



## Georgia Grade 8 Writing Assessment 2012 Writing Topics and Sample Papers

### Persuasive Writing Topic 8115

#### Writing Situation

A family in your town has decided to donate a large amount of money to a person, charity, or cause. Choose a person, a group, or a charity that you think deserves the money.

#### Directions for Writing

Write a letter to convince the family that your choice should receive the money. Include details about how the person, the group, or the charity would use the donation.

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### Expository Writing Topic 8215

#### Writing Situation

A family has decided to donate a large amount of money to your community. The money can be spent for a single project or it can be spent on several projects.

#### Directions for Writing

Think about the ways the money could be used in your community. Write a letter to the family who is donating the money. Explain how the money could be used for one large project or several smaller projects.

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*Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent*  
*"Making Education Work for All Georgians"*

Paper 1

Dear family,

My name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I hear that you are planning on giving the community a large amount of money. I have three good ways you should spend your money. We need help on building a community center, we are having trouble purchasing some trees and plants, and we are taking donation for family fun day. We are in much need of these project being complete but we do not have the financial report. So here are way your money is needed.

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Our community is in much need of a community center. This help our children stay off the street and also have physical activities. Our community center will consist of a library, class room, a computer lab and a <sup>gym</sup> gym and swim area. We will also provide After school and tutoring class for our children. for Adult we will have cooking, computer, and money handling classes. That why were in need of a community center.

We also will like to plant flower and trees to make our community look good. We are in need of flower to for our welcome sign. flower and tree will make our community clean, not only that it will also look good. This project will help the Neighbor hood out a lot.

Every community should have a family fun day. I would not like to ~~see~~ live in a boring neighbor hood with no type of activities.

Paper 1 (page two)

That why I plan family fundage. We just need donation to get started. We will have one every month.

If you agree with my suggestion make sure you write a letter to community leader letting him know your ideas

Community leader

## Annotations for Paper 1

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (there are several projects that could use the funding) is established through relevant supporting ideas (build a community center, plant flowers and trees, and start a family fun day). The writer develops these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “We will also provide After school and tutoring class for our children,” “flower and tree will make our community clean” and “We just need donation to get started”). The writer seldom elaborates further on these details, leaving some reader concerns unanswered (e.g., what kinds of activities will there be at family fun day?). Overall, though, there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

#### Organization Score: 3

The paper has a clear introduction, in which the writer establishes how the money could be spent. In the body of the paper, the writer groups related ideas about building a community center, planting flowers and trees, and starting a family fun day. Ideas within these paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas in the paper (e.g., “We also will” and “not only that”). The conclusion is brief, but it provides some closure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 2

Most of the word choice in the response is simple (e.g., “make our community look good,” “help the neighborhood out a lot,” and “the community is in much need”). Instances of more descriptive word choice (e.g., “physical activities”) are infrequent. The simple word choice leads to an indistinct tone and voice. Audience awareness is limited to the introduction and conclusion. Overall, the writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 2

There are some correct simple sentences, but there are also sentence errors, like run-ons (e.g., “[F]lower and tree will make our community clean, not only that it will also look good”). With respect to usage, there are several incorrect word forms (e.g., “for adult we will have cooking,” “plant flower and trees,” and “That why I plan”). The writer shows greatest control in mechanics; errors in this component are limited mostly to a few misspellings (e.g., “communtty” and “suggetion”) and some erratic capitalization (e.g., “your Ideas”). Given the usage and sentence errors, however, overall control is minimal.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Dear family,

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I understand that you are sending an amount of money to this community. I am very grateful for your kindness. Here are some ideas for what the money should be used for. Well the kids here have wanted a pool for some time now. Some other kids have been wanting a skate park. Some other people wanted a lake or pond to fish and ride boats in. Or maybe we could build more schools because our schools here are full of kids, and some kids are even in trailers. Or maybe get more school supplies like more computers and more gym equipment. Or maybe a Movie Theater because there is a lot much to do around here on weekends. Now that I think about it we could use a mall. There isn't one around here. Maybe we could build a little park for the little kids. Well whatever the money is used for I'm sure it was the right choice.

## Annotations for Paper 2

### Expository Prompt 215

#### **Ideas Score: 2**

The controlling idea (several projects could use the funding) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (build a pool, a skate park, a lake, a new school, a movie theater, etc.). Several of these are simply listed, but a few are developed partially (e.g., people could use the lake for fishing and boat riding, and the current school is overcrowded, causing some classes to be held in trailers). This is an example of a “low 2” in Ideas.

#### **Organization Score: 2**

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. There is an introduction, body, and conclusion. A few of the ideas are sequenced (e.g., “Now that I think about it we could use a mall. → There isn’t one around here”). A few transitions linking ideas (e.g., “Or maybe we could” and “Now that I think about it”). Demonstration of competence, however, is limited by the brevity of the response.

#### **Style Score: 2**

There are examples of effective word choice (e.g., “greatful for your kindness”), but the language is often repetitive (e.g. “Or maybe”). There is little sentence variety; several clauses begin with similar phrases (e.g., “Some other” and “Or maybe”). This repetition limits the writer’s ability to establish a consistent tone and voice. Demonstration of audience awareness is mostly limited to the introduction (“I understand that you are sending an amount of money to this community”).

#### **Conventions Score: 2**

Some sentences are correct, but there are also fragments (e.g., “Or maybe get more school supplies like more computers and more gym equipment”). There are not many errors in usage and mechanics, but not much is attempted; demonstration of competence is limited by the brevity of the response.

### **Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard**

Paper 3

Dear Family,

Thank-you so much for your generous donation! We greatly appreciated it. You may be wondering what we had done with your donation. Well, let me tell you!

When I was younger, maybe eight or nine, I would go to a park, and in the park there are woods. If you followed a trail into the woods, you would soon reach a river. The river was beautiful, it glistened in the sunlight, had smooth marble rocks in it, and fish. It was very peaceful. You would then follow the river down until you arrived at a bridge.

I had spent most of my childhood down at that bridge with my friends. It was magnificent. The bridge was a dark brown, like the bark of an oak tree. It also had soft, golden streaks running through it. The bridge was sturdy, it could hold the weight of at least 70 men, if not more! It overlooked the river, which was a peaceful scene. Many children would come to play here and make memories for when they became older.

Now, the trail leading down to the river is gone. People had carelessly trampled over the trail, making it unnoticeable. The river and woods had garbage in them. The water was murky brown. It no longer had fish living in it. The trash that flowed down the river, piled up at the end of it. It no longer glistened like it had once done.

The bridge was once beautiful. It now was just a pile of logs, barely holding together. The bridge was damp, it was falling apart. There were holes made by termites and people. Part of the bridge was in the water, kicked off by teenagers.

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Paper 3 (page two)

thinking it would be fun. People had carved their names in the bridge. There was graffiti all over it, up to the inch. It was amazing to see all the changes from when I used to play on it, before we fixed it up. Seeing how fragile the bridge looked, it almost made you want to whisper around it, seeing the condition it was in.

With the money you donated, we built a whole new bridge. We bought new wood to replace the termite-eaten, graffitied one. We hired workers to take down the old bridge carefully, not wanting to disrupt the forest. Volunteers cleaned the river and the woods. The trail was remade so that you could actually see it.

The bridge now looks amazing. The river is clear and sparkling, fish are living in it again! The bridge is sturdier and beautiful than ever. The woods have no more trash in them. Children are playing on the bridge again, making memories of it, just like I did.

We couldn't have done this without you. Once again, thank you so much for donating that money. Come and visit soon, so you can see how much you have helped us.

Love,

A Grateful Community.

## Annotations for Paper 3

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 5

This writer takes a somewhat different, yet acceptable, approach. Instead of asking for a donation, he/she reviews how a donation resulted in a successful project. The controlling idea (the money funded a river clean-up) is fully developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (how the river, trail, and bridge once were; how their condition deteriorated; how the donation made restoration possible). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific details (e.g., “The river was beautiful, it glistened in the sunlight, had smooth marble rocks in it, and fish”). The writer often elaborates further on these details, resulting in deeper development (e.g., the account of how the river’s condition worsened and how it improved thanks to the donation). The same kind of specific details and elaboration inform the reader about the trail and bridge’s decline and eventual improvement. Overall, the information in the paper answers several reader concerns about why the money was well-spent on the river clean-up project.

#### Organization Score: 5

The problem-solution organizing strategy is appropriate to the assigned topic and informational purpose. The introduction is brief, but the writer uses it to address the audience and set the stage for the development that follows (“You may be wondering what we have done with your donation. Well, let me tell you”). Related ideas are grouped and logically sequenced throughout the response (original state of the river area → its deterioration → how the money helped finance a clean-up effort). A variety of effective transitions show contrast between different periods in the river’s history (e.g., “The bridge *was once* beautiful” / “It *now* was just a pile of logs”; “playing on the bridge *again*, making memories of it, *just like I did*”). The conclusion provides effective closure by reminding the audience of the donation’s impact. The writer’s command of the components of organization facilitates clear communication in all parts of the response.

#### Style Score: 5

The writer uses a variety of carefully crafted phrases to establish a genuine tone and distinctive voice (e.g., “The bridge was a dark brown, like the bark of an oak tree,” people had carelessly trampled over the trail,” and “seeing how fragile the bridge looked, it almost made you want to whisper around it”). There are a variety of sentence lengths, structures, and beginnings. Throughout the paper, the writer controls language to engage the reader (“Come and visit soon, so you can see how much you have helped us”).

#### Conventions Score: 4

The writer demonstrates consistent control of the elements of Conventions. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are mostly correct, but there are a few run-ons (e.g., “The bridge was sturdy, it could hold the weight of at least 70 men, if not more”). The elements of usage and mechanics are consistently correct, with few errors. Although the writer does not demonstrate extensive variety in each element, what is attempted is consistently correct.

### Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Dear kind family,

I want to thank you for donating money it will be used to fix up our elementary schools.

Our classrooms need whiteboards and maps to help the teachers teach and demonstrate at the same time. The classrooms also need books such as sets of encyclopedias, and dictionaries. Also they need newer, and more diverse teaching, and student books. Computers are also needed in our classrooms. Computers that are new, and improved.

I also thought we could work on our gyms, such as buying balls, jump ropes, and other fun exercising things. Also in our gyms, I thought we could install a boys locker/changing area, and a girls locker/-changing area, some kids, girls especially, change to keep their regular clothes clean. Also the heating, and cooling systems need to be checked regularly every month, just in case.

I also thought we could work on our offices. The offices need newer, and improved computers too. They also need more space so the secretary, and nurse won't be ~~be~~ right one each other twenty-four-seven.

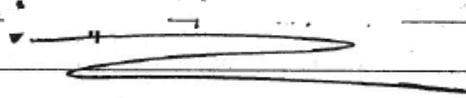
Last but not least, our libraries. They too need new computers to work with. They also need new books for higher grades to read, not just K-3, but 4-7 as well. The books need to be interesting.

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~~that way~~  
And fun, that way maybe then we will have more readers. Our libraries also need to be decorated with some sort of fairy-tale land characters, or story-book characters, just to lighten things up a bit.

I want to thank you for helping me, help our community fix our schools. Now our schools ~~are~~ will be fit for all of our students.

Thanks again,



## Annotations for Paper 4

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (the money will be used to fix up our elementary schools) is clear and developed with relevant supporting ideas (classroom needs, gyms, offices, libraries). The writer provides some examples and details (whiteboards and maps that teachers can use to demonstrate what is being taught, reference books and newer textbooks are needed, as are computers; fun exercising items like balls and jump ropes, lockers and changing areas; the secretary and nurse need newer computers and more space; the library needs computers and more difficult and interesting books, it also needs to be decorated to “lighten things up”) to provide a sense of completeness and address some reader concerns. Ideas are not developed evenly: the classroom and gym, for example, have more details than the office. The writer is generally focused on the assigned topic and the expository purpose of the task.

#### Organization Score: 3

The overall organizational strategy (introduction / supporting reasons / conclusion) is generally appropriate to the writer’s ideas and expository writing. The introduction is a single sentence which simply announces the topic. Within the body of the paper, ideas are generally sequenced in a clear manner (order of importance to the writer), and related ideas about the areas that need improvement are grouped together. The writer uses some transitions (“also,” is overused; “classrooms”→”they,” “girls”→”their,” “such as,” “last”) to link parts of the paper. The brief conclusion provides closure. The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally engaging (“whiteboards,” “demonstrate,” more diverse,” “install,” “systems,” “interesting and fun”) with some lapses into simple and ordinary language (the frequent use of “also,” “need to be,” “that way maybe then”). Language and a concerned tone are generally consistent with the writer’s purpose and the expository purpose. The writer demonstrates awareness of the audience (“I want to thank you”). The writer’s voice is clear (“Our classrooms need,” “other fun exercising things,” “some sort of fairy-tail land..just to lighten things up a bit”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 3

The majority of sentences are correct, but there are some sentence formation errors (the opening sentence is a run on or fused structure, “Computers that are new and improved.” and “Last, but not least, our libraries” are fragments, and the sentence in body paragraph one beginning “Also in our gyms,” is a long comma splice). Subjects and verbs generally agree, although there is repetition, and there are few word form errors (“right on each other twenty-four-seven” has an accepted meaning, but is ungrammatical Spelling, formatting, and punctuation are generally correct, but there are some mechanics errors too (misplaced commas after “such as,” and diverse teaching”). The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 5

Dear, Mr. and Mrs. Garcia

I would like to thank the entire family for donating all this money. There are many ways I would like to use this money, but these are the three main reasons I would like to use the money for. First of all we could use the money to clean the communitie and make schools better, but the most important is to make more schools. These are the main reason why I want to use the money for.

The money could be used to clean up the communitie. For example we could clean the grafity that gang leave behind. Go around the parks and pick up the trash that people forget to throw away, so like that animal's wont be indanger of getting caught in trash. Also we could clean the Public bathrooms because no one likes using dirty bathrooms. Last we could clean the streets and neighborhoods like that kids can play in clean places. This is jus the first way I want to use the money for.

The second way I would like to use the money for is to make schools better. We could do this by getting more supplies that we need. Some supplies are paper, pencils, chalk, books .....ect. Another thing is that we should buy more furniture, because the desks and chairs are falling apart. We already had one injury last month. A kids desk broke, but he got lucky he didnt get hurt that bad. Last thing that we need to do is make the lockers bigger, we need to make

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them bigger, because we barely have enough room to put are book bags, caught's, and text books in there, plus sometime students have to wait in line just to get to their lockers. That's how we could improve the schools.

The last way I want to use the money for is to build more schools. We need more schools because these schools are already crowded. We only got one small middle school and a high school. The teachers have to be taking desk to other rooms because some class rooms have a lot of kids. It's also hard to learn when there is a lot of students in the classroom and they're all making noise. That's why we need more schools.

These are all the reasons I want to use the money for. Whic is cleaning the communitie, making schools better, and building more schools. That's what I want to use the money for and if we succeed are communitie will be the best out of the hole U.S.A. So thank you once again for the donation.

Sincerely,

## Annotations for Paper 5

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (the money will be used to fund several projects) is well developed with relevant supporting ideas (clean up the community, improve existing schools, and build new schools). Supporting ideas (remove graffiti, pick up trash in the parks, clean streets and neighborhoods; buy student supplies and replace broken furniture, get bigger lockers; schools are too few in number and crowded) and elaboration (prevent animals from being injured by trash, kids can play in a clean place; desks and chairs are falling apart—a broken desk has caused an injury already, lockers are too small, students have to wait in line to get to lockers; teachers have to move desks, noise from crowded rooms interfere with learning) that address reader concerns. The writer is consistently focused on the assigned topic, genre, and purpose. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Ideas.

#### Organization Score: 3

The overall organizational strategy (introduction / supporting reasons / conclusion) is generally appropriate to the writer's ideas and expository writing. In the introduction is clear and establishes the topics that will be developed in the body of the paper. (Giving all the writer's ideas in the opening is unnecessary, and often leads to repetition, but it *does* make the writer's intention clear). Within the body of the paper, ideas are generally sequenced in a clear manner, and related ideas about how the money will be used are grouped together. The writer uses some transitions ("first of all," "the most important," "money could be used," "For example," "Also," "This," "second way," "Another thing," "already," "Last," "These are all the reasons," "That's") to link parts of the paper. The conclusion reiterates the supporting ideas. The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 2

Word choice is simple, ordinary ("all this money," "First of all," "so like that," "that bad," "have a lot of kids") and often repetitive ("I would like," "many ways," "first way," "second way," "last way," "I want to use the money for," "we could"). There are, however, instances of more engaging language ("graffiti," "animals want be indanger," "neighborhoods," "dirty bathrooms," "falling apart," "injury," "got lucky") and as a result, the language, tone and voice are uneven. Audience awareness is minimal (plans are communicated to the family, and the writer thanks the family for the money). Sentences are repetitive, but there is some variety in lengths and structures. Overall, the writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 3

A majority of sentences are correct, but there are some sentence formation errors ("Last we could clean the streets and neighborhoods like that kids can play in clean places." "These are the main reason why I want to use the money for." "A kids desk broke, but he got lucky he didn't get hurt that bad."). Subjects and verbs generally agree, but there are some word form errors ("gang," "reason," "indanger," "sometime," "that's" for "that's," "are" for "our"). Spelling and punctuation are generally correct, but there are some errors too ("communitie," "graffity," "cought's," "bearly"). Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

First off all we thank you for all the money you have donated to Elljay. 2nd, her is what are community has voted on to do with your money, The world's biggest fun center ever to be build in a five story building. It will have two roller coasters that go up to the last floor, one ferist while with over 50 sets you can fit up to five people in each one of the seats and five swimming pools with water slides. We will have more big boys rieds but we still have to buy all the baby rieds.

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That is only the firs floor, The 2nd floor has all video games. Ther is going to be over 200 games including an xbox, Xbox 360, ps1, ps2, ps3, and psp. We will also have all the ~~nintendo~~ nentendo games like the gamecube, game boy, game boy color and much much more. all the game sestomes are going to have a lote of game. But if we dont have it and you do than you can brang it and play it.

We will have a movie theater to  
with all the new and the old movies  
of ~~you~~ your choice. The fourth floor  
will be the place where you can  
leave your baby. It is like a day  
care. But only with a shopping center  
of all baby toys and clothing. All  
of it is going to be free. The  
last floor is going to be like  
a hotel where you can only  
stay for only 10 days. For each day  
you stay is 50 dollars with only  
6 people and 2 rooms. Each room has  
five beds, so it's like a house.

So there you have it. That  
is what Elijah voted on and  
I hope you find us ~~the~~ a lot of  
money because the ~~costs~~ cost for  
the world's biggest fun center  
is only 50 billion dollars.

## Annotations for Paper 6

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (the money will be used to build the world's biggest fun center) is developed with relevant supporting ideas (rides, video games, movie theater, day care and shopping center, guest accommodations). The writer provides some examples and details (two five story tall roller coasters, a fifty seat Ferris wheel that seats five people in each, five swimming pools with water slides, baby rides will be bought; over 200 games and systems such as Xbox, PS3, and Nintendo, all the new and old movies of your choice; you can shop for baby toys and clothing cheaply; ten day limits at fifty dollars per day for six people in two rooms) to provide a sense of completeness and address some reader concerns. Some ideas are well developed (rides) while some are partially developed (movie theater), and the games are more listed than elaborated. The writer is generally focused on the assigned topic and the expository purpose. Sufficient control of the components of Ideas is demonstrated.

#### Organization Score: 3

The overall organizational strategy (introduction / supporting ideas / conclusion) is generally appropriate to the writer's ideas and expository writing. The introduction is brief and establishes the topic. Within the body of the paper, ideas are generally sequenced in a clear manner (the writer begins with the contents of the first floor and ends with the fifth), and related ideas about what the fun center offers are grouped together. The writer uses some transitions ("first off," "fun center→It""That," "also," "last," "so there you have it") to link parts of the paper. The conclusion provides closure with the hope that the donation will be "a lote of money."

#### Style Score: 2

Word choice is simple and ordinary ("her is what," "biggest," "more big boy ried's," "a lote of game," "than you can brang it and play it," "so it's like"). Language and tone are uneven: appropriate (the world's biggest fun center ever to be billd," "I hope you sind us a lote of money because the cost for the worlds biggest fun cinter is only 50 billion dollers") in some parts of the response, but flat throughout most of the paper. There is minimal awareness of the audience ("thank you," "than you can," "I hope you sind us"). There is little variation in sentence length and structure. The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Style

#### Conventions Score: 2

Some sentences are correct, but there are also sentence formation errors ("2<sup>nd</sup>, here is what are community has voted on to do with your money, The world's biggest fun cinter ever to be filled in a five story billding." "That is only the firs floor, The 2<sup>nd</sup> floor has all video games." There are fragments beginning "But," and "So"). Some subjects and verbs agree, but there are frequent word form errors ("are," instead of "our," "brang," "chose," "youre," instead of "your," "were," for "where"). There are multiple spelling errors and punctuation errors (The writer usually provides end punctuation, but it is hard to detect at times.). The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 7

Dear Donaters,

Thank you for your large donation to our community. Your gratitude is greatly appreciated. I have thought of two major topics that could take use of the money: schools and the environment.

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As you can see, if you are driving to any certain destination, many trees are being cut down in order to build gas stations or ~~other~~ other buildings on that land. While gas stations and office buildings are necessary for our daily life, we need to understand that plants are more important. The fresh air that we breathe is from the extraordinary plant wildlife, but as we cut down plants, one by one, we are slowly decreasing our supply of ~~oxygen~~ oxygen. Therefore, my suggestion is to use a partial amount of the money for the growth of wildlife in our community. Together, we can collaborate and organize a project to plant trees all around our community, making it a much better place to live.

Another suggestion of mine involves schools. An education is one of the most important things to have. Without an education you cannot be successful in your life and future career. Although the school systems in our community are outstanding, we can always try to make it better. Many schools in our area have advanced enrichment and after-school programs, but other schools,

Paper 7 (page two)

sadly, are unable to afford such a thing. That is why I think some of the donation money should go to schools who can't afford these magnificent programs. This is our chance to enrich childrens' learning abilities and raise them to higher standards. The success of students and their advance <sup>in</sup> education is at our fingertips. This is the time to help these schools bring a wide range of opportunities into the lives of many children.

Thank you again for your consideration and thoughtful donation. I hope you will consider my proposal. Remember, these ideas can brighten our future and the future of others.

Best Regards,

## Annotations for Paper 7

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (there are two projects that would benefit from the funds) is well developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (improve the environment and support after-school programs) and developed with specific details (e.g., “as we cut down plants, one by one, we are slowly decreasing our supply of oxygen”). The writer often elaborates further on these details, resulting in deeper development (e.g., “Together, we can collaborate and organize a project to plant trees all around our community, making it a much better place to live”). Fuller development in the paragraph about after school programs would address more reader concerns (e.g., what kinds of activities do students do during enrichment?). Overall, though, the writer is consistently focused on the expository purpose.

#### Organization Score: 4

The brief introduction is still effective because the writer directly addresses the audience and establishes the discussion points that unfold in the body of the paper. Related ideas about helping the environment and contributing to after-school programs are grouped together. Ideas consistently follow an appropriate, logical sequence (e.g., “Without an education you cannot be successful in your life and future career. → Although the school systems in our community are outstanding, we can always try to make it better”). Transitions between body paragraphs are not especially effective, but transitions within paragraphs are (e.g., “Therefore,” “Although the school systems,” and “That is why”). The conclusion provides effective closure with a point for readers to consider (e.g., “Remember, these ideas can brighten our future and the future of others”). Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 4

Word choice is precise and engaging (e.g., “driving to a certain destination,” “decreasing our supply of oxygen,” and “advanced enrichment programs”). This effective language creates an appropriately positive tone and distinctive voice. Audience awareness is evident throughout the paper (e.g., “As you can see” and “Together, we can collaborate”). Sentences vary in length and structure. Lapses into simple word choice are rare (e.g., “important things” and “such a thing”). Overall, the writer consistently controls language to engage the audience. This is an example of a high “4” in Style

#### Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates a full command of the elements of Conventions. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are clear and correct in a variety of contexts. There are very few usage errors, and the elements of mechanics are consistently correct. Internal punctuation is especially strong; throughout the paper, the writer uses commas correctly to join clauses.

### Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 8

Dear family,

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I have sent you this letter to suggest some of the ideas I have as to how you can donate your money. You can donate it to one charity, or you can donate it to many charities. As long as it is helping the community.

One way you could donate your money is to one charity project. Focus on the quality of one donation, rather than the quantity of multiple donations. You could donate the money to a school, and help get better classrooms and computers. You could even donate it to a hospital, and help them get better equipment (maybe even less-boring magazines in the waiting room).

Another way you could donate your money is to many charity projects. Focus on the quantity of many donations, rather than the quality of one donation. The way you can do that is by splitting up the money so you can give it to multiple charities throughout the community. Give the money to multiple hospitals, churches, animal shelters, etc.

Those were just a few ~~out~~ of my ideas as to how you can help out your community. It doesn't matter where you put ~~the~~ the money, as long as it is being put to good use. You can even come up with a few ideas of your own.

Sincerely,

## **Annotations for Paper 8**

### **Expository Prompt 215**

#### **Ideas Score: 2**

The controlling idea (however the money is spent, make sure the community is served) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (the money could be spent on one large project or on several smaller projects). The writer includes few details to develop these supporting ideas (e.g., “You could donate money to a school, and help get better classrooms and schools,” and “focus on the quantity of many donations, rather than the quality of one donation”). Although the paper has effective focus, there is not enough development to provide a sense of completeness.

#### **Organization Score: 3**

There is a clear compare/contrast organizing strategy. The introduction is clear; it gives the reader a preview of what will be discussed in the body of the paper. The writer groups related ideas about financing one project and funding multiple projects. Ideas within these two body paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas in the response (e.g., “Another way” and “The way you can do that”). The conclusion provides clear closure. This paper is just long enough for the writer to demonstrate sufficient control of the components of Organization.

#### **Style Score: 3**

Word choice is generally effective (“Focus on the quality of one donation, rather than the quantity of multiple donations”). Occasional imperative statements (“Focus on”) and humorous asides (“maybe even less-boring magazines in the waiting room”) establish audience awareness, tone, and voice. There is some variation in sentence length and structure. This paper is just long enough for the writer to demonstrate sufficient control of the components of Style.

#### **Conventions Score: 3**

There are few errors in sentence formation, usage, and mechanics. A longer response could lead to greater demonstration of competence and more varied structures. With a paper of this length (i.e., about one page, with average handwriting size), it is difficult for the writer to demonstrate more than sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

### **Performance Level: Meets the Standard**

Dear, Noble Family of the Community

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As a whole the community would like to thank-you for your huge donation of 10 million dollars\* to help us with some of the projects that we have been working on for the last 8 months. With your great amount of charity and love for your community we have been able to get these several projects done quicker. By you being so generous we have been able to do things that we couldn't have dreamed of doing, because we had such little money and manpower. But with your donation we have been able to hire enough men to be able to get these jobs done faster.

With such a large amount of money we were able to build an outdoor classroom by the creek and schoolhouse, down on old Waterford St. With this new addition to the school the children will be able to learn and get some fresh air at the same time. We were also able to repaint the schoolhouse because it has faded from many years of being there and it had graffiti on it from some of the communities troubled children. Speaking of troubled children we used some of the money you donated and it was funded to help some of the special needs kids around the neighborhood. We also used the money to get new benches for outside the library and

new tables and chairs for inside the Library. Last but not least by using what was left of of the money we built a mommy and me park for the mothers and their little ones to go and have fun. This park is complete with a jungle gym, monkey bars, seesaws, swings, and a 10 seater merry-go-round free of charge to the children of the community.

In your remembrance we have made a plaque and put it in the ground by the park in front of a tree that we also planted in your honor for all of the great things you have done for this community. Thank you once again for every thing you have done.

Sincerely Yours

## Annotations for Paper 9

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (your donation has been used for several projects in our community) is clear and developed with relevant supporting ideas (outdoor classroom, repaint the schoolhouse, help special needs kids in the neighborhood, library improvements, build a “mommy and me park”). The writer provides some examples and details (the children will be able to get fresh air and learn at the same time in the outdoor classroom by the creek; paint had faded over the years and had graffiti on it; new benches outside and tables and chairs inside the library; mothers and their “little ones” can have fun on the jungle gym, monkey bars, and other equipment free of charge) to provide a sense of completeness and address some reader concerns. The writer is generally focused on the assigned topic and genre. The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Ideas.

#### Organization Score: 3

The overall organizational strategy (introduction / supporting reasons / conclusion) is clear and appropriate to expository writing. The introduction establishes the topic and sets the stage for the writer’s explanation of the projects being funded. Within the body of the paper, ideas are generally sequenced in a clear manner. Related ideas about each project are generally grouped together (there are no details to group about the help for special needs children). The writer uses some transitions (“By you being so generous,” “With such a large amount of money,” “With this new addition,” “also,” “Speaking of,” “Last,” “In your remembrance”) to link parts of the paper. The conclusion provides closure. The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 4

Precise and engaging word choice (“huge donation,” “with your great amount of charity and love,” “couldn’t have dreamed of,” “addition,” “graffiti,” “neighborhood,” “mothers and their little ones,” “remembrance,” “plaque,” “in your honor”) create a language and sincere tone that are consistent with the writer’s purpose and expository writing. The writer demonstrates awareness of the audience in all parts of the paper (“thank you,” “with your donation,” “what was left of the money,” “for all of the great things you have done”). The writer’s authoritative voice is clear and consistent. Sentences vary more in structure than in length (“As a whole the community would like to thank-you for your huge donation of 10 million dollars to help us with some of the projects that we have been working on for the last 8 months.” “We were also able to repaint the schoolhouse because it has faded from many years of being there and it had graffiti on it from some of the communities troubled children.” “Thank you once again for every thing you have done”). The writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 4

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct, with appropriate end punctuation. Errors in sentence formation are rare (a fragment beginning “But,”). Usage is consistently correct. Regarding mechanics, there is little internal punctuation, spelling is correct, the paper is formatted correctly, and “Waterford St.” is correctly capitalized, but “Library” is not. The writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 10

Well since a family has decided to donate money I think they should spend it on several projects instead of one. The reason I'm saying this is because if they could help several projects instead of one, more people could benefit from this amount of money. I would want my community to be helped in every way. In my community I would say we needed to have money for more computers, bigger classrooms, better houses, just an over all change should be done. My community in Hampton Georgia is not the best but the changes need to be done. Oh! maybe like the gangs. The people who donated the money should also have put money toward a program for gang members to clean up their act. More programs should also be for people who hang out in the streets. Another program should be for parents and kids, where like if the kid did not feel love & the parents did not know how to give love they could get counseling. There should be a lot of programs so that all that money wouldn't go to waste on just one project. That's what I think.

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## Annotations for Paper 10

### Expository Prompt 215

#### Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (spend the money on several projects) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are vague and general (more people could benefit; it will help the community in many ways). The writer provides limited details to develop these ideas (more computers, bigger classrooms, better houses; fund programs to help gang members “clean up their act and help “people who hang out in the streets”; a counseling program). The writer provides elaboration for one of these ideas (“if the kid did not feel love & the parents did not know how to give love they could bet counseling”). The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Ideas.

#### Organization Score: 2

There is limited evidence of an organizational strategy in this response. The introduction is ineffective: a single sentence announcing the topic. The body of the paper has little evidence of sequencing (“since a family has decided to donate money I think they should spend it on several projects...because...more people could benefit); most of the ideas are listed randomly (“Oh! Maybe like...”). Related ideas (things that money can buy and programs that would help people) are grouped together loosely because there are limited *related ideas*. Transitions are limited (“instead,” “from *this*,” “also,” “another”). The conclusion is abrupt (“That’s what I think.”). Overall, the writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 2

Word choice is simple, ordinary (“Well since a family has decided,” “just an overall change,” “Maybe like,” “a lot of”), and repetitive (“they should,” “they could,” “I would,” “should also”). The ordinary language creates a uneven tone that is flat throughout most of the paper, but is occasionally appropriate and engaging (“benefit from this amount of money,” “clean up their act,” “counseling,” “go to waste”). There is little evidence of audience awareness (“The reason I’m saying this,” “That’s what I think”). The writer’s voice is frequently vague (“Well,” “I would want my community to have,” “In my community I would say we needed to have,” “the changes need to be done”). There is little variety in sentences because there are a limited number of sentences. The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 2

There are few correct sentences in this response; errors include a comma splice (In my community I would say we needed to have money for more computers, bigger classrooms, better houses, *just* an over all change should be done.”), one is a fragment (“Maybe like the gangs.”), and other sentences are awkwardly structured (“Another program should be for parents and kids, where like if the kid did not feel love & the parents did not know how to give love they could get counseling.” “More programs should also be for people who hang out in the streets.”). There are few errors in usage (“needed,” “their,” for “there,” “where like if”). There are some correct commas, but there are also missing commas; few words are misspelled (“benefits”); the first word in each sentence is capitalized, as is “Hampton Georgia”; and paragraphs are not indented. Overall, the writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Conventions. The response falls at the high end of the “2” score point range.

**Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard**

Dear Mr. and Mrs. Johnson,

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Let me begin by telling you how amazingly generous you are! I heard about the large amount of money you will soon be donating to a charity. Since you have not yet made your final decision, I thought you could use a suggestion. I think that the Operation Smile program would be one charity that would greatly appreciate, and make good use of your monetary donation.

Operation Smile is a program that helps deprived kids in other countries fix birth defects on their faces. The ~~families~~ families of these children do not have enough money to pay for the help that their children desperately need. The money you donate will go towards ~~to~~ the operations of these poor kids.

The people who run Operation Smile are very trustworthy, which is another reason why this charity would be an excellent choice. I ensure you that these people are not opportunists, but are genuinely out there to help these kids. Unlike some charities, when you donate your money to Operation Smile, all of it goes to ~~to~~ the unfortunate kids living in ~~poor~~ poverty.

It is likely that before I told you about the good deeds of Operation Smile, you had never heard of this charity. Most people are not aware of the phenomenal things Operation Smile does. This is why you should donate your money to this cause. I completely understand that there are many larger foundations that seem to need more money, but because Operation Smile is smaller and not as well known, it doesn't get as many donations as charities such as homeless shelters or animal shelters. You will be amongst the few who donate money to Operation Smile.

As you can see, you will be making a great choice by donating your money to Operation Smile. I appreciate you taking the time to read my letter and hear my suggestion. Your generosity can make some children  
SMILE!

Sincerely,

## Annotations for Paper 11

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (Operation Smile should receive the money) is sufficiently developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (how Operation Smile helps, how the organization is trustworthy, and how it is not a particularly well known charity). The writer develops these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “Operation Smile is a program that helps deprived kids in other countries fix birth defects on their faces,” “I ensure you that these people are not opportunists, but are genuinely out there to help these kids,” and “Most people are not aware of the phenomenal things Operation Smile does”). There are not many specific details in the response, leaving some reader questions unanswered (e.g., what kids of “phenomenal things” does Operation Smile do?). Overall, though, there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

#### Organization Score: 3

The organizational strategy (introduction / supporting reasons / conclusion) is appropriate to the writer’s ideas and persuasive writing. The introduction clearly indicates which charity should receive the donation, and the conclusion provides closure. Related ideas are grouped together within paragraphs. The writer uses some transitions to link parts of the response (“another reason,” “before I told you about,” “as you can see”). Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 4

The language and tone are consistent with the writer’s purpose of suggesting a charity worthy of a monetary donation. Word choice is precise and engaging (“deprived,” “greatly appreciate,” “ensure,” “poverty,” “phenomenal,” “generosity”). The writer’s sincere voice is consistent and appropriate to the topic and persuasive writing. Sentences vary in length and structure. The writer appeals to the reader in the introduction, body, and conclusion. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 4

The writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Conventions. Simple, complex, and compound sentences are formed correctly with correct end punctuation (“Unlike some charities, when you donate your money to Operation Smile, all of it goes to the unfortunate kids living in poverty.” “I completely understand that there are many larger foundations that seem to need more money, but because Operation Smile is smaller and not as well known, it doesn’t get as many donations as charities such as homeless shelters or animal shelters.”). Except for one spelling error (“despretaly”), usage and mechanics are consistently correct.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 12

My family in town has decided to donate a large amount of money to my cousin when I went to my grand mother's house I seen my whole family I seen my brother He was fixing the truck I went in the house I seen my whole family my grandmother said she have been saving the money into that person grew up so she said that money was for one everybody was happy I was happy. I went to go everything I bought me three pair of shoes and clothes and I bought me a motorcycle the when it was done I had a dollar and I was

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## Annotations for Paper 12

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### **Ideas Score: 1**

The response lacks focus on the assigned topic and purpose. The opening sentence clearly indicates that the writer is aware of the assigned task, but most of the paper consists of a recitation of things the writer bought with money saved by the grandmother and given to the writer. Brevity and the loss of focus demonstrate a lack of control of the components of Ideas

#### **Organization Score: 1**

There is little evidence of an organizing strategy in this response. The opening line is lifted verbatim from the prompt, but do not constitute an introduction since the ensuing sentences are unrelated to that statement. In the brief narrative attempt, there is some chronological order, but overall, there is insufficient writing to determine competence in Organization.

#### **Style Score: 1**

Word choice is inaccurate and imprecise, resulting in language and tone that are flat (“when I went to my grandmother house I seen my whole family I seen my brother,” “said she have been saving the money into that person...”). The writer’s voice is not apparent. Awareness of the audience is not evident. There is no variety in sentence length and structure (run on sentences make up most of the response). Overall, the writer demonstrates a lack of control of the components of Style.

#### **Conventions Score: 1**

There are frequent sentence formation errors in this brief response (end punctuation is often missing). The paper also contains errors in both usage (“I seen my whole family,” “she have been”) and mechanics (lack of internal punctuation, spelling errors). The writer does not demonstrate minimal control of the components of Conventions.

### **Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard**

Dear family,

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Thanks for donating such a large amount of money. I know a perfect place to donate your money. St. Jude's children Hospital has been helping families all over the world. They really need your donation to pay for tests and research, help families who can't pay for themselves, and save children's lives. ~~St. Jude's~~ St. Jude's has been able to help children because of their tests and researches. They have to know what kind of cancer or diseases that child might have. The tests really help the children. It lets the doctors know what to give to the children. Some tests or researches can tell you what it is and the doctors can use your donation to get rid of it. Another way that they can use your donation is for the families.

Some families can't pay for the hospital bills. All they can think about is saving their kid's life. Some parents have to go back all the time. Not everybody has a lot of money, so it worries them. How would you feel if your kid's life was in danger and you couldn't pay for his/her treatment.

St. Jude's is there to save children's lives. No, not all of the children are going to live, but wouldn't you want them to try anyway. The doctors and nurses are there for one thing. To save children's lives who have cancer or any other diseases. Don't you think that all children should get a chance to live life. I personally think so.

I have gave you all of my reasons on why you should

Paper 13 (page two)

donate your money to St. Jude's. To pay for tests and research, to help families in need of help, and help save children's lives. I can't think of any other way to persuade you to donate to them. They really need it, so help St. Jude's children hospital.

Sincerely and always hoping for  
the best,

## Annotations for Paper 13

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (St. Jude’s Children’s Hospital should receive the money) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (e.g., kids can get effective treatment, the hospital makes effective care affordable, and it saves lives). However, the writer develops these supporting ideas with minimal details (e.g., “Some tests or researches can tell you what it is and the doctors can get rid of it”). There are few specific details in the response (e.g., specific examples of treatments or examples of families who would have no way of getting treatment for a child if the hospital did not exist).

#### Organization Score: 3

The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization. The introduction is clear, and the writer groups related ideas about how kids can get effective treatment, the hospital makes effective care affordable, and it saves lives. Ideas within paragraphs do not always build logically on one another, but they do follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link parts of the paper (e.g., “Another way that they can use your donation is for the families”). The conclusion is somewhat repetitive, but it provides clear closure.

#### Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “pay for tests and research,” “know what kind of cancer or diseases that child might have,” and “all children should get a chance at life”). This vocabulary helps create a sincere tone, and it establishes the writer’s voice. There are, however, some lapses into simple language (e.g., “really help the children,” “a lot of money,” and “they really need it”). Audience awareness is clear in most parts of the response (“They really need your donation”). There is some variation in sentence lengths and structures. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 3

Most of the sentences are correct. There are, however, some fragments (e.g., “To pay for tests and research, to help families in need of help, and help save children’s lives”). Usage is generally correct, although there are a few errors (e.g., “I have gave you”). Most elements of mechanics are correct. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions. This is an example of a “high 3” in Conventions. If there were a greater variety of sentences formed correctly, the score could go higher.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

To whom it may concern:

Hello, my name is \_\_\_\_\_ . I am a resident in your town and I would like to address a matter, if able, with you. It has come to my reasoning that you are interested in donating a large amount of money to a charity, person, or cause. I feel that with the many people in need of money, as well as charities and causes, it's hard to be sure, which one would benefit the most from the donation. In the case that in which you weren't sure as to where the donations should go, I did some evaluating of the many people, charities, and causes. The reason of me sending this letter was not to tell you as to where your money has to go, but where it could go and how it would benefit those involved. After much deliberation of many choices, I narrowed down upon two that I felt would benefit alot of people. I then excluded one and came upon my choice. With the many food shortages, starvation, death, education and crime rates as well as waste issues. I felt that with some help and money, the many groups of unemployed and unresidential people would have the opportunities to renew their lives. With your help ~~the~~ money could go towards a housing solution. An apartment building(s) could be rented or bought that would provide not only food, but full in house services, such as a room, cleaning facilities, and a residential lease agreement for the minimum of

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Paper 14 (page two)

one year. Upon the privilege of the lease agreement, residents are required to seek education, and apply at temporary job services if able. Residents will also be provided clothes, and groomed to a professional look upon arrival. The benefiting rate of the whole idea is extravagant and surreal, but think of the possibilities! With less homeless people on the streets death and crimes would start to decrease! As well as jobs that lose business because people avoid areas of high begging. Business would appreciate their business back. Just think of the jobs who need more workers, they would be granted with employees. Also those who might have wanted to go back to school to become somebody, now the confidence and stability is there so they can do it. Families with children would be able to send their children to school and daycare with expenses paid. They all would be so thankful. Then just think at the end of the day they all have you to thank. Wouldn't you love to be apart of that? Even if your money doesn't cover full expenses you'll still have the support, thankfulness, and more donation from others. Thank you for taking the time to read what I was addressing in my letter. Your considerations are greatly appreciated!

Sincerely,

Thanks again

## Annotations for Paper 14

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 4

The writer's controlling idea (the money should be used to help the unemployed and homeless) is well developed and addresses the assigned writing task. Supporting ideas (housing, education, jobs) and elaboration (food, a room, cleaning facilities, one year lease; required to seek education and apply at temporary job services; appropriate clothing provided) are relevant to the topic and the assigned genre. The supporting ideas are developed with specific examples and details (with fewer homeless on the streets, crime and deaths will go down, and "those who might have wanted to go back to school to become somebody, now the confidence and stability is there so they can do it") that address reader concerns. The writer is consistently focused on the assigned topic, genre, and purpose.

#### Organization Score: 3

The organizational strategy (introduction / supporting reasons / conclusion) is appropriate to persuasive writing. Although the writer does not include paragraph breaks, related ideas are grouped together in parts of the paper. In the introduction, the writer explains how he/she selected a charity that should receive the donation. The conclusion provides closure as the writer thanks the reader for considering a donation to the homeless. Some transitions are included to link parts of the response ("After much deliberation," "such as," "As well as jobs," "Also," "Then"). Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 3

The language and tone are generally consistent with the writer's topic and persuasive writing. Word choice is generally engaging, but there are some awkward phrases ("It has come to my reasonings," "The benefiting rate of the whole idea is extravagant and surreal"). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. The writer demonstrates audience awareness by explaining why the charity should receive the donation and thanking the reader in the conclusion. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 3

Sentences are generally correct with correct end punctuation. Usage is generally correct, except for a few awkward word forms and phrases. Mechanics is generally correct, but there are a few spelling errors ("extravagent," "seak," "privalege") and missing internal punctuation. The writer does not include any paragraph breaks. The conventions errors do not interfere with meaning. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 15

Dear Mr. & Mrs. Watson

I have heard that you are thinking of donating a large sum of money to a charity or organization, so I would like to take some time to talk to you about a special foundation that I am involved in called the Make-A-Wish Foundation. They help kids and families that have been hurt by inflation or by any reason that they might need the help. We don't want to make the families feel bad (although unfortunately sometimes it happens.) We just want to help in any way that we possibly can.

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The Make-A-Wish Foundation would use the money responsibly. We help build houses for the families that are financially challenged, and help get supplies like food & water to them. Also a lot of the time we send doctors & nurses to the more less doctors to give medical care to anybody that might need it. For those kids that are headed into school we help them get their school books and any supplies that they might need. We will also help them get through school with our tutoring programs that we offer. For those kids that are getting ready to graduate from high school and head towards college, and for those adults that want to go back to college, we have programs that will help them get their tuition money, by having a variety of fundraisers like car washes and small ~~parties~~ <sup>Carnivals</sup>, even bake sales. The foundation also helps adults that are having trouble getting jobs to get a job. We also work on getting part time jobs for students that are still in high school or college.

I would like to share with you one family's testimony about how the Make-A-Wish Foundation helps them. This testimony is told by Mr. Rob Baker:

Paper 15 (page two)

"One day every thing was going great for my wife and me. My business was booming, until one day it went bankrupt. later we found out that one of my employees was stealing money away from the company every month and falsifying the <sup>monthly</sup> records. After that I had some trouble finding a new job. Then every thing just started going straight downhill. First our cable got cut off, then the water and the phone got cut off at the same time. Next the electric got cut off, and then finally we got evicted. So, we ended up out in the streets until we met a person in the Make-a-wish Foundation. They helped us get back on our feet quickly. They gathered a bunch of volunteers and helped us build a new house, they helped my wife and I to get new jobs. They even got some donations to help us. All of this happened within a year or so ago. Everything is going great again, and we also have a new little son."

Just think about this, one day it might be your family instead of their with no where to go and nothing to do. You would want help from them wouldn't you? The answer is yes. Think of how important these donations are to how they function. If they didn't get any donations the foundation would crumble and then ~~there~~ where would you be? Just ask yourself what would you do then?

Sincerely,

## Annotations for Paper 15

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 5

The writer's controlling idea (the Make-A-Wish Foundation is the best choice) is fully developed with specific examples and details throughout the paper. Supporting ideas (help people build homes, provide doctors at homeless shelters, help students, help people find jobs) are relevant and developed with specific details (get food and water for needy families, the doctors give medical care to anybody the needs it, school kids get help with school books and supplies, the foundation offers tutoring programs to help students get through school, there is tuition assistance programs (and fundraisers) for college bound students and adults, the foundation helps people find jobs). The writer also uses an extended narrative "testimonial" that describes in detail the downward financial spiral that led "Mr. Baker" and his wife to the foundation and how volunteers there help to build a home for the couple. The response contains abundant information that fully addresses reader concerns about the responsible expenditure of donated money. The writer demonstrates full command of the components of Ideas.

#### Organization Score: 4

The overall organizational strategy (Introduction / supporting reasons and an extended narrative / conclusion) is appropriate to the writer's ideas and persuasive writing. The introduction sets the stage for the writer's argument. Ideas are logically sequenced across parts of the paper, and related ideas about how the foundation helps people are grouped together. The writer uses varied transitions ("a special foundation" → "Make a Wish foundation," "They," "although," "Also," "kids" → "them," "even," "I would like to share with you," "One day," "until," "later," "After that") to link parts of the paper. The conclusion ends the paper without repetition.

#### Style Score: 4

The writer's word choice ("special foundation," "inflation," "financially challenged," "medical care," "tuition money," "testamony," "business was booming," "falsifying the monthly records," "function," "the foundation would crumble") is precise and engaging, which creates appropriate language, a consistently concerned tone and distinctive voice. Audience awareness is clear in all parts of the paper ("I would like to take some time to talk to you," "I would like to share with you," "Just think about this"). Sentences vary in length and structure. The writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 4

Simple, complex and compound sentences are consistently correct with correct end punctuation. There are errors (A fragment beginning "So," and a comma splice "Just think about this, one day it might be your family...") The sentence beginning "For those kids that are" on page one is overloaded.). Subjects and verbs agree, and word forms are generally correct with few errors ("familys," "alot," and instances of awkward phrasing such as "or by any reason that they might need the help"). Punctuation, spelling, capitalization and formatting are generally correct, but there are some errors too ("unfortunetly," "possably," "collage," "Carnivals," "High school or Collage"). While there are minor errors in Conventions, they do not interfere with meaning. The writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard



Paper 16 (page two)

people would be happy.

## Annotations for Paper 16

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (three organizations that deserve your money) is minimally developed. The supporting ideas are relevant, but are either undeveloped (UNICEF) or are only partially developed (Relay for Life and the March of Dimes). The details are relevant, but minimal (“find a cure for cancer,” “save premature babies from dying”) or repetitive (“helping save millions,” “find a cure to save those people,” “helping people”). The appeal to emotion is an appropriate strategy in persuasive writing (“Donating to Relay for Life could help find a cure for cancer to save those people. You could be their hero!” “Just think of all the babies you could help live to see the next day.” “People helped might have a chance to live their lives to the fullest.”), but the writer repeats the idea of saving lives. The strategy would be more effective if more details about the charities’ life saving efforts had been provided. There is not enough information to provide a sense of completeness.

#### Organization Score: 3

The organizational strategy (introduction / three supporting ideas / conclusion) is often effective in persuasive writing. This plan has some formulaic characteristics: the supporting ideas are listed in the introduction, the ideas are then repeated in the opening sentences of the paragraphs in the body of the paper, and the conclusion repeats the ideas given in the body of the paper. There are, however, clear characteristics of a higher score point: statements within paragraphs are sequenced (“good cause”-“helping save millions”-“*this*,”-“people...have cancer”-“help find a cure”-“save *those people*,”), related ideas about the different charities are grouped together, and there are transitions linking ideas (“First,” “Then,” “Finally,” “Lastly,” “though,” “Either way,” “They,” “still,” “one of these”), and the conclusion provides closure in the final sentence. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control; the response falls in the low end of the “3” range.

#### Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally engaging (“entirely up to you,” “good cause,” “save millions,” “find a cure,” “hero,” “premature,” “all of the babies you could help live to see the next day,” “mothers who would see their children live and grow,” “a chance to live their lives to the fullest”). This vocabulary engages the audience and establishes the writer’s voice. There are lapses into ordinary, repetitive, and even inappropriate language for the topic (“there is” is used frequently; “I’m not kidding,” and “I’m not exactly sure what they do,” do not enhance the writer’s argument or convey the writer’s interest in the charities selected). Sentences vary in length and structure. The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 3

Sentences (mostly simple, but some complex structures) are generally correct, with very few errors. There is one fragment beginning “All of the mothers.” The first sentence in the last paragraph is incorrectly formed. Usage, particularly subject-verb agreement, is generally correct, although the instances are not extensive. Many elements of mechanics are demonstrated correctly (commas, spelling, capitalization, formatting). Sufficient competence is demonstrated.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 17

Dear Johnson Family,  
allow me to introduce myself. My name is \_\_\_\_\_  
\_\_\_\_\_, a member of the Southeastern Railroad  
Museum in Duluth, G.a. The news has reached  
us that you wish to donate a large sum of money  
to a good cause, and, we think that we could use it.  
Here at the Southeastern Railroad Museum, we have

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many things to improve, but no money to do it with. Much of our rolling stock, or railroad cars and locomotives, sit outside, unprotected against rain, wind, and snow. The majority of the rolling stock is rare and historic, but since they are kept outside, they are rusting horrendously. The money could let us be able to build a shed over the equipment, keeping it safe from "the elements."

Another use of the money would be to expand. Currently, our available space is very small and cluttered. Operable trains can go only one block before they are forced to reverse! Expansion could let rides be longer, and give a better home for our only two operable locomotives. The two locomotives, unfortunately, are regularly shunted out of their shed for long periods of time so other rolling stock can have minor repairs.

This leads us to our next problem. Major repairs are needed on much of our ailing equipment, ~~especial~~ especially our steam locomotives. However, our current budget only allows for minor repairs. The money could let us restore <sup>most</sup> ~~much~~ of the Southeastern Railroad Museum's equipment, including a rare, fireless type steam

Paper 17 (page two)

locomotive, and an equally rare Heisler logging locomotive  
With the amount of money you are offering, we could  
even buy more supplies for our machine shop, needed for  
restoring rolling stocks' wheels. Since people aren't really  
all that familiar with us, donations are rare, and yours would  
be greatly appreciated. Thank you for taking the time to read  
this letter, and we hope we'll be your choice.

Sincerely,

## Annotations for Paper 17

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (the money should be given to the Southwestern Railroad Museum) is well developed with relevant supporting ideas (the fleet of trains could be protected, expanded, and repaired). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific examples and details (e.g., “Much of the rolling stock, or railroad cars and locomotives, sit outside, unprotected against rain, wind, and snow”). The writer often elaborates further on these details (e.g., “The majority of the rolling stock is rare and historic, but since they are kept outside, they are rusting horrendously”). The final body paragraph (repairs) is not as fully developed as the other two body paragraphs, leaving some reader concerns unaddressed (e.g., what kinds of repairs need to be done to the “fireless type steam locomotive”?). Overall, though, the response is consistently focused on the persuasive topic and purpose.

#### Organization Score: 4

The problem/solution organizing strategy is appropriate to the persuasive topic and purpose. The brief introduction is clear. In the body of the paper, the writer groups related ideas about how the fleet of trains could be protected, expanded, and repaired. Ideas within body paragraphs build logically on one another (e.g., “Major repairs are needed on much of our ailing equipment, especially out steam locomotives. → However, our current budget only allows for minor repairs”). Effective transitions link all parts of the paper (e.g., “Currently,” “The two locomotives, unfortunately,” and “This leads us to our next problem”). The conclusion is effective because the writer cites a new but related issue for the audience to consider (“Since people aren’t really all that familiar with us, donations are rare, and yours would be greatly appreciated”). This response is an example of a “high 4” in Organization.

#### Style Score: 5

The writer uses a variety of carefully-crafted phrases and sentences to engage the audience (e.g., “The two locomotives, unfortunately, are regularly shunted out of their shed for long periods of time so other rolling stock can have minor repairs”). The writer frequently uses technical vocabulary (e.g., “rolling stock,” “operable locomotives,” “shunted,” and “Heisler logging locomotive”) to create an authoritative voice. There is an extensive variety of sentence lengths, structures, and beginnings. Overall, the writer demonstrates a full command of the components of Style. It is rare for an eighth grade student to demonstrate such firm control of language.

#### Conventions Score: 5

Sentences—including a variety of coordination and subordination strategies—are consistently clear and correct. The elements of usage and mechanics are correct throughout the paper. The writer demonstrates control and variety in well over 90% of the response.

### Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 18

Multiple Sclerosis: An Illness Without A Cure

A family in our own town needs help! They don't know what charity, cause, or person to donate a large ~~so~~ sum of money to. That is why I am here to help! Multiple Sclerosis, or MS for short, affects thousands of people in the United States alone and no <sup>cure</sup> ~~cause~~ has been found.

First, some background information is needed about this autoimmune disease. Multiple Sclerosis is an illness where the body actually attacks itself! The body is tricked into destroying the myelin, or coating on the nerves, in the brain. This illness causes permanent damage, though in almost all cases it is not fatal. Even if it's not fatal, severe symptoms still occur. Three major symptoms are temporary loss or blur of vision, unsteady walking and dizziness, or even paralysis from the ~~waste~~ waist down. The biggest reason for donation would be at least one person a day is diagnosed with MS and no cause or cure has been found.

Now, why do I want to support this charity? (The MS Society of America) My mother was diagnosed with Multiple Sclerosis eight years ago. She has difficulty walking and becomes dizzy. Even though she takes medicine every day to reduce symptoms, the medicine only prevents exacerbations, or severe breakouts of symptoms. It is difficult to have a mom with MS because she can only do so much walking and <sup>doesn't</sup> ~~doesn't~~ have a tremendous amount of stamina, but she is intelligent and doesn't let her MS become a huge obstacle. My mom tries her hardest to please others and is unselfish, despite her set back. ~~Her~~ Because of her walking she uses a cane, which slightly embarrasses me around my peers, but my friends are nice and don't ask about her too much. Lastly, with my mom's illness, I have a greater responsibility than most eighth graders and more expected from me at home. I try not to get frustrated.

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Paper 18 (page two)

with my mom and love her unconditionally, well most of the time.

The last topic I'll mention is research and treatment. There are two ways to treat Multiple Sclerosis. The first way is by injection. A person gives themselves a shot by ~~the~~ needle. There are also two types of injections. One type ~~actually~~ <sup>actually</sup> fights the illness head-on while the other acts as a decoy to the illness, so it kills the medicine instead of the myelin. The second way to lessen the symptoms is by anabolic steroids, the good kind. Finally, what is being done to raise money for research for Multiple Sclerosis? Many cities have annual walks and other organizations to raise money and support the people. Charities also play a part in raising money.

MS affects thousands of people all over the world and much is being done to find a cause and cure. It is ~~an~~ a very powerful illness and money is always needed. With your kind contribution a cure may be found to help the hundreds of thousands world wide. Thank you for your generosity and support!

## Annotations for Paper 18

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 5

The controlling idea (the money should be used for MS research) is fully developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (what MS is, how it affects the writer's mother, and how it is treated). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific details and extensive elaboration (e.g., "The body is tricked into destroying the myelin, or coating on the nerves, in the brain," "Even though she takes medicine every day to reduce symptoms, the medicine only prevents exacerbations, or severe breakouts of symptoms," and "One type [of treatment] actually fights the illness head-on while the other acts as a decoy to the illness, so it kills the medicine instead of the myelin"). The depth of information the writer includes about MS fully addresses reader concerns and perspectives.

#### Organization Score: 4

The overall organizational strategy (introduction / reasons why the MS Society of America should receive the donation / conclusion) is appropriate to the writer's ideas and persuasive writing. Although the writer could have included more information in the introduction to set the stage for the rest of the response, the opening paragraph clearly introduces the topic of multiple sclerosis. Ideas are grouped logically within paragraphs, and presented in a logical sequence across parts of the paper. Varied transitions link parts of the paper and ideas within paragraphs ("First," "Even if," "The last topic," "Finally," "why do I want to support this charity?"). Transitions in the final body paragraph could have been more varied and sophisticated ("The first way," "The second way"). Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Organization.

#### Style Score: 5

Carefully crafted phrases and sentences create a sustained tone and advance the writer's purpose with respect to convincing the reader to support the multiple sclerosis charity. Varied, precise, and technical language is appropriate to persuasive writing and the writer's choice of charities ("destroying the myelin, or coating on the nerves," "unsteady walking and dizziness, or even paralysis," "exacerbations," "unconditionally," "research and treatment," "lessen the symptoms," "anabolic steroids"). The writer's sincere, authoritative voice is sustained throughout the response. An extensive variety of sentence lengths, structures, and beginnings are included. The writer demonstrates sustained audience awareness by using powerful language to illustrate the importance of the issue to the reader.

#### Conventions Score: 5

The writer uses correct simple, complex, and compound sentences with correct end punctuation. Usage is consistently correct in a variety of contexts. All elements of mechanics are consistently correct (internal punctuation, spelling, paragraph breaks, and capitalization). There are a few spelling errors, but they are medical terms rather than commonly used words ("myalin," "anibolic"). Overall, the writer demonstrates a full command of the components and elements of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Dear Smith family,

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I am writing you from the St. Jude Cancer Foundation. I have been informed that you are going to donate a large amount of money to a charity. I am writing to ask could you please donate that to the St. Jude Cancer Foundation.

There are numerous reasons why we need your help. We have hard working scientist here trying to find a cure for cancer, but we do not have enough money to continue research and studying to find it. We also need money to buy medicines for less fortunate patients who do not have enough to buy themselves. We also need money to buy gifts for the less fortunate children here for Christmas and birthdays. We have young children here fighting for their life, and we need money to help them.

Smith family please help us. We need your help to give these children a chance at life. A chance to be something one

day. we need your help. ~~Please help us.~~  
Please send your money.

Sincerely,

## Annotations for Paper 19

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 2

The writer's controlling idea (St. Jude Cancer Foundation deserves your help) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas (continue research and study to find a cure, buy medicines, buy gifts for Christmas and birthdays are general and have little elaboration (hard working scientists, but not enough money, less fortunate patients need help, children are fighting for their lives). The response lacks sufficient information to provide a sense of completeness.

#### Organization Score: 2

Although the response has a clear introduction, a body with supporting ideas, and an effective conclusion, the writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization: there are few ideas in the paper to sequence or related ideas to group. There are no transitions between paragraphs and those within the body are limited ("also," "cure-it," "children-them").

#### Style Score: 2

Although there are a few engaging words ("continue research," "less fortunate," "fighting for there life") and the writer's tone is sincere, the demonstration of competence in Style is limited by the brevity of the response. There is little variation in sentence length and structure. Word choice is sometimes imprecise or inaccurate (e.g., "numberous"). Overall, the writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Style.

#### Conventions Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Conventions. Simple sentences are formed correctly, but there are not many examples of compound or complex sentences in this brief response. There are errors in usage ("hard working scienceist here tring to find a cure," "young children here fighting for there life") and mechanics, such as spelling errors ("scienceist," "studing," "fournate"). The demonstration of competence in Conventions is also limited by the brevity of the response.

### Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard



Doctors say that if you are cancer-free for five years, you are pretty safe; but cancer can always come back. Cancer can be like a spirit, haunting you for the rest of your life.

There are many types of cancer and anyone can get it. There is breast cancer for some women and there is lung cancer for people who smoke. People need to be aware. If people who smoke knew that they could die from smoking if they get lung cancer, I bet they wouldn't have started in the first place. People also need to be aware, so they can help the cause.

We need to help the American Cancer Society. They have so much work to do and so much to take care of. Walks are not enough to raise all the money they need. If we don't help the cause, cancer will spread around the world and take over. If a vaccine is not found soon, in years to come almost every other person will have or have had some type of cancer. The American Cancer Society can't find a cure if they don't have the money they need to keep persevering to reach the goal of finding a cure.

## Annotations for Paper 20

### Persuasive Prompt 115

#### Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (the American Cancer Society should receive the money) is well developed and addresses the assigned topic, and the persuasive purpose of the task. Supporting ideas (pay for more research and training, general effects of the disease, types of cancer) are relevant to the topic and the persuasive writing. The supporting ideas are developed with specific examples and details (kills hundreds of people, it is painful, treatment is expensive, it may recur; anyone can get cancer, there is breast cancer for some women, lung cancer for people who smoke; walks do not raise enough money to do all the work that is needed; a vaccine is needed to halt the progress of cancer, the American Cancer Society needs money to persevere in finding a cure). The writer provides elaboration (cancer doesn't go away like a cold, but can last for years; if you get rid of it, you probably went through a lot to get there) that address reader concerns.

#### Organization Score: 4

The overall organizational strategy (introduction / supporting points of the argument / closing comments) is appropriate to the writer's ideas and to persuasive writing. The introduction sets the stage for the writer's argument. Ideas are logically sequenced across parts of the paper (the writer moves from the general effects of the disease to specific cancers that may occur, and ends with a plea to support the organization that is involved in funding a search for the cure); related ideas about the disease are grouped together. The writer uses varied transitions ("they," "it," "cancer"- "disease," "anyone"-women, people who smoke," "Another," "but also," "If" ) to link parts of the paper. The conclusion ends the paper without repetition.

#### Style Score: 4

Word choice is consistently engaging, and often precise ("researchers," go away like a cold would," "horrible disease," "not only painful to you, but also to your wallet," "medical treatments," "like a spirit, haunting you for the rest of your life," "vaccine," "persevering to reach the goal of finding a cure"). There are few lapses into ordinary language ("cost a lot," "go through a lot," "bad thing,"). The writer's consistently effective language creates a serious, concerned tone and clear voice that are appropriate to the topic and to persuasive writing. Audience awareness is evident throughout the appeal ("it can last for a long time, or you could even die," "If you get rid of it, you probably had to go through a lot to get there." "The American Cancer Society can't find a cure if they don't have the money they need..."). Sentences vary in length and structure ("People need to be aware." "If a vaccine is not found soon, in years to come almost every other person will have or have had some type of cancer.").

#### Conventions Score: 4

The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Conventions. Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct, with appropriate end punctuation. The fragment in the first paragraph ("Meaning...") is functional. There are other fragments that are incomplete sentences ("Another bad thing about this disease, is that once you finally get rid of it without dying." "If people who smoke knew that they could die from smoking if they get lung cancer.") Usage is correct. The elements of mechanics are consistently correct, with minor errors (misplaced comma after *at least*, an unnecessary semi-colon after *pretty safe*, and some misspelled words such as "socitey," "diease," "hundrands," "persevering"). Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Conventions.

### Performance Level: Meets the Standard

## Score Key – Grade 8 Sample Papers

| Paper # | Ideas | Org. | Style | Conv. | Performance Level          |
|---------|-------|------|-------|-------|----------------------------|
| 1       | 3     | 3    | 2     | 2     | Meets the Standard         |
| 2       | 2     | 2    | 2     | 2     | Does Not Meet the Standard |
| 3       | 5     | 5    | 5     | 4     | Exceeds the Standard       |
| 4       | 3     | 3    | 3     | 3     | Meets the Standard         |
| 5       | 4     | 3    | 2     | 3     | Meets the Standard         |
| 6       | 3     | 3    | 2     | 2     | Meets the Standard         |
| 7       | 4     | 4    | 4     | 5     | Exceeds the Standard       |
| 8       | 2     | 3    | 3     | 3     | Meets the Standard         |
| 9       | 3     | 3    | 4     | 4     | Meets the Standard         |
| 10      | 2     | 2    | 2     | 2     | Does Not Meet the Standard |
| 11      | 3     | 3    | 4     | 4     | Meets the Standard         |
| 12      | 1     | 1    | 1     | 1     | Does Not Meet the Standard |
| 13      | 2     | 3    | 3     | 3     | Meets the Standard         |
| 14      | 4     | 3    | 3     | 3     | Meets the Standard         |
| 15      | 5     | 4    | 4     | 4     | Exceeds the Standard       |
| 16      | 2     | 3    | 3     | 3     | Meets the Standard         |
| 17      | 4     | 4    | 5     | 5     | Exceeds the Standard       |
| 18      | 5     | 4    | 5     | 5     | Exceeds the Standard       |
| 19      | 2     | 2    | 2     | 2     | Does Not Meet the Standard |
| 20      | 4     | 4    | 4     | 4     | Meets the Standard         |