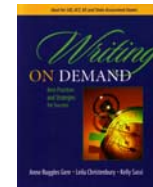


# ELA/MME Unit of Study: **WRITING**

## *HANDOUTS for Grade 11*

### **A Writing Test Genre Study for English Language Arts/Michigan Merit Exam**



[www.writingondemand.org](http://www.writingondemand.org)

## GRADE 11: Day 1/Document 1



# ACT English Test Structure



The ACT English Test is primarily a test of your editing skills. Let's take a closer look at the structure of this test:

### **Timing:**

- 75 questions
- 45 minutes  
(~ 30 seconds per question)

### **Passages to read:**

- Five passages (essays)
- ~15 questions per passage

### **Types of Questions:**

- **40 Grammar and Usage Questions**
  - Focus on standard usage
  
- **35 Rhetorical Skills Questions**
  - Focus on organization, transitions, quality of argument/writing
  - Focus on “purpose, audience, unity and focus” just like when writing an essay



## **Remember POE: Process of Elimination**

**Practice Process of Elimination on the following question:**

1. In what year was the Gettysburg Address delivered?
  - A. 1492
  - B. 1776
  - C. 1863
  - D. 1987

Of course, Answer Choice C is correct!

## GRADE 11: Day 1/Document 3

### ACT English Strategies: Bessie Coleman Passage



(used by permission from ACT)

(Note: passage continues on the next page)

Bessie Coleman: In Flight

[1]

After the final performance of one last practice landing, the French instructor nodded to the young African-American woman at the controls and jumped down to the ground. Bessie Coleman was on her own now. She lined up the nose of the open cockpit biplane on the runway's center mark, she gave the engine full throttle, and took off into history.

1. A. NO CHANGE  
B. one finally ultimate  
C. one final  
D. one last final
2. F. NO CHANGE  
G. off  
H. along  
J. OMIT the underlined portion

[2]

It was a long journey from the American Southwest she'd been born in 1893, to these French skies. The year in which she was born was about a century ago. There hadn't been much of a future for her in Oklahoma then. After both semesters of the two-semester year at Langston Industrial College, Coleman headed for Chicago to see what could be done to realize a dream. Ever since she saw her first airplane when she was a little girl, Coleman had known that someday, somehow, she would fly.

3. A. NO CHANGE  
B. mark,  
C. mark, Coleman  
D. mark that
4. F. NO CHANGE  
G. Southwest that she'd been  
H. Southwest, where she'd been  
J. Southwest, she was
5. A. NO CHANGE  
B. It is now just about a century since the year of her birth.  
C. Just about a century has passed since the year of her birth.  
D. OMIT the underlined portion.

[3]

Try as she might, however, Coleman could not obtain flying lessons anywhere in the city. Then she sought aid from Robert S. Abbott of the Chicago Weekly Defender. The newspaperman got in touch with a flight school in France that was willing to teach this determined young woman to fly.

6. F. NO CHANGE  
G. a year  
H. a year like two full semesters  
J. one year filled with two semesters
7. A. NO CHANGE  
B. Abbott:  
C. Abbott, whose  
D. Abbott;

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## GRADE 11: Day 1/Document 3 (cont.)

[4]

[1] While they're, she had as<sup>8</sup> one of her instructors Anthony Fokker, the famous aircraft designer. [2] Bessie Coleman took a quick course in French, should she settle<sup>9</sup> her affairs, and sailed for Europe. [3] Coping with a daily<sup>10</sup> foreign language and flying in capricious, unstable machines held together with baling wire was daunting, but Coleman persevered. [11]

[5]

On June 15, 1921, Bessie Coleman, earned an international pilot's license,<sup>12</sup> issued by the International Aeronautical Federation. Not only was she the first black woman to win her pilot's wings, she was the first American woman to hold this coveted license.

[6]

She was ready for a triumphant return to the United States to barnstorm and lecture proof<sup>13</sup> that if the will is strong enough for one's dream<sup>14</sup> can be attained.

Question 15 asks about the preceding passage as a whole

The writer intends to add the following sentence to the essay in order to provide a comparison that would help underline the challenges that Bessie Coleman faced:

Her dream of becoming the world's first black woman pilot seemed as remote in Chicago as it had been in Oklahoma.

In order to accomplish this purpose, it would be most logical and appropriate to place this sentence after the:

15. A. first sentence in Paragraph 2.  
B. first sentence in Paragraph 3.  
C. last sentence in Paragraph 3.  
D. first sentence in Paragraph 5.

8. F. NO CHANGE  
G. they're  
H. there,  
J. there, she had as

9. A. NO CHANGE  
B. as if to settle  
C. to settle  
D. settled

10. F. NO CHANGE  
G. (Place after *with*)  
H. (Place after *flying*)  
J. (Place after *in*)

11. Which of the following sequences of sentences will make Paragraph 4 most logical?

- A. NO CHANGE  
B. 1, 3, 2  
C. 2, 1, 3  
D. 3, 2, 1

12. F. NO CHANGE  
G. Coleman earned an international pilot's license  
H. Coleman, earned an international pilot's license  
J. Coleman earned an international pilot's license;

13. A. NO CHANGE  
B. lecture and proof  
C. lecture, proof  
D. lecture proof,

14. F. NO CHANGE  
G. stronger than  
H. strongly enough,  
J. strong enough,

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## GRADE 11: Day 1/Document 4

### **Teacher model: ACT English Strategies**

The following is an example of a think-aloud rationale that accompanies the “ACT English strategies” handout.

*On the ACT English Test, the questions have a specific look. First, you are presented with a passage. At certain points in the passage, specific sections are underlined: it may be a word, a phrase or a sentence that is underlined. These are usually grammar and usage questions.*

#### **READ AROUND**

*When tackling an ACT English question, it is important to “read around” the underlined portion. Often, ACT gives little hints and clues to help get to the correct answer, and if I “read around” the question, I will see these hints.*

#### **UNDERSTANDING WHAT THE QUESTION IS ASKING**

*On the ACT English Test, another strategy is to identify what the question is asking. For example, on this sample test (Day 1/Document 3), Question 2 focuses on the underlined section, “up.” First, I “read around” what the question is asking and see that the sentence currently states, “She lined up the nose of the open cockpit biplane.” Reading around tells me that whatever I choose needs to make sense within the larger sentence. Secondly, I look at the answer choices. When I look at the answer choices, it is clear the ACT is testing standard preposition and adverb usage:*

- *Answer Choice F is to leave the sentence as it is: NO CHANGE*
- *Answer Choice G is to change the underlined portion to “off”*
- *Answer Choice H is to change the underlined portion to “along”*
- *Answer Choice J is to “OMIT the underlined portion”*

*The strategy here is to notice what is changing in the answer choices. This helps me to know what the question is asking. I do this BEFORE I start Process of Elimination. In Question 2, I see very quickly that this question is testing standard usage of prepositions and adverbs. The words “up,” “along,” and “off” are what is changing from one answer choice to the next. These are all adverbs in an idiomatic expression. This tells me that I should think back to what I know of standard usage of adverbs to determine what I can eliminate and what I should keep.*

*Quite quickly, I see that the only answer choice that makes sense idiomatically is answer choice F. Still, I double-check the other answers. G and H are clearly wrong (you would never hear people say “She lined off the nose of the airplane,” nor would you hear them say “She line along the nose of the airplane”). Finally, answer choice J makes the sentence nonsensical. Therefore, answer choice F is our best answer.*

*Next, let’s look at a punctuation question. When I look at Question 7, I see right away that each answer choice has a different punctuation option:*

- *Answer choice A has no punctuation*
- *Answer choice B employs the colon*
- *Answer Choice C uses a comma and adds a pronoun*
- *Answer Choice D adds a semi-colon.*

## GRADE 11: Day 1/Document 4 (cont.)

*Now that I know what the question is asking, I can use my knowledge of standard punctuation usage to get closer to an answer.*

*The best answer is A. No punctuation is needed here between the noun ("Robert S. Abbott") and the prepositional phrase describing that noun ("of the Chicago Weekly Defender"). The use here of the colon (Choice B) or the semicolon (Choice D) is not called for. Choice C incorrectly proposes setting this prepositional phrase off from the main clause and introducing it with the relative pronoun that expresses possession (whose)*

*Finally, let's look at what an ACT English Rhetorical Skills Question looks like. ACT rhetorical questions focus on audience, purpose, organization, style, argument, and transitions. Question 11 is a rhetorical question: specifically, in Question 11, I must decide the order of the paragraphs. Tomorrow, we will go over specific strategies to handle this sort of question. For today, just practice recognizing which are Rhetorical Skills Questions and which are Grammar and Usage Questions.*

## GRADE 11: Day 1/Document 5



### Bessie Coleman Passage:



## Answer Key with Explanations

Used with permission. From: <http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/test1/eng/answer1e.html>

### 1. **Rhetorical Skills: Redundancy**

The best answer is C, which concisely conveys the idea that the practice landing referred to was the last one in a series. In contrast, the other choices are redundant. Choice A belabors the point that "the final performance" was indeed the "last" performance (and confusingly suggests that there was more than one performance of a single landing). Choice B pointlessly repeats the notion of finality in the redundant phrase "finally ultimate" (and confusingly suggests that all the landings strove to be ultimate, but only the last landing succeeded). Choice D is simply redundant because the words last and final in the sentence are synonymous.

### 2. **Grammar and Usage: Adverbs (idiomatic usage)**

The best answer is F. It offers the only idiomatically acceptable wording. The verb phrase line up is often used to mean "align." Choices G and H are clearly wrong here. We would never hear someone say that "she lined off the nose of the . . . biplane on the runway's center mark" or that "she lined along the nose of the . . . biplane on the runway's center mark." Choice J, which proposes deleting the underlined portion, also sounds improbable: "She lined the nose of the . . . biplane on the runway's center mark." This sentence suggests that Bessie Coleman is doing something with the nose of the plane, but whatever it is, it doesn't make sense in terms of the rest of the information in the sentence.

### 3. **Grammar and Usage: Verb phrases**

The best answer is B. This sentence presents a series of three verb phrases—three things that Bessie Coleman did. The subject for all three of the verb phrases is the pronoun "she" at the beginning of the sentence. The third verb phrase in the series ("took off into history") has no subject, so it would be inconsistent and illogical to state the subject of the second verb phrase in the series, as Choices A and C propose. Choice D proposes that, rather than being the second in the series of verb phrases, this should be a subordinate adjective clause describing the preceding noun, but there's no logical support for saying, "the runway's center mark . . . gave the engine full throttle."

### 4. **Grammar and Usage: Pronoun/punctuation**

The best answer is H. It provides the relative pronoun and the punctuation that effectively relates this subordinate adjective clause to the main clause of this sentence. The main clause is as follows: "It was a long journey from the American Southwest to these French skies." The subordinate clause is describing or defining the American Southwest: "where she'd been born in 1893." Since this clause occurs in the middle of the main clause and is not essential or restrictive information, it must be set off from the main clause. Choices F and G fail to do so. Choice J does set the phrase off with commas but fails to provide a pronoun that would effectively relate this clause to the main clause.

### 5. **Rhetorical Skills: Redundancy**

The best answer is D. The most appropriate decision is to delete the information—presented in Choices A, B, and C in different phrasings—that Bessie Coleman was born about a century ago. This information is a mere digression in terms of the focus or development of this essay. It sidetracks the readers. Besides, it provides information that readers could easily infer on their own, since they are told in the previous sentence that Coleman was born in 1893.



## GRADE 11: Day 1/Document 5 (cont.)

### 6. *Rhetorical Skills: Redundancy*

The best answer is G. It is the only choice that doesn't propose irrelevant or redundant information. Choices F, H, and J all propose unnecessarily long-winded and wordy ways of saying that Coleman headed for Chicago after a year at Langston Industrial College. It is just not important for readers to know that a year at Langston consisted of two semesters of schooling.

### 7. *Grammar and Usage: Punctuation*

The best answer is A. No punctuation is needed here between the noun ("Robert S. Abbott") and the prepositional phrase describing that noun ("of the Chicago Weekly Defender"). The use here of the colon (Choice B) or the semicolon (Choice D) is not called for. Choice C incorrectly proposes setting this prepositional phrase off from the main clause and introducing it with the relative pronoun that expresses possession ("whose").

### 8. *Grammar and Usage: Pronoun/homophones (there vs. they're)*

The best answer is J. It proposes the correct form of the pronoun (there) and ensures that the main clause is a complete sentence. Choices F and G are both wrong because they propose using the contracted form of "they are." Although "they're" sounds like "there," it has a different meaning, which would not make sense in the context of this sentence. Choice H proposes the correct adverb but also proposes deleting "she had as," which would create a sentence fragment: "While there, one of her instructors Anthony Fokker, the famous aircraft designer."

### 9. *Grammar and Usage: Verb phrases*

The best answer is D. It logically presents this sentence as a series of three verb phrases, all in the simple past tense. Choices A, B, and C all incorrectly attempt to relate the second phrase in this series to the first phrase. There is no information in this essay nor any logic to support the idea that "Bessie Coleman took a quick course in French, to settle her affairs" (Choice C) or "took a quick course in French, as if to settle her affairs" (Choice B). Likewise, the sense of probability or expectation or futurity that might be expressed by "should she settle her affairs" has no logical support in the context of this essay.

### 10. *Rhetorical Skills: Placement of adjectives and adverbs*

The best answer is H. This question asks the test-taker to decide the best placement of the word daily in the sentence. This word has the flexibility to serve as either an adverb or an adjective. Here, the most logical and appropriate place for this word would be after the word flying. In this arrangement, the word daily serves as an adverb modifying the verb preceding it: "Coping with a foreign language and flying daily in capricious, unstable machines held together with baling wire was daunting, but Coleman persevered." None of the other proposed placements make sense in the context of this sentence: Choice F would have daily functioning as an adjective ("a daily foreign language"). Choice G would seem to have the word functioning as an adverb, but it's hard to tell what the adverb would be describing ("Coping with daily a foreign language"). Choice J would have daily functioning as an adverb defining an adjective ("in daily capricious, unstable machines").

### 11. *Rhetorical Skills: Order within a paragraph*

The best answer is C. It is the only choice that places Sentence 2 as the first sentence in the paragraph. Sentence 2 should logically precede Sentences 1 and 3 because, while Sentences 1 and 3 describe Bessie Coleman's experiences in Europe, Sentence 2 tells readers that she sailed for Europe (and describes the things she did prior to making the trip). Choices A and D are wrong because they keep Sentence 2 in the second position, and Choice B is wrong because it puts Sentence 2 in the final position.

**12. Grammar and Usage: Punctuation**

The best answer is G. It offers the correct punctuation decisions for this sentence. Choices F and H are incorrect because they propose putting a comma between the subject ("Bessie Coleman") and the predicate or verb phrase ("earned an international pilot's license"). Choice J is incorrect because it proposes putting a semicolon between the direct object noun ("an international pilot's license") and the subordinate clause defining that noun ("issued by the International Aeronautical Federation"). It might help to realize that, between the words license and issued, the words that were are not expressed but are understood or implied.

**13. Grammar and Usage: Punctuation**

The best answer is C. This is a difficult question in a rather complex sentence. The clause beginning with proof serves as an appositive, a phrase that describes or defines a preceding noun. Appositives are set off from the main clause with commas and, in most cases, immediately follow the noun they are describing. Here, the appositive occurs at the end of the sentence but describes the subject at the beginning of the sentence (She). "She was ready for a triumphant return to the United States to barnstorm and lecture, proof that . . . one's dream can be attained." The punctuation decisions offered by Choices A and D would both produce an illogical phrasing because they propose that proof should serve as the direct object of the verb lecture ("She was ready . . . to barnstorm and lecture proof . . ."). Choice B is equally illogical because it proposes that proof could function as a verb ("She was ready . . . to barnstorm and lecture and proof that . . . one's dream can be attained.")

**14. Grammar and Usage: Noun clause**

The best answer is J. It effectively coordinates the various elements of this noun clause, which is functioning as an appositive for the subject of the main clause of this sentence. The entire noun clause should read: "proof that if the will is strong enough, one's dream can be attained." You will see that within this noun clause, which is already serving a secondary role in terms of the main clause of the sentence, there is a main clause ("one's dream can be attained") and a subordinate clause related to that main clause by the conjunction if ("the will is strong enough"). Choice H is wrong because it proposes an adverb (strongly) where a predicate adjective is required. Choices F and G are both wrong because they coordinate these clauses in ways that don't make sense and that make clause fragments: "if the will is strong enough for one's dream can be attained" (Choice F) and "if the will is stronger than one's dream can be attained" (Choice G).

**15. Rhetorical Skills: Order within a paragraph**

The best answer is B, which provides the intended comparison by placing the sentence in the most logical location. Choice B underlines or emphasizes the challenges Coleman faced by comparing her hopes and expectations with the reality she met in Chicago. On the contrary, Choice A spoils the logical sequence that Choice B establishes, because the end of the first sentence in Paragraph 2—"these French skies"—does not support the intended comparison. Choices C and D delay making the comparison until too late in the essay. In Choice C, the comparison is weakened because, by the end of Paragraph 3, Coleman is already on her way toward flight school. In Choice D, a comparison intended to "underline the challenges" no longer is pertinent, because Coleman has already met the challenges.



## Grammar Cheat Sheet:



### Preventing Pronoun Problems

In order to make our sentences clear and understandable, we have to make sure that we avoid any problems with pronouns. The ACT often tests this ability on the English Test. Use this Grammar Cheat Sheet to avoid these issues:

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**Pronoun-Antecedent agreement:** (remember the antecedent is the word which the pronoun replaces) a pronoun must agree in number with its antecedent.

The most common pronoun-antecedent issue is with the word “everyone.”

Incorrect example: Could **everyone** please take out **their** book?  
(everyone=singular, their=plural)

Here’s how to fix it:

Corrected: Could **everyone** please take out **his or her** book?

---

**Unclear pronoun reference:** when the sentence wording makes finding the antecedent difficult.

Unclear example: When the cat caught the mouse, **it** made a loud, animal-like noise.

In this case, the pronoun **it** is unclear: is the sentence referring to the cat or the mouse?

Corrected: When the cat caught the mouse, the cat made a loud, animal-like noise.

---

**The pronoun switch:** This is when the writer shifts from a first-person pronoun to a third, third-person to first, etc.

Incorrect example: If you are confused by pronouns, students should ask for help.  
(you=second person, students=third-person subject)

Corrected: If you are confused by pronouns, you should ask for help. OR  
If students are confused by pronouns, they should ask for help.



## Anatomy of a Rhetorical Skills Question



### ACT Rhetorical Skills Questions:

- Test your ability to recognize “writer’s strategy”
- This includes determining whether the writer has:
  - The BEST organization for a passage
  - The BEST transitions for the passage
  - The quality of the writer’s argument
  - Whether the writer has:
    - A clear purpose
    - A clear audience
    - A sense of unity
    - A sense of focus
- This means that you will have to consider the passage as a whole, including its tone, point of view, topic, and purpose.

### HERE IS WHAT THEY LOOK LIKE:

From [www.act.org](http://www.act.org): “Bessie Coleman: In Flight”

<http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/test1/engl/englishtest.html>

When ACT gives you a question like this, be sure to read carefully.

### Rhetorical Skills Question:

15. The writer intends to add the following sentence to the essay in order to provide a comparison that would help underline the challenges that Bessie Coleman faced:

Her dream of becoming the world’s first black woman pilot seemed as remote in Chicago as it had been in Oklahoma.

In order to accomplish this purpose, it would be most logical and appropriate to place this sentence after the:

- A. first sentence in Paragraph 2.
- B. first sentence in Paragraph 3.
- C. last sentence in Paragraph 3.
- D. first sentence in Paragraph 5.

These are the answer choices.



## Rhetorical Skills Cheat Sheet: Avoiding Redundancy, Repetition, and other Repetitious Redundancy

The ACT Rhetorical Skills Questions often test whether you are strong enough to eliminate redundancy. **Redundancy** is when extra words can be omitted without losing meaning. In other words, it means that any extra words or repetitious phrases should be eliminated on ACT Rhetorical Skills Questions



### Redundancy Test Trick: KISS

KISS = Keep it Simple, Silly!

Here is how we use KISS: the simplest answer is often correct. This means the answer choice with the fewest words is the one we want. We can also use this on punctuation questions: often the answer choice with the fewest punctuation marks is correct.

#### EXAMPLE:

From [www.act.org](http://www.act.org): “Bessie Coleman: In Flight”

<http://www.actstudent.org/sampletest/test1/eng/english/test.html>

Bessie Coleman: Question 6

- F. NO CHANGE [*underlined portion in the passage: After both semesters of the two-year semester*] = 6 words
- G. a year = 2 words
- H. a year like two full semesters = 6 words
- J. one year filled with two semesters = 6 words

KISS tells us that answer choice G is correct because it has the fewest words. Answer choice G is, in fact, the correct answer.



**0225C: Passage IV: A Creative Education**



N.C. Wyeth, gifted artist and illustrator, was in  
 46  
 the early twentieth century. He is celebrated for  
his vivid and haunting images by art historians,

47  
 many of which continue to be published in  
 children’s books for the young today. Yet those

48  
 who knew him believe that [49]. Because he  
 worked at home, Wyeth was able to devote  
 much of his time and energy to their care and  
 instruction. Rather than send his children to  
 school, where, Wyeth believed, they would be  
 “pruned to stumps, one resembling the other,”  
 during the day he often tutored them at home.  
 The children regularly engaged in activities  
stimulating their curiosity and creativity, which

50  
were designed by Wyeth.

He wanted his children to value time and spend  
 it productively. Even mealtimes were  
 educational, devoted to discussions of current  
 events and the works of famous writers and  
 artists.

The children’s activities continued into the  
 evenings, too. Each night, Wyeth would tell  
 stories of  
 elves and other magical creatures or would read  
 from  
 the classics. The children’s favorite stories  
that they heard were those that he told while

51

(passage continued on next page)

46. F. NO CHANGE  
 G. Wyeth was a gifted artist and illustrator  
 H. Wyeth was a gifted artist, and illustrator  
 J. Wyeth, a gifted artist and illustrator,
47. A. NO CHANGE  
 B. by art historians for his vivid and  
 haunting images,  
 C. for his vivid and haunting images, by art  
 historians,  
 D. by art historians who consider the  
 images vivid and haunting,
48. F. NO CHANGE  
 G. for young people  
 H. for young readers  
 J. OMIT the underlined portion
49. The writer would like to link the information  
 already presented about N.C. Wyeth to the topic  
 discussed in the rest of the essay. Assuming all  
 are true, which of the following completions of  
 this sentence best achieves this effect?  
 A. he raised his five children in an unusual  
 and successful way.  
 B. he was ahead of his time in his role as  
 the primary caregiver of his five children  
 C. his greatest artistic feat was in the  
 raising of his five children  
 D. he spent more time with his five  
 children than most men did in those days
50. F. NO CHANGE  
 G. that would stimulate their curiosity as  
 designed by Wyeth.  
 H. designed by Wyeth, they were to  
 stimulate their curiosity.  
 J. that were designed by Wyeth to  
 stimulate their curiosity.
51. A. NO CHANGE  
 B. that he told  
 C. he told  
 D. OMIT the underlined portion

standing at his easel sketching the giants

52

monsters and other fantastic creatures that inhabited his lively tales.

The children were required to do more than sit and listen quietly through

53

their "lessons." They were expected to keep scrupulously written journals containing

54

sketches and notes, and personal diaries they

55

also kept. Wyeth believed their richly textured childhood, both disciplined and fanciful, would lay the foundation for productive

56

adult years.

Child-rearing provides many subtle rewards.

57

Wyeth created a virtual dynasty of talent and achievement. Three of the children became successful artists, another a composer, and one who was a scientist and inventor. All of

58

them trace their accomplishments to their remarkable childhood under the watchful eye of their father's dedication and determination.

59

**Question 60 asks about the preceding passage as a whole.**

**60.** Suppose the writer had been assigned to write a brief essay illustrating the influence of N. C. Wyeth's artwork on the subsequent artwork on his children. Would this essay successfully fulfill the assignment?

- F.** Yes, because the essay indicates that three of his children became successful artists.
- G.** Yes, because the essay indicates that Wyeth used his artwork to help foster creativity in his children.
- H.** No, because the essay restricts its focus to Wyeth's creative child-rearing methods.
- J.** No, because the essay does not suggest the types of images Wyeth created.

**52.** **F.** NO CHANGE

- G.** standing at his easel, sketching the giants, monsters,
- H.** standing, at his easel sketching the giants, monsters,
- J.** standing at his easel; sketching the giants, monsters,

**53.** **A.** NO CHANGE

- B.** more, than sit and listen quietly,
- C.** more than sit and listen quietly,
- D.** more than sit, and listen quietly

**54.** **F.** NO CHANGE

- G.** written journals scrupulously containing
- H.** journals, which were scrupulously containing written
- J.** scrupulously written journals, which were containing

**55.** **A.** NO CHANGE

- B.** also keeping personal diaries
- C.** they also kept personal diaries
- D.** as well as personal diaries

**56.** **F.** NO CHANGE

- G.** were laying
- H.** had lain
- J.** OMIT the underlined portion

**57.** Which of the choices provides the most effect introductory sentence for the essay's concluding paragraph?

- A.** NO CHANGE
- B.** Raising children is life's greatest challenge.
- C.** His approach seems to have worked.
- D.** Wyeth's drawings will not be forgotten.

**58.** **F.** NO CHANGE

- G.** the other
- H.** one becoming
- J.** another being

**59.** **A.** NO CHANGE

- B.** the dedication and determination of their father.
- C.** their dedicated and determined father.
- D.** the dedicated determination of their father.

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GRADE 11: Day 2/Document 4



**0225C: Passage IV: A Creative Education:**



**Answer Key and Labels**

Question number	Answer	Type of question
46	G	Usage/Mechanics
47	B	Usage/Mechanics
48	J	Rhetorical Skills
49	C	Rhetorical Skills
50	J	Rhetorical Skills
51	D	Rhetorical Skills
52	G	Usage/Mechanics
53	A	Usage/Mechanics
54	F	Usage/Mechanics
55	D	Usage/Mechanics
56	F	Usage/Mechanics
57	C	Rhetorical Skills
58	G	Usage/Mechanics
59	C	Usage/Mechanics
60	H	Rhetorical Skills



## GRADE 11: Day 3/Document 1



### **Sample ACT Prompt (Topic: 5<sup>th</sup> year HS)**



#### Sample ACT prompt:

Educators debate extending high school to five years because of increasing demands on students from employers and colleges to participate in extracurricular activities and community service in addition to having high grades. Some educators support extending high school to five years because they think students need more time to achieve all that is expected of them. Other educators do not support extending high school to five years because they think students would lose interest in school and attendance would drop in the fifth year. In your opinion, should high school be extended to five years?

In your essay, take a position on this question. You may write about either one of the two points of view given, or you may present a different point of view on this question. Use specific reasons and examples to support your position.

Source: <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/sample/index.html>



**Sample Top-Scoring Introduction on**  
**the ACT Writing Test**



The Senior Itch—the incurable chaffing we all crave to scratch. The cure? Graduation. As we progress through our high school years growing with wisdom and maturity, we all yearn for freedom. Yet what we desire most is not always what is best for us. Although most won't want to admit it, extending our high school career to five years would make an important and beneficial impact on our future. With the four years that are currently provided, there is not enough time for motivated students to accomplish their goals before college. Merely being accepted by a selective college or university requires much pre-planned effort that is literally unavailable to students already concerned with grades and other activities.

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1. What is the writer's topic?	
2. What is the writer's position on the topic?	
3. How does the writer capture the reader's attention?	
4. How does the writer provide a context for the argument?	

Source of text: <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/sample/index.html>

## GRADE 11: Day 3/Document 3



# Sample Top-Scoring Evidence and Warranting on the ACT Writing Test



Position (from introduction): Although most won't want to admit it, extending our high school career to five years would make an important and beneficial impact on our future.

**Body Paragraph:** Colleges look most thoroughly at how an applicant used his or her four years of high school. Leadership roles, a dedication to an organization, and a well-rounded, involved student is appealing to the most elite educational institutions. Often, students desire leadership positions in numerous extra-curricular organizations, but face limiting regulations on the number of offices they may hold at one time. Even if a school doesn't limit students' involvement, students eventually reach the limits of what a 24-hour day can hold. Too often, students cannot participate as much as they want in as many extra-curriculars as they want because there just isn't time. With an extra year of high school, those involved in more than one activity could successfully find the time to contribute to and to lead each one. Colleges would see a longer, more developed individual's resume that included a time for each of their interests. The organizations would benefit from stronger student participation and the students would be recognized for their true efforts as well.

Body Paragraph with evidence and warranting highlighted: **Colleges look most thoroughly at how an applicant used his or her four years of high school. Leadership roles, a dedication to an organization, and a well-rounded, involved student is appealing to the most elite educational institutions [evidence].** Often, students desire leadership positions in numerous extra-curricular organizations, but face limiting regulations on the number of offices they may hold at one time. Even if a school doesn't limit students' involvement, students eventually reach the limits of what a 24-hour day can hold. Too often, students cannot participate as much as they want in as many extra-curriculars as they want because there just isn't time. **With an extra year of high school, those involved in more than one activity could successfully find the time to contribute to and to lead each one [warranting].** Colleges would see a longer, more developed individual's resume that included a time for each of their interests. The organizations would benefit from stronger student participation and the students would be recognized for their true efforts as well.

*Students: identify the evidence and warranting in the next body paragraphs.*

Source of text: <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/sample/index.html>

## GRADE 11: Day 3/Document 3 (cont.)

Next Body Paragraphs: Because they struggle to gain leadership roles and become the well-rounded students colleges desire, the task of maintaining a respectable grade-point-average during high school is a struggle for many students. It is difficult to be involved in activities of interest while still keeping high grades. However, colleges don't consider this when they seek applicants with high grade-point-averages in their admissions pool. Elongating the span of high school would allow more students with both grades and activities on their agenda to spend more time focusing on each separate interest. Rather than feeling forced to crunch a large block of "weighted" classes together in hopes of elevating their GPA, students would find more time to spread out their difficult classes and make the most of every single year. With less pressure and more time, grades would improve for all dedicated students, as would the enjoyment of studying those subjects and the increased retainment of what we learned in those classes.

Education aside, many high school students find that four years is not enough time to accomplish their varied goals. For instance, a student may desire a job in addition to school. The money they earn may help pay their way through college. With such a short preparation period before college, they can hardly be expected to make a successful life for themselves without the proper funds. Also, many students are interested in community service prior to attending college, but find they do not have enough time in the four-year high school period. Colleges are drawn to students with a rich assortment of community service and evidence of responsibilities such as holding a job, but students have a hard time finding the hours to put into these tasks.



**Sample Top-Scoring Conclusion on  
the ACT Writing Test**



High school is the foundation of the rest of our life. Like money in the bank, the investment of an additional year when we are young can make all the difference. With the additional time, motivated students would be able to become more involved in their schools, boost their grades, and find the time for a job and community service. Colleges admire these attributes, and for the sake of high-schoolers' acceptance into these institutions, more time should be provided for their endeavors. High school students work hard toward their future. Another year would help ensure their success.

QUESTIONS	ANSWERS
1. How does the writer remind the reader of his or her strongest points?	
2. How does the writer inspire the reader to take action?	
3. How does the writer give a sense of closure?	
4. Is there anything else about this conclusion that you find effective?	

Source of text: <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/sample/index.html>



## **Six-Point Holistic Scoring Rubric for** **the ACT Writing Test**

Source: <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/scores/guidelines.html>

Papers at each level exhibit all or most of the characteristics described at each score point.

### **Score = 6**

**Essays within this score range demonstrate effective skill in responding to the task.**

The essay shows a clear understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer a critical context for discussion. The essay addresses complexity by examining different perspectives on the issue, or by evaluating the implications and/or complications of the issue, or by fully responding to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is ample, specific, and logical. Most ideas are fully elaborated. A clear focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained. The organization of the essay is clear: the organization may be somewhat predictable or it may grow from the writer's purpose. Ideas are logically sequenced. Most transitions reflect the writer's logic and are usually integrated into the essay. The introduction and conclusion are effective, clear, and well developed. The essay shows a good command of language. Sentences are varied and word choice is varied and precise. There are few, if any, errors to distract the reader.

### **Score = 5**

**Essays within this score range demonstrate competent skill in responding to the task.**

The essay shows a clear understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer a broad context for discussion. The essay shows recognition of complexity by partially evaluating the implications and/or complications of the issue, or by responding to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is specific and logical. Most ideas are elaborated, with clear movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained. The organization of the essay is clear, although it may be predictable.

Ideas are logically sequenced, although simple and obvious transitions may be used. The introduction and conclusion are clear and generally well developed. Language is competent. Sentences are somewhat varied and word choice is sometimes varied and precise. There may be a few errors, but they are rarely distracting.

### **Score = 4**

**Essays within this score range demonstrate adequate skill in responding to the task.**

The essay shows an understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue and may offer some context for discussion. The essay may show some recognition of complexity by providing some response to counterarguments to the writer's position. Development of ideas is adequate, with some movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained throughout most of the essay. The organization of the essay is apparent but predictable. Some evidence of logical sequencing of ideas is apparent, although most transitions are simple and obvious. The introduction and conclusion are clear and somewhat developed. Language is adequate, with some sentence variety and appropriate word choice. There may be some distracting errors, but they do not impede understanding.

## GRADE 11: Day 4/Document 1 (cont.)

### **Score = 3**

#### **Essays within this score range demonstrate some developing skill in responding to the task.**

The essay shows some understanding of the task. The essay takes a position on the issue but does not offer a context for discussion. The essay may acknowledge a counterargument to the writer's position, but its development is brief or unclear. Development of ideas is limited and may be repetitious, with little, if any, movement between general statements and specific reasons, examples, and details. Focus on the general topic is maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. The organization of the essay is simple. Ideas are logically grouped within parts of the essay, but there is little or no evidence of logical sequencing of ideas. Transitions, if used, are simple and obvious. An introduction and conclusion are clearly discernible but underdeveloped. Language shows a basic control. Sentences show a little variety and word choice is appropriate. Errors may be distracting and may occasionally impede understanding.

### **Score = 2**

#### **Essays within this score range demonstrate inconsistent or weak skill in responding to the task.**

The essay shows a weak understanding of the task. The essay may not take a position on the issue, or the essay may take a position but fail to convey reasons to support that position, or the essay may take a position but fail to maintain a stance. There is little or no recognition of a counterargument to the writer's position. The essay is thinly developed. If examples are given, they are general and may not be clearly relevant. The essay may include extensive repetition of the writer's ideas or of ideas in the prompt. Focus on the general topic is maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. There is some indication of an organizational structure, and some logical grouping of ideas within parts of the essay is apparent. Transitions, if used, are simple and obvious, and they may be inappropriate or misleading. An introduction and conclusion are discernible but minimal. Sentence structure and word choice are usually simple. Errors may be frequently distracting and may sometimes impede understanding.

### **Score = 1**

#### **Essays within this score range show little or no skill in responding to the task.**

The essay shows little or no understanding of the task. If the essay takes a position, it fails to convey reasons to support that position. The essay is minimally developed. The essay may include excessive repetition of the writer's ideas or of ideas in the prompt. Focus on the general topic is usually maintained, but focus on the specific issue in the prompt may not be maintained. There is little or no evidence of an organizational structure or of the logical grouping of ideas. Transitions are rarely used. If present, an introduction and conclusion are minimal. Sentence structure and word choice are simple. Errors may be frequently distracting and may significantly impede understanding.

### **No Score**

#### **Blank, Off-Topic, Illegible, Not in English, or Void**

## GRADE 11: Day 4/Document 2



### Sample Student Essays



Source: <http://www.actstudent.org/writing/sample/index.html>

#### Essay M:

In this essay I am writing about that school should be extended for five year. I think that school should be extended for five year because it will help you how you are educate. The school for five year will help you a lot when you are doing something. The school for five year could help you in most everything that you are doing. I think that if you go to school for five years you could learn a lot of skills. School could help you out of most anything that you want to do in this world. School could teach you how to be educator. By going to school is a good thing because if you go to school it could help have experience in everything that you are doing. To have experience you to do that thing you do best and how well you do at it. I think that school could teach you how to have experience in everything you are doing. I know that to go to school you have to choice to go to school because nobody can make you go to school. I know that school are not for everyone but I think that every children should go to school because if you don't go to school you will not be educate. I know that when you have an education it is a good thing. School is a place where you could learn a lot of different that you don't know. I know that I learn a lot of thing I didn't know but I know them. By going to school you make new friends, and you see a lot of different people like people that is not from the United States. At school you do classwork and do all type of assignment your teacher told you to do. I believe that every students should want to be educator because you need education in this world. School shouldn't be a place where students fights. I think that every students should like going to school.



## Score = 1

### Scoring Explanation for Essay M:

This essay shows little skill in responding to the writing task.

While the writer takes a position on the issue in the beginning of the essay (*I think that school should be extended for five year because it will help you how you are educate*), the rest of the discussion does not convey reasons to support that position. Instead, the writer minimally develops many different ideas about school in general, repeating ideas rather than explaining them (*School is a place where you could learn a lot of different that you don't know. I know that I learn a lot of thing I didn't know but I know them*). At times, statements supporting claims are not understandable (*By going to school is a good thing because if you go to school it could help have experience in everything that you are doing. To have experience you to do that thing you do best and how well you do at it*).

There is no discernable organization to the essay other than a minimal introductory statement: ideas are not logically grouped, no transitions are used, and no conclusion is offered. Sentence structure and word choice are consistently simple, with sentences repeatedly beginning with, "I think" or "I know."

Language usage errors are frequently distracting and contribute to difficulty understanding some portions of the essay.

## **Essay X:**

If you ever ask a highschool student whether they would want to go one more year very few would say yes. I would, not because I like school, not because I enjoy spending six hours cooped up inside, but because I could use one more year to just be sure I am completely prepared for college. Along with this I feel that because we are required to take tenth grade graduation test and most of our tenth grade year is spent preparing for this test.

Highschool students today are highly prepared for the world, but that one extra year in high school could possibly be spent taking time on preparatory courses in college type setting. Students get thrown into the college setting which is a major shock to them due to the major differences. Maybe doing this our freshmen's first quarter wouldn't be as much of a change.

Because we have to take the graduation test in tenth grade we don't learn anything that year. We need another year due to that, so we should go one more year to make sure we are ready.

## Score = 2

### Scoring Explanation for Essay X:

This essay demonstrates inconsistent skill in responding to the task. The writer takes a position but displays no recognition of a counter-argument to that position.

Development of ideas is thin with general statements to explain the first idea (*Students get thrown into the college setting which is a major shock to them due to the major differences*) and very little explanation of the second idea (*Because we have to take the graduation test in tenth grade we don't learn anything that year*).

There is some indication of an organizational structure: a discernible introduction offers two ideas, with each discussed in its own paragraph. The conclusion is minimal and not clearly separated from discussion of the writer's second idea (*We need another year due to that, so we should go one more year to make sure we are ready*). Transitions are simple (*but, because*).

Sentence structure shows some variety (*I would, not because I like school, not because I enjoy spending six hours cooped up inside, but because I could use one more year to just be sure I am completely prepared for college*) and word choice is appropriate to the discussion (*cooped up inside, preparatory courses, freshmen's first quarter*).

## Essay H:

Educators debate extending high school to five years because of increasing demands on students from employers and colleges to participate in extracurricular activities and community service in addition to having high grades. Some educators support extending high school to five years because they think students need more time to achieve all that is expected of them. Other educators do not support extending high school to five years because they think students would lose interest in school and attendance would drop in the fifth year. Both sides have strong points, but I agree with the educators who say that there shouldn't be an extension to high school adding a fifth year.

I agree that high school should not be made up of a fifth year because I agree with those people who say that students would lose interest. Some adolescents are already losing interest in school and an increasing number of students are becoming dropouts. Being a high school student myself, it is hard and some students don't realize their full potential and think it is easier to give up than to succeed. I think adding an extra year to high school would increase the number of dropouts a year, create very serious attendance dilemmas, and cause students' interest in school to decline.

I also feel that there should not be another year to high school because I just feel that it should be a job of the instructors at a high school to prepare us, high school students, for college within those four years of high school. I feel that creating another year to high school would decrease the teacher's interest and they would do a poor job and wait until the fifth year to make up for their mistakes. The teacher should have the need to do their best to prepare us for college and careers within the four years of high school.

I just think that five years is too long and students would get bored with school. Their drive would definitely decline. Students would lose interest and attendance would drop. The students would become dropouts.

Educators should not extend high school with a fifth year to fully prepare students for college.

**Score = 3**

**Scoring Explanation for Essay H:**

This essay shows some understanding of the writing task.

The writer takes a position on the issue (*Both sides have strong points, but I agree with the educators who say that their shouldn't be an extension to high school adding a fifth year*) and offers some context for discussion by repeating the prompt as an introduction. By using the prompt as part of the essay, the writer acknowledges a counter-argument but does not discuss it at all.

Two main ideas are developed to support the writer's position (. . . *I agree with those people who say that students would loose interest. . . . I also feel that there should not be another year to high school because I just feel that it should be a job of the instructors at an high school to prepare us, high school students, for college within those four years of high school*), with the first idea repeated twice in separate parts of the discussion (*I just think that five years is too long and students would get bored with school*). Discussion of each idea is limited to general statements that are never illustrated by specific reasons, examples, or details (*I feel that creating yet another year to high school would decrease the teacher's interest and they would do a poor job and wait until the fifth year to make up for their mistakes*), but the essay does maintain focus on the specific issue in the prompt.

Organization is simple and clear but provides no evidence that ideas in the essay are logically sequenced within the discussion. Simple transitions connect the paragraphs (*I agree . . . I also feel . . . I just think . . .*) without making meaningful connections between ideas. The introduction and conclusion are clearly discernible as intentional frames for the discussion, but are underdeveloped—either because the language is merely repeated from the prompt or because the writer did not extend summation past a single conclusive statement.

Language use shows some sentence variety (*Some adolescence are already loosing interest in school and an increasing number of students are becoming dropouts*) and appropriate word choice (*potential, succeed, attendance*). Some errors distract but do not impede understanding.

## Essay P:

Educators debate extending high school to five years due to the increasing demands on students from employers and colleges. Those for it say that it will give students more time to achieve what is expected, and those against it say that students would lose interest and attendance will drop in year five. Of course there seems to be advantages and disadvantages to both, but let's be realistic, in America today, education isn't exactly our most relishing topic. I feel that extending high school one more year is a bad idea for three reasons, students really only have three years, there will be a loss of interest, and it's just a "band aid" for bigger problems.

Firstly, if you think about it, there are really only three years of high school, because does anyone really get anything done senior year? No. Senior year is a time of waiting, for school to end, for your acceptance letters to come in, it's a time of waiting. Not to mention the commonly known disease that seems to incubate all seniors called "senioritis". Senioritis is basically not doing anything. With 5 years of high school students would waste 2 years to senioritis instead of just one.

Out of the millions of students enrolled in high school, maybe one out of 5 truly enjoys school, whereas the others just treat it as a social gathering very early in the morning. After the first three years of high school, coming into your senior year, you become a human form of a slug, very slow, both physically and mentally. Of course I might be over exaggerating maybe a little bit, but the interest is gone after sophomore year. What makes you think that it will magically pop up after an addition of one more year? It will just be more time to be bored.

Lastly, extending high school an extra year just seems like a band aid for all the problems in the field of education. At a time where the illiteracy and dropout rate seems to be rising as much as gas prices these days, one more year isn't going to cut it. The solution isn't that easy.

So in conclusion, four years is ample time to achieve greatness and fully take advantage of high school. For those that don't think so, explain how most of my generations parents did it in four years, does that make them super heroes? I think not. Another year is just not a smart idea.

**Score = 4**

**Scoring Explanation for Essay P:**

This essay demonstrates adequate skill in responding to the task.

The writer takes a position (*I feel that extending high school one more year is a bad idea for three reasons . . .*) and offers some context for the discussion (*Educators debate extending high school to five years due to the increasing demands on students for employers and colleges. Those for it say that it will give students more time to achieve what is expected, and those against it say that students would lost intrest and attendance will drop in year five*). The essay also shows some recognition of complexity by acknowledging multiple perspectives and providing some response to counter-arguments to the writer's position (*Of course there seems to be advantages and disadvantages to both, but lets be realistic, in America today, education isn't exactly our most relishing topic*).

Development of ideas is adequate, with three ideas discussed and with some movement between general statements (*extending high school an extra year just seems like a band aid for all the problems in the field of education*) and specific examples and details (*At a time where the illiteracy and dropout rate seems to be rising as much as gas prices these days, one more year isn't going to cut it*). Focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained throughout the essay.

The organization of the essay is apparent but predictable, with obvious transitions (*Firstly, Lastly, So in conclusion*). There is some evidence of logical sequencing within the third paragraph (*coming into senior year, you become a human form of a slug. . . . the intrest is gone after sophomore year. What makes you think that it will magically pop up after a addition of one more year? It will just be more time to be bored*). The introduction and conclusion are both clear and somewhat developed.

The writer demonstrates adequate ability with language, using a variety of sentence types and some appropriate word choice (*extending, social gathering, physically and mentally, illiteracy*) as well as some inaccurate and distracting word choice (*relishing, incubate*). Other errors also distract the reader but do not impede understanding.

Language usage errors are frequently distracting and contribute to difficulty understanding some portions of the essay.

## **Essay J:**

Demand for more credits, community service, and better grades runs many high schoolers ragged. For many anything but the best is simply unexceptionable. In a society that constantly tells its youth they must have the highest pay check and newest car to be happy, why wouldn't this be the case? A fifth year of high school would give students more opportunity to take classes they would enjoy, take stress off of teenagers, and give the youth of our nation a chance to develop good priorities.

Schools are always adding new and interesting courses, but for many, like the college bound student, there just isn't the time. Though an arts and crafts class might sound like fun, something like AP Music Theory would probably look better on a transcript. Since there is no time to take both the student will probably take the harder class even if it is just to keep up appearances. Fifteen years old seems too early to start making "career" choices over things that would be fun. But it happens and it causes stress.

Teenagers in the country have an ever growing load of stress being placed upon them. Starting before high school teens are faced with the questions: Where are you going to college? How are you going to get there? What are you going to be? All these questions are extremely daunting and often stress students out. Also, with the price of college so high many students take on a job during high school, which only adds to the stress. With an extra year of high school not only would students have time to think through big decisions, but they would also be better able to balance work with school.

Time is so fleeting in this day and age. There is never enough time. No time for family, no time for relaxing, no time for sleep. Even if some time is stolen to recuperate, aren't the youth told that if they rest at home or sleep too much they are lazy and worthless?! While too much "vegging" could be a problem, teens need to know what is important and necessary for their mental and physical health. At the pace of many high schoolers lives, this generation is sure to be one full of workaholics. Is that really what are society needs? When the lesson students learn in school is one that exhausts them and sets them up for an unhealthy lifestyle in their future, it is time for a change.



With such a high demands placed on the youth of our nation, it seems only fair that they are given more time. They are only young once. Teens should not be forced to grow up at such a fast pace. An extra year of high school will allow students to enjoy their education by giving them the gift of time, time to relax, time to take classes at their own pace and maintain a healthy lifestyle, time to discover the fun and interest in school. More time in high school will benefit students now and in the future.

## Score = 5

### Scoring Explanation for Essay J:

This essay takes a position in favor of extending high school and offers a broad context for discussion by situating high school effort within a larger society that values excellence and high achievement (*In a society that constantly tells its youth they must have the highest pay check and newest car to be happy, why wouldn't this be the case?*).

The essay demonstrates recognition of complexity with discussion of the complications of the issue in the fourth paragraph. First, the writer establishes that students never have enough time, then anticipates the stereotype of the lazy teenager who "sleeps too much," then attempts to solve the acknowledged complication that "too much 'vegging' could be a problem." The essay thus demonstrates an ability to treat the complexity of the issue without undermining the essay's position or logic.

Development of ideas is specific and logical. The essay moves between general ideas (*Schools are always adding new and interesting courses, but for many, like the college bound student, there just isn't the time*) and specific examples (*Though an arts and crafts class might sound like fun, something like AP Music Theory would probably look better on a transcript*). Moreover, some ideas are developed fully as the writer draws critical conclusions from the discussion (*Fifteen years old seems to early to start making "career" choices over things that wold be fun*).

The essay has a simple structural organization, but generally demonstrates logical progression of ideas, especially through the second and fourth paragraphs. Transitions between ideas are well crafted both between paragraphs (*But it happens and it causes stress. . . . Teenagers in the country have an ever growing load of stress being placed upon them*) and within paragraphs to make logical connections between ideas.

Language use in the essay is generally clear, although misspellings of homophones (*its/it's, our/are*) are distracting. Some incorrect punctuation is also distracting, but the mistakes do not impede understanding. Some precise vocabulary (*daunting, fleeting, generation*) and a variety of sentence constructions are used effectively throughout the essay.

## **Essay Z:**

The Senior Itch—the incurable chaffing we all crave to scratch. The cure? Graduation. As we progress through our high school years growing with wisdom and maturity, we all yearn for freedom. Yet what we desire most is not always what is best for us. Although most won't want to admit it, extending our high school career to five years would make an important and beneficial impact on our future. With the four years that are currently provided, there is not enough time for motivated students to accomplish their goals before college. Merely being accepted by a selective college or university requires much pre-planned effort that is literally unavailable to students already concerned with grades and other activities.

Colleges look most thoroughly at how an applicant used his or her four years of high school. Leadership roles, a dedication to an organization, and a well-rounded, involved student is appealing to the most elite educational institutions. Often, students desire leadership positions in numerous extra-curricular organizations, but face limiting regulations on the number of offices they may hold at one time. Even if a school doesn't limit students' involvement, students eventually reach the limits of what a 24-hour day can hold. Too often, students cannot participate as much as they want in as many extra-curriculars as they want because there just isn't time. With an extra year of high school, those involved in more than one activity could successfully find the time to contribute to and to lead each one. Colleges would see a longer, more developed individual's resume that included a time for each of their interests. The organizations would benefit from stronger student participation and the students would be recognized for their true efforts as well.

Because they struggle to gain leadership roles and become the well-rounded students colleges desire, the task of maintaining a respectable grade-point-average during high school is a struggle for many students. It is difficult to be involved in activities of interest while still keeping high grades. However, colleges don't consider this when they seek applicants with high grade-point-averages in their admissions pool. Elongating the span of high school would allow more students with both grades and activities on their agenda to spend more time focusing on each separate interest. Rather than feeling forced to crunch a large block of "weighted" classes together in hopes of elevating their GPA, students would find more time to spread out their difficult classes and make the most of every single year. With less pressure and more time, grades would improve for all

dedicated students, as would the enjoyment of studying those subjects and the increased retainment of what we learned in those classes.

Education aside, many high school students find that four years is not enough time to accomplish their varied goals. For instance, a student may desire a job in addition to school. The money they earn may help pay their way through college. With such a short preparation period before college, they can hardly be expected to make a successful life for themselves without the proper funds. Also, many students are interested in community service prior to attending college, but find they do not have enough time in the four-year high school period. Colleges are drawn to students with a rich assortment of community service and evidence of responsibilities such as holding a job, but students have a hard time finding the hours to put into these tasks.

High school is the foundation of the rest of our life. Like money in the bank, the investment of an additional year when we are young can make all the difference. With the additional time, motivated students would be able to become more involved in their schools, boost their grades, and find the time for a job and community service. Colleges admire these attributes, and for the sake of high-schoolers' acceptance into these institutions, more time should be provided for their endeavors. High school students work hard toward their future. Another year would help ensure their success.

**Score = 6**

**Scoring Explanation for Essay Z:**

This essay demonstrates effective skill in responding to the writing task.

The essay takes a position on the issue (*extending our high school career to five years would make an important and beneficial impact on our future*) and offers a critical context for discussion (*Yet what we desire most is not always what is best for us*). Complexity is addressed as the writer anticipates and responds to a counter-argument to the discussion (*Even if a school doesn't limit students' involvement, students eventually reach the limits of what a 24-hour day can hold*). Development is ample, specific and logical, discussing most ideas fully in terms of the resulting implications (*Colleges would see a longer, more developed individual's resume that included a time for each of their interests. The organizations would benefit from stronger student participation and the students would be recognized for their true efforts as well*). Clear focus on the specific issue in the prompt is maintained.

Organization of the essay is clear though predictable. Most of the essay demonstrates logical sequencing of ideas (*It is difficult to be involved in activities of interest while still keeping high grades. However, colleges don't consider this when they seek applicants with high grade-point-averages in their admissions pool. Elongating the span of high school would allow more students with both grades and activities on their agenda to spend more time focusing on each separate interest*). Transitions are used throughout the essay (*Although, Even if, However, Rather than*) and are often integrated into the essay (*Because they struggle to gain leadership roles and become the well-rounded students colleges desire, the task of maintaining a respectable grade-point-average during high school is a struggle for many students*). The conclusion and especially the introduction are effective and well developed.

The essay shows a good command of language, with precise and varied sentences and word choice (*The Senior Itch—the incurable chaffing we all crave to scratch. . . . Merely being accepted by a selective college or university requires much pre-planned effort that is literally unavailable to students already concerned with grades and other activities*).

There are few errors to distract the reader.

GRADE 11: Day 5/Document 1



**Prompt Analysis Worksheet**



<b>Write your prompt here:</b>		
<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>Audience:</b>
<b>Your position on the topic:</b>		
<b>Reasons to support your position</b>	<b>Examples/evidence</b>	<b>Warrant (Explain how do the reasons and examples support your position)</b>
1.		
2.		
3.		
<b>Counterarguments</b>		<b>Rebuttals to counterarguments</b>



## **The Bump Chart: How to Move One Score Point Higher on the ACT Rubric**

### **Quick ways to move from 1 to 2**

- Add an introduction paragraph
- Add a conclusion paragraph

### **Quick ways to move from a 2 to a 3**

- Take a clear position
- Give two examples of that position in your body paragraph

### **Quick ways to move from 3 to a 4**

- Avoid repetition
- Add to conclusion and introduction

### **Quick ways to move from a 4 to a 5**

- Make transitions between paragraphs more interesting
- Improve development of body paragraphs by developing rebuttal

### **Quick ways to move from a 5 to a 6**

- Strongly develop arguments and rebuttal
- Improve command of language

## GRADE 11: Day 6/Document 1



# ELA Scoring Guide for the Civic Essay



Remember that this essay will be scored twice, once using this rubric for the ELA score and once using the Social Studies Scoring Guide for the Civic Essay.

Points	Persuasive Writing Scoring Guide
<b>6</b>	The essay takes a position on the issue in the prompt, shows clear understanding of that issue, and maintains focus across the response. The position is supported thoroughly and consistently with specific, logical reasons and/or examples. The response may demonstrate insight and complexity by evaluating various implications of the position and/or by responding to arguments that differ from the writer's position. Organization is well controlled, with a logical sequence of reasons and strong transitions and relationships among reasons. The essay shows a good command of varied, precise language that supports meaning. Few, if any, errors distract the reader.
<b>5</b>	The essay takes a position on the issue in the prompt, shows clear understanding of that issue, and is focused through most of the response. The position is supported with specific, logical reasons. The essay may show recognition of complexity by partially evaluating implications of the issue, or by responding to arguments that differ from the author's position. Organization is generally controlled, with an occasional lapse in sequencing and/or relationships among reasons. Language is competent and supports meaning. Errors are rarely distracting.
<b>4</b>	The essay takes a position on the issue in the prompt, shows an understanding of that issue, and is generally focused. The position is supported adequately, and may be an uneven mixture of general and specific reasons. The essay may show some recognition of complexity by responding to some arguments that differ from the writer's position. Some organization is evident in the sequencing and relationships of reasons. Language is adequate. Errors may distract, but do not interfere with meaning.
<b>3</b>	The essay takes a position on the issue in the prompt, shows an understanding of the issue in the prompt, but may not remain focused. The position is supported with reasons that may be limited and/or repetitious. The essay may also mention an argument that opposes the writer's position. Organization may be uneven, but there are clusters of sequenced and related reasons. Language may be limited. Errors may occasionally interfere with meaning.
<b>2</b>	The essay takes a position, but shows little understanding of the issue in the prompt, or takes an unclear position. Support may be so minimal or unclear that organization may not be apparent. Language may be simple. Errors may interfere with meaning.
<b>1</b>	The essay takes no position, or takes a position with no support, showing little or no understanding of the issue in the prompt. There is little or no evidence of an organizational structure, or of sequencing and connecting reasons. Language may be limited and contain errors that detract from meaning.
<b>0</b>	The essay is (A) off-topic, (B) written in a language other than English or illegible, or (C) not found in your answer folder.

Source: <http://www.michigan.gov.mde>



## GRADE 11: Day 6/Document 2



# Social Studies Scoring Guide for the Civic Essay



Points	Description
<b>5</b>	<p><b>The supporting prior knowledge, data, and core democratic value used by students must be explained in enough detail to show a clear connection to the position taken in order to receive credit. In order to receive a 5-point score, the response must:</b></p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1. Give a clearly stated position on the issue and support their position. Do not accept those who do not take a stand, who say someone else (parents, school, or government) should decide.</li> <li>2. Provide at least one supporting point that is based on core democratic values of American constitutional democracy that is explained in enough detail to show a clear connection to the position taken. Do not accept if this support contradicts stated position.</li> <li>3. Provide one (or more) piece(s) of accurate, valid, and relevant supporting social studies information that comes from the student's prior knowledge (information other than that supplied by the Data Section or a Core Democratic Value) that is explained in enough detail to show a clear connection to the position taken. Do not accept feelings or opinions. Support must be factual. Do not accept if this support contradicts stated position.</li> <li>4. Provide one reason that acknowledges an argument from the opposing viewpoint and refutes that argument. Do not accept merely an acknowledgment that opposing viewpoints exist.</li> <li>5. Provide one (or more) piece(s) of accurate, valid, and relevant supporting information from the Data Section that is explained in enough detail to show a clear connection to the position taken. Do not accept if this support contradicts stated position.</li> </ol>
<b>4</b>	<p>In order to receive a 4-point score, the response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give a clearly stated position on the issue with support for their position, and</li> <li>• contain at least 3 of the remaining 4 elements listed above</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<p>In order to receive a 3-point score, the response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give a clearly state and supported position on the issue, and</li> <li>• contain at least 2 of the remaining 4 elements</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<p>In order to receive a 2-point score, the response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give a clearly state and supported position on the issue, and</li> <li>• contain at least 1 of the remaining 4 elements</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<p>In order to receive a 1-point score, the response must</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• give a clearly stated and supported position on the issue</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<p>Response shows no evidence of a clear position or the position is not supported in any way</p>

Source: <http://www.michigan.gov.mde>



## MME Civic Essay: Combination of the Requirements for Top Scores on Both Rubrics

<p><b><u>Clearly state your opinion</u></b> Give a <b>clearly stated and supported position</b> on the issue. The essay takes a position on the issue in the prompt, shows clear understanding of that issue, and maintains focus across the response. The response may demonstrate insight and complexity by evaluating various implications of the position and/or by responding to arguments that differ from the writer’s position.</p>	<p><b><u>Support your opinion with examples</u></b> Provide one (or more) piece(s) of accurate, valid, and relevant <b>supporting information from the Data Section</b>. Provide one (or more) statement(s) of accurate, relevant, and important <b>supporting knowledge from history, geography, civics, or economics</b> that come(s) from the student’s prior knowledge (information other than that supplied by the Data Section or a core democratic value of American constitutional democracy). Provide at least one supporting point that is based on the <b>core democratic values of American constitutional democracy</b>. The position is supported thoroughly and consistently with specific, logical reasons and/or examples.</p>	<p><b><u>Give an opinion opposite to yours and refute it</u></b> Provide one reason that <b>acknowledges an opposing viewpoint</b> and refutes that position on the issue. The response may demonstrate insight and complexity by evaluating various implications of the position and/or by responding to arguments that differ from the writer’s position.</p>	<p><b><u>Use conventions of Good Writing</u></b> Organization is well controlled, with a logical sequence of reasons as well as strong transitions between, and relationships among, reasons. The essay shows a good command of varied, precise language that supports meaning. Few, if any, errors distract the reader.</p>
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## GRADE 11: Day 6/Document 4



### Sample Civic Essays



#### Student Sample A

Dear Person of Congress,

I heard there was an ongoing debate about whether or not the constitution should be written without gender identification. Well the truth of the matter is yes, it should.

Women and men are supposed to be treated as equals in the United States, right? Then why not start with what actually makes up the U.S. A. People (men mostly) say that they are treating women as equals, then why not do the constitution so it is also equal. There's that good ol' core democratic value equality working for you.

It's not as if the constitution couldn't be rewrote. Arizona rewrote the constitution in 1992 so if Michigan wanted to, then they could also rewrite it. Also, Florida rewrote the constitution in 1998, which also means it was only re-written about 6 years ago. So with better technology today, it would go by a lot faster.

Please take into consideration about changing the gender identifying constitution we go bye today.

Sincerely,

Student signature

Source: <http://www.michigan.gov.mde>

## Student Sample B

To Whom it May Concern:

I believe that the constitution should be rewritten without gender identification. There are many fundamental beliefs that support this and a couple of constitutional principles that will support this as well.

The fundamental beliefs that will support this idea are The pursuit of Happiness and Equality. The pursuit of happiness, will support this because with gender identification many people will not pursue their dreams, mainly being women because they think that certain jobs are unwanted even though they are capable of doing them as well. Equality is self explanatory. All people are supposed to be treated equal but that's not always true because the law specifies what they can and can't do because of their sex.

The constitutional right that supports this is Individual Rights. With gender identifications in place in the Constitution the right to be treated equal cannot and does not always happen. An example is like when the president is always stated as he and not as just the president. Women will think that is something that they can never be. Even though I am a man, I still believe that is isn't fair.

In conclusion, I feel that the constitution should be rewritten to include gender identifications for the country to be equal and I believe gender should be specified.

## Student Sample C

Dear Congressional representative,

I think the Constitution should be rewritten to remove gender identifying language. I feel like if all the other states like Maryland, Alabama, Alaska, and Michigan. If those states can do they can do. I feel women deserve rights like men. I have a mother, sister, and a neice and I want them to feel just as secure as I do. They should change it for the sake of America.

Source: <http://www.michigan.gov.mde>

## GRADE 11: Day 7/Document 1

### MME Civic Essay Prompt



#### Task II: Taking a Stand

You will now take a stand on a the following public policy issue: Should the United States Congress propose an amendment allowing the United States Constitution to be rewritten without gender identification? You may either support or oppose allowing the Constitution to be rewritten with updated language. Write a letter to your congressional representative.

You will be graded on the following criteria. Your letter must include:

- a clear and supported statement of your position;
- supporting information using a core democratic value of American constitutional democracy;
- supporting knowledge from history, geography, civics (other than the core democratic values), or economics (it is not enough to state only your opinion); and
- supporting information from the Data Section.

Remember to: Use complete sentences.

Explain your reasons in detail.

Explain how the core democratic value you use connects to your position.

Write or print neatly on the lines provided in your Answer Folder. No additional sheets may be used.

#### Data Section, Part A

**Some State Constitutions with and without gender identification**

State	Year of Last Rewrite or Revision	Gender Identification
Maryland	1867	with
Alabama	1901	with
Alaska	1956	with
Michigan	1963	with
Arizona	1992	without
Georgia	1982	without
Florida	1998	without

Current Language from the United States Constitution:

Section 1. The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. He shall hold his office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected, as follows...

Possible change in Language of the United States Constitution to exclude gender:

Section 1. The executive power shall be vested in a President of the United States of America. The President shall hold office during the term of four years, and, together with the Vice President, chosen for the same term, be elected, as follows...

Source: <http://www.michigan.gov.mde>

Part B

Changes in Some Job Titles to Exclude Gender Identification	
Old Title	New Title
Fireman	Fire Fighter
Fisherman	Fisher
Mailman	Mail Carrier
Policeman	Police Officer

Source for Data: *Dictionary of Occupational Titles*

Source: Michigan Department of Education. "Social Studies Grade 9 Scoring Guide for Released Item 22 Updating the United States Constitution." Fall 2005.

### Some Core Democratic Values of American Constitutional Democracy

Core democratic values are the fundamental beliefs and constitutional principles of American society. These values unite all Americans. They are expressed in the Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, and other significant documents, speeches, and writings of the nation. Below is a list of some core democratic values. You may use any core democratic value to support your position, including those not on this list. Be sure to explain how the value you choose supports the position you take.

#### Fundamental Beliefs

Life  
Liberty  
The Pursuit of Happiness  
Public of Common Good  
Justice  
Equality  
Diversity  
Truth  
Popular Sovereignty  
Patriotism

#### Constitutional Principles

The Rule of Law  
Separation of Powers  
Representative Government  
Checks and Balances  
Individual Rights  
Freedom of Religion  
Federalism  
Civilian Control of the Military

GRADE 11: Day 7/Document 2

**Prompt Analysis Worksheet**



<b>Write your prompt here:</b>		
<b>Topic:</b>	<b>Purpose:</b>	<b>Audience:</b>
<b>Your position on the topic:</b>		
<b>Reasons to support your position</b>	<b>Examples/evidence</b>	<b>Warrant (Explain how do the reasons and examples support your position)</b>
1.		
2.		
3.		
<b>Counterarguments</b>		<b>Rebuttals to counterarguments</b>

## Civic Essay Worksheet

Additional notes for the MME Social Studies exam only. (Use in addition to the Prompt Analysis Worksheet)	
core democratic value	
supporting knowledge from your previous years studying history, geography, civics, or economics	
supporting information from the data section of test	





## Overview of MME/ACT Writing Strategies



- Keep the focus on the characteristics of good writing, not on test preparation.
- Learn to recognize the rhetorical skills in writing: strategy, organization, style.
- Take advantage of opportunities to read sample essays and use critical thinking skills to identify the scores of sample essays.
- Learn to analyze writing prompts.
- Allocate your time during a writing exam, so you can follow an abbreviated version of the writing process, including time to prewrite, draft, and edit.
- Use strategies for sharpening your editing skills.
- Remember the elements of a strong argument.
- Understand the rubrics for the writing exams you will be taking.
- Take time to reflect on your development as writers.