



English II

Constructed Response Scoring Guide

Spring 2023

General Information

Beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, reading language arts assessments include an extended constructed response, or essay, at every grade level. They also include short constructed-response questions. Students are asked to write the essay in response to a reading selection and write in one of two modes: informational or argumentative.

This State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) constructed-response scoring guide provides student exemplars at all score points for extended constructed-response and short constructed-response prompts from the STAAR English II operational test. The prompts are presented as they appeared on the test, and responses were scored based on the rubrics included in this guide, which were developed with the input of Texas educators. Essays were scored using a five-point rubric. Short constructed responses in the reading domain were scored using a two-point prompt-specific rubric. Short constructed responses in the writing domain were scored using a one-point rubric.

The five-point rubric for extended constructed responses includes two main components: organization and development of ideas and conventions. A response earns a specific score point based on the ideas and conventions of that particular response as measured against the rubric. The annotation that accompanies each response is specific to that response and was written to illustrate how the language of the rubric is applied to elements of the response to determine the score the response received. Extended constructed responses are scored by two different scorers, and the scores are summed to create a student's final score, so students may receive up to 10 points for their essay.

The responses in this guide are actual student responses submitted online during the testing window. To protect the privacy of individual students, all names and other references of a personal nature have been altered or removed. Otherwise, the responses appear as the students wrote them and have not been modified.

English II Reading Passage with Extended Constructed Response

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Eleven-year-old Thea, an aspiring vocalist, teaches piano lessons in Moonstone, Colorado, in the late 1800s.

from The Song of the Lark
by Willa Cather

- 1 Winter was long in coming that year. Throughout October the days were bathed in sunlight and the air was clear as crystal. The town kept its cheerful summer aspect, the desert glistened with light, the sand hills every day went through magical changes of color. The scarlet sage bloomed late in the front yards, the cottonwood leaves were bright gold long before they fell, and it was not until November that the green on the tamarisks began to cloud and fade. There was a flurry of snow about Thanksgiving, and then December came on warm and clear.
- 2 Thea had three music pupils now, little girls whose mothers declared that Professor Wunsch was “much too severe.” They took their lessons on Saturday, and this, of course, cut down her time for play. She did not really mind this because she was allowed to use the money—her pupils paid her twenty-five cents a lesson—to fit up a little room for herself upstairs in the half-story. It was the end room of the wing, and was not plastered, but was snugly lined with soft pine. The ceiling was so low that a grown person could reach it with the palm of the hand, and it sloped down on either side. There was only one window, but it was a double one and went to the floor. In October, while the days were still warm, Thea and Tillie papered the room, walls and ceiling in the same paper, small red and brown roses on a yellowish ground. Thea bought a brown cotton carpet, and her big brother, Gus, put it down for her one Sunday. She made white cheesecloth curtains and hung them on a tape. Her mother gave her an old walnut dresser with a broken mirror, and she had her own dumpy walnut single bed, and a blue washbowl and pitcher which she had drawn at a church fair lottery. At the head of her bed she had a tall round wooden hat-crate, from the clothing store. This, standing on end and draped with cretonne, made a fairly steady table for her lantern. She was not allowed to take a lamp upstairs, so Ray Kennedy gave her a railroad lantern by which she could read at night.
- 3 In winter this loft room of Thea’s was bitterly cold, but against her mother’s advice—and Tillie’s—she always left her window open a little way. Thea asked Dr. Archie about the window, and he told her that a girl who sang must always have plenty of fresh air, or her voice would get husky, and that the cold would harden her throat. The important thing, he said, was to keep your feet warm. On very cold nights Thea always put a brick in the oven after supper, and when she went upstairs she wrapped it in an old flannel petticoat and put it in her bed. The boys, who would never heat bricks for themselves, sometimes carried off Thea’s, and thought it a good joke to get ahead of her.

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- 4 When Thea first plunged in between her red blankets, the cold sometimes kept her awake for a good while. After half an hour or so, a warm wave crept over her body and round, sturdy legs; she glowed like a little stove with the warmth of her own blood, and the heavy quilts and red blankets grew warm wherever they touched her, though her breath sometimes froze on the coverlid. Before daylight, her internal fires went down a little, and she often wakened to find herself drawn up into a tight ball, somewhat stiff in the legs. But that made it all the easier to get up.
- 5 The acquisition of this room was the beginning of a new era in Thea's life. It was one of the most important things that ever happened to her. Hitherto, except in summer, when she could be out of doors, she had lived in constant turmoil; the family, the day school. The clamor about her drowned the voice within herself. In the end of the wing, separated from the other upstairs sleeping-rooms by a long, cold, unfinished lumber room, her mind worked better. She thought things out more clearly. Pleasant plans and ideas occurred to her which had never come before. She had certain thoughts which were like companions, ideas which were like older and wiser friends. She left them there in the morning, when she finished dressing in the cold, and at night, when she came up with her lantern and shut the door after a busy day, she found them awaiting her.
- 6 From the time when she moved up into the wing, Thea began to live a double life. During the day, when the hours were full of tasks, she was one of the Kronborg children, but at night she was a different person. On Friday and Saturday nights she always read for a long while after she was in bed. She had no clock, and there was no one to nag her.

From THE SONG OF THE LARK by Willa Sibert Cather—Public Domain

English II Extended Constructed Response

Prompt

Read the excerpt from *The Song of the Lark*. Based on the information in the excerpt, write a response to the following:

Explain how acquiring the loft room changes Thea.

Write a well-organized informational composition that uses specific evidence from the excerpt to support your answer.

Remember to —

- clearly state your thesis
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- use evidence from the selection in your response
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar

Manage your time carefully so that you can —

- review the selection
- plan your response
- write your response
- revise and edit your response

Write your response in the box provided.

English II Reading Passage with Extended Constructed Response

Informational Writing Rubric

Score Point	Organization and Development of Ideas
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Controlling idea/Thesis is clear and fully developed The controlling idea/thesis is clearly identifiable. The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow.• Organization is effective A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and conclusion is evident. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the controlling idea/thesis. The sentences, paragraphs, or ideas are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways.• Evidence is specific, well chosen, and relevant The response includes relevant text-based evidence that is clearly explained and consistently supports and develops the controlling idea/thesis. For pairs in grades 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from both texts. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.• Expression of ideas is clear and effective The writer's word choice is specific, purposeful, and enhances the response. Almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer's ideas and contribute to the overall quality of the response and the clarity of the message.
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• Controlling idea/Thesis is present and partially developed A controlling idea/thesis is presented, but it may not be clearly identifiable because it is not fully developed. The focus may not always be consistent and may not always be easy to follow.• Organization is limited A purposeful structure that includes an introduction and conclusion is present. An organizational structure may not be consistent and may not always support the logical development of the controlling idea/thesis. Sentence-to-sentence connections and clarity may be lacking.• Evidence is limited and may include some irrelevant information The response may include text-based evidence to support the controlling idea/thesis, but it may be insufficiently explained, and/or some evidence may be irrelevant to the controlling idea/thesis. For pairs, evidence is drawn from at least one of the texts. The response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.• Expression of ideas is basic The writer's word choice may be general and imprecise and at times may not convey the writer's ideas clearly. Sentences and phrases are at times ineffective and may interfere with the writer's intended meaning and weaken the message.

<p>1</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Controlling idea/Thesis is evident but not developed A controlling idea/thesis is present but not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. • Organization is minimal and/or weak An introduction or conclusion may be present. An organizational structure that supports logical development is not always evident or is not appropriate to the task. • Evidence is insufficient and/or mostly irrelevant Little text-based evidence is presented to support the controlling idea/thesis, or the evidence presented is mostly extraneous and/or repetitious. Explanation of any evidence presented is insufficient and may be only vaguely related to the writing task. For pairs in grades 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from only one text. The response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose. • Expression of ideas is ineffective The writer’s word choice is vague or limited and may impede the quality and clarity of the essay. Sentences and phrases are often ineffective, interfere with the writer’s intended meaning, and impact the strength and clarity of the message.
<p>0</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A controlling idea/thesis may be evident. • The response lacks an introduction and conclusion. An organizational structure is not evident. • Evidence is not provided or is irrelevant. The response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose. • The expression of ideas is unclear and/or incoherent. <p><i>Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Development and Organization of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.</i></p>
Score Point	Conventions
<p>2</p>	<p>Student writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • sentence construction • punctuation • capitalization • grammar • spelling <p>The response has few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.</p>

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<p>1</p>	<p>Student writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including limited use of correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sentence construction• punctuation• capitalization• grammar• spelling <p>The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.</p>
<p>0</p>	<p>Student writing demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including infrequent use of or no evidence of correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none">• sentence construction• punctuation• capitalization• grammar• spelling <p>The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.</p>

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

The room is like her little imagination she has it designed to look like it is summer. She imagines that the room is warm but, it is actually cold in there. The room has alot of space but, it is on a half story room.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

In this response the writer attempts to give a thesis that “The room is like her little imagination” but does not explain how acquiring the loft room changes Thea. The response lacks an introduction and a conclusion, and an organizational structure is not evident. The writer paraphrases evidence (“designed to look like it is summer”; “She imagines that the room is warm but, it is actually cold in there”; “The room has alot of space but, it is on a half story room”), which is irrelevant because the focus remains on the room and not Thea, causing the expression of ideas to be unclear. The response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

If a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

Response 2

In the begining fo the storie Thea was given a isolated room at the top of the house. Thea taught piano to her peers in exchange for 25 cents. Thea used the money from her lessons to refurnish her room. Thea, Tilly and gus started sprucing up her room. Thea aspired to be a vocolist. Thea's room had one window, Thea's mom told her not to leave it op

Organization and Development of Ideas: 0

In this response the writer attempts to present a short summary of the excerpt; therefore, a thesis is not evident. The response lacks an introduction and a conclusion, and an organizational structure is not evident because the writer switches abruptly from acquiring the room to teaching lessons and then leaving the window open. Without a thesis, any attempt to paraphrase evidence (“taught piano to her peers . . .”; “Thea used the money from her lessons to refurnish her room”; “Thea aspired to be a vocolist”; “one window, Thea’s mom told her not to leave it op”) is irrelevant. The expression of ideas is unclear because the response is a summary. Overall, the response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

If a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

Score Point 1

Response 1

How could a loft change Thea, well since Thea moved into that little room she began to develop a new personality for herself u could say she was "living a double life" while it was still day time her day was full of things to do such as errands and chores and well when night came she could have time for herself where she is able to read with no interuptions and no one telling her what to do, the night time was her free time from everything, she can just relax and do her activities because she could actually think and be alone with her toughts and have a peaceful weekend and night before she goes into a new day of busy ness.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

The writer of this response presents the thesis that "since Thea moved into that little room she began to develop a new personality for herself u could say she was 'living a double life,'" but it is not developed appropriately. A weak introduction is present ("How could a loft change Thea"), and a conclusion is not evident. While the organization is weak because the response is a single sentence, the writer does maintain focus on Thea living a double life by describing her life during the day and night. The writer paraphrases little relevant evidence ("while it was still day time her day was full of things to do . . . and well when night came she could . . .") and offers explanations ("the night time was her free time from everything, she can just relax and do her activities . . . she could actually think and be alone with her toughts") in support of the thesis. The writer does not develop the idea of Thea's new personality, nor does the writer provide evidence to support this idea. The expression of ideas is ineffective because the writer's word choice is limited ("free time from everything," "do her activities") and impedes the clarity of the essay. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions with errors in sentence construction (the response is a single run-on sentence), and the sentence "How could a loft change Thea" is missing a question mark. In addition, there are errors in grammar ("u could say") and spelling ("u," "interuptions," "toughts," "busy ness"). The response has many errors, and these impact the clarity of the writing and impede the reader's understanding of the writer's thoughts.

Response 2

I noticed in the exerpt The song of Lark when she aquried this room. It changed her, it gave her a positive change. she would talk about how she would fix it up. which she was really appreciative for. She would talk about how she would have time for her self, i can agree with this. When i first got my room i remember fixing it up the way i wanted and having a feeling of security. Im pretty sure this is how she feels. To have time for your self not bothered by anyone. she would say she would transform at night, Into someone else,
This wasnt negative at all. I can understand when you have your self and no distractions you become at peace.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In this response, the writer provides the thesis that “when she aquried this room. It changed her, it gave her a positive change.” The writer attempts an introduction (“I noticed in the exerpt . . .”) and conclusion (“This wasnt negative at all . . . you become at peace”). The organization is minimal as the writer discusses the positives before considering the negatives. The writer paraphrases insufficient relevant evidence (“She would talk about how she would have time for her self . . .”; “she would transform at night, Into someone else”), and the explanation of evidence (“I can understand when you have your self and no distractions you become at peace”) is also insufficient. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions with errors in sentence construction, punctuation (“Im,” “else,” “wasnt”), capitalization (“song,” “Lark.when,” “change. she,” “up. which,” “i,” “anyone.she,” “night,Into”), and spelling (“exerpt,” “aquried,” “her self,” “your self”). The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Score Point 2

Response 1

The room becomes and important aspect of Theas life. It marks a new chapter in theas life and is described as one of the best things to happen to her. This room was a safe space thea created herself even though it wasnt luxurios, but it was to theas comfort and needs. It was a place where her mind worked better and she could think things more clearly, she came up with pleasant plans and ideas that she had never thought of before. Thea changes in the aspect that she starts to live a double life where during day she was filled with tasks and has the resposibility of being a Kronborg Child, and at night she could escape and be herself, she can be herself without having anyone nag her, she has freedom and all the time in the world.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

In the last sentence of the response, the writer offers the thesis that “Thea changes in the aspect that she starts to live a double life where during day she was filled with tasks and has the resposibility of being a Kronborg Child, and at night she could escape and be herself.” An introduction (“The room becomes and important aspect of Theas life”; “one of the best things to happen to her”) and conclusion (“Thea changes . . . she has freedom and all the time in the world”) are present. The organization is weak because the evidence follows the order of appearance in the excerpt. The writer paraphrases little text-based evidence (“It was a place where her mind worked better . . . she came up with pleasant plans and ideas that she had never thought of before”; “Thea changes in the aspect that she starts to live a double life . . . she can be herself without having anyone nag her”) and offers an insufficient explanation (“she has freedom and all the time in the world”). The expression of ideas is ineffective because the writer’s word choice is vague (“safe space,” “was a place,” “has freedom”). Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions with several errors, including a run-on sentence (last sentence of the response), missing apostrophes (“Theas,” “wasnt”), capitalization (“thea,” “Child”), grammar (“becomes and important,” “where during day”) and spelling (“luxurios,” “resposibility”). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Response 2

In the excerpt from *The Song of the Lark*, Thea, the main character, finds her old life with family and friends much too burdensome, her family cause too much noise, and her school days won't let her think, this causes the poor girl to resort to almost isolating herself, this overall changes her character and her as a person by the use of self reflection.

Thea would usually like to spend time alone. "...except in summer, when she could be outdoors..." the author writes "...she had lived in constant turmoil..." however Thea finds herself landing a living space on a house where she can't be bothered, and is at peace with her thoughts and with "no one to nag her", the author states "In the end of the wing, separated from the other upstairs sleepingrooms by a long, cold, unfinished lumber room, her mind worked better" as Thea has her personal space now she is able to be more at peace with herself without all the ruckous her family would cause.

Thea's character changed from an overworked artist, to a self reflecting teacher willing to teach, all because of the room where she resides, as the author states that Thea lived a "double life" still busy during day, but at least at peace at night. Alone and quiet can sometimes be the best of those looking to take a time to relax and focus their thoughts.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

In the last paragraph the writer presents the thesis that "Thea's character changed from an overworked artist, to a self reflecting teacher." A purposeful organizational structure includes an introduction ("In the excerpt . . . use of self reflection") and a conclusion ("Thea's character . . . focus their thoughts") that logically supports the thesis; however, aside from "In the excerpt," sentence-to-sentence connections are missing. The writer paraphrases ("her school days won't let her think") and quotes relevant evidence ("her mind worked better") and explains ("more at peace with herself without all the ruckous"; "Alone and quiet . . . to relax and focus") in support of how Thea self-reflects. The expression of ideas is basic as the writer's word choice is general ("her as a person," "at peace") at times and does not always convey the writer's ideas clearly. Overall, the response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions in sentence construction with multiple run-on sentences in the first, second (“except . . . turmoil’ . . . family would cause”), and third paragraphs (“Thea’s character . . . as the author states that . . . peace at night”). There are also errors in punctuation with frequently missing or misplaced commas (“however Thea”; “the author states ‘In’”; “from an overworked artist, to a self reflecting teacher”), capitalization (“The Song of the lark”), grammar (“family cause too much noise,” “take a time”) and spelling (“ruckous”). The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Score Point 3

Response 1

Why is the loft Thea recieves so important to her? Thea is a young girl who teaches piano and has dreams of becoming a vocalist. In order for her to start her journey of being a vocalist she has to learn how to live on her own and branch out. Living in her first space teaches her to make the best out of every situaition and helps her see the perspective that not everything will be easy. The loft is her first step towards reaching her dream, and she is very excited about starting off with her own place.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 1

The writer presents a thesis in the fourth sentence that “Living in her first space teaches her to make the best out of every situaition and helps her see the perspective that not everything will be easy.” An introduction (“Why is the loft Thea recieves so important to her?”) and conclusion (“The loft is her first step . . . her own place”) are present, but the organization is limited because the writer focuses on one idea—the ambitions of Thea. The writer paraphrases insufficient and overly general evidence (“teaches her to make the best out of every situaition and helps her see the perspective that not everything will be easy”) and offers insufficient explanations (“has to learn how to live on her own”). The expression of ideas is ineffective because the writer’s word choice is vague (“branch out,” “the best out of every situaition,” “very excited”). Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions including correct sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar. Two spelling errors (“recieves,” “situaition”) are present. The response has few errors, and those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

See people tend not to believe when i say the envoirement around you is what it can make you , and Thea in this excerpt is a a very setting fit to this because she changed alot throughout the changes of her loft. At first , she may have seen the loft as an isloated , outdated and just old room her mom is allowing her to live in , but things were soon to change. Once cleaning the loft and setting and applying up the papered walls of small but enlightening red and brown roses everywhere you seemed to turn. The loft gave her the sense of appreciation and acceptance evolving around the fact that she's still happy with what she has. In paragraph 4 within the excerpt it says " After half an hour or so, a warm wave crept ove rhe rbody and round , sturdy legs; she glowed like a little stove with the warmth of her own blood, and the havey quilts and red blankets grew warm wherever they touched her". This descreptive wrting can show her changes of feelings and comfort and how she can turn a negative situation positive.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer offers a thesis in the final sentence that Thea “can show her changes of feelings and comfort and how she can turn a negative situation positive.” An introduction (“See people tend not to believe when i say . . . she changed alot throughout the changes of her loft”) and conclusion (“This descreptive wrting can show . . . how she can turn a negative situation positive”) are present. However, the organization is limited as the writer quickly shifts from details about making the room comfortable to keeping warm but includes sentence-to-sentence connections (“At first ,” “Once cleaning the loft,” “In paragraph 4,” “After”). The writer paraphrases limited but relevant evidence (“At first , she may have seen the loft as an isloated , outdated and just old room . . .”; “Once cleaning the loft . . . everywhere you seemed to turn”; “ After half an hour or so, a warm wave . . . wherever they touched her”) but offers an insufficient explanation (“The loft gave her the sense of appreciation and acceptance evolving around the fact that she’s still happy with what she has”). The expression of ideas is basic because the writer’s word choice is general at times (“changed alot,” “things,” “happy with what she has”). Overall, this response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The response has errors including missing commas (“small but enlightening red and brown roses everywhere you seemed to turn”; “it says ` After”), capitalization (“i”), grammar (“applying up,” “evolving around”), and spelling (“envoirement,” “alot,” “isloated,” “acceptence,” “havey,” “descreptive,” “wrting”). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Response 3

Many people who have the pleasure of having your own room know it comes with benefits. When she got her own little space she began to find the freedom through those benefits. By acquiring the loft room, Thea changes in a way to better her self as a young girl and find more freedom.

To start off when Thea first moved in to the "wing" (her new space) she began to make her own rules. In paragraph 3 she is "in winter this loft room of theas bitter cold, but against her mother's advice-and- tillies-she always left her window open a little way." This excerpt above shows theas willingness to do whatever it takes to be good at singing. By going against her mothers wish to simply benefit her voice in the long run. Thea shows grit to do what she knows is best for her, and her new room helps her do so by having her own space to her self. At night due to the low temperature and keeping her window open she got cold so "she glowed like a little stove with the warmth of her own blood, and the heavy quilts and red blankets grew warm where ever they touched her." This quote shows that even when Thea make her own decision she can make one that is great for her and problem solve while doing so. Thea wanted her voice to have the fresh air so she came up with a way to make that happen and keep warm. Thea proves with her new room she can make her own decisions.

Lastly, By gaining her new room Thea has alone time and time to rest her little mind. "From the time when she moved up into the wing, Thea began to live a double life. The quote show that Thea no has time with others and by her self. Theas double life Thanks to her new room allows her to gain time by her self. Thea loves the weekend and now on "Friday and saturday nights she always read for along while after she was in bed. She had no clock, no one to nag her." In the wing Thea loves her quiet nights that allow her to read late. In her room Thea goes unbothered with no one interruption her. Once again Thea's room provides a quiet space for just her to rest and spend alone time.

all in all, by gaining her new room and own space, she changes in a way to better her self as a young girl and finds more freedom.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer offers the thesis that “Thea changes in a way to better her self as a young girl and find more freedom.” An introduction (“Many people . . . find more freedom”) and a conclusion (“all in all, by gaining . . . more freedom”) are present. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the thesis and includes paragraph-to-paragraph transitions (“To start off,” “Lastly,” “all in all”) and sentence-to-sentence connections (“In paragraph 3,” “This excerpt above,” “This quote shows,” “Once again”). The writer quotes specific and relevant evidence (“against her mother’s advice-and- tillies-she always left her window open a little way”; “Thea began to live a double life”; “She had no clock, no one to nag her”) and clearly explains (“she can make her own decisions”; “her new room allows her to gain time by her self”; “Thea goes unbothered with no one interruption her”). The expression of ideas is clear as almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer’s ideas and contribute to the clarity of the message. Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 0

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. There are convention errors with a sentence fragment (“By going against her mother’s wish . . . in the long run”) and missing apostrophes (“thea,” “mother’s”). In addition, there are errors in capitalization (“thea”; “tillies”; “Lastly, By gaining”; “double life Thanks to”; “all in all”; “saturday”), grammar (“even when Thea make her own decision”; “The quote show that Thea”; “no one interruption her”) and spelling (“benefits,” “her self,” “young,” “begin,” “simly,” “decision,” “voice,” “interruption”). The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

Score Point 4

Response 1

Acquiring the loft room changes Thea by beginning a new era in her life by maturing. "She has certain thoughts which were like companions, ideas which were like older and wiser friends." This line from the story shows her maturing by having thoughts as an older person when she is in her room. The loft room also leads Thea to become more appreciative of what she has. "The acquisition of this room was the beginning of a new era in Thea's life. It was one of the most important things that ever happened to her." This shows that she appreciates this room even though it's not ideal. In conclusion, acquiring the loft not only makes Thea become more mature, but also more appreciative

Organization and Development of Ideas: 2

The writer offers the thesis that "Acquiring the loft room changes Thea by beginning a new era in her life." An introduction and conclusion are present. An organizational structure is present as the writer develops the ideas of Thea's maturity and appreciation. Sentence-to-sentence connections ("This line from the story," "The loft room also leads," "This shows," "In conclusion") add some clarity. The writer quotes some limited relevant evidence ("The acquisition of this room was the beginning of a new era in Thea's life. It was one of the most important things that ever happened to her") and offers an insufficient explanation ("This shows that she appreciates this room even though it's not ideal"). Some quotes are irrelevant to the thesis ("She has certain thoughts which were like companions, ideas which were like older and wiser friends") because this evidence does not support the thesis. The expression of ideas is basic because the writer's word choice is general at times ("having thoughts," "what she has") but also includes some specific words ("maturing," "ideal"). Overall, the response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions including correct sentence construction, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. A punctuation error is present as the last sentence of the response is missing a period. The response has few errors, and those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

Ambition and goals are on everyone's mind, and as a child those ideas become their life. Staying awake for an hour from the cold is all worth it in the mind of eleven-year-old Thea who aspires to be a vocalist. Being alone, no authority, changes her to gain a higher level of maturity and offer a gift of having alone time to herself.

This selection has allowed me to view a young girl as if she were a young lady moving away and making a life for herself. She has the same components of a working adult such as, a job, own living space and being self sustained from it. A big part of maturity is being able to provide for yourself and solve the problems you're faced with. The loft Thea lives in doesn't have heating instead it offers freezing nights as if she were sleeping in a freezer. Howeverm this aspiring voclaist toughs it out as she layers her blankets on top of her. If she needs more furniture she makes it or finds used things she makes work for her. When all of her problems are solves she is left alone to read as late as she wants. "On Friday and Saturday nights she always read for a long while after she was in bed." The loft changes Thea to be her own and do what she wants, while she is in this loft. It is even said by her in the selection that she begun to "think better; clearly."

With the addtion of the loft Thea grows her maturity in while perusing her goal. She is not weighed down by nagging family memebbers, or teaching piano lessons. In the loft she is her own person to do what she wants.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

In the last sentence of the first paragraph, the writer presents a clear thesis that “Being alone, no authority, changes her to gain a higher level of maturity and offer a gift of having alone time to herself.” An effective introduction and conclusion are evident. The organizational structure effectively supports the development of the thesis by focusing on the ideas of being alone and having no authority. The writer paraphrases specific evidence which supports the idea of being alone (“The loft Thea lives in doesn’t have heating. . .”; “toughs it out as she layers her blankets . . .”; “If she needs more furniture she makes it or finds used things . . .”) and offers a clear explanation (“She has the same components of a wokring adult . . .”; “A big part of maturity is being able to provide for youself and solve the problems you’re faced with”). In addition, specific quotes supporting the idea of having no authority (““On Friday and Saturday nights . . . after she was in bed””) are clearly explained (“When all of her problems are solves . . . to read as late as she wants”; “The loft changes Thea to be her own and do what she wants . . .”). The expression of ideas is effective because the writer’s word choice is specific (“Ambition and goals,” “components,” “self sustained”) and enhances the response. Overall, this response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 1

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. The response has errors in sentence construction with a run-on sentence (“The loft Thea lives in doesn’t have heating instead it offers freezing nights as if she were sleeping in a freezer”), missing commas (“have heating instead,” “If she needs more furniture she,” “of the loft Thea”), grammar (“are solves,” “she begun to,” “grows her maturity in while”) and spelling (“wokring,” “self sustained,” “youself,” “Howeverm,” “voclaist,” “addtion,” “perusing,” “memebers”). The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

Score Point 5

Response 1

When Thea gets her own room and space, though it is small, it gives her a kind of freedom. In paragraph 6, the author writes, " During the day, when the hours were full of tasks...She had no clock, and there was no one to nag her."

Her room changes her because it allows her time to take a step back and do what she chooses. Based on the text evidence and description of how Thea feels, we can infer that she treasures this space. She puts a lot of work and time into creating this space into a comforting area. She decorates her little room, and gets materials to change it from shabby and unfinished to something she is proud of.

Further, she uses her own opinions and needs to dictate how she lives. "but, against her mother's advice-- and Tillie's-- she always left her window open a little way." The author writes that Thea does this so she may further her music career and strengthen her voice. She is also said to put a brick in her bed to keep her feet warm. These two examples are few of many from the excerpt that show how she creates her own space by using her opinions. Doing as she pleases in her little room.

I believe many teens can relate to Thea. I know my room is my space where I can recharge and have time to myself, which is how she treats her room. I've also spent years and resources in my room, to cultivate it into a place where I feel comfortable. Having a space dedicated to rest, relaxation, and a type of freedom is extremely important to so many people, and has been for centuries as this was written from the 1800s.

All three of these examples further the idea that having your own space, no matter how small, is important and freeing.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer provides a clear thesis that “When Thea gets her own room and space, though it is small, it gives her a kind of freedom.” An effective introduction (“When Thea gets her own room . . . no one to nag her”) and conclusion (“I believe many teens . . . is important and freeing”) are evident. The organizational structure effectively supports the development of the thesis by dedicating the first paragraph to having freedom to decorate her room and the second paragraph to having freedom to ignore advice. In addition, paragraph-to-paragraph transitions (“Further,” “I believe,” “All three of these examples”) and sentence-to-sentence connections (“Based on the text evidence,” “These two examples”) logically connect ideas effectively. The writer paraphrases specific evidence (“She decorates her little room, and gets materials to change it from shabby and unfinished to something she is proud of”) and offers clear explanations (“we can infer that she treasures this space”; “She puts a lot of work and time . . . into a comforting area”). The writer also quotes specific evidence (“but, against her mother’s advice . . . left her window open a little way”) and adds clear explanations (“she uses her own opinions and needs to dictate how she lives”; “she may further her music career and strenghten her voice”). In the fourth paragraph, the writer includes a personal anecdote, which is clearly linked to the thesis and provides additional explanation (“my room is my space where I can recharge . . . which is how she treats her room”; “Having a space dedicated to rest . . . is extremely important . . . as this was written from the 1800s”). The expression of ideas is clear and effective because the writer’s word choice is specific (“dictate,” “further her music career,” “cultivate”) and enhances the response. Overall, the response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions including correct punctuation and grammar. A few errors with a sentence fragment (“Doing as she pleases in her little room”), capitalization (“lives. `but, against . . .””) and spelling (“strenghten,” “exerpt”) do not impact the clarity of the writing.

Response 2

Aquiring the loft room changed Thea in a good way. Everybody needs their own space and freedom to think clearly. Thea's room helps her to come up with new ideas, get away from the turmoil in her life, and makes her happy.

One thing that changes about Thea is the way new ideas and thoughts flowed through her. As stated in the passage, "She thought things more clearly. Pleasant plans and ideas occurred to her which had never come before." Being in her own space, Thea found it easier to think and clear her mind. Just being able to have some time to herself in this new room changed Thea's thinking process and helped her relax.

Another thing that changed about Thea was the way she could escape to her room whenever she felt overwhelmed. In paragraph 6, the author claims that Thea lived a double life. In her room she was free from the confinements of time and nobody would nag her. Whenever her life grew dull or if she got tired, she would go to her room and read for a long while. This was something Thea never had before and something she is obviously grateful for.

The main thing that changes about Thea is her mood. With her new room Thea becomes tremendously happier. The author states, "The acquisition of this new room was the beginning of a new era in Thea's life. It was one of the most important things that every happened to her." Saying that the room changed her life is a very bold statement. Thea obviously feels a lot happier and more free.

Thea aquiring this new space resulted in a lot of positive changes. Her mood was more positive, she got to think more clearly and was able to get away from the turmoils in her life. It's obvious how much Thea loves her new room by how much effort she put into decorating it. This new room is most likely Thea's most prized possession and has changed her life for the better.

Organization and Development of Ideas: 3

The writer of this response presents a clear thesis that “Thea’s room helps her to come up with new ideas, get away from the turmoil in her life, and makes her happy.” An effective introduction (“Aquiring the loft room . . . makes her happy”) and conclusion (“Thea aquiring this new space . . . has changed her life for the better”) are evident. The organizational structure includes paragraph-to-paragraph transitions (“One thing,” “Another thing,” “The main thing”) and sentence-to-sentence connections (“Being in her own space,” “In paragraph 6”) that logically connect ideas. The writer includes specific, relevant quotes (“Pleasant plans and ideas occurred to her which had never come before”; “one of the most important things . . .”), paraphrased evidence (“free from the confinements of time and nobody would nag her”), and clear explanations (“Being in her own space, . . . helped her relax”; “Saying that the room . . . happier and more free”; “Whenever her life grew dull . . . obviously grateful for”; “Saying that the room changed her life is a very bold statement”). The expression of ideas is effective because the writer’s word choice is specific and purposeful (“escape,” “overwhelmed,” “confinements,” “tremendously”). Almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer’s ideas and contribute to the overall quality of the response and the clarity of the message. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Conventions: 2

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions including correct sentence construction, punctuation, and capitalization. A few errors in grammar (“that every”) and spelling (“Aquiring,” “possession”) do not impact the clarity of the writing.

English II Writing Short Constructed Response

English II Writing Short Constructed Response

Passage: "Be Prepared"

Original Paragraph:

(13) However, when Sophia looked in the oven, she didn't see anything that resembled a pan of cookies. (14) It looked more like a volcanic eruption! (15) As she grabbed the pan and began to scrape the congealed mass into the sink, the smoke alarm started blaring. (16) Natalie and Owen turned around with their hands over their ears to block the shrill sound, who had been watching a movie.

Prompt

Sentence 16 needs to be revised. In the box provided, rewrite this sentence in a clear and effective way.

Item-Specific Rubric

Score: 1

The response is a complete sentence that expresses the ideas in a clear and effective way.

Score: 0

The response is not a complete sentence or does not express the ideas in a clear and effective way.

Sample Student Responses

Score Point 0

Response 1

Natalie and owen turned around with their hands over their ears to block the shrill sound,who had been watching a movie.

The writer does not express the ideas in a clear and effective way. The original sentence contains an error with the placement of the phrase "who had been watching a movie," creating a misplaced modifier that connects to the word "sound" instead of to "Natalie and Owen." The writer of this response makes no changes to correct the original sentence.

Response 2

Natalie and Owen turned around, with their hands over their ears to block the shrill sound, who had been watching a movie?

The writer does not make any changes to correct the error in the original sentence. In addition, the writer introduces a question mark which changes the overall meaning of the original sentence.

Response 3

Natile and Owen were scared so they put there hands over there ears.

The writer does not express the ideas in a clear and effective way and does not include many important ideas ("block the shrill sound," "who had been watching a movie") from the original sentence.

Response 4

Natalie and owen who had been watching a movie turned around with thier hands on thier eyes to block the shrill sound.

The writer does not express the ideas in a clear and effective way. Although the writer corrects the original error by positioning the phrase "who had been watching a movie" so that it modifies "Natalie and Owen" ("Natalie and owen who had been watching a movie"), the meaning of the original sentence is altered with the use of "eyes" instead of "ears."

Score Point 1

Response 1

Natalie and Owen who had been watching a movie then turned around with thier hands over thier ears to block the shrill sound.

The writer provides a complete sentence that expresses the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer corrects the error in the original sentence (“Natalie and Owen who had been watching a movie . . .”) by positioning the misplaced modifier “who had been watching a movie” after “Natalie and Owen.” While the writer causes some ambiguity as to whether the shrill sound is from the movie by inserting the conjunctive adverb *then* into the sentence, when placed in context with the information preceding the original sentence (“As she grabbed the pan and began to scrape the congealed mass into the sink, the smoke alarm started blaring”), the revision is effective. The misspellings and missing punctuation do not affect the score.

Response 2

The shrill sound caused Natalie and Owen to quickly turn around and cover their ears, taking their attention away from the movie they had been watching.

The writer provides a complete sentence that expresses the ideas in a clear and effective way by effectively rearranging the original sentence to accurately indicate what is causing Natalie and Owen to react (“The shrill sound caused Natalie and Owen to quickly turn around and cover their ears . . .”) and adding the phrase (“taking their attention away from the movie they had been watching”). Adding the phrase “taking their attention away” does not impact the score since it is an accurate reflection of the meaning conveyed in the original sentence. Even though the writer does not include Natalie and Owen’s use of “their hands” to cover their ears, this omission does not impact the clarity or effectiveness of the response. Also, the idea of “blocking” the sound is not lost since Natalie and Owen “cover their ears.”

Response 3

The shrill sound caused Natalie and Owen, who were watching a movie, to turn around with their hands over there ears

The writer provides a complete sentence that expresses the ideas in a clear and effective way by effectively rearranging the original sentence to accurately indicate what is causing Natalie and Owen to react (“The shrill sound caused Natalie and Owen . . .”). The writer also corrects the error in the original sentence by positioning the phrase “who were watching a movie” so that it modifies “Natalie and Owen.” It is important to note that the lack of a period at the end of the sentence as well as the grammatical error introduced with the word “there” has no effect on the score. Additionally, the idea of “blocking” the sound is not lost since the revision describes Natalie and Owen as having “their hands over there ears.”

Response 4

Natalie and Owen, who had been watching a movie, turned around with their hands over their ears to block the shrill sound.

The writer provides a complete sentence that expresses the ideas in a clear and effective way by positioning the misplaced modifier “who had been watching a movie” after “Natalie and Owen” to modify Natalie and Owen.