



APPENDIX C

SAMPLE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEMS AND RESPONSES

Communication and Literacy Skills Test
General Curriculum Test

This section of the Faculty Guide includes information related to open-response items for selected tests: sample open-response items, test directions, scoring rubrics, sample responses with assigned scores, and explanations for the score assigned to each sample response. The information is organized as follows.

Communication and Literacy Skills Test: Sample Written Summary Exercise

Directions for the Written Summary Exercise

Sample Written Summary Exercise

Scoring Rubric for Written Summary Exercise

Written Summary Exercise: Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Written Summary Exercise: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Communication and Literacy Skills Test: Sample Written Composition Exercise

Directions for the Written Composition Exercise

Sample Written Composition Exercise

Scoring Rubric for Written Composition Exercise

Written Composition Exercise: Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Written Composition Exercise: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

General Curriculum Test: Sample Open-Response Item Assignments

Directions for the Open-Response Item Assignments

Sample Open Response Item Assignment #1

Scoring Rubric for Subject Tests

Open-Response Item Assignment #1: Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Open-Response Item Assignment #1: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Sample Open Response Item Assignment #2

Scoring Rubric for Subject Tests

Open-Response Item Assignment # 2: Sample Responses for Each Score Point

Open-Response Item Assignment #2: Analyses of Sample Responses for Each Score Point

COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS TEST
SAMPLE ASSIGNMENTS AND RESPONSES

DIRECTIONS FOR THE WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE

This section of the writing subtest presents a passage for you to summarize in your own words. The passage can be found on the next page. Prepare a summary of approximately 150 to 250 words.

Your summary should effectively communicate the main idea and essential points of the passage. You are expected to identify the relevant information and communicate it clearly and concisely in your own words.

Your summary will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **FIDELITY:** The accuracy and clarity with which the response uses your own words to convey and maintain focus on the writer's main ideas.
- **CONCISENESS:** The extent to which the response is of appropriate length, depth, and specificity to convey the writer's main ideas.
- **ORGANIZATION:** The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of ideas.
- **SENTENCE STRUCTURE:** The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.
- **USAGE:** The extent to which the response shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.
- **MECHANICAL CONVENTIONS:** The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the response follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

The final version of your summary should conform to the conventions of edited American English, should be written legibly, and should be your own original work.

SAMPLE WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE

Read the selection below, written in the style of a history textbook.

The Fall of the Soviet Union

In 1989 a series of peaceful revolutions brought Soviet rule in Eastern Europe to an abrupt close. Two years later, the Soviet Union itself ceased to exist. The Cold War was over. For nearly half a century, U.S.-Soviet differences had provided the basic structure of international relations. Given the extraordinary sweep of Soviet and U.S. power during the period, it was not surprising that the conflict's end generated considerable talk about the creation of a new world order. It also prompted much discussion about the causes of the Soviet Union's collapse. How, observers asked, could one of history's most powerful empires have fallen so far, so fast? Why did the Cold War end as it did?

According to one interpretation, these events can best be explained by the inherent inefficiencies built into the Soviet system. The state planning apparatus established by Communist leaders worked well enough during the early period of Soviet rule, when the main task was the construction of a basic industrial infrastructure. But it could not handle the increasingly complex demands of the modern global economy. By the 1980s, if not earlier, the system's defects had become glaringly apparent. In the high-technology world of the information revolution, where successful development required flexible responses to rapidly changing conditions, the system's bureaucratic rigidity ensured that the U.S.S.R. would fall further and further behind its Western competitors. Although Soviet leaders ultimately recognized the need for reform, it was too late. Moreover, they could not have done much even if they

had had more time because of the resistance they faced from entrenched officials opposed to any innovations that might threaten their privileged positions.

A second group of scholars has argued that it was primarily U.S. policies during the 1980s that hastened the Soviet decline. The main figure in this analysis is Ronald Reagan. As president, he substantially increased U.S. defense spending and promoted the creation of new, technologically complex weaponry such as the Star Wars missile defense system. These developments convinced those Soviet leaders who understood how dysfunctional their system had become that the U.S.S.R. could no longer compete with the United States. Forced to make ever-greater concessions to their main adversary, Soviet president Mikhail Gorbachev and his associates accepted the fact that the great socialist experiment had failed and surrendered to the West.

A third interpretation focuses on what might be called the "Gorbachev factor." Analysts who adopt this perspective stress the Soviet president's effort to reduce world tensions in his relations with the United States and other Western powers. They also point to the important consequences of his domestic reforms. *Glasnost* (political openness) initiated a process of democratization that, once begun, could not be contained and quickly spread to Eastern Europe. *Perestroika* (economic restructuring) introduced market-oriented innovations that undermined the power of state bureaucrats and raised expectations

that could not be met within the existing system. Without Gorbachev, this line of argument concludes, we would still be living in a world marked by Cold War tensions and animosities.

Each of these analyses raises important points that will doubtless be included in any final assessment of the collapse of Soviet rule. But they do not go far enough. What is missing from all of them is any

recognition of the role played by the Soviet people in the fall of Communism. The forces that toppled the regime operated as much from the bottom up as they did from the top down. The fact is that we need to know considerably more about Soviet society during the final decades of the U.S.S.R. Until we do, it will be impossible to construct a truly adequate interpretation of this momentous turn of events in world history.

**Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS:
WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE**

Performance Characteristics:

Fidelity	The accuracy and clarity with which the candidate uses his or her own words to convey and maintain focus on the writer's main ideas.
Conciseness	The extent to which the candidate's response is of appropriate length, depth, and specificity.
Organization	The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of the candidate's ideas.
Sentence Structure	The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.
Usage	The extent to which the candidate's writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.
Mechanical Conventions	The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the candidate's writing follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>A well-formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Using his or her own words, the candidate accurately conveys the writer's main ideas and maintains focus and unity. • The candidate's response is concise, but provides enough statements of appropriate depth and specificity to convey the writer's main points. • The response exhibits control and organization. • The candidate uses correct and effective sentence structure. • The candidate's usage and choice of words are careful and precise. • The candidate shows mastery of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).
3	<p>An adequately formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Generally using his or her own words, the candidate accurately conveys most of the writer's main ideas and generally maintains focus and unity. • The candidate's response may be too long or too short, but generally provides enough statements of appropriate depth and specificity to convey most of the writer's main points. • The candidate's organization of ideas may be ambiguous, incomplete, or partially ineffective. • The candidate uses adequate sentence structure, but minor errors may be present. • The candidate's usage and choice of words display minor errors. • The candidate makes some errors in the use of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).
2	<p>A partially formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate conveys only some of the writer's main ideas and/or does not sustain the focus and unity of the discussion. The candidate relies heavily on the writer's words. • The candidate's response is too long or too short and/or includes few statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response. • The candidate may make an effort to organize and sequence ideas, but organization is largely unclear. • Sentence structure is poor, with noticeable and distracting errors. • Imprecision in usage and word choice is distracting. • The candidate makes frequent errors in the use of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).
1	<p>An inadequately formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The writer's main ideas are not identified. • The candidate fails to include statements that would contribute to the effective development of the response. • Any organization that is present fails to present an effective sequence of ideas. • Sentence structure is ineffective, and few sentences are free of errors. • Imprecision in usage and word choice interferes with meaning. • The candidate makes serious and numerous errors in the use of mechanical conventions (i.e., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization).
U	<p>The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.</p>
B	<p>There is no response to the assignment.</p>

WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE: SAMPLE RESPONSES

Sample Score Point 4 Response

The Cold War ended in 1989, ending years of Soviet rule in Eastern Europe. As Soviet - U.S. relations had dominated much of international politics, great debate ensued about what global politics would now look like. Also debated was the cause of the fall of the Soviet Union. Three main theories prevailed.

The first theory posits that bureaucratic inefficiencies built into the structure of the Soviet system prevented it from competing in the global market. With the information revolution, economies needed to be flexible and able to respond rapidly to changing conditions. Soviet leaders did not act in time and faced resistance from leaders afraid of losing power. The second theory posits US policy crafted by Ronald Reagan caused the fall of the Soviet Union. Reagan greatly increased defense spending and developed complex defense systems with which the USSR could not compete. The Soviet Union ultimately had to admit defeat. The third theory posits that Gorbachev's policies were the determining factor. To improve relations with the United States, Gorbachev instituted policies of Glasnost (political openness) and Perestroika (economic restructuring). These reforms undermined Soviet power and were instrumental in ending the Cold War.

Despite the valid points these theories raise they do not address all the important factors. None of them address the role the Soviet people played in ending Communism. Until we know more about Soviet society, we cannot create a theory that accurately accounts for this revolutionary event in global politics.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

The Cold War ended the existence of the Soviet Union and brought discussions about how such a powerful rule could collapse like it did.

One answer is that as the modern global economy grew, the Soviet system was inefficient. The information revolution required "flexible responses to rapidly changing conditions" and the U.S.S.R could not adjust.

A second answer is that the Soviet declined due to U.S policies. President Reagan increased defense spending and promoted technological growth, which convinced U.S.S.R leaders that they couldn't keep up, causing them to surrender.

Another answer is the "Gorbachev factor." Gorbachev, the Soviet president, created reforms such as Glasnost, which initiated democratization that then were brought to Eastern Europe, and Perestroika, which raised expectations economically that could not be met.

These answers all provide insight into the collapse of the U.S.S.R but not enough. They lack the recognition of the role of the Soviet people in the fall of communism. To find the real answer we need to look at the Soviet society during the final decades of the U.S.S.R.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

Centered on the fast collapse of U.S.S.R and the end of the Cold War, the author provided us readers three different interpretations first and then put forward his/her own thinking of the analyses mentioned.

One group of scholars insists that it's its inherent inefficiencies built into the Soviet system, mainly the system's bureaucratic rigidity and resistance from officials with established privileged positions that resulted in the fall of U.S.S.R.

A second group holds the view that U.S.S.R collapsed so fast mainly due to the policies by Regan administration and the concessions of Soviet president Gorbachev.

According to the third interpretation, the quick collapse of U.S.S.R resulted from so-called "Gorbachev factor". Put it another way, it's the Soviet president's effort to minimize U.S-Soviet tensions and his domestic reforms that caused the fast fall of U.S.S.R.

The author thought though each of the three analyses mentioned above raised important points, all of them missed any recognition of the role played by the Soviet people. Until we have a good understanding of U.S.S.R during the final decades, there's no way to interpret adequately the significant turn of events in the world history.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

The fall of the Soviet Union can not be easily describe as an overnight event. It can also not be thought that the outside force caused it collapse. All in all, the cause of the fall of the Soviet rule is its system. The system's bureaucratic rigidity ensured that sooner or later, the society will cease to exist. There are few factors to surport this idea. First, in order to learn the high technology, Soviet leaders will open their door to the western countries. The high technology, the idea of freedom, the idea of equal right also were brought into the countries. According to the communism, everybody has the same food, clothes, no one will be rich. In reality, People are not treated equally, the people who had power were treated differently. People started to get angry with the leaders. They want to change in order to have a better life.

Inside the Soviet Union, the disagreement were more and more serious. Finally the Communist party collapsed in 1991. Although "Gorbachev" wanted to change his country to be a democratic society. But some rulers just wanted be where they were. They didn't want to change because they didn't want to loose their power, their privilleges, The Communist leaders were no more followers of Communism.

When People don't do what believe in, their believe cannot exist anymore. It is only an ideal theory in the end.

WRITTEN SUMMARY EXERCISE: The Fall of the Soviet Union

ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis for each sample response. For example, for each of the sample responses, the corresponding analysis will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "organization" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, if organization is unclear, then fidelity will be affected, because the relationship among ideas will be clouded. If sentence structure is confusing or ambiguous, that will also affect fidelity and focus. If usage is marked by errors so that meaning is lost or altered, then organization and fidelity will suffer. Even errors in spelling and punctuation can accumulate to such an extent as to undermine sentence structure, focus, and accuracy.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Fidelity: The response clearly and accurately conveys all the passage's main points without relying on its language or phrasing. The response is well focused and unified. It does not introduce extraneous commentary or information.

Conciseness: The response is concise. The paragraph summarizing the three analyses presents a great deal of information efficiently.

Organization: The writing is well organized. Paragraph 1 establishes subject and context, paragraph 2 present arguments, and paragraph 3 summarizes the writer's comments and conclusion.

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is varied and effective. Complex sentences alternate with simple ones, which provides rhythmic force and clarity. The parallel structure of the arguments ("The first theory...The second theory...The third theory...") makes dense information easy to read and understand.

Usage: Usage and word choice are precise and interesting. "Ensued," "posits," and "instrumental" are examples of well-chosen words that contribute to the response's conciseness and accuracy.

Mechanical Conventions: The response is free of mechanical errors and demonstrates mastery of conventions.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Fidelity: The response presents most of the writer's main points accurately and clearly, but in rather general terms that lose some concreteness. The opening statement contains an infidelity: the article does not say that the Cold War ended the Soviet Union, unless one presumes that all the factors cited next are somehow aspects of the Cold War.

Conciseness: The response is concise, but lacks some specificity. For instance, in paragraph 2, the nature of the inefficiency or of the "rapidly changing conditions" is not given, leaving the reader with only a general understanding of the Soviet Union's inefficiencies. In paragraph 4, it is not quite clear how glasnost and perestroika represented adaptations to Western norms.

Organization: The sequence of ideas is adequate. Some of the paragraphs are choppy and short.

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is adequate, though not sophisticated.

Usage: Word usage is largely adequate. "Like it did" should be "as it did." There is an instance of subject-verb disagreement in "Glasnost, which...then were brought..." "They lack the recognition of the role" is awkward.

Mechanical Conventions: Mechanics are adequate. "Existance" is misspelled.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Fidelity: Some of the writer's main points are present, but some are absent. Although the three interpretations are cited, there is an insufficient account of how they attempt to explain the fall of the Soviet Union. Reagan's policies are cited in the third paragraph, again, without an explanation of why they are relevant to the question of the Soviet Union's fall. The paragraph on the "Gorbachev factor" neither names nor describes glasnost or perestroika. The response also relies heavily on the language of the original article ("inherent inefficiencies built into the Soviet system," "bureaucratic rigidity," "any recognition of the role played by the Soviet people," etc.).

Conciseness: Conciseness requires that the response be of appropriate length, depth, and specificity to stand as a summary of the main ideas. In this response, conciseness comes at the expense of content (as explained above).

Organization: Organization follows that of the article, but is undermined by the missing information, which in turn undermines the logical sequence of ideas. Without knowing the specifics of the interpretations put forth, the reader is unable to see how the ideas follow from each other or how the interpretations could be missing a "recognition of the role played by the Soviet people."

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is sometimes awkward: "...then put forward his/her own thinking of the analyses mentioned." The opening sentence contains a misplaced modifier: the article, not the author, is "centered on the fast collapse of U.S.S.R."

Usage: Usage is imprecise and sometimes incorrect: "Provided us readers," "Put it another way, it's the Soviet presedent's effort," "it's its inherent inefficiencies."

Mechanical Conventions: There are some errors in mechanics. "Regan" and "presedent's" are misspelled. The use of "so-called 'Gorbachev factor'" is redundant: the term "so-called" performs the same function as the quotation marks.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Fidelity: The writer's main ideas are not identified; the response seems to offer an original interpretation of the fall of the U.S.S.R., which coincidentally has a few points in common with those mentioned in the article. The response does not function as a summary. In places it contradicts the article: it says the Soviet leaders "will open their door to the western countries" for their technology, where the article cites U.S.S.R.'s inability to do this as a reason for its collapse.

Conciseness: The response is not concise, as its statements do not serve the function of summarizing the content of the article. The three arguments cited by the article are not identified, nor is the article's final critical point represented.

Organization: The organization of ideas is unclear. The first paragraph seems to convey the writer's understanding of why the U.S.S.R. fell, but the second paragraph introduces a new idea about the loss of ideological purity by Communist leaders, and the conclusion is that this loss of ideals was fatal.

Sentence Structure: Sentence structure is awkward: "It can also not be thought that the outside force caused it collapse."

Usage: Usage is flawed. Tenses shift back and forth from past to present; subjects and verbs do not agree ("the idea...were brought"). Words are misused: "loose their power," "their believe cannot exist anymore."

Mechanical Conventions: There are frequent and numerous mechanical errors. Gorbachev's name is in quotes for no reason. "Privileges" is misspelled, as are "burocratic," "surport," and "angery."

DIRECTIONS FOR THE WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE

This section of the writing subtest consists of one writing assignment. The assignment can be found on the next page. You are asked to prepare a multiple-paragraph composition of approximately 300 to 600 words on an assigned topic.

Your composition should effectively communicate a whole message to the specified audience for the stated purpose. You will be assessed on your ability to express, organize, and support opinions and ideas. You will not be assessed on the position you express.

Your composition will be evaluated based on the following criteria:

- **APPROPRIATENESS:** The extent to which the response addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.
- **MECHANICAL CONVENTIONS:** The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the response follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.
- **USAGE:** The extent to which the writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.
- **SENTENCE STRUCTURE:** The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.
- **FOCUS AND UNITY:** The clarity with which the response states and maintains focus on the main idea or point of view.
- **ORGANIZATION:** The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of ideas.
- **DEVELOPMENT:** The extent to which the response provides statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and/or accuracy.

The final version of your composition should conform to the conventions of edited American English, should be written legibly, and should be your own original work.

SAMPLE WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE

COMPOSITION EXERCISE

Read the passage below about prohibiting vending machines that sell soda and processed snack foods in public schools; then follow the instructions for writing your composition.

Should vending machines that sell soda and processed snack foods be prohibited in public schools? Supporters of such a ban argue that it is necessary to protect the health of students. Numerous studies have shown that a growing number of young people are seriously overweight, a condition that markedly increases the likelihood they may develop diabetes and other health problems as they grow older. Moreover, those in favor of the prohibition say, teaching students about proper nutrition in health courses and then surrounding them with junk food sends a confusing, even hypocritical, message. Other people, however, object to such a prohibition on both practical and ideological grounds. In addition to depriving cash-strapped school districts of an important source of revenue that can be used to purchase needed supplies and equipment, they contend, barring these machines places unnecessary restrictions on students' and parents' rights to make their own decisions about whether snack foods are appropriate for them. In any case, say opponents of the prohibition, the fact is that students who want sodas and snack foods will find a way to obtain them, regardless of whether they are sold in schools.

Your purpose is to write a persuasive composition, to be read by a classroom instructor, in which you take a position on whether or not vending machines that sell soda and processed snack foods should be prohibited in public schools. Be sure to defend your position with logical arguments and appropriate examples.

**Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR COMMUNICATION AND LITERACY SKILLS:
WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE**

Performance Characteristics:

Appropriateness	The extent to which the candidate addresses the topic and uses language and style appropriate to the given audience, purpose, and occasion.
Mechanical Conventions	The extent to which words are spelled correctly and the candidate follows the conventions of punctuation and capitalization.
Usage	The extent to which the candidate's writing shows care and precision in word choice and is free of usage errors.
Sentence Structure	The effectiveness of the sentence structure and the extent to which the sentences are free of structural errors.
Focus and Unity	The clarity with which the candidate states and maintains focus on the main idea or point of view.
Organization	The clarity of the writing and the logical sequence of the candidate's ideas.
Development	The extent to which the candidate provides statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and/or accuracy.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>A well-formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate addresses the assignment fully and uses appropriate language and style. • The candidate shows mastery of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Usage and choice of words are careful and precise. • Sentence structure is effective and free of errors. • The candidate clearly states a main idea and/or point of view, and maintains focus and unity throughout the response. • The candidate exhibits control in the organization of ideas. • The candidate develops the response fully by providing ample statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy.
3	<p>An adequately formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate addresses the assignment adequately and generally uses appropriate language and/or style. • There may be some errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Minor errors in usage and word choice are evident. • Sentence structure is adequate, although minor errors may be present. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is generally clear, and focus and unity are generally maintained. • The organization of ideas may be ambiguous, incomplete, or partially ineffective. • The candidate provides a sufficient quantity of statements of appropriate depth, specificity, and accuracy to adequately develop the response.
2	<p>A partially formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate partially addresses the assignment and may use inappropriate language and/or style. • The candidate makes frequent errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice is distracting. • Sentence structure is poor, with noticeable and distracting errors. • The main idea and/or point of view is inconsistent and/or the focus and unity of the discussion are not sustained. • The candidate may make an effort to organize and sequence ideas, but organization is largely unclear. • The response includes very few statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.
1	<p>An inadequately formed written response.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The candidate attempts to address the assignment, but language and style are generally inappropriate for the given audience, purpose, and/or occasion. • The candidate makes serious and numerous errors in the use of mechanical conventions (e.g., spelling, punctuation, and capitalization). • Imprecision in usage and word choice interferes with meaning. • Sentence structure is ineffective, and few sentences are free of errors. • The main idea and/or point of view of the response is not identified. • Any organization that is present fails to present an effective sequence of ideas. • The candidate fails to include statements that contribute effectively to the development of the response.
U	<p>The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.</p>
B	<p>There is no response to the assignment.</p>

WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE: SAMPLE RESPONSES

Sample Score Point 4 Response

Countless studies have shown that eating foods high in sugar, fat, and processed materials puts people at greater risk for a number of health issues, compared to diets focused on whole foods. It's no wonder. Read a label on something -- anything -- dispensed from a snack machine and try to figure out to what extent the ingredients rely on known, natural substances. It is more likely that you will be unable to pronounce most of the substances listed, as they have chemical names resulting from the process of being artificially manufactured for mass production for the snack food industry. Vending machines that sell soda and processed snack foods do not belong in public school facilities devoted to providing our children with the best education guided by the most up-to-date information. That would be analogous to insulating the school's heating system pipes with asbestos, material long ago found to be deadly to human beings.

The United States Department of Public Health and the American Medical Association have provided undeniable evidence that our national addiction to soda and junk food is leading to a higher percentage of overweight children than other countries in the world. In fact, pediatricians have been documenting higher and higher percentages of overweight children in this country year after year for the past three decades. Overweight children tend to be sick more often and consequently miss out on more schooling and school experiences. They suffer from ostracism and bullying from other children, find it physically difficult to participate in play and sports, and tend to need support services for issues with social-emotional development. In addition, the trend toward obesity continues into adulthood, increasing the likelihood of diabetes, digestive disorder, heart disease, vascular disease and orthopedic conditions. Consequently, health care costs in our country are also rising astronomically compared to other countries.

At every grade level in the public schools, teachers are working hard -- in regular classrooms, lunchrooms, health classes and physical education programs -- to educate children about healthy eating. Having vending machines in the schools undermines these efforts to encourage students to make good nutritional decisions. Snack machines just place unnecessary temptation directly in the path of the students' good intentions and their developing consciousness about healthy life styles.

Continued on next page

Sample Score Point 4 Response (continued)

Young people need consistency from the adults they deal with every day, so in addition to teaching about good nutrition, teachers need to model healthy eating and ensure that the food choices available to children during the school day are healthy and nutritionally sound. In this way the message is consistent and clear.

Some opponents might claim that removing the vending machines would deprive the schools of necessary revenues to purchase supplies and equipment. I would suggest that we could still maintain vending machines but could fill them with nutritional food choices such as fruits, yogurt, granola bars, salads and bottled water. To those who claim that prohibiting unhealthy snacks would deprive students and parents of a right to choose, I would maintain that these individuals can still make these choices by purchasing these products elsewhere. There are limits on how much influence the school and its teachers have. The school would just be encouraging students to make better choices during the school day by providing easier accessibility to healthier snacks on school grounds.

Placing snack and soda vending machines in public schools is a symptom of much larger issues, such as wide spread and decades-long evisceration of school budgets, which opened the door for vending machine marketing opportunists, not to mention our failure to take the real needs of children K - 12 into account when considering where to get the dollars for extra curricular activities. If we had more sense and more concern for doing the right thing rather than the expedient thing, we'd take the existing vending machines out of the public schools and encourage community-wide examination of the issues that put them there in the first place.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

Today's youth is in trouble. It is not that they are in trouble with the law, nor are they doing poorly in school. Today's youth is progressively becoming overweight. But is it the job of the public school system to restrict students' intake of sweets? Some schools want to take snack and soda machines out so that students will not be able to obtain foods that will cause them to gain weight. But will this really solve the problem? Today's youth are persistent, they will find a way to satisfy their sweet tooth. If these machines are taken away then what will we be teaching our children about making good decisions? In addition to this, taking away snack machines will allow for even lower funds that a school has to work with.

Children today will find a way to get sweets. If there are no vending machines then they will just bring them from home. So taking vending machines out will not solve any problem. In my high school, our administration did away with our one soda machine and candy machine. Instead they replaced our soda machine with high sugar content juice and power drinks. In addition to this students would still bring soda and candy from home. So by doing away with these, my school did not solve anything. We still had an overload of sugar-high drinks and students would just bring them from home.

Schools should keep vending machines. In order for this to look OK with people who want to do away with them is to start to advocate better eating habits at an early age and keep stressing them throughout the schooling years. Parents should also teach their children good eating habits so when they get to school and see a vending machine they make the right choice for them.

Freedom of choice is a huge thing for today's youth, especially in high school, where most of this controversy is taking place. High School students want to start to be treated like adults and to do so, we should let them make their own decisions. They first need to be taught well -- they first need to obtain good eating habits so that when they are tempted by a vending machine they make a good decision for themselves. By restricting all students from vending machines, schools are sending the wrong message that they do not trust their students to make good decisions for themselves while at the same time the school is trying to help a child prepare for the real world. If taught good eating habits a child can survive in a world with vending machines.

Continued on next page

Sample Score Point 3 Response (continued)

Finally schools need the revenue that they earn from vending machines. Public schools are low on funds and everything that they can get can help better a child's education with better resources. Students don't know that they are helping their education by buying stuff from snack machines. If these machines are taken away then how will schools make up for the lost funds? Probably by raising taxes something nobody will like. The smallest income can help a school obtain better resources for students and the money obtained from vending machines is one such source.

Vending machines should not be eliminated from schools. If children were educated better about nutrition then maybe they would make better decisions about their eating habits. Students will obtain sweets whether or not there are vending machines in the school. By taking vending machines out we are infringing on the kids freedom of choice and the school needs the money that they earn from the vending machines.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

Students find a way to buy and get what they enjoy and are interested in be it clothes or food or cars. Soda and junk food should not be sold in Public Schools or they will buy it. Offer chips and soda or an apple and water, what do you think the students will choose. Of course they would choose the chips and soda. So would you if you were a kid. When students are given a chance to eat junk food they will. If students are given choices between healthy snacks and healthy drinks like whole grain crackers and cheese or peanut butter, low-sugar snacks, and juices and sports drinks, students would most likely choose healthy snacks. Schools should promote healthy eating in their School Systems and teach children proper eating habits at a young age.

Many people say, that these children are young and they should be able to eat whatever they want. However, these children will eat junk food the rest of their lives. Children who are constantly eating junk food and not eating fruits and vegetables would not grow up and like to eat healthy foods. As they are getting older if they have never learned to eat fruit and vegetables they would become overweight.

If we want children to grow up and be happy and healthy adults then we need instill these ideals in them when they are young. By providing them with junk food we are not teaching them what they will need to be healthy adults. Obesity is a problem in this country whether we want to believe it or not. It is our job to teach our young children the proper eating habits they will need for a lifetime. Schools should work with companies that supply healthy drinks and snacks.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

The kind of food and drink which sell in school machines is not anything for the people to worry about. They shouldn't fight about this thing when it's only the students who have the choices. Other people just interfere. There's nothing in there that's just for adults. Students have a right to the snacks just like anybody else. You see the teachers with the snacks and sodas all the time. Believe me. It's not fair to take away the rights of students just because they disagree with the food.

If there are hungry and they want a snack, they can go to the machine like everyone. It doesn't matter what's in it as long as it tastes good. You're just hungry and you want something to eat now. That's what the machines are for. Who has time to pack something from home? Your bag is full of books and too heavy to carry anyway. All you get to eat during the day is lunch in the cafeteria. That's supposed to be healthy anyway. That's your main meal at school. The snacks are there because one meal a day isn't enough for kids anyway. They are growing and need more food than that. It's just a bad idea to put apples and water in the machines. Apples from a machine are all dented and brown and taste mushy. I tried one once at camp. Believe me. You can get apples in the lunch room. You can get salad and yogurt there too, so give me a break. I want a chocolate bar for a snack. And a soda. Those are the things that take care of your hunger just right. And they don't hurt you. Not if you have it just when you're hungry.

Believe me, kids get enough to worry about their health these days. Teachers after them all the time in gym class and health class and home room and every place else to eat broccoli and play sports every day. Stop watching TV. Stop playing on the computer. Stop eating fast food. Eat fruit. Like we got new laws about this coming at us every day. So don't take away snacks we like. We need them after all the other stuff they make us eat and all the stuff we have to do in gym.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION EXERCISE: Vending Machines in Schools

ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis for each sample response. For example, for each of the responses, the corresponding rationale will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "appropriateness" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, if the response has no discernable organizational plan, then focus and unity will be affected. If sentence structure is confusing or ambiguous, that will affect the development of ideas. If usage is marked by errors so that meaning is lost or altered, then organization and focus will suffer. Even errors in spelling and punctuation can accumulate to such an extent as to compromise any effort to address the topic appropriately.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Appropriateness: The writer has taken a position on the assigned topic and addressed it fully, using language and style appropriate to the audience and purpose.

Mechanical Conventions: This response contains no errors in spelling, punctuation, or capitalization, and demonstrates the candidate's mastery of mechanical conventions.

Usage: The candidate's choice of words is careful and precise, such as "dispensed," "analogous," "ostracism," "astronomically," "undermines," and "evisceration." Usage is correct throughout.

Sentence Structure: The sentence structure is varied and often complex. The first paragraph, for example, contains the effectively terse, "It's no wonder," as well as the well-controlled complexity of, "It is more likely that you will be unable to pronounce most of the substances listed, as they have chemical names resulting from the process of being artificially manufactured for mass production for the snack food industry."

Focus and Unity: The writer sets the stage for his/her position in the opening sentences, and then clearly states that position at the end of the first paragraph. The position against vending machines that sell soda and processed snack foods is maintained throughout the response, including specific references to that subject in each paragraph.

Organization: The response is very well organized. The first paragraph uses illustration and logical reasoning to establish a context for the candidate's position. The second paragraph lists factual connections between snack food vending machines and negative health effects for both children and adults. The third paragraph focuses on the inherent conflict between the presence

of snack food machines and the schools' teaching regarding nutrition. The fourth paragraph rebuts key arguments against removing vending machines from schools, and the final paragraph concludes that communities bear responsibility for resolving budget dilemmas in more educationally appropriate ways.

Development: The development of each point in the candidate's argument is strong and clear. Each point is fully elaborated before another point is introduced. The response uses a variety of strategies for developing each idea, including the analogy in the first paragraph regarding using asbestos in schools, the cumulative impact of a wide variety of factual statements in the second paragraph, the step-by-step reasoning of the third and fourth paragraphs, and the logical conclusions drawn from all of that material in the final paragraph.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Appropriateness: The writer adequately addresses the assignment by taking a position and discussing subtopics related to that position. Language and style are generally appropriate to the audience and purpose. The use of terms like "OK," "huge thing," and "stuff" makes the tone more informal than the specified audience and purpose warrants.

Mechanical Conventions: Mechanics are adequate to convey meaning. However, there are minor mechanical errors, such as the comma instead of a semi-colon after, "Today's youth are persistent," in the first paragraph, the misuse of the hyphen in the fourth paragraph, and the missing commas after "finally" and "raising taxes" in the fifth paragraph.

Usage: While the words chosen are generally adequate to convey meaning, several times the candidate uses "these," "this," and "them" when a specific referent is needed (e.g., "If there are no vending machines then they will just bring them from home.") In the first paragraph, the phrase "allow for even lower funds" is imprecise, as is "in order for this to look OK with people who want to do away with them" in the third paragraph and "obtain good eating habits" in the fourth paragraph.

Sentence Structure: The relationship between the opening four sentences of the first paragraph and the writer's position is ambiguous. The fifth paragraph contains a sentence fragment. Most sentences adequately communicate the broad ideas behind the writer's position, although the awkwardness of the sentence structure often results in a lack of clarity (e.g., "By restricting all students from vending machines, schools are sending the wrong message that they do not trust their students to make good decisions for themselves while at the same time the school is trying to help a child prepare for the real world.")

Focus and Unity: The point of view -- that public schools should keep vending machines that sell soda and processed snack foods -- is maintained throughout the response. After giving a personal example of how persistent young people are in obtaining sweets, the writer briefly addresses the opposition's perspective in the third paragraph, then discusses school vending machines relative to the issues of freedom of choice and the school's needs for revenue.

Organization: The writer forecasts three subtopics in the introduction -- the persistence of young people in satisfying their sweet tooth, teaching children about making good decisions, and keeping funds the school needs. Subsequent paragraphs provide adequate elaboration on each of those ideas in turn. The points raised are repeated in the concluding paragraph.

Development: The writer uses different strategies to develop a few basic ideas to support each point. The first sub-topic is developed through a personal example. The opposing point of view is then countered with a brief suggestion about teaching "better eating habits at an early age." The paragraph about having vending machines in schools in order to prepare students for the real world meanders from "freedom of choice" to the final sentence, "If taught good eating habits a child can survive in a world with vending machines." The last point uses a question and answer approach to develop the idea that schools need the revenues from vending machines.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Appropriateness: The writer partially addresses the assignment, offering the position that schools should not sell soda and junk food, although vending machines are not specifically mentioned. The response is simplistic in substance and style, based on repetitive arguments about children's attraction to junk foods versus teaching children healthy eating habits when they are young.

Mechanical Conventions: The response has frequent mechanical errors. The terms *public schools* and *school systems* have been incorrectly capitalized. A period instead of a question mark is used at the end of the phrase "what do you think the students will choose" in the first paragraph. Some unnecessary commas are inserted, and some necessary commas are missing. Spelling is generally correct, except for "obesity."

Usage: In the sentence, "Soda and junk food should not be sold in Public Schools or they will buy it," the meaning is confused by the use of the indefinite *they*. Both the present tense and the conditional tense are used in the last two sentences of the second paragraph (*are* and *would*). The phrase "be it clothes or food or cars" is awkward, as is the phrase, "would not grow up and like to eat healthy foods." The response lacks precision in choosing words other than the most basic vocabulary to communicate meaning.

Sentence Structure: Sentences are generally free of structural errors. However, sentence structure throughout the response lacks variation and complexity. The sentence listing healthy snacks in the first paragraph is sloppily structured, which results in the inference that students have to choose between one healthy snack and another, (rather than the intended meaning of choosing among healthy snack items), as well as the unintended phrase, "drinks like whole grain crackers and cheese."

Focus and Unity: The focus of the writer's argument is that children are naturally attracted to foods that are unhealthy for them so they need to be taught proper eating habits. The role of vending machines in schools is not explicitly mentioned. The final sentence refers to "companies that supply healthy drinks and snacks," which again does not convey a specific link to vending machines.

Organization: The response contains no discernable organizational plan; consequently, the connections from one idea to the next are not always apparent. For example, the first and second sentences of the response seem disjointed. The final paragraph introduces two new ideas—obesity in this country and working with suppliers of healthy foods.

Development: The response mentions the issue of healthy versus unhealthy foods and teaching children healthy eating habits, without developing a position specific to whether or not vending machines that sell soda and processed snack foods should be prohibited in public

schools. Although some specific examples of healthy snacks are provided in the first paragraph, the assertions in the second paragraph require elaboration. References in the last paragraph to obesity and suppliers of healthy snacks are not explained or developed.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Appropriateness: The response uses a low level of language that is inappropriate to the task. Although the writer attempts to address the topic, the response bears only a tangential relationship to the assignment.

Mechanical Conventions: The response contains numerous errors in spelling and punctuation that detract from clear and effective communication.

Usage: Several usage errors interfere with meaning: "food and drink which sell," "bags is full," "kids got enough." Use of the colloquialisms "anyway," "give me a break," and "believe me" add nothing to the discussion. Pronouns like "it," "they," and "that" without clear antecedents leave the reader confused about the subject of the sentence.

Sentence Structure: The response contains several sentence fragments. Sentences are simplistic and contain numerous syntactic errors.

Focus and Unity: Lapses in focus appear in each paragraph. A reference to teachers with snacks and sodas is dropped into the middle of a rambling discussion in the first paragraph about student choices, interference from other people, student rights, and fairness. The second paragraph jumps from hunger to packing something from home to school lunches to kids' needs for snacks to machine apples turning brown to healthy foods available at lunch to the virtues of chocolate bars and soda. The response could have been stronger if some of these ideas had been placed in logical order and if each idea had been developed through a reasoning process or with examples. The voice also changes—from that of the writer defending a position on the issue to that of a student in the school facing the removal of vending machines.

Organization: The logical sequence of ideas is unclear and ineffective. The response puts too much of a burden on the reader to bring order to the jumble of points being made. There is no apparent organizational plan with main ideas and subtopics to support those ideas. For example, the organization of the candidate's ideas is compromised by the change of voice discussed under Focus and Unity.

Development: In this response, each idea is quickly left behind while another idea is introduced, with the exception of the section in the second paragraph that devotes 5 sentences to apples, stream of consciousness style. Generally, instead of developing points and relating them to the position being taken, the writer has produced a sequence of seemingly unrelated ideas. For example, "Who has time to pack something from home?" The intended reference is not clear.

GENERAL CURRICULUM TEST
SAMPLE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENTS AND RESPONSES

DIRECTIONS FOR THE OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENTS

This section of the test consists of two open-response item assignments that appear on the following pages. You will be asked to prepare a written response of approximately 150–300 words (1–2 pages) for each assignment. You should use your time to plan, write, review, and edit your response for each assignment.

For each assignment, read the topic and directions carefully before you begin to work. Think about how you will organize your response. You may use any blank space in this test booklet to make notes, write an outline, or otherwise prepare your response.

As a whole, your response to each assignment must demonstrate an understanding of the knowledge of the field. In your response to each assignment, you are expected to demonstrate the depth of your understanding of the subject area by applying your knowledge rather than by merely reciting factual information.

Your response to each assignment will be evaluated based on the following criteria.

- **PURPOSE:** the extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment
- **SUBJECT KNOWLEDGE:** appropriateness and accuracy in the application of subject knowledge
- **SUPPORT:** quality and relevance of supporting evidence
- **RATIONALE:** soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject area

The open-response item assignments are intended to assess subject knowledge. Your responses must be communicated clearly enough to permit valid judgment of the evaluation criteria by scorers. Your responses should be written for an audience of educators in this field. The final version of each response should conform to the conventions of edited American English. Your responses should be your original work, written in your own words, and not copied or paraphrased from some other work.

Be sure to write about the assigned topics. Please write legibly. You may not use any reference materials during the test. Remember to review your work and make any changes you think will improve your responses.

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT #1

Read the problem below; then complete the exercise that follows.

A writer has been offered two different projects. Project *A* will pay \$35 per hour, and the writer estimates that it will take 100 hours to complete. Project *B* involves writing a set of seven articles. It will pay \$500 for each article in the set, and the writer estimates that it will take about 10 hours to write each article.

- Which of the two projects pays the highest hourly rate?
- By what percentage does the hourly pay rate of the higher-paying job exceed that of the lower-paying job?

Use your knowledge of mathematics to create a response in which you analyze and solve this problem. In your response you should:

- describe two prerequisite mathematical skills necessary for solving this problem;
- identify two mathematical concepts involved in solving this problem; and
- solve the given problem showing your work and justifying the steps you used in arriving at your solution.

Be sure to show your work and explain the reasoning you used to complete the above exercise.

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TESTS

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment.
Subject Matter Knowledge	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge.
Support	Quality and relevance of supporting details.
Rationale	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.
U	The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.
B	There is no response to the assignment.

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT #1: SAMPLE RESPONSES

Sample Score Point 4 Response

In this problem, the student needs to be familiar with the mathematical skills of multiplication and division. For example, to calculate the total hours needed to complete Project B, the student needs to know the X 10 facts (7 articles X 10 hours per article = 70 hours to complete the assignment). Also, the student needs to use division to get the hourly rate for Project B, dividing the amount earned in Project B (\$3500) by the total hours worked on Project B (70).

Conceptually, the student needs to be organizing and separating information. Knowing which information is going to be vital to solving a word problem and organizing that information is a prerequisite for knowing how to convert the problem to mathematical representation and knowing which math skills will be most useful to finding the answer. The concept of percentages is also needed to understand the meaning of the second question and to find a solution.

To establish the hourly rate of Project A, all I needed to do was read the second sentence; it is given. Project A pays \$35 an hour. To find out how much Project B pays, I first calculated the total number of hours Project B will take (7 articles X 10 hours each will amount to 70 hours in total). Next, I calculated the total amount to be paid for Project B (\$500 will be paid for each project, and there are 7 projects, which equals \$3500). By dividing the total pay by the total number of hours, I arrived at the hourly rate of pay, which is \$50. Project B pays the highest hourly amount, at \$50/hour compared to the \$35/hour given in the problem as the rate for Project A.

To determine the percentage increase of Project A to Project B, I first found the difference between the two, which is \$15 (\$50 - \$35). Then I had to figure out what percent is 15 of 35. To do so, I set up an equation: $15/35 = x$, which can be reduced to $3/7 = x$. I then used long division to divide 7 into 3. The answer is .428, or 43%. Project B has a 43% better rate of pay than Project A.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

In order to answer this problem, the two prerequisite math skills needed are being able to multiply and the second would be to understand dollars per hour ($\$/\text{hour}$) and percentages. You would need to do complex multiplication because you need to figure out how much Project B will pay by multiplying the number of hours by the number of articles and then by the pay for each article. The second prerequisite would be converting data into percentages to see the difference between the two payments. The two main concepts involved are proportion and problem solving.

To solve this problem a number of steps must be taken. Step 1: In Project A you are going to multiply $\$35$ and 100 hours. That is going to be how you get how much you make for Project A: $35 \times 100 = \$3,500$. Step 2: For Project B, you take $\$500$ which is the amount per article and you multiply it by the number of articles: $7 \times 500 = \$3,500$. Step 3: Compare the two. The pay is equal. However, it would be better if the person took project B because the person would be making the same amount of money, but in a shorter amount of time. Because project B would take 30 fewer hours, the writer is initially getting paid more by the hour. A writer could do Project B in only 70 hours as opposed to 100 hours for the same amount of pay. Lastly you need to compare the two and figure out the difference. There is a difference of $\$15$ ($\$50 - \35) making Project B a 15% higher hourly rate.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

As stated in this problem, because Project A will make \$35 per hour and the project should take 100 hours to complete, Project A will be making \$3500 for this job. But then Project B involves writing 7 articles and getting paid \$500 for each article, which would also bring in a total of \$3500. But you also have to be aware that Project B is paying only at an hourly rate of 10 hours. Because both projects would end up getting the same amount of money, Project A pays at a higher hourly rate of 100 hours to complete. To put these into percentages, the 10 hours would be made into 10% and the 100 hours would be made into 100%. To answer the question, the higher paying job has a 90% higher pay rate.

Math skills needed for this problem are knowledge of dealing with percentages and also multiplication skills needed to see who would make more money per hour. Some main concepts used are knowing how to do word problems and using math processes, taking each question one step at a time.

To get my solution I multiplied \$35 times the 100 hours to get \$3500 and I did the same with Project B -- multiplied the 7 articles by the \$500 for each article to come to a total of \$3500. With percentages I know it's out of 100%, so I converted then subtracted 10% from the 100% to come up with the 90% higher hourly rate. Most of the steps I used were multiplication, percent knowledge and subtraction.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

If I were a writer I would take the job that pays more. You can take 100 hours and multiply it by \$35 per hour, which will give you \$3,500. For Project B, if it takes 10 hours to write each article, then you can see that in 100 hours you can get 10 articles, which will give you \$5000, so you're better off choosing Project B since you can make more money. Of course you want to get the most for your work.

The math concepts used in solving this problem are multiplication and addition.

Project A = \$35 per hour

100 hours x \$35 per hour = \$3,500

Project B = \$500 each article which take 10 hours.

100 hours = 10 articles

10 X 500 = \$5000 in 10 hours

The prerequisites needed are the foundations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division.

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT #1: Calculating the Rate and Percentage ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis of each sample response. For example, for each of the responses, the analysis will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "purpose" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present here. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, a response weak in subject knowledge will affect the extent to which the purpose can be achieved as well as the soundness of the rationale. A lack of high quality, relevant support affects the ability to demonstrate an ably reasoned response.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Purpose: The writer fully addresses the purpose of the assignment, using mathematical understanding to both analyze and solve the problem. The first and second paragraphs provide a thorough explanation of the skills and concepts the problem requires, while the third and fourth paragraphs explain and justify each step the writer followed.

Subject Knowledge: This response demonstrates substantial mathematical knowledge. In the first half, appropriate skills and concepts are correctly identified and related specifically to this problem. In the second half, the steps taken to solve the problem indicate the writer's grasp of a variety of mathematical functions, including multiplication, division, percentages, hourly rates, ratio, and algebraic equations.

Support: Specific examples are given throughout this response to illustrate which skills are involved at which steps of the process and which steps were taken to arrive at a solution. The writer has provided all of the numbers used, each operation used, and the correct outcome of each operation. For example, in the final paragraph, ". . . I set up an equation: $15/35 = x$, which can be reduced to $3/7 = x$. I then used long division to divide 7 into 3. The answer is .428 or 43%."

Rationale: The writer's underlying rationale for using a particular operation at a particular step in the process is evident throughout the response in such phrases as "to establish the hourly rate," "to determine the percentage increase," and "to do so." The quality of the writer's reasoning process is especially clear in the explanation of the concepts involved in solving a word problem: "Knowing which information is going to be vital to solving a word problem and organizing that information is a prerequisite for knowing how to convert the problem to mathematical representation. . ."

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Purpose: This response has largely achieved the purpose of the assignment. Two math skills are identified and explained in sometimes specific (multiply "the number of hours by the number of articles and then by the pay") and sometimes general terms ("to understand dollars per hour"). Relevant concepts, proportion and problem solving, are named, but their roles in solving this particular problem are not detailed or developed.

Subject Knowledge: While the response shows a generally accurate application of mathematical knowledge, the discussion lacks specific examples to illustrate the meaning of those terms and processes in the context of this particular problem, such as, "converting data into percentages," and the concept of "proportion." The writer uses three sentences to explain why Project B is a better choice, without showing how to represent those ideas in mathematical terms. The most complex aspect of the problem, to calculate the percentage by which one rate of pay exceeds that of the other, has not been resolved.

Support: The writer supported the statement that multiplication will be needed:

". . . you need to figure out how much Project B will pay by multiplying the number of hours by the number of articles and then by the pay for each article." Support is also given for steps 1 and 2 of the computation, which provide specific numbers from the problem and show how they are being used and for what purpose. The remainder of the response relies on general statements that may or may not be accurate, such as "converting data into percentages to see the difference." The writer does not indicate which data or the kind of difference.

Rationale: This response reveals a generally adequate understanding of the topic. The writer's reasoning process is clearly presented in the statement in the first paragraph that begins "you would need to do complex multiplication because," and is further aided in the second paragraph by the approach of "step 1," "step 2," and so on. The response does not indicate how the key concepts of proportion and problem solving come into play or how the writer arrived at the erroneous conclusion that the \$15 difference in pay was the same as a 15% difference.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Purpose: The assignment has been partially achieved in this response. Although an effort is made to address all parts of the assignment, there are significant errors in the problem-solving process.

Subject Knowledge: The response reflects limited knowledge and understanding of the subject. While the writer used multiplication appropriately to arrive at the correct amount of total pay for both Project A and Project B, the misunderstanding of what hourly rate means led to successive errors in interpreting and calculating "by what percentage" one job exceeded the pay rate of the other. Except for a general explanation of how multiplication would be useful, "to see who would make more money per hour," the skills and concepts cited lack specific examples to illustrate the writer's knowledge of how they could be used to arrive at a solution.

Support: Supporting evidence in this response is limited. "Using math processes" and "taking each question one step at a time" are given as useful concepts, but these could apply to the entire universe of math problems. The writer does not explain how those ideas are specifically related to solving this problem.

Rationale: The final paragraph shows the underlying logic and the specific mathematics the writer used to determine the total amount of pay for each project. However, the writer's arguments for Project A are limited and poorly reasoned, as illustrated in the statement, "Project B is paying only at an hourly rate of 10 hours," and the failure to explain why that meant the next step was "to put these into percentages," or to explain what is meant by "with percentages I know it's out of 100%, so I converted then subtracted 10% from the 100%."

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Purpose: The purpose of the assignment has not been achieved. The problem itself has been misinterpreted, and specific questions have not been addressed, such as calculating the hourly rate of pay, determining by what percentage the hourly pay rate of one project exceeds the hourly pay rate of the other, and providing a descriptive analysis of the prerequisite math skills and concepts.

Subject Knowledge: This response shows little application of relevant subject knowledge. Two simplistic multiplication calculations are the only mathematics used in constructing the response, which shows no understanding of the conditions the problem sets up for Project A and Project B. The writer states that "the math concepts used in solving this problem are multiplication and addition," but provides no example of where and how addition was useful.

Support: The response doesn't connect the math prerequisites cited ("the foundations of addition, subtraction, multiplication and division") to a demonstrated solution to this problem. Some of the numbers provided in the problem are dismissed as unimportant and not referred to at all. There are no explanations of problem-solving strategies for this specific problem and only brief examples of multiplication.

Rationale: By focusing on one small piece of the problem—determining which project pays more—the response fails to analyze the problem as a whole. The response is based on the erroneous assumption that the writer is free to produce 10 articles instead of the assigned 7 for Project B. As a result, several key aspects of the problem that required logical step-by-step mathematical processes and reasoning are missing.

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT #2

Read the passage below from *The Pearl* (1947), a novel by John Steinbeck; then complete the exercise that follows.

Set in Latin America in the early twentieth century, the novel tells the story of Kino, a poor fisherman, who struggles to sell an extraordinary pearl he has found. This passage describes Kino's arrival at the office of a pearl broker in the city.

A stout slow man sat in an office waiting. His face was fatherly and benign, and his eyes twinkled with friendship. He was a caller of good mornings, a ceremonious shaker of hands, a jolly man who knew all jokes and yet who hovered close to sadness, for in the midst of a laugh he could remember the death of your aunt, and his eyes could become wet with sorrow for your loss. This morning he had placed a flower in a vase on his desk, a single scarlet hibiscus, and the vase sat beside the black velvet-lined pearl tray in front of him. He was shaved close to the blue roots of his beard, and his hands were clean and his nails polished. His door stood open to the morning, and he hummed under his breath while his right hand practiced legerdemain. He rolled a coin back and forth over his knuckles and made it appear and disappear, made it spin and sparkle. The coin winked into sight and as quickly slipped out of sight, and the man did not even watch his own performance. The fingers did it all mechanically, precisely, while the man hummed to himself and peered out the door. Then he heard the tramp of feet of the approaching crowd, and the fingers of his right hand worked faster and faster until, as the figure of Kino filled the doorway, the coin flashed and disappeared.

"Good morning, my friend," the stout man said. "What can I do for you?"

Kino stared into the dimness of the little office, for his eyes were squeezed from the outside glare. But the buyer's eyes had become as steady and cruel and unwinking as a hawk's eyes, while the rest of his face smiled in greeting. And secretly, behind the desk, his right hand practiced with the coin.

Using your knowledge of literature, write a response in which you:

- identify and discuss one significant theme suggested by the passage; and
- identify and describe one element of fiction (e.g., characterization, dialogue, imagery, descriptive details) the author uses in this passage to convey this theme.

Be sure to cite specific evidence from the passage in your response.

Massachusetts Tests for Educator Licensure®
SCORING RUBRIC FOR SUBJECT TESTS

Performance Characteristics:

Purpose	The extent to which the response achieves the purpose of the assignment.
Subject Matter Knowledge	Accuracy and appropriateness in the application of subject matter knowledge.
Support	Quality and relevance of supporting details.
Rationale	Soundness of argument and degree of understanding of the subject matter.

Scoring Scale:

Score Point	Score Point Description
4	<p>The "4" response reflects a thorough knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is fully achieved. • There is a substantial, accurate, and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is sound; there are high-quality, relevant examples. • The response reflects an ably reasoned, comprehensive understanding of the topic.
3	<p>The "3" response reflects an adequate knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is largely achieved. • There is a generally accurate and appropriate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is adequate; there are some acceptable, relevant examples. • The response reflects an adequately reasoned understanding of the topic.
2	<p>The "2" response reflects a limited knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is partially achieved. • There is a limited, possibly inaccurate or inappropriate, application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence is limited; there are few relevant examples. • The response reflects a limited, poorly reasoned understanding of the topic.
1	<p>The "1" response reflects a weak knowledge and understanding of the subject matter.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The purpose of the assignment is not achieved. • There is little or no appropriate or accurate application of subject matter knowledge. • The supporting evidence, if present, is weak; there are few or no relevant examples. • The response reflects little or no reasoning about or understanding of the topic.
U	The response is unrelated to the assigned topic, illegible, primarily in a language other than English, not of sufficient length to score, or merely a repetition of the assignment.
B	There is no response to the assignment.

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT #2: SAMPLE RESPONSES**Sample Score Point 4 Response**

This passage, which describes the pearl broker Kino is about to sell his pearl to, illustrates the theme of the deceitful nature of some human beings, and more specifically, when personal gain is at stake. The first two sentences draw the reader in, lulling us into a false sense of complacency regarding the broker. The author uses descriptive detail in phrases such as "fatherly and benign," "eyes twinkled with friendship," "caller of good mornings," "shaker of hands," and "jolly man" that call up visions of a Santa Claus-like character, some one who seems more of a giver than a taker. The beauty of these descriptive details is that they can be read at face value just like the man himself if you don't know what he's up to. He might actually be so full of empathy that he can shed tears when he remembers "your loss." But that, of course, is not what Steinbeck is up to. Once the reader understands the duplicity of the man, rereading the descriptions opens a window into the broker's motives and the underlying theme of the passage.

The author begins to let the reader in on the pearl broker's secret, his deceptive slyness, by writing this sentence: "His door stood open to the morning and he hummed under his breath while his right hand practiced legerdemain." He is a slick salesman at his finest. A trickster. A man who can cry and laugh at the drop of a hat in order to get what he wants. The author reveals to us the true nature of the broker, as other than he first appeared, through carefully chosen detail. The contrast of the morning light and his dark office, for example, completes our understanding of the hard, merciless nature of the broker waiting in his lair for the next victim. By the time Steinbeck writes, "but the buyer's eyes had become as steady and cruel and unwinking as a hawk's eyes, while the rest of his face smiled in greeting," the reader is not surprised. This man is no good. This passage is very effective in building the tension in the reader and a sense of danger for unsuspecting Kino.

Sample Score Point 3 Response

One significant theme present in this passage is that of secrecy. Steinbeck presents this theme both in his characterization of the pearl broker and in Kino's meeting with him. The imagery of the coin in the passage presents further evidence to this theme.

Steinbeck's characterization of the pearl broker shows how one person can bring secrecy to an encounter. He is described as a "jolly man who knew all jokes and yet hovered close to sadness, for in the midst of a laugh he could remember the death of your aunt." The pearl broker is a man who is capable of handling and presenting more than one emotion at a time. This skill demonstrates secrecy in the passage because men in his line of work need to be able to conceal certain emotions and present others in order to obtain the best deal possible on different pearls. There might be a comment on business men and their greed in this passage.

The imagery of the pearl broker playing with a coin adds to the theme of secrecy. When Steinbeck says he "rolled a coin back and forth over his knuckles . . . the coin winked into sight and as quickly slipped out of sight," the reader can easily picture what the pearl broker is doing. The subconscious activity takes place with little active thought, but is still intriguing and purposeful. It is another example of how the broker is capable of dual actions, and can display two thoughts at once. When Kino walks into his office, the broker is still secretly playing with this coin under the desk, waiting for Kino to tell him his secret, and ready to pounce on it once he finds out what it is, like a bird after his prey.

Sample Score Point 2 Response

When first reading the passage from *The Pearl* it seems evident to me that this is a pleasant man who was sensitive to his peers' issues. He was the type of man who always had a shoulder to cry on. But it is interesting that once Kino entered the office, the once pleasant reaction on the man's face turned cold and the twinkle in his eye diminished. And so the question is raised as to what this man is really like. At first glance he seems pleasant but once interacting with someone else, his demeanor changes. A theme is how someone can change in just a moment from good to bad.

An element of fiction which is used very well to convey this theme is the coin game which the man is playing. For someone who didn't seem to have a care in the world, the question is raised as to why when Kino walked in did the man stop playing the coin game in full view, but still continued playing out of sight of Kino. This shows the two completely opposite sides to this man. One minute he is a kind, jolly man, the next, he is harsh and secretive.

Sample Score Point 1 Response

The older man in the story that owned the office knew many people. This friendly man sat and waited for a customer to arrive with their treasure, a pearl. His office was dim compared to the light outside but he was comfortable with it. As he was comfortable with the appearance of himself. A cleanshaven man with clean hands and polished nails.

The man had an order about himself. The desk was neat and tidy with a single scarlet hibiscus upon his desk. This was sitting near the tray that would hold the pearls that his customers would bring to him to sell.

While he awaited for Kino to arrive the man played with a coin with his right hand. He made it slip in and out of his fingers, he made it dance. The man didn't even have to watch it as it danced in and out of sight-faster and faster it danced.

The author of this story drew me into this scene. I felt as if I was sitting there watching him work the coin over his fingers. There was a calm about him as he waited for Kino even though his fingers were still moving as he waited.

OPEN-RESPONSE ITEM ASSIGNMENT #2: The Pearl

ANALYSES OF SAMPLE RESPONSES

When candidates' MTEL responses are scored, the scoring is both "focused" and "holistic." It is focused on the performance characteristics described in the rubric. These are the characteristics listed in the analysis for each sample response. For example, for each of the responses, the corresponding analysis will offer some illustration of how the characteristic of "purpose" is present at the score point 4 level, or the 3, 2, or 1 level. These analyses are provided to explain why the sample responses provided are assigned particular scores.

However, the "holistic" aspect of scoring is also present here. Responses cannot be evaluated by formula, and their performance characteristics cannot be separated into truly discrete categories. For instance, a response weak in subject knowledge will affect the extent to which the purpose can be achieved as well as the soundness of the rationale. A lack of high quality, relevant support affects the ability to demonstrate an ably reasoned response.

Thus, while the scoring method focuses on specific performance characteristics, a score is not determined by consideration of just one or several characteristics. Rather, the holistic score that is assigned reflects the overall effectiveness of all of the performance characteristics working in concert.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 4 Response

Purpose: This response fully answers the charges of the assignment. A central theme is identified—not only the deceptive nature of humans, but a duplicity associated with personal profit—and discussed at length. The candidate identifies an element of fiction, descriptive detail, that is used by Steinbeck to develop the theme, and demonstrates a clear understanding of what is meant by this element and how it reveals the broker's duplicitous nature.

Subject Knowledge: In analyzing the passage, the writer demonstrates a strong ability to read and decode literary language. The candidate displays an ability to analyze and think about how language works, showing us how readers are drawn into a false "reading" of the character, how we experience the broker's duplicity more substantially by the subtle experience of being momentarily deceived ourselves, and how the final effect is one of rising tension and peril. In describing the broker as a "trickster" after indicating the sentence containing the word "legerdemain," the writer shows knowledge both of vocabulary and literary type.

Support: All of the examples from the passage used to illustrate points and insights are well-chosen and explanatory. For instance, the phrases supporting the impression that at first the broker appears to be a Santa figure are all pertinent and convincing, especially "twinkled" and "jolly." The use of "the contrast of the morning light and his dark office" is particularly effective because the writer implies that character development does not always need to come through details associated directly with the person himself. The addition of the writer's own metaphor, the broker "waiting in his lair for the next victim" extends the text's own suggestive language in a way that enlightens rather than distorts.

Rationale: The response shows evidence of clear and comprehensive reasoning about a piece of literature. There is no doubt that the writer understands what effect Steinbeck is "up to," and the response does not leave holes in the interpretation for the reader to fill in. For instance, when the writer argues that the description of the broker as at first Santa-like, the meaning is made clear—he seems to be a "giver," not a "taker." This contrast clarifies a central idea in the passage.

Analysis of Sample Score Point 3 Response

Purpose: By identifying "secrecy" as the theme and the imagery associated with the coin a supporting element of fiction, the response largely achieves the purpose. While this theme is not as sophisticated or precise as, say, "duplicity" or "the difference between reality and appearance," it allows the writer to adequately analyze one interpretation of the passage as a whole. The image of the coin is central to the passage, and the response adequately treats its function.

Subject Knowledge: Most of what the response presents in its analysis of the text is accurate. The response shows an adequate understanding of what a theme is, as well as what imagery is, although further explanation of how imagery works in general and then how the coin's rolling over the broker's knuckles specifically adds to the theme and/or affects the reader would improve the response. There is a general sense in the response that the writer's interpretation is, while more than literal, not fully able to use literary analytic tools to come to a fuller understanding of the passage's complexity.

Support: The support for the theme of secrecy is adequate. Choosing the example of the characterization of the broker as someone "jolly" and "close to sadness" does not at first directly illustrate hiding emotions, but the general idea of the broker as someone who can be sad while appearing happy is conveyed. Citing that part of the coin imagery that describes its being at first in view and then hidden is also relevant to the support the response develops for the chosen theme.

Rationale: This response is adequately reasoned. The basic idea of duplicity is here, with an appropriate choice of imagery to connect to it. The writer misses the degree of the menace in the broker's characterization, pointing out that men in "his line of work" need to employ this type of secrecy. Other observations need more explanation. How does this characterization comment on businessmen's greed? In what way is the coin trick "subconscious" and what are the implications of the broker's doing it without much "active thought"? In what way does Kino have a "secret" that the broker is going to "pounce" on?

Analysis of Sample Score Point 2 Response

Purpose: Partial achievement of the purpose of the assignment is evident in the attempt to identify a theme—sudden transformation from good into bad—and to name an element of fiction that contributes to this theme. The chosen theme begins to get at the issue of duplicity but does so only in part and very simplistically. The identified element of fiction—the coin game—is not an element of fiction, but it could be connected to the chosen theme.

Subject Knowledge: This response shows a limited ability to apply subject knowledge. The inaccuracy of choosing the coin game as an example of an element of fiction and the limited scope of the chosen theme shows a limitation with the basic terminology of literary analysis. The

writer does attempt to go a little further than literal understanding: "And so the question is raised as to what this man is really like." This analytic question seems to recognize a tension between appearance and reality but does not go further than observing that "interacting" triggers a change.

Support: The support provided is diminished by the limitations of what it is illustrating. The writer assumes that the broker is both "pleasant" and "harsh and secretive." The examples of the pleasantness ("sensitive to his peers' issues," "always had a shoulder to cry on") are summations of details that Steinbeck provides for just the opposite effect. The response gives little in the way of showing the cruel, secretive side of the broker, saying just that "his demeanor changes" and that he hides the coin game. No support is provided for concluding that the broker "didn't seem to have a care in the world."

Rationale: Though the response goes a little way towards understanding that the characterization of the broker is more complicated than it first appears, its poor reasoning leads to a partial realization—there are "two completely opposite sides to this man." Gaps in logic and misreading seriously limit the scope of the response. For instance, despite all of the initial descriptions in the passage of the positive interactions the broker has with people, the candidate writes that "once interacting with someone else, his demeanor changes."

Analysis of Sample Score Point 1 Response

Purpose: Because no theme or element of fiction is identified and discussed, the purpose of the assignment is not achieved. The writer presents a little analysis that might be used to identify a theme—"The man had an order about himself"—but fails to develop the observation beyond showing how orderly the broker's desk appears.

Subject Knowledge: The writer's ability to read and analyze a text is mostly literal, which leads to error, like describing the broker as a "friendly man." There is no evidence that the writer knows what a theme is or can use terminology associated with elements of fiction to show how an author constructs an effect through word choice. The descriptive retelling of the passage is accurate only at surface level; there is no apparent knowledge about how to describe how the "author of this story drew [the writer] into this scene."

Support: Without a theme or designated element of fiction, the writer's examples cannot be relevant in terms of developing or illustrating an interpretive analysis. To say that the pearl broker was "comfortable with the appearance of himself" might have been an interesting observation if the support for claiming it had followed and had then been connected to a larger point about the passage as a whole.

Rationale: The response demonstrates very little understanding of the passage. Unable to read below the surface or interpret the details Steinbeck uses to characterize the broker, the writer does not make connections that would lead to an insight about the broker's duplicity and the danger that Kino is walking into, and therefore also misinterprets the use of the literal meanings of the descriptive elements in the passage.

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

Page

- C-43** From THE PEARL by John Steinbeck, copyright 1945 by John Steinbeck, © renewed 1973 by Elaine Steinbeck, Thom Steinbeck and John Steinbeck IV. Used by permission of Viking Penguin, a division of Penguin Group (USA) Inc. Reprinted with permission.