*show it to my classmates*]. These ideas indicate only that the student has read the question.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment.
Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

I would use it for I could complete and have fun. I would show it to my classmates if I could. I will tell them how I did it, when I did it and with who I did it and with what I did it.

It could move to like a rocket. With the lightweight.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

Page 41



DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 1

This response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task. The response provides a vague reference to the text [*The paper was folded into a cone. . . the balloon was placed in it*], indicating that the student read the article, but the explanation simply describes what to do with the paper and does not explain the reason for using paper that is lightweight.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment.
Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

The paper
was folded into
a cone so that the
balloon was placed in
it.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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DO NOT GO ON
UNTIL YOU ARE
TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 1

With the inclusion of the last line [*will not be able to move*], the response indicates that the student has read the article and grasped to a certain extent the reason for using lightweight paper. However, the text reference is limited and the explanation [*I(t) will be destroyed*] too vague to convey anything but a minimal understanding of the task.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment.
Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

This experiment needs
the light weight because if it
didn't I will be destroyed.
And will not be able
to move

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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DO NOT GO ON
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TOLD TO DO SO.

Score Point 1

This response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task. The student presents two simple reasons for using lightweight paper in the activity [*A lightweight paper would go faster. It would also make it easyor to use the thumbtack*], but the information is vague because the explanation does not make it clear how the paper or the thumbtack function in the experiment.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment.
Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

A lightweight paper would go faster.
It would also make it easier
to use the thumbtack

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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Score Point 2

The student provides several text-based reasons for using lightweight paper [*so it does not slow the rocket down; so you can poke the thumbtack through the paper; you can fold it better; you can cut it better*] but does not provide an explanation of how these reasons affect the outcome of the activity. Without further explanation, this response is general and demonstrates a partial understanding of the task.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

One reason to use lightweight paper is so it does not slow the rocket down. Another reason is so you can poke the thumbtack through the paper. Also you can fold it better to make the cone. Another reason is so you can cut it better than normal paper. These are the reasons for using lightweight paper in that experiment.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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Score Point 2

This response demonstrates a partial understanding of the task. The student provides some text reference to explain the reasons for using lightweight paper [*it would be hard to cut. It would also be hard to put the thumbtack through the paper*]. However, the information is only general because the explanation does not make clear why heavy paper would make “the balloon come down” or how the paper functions in the activity.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

The reason for using light paper is because if you use heavy paper the balloon would come down. If you use light paper the balloon would stay up. Also if you use heavy paper it would be hard to cut. It would also be hard to put the thumbtack through the paper. That's why using lightweight paper is easier than heavy weight paper.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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DO NOT GO ON
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Score Point 2

This student presents some general information from the text to explain the reasons for using lightweight paper [*because lightweight paper is lighter, so the rocket balloon will go faster*] and attempts a conclusion [*for example, constuction paper is too heavy. So the rocket balloon would go slower. The more weight the slower the rocket balloon goes*]. However, the response does not make clear how the paper functions in the activity. Therefore, the response displays a partial understanding of the task.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

Using lightweight paper is better than other papers because lightweight paper is lighter, so the rocket balloon will go faster. If you used another type of paper, for example, construction paper, it is too heavy. So the rocket balloon would go slower. The more weight the slower the rocket balloon goes. The less weight the faster the rocket balloon goes. So this is reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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DO NOT GO ON
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Score Point 3

This response demonstrates that the student has synthesized the text and understood the task. The student makes use of relevant information from the article to explain the reasons for using lightweight paper [*if you used heavier paper, the rocket would slow down; Another reason for using lightweight paper. . . is so the rocket can ride quickly down the string; if you use heavyweight paper, you would (not) be able to cut it well*]. However, the details are simple and merely imply how the paper functions in the activity.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

I ^{think} the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment is because if you used heavier paper, the rocket would slow down. Another reason for using lightweight paper for this experiment is so the rocket can ride quickly down the string. My last reason for using lightweight paper is because if you use heavyweight paper, you would be able to cut it well. In the article, it said to cut the paper halfway up. Those are reasons to use lightweight paper for this experiment.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



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Score Point 3

This response demonstrates an understanding of the task. The student explains the reason for using lightweight paper (*if you had a heavyweight paper it would weigh so much the rocket would not go anywhere even if the baloon was blown up. The baloon would stay there and deflate*) and includes some relevant information from the article that helps imply the function of the paper [*The lightweight paper would make the rocket shoot along the string*]. However, the explanation, although accurate, is simple and lacks the details and elaboration needed for a higher score.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

In the article, you have to use a lightweight paper because if you had a heavyweight paper it would weigh so much the rocket would not go anywhere even if the balloon was blown up. The balloon would stay there and deflate. The lightweight paper would make the rocket shoot along the string. You should use the lightweight paper.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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Score Point 3

This student provides a reason for using lightweight paper for the activity [*the rocket may not move if the paper is heavy*] and provides a simple but accurate conclusion using information from the article as support [*the balloon will have to use more air to push and it may not have enough air to move the paper. If the balloon does have enough air to move the heavy paper it will not move very far or fast because the paper will not move easilly*]. Although accurate, the response does not provide the details needed to explain how the paper functions in the activity.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

The reason for using light weight paper is that the rocket may not move if the paper is heavy because the balloon will have to use more air to push and it may not have enough air to move the paper. If the balloon does have enough air to move the heavy paper it will not move very far or fast because the paper will not move easily. This is why you should definitely use light weight paper!

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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Score Point 4

This response clearly demonstrates that the student has synthesized the text and understood the task. The student provides appropriate and elaborated reasons for using lightweight paper [*if the paper is heavy then when the rocket is flying the paper will drag down the balloon. . . it will not fly straight; if I have to fold the paper that many times and then have to cut it, it will be too thick and hard for me to cut*]. The details used to develop the explanations are accurate and display a controlled use of relevant text to draw logical conclusions.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

The reasons for using lightweight paper in this experiment is because if the paper is heavy then when the rocket is flying the paper will drag down the ^{balloon.} Also if I use heavy paper the balloon will not come out right and it will not fly straight. Also if it tells me to use lightweight that means that for some reason I have to use lightweight paper. Another reason for using lightweight paper is because if I have to fold the paper that many times and then have to cut it, it will be too thick and hard for me to cut. These are reasons for using lightweight paper.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



DO NOT GO ON
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Score Point 4

This response provides an appropriate and elaborated reason for using lightweight paper for the activity [*You would use lightweight paper because it is lighter than other papers. Also if you used heavier paper it would weigh the rocket down*]. The student then makes relevant and controlled use of the text to illustrate the effect of the paper on the activity [*If the rocket is weighed down it will move slower. When it moves slower the balloon starts to run out of air and will not be able to make it down the string*]. By predicting the effect of heavyweight paper, the student draws an appropriate and logical conclusion that extends the meaning of the text.

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

It would use lightweight paper because it is lighter than other papers. Also if you used heavier paper it would weigh the rocket down. If the rocket is weighed down it will move slower. When it moves slower the balloon starts to run out of air and will not be able to make it down the string.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.

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Score Point 4

This very complete response demonstrates that the student has synthesized the passage and has a very clear understanding of the task. The student makes relevant and controlled use of text to explain the reason for using lightweight paper [*if you use lightweight paper. . . you will probably find that it goes all the way down the string*] and to predict the effect of heavyweight paper [*The heavy paper ways the rocket down*]. The student then provides specific details to explain why the heavier paper would produce a different outcome and draws an appropriate and logical conclusion [*Scince the heavy paper needs more air to push it, the air runs out befor the rocket hits the end of the string*].

14. Explain the reasons for using lightweight paper for this experiment. Use information from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the lines below.

Lightweight is better to use than heavy paper because if you use lightweight paper for your first time you will probably find that it goes all the way down the string. Then you might try heavy paper for the same experiment. You will probably find that the rocket will not go all the way down the string. The heavy paper ways the rocket down. The air coming out of the balloon can only pull a certain amount of weight. The air in the balloon runs out quicker because it takes more air to pull that much weight. Since the heavy paper needs more air to push it, the air runs out before the rocket hits the end of the string.

If you have time, you may review your work in this section only.



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