



**English Language Arts
Grade 8
Fall 2005**

**Peer Response to the Student Writing Sample
Released Item # 37
Scoring Guide**



REVISING AND EDITING THE STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE

DIRECTIONS: Read the student writing sample below. Then answer the questions that follow. Choose the *best* answer for each question. You may look back at the student writing sample as often as needed.

- (1) Challenge. Just the word makes my ears prick up like Bambi near a hunter. My heart
(2) beats faster and my adrenaline starts to flow. This is the one word that can make a boring, dull
(3) life into one big old vat of excitement. The dictionary definition of challenge is “a call to prove
(4) one’s courage, skill, etc...” My definition is, “Challenge = An opportunity in disguise.”
(5) According to the dictionary, I’m wrong, but according to my life, I just hit it right on the
(6) button.
- (7) My favorite thing to do is sleep. I also like to play sports, eat and watch t.v. In fact,
(8) I love napping so much that it helped me overcome one of my worst challenges, the dark.
- (9) Kids my age have usually mastered this darkness dilemma, but when I was younger
(10) it scared me to death. My brother, Edwin, loved to torture me with scary stories. My face
(11) would become the color of a snow hare—dead white. When I went to bed at night I would
(12) huddle under the covers with my light on until I fell asleep. My mom would come in and
(13) turn off the light after that. This worked for years, but it was soon to change. So I kept the
(14) light on, and I would stay up later and later. I was more tired in the morning. I was so sleepy
(15) that I could barely keep my head up. Finally, I faced the facts, I had to adjust. So when I
(16) went to bed, I closed my eyes, turned the light off and tried to sleep. I eventually adapted to
(17) this and was over my fear of darkness.

PEER RESPONSE TO THE STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE

DIRECTIONS: Write a response to the question in the box below. You may look back at the student writing sample as often as needed during Part 3B.

37 Does the writer successfully address the question: Do I stay focused on my central idea?

Use details from the student writing sample to support your answer.

Use the checklist on the next page to help you with your response. The Notes/Planning space may be used for writing down and organizing your ideas.

Your response must be written in the lined spaces starting on page 11 of your **Answer Folder**. Only the writing in your **Answer Folder** will be scored. No extra sheets may be used.

You may not use any resource materials (dictionaries, grammar books, spelling books, etc.) for any part of this test.

When you have finished Part 3B, STOP.

**PART 3B: CHECKLIST FOR THE
PEER RESPONSE TO THE STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE**

DIRECTIONS:

Use this checklist to help you with your response. Your response must be written in the lined spaces starting on page 11 of your **Answer Folder**.

CHECKLIST:

- _____ Do I clearly answer the question that was asked?
- _____ Do I support my answer with details from the student writing sample?
- _____ Is my response complete?

NOTES/PLANNING

**Michigan Educational Assessment Program
Writing: Peer Response to the Student Writing Sample
Grades 3-8
Holistic Score Point Descriptions**

Here is an explanation of what readers think about as they score this writing:

- 4** The response clearly and fully addresses the task and demonstrates an understanding of the effective elements of writing that are relevant to the task. Ideas are supported by relevant, specific details from the student writing sample. There may be surface feature errors, but they do not interfere with meaning.
- 3** The response addresses the task and demonstrates some understanding of the effective elements of writing that are relevant to the task. Ideas are somewhat supported with a mix of general and specific relevant details from the student writing sample. There may be surface feature errors, but they do not interfere with meaning.
- 2** The response demonstrates limited ability to address the task and may show limited understanding of the effective elements of writing that are relevant to the task. Ideas may be supported with vague and/or partially relevant details from the student writing sample. There may be surface features that partially interfere with meaning.
- 1** The response demonstrates an attempt to address the task with little, if any, understanding of the effective elements of writing that are relevant to the task. The response may include generalizations about the student writing sample with few, if any, details. There may be surface feature errors that interfere with meaning.

Condition codes for unratable papers (zeroes):

- A – Off topic or insufficient
- B – Written in a language other than English or illegible
- C – Blank or refusal to respond
- D – No connection to the question

Write your final response here. No additional sheets may be used.

The author does stay focused on the central idea throughout the sample. He/she introduces the main idea in the first paragraph and goes into detail about in the second and third.

Anchor Paper 1
Score Point 1

This response attempts to address the task (*The author does stay focused on the central idea throughout the sample*). The writer offers only general statements about the writing sample (*He/she introduces the main idea in the first paragraph and goes into detail about in the second and third*). No specific examples from the text are provided. Little understanding of the relevant writing elements is demonstrated.

Write your final response here. No additional sheets may be used.

I think the Harthor stayed on the topic through the sample. They had a good topic sentence. They stated what they felt like and a word that described their feeling. It was really good when they got off the topic paragraphs. They didn't wander off in the writing and really didn't use fillers. That's what I think of this sample.

Anchor Paper 2
Score Point 1

This response addresses the question of focus in the original writing sample by making a general comment about the sample (*I think the Harthor stayed on the topic through the sample*) and briefly addresses effective elements of the writing (*They had a good topic sentence....They didn't wander off in the writing and really didn't use fillers*). The writer also includes a vague reference to the text (*They stated what they felt like and a word that described their feeling*). This response is too general to demonstrate understanding of the given task.

Write your final response here. No additional sheets may be used.

The author stay's focused on the idea of "Challenge." He talks about the definition & his definition. He also gives an example of one of his' challenges. I think he wrote a good story.

Anchor Paper 3
Score Point 2

This response addresses the given task with a specific statement about the writing sample (*The author stay's focused on the idea of "Challenge"*). However, the writer offers only limited and general commentary on the use of relevant writing techniques (*He talks about the definition & his definition. He also gives an example of one of his challenges*), showing minimal understanding of the task.

Write your final response here. No additional sheets may be used.

I don't think the author focused on his central idea the whole time. For example, he put in extra parts, like the part about the definition of challenge. He didn't need this part at all. Also he didn't need to add the his brother Edwin loved to scare him with scary stories. Also, the line "I also love to play sports, eat, and watch t.v. should be in there at all."

Anchor Paper 4
Score Point 2

The writer presents a limited response to the writing sample (*I don't think the author focused on his central idea the whole time*) and offers specific but limited commentary on the use of relevant writing techniques (*...he put in extra parts, like the part about the definition of challenge. He didn't need this part at all. Also he didn't need to add the his brother Edwin loved to scare him with scary stories. Also the line "I also love to play sports, eat, and watch t.v. should be in there at all*). Because this response never clearly addresses what the central idea of the sample is, it demonstrates only limited understanding of the given task.

Write your final response here. No additional sheets may be used.

Yes, the author the author does stay focused on one central idea. The central idea is challenge, the author says that in the beginning of the piece. Then the author explains what challenge is to him and others. From there the author tells about a challenge that he or she went through. Then the author explains how he or she went through beating that challenge. In conclusion, I believe that the author of this story did stay focused on one central idea for the reasons above.

**Anchor Paper 5
Score Point 3**

This response addresses the task (“...the author does stay focused on one central idea”) and states the author’s central idea (*The central idea is challenge*). As support, the response offers a series of statements that summarize the writing piece and show how the author maintains focus on the central idea of “challenge” (...says that in the beginning of the piece....explains what challenge is to him and others....tells about a challenge that he or she went through). This response demonstrates some understanding of the given task.

Write your final response here. No additional sheets may be used.

Yes, I think the author is successful in staying focused on their central idea. The author starts the passage by explaining what a challenge is, and then describes their challenge. The author gives details about his life, and how he overcame his fear of darkness. Such as, "I love napping so much that it helped me overcome one of my worst fears, the dark." Also, the author explained the ways his brother would torture him and how he would end up getting himself to sleep. An example the author gave was, "When I went to bed at night I would huddle under the covers with my light on until I fell asleep." Another good thing about this passage was how the author explained how he finally adjusted to the darkness.

Anchor Paper 6
Score Point 3

This writer offers a statement in response to the task (*Yes, I think the author is successful in staying focused on their central idea*) and provides some relevant examples of effective writing elements, explaining why the author uses them (*The author gives details about his life and how he overcame his fear of darkness*). The response offers some details, citing specific textual evidence (*Such as, "I love napping so much that it helped me overcome one of my worst fears, the dark"....the author explained how he finally adjusted to the darkness*). The response offers further details from the text that show the author's focus (*...the author explained the ways his brother would torture him, and how he would end up getting himself to sleep. An example the author gave was, "When I went to bed at night I would huddle under the covers with my light on until I fell asleep*). Overall, the writer demonstrates some understanding of the task.

I do not think the author was successful in addressing the question. The author did not stay focused on the central idea. In the first paragraph, the author started out by writing about challenge. In the second paragraph, the author wrote about their hobbies and one of their worst fears, the dark. Then in the third paragraph, the author wrote about how they used to be afraid of the dark but overcame that fear. The author jumped around, not sticking to one topic. The only time the author talked about challenge was in the first paragraph and then the word was never mentioned again throughout the writing. They went from writing about challenges to writing about fear. The author could have written about how one of the challenges in their life was overcoming the fear of the dark. But the author just jumped from one topic to the next, not staying focused on the central idea.

Anchor Paper 7
Score Point 3

This response addresses the task (*The author did not stay focused on the central idea*). The writer demonstrates some understanding of the effective elements of writing by supporting this position with both general (*The author jumped around, not sticking to one topic*) and specific (*...the author started out by writing about challenge. In the second paragraph the author wrote about their hobbies and one of their worst fears, the dark...in the third paragraph, the author wrote about how they used to be afraid of the dark but overcame that fear*) and relevant details from the text. The response concludes with a weak reflection (*The author could have written about how one of the challenges in their life was overcoming the fear of the dark*) that is not sufficiently explained to raise this paper above a score of 3.

I think the writer does stay focused on what their talking about. In the first paragraph they are talking about what a challenge is, and about this kids life. They explain to you what a challenge is and what the kids definition of a challenge is. In the second paragraph their talking their favorite things to do, and that all ties up to what his challenge is... the dark. And then in the last paragraph they talked about his challenge and the way he overcome his challenge. "Challenge. Just the word makes my ears prick up like Bambi near a hunter" so in a way there saying challenge can be scary and there scared of the dark. So I think its really cool they way they tied everything together.

Anchor Paper 8
Score Point 4

A level 4 response clearly and fully addresses the task by providing specific and relevant details from the writing sample and explaining how the author effectively uses various writing elements to maintain focus on a central topic, thereby demonstrating insight into the writer's approach to writing techniques and strategies. This response meets these requirements by commenting on the task (*I think the writer does stay focused on what their talking about*) and by providing specific statements that explain the focus of the writing sample (*...they are talking about what a challenge is, and about this kids life. They explain to you what a challenge is and what the kids definition of a challenge is*). The response demonstrates understanding by describing the author's technique of connecting ideas back to the central theme of "challenge" (*In the second paragraph their talking their favorite things to do, and that all ties up to what his challenge is... the dark*). Further details from the sample are also offered, along with a stronger reflection (*...in the last paragraph they talked about his challenge and the way he overcome his challenge. "Challenge. Just the word makes my ears prick up like Bambi near a hunter" so in a way there saying challenge can be scary and there scared of the dark. So I think its really cool they way they tied everything together*). Overall, this response demonstrates an understanding of the effective elements of writing that are relevant to the task.

No, I think the author does not stay focused on the central idea. They are not successful in addressing the question. I say this because the reading selection is not ordered or organized.

For example in the first Paragraph they talk about challenges and what it means to them. I say they did good and had previous knowledge and all however, the rest of the story does not. The second para. talks about his goals and hobbies, then he talks about his phobia of the dark. He goes into and connects those to paragraphs well, but it has nothing to do with challenge. I say that they forgot to add a conclusion about something to do with getting rid of his phobia was a challenge, or something of that matter.

Anchor Paper 9
Score Point 4

This response clearly and fully addresses the task (*No, I think they author does not stay focused on the central idea*) by discussing the use of relevant writing elements in the student writing sample. The response provides a general statement about a writing element (*I say this because the reading selection is not ordered or organized*) followed by specific examples (*...in the first Paragraph they talk about challenges and what it means to them....The second para. talks about his goals and hobbies, then he talks about his phobia of the dark*). Beyond this understanding, the response offers an overall reflection (*He goes into and connects those to paragraphs well, but it has nothing to do with challenge. I say that they forgot to add a conclusion about something to do with getting rid of his phobia was a challenge, or something of that matter*). This response demonstrates understanding that the author's organization is a problem and also explains what the author could have done to more effectively connect his ideas back to the central topic of *challenge*.

Anchor Paper 10 – Score Point 4

Write your final response here. No additional sheets may be used.

In my opinion, I think that the author was not successful on staying focused on their central idea. For example, in the first paragraph, they rambled on about challenge too much. If they had cut it down, it would be easier to understand what their central idea was. From the way they started their writing, it was confusing to jump from all this discussion, to being afraid of the dark. Another reason why I think the author didn't stay focused on their central idea was because in their 2nd paragraph, all of the sudden they talk about liking to play sports, eat, and watch T.V. This has nothing to do with being afraid of the dark and shouldn't have been written. Therefore, I think that the author was not successful at staying focused on their central idea.

Anchor Paper 10
Score Point 4

The writer fully and clearly demonstrates understanding of the task by commenting on the text (*I think that the author was not successful on staying focused on their central idea*) and supporting this position with details from the writing sample that are both relevant and clearly explained in terms of effective writing techniques (*...they rambled on about challenge too much. If they had cut it down, it would be easier to understand what their central idea was. From the way they started their writing, it was confusing to jump from all this discussion, to being afraid of the dark*). This support shows understanding of the writing strategy employed and also clearly and fully reflects back on the overall task by describing how this writing element impacts the reader. In addition, the writer offers another specific from the text (*...in their 2nd paragraph, all of the sudden they talk about liking to play sports, eat, and watch T. V.*) with explanation (*...has nothing to do with being afraid of the dark and shouldn't have been written*).

