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# Language Arts–Writing

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# Language Arts – Writing

## Directions

### Multiple-Choice Questions (MC)

Time – 85 Minutes (MC and Essay Question)

25 MC Questions

1 Essay Question

This is a test of some of the skills involved in revising written materials. There are three selections that present draft reports, letters, or articles. Each selection is presented twice, first in a box in a conventional format and then in a spread-out format with certain parts underlined and numbered. You will be asked to correct or improve the underlined and numbered parts. Read quickly through the boxed text to get an idea of its purpose and style. Then go on to the spread-out format.

For some of the underlined parts, there is no corresponding question in the right-hand column; instead just four alternatives are listed. Choose the alternative that

- makes the statement grammatically correct;
- expresses the idea in the clearest or most appropriate way;
- is worded most consistently with the style and purpose of the writing;
- organizes the ideas in the most effective way.

In some cases, there may be more than one problem to correct or improve. When you have decided which alternative is best, mark your choice on the answer sheet. If you think the original underlined version is best, choose “No change.”

Other underlined parts have questions about organization or spelling in the right-hand column. In questions about organization, you will probably find it helpful to look at the boxed text. In the questions about spelling, you are to indicate which of three underlined words is misspelled, if any. If there are no errors in any of the words, choose “None.”

Work as quickly as you can without becoming careless. Do not spend too much time on any question that is difficult for you to answer. Instead, skip it and return to it later if you have time. Try to answer every question even if you have to guess.

Mark all your answers on the answer sheet. Give only one answer to each question.

If you decide to change one of your answers, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Be sure that the number of the question you are answering matches the number of the row of answer choices you are marking on your answer sheet. The answer sheet may contain more rows than you need.

You will have 85 minutes to complete the multiple-choice questions and essay question of the Writing test.

Questions 1 through 10 refer to the following selection.

After a class trip, students each chose a personal highlight from their visit to write about for a newspaper feature. Read through the draft of one student’s account. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

### The National Archives

¶1 On our class trip to the U.S. Capital, Washington, D.C., the teachers insisted on taking us to the National Archives, where the government’s most important records are kept. Now admitting at first that I did not want to go because a building full of papers and records sounded like a pretty dull thing to see.

¶2 The National Archives is located near what is known as the National Mall, a long parkway stretching westward from the Capitol building. On either side are various Smithsonian museums.

¶3 When my turn finally came to view these historic documents, I lingered a long time too. I was unexpectedly moved. Before me were the handwritten principles that have allowed our country to operate according to law and undergoing change peacefully for 200 years. At the bottom of the documents were extravagantly embellished signatures — those of Ben Franklin, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson, among many others.

¶4 On the day we visited the Archives, a long line of people waited in the huge, marble Exhibition Hall. The cases containing the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights were on a pedestal at the front of the room. One by one, people passed in front of them and paused looking. No one just hurried by.

¶5 To ensure that the documents continue to be well preserved, they are sealed in helium-filled glass cases. To protect the documents further, the lights in the Exhibition Hall are kept low, and the temperature and humidity are carefully controlled. Each night the cases are lowered into a fireproof and shockproof vault beneath the building, in case of an emergency, they can be lowered instantly.

¶6 During our trip, we saw the nation’s history reflected in many impressive museums and monuments. Much to my surprise, of all the places we visited, the Archives turned out to be my most favorite.

## The National Archives

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❶ \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. capital Washington, D.C. the
- C. capital, Washington, D.C., the
- D. Capital, Washington, D.C. the

❷ \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. Now I have to admit that at first
- C. At first admitting that
- D. First I admitted that

❸ \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. stretched
- C. it stretches
- D. which is stretched

❹ \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. and to undergo
- C. and it can undergo
- D. and the undergoing of

❺ \_\_\_\_\_

Which of these words, if any, is misspelled?

- A. None
- B. extravagantly
- C. embellished
- D. signitures

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6 \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. pausing looked.
- C. paused to look.
- D. looked pausing.

7 \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. To also protect the documents,
- C. To protect the documents besides,
- D. To increasingly protect the documents,

8 \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. the building. In case
- C. the building in case
- D. the building; and so in case

9 \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. very favorite of them all.
- C. favorite above all others.
- D. favorite.

10 \_\_\_\_\_

**This question concerns the draft as a whole.**

For the best organization of ideas, where should paragraph 3 be placed?

- A. No change
- B. After paragraph 1
- C. After paragraph 4
- D. After paragraph 5

**NO TEST MATERIAL ON THIS PAGE**

Questions 11 through 18 refer to the following selection.

A career counselor was preparing an information sheet about job interviews. Read through the draft. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

### Tips for a Successful Job Interview

¶1 In the days preceding an interview, there are a number of steps applicants can take in order to make a great impression.

#### Step One: Research the Employer

¶2 First, applicants should try to learn about the business or organization. Use the company's website as well as other resources to gather information about its products, services, who the staff is, and accomplishments.

#### Step Two: Know What to Say

¶3 During interviews applicants should describe themselves in ways that best show how well they fit the position. Nonetheless, be ready to provide information in the following areas. Education and training; any former jobs, especially ones related to the new position; strengths and weaknesses; past challenges; and goals for the future. Become familiar with the following frequently asked interview questions and plan a two-to-three-sentence response for each.

- **What would you like to tell me about yourself?** Applicants can talk about qualities especially talents and prior experiences, that make them a particularly good fit for the job.
- **Why do you want to work here?** This is where prior research about the employer can pay off, enabling applicants to explain why they respect the employer and restate why they are a good fit for the position.
- **Tell me about a time you made a mistake.** How did you resolve it? Choose a mistake that taught a lesson. Emphasize the lesson. Talk about how, in later situations, to act differently.
- **Why should we hire you?** If given this opportunity to distinguish oneself from others, tell the interviewer about any unique qualities, skills, and career goals.
- **Do you have any questions for me?** Ask for more information about the job. For example, this can be a time to ask about hours or pay. It is also the time to ask for clarification of anything discussed during the interview.



### **Step Three: Practice Being Interviewed**

¶4 First practice alone and then ask a friend or a mentor to play the role of the interviewer. During the practice interview, make sure to:

- Give the interviewer a firm handshake.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Give thorough answers.
- Speak clearly and concisely.
- Thank the interviewer at the end of the interview.

At the conclusion of the role-playing, ask that friend of yours to tell you what he or she really, really thought.

### **Step Four: Look Sharp, Plan Ahead, Be Confident, and Expect Surprises**

¶5 For the interview itself, wear clean, appropriate attire and bring along relevant documents and supplies. Before the interview, get plenty of rest, make sure to eat a nutritious meal, and allowing extra time to get to the destination. Most importantly, remember that it is impossible to prepare for every topic that will come up at an interview. If there is a surprise, take a deep breath, relax, and be natural.

## Tips for a Successful Job Interview

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- **What would you like to tell me about yourself?** *Applicants can talk about **14** qualities especially talents and prior experiences, that make them a particularly good fit for the job.*

**11** \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. what services it provides, staff,
- C. services, staff employed,
- D. services, staff,

**12** \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. For that reason,
- C. So why not
- D. Instead

**13** \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. areas; education
- C. areas: education
- D. areas, education

**14** \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. qualities, especially talents and prior experiences, that
- C. qualities, especially talents and prior experiences that
- D. qualities especially talents and prior experiences that

- **Why do you want to work here?** *This is where prior research about the employer can pay off, enabling applicants to explain why they respect the employer and restate why they are a good fit for the position.*
- **Tell me about a time you made a mistake.** *How did you resolve it? Choose a mistake that taught a lesson.*  
**15** Emphasize the lesson. Talk about how, in later situations, to act differently.
- **Why should we hire you?** *If given this opportunity to distinguish oneself from others, tell the interviewer about any unique qualities, skills, and career goals.*
- **Do you have any questions for me?**  
**16** Ask for more information about the job. For example, this can be a time to ask about hours or pay. It is also the time to ask for clarification of anything discussed during the interview.

**15**

Choose the best way to combine the indicated sentences.

- A. Emphasizing the lesson, talk about acting differently in later situations.
- B. Talk about how to act differently in later situations that emphasize the lesson.
- C. With the lesson being emphasized, talk in later situations about acting differently.
- D. Talk about how to act differently in later situations with the emphasized lesson.

**16**

Choose the best way to express the information in the indicated sentences.

- A. Ask for more information about the job, such as the hours or pay, and for clarification of anything discussed during the interview.
- B. Ask for more information about the job hours or job pay and that clarifies anything discussed during the interview.
- C. Ask for more information about the job's hours or pay and its clarifying anything discussed during the interview.
- D. Ask for more information about the job, such as the hours, pay, and to clarify anything discussed during the interview.

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**17** \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. to hear something that could help.
- C. for constructive feedback.
- D. if it went ok.

**18** \_\_\_\_\_

- A. No change
- B. to allow
- C. allows
- D. allow

**NO TEST MATERIAL ON THIS PAGE**

Questions 19 through 25 refer to the following selection.

Read through the draft of a report about an influential sports figure. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

### Holcombe Rucker

¶1 When Holcombe Rucker (1926 – 1965) blew the first whistle to start his experiment in summer youth basketball on a Harlem playground in 1947, there were four teams, and he was the only official. By 1965 “The Rucker,” as the program had come to be called, has expanded to include youth, college, and professional divisions that played on several playgrounds in Harlem. As The Rucker continued to thrive, its reputation grew, and, in 1974 New York City renamed its home. The city park at 155th Street and 8th Avenue is now called Holcombe Rucker Park. Many players and commentators believe that after 1965 The Rucker became the major force in reshaping how organized basketball is played.

¶2 Successful basketball can go in either direction, emphasizing interdependent team play or individual brilliance, depending on how “successful” is understood. Before The Rucker, success in organized basketball meant developing a team-oriented, often systematized approach to the game. It was players in The Rucker who brought a new definition of success to basketball, one based on the brilliance and creativity of individuals. Crucial to this innovation was the fact that The Rucker, though it administered leagues with coaches, referees, and champions, did not have teams that provided the players or coaches with a livelihood or that represented institutions such as schools. Thus, although players and coaches certainly wanted to win Rucker games and championships, there were no significant pressures or incentives to do so, other than their own competitive desires. This environment allowed the players more freedom to reinvent how the game was played, opening it up particularly to displays of individual creativity and skill. The Rucker games, played outdoors before large and appreciative crowds, created reputations for players who displayed this individual virtuosity. Beginning in the 1960s, such moments of individual brilliance grew enormously in frequency and at the highest levels of play as well-known professional stars played in The Rucker, often being challenged by legendary playground players.

¶3 Helping players to leave the playgrounds and continue their educations, not changing basketball, was what had motivated Holcombe Rucker. He started his program to give young people something to do outside of school, he monitored how players did in school, and he sent hundreds on to prep schools and to college. He himself provided a model, obtaining a high school equivalency diploma, an undergraduate degree, and a position as a junior high school English teacher while running his program. For Rucker, running his program, including enlarging its size and scope, was always a means to achieve his educational goals for the players.

## Holcombe Rucker

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**19**

- A. No change
- B. will have expanded
- C. had expanded
- D. expanded

**20**

- A. No change
- B. grew and in 1974,
- C. grew and, in 1974
- D. grew, and in 1974

**21**

The writer is considering whether or not to add the following sentence at the start of paragraph 2:

Athletic contests have two basic forms: matches between highly coordinated teams (e.g., football) or lone individuals competing against each other (e.g., boxing).

Would this be an appropriate sentence to add at this point?

- A. Yes; it summarizes previously discussed information.
- B. Yes; it introduces subjects developed in paragraph 2.
- C. No; it contradicts assertions made in paragraph 1.
- D. No; it presents opinions as documented facts.

**22**

One of the four indicated words is misspelled. Which change in spelling corrects the error?

- A. inovation
- B. adminestered
- C. livelihood
- D. institutions

wanted to win Rucker games and championships, there were no significant pressures or incentives to do so, other than their own competitive desires. **23** This environment allowed the players more freedom to reinvent how the game was played, opening it up particularly to displays of individual creativity and skill. The Rucker games, played outdoors before large and appreciative crowds, created reputations for players who displayed this individual virtuosity. Beginning in the 1960s, such moments of individual brilliance **24** grew enormously in frequency and at the highest levels of play as well-known professional stars played in The Rucker, often being challenged by legendary playground players.

¶3 Helping players to leave the playgrounds and continue their educations, not changing basketball, was what had motivated Holcombe Rucker. He started his program to give young people something to do outside of school, he monitored how players did in school, and he sent hundreds on to prep schools and to college. He himself provided a model, obtaining a high school equivalency diploma, an undergraduate degree, and a position as a junior high school English teacher while running his program. For Rucker, running his program, including enlarging its size and scope, was always a means to achieve his educational goals for the players.

**25**

**23**

- A. No change
- B. On the other hand, this environment
- C. Nevertheless, this environment
- D. Similarly, this environment

**24**

- A. No change
- B. became increasingly common and exemplified
- C. happened repeatedly and the demonstration of
- D. were occurring very much more often and

**25**

Choose the best sentence to add at the end of paragraph 3.

- A. Yet it has been the unintended changes in basketball itself that have done the most to expand educational opportunities for the players, as schools have embraced the individual virtuosity first brought to organized basketball by The Rucker.
- B. Perhaps year-round organized basketball did not begin entirely with Holcombe Rucker in the summers of the late 1940s and early 1950s in New York City, but no other person or place has been put forward as an alternative origin.
- C. The Rucker still continues today, with its outdoor displays of individual virtuosity presented on a removable wooden court at Holcombe Rucker Park in upper Manhattan.
- D. In addition to the city park, there is also a New York public school, the Holcombe Rucker School of Community Research, named for him.



# Language Arts – Writing

## Directions

Essay Question

Time – 85 Minutes (MC and Essay Question)

25 MC Questions

1 Essay Question

This is a test of your writing skills. Your response will be scored based on

- development of a central position through explanation of supporting reasons, examples, and details from passages and personal experience;
- clear organization of ideas, including an introduction and conclusion, logical paragraphs, and effective transitions;
- language use, including varied word choice, varied sentence constructions, and appropriate voice;
- clarity and correctness of writing conventions.

Below you will find two passages in which the authors put forth differing perspectives on an issue of importance. Read both passages carefully, noting the strengths and weaknesses of each discussion. Then, you will write an essay in which you explain your own opinion on the issue.

The following articles appeared in a flyer entitled “Opposing Views on the GatesburgGoGreen Initiative” printed by a community interest group. The first piece highlights the benefits of a mandatory recycling and composting proposal, and the second piece addresses concerns with the proposal.

### Going Green for Gatesburg

¶ 1 The GatesburgGoGreen Initiative is a joint proposal crafted by environmental groups, businesses, city officials, and citizens. The goal is to reduce the amount of waste we add to the county landfill by 90% over the next five years. This plan is ambitious but achievable. It is a goal shared by cities like San Francisco and Cleveland, both of which are much larger than Gatesburg.

¶ 2 The proposal began as a discussion about extending the life of the county landfill, which will close in ten years if we do nothing. Several years ago, the city banned the dumping of construction waste, such as wood, that can be effectively recycled. The city later banned yard waste and started a composting program for leaves and grass clippings. Requiring recycling and composting is nothing new. We are just taking the idea to the next level to save our landfill.

¶ 3 The new plan calls for every resident to have three trashcans: a green one for compost such as food waste, a blue one for recyclable paper and plastic, and a black one for the landfill. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the average American produces more than four pounds of trash each day and recycles only about a third of that amount. Those daily pounds of trash add up. They result in tons added unnecessarily to our landfill each year.

¶ 4 Purchasing bins and hiring staff will cost money. However, those investments will pay dividends. The city will follow the example of Phoenix, Arizona, which has made more than 500 million dollars in a year by selling its recyclables. We will produce compost that citizens can use in their gardens. We will save money by not having to open a new landfill. We will improve the environment and our budget at the same time.

## No Recycling Laws for Gatesburg

¶ 1 Recycling is a great idea. Americans already recycle at a high rate, which is around 95% of lead-acid batteries and 70% of steel cans and newspapers. That is one reason we oppose the GatesburgGoGreen Initiative. It burdens citizens by taking a good idea to ridiculous extremes.

¶ 2 The so-called initiative is a law, plain and simple. If passed, it would criminalize violations of its complicated rules. A newspaper goes into the blue bin, but what about a flyer insert? Well, it depends. Coffee grounds go in the green bin, but what about a plastic container of yogurt that has gone out of date? Careful — make a mistake, and you will be fined. Those fines, along with the increased taxes to pay for the services and personnel, make this a bad idea for taxpayers.

¶ 3 Privacy is another concern. The proposal requires that radio-frequency identification computer chips be attached to each bin. These chips track the pounds of trash each person discards versus how much is recycled. City officials know the average weights thrown out per day, and they know what the numbers should be with mandatory recycling and composting. Falling outside of acceptable ranges summons the trash police to check your bins to see if you have thrown a banana peel into the trash bin instead of the compost bin. The law calls for “administrative personnel” who will have the authority to write tickets. If we aren’t careful, Gatesburg will start to feel like the United Kingdom. In some locations in the UK, compliance with trash laws is monitored with surveillance cameras.

¶ 4 This proposed law is not only unnecessary but also radical in how it sacrifices the needs and comfort of citizens to reach an impossible ideal. We already recycle, and we do not need a law forcing us to go beyond what is reasonable.

Write an essay in which you explain your own position on the issue of whether or not recycling and composting initiatives such as the one described in the flyer should be adopted and put into practice in communities throughout the United States.

Be sure to use specific reasons and examples from your own experience and knowledge to support your position. Evidence from the passages provided should also be used to support your ideas. Remember that every position exists within the context of a larger discussion of the issue, so your essay should, at minimum, acknowledge alternate and/or opposing ideas. When you have finished your essay, review your writing to check for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.



**NO TEST MATERIAL ON THIS PAGE**

## HiSET Answer Key and Rationales

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
1	C	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p><b>Option C is correct</b> because “capital” is a common noun and should be lowercase, and commas are correctly used to set off “D.C.” from the sentence the same way they would be used with the name of a state.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
2	B	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<p><b>Option B is correct</b> because the revision of “Now admitting at first that” to “Now I have to admit that at first” corrects the sentence fragment.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
3	A	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p><b>Option A is correct</b> because no revision is needed; the present participle “stretching” is used to most precisely describe the “long parkway” while maintaining the present verb tense of the sentence.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
4	B	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<p><b>Option B is correct</b> because the infinitive “and to undergo” is parallel in form to the infinitive “to operate” that precedes it in the sentence.</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
5	D	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<p><b>Option D is correct</b> because “signatures” is the correct spelling of “signitures.”</p>			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
6	C	II. Language Facility	Easy
Rationale			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because “paused to look” maintains the past verb tense used in the sentence and expresses the idea most precisely.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
7	A	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option A is correct</b> because no revision is needed; “To protect the documents further” expresses how the documents are protected to a greater extent.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
8	B	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option B is correct</b> because replacing the comma after “building” with a period and capitalizing “In” revises the run-on sentence.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
9	D	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because it eliminates the redundancy in the phrase “most favorite.” The adjective “favorite” implies something is the best without the addition of the superlative “most.”			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
10	C	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because in paragraph 3 the writer describes his/her turn viewing the historic documents, which logically comes after paragraph 4, in which the writer described the initial arrival at the Archives and standing in line to see the documents.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
11	D	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because “staff” maintains parallel form with the other nouns in the series, “products” and “services.”			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
12	B	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option B is correct</b> because “For that reason” logically transitions from the need for applicants to describe themselves to examples of how they can accomplish this objective.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
13	C	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because a colon is used to introduce a series of items.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
14	B	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option B is correct</b> because the parenthetical element “especially talents and prior experiences” is correctly set off from the sentence with commas.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
15	A	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option A is correct</b> because it most precisely and logically combines the ideas in the two sentences without changing the sentences’ intended meanings.			



Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
16	A	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option A is correct</b> because it greatly reduces the wordiness of the sentence while preserving the original intended meaning.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
17	C	II. Language Facility	Easy
Rationale			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because it maintains the formal tone of the passage.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
18	D	III. Writing Conventions	Easy
Rationale			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because it maintains the parallel structure of the imperative verb forms that appear in the paragraph: “wear,” “bring,” “get,” and “make sure.”			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
19	C	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because “had expanded” maintains the verb tense of the sentence established with the verb “had come.”			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
20	D	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option D is correct</b> because a comma is only needed before the coordinating conjunction “and,” not after it.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
21	B	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option B is correct</b> because the sentence would provide an effective introduction for paragraph 2, which explains the interaction between team sports and individual athletic skills.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
22	C	III. Writing Conventions	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option C is correct</b> because “livelihood” is the correct spelling of “livelyhood.”			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
23	A	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option A is correct</b> because “This environment” effectively connects the ideas in the previous sentence without the use of an additional transitional phrase.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
24	B	II. Language Facility	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option B is correct</b> because it most precisely expresses the ideas in the sentence while maintaining the tone.			

Sequence Number	Correct Response	Content Category	Question Difficulty
25	A	I. Organization of Ideas	Medium
Rationale			
<b>Option A is correct</b> because it presents an effective conclusion of the passage’s main ideas.			

## Essay Question

### Scoring Your Essay

The Scoring Guide used for scoring essay responses is given below. One way to see how well you did on your essay in this practice test is to ask someone with experience in scoring essays to score your response using this scoring guide. We also provide sample responses to the practice prompt that have been scored by trained essay raters. You can compare your essay to these scored responses and estimate your score that way.

Please remember that you must achieve a score of at least 2 on the essay portion of the Language Arts – Writing test in order to pass the test as a whole.

### Scoring Guide

**Score of 1** – *Essays at this score point demonstrate weak command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

- The response has little or no development of a central position or claim(s). No correct and/or understandable context of the topic is provided for the discussion. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) may not be clear. A few ideas may be provided but these lack explanation of ideas, only repeat ideas, or ideas are derived entirely from provided texts.
- The response lacks an introduction and/or conclusion, and fails to demonstrate any understanding of paragraphing. Transitions are not used or may be used incorrectly.
- Language control is minimal. Word choice and sentence structure are simple. The response lacks formal style and an objective tone.
- Minimal or no command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling frequently appear.

**Score of 2** – *Essays at this score point demonstrate limited command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

- The response demonstrates limited development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic that is only somewhat correct or understandable is provided for the discussion. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) may be somewhat unclear or confusing. A few ideas are provided but explanation is thin and/or superficial and parts of the explanation may be repetitious or derived too heavily from provided texts without interpretation.
- The introduction and conclusion are minimally developed. Some related ideas are grouped together though paragraphing may not be used. Few transitions are used.
- Beginning skill in language is demonstrated. Word choice is general and repetitive. The response has repetitive sentence structure and/or long, uncontrolled sentences. The response lacks formal style and/or an objective tone.
- Limited command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Numerous errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear and may interfere with understanding.

## Scoring Guide Continued

**Score of 3** – *Essays at this score point demonstrate partial command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

- The response demonstrates partial development of a central position or claim(s). A brief context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including introduction of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) is evident. Several ideas with limited or uneven explanation are provided; few or only general examples and/or details support ideas. The response uses evidence drawn from provided texts but this is limited or overused, poorly chosen, or misrepresented.
- The response has an introduction and conclusion, though one or both of these may be under-developed. Ideas are grouped together in paragraphs, though the relationship among ideas may at times be unclear. Transitions are simple and used inconsistently.
- Some developing skill in language is demonstrated. Word choice is general and the response demonstrates a little variety in sentence structure, although a few long, uncontrolled sentences may be used. The response attempts to maintain formal style and an objective tone but may fail to sustain these throughout discussion.
- Partial command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are regularly present throughout the response and may sometimes interfere with understanding.

**Score of 4** – *Essays at this score point demonstrate adequate command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

- The response demonstrates adequate development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including some discussion of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) is clear. Several ideas with adequate explanation are provided; some specific and relevant examples and/or details support ideas, including relevant evidence drawn selectively from provided texts and appropriately integrated.
- A clear, functional introduction and conclusion are provided. Relationships between ideas are clarified by organization: transitions are consistently used, though they may be simple, and some evidence of logical sequencing of ideas is demonstrated. The response uses appropriate paragraphing.
- Adequate skill in language use is demonstrated. Word choice is mostly specific and somewhat varied. The response demonstrates control of sentences with some variety in length and structure. A formal style is established and an objective tone maintained throughout the discussion.
- Adequate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Some errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear but do not interfere with understanding.

## Scoring Guide Continued

**Score of 5** – *Essays at this score point demonstrate strong command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

- The response demonstrates competent development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including balanced discussion of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) is clear and considered. Several ideas with complete explanation are provided; specific, relevant, and somewhat elaborated reasons, examples, and/or details support ideas, including clear and relevant evidence drawn from provided texts and skillfully integrated.
- The introduction and conclusion are clear and sufficient. Clear and appropriate paragraphing is used. Varied transitions and logical sequencing of ideas are used throughout to link major sections of text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between ideas.
- The response demonstrates competent skill in language. Word choice is usually precise and varied. The response uses well-controlled sentences that are varied in length and complexity. A formal style is established and an objective tone maintained throughout; counterclaims are discussed fairly, without bias.
- Able command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Few errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear, and most are superficial.

**Score of 6** – *Essays at this score point demonstrate superior command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.*

- The response demonstrates expert development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including balanced discussion of the strengths and limitations of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) is clear, considered, and nuanced. Several ideas with effective and thorough explanation are provided; relevant and fully elaborated reasons, examples, and/or details support ideas, including compelling evidence drawn from provided texts and effectively integrated.
- The response has an effective introduction and conclusion. Clear and appropriate paragraphing is used, creating a coherent whole. Effective transitions and logical sequencing of ideas are used throughout to link major sections of text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.
- The response demonstrates proficient skill in language. Word choice is precise, varied, and engaging. The response effectively varies sentence length and complexity. A formal style is established and an objective tone that enhances the effectiveness of the response maintained; counterclaims are discussed fairly, without bias.
- Expert command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated, and the response demonstrates sophisticated use of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Few or no errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear.

## Scored Sample Responses

**Note:** All responses are reproduced exactly as written, including errors, misspellings, etc., if any.

### Score of 1

The goal for reducing waste to the county landfill would try to be 90% over the 5 next years. By trying to Give each house 3 in total Bins. A green one For Food waste, Blue for recycling and a black one for landfill.

My neighborhood doesn't have a problem as much as other neighborhoods do. The Throwing it away could be a problem to kids.

I personally don't think it's that necessary to do this to save the current landfill. Than making a new one. Fining people If caught otherwise. Having chips on each bin would make me thing It's Invading peoples privacy. Making sure they throw It in the right bin? Atleast they aren't exactly throwing It where ever else outside.

### Score of 2

I think that recycling and composting are both good things, but they shouldn't be made into laws. You don't know how people would react to such a law that forces them to do these things. They are able to find ways around the law. Also it would be so easy to get someone else in trouble by putting the wrong things in the wrong bin when walking by.

It stated that you would get a fine if you put something in the wrong bin. So what would happen if you didn't know where it was supposed to go. They want to charge people for having too much garbage. I think that is ridiculous.

It would also take up alot of time. You would have to contemplate over which bin to put it in. If you have kids you would have to go over everything that they throw away. So really it is just a waste of time. The people should be able to choose wether they want o recycle or compost, not be forced into it.

### Score of 3

I am for the act of going Green for gates burg. This act will not only help the city and the people that live in it but it also helps the earth become cleaner. It is a act that they must do it reduces the amont of garbage in that land fill by 90%!

With the average american producing more than four pounds of trash each day some thing needs to be done. This act is a great start, we could also implment these acts into other city's across america as well. With the new color cotated tubs even more things get recyled that what gets reclyed now. only about one third of americas trash get's recycled, and these laws will increase this giving us more receyblels and less trash.

Every thing has it's down falls and these laws are no differnt. one of the major down falls is getting fined. The recycling laws are very specific and if you don't know what Item goes were you could get charged. This is a major turn off to some people because it is money coming out of their wallet. The other major down side to this law is that the trash will be monitored through mirco chips on the bins. If you put something in the wrong bin, the trash police show up and this could lead to trash police always coming up to your door.

This was some information about the going green law for Gatesburg, I think that this is a great law and needs to happend right away, even with some it's downsides it should be done. In the end it will help the people in the city be cleaner and most of all it will help the planet earth.

## Scored Sample Responses Continued

### Score of 4

Plastic, Paper, Garbage as far as the eye can see covering our planet. That's the way we are heading with 4 pounds of trash each American produces a day. Gatesburg is starting the 'GatesburgGoGreen' initiative to save their landfill. It's a very good idea that can have many advantages for the environment and cut down on how much garbage we produce.

The Gatesburg initiative will have many advantages for the environment. Putting 3 trashcans for every household to divide up trash makes recycling and composting easier to achieve, can provide cleaner air and less garbage piling up destroying the environment. With this initiative, we are putting our food products back into the soil providing our soil with more nutrients. All around could really improve the condition of our planet.

GatesburgGoGreen can also decrease the amount of garbage we produce. We'd have one garbage can for things we can't use again, one for paper and plastic to reuse, and one food waste we can compost to reuse as soil for people's gardens. This plan could cut the waste we never use again in half. We'd also get more stuff to use if we follow through with this plan.

Some people think the initiative will burden citizens and that this idea is ridiculously extreme, and that it'll be a law forcing us to go beyond what is reasonable. Even though it may seem unreasonable, it is a very good idea to help the future of our planet. They think it will sacrifice the comfort of citizens. If we keep disposing of garbage the way we do now, the comfort of citizens will be far worse in the future.

Overall I support this plan, it will lead to great things. Reusing waste will greatly improve our environment and cut down our waste production. The GatesburgGoGreen initiative has my full support in this and I'd be more than happy to have this apply to my own household.

### Score of 5

According to the article [Going Green for Gatesburg](#) "The average American produces more than four pounds of trash a day." This trash is quickly filling up our landfills and hurting our environment but most of that is preventable. The GatesburgGoGreen Initiative is proposing mandatory recycling and composting laws to cut down on the waste that goes into our landfills. I think that these proposals are great and would have many benefits. First of all in the long run the recycling could save money also it could help the environment, even though this is a great idea there are some people opposed, but the benefits outweigh the negatives.

Using the proposal of the GatesburgGoGreen Initiative could save Gatesburg a lot of money. For example in the article it states that "Phoenix, Arizona... has made more than 500 million dollars in a year by selling its recyclables". Gatesburg could also make money off of his investment. They could produce and sell compost and sell other recyclable things to make money. Even though the start up costs and staff costs could be higher, there is a great chance that they would make money.

The GatesburgGoGreen Initiative would also help the environment. In the article, they mention that people only recycle about one third of their daily amount of trash. There is no need for filling up the landfills with trash that could have been repurposed. The article also states that "The goal is to reduce the amount of waste we add to the county landfill by 90% over the next five years". By adopting this initiative citizens of Gatesburg would be helping to save the environment.

In Gatesburg there are some people opposed to the plan. They believe that recycling should be all option, not a law. They state that fines for making mistakes of what you do and don't recycle and privacy concerns make this a bad idea. I think that these issues will not really be a problem at all. If the citizens are taught what to recycle and what not to and how to stay within the guidelines there should not be a problem with the recycling and

## Scored Sample Responses Continued

### Score of 5 Continued

compositing program.

Even though the GatesburgGoGreen Initiative could have its flaws there are still more positives than negatives. At first the program may seem slightly unusual to people, but eventually it will become a normal thing. The people that are trying to stop the initiative are pessimistic and refuse to see the good things in the program. Starting this program will help Gatesburg to save money and the environment, and possibly influence the surrounding areas to do the same.

### Score of 6

The Gatesburg Go Green initiative should be supported by the community. This planet that we live on is suffering and there has not been enough radical action to improve its condition. This plan to reduce waste and increase recycling is a step in the right direction to help the Earth. The Initiative should be supported because of how much it helps the environment, benefits future generations, and brings a community together.

Based on the statistic that the average American creates four pounds of trash a day, it can be said that too much material is harnessed only to be turned useless. This treatment of resources is what is initially causing all of our environmental issues. Deforestation? Recycle paper and cardboard so it can be made into new paper and cardboard instead of using millions of growing trees. Water pollution? The breakdown and recycling of chemicals means they can serve their purpose again and not need to be dumped into rivers. Laziness and the false belief in the immortality of our planet is what has begun to destroy it.

Furthermore, our actions today are what shape the world our children and grandchildren live in. If there are not measures taken to recycle more preserve resources, little Timmy in the year 2100 won't know what a forest is and will color all of the oceans brown in his school art class. The importance of beginning new habits early cannot be underestimated, for the longer one keeps the old, the harder it is to break. The Go Green Initiative will start people on a stricter recycling schedule so that it will become a second-nature action that will be taught through families and maintained, so that little Timmy can go on nature hikes and see beautiful, blue oceans. It must be realized that this issue is larger than who we are and our present time.

Lastly, anything that affects all people in a community will bring them closer together. People who used to be nothing more than locational neighbors can have barbeques and talk about the new recycling laws. Many friendships begin from conversation over a mutual topic, and this environment-aiding law is a great one. Communities will draw together to help the planet and their future generations.

Opposition to the law declare it to deny freedom of choice, and the trash inspections are dubbed an invasion of privacy It is acceptable to note and the law can be altered in a way where inspections are not invasive. However, as for freedom of choice, one's choice not to recycle affects many more than just themselves, and in that situation a personal freedom should be denied to benefit the billions it affects. Deforestation will effect everyone, and if it increases because a handful are wasting usable products, they should be punished in some way.

The Go Green Initiative is a wonderful law that will set in motion future laws to further lessen our impact on the environment. It will change us as a people to damage the environment exponentially less, instill a passion for keeping good living conditions for future generations, and to bring the affected communities together. This law should receive complete support from everyone who wants to continue to call Earth "home."



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