

2021 MCAS Sample Student Work and Scoring Guide

Grade 3 English Language Arts

Question 12: Essay

Reporting Categories: Language and Writing

Standard: L.PK-12.1 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Standard: L.PK-12.2 - Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Standard: L.PK-12.3 - Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Standard: W.PK-12.3 - Write narratives to develop experiences or events using effective literary techniques, well-chosen details, and well-structured sequences.

Standard: W.PK-12.4 - Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Item Description: Write a narrative that extends the story by describing what might happen next.

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Essay Prompt

For this question, you will write a story based on the passage(s). Your writing should:

- Use characters, settings, events, and other details from the passage(s).
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Based on *Trouble in a Fur Coat*, write a story that tells what will **most likely** happen next to the mother bear and her cubs. Use what you know about the characters, settings, and events to write your story.

Continue to the following page to see the scoring guides for this question. Sample student responses begin on page 3. The annotations that appear above each sample response describe elements of the response that contributed to its score for Idea Development and Standard English Conventions.

Scoring Guide for Idea Development

Select a score point in the table below to view the sample student response.

Score*	Description
4A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central idea is clear and fully developed Effective selection and explanation of evidence and/or details Effective organization Clear expression of ideas Full awareness of the purpose for writing
4B	
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central idea is general and moderately developed Appropriate selection and explanation of evidence and/or details Moderate organization Adequate expression of ideas Sufficient awareness of the purpose for writing
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central idea may be present and is somewhat developed Limited selection and explanation of evidence and/or details Limited organization Basic expression of ideas Partial awareness of the purpose for writing
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Central idea is not present and/or not developed Insufficient evidence and/or details Minimal or no organization Poor expression of ideas Minimal awareness of the purpose for writing
0	The response shows evidence the student has read the text, but does not address the question or incorrectly responds to the question.

Scoring Guide for Standard English Conventions

Select a score point in the table below to view the sample student response.

Score*	Description
3A	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistent control of a variety of sentence structures relative to length of essay Consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay
3B	
3C	
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Mostly consistent control of sentence structures relative to length of essay Mostly consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little control and/or no variety in sentence structure and/or Little control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or insufficient length
0	Sentences are formed incorrectly with no control of grammar, usage, and mechanics and/or insufficient length.

*In both scoring guides, letters are used to distinguish between sample student responses that earned the same score (e.g., 4A and 4B).

Idea Development—Score Point 4A

The narrative is fully developed and continues the story, telling what will happen next to the mother bear and her cubs. Effective use of details, such as “There [were] hundreds of [salmon] flying out of the waterfall,” are included to describe the setting of the stream. The personalities of Natook and his sister Kimwa are revealed through their interactions at the stream in this example: “‘I [w]ant to try!’ Kimwa said, and stepped into the freezing water.” The narrative describes how Natook watches Kimwa as she attempts to catch a fish: “Kimwa kept on trying, but she never gave up! A minute later, she caught one! I was so proud of my sister!” Later, when Kimwa nudges her brother into the water, Natook decides to be “a brave bear” and chants, “You can do this!” in his head until he succeeds in catching a fish. The dialogue and actions of the characters demonstrate clear expression of ideas and continue the story of the mother bear and her cubs. The narrative is effectively organized and shows full awareness of the purpose for writing.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 3A

The narrative contains a variety of simple and complex sentence structures that demonstrate a consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Minor errors in capitalization and grammar, such as using “lead” instead of “led” in the sentence “She lead us to the stream,” do not interfere with overall understanding or meaning. Given its length and complexity, the narrative demonstrates consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

We played in that stream for as long as I could remember. Mother just kept on drinking the water whenever she was thirsty. Soon enough, we both collapsed onto the bank where mother was.

"What can we do next?" Kimwa asked.

"Yeah," I said, out of breath.

"Follow me." Mother said, and we followed her back into the wilderness.

She lead us to another stream. "What?" I squaked. "I thought we were just here?" "It's different," Mother said, and tilted her head up. It was just then that I noticed that this stream had a waterfall attached to it. "What's that for?" Kimwa asked, frightened.

"It's how you catch fish," Mother said. She stepped into the stream, tilted her head and, POOF! She caught a fish. It hanged out of mother's mouth like a dead man.

"I Want to try!" Kimwa said, and stepped into the freezing water.

Mother moved asied, to give Kimwa more room.

There wre hundreds of Salamon flying out of the waterfall. I wasn't sure if Kimwa was gonna catch one.

There was one fish that nearly missed Kimwa's ear, once, her mouth wasn't open, and it hit her in the face! Kimwa kept on trying, but she never gave up! A minute later, she caught one! I was so proud of my sister!

But now, it was my turn. my sister had eaten her fish already, and was nudging me into the water. I was scared! I didn't want to get slapped in the face like Kimwa.

And before I knew it, I was in the water. The fish where flying everywhere! But then I decided to be a brave bear. I saw one coming, "You can do this!" I was chanting in my head. I leaped to the side, and POW! That fish landed in my mouth! I couldn't belive I did it! I gulped down my delicious fish, oh, wow it was good, and guess what, I think that that waterfall is fun, after all!

Idea Development—Score Point 4B

The narrative is fully developed and continues the story of the mother bear and her cubs. Effective details relating to the characters, the setting, and the events are included to describe what happens after the water fight and when the family returns home, with both cubs feeling “sad that the day was over.” Before falling asleep, the cubs think about the great things that happened during the day. Events continue to develop the next morning as the mother bear and her cubs return to the stream, passing the lumps and mounds that had been unfamiliar to them the day before. At the stream, Mother teaches her cubs to fish: “Okay cubs, today I will demonstrate how to hunt for salmon.” After both cubs try fishing, the family travels home again. Mother’s feelings about her cubs are clearly expressed when she says, “Go to sleep you sleepyheads.” The narrative demonstrates a full awareness of the purpose for writing.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 3B

The narrative contains a variety of simple and complex sentences that show consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Minor errors and missing punctuation do not interfere with an overall understanding of the narrative. Given its length and complexity, the narrative demonstrates consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

After the water fight, me and Kimwa were drenched. Mother told us it was time to go home. As we were going home, me and Kimwa felt sad that the day was over and told Mother this. She replied: "It's okay that the day is over. You'll eventually get used to it.". When we got back to the den, it was time for sleep. "Okay cubs, time for sleep." Mother told us. As we shut our eyes, we thought of all the great things that happened today. The scenery, the water fight and some more. The next day, we got back out into the open world and we looked at the tall things that reached up, up, up, into the sky again. Then we looked at the big and little lumps and mounds again. Today Mother told us we were going back to the stream for something new. After we wandered off to the stream Mother told us that today's lesson was to hunt for salmon. Mother demonstrated like this: "Okay cubs, today I will demonstrate how to hunt for salmon.". "First you must wait until the salmon come.". SPLASH! Mother jumped into the water to grab some salmon. "There you go. How to grab salmon."She said with a salmon in her mouth. It was my turn first. I waited for the salmon, and when it came, I jumped into the water, the salmon swimming into my chest. Nowhere to go, the salmon got grabbed by my waiting paws and I climbed out of the water. "You're supposed to grab it with your mouth."she said. Kimwa's turn was next. The salmon came, and she splashed into the water mouth first. She managed to grab it with her mouth, but it broke loose. Mother told us it was time to go home. When we got back, Mother said " Go to sleep you sleepyheads.". And we did.

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Idea Development—Score Point 3

The narrative continues the story of the mother bear and her cubs but is moderately developed. Appropriate details and dialogue are included that reveal the personality of the no-nonsense mother when she says, “That’s the third time I’ve told you two!” as well as that of young Natook, who shouts, “Incoming!!!” as he is about to run into the stream. The playful interaction of the cubs is adequately developed, but the action does not move beyond the setting of the stream to further extend the narrative. There is a sufficient awareness of the purpose for writing.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 3C

The narrative demonstrates consistent control of a variety of sentence structures, as shown in this example: “‘Oh, ya!’ I remembered, ‘I was about to get you for shoving me face-first in the stream!’” There are some minor errors in punctuation and grammar, but given its length and complexity, the narrative shows consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

Splash! A huge spray of water hits my mother. " Stop with the water," she growled, "That's the third time I've told you two!" " Sorry, mother," my sister Kimwa and I appologise to our mother. She hated when we got her soaked. " Stay in the area over there," mother pointed to the left side of the stream away from where she was drinking water. Me and my little sister, Kimwa were water fighting on the left side of the stream, well, at least we were suppose to be on the left side. Kimwa and I trudged back over to the shore. "So, where were we?" I asked Kimwa. Kimwa shrugged her shoulders. She wasn't much help. "Oh, ya!" I remembered," I was about to get you for shoving me face-first in the stream!" I ran toward Kimwa and pushed her in the stream, but she swang to the side just in time, but I was running so fast , I couldn't stop!! " Incoming!!!!" I yealed. And just when I thought it was over, mother ran and caught me before I fell in. " Thanks, mother!" I said. " Yes, but be more careful next time." she told me. "Okay." I said as I ran onto the bank. I new she was right about that. " I'm still going to get you!" I playfully tagged my sister on shore." Your'e it!"

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Idea Development—Score Point 2

The narrative continues the story of the mother bear and her cubs but is only somewhat developed. Details, while limited, include how Mother teaches her cubs about the process of hunting: “We watch Mother sniff for something then she [crouched] down and jumped at something in the bushes.” The dialogue does little to define the characters or advance the narrative. There is a basic expression of ideas and a partial awareness of the purpose for writing.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 2

The narrative contains mostly controlled, simple sentence structures. While there are minor capitalization errors within quotations and some spelling errors, they do not detract from overall understanding. Given its length and complexity, the narrative demonstrates mostly consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

After we went to the stream we went to the woods. Mother told us she was going to teach us how to hunt. I asked "what is that?" She said "it is hard to explain." We watch Mother sniff for something then she crouched down and jumped at something in the bushes. She came back with a rabbit in her mouth. "Mother," I said, "What do we do with it?" She said, "you eat it. And to get it you have to hunt." Now I understand. Hunting means to get food and eat it. I asked "do you always have to eat the same thing?" Mother said, "no. But I have a lot to teach you still.

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Idea Development—Score Point 1

The narrative continues the story of the mother bear and her cubs, but it lacks development. Ideas are poorly expressed, and there are insufficient details related to the characters, the setting, or the events. There is a minimal awareness of the purpose for writing.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 1

The narrative demonstrates little variety or control in sentence structure, with sentences containing scattered errors. The writing lacks the complexity or length to demonstrate more than minimal control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

Me and Kimwa played in the stream a litle bit longer and then Mother said " take your last sips of water and lets head back to the den." We drank some more water while mother listen to make sure we were safe to leave the stream. After that me,Mother, and Kimwa ran through the bushy, spickey path heading towards the den then, when we got back, me and kimwa played together.

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Idea Development—Score Point 0

The response contains evidence that the student has read the text but does not provide a story that tells what happens next to the mother bear and her cubs.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 0

The response consists of a single, incorrect sentence, with errors in capitalization and punctuation. It demonstrates no control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

the mother bear was strong

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