

2021 MCAS Sample Student Work and Scoring Guide

Grade 4 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 describes what will most likely happen next in the story.

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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 “Winning,” write a story that tells what will happen when Tom goes to Ed’s house. 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 fully developed narrative tells what will happen when Tom goes to Ed's house. The narrative is effectively organized and includes well-chosen details that relate to the characters, setting, and continuation of events. Tom's character is developed through details such as, "Tom just nodded. He wasn't used to people thanking him, or at the least smiling at him." Tom's feelings of nervousness about making a new friend are clearly expressed: "He would be at Ed's house shortly, and he didn't know what to say." When Tom sees Ed's room filled with "model rockets, real rockets, rocket poster[s], and even [some] autographs from real rocketeers," Tom is amazed. Tom "shyly" asks Ed if they could build a rocket together, and his "heart start[s] racing" while he waits for the answer. The boys build a rocket together, and their dialogue and cooperation clearly show that a bond is being formed. At one point, Tom notes that Ed seems shy and talks to him in a comforting way. The narrative concludes with a positive outlook on Tom and Ed's relationship: "[Their] rocket soared into space[,] only leaving behind their friendship." There is a full awareness of the purpose of writing throughout the narrative.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 3A

The narrative demonstrates a consistent control of a variety of sentence structures, as shown in these sentences: "He gently placed it on the launching pad. He [connected] the igniter and the engine, checking to see if there were any problems." The dialogue between Tom and Ed is generally punctuated correctly, and while there are minor errors in grammar and usage, they do not detract from the overall meaning. Based on its length and complexity, the narrative shows consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

"Thanks again, Tom." Ed said as they walked through the grass to Ed's house.

Tom just nodded. He wasn't used to people thanking him, or at the least smiling at him. They walked through the path, Ed telling Tom stories about his rockets. Tom hoped that Ed would turn out to be the good friend that he seemed like; but Tom was still worried. Tom didn't talk much, except for sometimes a "Yes," or "I see." He didn't want to mess up his chances of having a friend. The truth was, Ed's stories were actually interesting. He would be at Ed's house shortly, and he didn't know what to say.

"That's how I built the fuselage of that rocket. I named it alien 11, because I painted it green. And here we are." Ed pointed to a light gray house, with a field in the back. Tom saw model rockets in one window, probably Ed's room. "Come on in!" Said Ed, opening the front door. Tom walked inside, and up to Ed's room. He found model rockets, real rockets, rockets poster, and even some autographs from real rocketeers! Tom stood in awe, while Ed bounced onto his bed.

"Wha... How...When..." Tom stuttered, in wondering what to say. He was amazed by Ed's obsession. Ed hadn't really been this obsessed with rockets at the contest....

"We could test one." Said Ed, holding a shiny red and blue rocket. The expression on Tom's face said it all. All afternoon, they tested, compared, and launched rockets in the field.

"Would it be okay if we built a rocket?" Tom asked, feeling shy. He dug his hands into his pockets. "Like, just me and you?" He felt his face getting hot, and his palms were getting sweaty. Ed didn't reply. Tom's heart started racing.

"Sure." Ed replied. They started planning.

"What if ..."

"Maybe..." At last, they had come up with a plan. They built, tested, and tweaked their rocket. Ed brought out a special engine.

"I've been saving this one." Said Ed. They carefully put it in place.

Ed walked over to a special place in the field. "This is where I always launch mine." Ed almost looked.... Shy!

"Perfect." Tom said, trying to comfort Ed.

"You do the honors." Said Ed, handing the rocket over to Tom. Tom took it gracefully with two hands. He gently placed it on the launching pad. He connected the igniter and the engine, checking to see if there were any problems.

"Three, two, one, blastoff!" The rocket soared into space; only leaving behind their friendship.

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Idea Development—Score Point 4B

The well-developed narrative tells what will happen when Tom goes to Ed's house. Details relating to characters, setting, and continuation of events are well chosen. Tom feels jealous when he sees Ed's toolbox: "Tom eyed the toolbox. It had baby blue paint on it with a shiny handle, no rust [whatsoever], and inside it were clean tools and nails." Tom is worried when Ed goes upstairs, and his thoughts are clearly expressed when he tells himself to "[s]nap out of it" as he searches for Ed's room. Organization is effective throughout the narrative. When Tom finds the room with drawers open and "paper scattered all over the floor," he thinks, "He must have been looking for something." Ed shows Tom the rocket he was searching for and how it inspired his interest. Tom asks Ed to help him with his own rocket, and it becomes evident that a friendship is forming between the boys. The narrative ends by noting that "they became [best friends] and [teammates] for future competitions." There is a full awareness of the purpose of writing throughout the narrative.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 3B

The narrative demonstrates consistent control of a variety of sentence structures. Punctuation is used effectively in the dialogue between the two characters. Minor errors in grammar (e.g., "teared apart" instead of "torn apart") and word choice (e.g., "no rust once so ever" instead of "no rust whatsoever") do not detract from understanding. Based on its length and complexity, the narrative demonstrates consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

It's a day after the competition, Ed and Tom agreed to have a playdate. They both decided to go to Ed's house. Tom was sitting in the car as his mom drove him to the house. Once Tom got there his mom drove off. He was about to knock on the door when Ed appeared from around the corner.

"Oh, hi Ed." Tom said. "Hi, sorry if I startled you." Ed replied and opened the door.

"Woah, your house is nice." Tom said looking around the room. "Thanks, my mom and I decorated it." Ed and Tom sat down on the soft, black leather couch. Tom eyed the toolbox. It had baby blue paint on it with a shiny handle, no rust once so ever, and inside it were clean tools and nails. Tom was so jealous of how it was in such good shape.

"Oh, you're looking at that? I've had that for a while now, it was a birthday present." Ed said. "It's an amazing birthday present." Tom said. "I need to get something, I will be right back." Ed ran upstairs. Tom started to worry that Ed didn't want to talk to him anymore because he had been up there for a while.

A few minutes later Tom decided to go check on Ed. He got upstairs but soon got distracted by the decorating skills. *Snap out of it!* He told himself and continued looking. He found Ed's room and looked through the crack of the door opening. Everything was teared apart, his drawers were open and there was paper scattered all over the floor. *He must have been looking for something.* Tom thought. "I found it!" Ed held up a miniature, toy rocket. "This is what inspired me to make rockets," He said "I kept on practicing but I never knew I would make it this far." "Maybe you could help me with my rockets?" Tom asked "Like how do you make them go so high?"

The boys got downstairs and talked about inventions and memories. And so they became bestfriends and teammates for future competitions.

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Idea Development—Score Point 3

The narrative tells what will happen when Tom goes to Ed's house, but it is moderately developed. Events are somewhat organized as Tom interacts with Ed and the other children in Ed's "huge backyard." There are general references to some of the other characters who participated in the competition, such as the girl Tom tells "to make her rocket smoother" and the boy he advises "to spend more time working on his rocket." Tom, whose character is adequately developed, feels that by helping the other children, he is "giving back what he stole from them" and "a hero of some [sort]." At the end of the day, Tom "felt a wave of happiness." There is a sufficient awareness of the purpose for writing throughout the narrative.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 3C

The narrative shows consistent control of sentence structures and conventions despite minor errors in spelling and punctuation in some of the dialogue. Given its length and complexity, the narrative demonstrates consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

Tom went to Ed's house later in the day. Ed's house had a huge backyard. It was 4:00 in the afternoon and the sun made the sky light blue. Tom met most of the kids Tom saw at the rocket competition. Then the kids asked Tom how to make their rocket fly higher than before. Tom told a blond haired girl to make her rocket smoother. Then, he told the kid with the sloppy rocket to spend more time working on his rocket. When Tom looked up there was a long line of kids waiting for Tom to help them. Then, he told another kid to have the fins farther away from the rocket's center of gravity. "Next" said Tom and the next kid in line walked to Tom. The kid showed Tom his rocket. His rocket was lime green with sky blue swirls and it had bumps and dents. Tom told him to make his rocket more aerodynamic. When Tom was finished, he went to talk to Ed about the competition. "you did pretty well at the competition" Tom said. "Yeah I did" replied Ed. Then kids couldn't wait for the next time they were going to have a competition. Then Ed helped a few kids about their rocket. Then Tom helped a few kids about what to do about the weather conditions. "if it is sticky and airless like today you have to angle your launch pad higher." Tom said looking out the window. Tom felt like he was giving back what he stole from them. He felt like a hero of some sorts. He was giving advice to most of the kids whose rocket didn't go that high. "to make your rocket go higher you have to make your rocket smoother to prevent your rocket to wobble." Tom said to one kid. Then, it was getting late so Tom said goodbye to everyone and left. When Tom left he felt a wave of happiness wash over himself. Tom couldn't wait for the next rocket competition.

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Idea Development—Score Point 2

The narrative is somewhat developed as it tells what will happen when Tom visits Ed's house. Organization is present, but the expression of ideas is basic, and the pacing of events moves too quickly because of limited details, as shown in these sentences: "Then, they both walked up to Ed's room. 'Wow! I love this room!' Then Tom and Ed tried to build a robot. But, it failed." In addition, the narrative reveals a partial awareness of the purpose for writing.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 2

The narrative demonstrates little variety in sentence structure and contains few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics. Relative to its length and complexity, the narrative demonstrates mostly consistent control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

Today, Tom was going to Ed's house! He brought his special microchip to show Ed! Tom got picked up by Ed's dad. When they arrived Tom said "Wow! Nice house!" "Thanks," They both walked into the house and went to the kitchen. Tom and Ed talked while they had lunch.

Then, they both walked up to Ed's room. "Wow! I love this room!" Then Tom and Ed tried to build a robot. But, it failed.

After that, they tried to build a rocket. By accident, Tom put his microchip inside the rocket without noticing! Then, they both tried looking for the microchip for 2 whole hours!

Finally, Tom found out that he put the microchip inside the rocket. Then, they had to take the rocket apart. Tom finally found the microchip! But then, it was already 5:00! "Tom!" Tom's dad yelled. "Coming, sorry I have to leave for dinner, Bye Ed!" "Bye Tom!" "Maybe we can hang out tomorrow?" Tom yelled to Ed from outside. Ed gave him a thumbs up.

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Idea Development—Score Point 1

The narrative tells what will happen when Tom goes to Ed's house, but it lacks development. Details are insufficient and poorly expressed. Dialogue between Tom and Ed is minimal and does little to reveal the personalities of the characters beyond "[W]ow, cool," which is Tom's reaction to Ed's house, and his enthusiastic "YEAH!" when he is asked about wanting to launch rockets. The narrative demonstrates little organization, contains a poor expression of ideas, and ends abruptly. There is minimal awareness of the purpose for writing.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 1

The narrative demonstrates little variety or control of sentence structures. The writing lacks the complexity or length to demonstrate more than minimal control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

When Tom goes to Ed's house Ed says "this is it, my home." Tom says "wow, cool" after Ed gets to the field behind his house with Tom behind him Ed asked "do you want to launch some rockets?" "YEAH!" Tom yelled far away from him. After a rocket or two Ed asked "do you want a snack?" "ok" Tom said. Finally Tom said "I have to go see you later." "ok see you later." Ed says.

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Idea Development—Score Point 0

The response does not tell what will happen when Tom goes to Ed's house; instead, it provides a brief summary of the events in the passage. A well-developed summary that does not address the prompt would also receive a 0 in Idea Development.

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 0

The response, consisting of only two sentences, is of insufficient length and complexity. The response contains errors in capitalization, grammar, usage, and mechanics, demonstrating no control of standard English conventions for this grade level.

Well Tom always win in evrey competition but he felt nerveous about the rocket competition. so he made a rocket then E'd comes and introduce himself to tom the setting is out side is wher the competition.

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