

Writing Skills

The test has short and long writing tasks, and multiple-choice questions that focus on three writing skills required in school and daily life:



- o Developing a main idea with sufficient supporting details
- o Organizing information and ideas in a coherent manner
- o Using conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation) in a manner that does not distract from clear communication

Tips for Writing

It is important that you follow instructions and write in the required form. Read the assigned topic for each task carefully before you begin to write. Make sure your work is on-topic and is in the required form. All writing tasks must be written in complete sentences and your paragraph divisions must be clear. It is important to follow instructions for each task. For example, if you are asked for a minimum of three paragraphs, write at least three paragraphs. Writing that is off-topic, illegible, inappropriate (i.e., racist, offensive), or not in the specified form will not be marked.

Long Writing Tasks

- o One of the tasks is writing **a news report** based on a picture and headline provided. You will make up facts and information to answer the questions Who? What? Where? When? Why? and How? and write a one-page report on the event. Your audience is the readers of a newspaper.
- o The space provided for your written work indicates the approximate length of the writing required. If you have not written enough to demonstrate your writing skills, your written work will not be marked.
- o Make sure your handwriting is clear. Make revisions to your writing as neatly and clearly as you can. Illegible handwriting will not be marked.
- o Use correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation so that ideas are communicated clearly.
- o If you leave a selection blank, it is unlikely that you will be successful in the writing portion of the test.

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The other long writing task is **a series of paragraphs expressing an opinion** on a given topic. You will develop your main idea with supporting details (proof, facts, examples, etc.) and write a minimum of three paragraphs on the two pages provided for your response. Your audience is an adult who is interested in your opinion.

Strategies for the Series of Paragraphs Supporting an Opinion

- o Read the topic question and decide what position you will take in your response.
- o Clearly state your opinion at the beginning or end of your response.
- o Write at least three paragraphs. Include an introduction, a development and a conclusion. Use transitional devices (e.g., therefore, consequently, as a result, etc.).
- o Support your opinion with reasons and relevant examples or facts.
- o Make sure the divisions between paragraphs are clear.

Short Writing Tasks

These tasks give you the opportunity to use your knowledge and personal experience while demonstrating your writing skills.

Strategies for the Short Writing Tasks

- o Read and reread the questions carefully.
- o Think of links between the topic and your knowledge and personal experiences.
- o Answer the question using specific details and relevant information.
- o Answer in full and correctly written sentences, keeping your answer within the six lines provided.
- o Reread your response and correct any errors you notice.

Multiple Choice Questions

These multiple-choice questions give you the opportunity to demonstrate the three writing skills.

Strategies for Multiple Choice Writing Questions

- o Read and reread the question carefully.
- o Read the four answers and rule out any that are obviously incorrect.
- o If necessary, reread the question to choose the best or most correct answer.
- o Record the answer on the Student Answer Sheet as described in the test instructions.