The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

Writing
Item and Scoring Sampler

SUPPLEMENT

2009–2010
Grade 11
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INTRODUCTION

The 2009–2010 Writing Item and Scoring Sampler Supplement displays released items from the 2009 PSSA operational test. The sampler supplement is to be used in conjunction with the previous year’s item sampler. The 2008–2009 Writing Item and Scoring Sampler can be found on the Pennsylvania Department of Education website at http://www.pde.state.pa.us/. Select the “Pre K–12 Schools” tab at the top of the page. Then select “Assessment” in the “Learn About” column to the left. Select “Resource Materials” in the “Learn About” column of the next page, and then scroll down to find the appropriate sampler. Alternately, you may type in or click this link to reach the location of the item samplers:

http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/cwp/view.asp?a=108&Q=73314&a_and_tNav=680&a_and_tNav=

This item and scoring sampler supplement contains 12 writing multiple-choice items and one writing prompt. The multiple-choice items are connected to embedded-error passages. Each item is preceded by the Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content coding. The correct answer is indicated by an asterisk. Each item is followed by a brief analysis or rationale. The table following each multiple-choice item displays the percentages of students who chose each answer option. The correct answer is also shaded in these tables. The table following the writing prompt indicates the students’ performance in composition and conventions control at each score point. Sample student responses for each of the scoring levels are also included for the writing prompt.
When Erin Gruwell first stepped through the doors of Room 203 at Woodrow Wilson High School in Long Beach, California, she had no idea how her experiences there would change the course of her life. Fresh out of college, Erin was eager to make a difference in the lives of her students. Her first day of school, however, presented her with seemingly insurmountable obstacles: her students were considered “unteachable,” “below average,” and “delinquent.” Mrs. Gruwell was determined not to except the labels placed on her students, and she focused on finding ways to reach them. She began by helping her students form a community among themselves. Many of her students were members of rival gangs. Gruwell engaged students in activities to forge common bonds and used books which she bought with money from a second job to help students feel connected to others. The students began to form friendships and work together toward their common goals. Gruwell’s most important project began on the day she distributed brand new notebooks to each member of her class. Students were invited to share their personal stories in the notebooks. Through the telling of these stories, each student began to feel heard, understood, and respected. Eventually, Mrs. Gruwell helped propel the students toward even more success when she published her stories in a book aptly titled *The Freedom Writers Diary.*

B.5

1. Which word is used incorrectly and should be changed?

A  course should be coarse in sentence 1  
B  except should be accept in sentence 4 *  
C  among should be between in sentence 5  
D  personal should be personnel in sentence 10

*Students are asked to look at four words in the passage and choose the one that is used incorrectly in its context. Options A, C, and D present words that are commonly confused in usage but are correctly used in the passage. The correct answer is Option B—the word in the sentence should be “accept.”

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Note: The percentages listed in the table below each item have been rounded.
WRITING

B.5

2. Choose the best place to add this detail.
   Because of this tension, Room 203 often felt more like a boxing ring than a classroom.

   A  after sentence 2
   B  after sentence 4
   C  after sentence 5
   D  after sentence 6  *

A new detail is provided, and students must choose the most logical placement for the detail in the passage. “After sentence 6” (Option D) is the correct answer because the sentence reads, “Many of her students were members of rival gangs,” and the new detail begins with “Because of this tension,”— a direct reference to the content of sentence 6. The remaining answer options do not include any information that could logically be followed by “Because of this tension.”

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B.6

3. Which part of sentence 7 could best be enclosed in parentheses?

   A  Gruwell engaged students (in activities) to forge common bonds and used books which she bought with money from a second job to help students feel connected to others.
   B  Gruwell engaged students in activities to forge common bonds (and used books) which she bought with money from a second job to help students feel connected to others.
   C  Gruwell engaged students in activities to forge common bonds and used books (which she bought with money from a second job) to help students feel connected to others.  *
   D  Gruwell engaged students in activities to forge common bonds and used books which she bought with money from a second job (to help students feel connected to others).

This item asks students to demonstrate an understanding of one function of parentheses, in this case, to enclose non-essential information in a sentence. The word groups enclosed in parentheses in Options A, B, and D are all essential to the meaning of the sentence, so the parentheses should not be used. Only Option C encloses a piece of additional, but non-essential, information in parentheses. The correct answer is C.

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4. Which change corrects the error in sentence 12?

A  Place a comma after success.
B  Place a semicolon after success.
C  Change published to publishes.
D  Change her to their.  *

Students are told there is an error in sentence 12 and are asked to both identify and choose the correction for the error. Options include two possible punctuation errors (comma, semicolon), a possible verb tense error, and a pronoun agreement error. The correct answer is D—“Change her to their”—because the stories Mrs. Gruwell published were not her stories; they were the students’ (“their”) stories.

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The waxwing is a fairly common bird whose range spans southern Canada and the northern United States. Smaller than a robin, the waxwing has a pale yellow belly, distinct black mask, and crested, cinnamon-brown head that make it a striking bird. Its name is derived from red, waxy appendages at the tips of its wings. It is one of the most frugivorous (fruit-eating) birds in North America. While the waxwing is a skilled hunter of insects, its preferred diet is fruit that has a high sugar content. Often traveling in flocks of forty or more birds, waxwings descend rapidly on fruit-bearing trees and bushes, stripping them bare of fruit within minutes. Waxwings make an open cup of a nest and usually lay 4 or 5 light gray eggs. Perhaps the waxwing’s most interesting behavior involves its sharing of food. If berries are at the end of a branch or twig, the birds will line up and pass berries from one beak to the next all the way down the line. An amazing sight to see. Waxwings breed in summer when there is a good supply of fruit and insects to feed their young. The birds are mostly nomadic, flying from one available food source to the next. Found in both rural and urban areas, waxwings most often choose to live in open woodlands, small trees, or garden areas.
B.5

5. In which version of sentence 5 is the modifier, like many songbirds, misplaced?

A  Like many songbirds, the waxwing is a skilled hunter of insects, but its preferred diet is fruit that has a high sugar content.

B  While the waxwing, like many songbirds, is a skilled hunter of insects, its preferred diet is fruit that has a high sugar content.

C  While the waxwing is a skilled hunter of insects, like many songbirds, its preferred diet is fruit that has a high sugar content.

D  While the waxwing is a skilled hunter of insects, its preferred diet is fruit that has a high sugar content, like many songbirds. *

This item focuses on modifier placement. The modifying phrase like many songbirds is correctly placed in 3 of the 4 answer options, and students are asked to identify the sentence in which its placement is incorrect. Options A and B place the phrase on either side of “the waxwing,” which is logical and correct. Option C places the phrase between the clauses to logically connect the two ideas (the waxwing eats insects but prefers fruit). Option D is the correct answer because the phrase’s placement suggests that it is modifying “fruit that has a high sugar content” rather than the waxwing or its diet.

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B.5

6. Choose the best place to add this detail.
Two of its favorite fruits are cherries and mulberries.

A  after sentence 2
B  after sentence 5  *
C  after sentence 8
D  after sentence 9

Students are asked to place a new detail in the passage. Option B is the correct answer because sentence 5 informs the reader of the waxwing’s preference for high-sugar fruit, and the new detail specifies two of those high-sugar fruits. Option A isn’t a logical placement because the preceding sentence is describing the waxwing’s appearance and not its diet. Options C and D address the waxwing’s feeding habits, but again, not specific information about its diet.

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WRITING

B.5

7. Which sentence is off-topic and should be removed?

A  sentence 4  
B  sentence 7  * 
C  sentence 12  
D  sentence 13

This item asks students to identify an off-topic detail in the passage. Option A is on topic because it introduces a major point of the passage—the waxwing’s fondness for fruit. Options C and D are on topic because they support the final point of the passage: waxwings are nomadic and live in open areas. Option B, a description of the bird’s nest, strays from the topic of its paragraph. The other details in this paragraph focus on the waxwing’s feeding habits.

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B.5

8. Which revision makes sentence 10 a complete sentence?

A  An amazing sight for someone to see. 
B  An amazing sight to see this.  
C  It is an amazing sight to see.  * 
D  Is quite an amazing sight to see.

A common sentence fragment error is placed in the passage. Students are offered four versions of the sentence and must identify which is a complete and correct revision. The correct answer is Option C because it is the only one that contains all the necessary elements of a sentence: a subject, a verb, and a complete thought.

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Aerobic exercise promotes good health and a strong body by building cardiovascular strength, toning muscles, increasing endurance, and boosting lung capacity. It helps lower cholesterol, which can cause heart disease. In addition, aerobic exercise relieves stress.

What exactly is an aerobic activity? An activity is considered aerobic if it elevates a person’s heart rate to 60% of its maximum level for fifteen to twenty minutes. To begin an aerobic exercise program, an individual should determine his or her resting heart rate—the rate at which the heart beats when it is not under physical stress. Once the resting heart rate has been determined, you are ready to begin aerobic activity. The heart rate must remain above the resting rate continuously for fifteen minutes in order for the exercise to be beneficial to the heart.

There are many forms of aerobic exercise. Rollerblading, running, walking, swimming, and biking are just a few activities that can be aerobic exercise if they are performed for a minimum of fifteen minutes. Many fitness clubs offer step aerobics and cardio kickboxing as fun ways to exercise the heart too.

B.6

9. Which change corrects the error in pronoun use in sentence 7?

A  Once the resting heart rate has been determined, we are ready to begin aerobic activity.
B  Once the resting heart rate has been determined, one is ready to begin aerobic activity. *
C  Once the resting heart rate has been determined, we are ready to begin aerobic activity.
D  Once the resting heart rate has been determined, I am ready to begin aerobic activity.

Students are asked to identify a shift in point of view. This is an informative passage written in the third person, until sentence 7 introduces “you.” Four suggested corrections to sentence 7 are offered. Options A and D shift to first person plural or first person singular, and Option C retains third person but shifts to plural while the remainder of the passage is third person singular. Only Option B retains both the third-person point of view and the singular state that is consistent with the remainder of the passage. Option B is the correct answer.

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WRITING

B.6

10. Which word is spelled incorrectly?

A  endurance in sentence 1
B  capacity in sentence 1
C  continuously in sentence 8
D  benificial in sentence 8  *

This spelling item has answer options of grade-level, commonly misspelled words. The correct answer is D, benificial.

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11. Which change corrects an error in apostrophe usage?

A  Remove the apostrophe from the word person’s in sentence 5.
B  Add an apostrophe to the word beats in sentence 6.
C  Remove the apostrophe from the word form’s in sentence 9.  *
D  Add an apostrophe to the word clubs in sentence 11.

Students are asked to identify an apostrophe error. A common apostrophe error is adding an apostrophe to a noun that is not in possessive form. That is the error in this item—“form’s” is simply plural (there is more than one form). Option C is the correct answer. Other options ask students to recognize both when a word is in possessive form (Option A—the heart rate belongs to the person) and when it is not (“beats” is a verb and “clubs” is simply plural).

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B.5

12. Which sentence would best conclude this passage?

A  Gymnastics is another type of activity that is healthy for the body.
B  A balanced diet is just as important as steady, regular exercise.
C  While aerobic exercise is not the only way to stay in shape, it can be an important part of a healthy lifestyle. *
D  In order to continue building physical strength, a person should increase aerobic activity to four or five times a week.

Students are asked to choose the best concluding sentence for the passage. The correct answer is Option C because it brings the reader back to the opening sentence (about how aerobics is a healthy activity) and offers a summary of sorts—“an important part of a healthy lifestyle.” Options A and B are new topics and would not be effective conclusions to this passage. Option D continues the passage with additional supporting information instead of concluding it.

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## PSSA Informational Scoring Guideline

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<th>Content Development</th>
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<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Sharp, distinct controlling point made about a single topic with evident awareness of task and audience.</td>
<td>Substantial, relevant, and illustrative content that demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose. Thorough elaboration with effectively presented information consistently supported with well-chosen details.</td>
<td>Effective organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which develop a controlling idea.</td>
<td>Precise control of language, stylistic techniques, and sentence structures that creates a consistent and effective tone.</td>
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<td>3</td>
<td>Clear controlling point made about a single topic with general awareness of task and audience.</td>
<td>Adequate, specific, and/or illustrative content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose. Sufficient elaboration with clearly presented information supported with well-chosen details.</td>
<td>Organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which develop a controlling idea.</td>
<td>Appropriate control of language, stylistic techniques, and sentence structures that creates a consistent tone.</td>
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<td>Vague evidence of a controlling point made about a single topic with an inconsistent awareness of task and audience.</td>
<td>Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose. Underdeveloped and/or repetitive elaboration with inconsistently supported information.</td>
<td>Inconsistent organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which ineffectively develop a controlling idea.</td>
<td>Limited control of language and sentence structures that creates interference with tone.</td>
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<td>1</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of a controlling point made about a single topic with a minimal awareness of task and audience.</td>
<td>Minimal evidence of content that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the purpose. Superficial, undeveloped writing with little or no support. May be a bare list.</td>
<td>Little or no evidence of organizational strategies and structures, such as logical order and transitions, which inadequately develop a controlling idea.</td>
<td>Minimal control of language and sentence structures that creates an inconsistent tone.</td>
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INFORMATIONAL WRITING PROMPT

You will have approximately 60 minutes to plan, write, and proofread your response to this writing prompt:

Inventions have changed our lives for the better and for the worse. In an essay, discuss one of the most important inventions of your lifetime. Explain the positive and negative effects this invention has had on society.

Plan
Before you write:

- Read the prompt carefully so you understand exactly what you are being asked to do.
- Consider topic, task, and audience.
- Think about what you want to write.
- Use scratch paper to organize your thoughts. Use strategies like mapping or outlining.

Write
As you write:

- Maintain a clear and consistent focus.
- Include specific details; use examples and reasons, and facts to support your ideas.
- Use a variety of well-constructed, complete sentences.
- Use a logical organization with an obvious introduction, body, and conclusion.

Proofread
After you write:

☐ Did you support your ideas with specific details?
☐ Do the point of view and tone remain consistent?
☐ Did you check for capitalization, spelling, sentence structure, punctuation, and usage errors?

Go on to the next page to begin writing your response.
One of the most influential and important inventions of our time is the internet. Most people who have access to a computer use the internet multiple times a day to complete a variety of tasks. One can go online to look up information, listen to music, watch videos, shows, or movies, read books, chat with friends, take a college course, translate words into a different language, etc. The possibilities are endless. Like all inventions, the internet has affected our lives positively and negatively; it has connected society but the internet has also presented more risks and corruption in society.

The internet has significantly contributed to globalization, the spreading of ideas and interdependence throughout the world. Two opposites side of the world, such as the United States and China, can now connect more easily than ever before. One can sit at their computer and watch videos recorded in Brazil, Israel, France, or Japan. People from around the world can share information on blogs or talk and share pictures on community sites such as Facebook or Myspace. Everyone can access different information and learn a lot from cooking websites, "how-to" Youtube videos, sites with historical information, and sites with information on almost every topic possible. The internet can be very useful for research projects and finding out information on virtually anything. The internet has also helped to improve business for many companies and institutions. Businesses can easily advertise everywhere online and provide easy-access information to their customers. Colleges have websites so students can learn about them easily and more students will find out about them. It is clearly evident how much the internet...
AFTER YOU HAVE CHECKED YOUR WORK, CLOSE THIS WRITING BOOKLET SO YOUR TEACHER WILL KNOW YOU ARE FINISHED.
Composition Score 4

The sharp, distinct controlling point that “one of the most influential and important inventions of our time is the internet” is stated immediately in the introduction and carried throughout the paper. The writer goes on to give multiple activities that a person can do via the internet (“. . . look up information, listen to music, . . . take a college course, translate words into a different language, . . .”), showing how pervasive it is in today’s society, and then states it has caused both positive and negative effects.

The writer uses specific, relevant details to support both sides of the issue (“. . . has significantly contributed to globalization,” “One can sit at their computer and watch videos recorded in Brazil, Israel, France, or Japan,” “. . . learn a lot from cooking websites, ‘how-to’ Youtube videos, sites with historical information, . . .,” “. . . dangerous or annoying people have come into contact with people secretly through the use of online dating sites or community sites,” and “There are websites that display instructions and information on how to make or obtain illegal drugs”).

The paper is logically organized with an effective introduction and conclusion. In the introduction, the writer clearly states his/her topic as being the internet and distinctly lays out the rest of the essay as focusing on the positive and negative effects of it. The paper then goes on to address both effects in separate paragraphs, and then concludes by effectively summarizing the writer’s points without restating them. The use of transitions such as, “Like all inventions,” “Although the internet is very resourceful, unfortunately, it has presented many more risks and forms of corruption in society,” and “Also,” easily move the reader through the paper.

The writer demonstrates precise control of language (“multiple times a day,” “variety of tasks,” “possibilities are endless,” “the deterioration of society,”) and sentence structures, creating a consistent and effective tone.

This essay exemplifies a strong and consistent control of composition skills in the informational mode.
Hybrid automobiles are one of the most important inventions of my lifetime. Their benefits far outweigh any drawbacks that they may have, and there are very few to hybrids. I believe that hybrids are the future of the automotive industry, and that everyone alive today is witnessing it.

Hybrid vehicles are defined as automobiles that run on both gasoline and electricity. They operate by charging their batteries from solar cells, plugging into charging stations, or by using the kinetic energy of the vehicle to charge as well. When the electric power of the vehicle is running low, it switches over to using its reserves of gasoline to fuel the combustion engine. This all may seem fairly simple, but it works, and it is helping the world.

The world is a very worried place. We have the spectre of global warming haunting us wherever we go, as well as an unpredictable stock market and the rise and fall of the gas price tide. Hybrids can help to solve all of these problems. Hybrid vehicles help the environment by greatly reducing its emissions, since it only runs on gasoline part of the time. Hybrids will also save you money in the long run, which everyone likes to do. Since hybrids mostly run on electricity, they don’t require nearly as many fill-ups at the pump than conventional automobiles. With this saved money,
people may start feeling a little bit better about the world, and Saving it.

Although hybrids are the wave of the future, they aren’t perfect. Currently, hybrids cost much more than a comparable automobile in its class. This is but a small price to pay in my opinion, since you are almost completely guaranteed to make that difference back in saved gas, not to mention helping the environment. Hybrids also take a great deal of time to make; often with long writing lists to purchase them. I also feel that this is a trivial obstacle on the path to help save the planet. Although hybrids still aren’t perfect, they are a reasonable choice for a vehicle, and should be highly considered.

Hybrid automobiles are important today, because they are an important step in the right direction towards helping to repair the damage done to our environment. They should be given a chance to really make a difference in the world, as I and many others believe they can.
Composition Score 4

The sharp, distinct controlling point that hybrid automobiles “are the future of the automotive industry” is stated immediately in the introduction and carried throughout the paper.

The strength of this paper is the relevance and specificity of the information and the succinctness with which the writer presents his/her information. (“Hybrid vehicles are defined as automobiles that run on both gasoline and electricity. They operate by charging their batteries from solar cells, plugging in to charging stations, or by using the kinetic energy of the vehicle to charge as well,” “We have the spectre of global warming haunting us wherever we go, as well as an unpredictable stock market and the rise and fall of the gas price tide,” and “Hybrid vehicles help the environment by greatly reducing its emissions, since it only runs on gasoline part of the time.”)

The paper is logically organized with an effective introduction and conclusion. In the introduction, the writer states that hybrid vehicles have benefits that outweigh their drawbacks, making the hybrid vehicle the future of the automotive industry. The writer then discusses how the hybrid vehicle works, how the hybrid can help not only the environment but also the economy, and then describes some drawbacks to the hybrid. The conclusion effectively summarizes the writer’s points without restating them. The use of transitions such as “also” and “as well as,” and the transitional sentence, “Although hybrids are the wave of the future, they aren’t perfect,” easily move the reader through the paper.

The writer demonstrates precise control of language (“reserves of gasoline,” “combustion engine,” “worried place,” and “reducing its emissions”) and sentence structures, creating a consistent and effective tone.

This essay exemplifies a strong and consistent control of composition skills in the informational mode.
Throughout the past twenty years many different unique versions of music players and cell phones have been introduced to society. It is now possible to accomplish virtually any task from wherever your location happens to be. This makes life extremely easy for those on the go constantly. While they might not always know where they're going to be, they do know if they have enough bars they can order dinner, plan a meeting, rent a movie, play a game, download music, and check up on their daughter's whereabouts without even moving. These devices do make life exceedingly easy and are a God-send to many business men and women. It can be a burden as well. Few people actually have the time and patience to learn all the complicated functions their brand new phone does. Some struggle with (in comparison) basic things like, inserting phone numbers and speed dial. There is almost no way they can hope to figure out more complicated procedures. So while these are for the most part wonderful tools that if used to their full potential can make life enormously easier they're not always the best solution, especially for some one who still refers back to hand
Composition Score 3

The writer’s clear controlling point is that the new versions of music players and cell phones make life easier for people on the go, but they also can be a burden for people learning how to use all the complicated functions.

The writer uses adequate, but somewhat general, content to discuss these points:
“While they might not always know where they’re going to be, they do know; if they have enough bars they can order dinner, plan a meeting, rent a movie, play a game download music, and check up on thier daughter’s whereabouts without even moving,” and “Few people actually have the time and patience to learn all the complicated functions their brand new phone does.”

The essay includes an introduction and conclusion. Although written as one long paragraph, the content is organized in logical order, first discussing the advantages of the new music players and cell phones, and then discussing the burdens of learning all the functions of these items.

The writer demonstrates appropriate control of language with the use of such descriptive comments as “have enough bars,” “check up on thier daughter’s whereabouts,” and “some one who still refers back to hand written address books for phone numbers,” as well as sentence structures that create a consistent tone.

This essay exemplifies adequate control of composition skills in the informational mode.
The cell phone, a device that connects everyone to each other, a gadget that acts as a lifeline in emergencies, and an invention that everyone has a use for. But it also has its negatives such as Car accidents and distracting students in school.

The cell phone has had countless positive effects on society. Cell phones make it possible for family members that have moved away to keep in contact with each other. This invention has also saved thousands of lives, by calling for help if people are in harmful situations, and maybe the best thing about this invention is that everyone can use cell phones, no matter what their age is.

Although I've made the cell phone sound like a brick of gold, it still has its negatives. A large amount of car accidents have been caused by cell phone usage, and the distraction that the phone causes the driver: it also causes a distraction for kids in school.

The cell phone, people marvel at all of the great things it's done for society. But few realize the damage it can really do.

If you need additional space, please continue on the next page.
Composition Score 2

There is vague awareness of a controlling point. The writer states three advantages and two disadvantages to the cell phone in the introduction.

The content is inadequately elaborated and listy. All three advantages stated in the introduction (“connects everyone to each other,” “lifeline in emergency’s,” and “everyone has a use for”) are again stated with more specificity in one full sentence each in the second paragraph. The two negative results of using a cell phone (“car accidents” and “a distraction for kids in school”) are discussed in the third paragraph, again in one sentence each. There are many missed opportunities for elaboration, and the lack of facts and examples results in an extended list.

The writer demonstrates an attempt to organize his/her ideas with an introduction, conclusion, and mention in the body of the same points as stated in the introduction. However, due to the lack of elaboration, there is little to organize in the body of the paper. Simple transitions such as “also” and “although” are used.

The writer demonstrates a limited control of language and sentence structures with the use of simple verbs, ordinary vocabulary, and lack of variety of sentence structures, which results in interference with tone.

This essay exemplifies limited control of composition skills in the informational mode.
The most important invention of my life is the electric wheelchair. I chose this invention to write about because it has given greater mobility to the elderly and disabled. It has allowed the disabled to get around their homes and make frequent trips outside.

Composition Score 1

This very short paper has a one-sentence introduction stating the writer’s point that the electric wheelchair is the most important invention of his/her life. There is minimal content with one slightly elaborated point that the invention gives “greater mobility to the elderly and disabled,” so they are able “to get around their homes and make frequent trips outside.” There is no conclusion nor any organization demonstrated, since there is so little content to organize. The writer demonstrates minimal control of language and sentence structures, which results in an inconsistent tone.

This essay exemplifies little or no control of composition skills in the informational mode.

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PSSA CONVENTIONS SCORING GUIDELINE

4
Thorough control of sentence formation.
Few errors, if any, are present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, but the errors that are present do not interfere with meaning.

3
Adequate control of sentence formation.
Some errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, but few, if any, of the errors that are present may interfere with meaning.

2
Limited and/or inconsistent control of sentence formation. Some sentences may be awkward or fragmented.
Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, and some of those errors may interfere with meaning.

1
Minimal control of sentence formation. Many sentences are awkward and fragmented.
Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, and many of those errors may interfere with meaning.
All inventions have had both positive and negative effects on society and our lives. At times, new inventions can make life easier and more convenient. However, this isn't always a good thing. One invention that has changed lives both for better and for worse is the internet. The world wide web has provided many people with convenient and fast forms of research, communication, and entertainment. The internet is in fact so convenient at times that as a negative effect, it has made important skills, such as finding information in books, obsolete. The internet has had a positive effect on society by making it easier to research and communicate and has a negative effect on society by taking away necessary life skills.

One of the greatest resources the internet has provided us with would be an easy and convenient form of research. With the help of the internet, a research project that could have taken hours in a library takes only minutes. You simply type whatever it is you need to know in a search engine and thousands of websites show up containing just the information you are looking for. This, overall, has a positive effect on society because it gives people an easy and convenient way to obtain information quickly.

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If you are sick and want to look up what the symptoms of influenza are, you don’t have to leave your house, drive to the library, find a book on the subject, and read it. The internet provides such information almost instantly, making lives much more convenient. Another resource that the internet provides for society is communication. With the technology today, it is possible to communicate with someone on the exact opposite side of the world instantly. Email and instant messaging through the internet eliminate the time it takes to send mail. For many people, this quick and easy communication helps accomplish tasks in much less time. Easy communication is definitely a positive effect on society. People can get in touch with each other whenever they want to, and communication is fast, simple, and easy.

Although the internet has provided many different resources that not only make our lives more convenient, but less time consuming, there are also negative effects that have resulted in this invention as well. It is true that the internet has made researching much easier and more convenient. However, it has also somewhat eliminated the necessity of research skills developed by finding books and reading them to find information. From experience,
I know that many times students don’t even want to bother looking up information in books in the library anymore. They go strait to the internet and grab all of their information from there. Although the internet is quick and easy, being able to find information elsewhere is an important lifeskill. In some situations in life, we are not going to be able to use the internet to give us all the answers. Therefore, we are going to need to know other ways of getting that information. If we are used to having everything we need to know, right at our finger tips, we are not going to know how to use other sources to get information. This negatively affects our society because when the students who are used to getting their information conveniently from the internet, go to college or get older, they will not have developed the skills to get information any other way.

Inventions have changed people’s lives for the better and for the worse. There has not been one invention that did not have negative effects to go along with the positive ones. One of these inventions being the internet. The internet has had positive effects on society, such as providing fast and convenient research and communication, but it also has negative effects such as weakening research skills.

AFTER YOU HAVE CHECKED YOUR WORK, CLOSE THIS WRITING BOOKLET SO YOUR TEACHER WILL KNOW YOU ARE FINISHED.
Conventions Score 4

The writer demonstrates strong sentence formation skills using a variety of complex sentences correctly (“Although the internet has provided many different resources that not only make our lives more convenient, but less time consuming, there are also negative effects that have resulted in this invention as well”). The writer also demonstrates good use of series (“. . . you don’t have to leave your house, drive to the library, find a book on the subject and read it”). There is an error in agreement (“If you are sick and wanted to look up . . .”), and there are a few misspellings. There is an occasional missing comma or random capital letter. None of the errors interfere with the meaning.

This essay exemplifies strong and consistent control of conventions for writing.
There have been many important inventions in my lifetime, but feel the most important invention is the mp3 player. This music playing device has been a refuge for many teens seeking shelter from the abusive world they live in. Yet at the same time, the mp3 has also been a hot target for thieves and criminals.

mp3 players have certainly had a positive effect on society. Many teens and children have found their mp3s becoming a safe haven for them when they are sad, lonely, or just down in the dumps. Listening to the music helps them to get their homework done, do their chores, and help keep them from getting urged, which can lead to illegal activities.

But mp3 players have also had a negative effect on society. Many thieves and criminals steal and sell mp3 players on the black market, for a small personnel profit. Many teens are missing out on their education because when in school they stealthily listen to their mp3 player and miss out on the lesson.

Although mp3 players have both positively and negatively affected society, mp3 players have had a greater positive effect on society.

Conventions Score 3

The writer demonstrates adequate rather than strong control of sentence formation, using only a few correct complex sentences. “Personal” is misspelled “personnel,” there is no capital “Y” on “yet” in the introduction, and there are incorrect capital “T”s throughout. There also is the incorrect use of commas (“. . . sell mp3 players on the black market, for a small personnel profit”) and the misuse of “effected” for “affected.” Although there are relatively minor errors in this essay that do not interfere with meaning, the writer has failed to demonstrate and maintain strong and consistent control of language conventions.

This essay exemplifies adequate control of conventions for writing.

If you need additional space, please continue on the next page.
The cell phone, a device that connects everyone to each other, a gadget that acts as a lifeline in emergencies, and an invention that everyone has a use for. But it also has its negatives such as Car accidents and distracting students in school.

The cell phone has had countless positive effects on society. Cell phones make it possible for family members that have moved away to keep in contact with each other. This invention has also saved thousands of lives, by calling for help if people are in harmful situations, and maybe the best thing about this invention is that everyone can use cell phones, no matter what their age is.

Although I've made the cell phone sound like a brick of gold, it still has its negatives. A large amount of car accidents have been caused by cell phone usage, and the distraction that the phone causes the driver: it also causes a distraction for kids in school.

The cell phone, people marvel at all of the great things it's done for society, but few realize the damage it can really do.

If you need additional space, please continue on the next page.
Conventions Score 2

The writer demonstrates limited control of sentence formation, beginning the paper with a sentence fragment (“The cell Phone, a device that connects everyone to each other, a gadget that acts as a lifeline in emergency’s, and an invention that everyone has a use for”). It is questionable whether the writer intended to use the fragment for effect. There are many spelling errors (“emergency’s,” “accidents,” “Possitive,” and “posible”). The writer misuses capital letters throughout, uses some unnecessary commas, and fails to capitalize some words at the beginning of sentences (“this invention has also saved thousands of Lives, . . .”). There is a missing apostrophe in the word “Ive.” Some of these errors may interfere with meaning.

This essay exemplifies limited control of conventions of writing.
A positive effects was when cost of Live was not so hight and you could ford it. Now the cost of Living is so high it is hard to buy food. Now that the cost has went up so this is how inventions has change. From better to worst by the cost of Living changing.

Conventions Score 1

The writer demonstrates minimal control of sentence formation. There are both sentence fragments (“From better to worst By the cost of Living changing”) and a run-on sentence. There are many grammar and usage errors, causing confusion for the reader (“A positive effects was when cost of Live was not so hight and you could ford it”).

This essay exemplifies little or no control of conventions for writing.

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**SUMMATIVE DATA TABLE**

Note: The percentages for student data have been rounded.

### Multiple-Choice Items

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### Writing Prompt

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Writing
Grade 11
Item and Scoring Sampler Supplement