Grade 9
English Language Arts
Examples of the Standards for Students’ Writing
Functional Writing

Alberta Provincial Achievement Testing 2019
This document was written primarily for:

- Students
- Teachers
- Grade 9 English Language Arts
- Administrators
- Parents
- General Audience
- Others

Alberta Education, Government of Alberta

2018–2019

English Language Arts 9 Examples of the Standards for Students’ Writing

Functional Writing

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Please note that if you cannot access one of the direct website links in this document, you can find Provincial Achievement Test-related materials on the [Alberta Education website](http://example.com).
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To call toll-free from outside Edmonton, dial 310-0000.

Additional documents

Follow these steps to access Provincial Achievement Test resources on the Government of Alberta website:

Step 1: Type www.alberta.ca.

Step 2: Click on “Education and training.”

Step 3: Click on “Kindergarten to Grade 12 education.”

Step 4: Click on “K to 12 provincial assessment.”

Step 5: Click on “Provincial Achievement Tests.”

Step 6: Scroll down to find “Subject area resources” and click on the desired subject area tab.

On the website, there is a link to “Subject Bulletins” which provide students and teachers with information about the Provincial Achievement Tests scheduled for the current school year. Please share the contents of the Grade 9 English Language Arts Subject Bulletin with your students.

Also on the website, there is a link to “Examples of the Standards for Students’ Writing.” These samples are intended to be used to enhance students’ writing and to assist teachers in assessing student writing relative to the standards embedded in the scoring criteria in the scoring guides.
Acknowledgements

Publication of this document would not have been possible without the permission of the students whose writing is presented. The cooperation of these students has allowed Alberta Education both to continue defining the standards of writing performance expected in connection with Provincial Achievement Tests and to continue demonstrating approaches taken by students in their writing.

This document includes the valuable contributions of many educators. Sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to the following teachers who served as members of the respective working groups: **Exemplar Selection**—Julie Chrapko, Noreen Holt, Carolyn Powell, Bernadette Sciortino, and Janet Westworth; **Exemplar Validation**—Nzingha Austin, Shaunna Bradshaw, Colleen Doyle, Pat Galandie, Nicole Orr, Andrea Schell, and Melissa Steeves; and **Standards Confirmation**—Rhonda Anderson-Steffes, Trevor Bolze, Desiree DeKock, Angie Hryhoryshyn-Snow, Denise Kissel, Paul Letkeman, Tony Lucas, Jaylene Lyons, and Kelsey Wilson.

We gratefully acknowledge the contributions made by members of the Provincial Achievement Testing Branch and the Document Design and Desktop Publishing Unit of the Provincial Assessment Sector, Alberta Education.
Introduction

The written responses in this document are examples of Grade 9 English Language Arts writing that met or exceeded the acceptable standard for student achievement. Along with the commentaries that accompany them, they should help teachers and students to understand the standards for the Grade 9 English Language Arts Part A: Writing Provincial Achievement Test in relation to the scoring criteria.

The purpose of the sample responses is to illustrate the standards that governed the 2019 marking session and that anchor the selection of similar sample responses for marking sessions in subsequent years. The sample papers and commentaries were used to train markers to apply the scoring criteria consistently and to justify their decisions about scores in terms of each student's work and the scoring criteria.

The sample responses included in this document represent a very small sample of successful approaches to the Functional Writing Assignment.

Cautions

1. The commentaries are brief.

The commentaries were written for groups of markers to discuss and apply during the marking session. Although brief, they provide a model for relating specific examples from student work to the details in a specific scoring criterion.

2. Neither the scoring guide nor the assignment is meant to limit students to a single organizational or rhetorical approach in completing any Provincial Achievement Test assignment.

Students must be free to select and organize their material in a manner that they feel will enable them to best present their ideas. In fact, part of what is being assessed is the final effectiveness of the content, the form and structure, and the rhetorical choices that students make. The student writing in this document illustrates just a few of the many successful organizational and rhetorical strategies used by students. We strongly recommend that you caution your students that there is no preferred approach to an assignment except that which enables the student to communicate his or her own ideas about the topic effectively. We advise you not to draw any conclusions about common patterns of approach taken by students.

3. The sample papers presented in this document must not be used as models to be reiterated.

Because these papers are only illustrations of sample responses to a set topic, students must not memorize the content of any sample response with the intention of reiterating parts or all of a sample response when either completing classroom assignments or writing future Provincial Achievement Tests. The approaches taken by students at the standard of excellence, not their words or ideas, are what students being examined in the future should emulate. In fact, it is hoped that the variety of approaches presented here will inspire students to experiment with diction, syntax, and form and structure in order to develop an individual voice and engage the reader in ideas and forms that the student has considered. Provincial Achievement Test markers and staff at Alberta Education take plagiarism and cheating seriously.
4. *It is essential that each of these examples of student writing be considered as first-draft writing.*

Given more time, students would be expected to produce papers of improved quality, particularly in the dimension of **Content Management**.

5. For further information regarding student performance on **Part A: Writing** of the Grade 9 English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test, access the [Grade 9 English Language Arts 2019 Assessment Highlights](#) document that is posted on the Alberta Education website.

**Suggestions**

To provide each paper with the most accurate and impartial judgment possible, use only the scoring criteria and the standards set by the Exemplars and Rationales. Each student is a person trying to do his or her very best. All students are completely reliant on your careful, professional consideration of their work.

Markers are responsible for

- reviewing and internalizing the scoring criteria and their application to student writing
- applying the scoring criteria impartially, independently, and consistently to all papers
- refraining from marking a response if personal biases—regarding the student’s handwriting, development of topic, idiosyncrasies of voice, and/or political or religious preference—interfere with an impartial judgment of the response
- ensuring that every paper is scored
  - fairly
  - according to the scoring criteria
  - in accordance with the standards illustrated in the Exemplars and Rationales

The scores awarded to student responses must be based solely on the scoring criteria with reference to the Exemplars and Rationales. Fairness to all students is the most important requirement of the marking process.

To facilitate fair and valid assessment of all student work during both local and central marking, **teachers must not** mark or write in student booklets. Teacher-created scoring sheets, which may be used during local marking, are **not** to be included in student test booklets.

Please feel free to contact Provincial Assessment Sector staff members to discuss any questions or concerns.
Maintaining Consistent Standards

For all Provincial Achievement Test scoring sessions, teacher working groups for Exemplar Selection, Exemplar Validation, and Standards Confirmation are used both to establish expectations for student work in relation to the scoring criteria and to ensure scoring consistency within and between marking sessions. These working groups are crucial to ensuring that marks are valid, reliable, and fair measures of student achievement.

Exemplar selection working group

Exemplars are selections of student work, taken from field tests, that best illustrate the scoring criteria. The Exemplar Selection Working Group is composed of experienced teachers representing various regions of the province who read a large sample of students’ written responses. Working-group members select responses that best match the established standards in the Exemplars and Rationales from the previous marking session. The working group then writes Rationales that explain the relationship between each Exemplar and the scoring criteria in each scoring category. The same process also occurs at this time in the selection of Training Papers. These papers are selected to illustrate characteristics of student work that might not be covered in the Exemplars and that might lead to inconsistent judgments or marking difficulties. While Exemplars usually receive consistent scores across all categories, Training Papers typically do not. This is due to the reality that students may not perform with equal ability in every scoring category, as well as to the necessity of evaluating each scoring category as a distinct skill area.

Exemplar validation working group

The Exemplar Validation Working Group, another group of experienced teachers from various provincial regions, reviews and approves the Exemplars, Training Papers, and Rationales that have been prepared for local marking. The working group ensures that the Rationales accurately reflect the standards embedded in the descriptors in the Scoring Guide while verifying that appropriate and accurate references have been made to student work. Working-group members also strive to ensure that there is clarity within the Rationales.

Standards confirmation working group

Teachers from throughout the province who serve on the Standards Confirmation Working Group read a large sample of student responses to Part A: Writing to confirm the appropriateness of the standards set by the test in relation to student work on the Grade 9 English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test. The working group ensures that the Exemplars, Training Papers, and Rationales are appropriate for central marking. Working-group members also select student responses that are to be used for daily Reliability Reviews. Once a day, all markers score a copy of the same student paper for inter-rater reliability. Reliability Reviews confirm that all markers are consistently awarding scores that accurately reflect the standards embedded in the scoring criteria.

Working groups for Exemplar Selection, Exemplar Validation, and Standards Confirmation are part of a complex set of processes that have evolved over the years of Provincial Achievement Test administration. These teacher working groups are crucial to ensuring that standards are consistently and fairly applied to student work.
Local Marking

Classroom teachers are encouraged to assess students’ writing, using the Scoring Guides, Exemplars, and Rationales that are sent to the schools along with the Part A: Writing tests, before returning the tests to Alberta Education. All papers are scored centrally in Edmonton in July.

Scores awarded locally can be submitted to Alberta Education, where they will be used as the first reading of a student’s response. Local markers are to use the “For Teacher Use Only” section on the back of each Part A: Writing test booklet to record their scores by filling in the appropriate circles. The “School Code” and “Accommodations Used” sections should also be completed (see accommodations in the General Information Bulletin for information). If a teacher wants to know how his or her locally awarded scores compare with the scores that the tests received when scored centrally, then he or she must create a three-digit identification number and enter it in the section labelled “ID No.” on the back of each student booklet. No two teachers from the same school should create and use the same ID number. No other marks are to be made in the test booklet by the teacher.

Tests are to be returned to Alberta Education according to the scheduling information in the online General Information Bulletin. The tests will then be scored centrally by Alberta Education as the second reading. Both sets of scores are used when calculating each student’s final mark. In the case of a discrepancy between these two sets of scores, papers will receive a third reading. All three sets of scores will be used to determine the final scores that a paper is awarded. In this way, valid and reliable individual and group results can be reported. Papers that are not assessed locally by teachers will be scored centrally only once.

After central marking has been completed and school reports have been sent to the schools, teachers who submitted their scores with an ID number will receive a confidential report on their marking. This report is called the Local Marker Report and includes the locally awarded scores, centrally awarded scores, third-read scores if applicable, and the final scores assigned.

Teachers may make photocopies of student writing from only the English Language Arts Part A: Writing tests after the May administration of the test for inclusion in portfolios of the year’s work. Copies can be made for parents who request them.

The levels of student achievement in the scoring guides are identified by specific words to describe student achievement in each scoring category. Classroom teachers are encouraged to discuss and use the scoring criteria with their students during the year.

To determine a student’s mark, convert the word descriptors to the following numeric values: Excellent = 5, Proficient = 4, Satisfactory = 3, Limited = 2, and Poor = 1.
A total score for a student’s written response may be calculated by a teacher using the following procedure. For the **Narrative / Essay Writing Assignment**, assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of **Content, Organization, Sentence Structure, Vocabulary, and Conventions**. Then, multiply the scores for **Content** and **Organization** by 2 as these categories are worth twice as much as the other categories. The maximum score possible for Narrative / Essay Writing is 35. For the **Functional Writing Assignment**, assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of **Content** and **Content Management**. Then, multiply each score by 2. The maximum score possible for Functional Writing is 20. To calculate the **Total Part A: Writing Score**, add the Narrative / Essay Writing and Functional Writing scores as follows: **Narrative / Essay Writing /35 (63.6%) + Functional Writing /20 (36.4%) = Total Score /55 (100%)**. The mark for **Part A: Writing** is worth 50% of the total mark for the Grade 9 English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test.

Because students’ responses to the **Narrative / Essay Writing Assignment** vary widely—from philosophical discussions to personal narratives to creative approaches—assessment of the **Narrative / Essay Writing Assignment** on the Provincial Achievement Test will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt’s suggestion that “the evaluation of the answers would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the youngster has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether, necessarily, he has thought about it the way an adult would, or given an adult’s ‘correct’ answer.”


Consider also Grant P. Wiggins’ suggestion to assess students’ writing “with the tact of Socrates: tact to respect the student’s ideas enough to enter them fully—even more fully than the thinker sometimes—and thus the tact to accept apt but unanticipatable or unique responses.”


To assess locally those students with special test-writing needs, specifically a scribed response (test accommodation 5) or a taped response (test accommodation 10), teachers are to refrain from scoring **Conventions** for **Assignment I: Narrative / Essay Writing** as well as **Content Management** for **Assignment II: Functional Writing**.
Scoring Guide: Functional Writing Assignment

**Content**

When marking **Content** appropriate for the Grade 9 Functional Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

- ideas and development of the topic are effective
- the purpose of the assignment is fulfilled with complete and relevant information
- the tone is appropriate for a business letter, and awareness of audience is evident

**Cross-reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Excellent</th>
<th>E</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ideas are perceptive, and development of the topic is clear and effective.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pertinent information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise details that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tone appropriate for the addressee is skillfully maintained.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Proficient</th>
<th>Pf</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ideas are thoughtful, and development of the topic is generally effective.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Significant information is presented, and this information is substantiated by specific details that fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tone appropriate for the addressee is clearly maintained.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Satisfactory</th>
<th>S</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ideas are appropriate, and development of the topic is adequate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Relevant information is presented, and this information is supported by enough detail to fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A tone appropriate for the addressee is generally maintained.</td>
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</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Limited</th>
<th>L</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ideas are superficial, flawed, and/or merely a repetition of the situation presented, and development of the topic is inadequate.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information presented is imprecise, undiscerning, and/or simply a restatement of the prompt provided. Supporting details are insignificant and/or lacking. The purpose of the assignment is only partially fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Some awareness of a tone appropriate for the addressee is evident but may be inconsistently maintained.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Poor</th>
<th>P</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The ideas are overgeneralized, misconstrued, and/or essentially a verbatim reiteration of the situation presented, and development of the topic is ineffective.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Information is irrelevant, missing, and/or essentially copied from the prompt provided. Supporting details are obscure and/or absent. The purpose of the assignment is not fulfilled.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Little awareness of a tone appropriate for the addressee is evident.</td>
<td></td>
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</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Insufficient</th>
<th>INS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess <strong>Content</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note: **Content** and **Content Management** are equally weighted.

Student work must address the task presented in the assignment. Letters that are completely unrelated to the context established in the assignment will be deemed **insufficient** in **Content**.
Content management

When marking Content Management appropriate for the Grade 9 Functional Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

• words and expressions are used accurately and effectively
• sentence structure, usage, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.) are controlled
• the formats of an envelope and a business letter are consistently applied

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Cross-reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 4.1, 4.2

| Excellent  | • Words and expressions used are consistently accurate and effective.
|           | • The writing demonstrates confident and consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that may be present do not impede meaning.
|           | • The envelope and letter are essentially free from format errors and/or omissions. |
| Proficient | • Words and expressions used are usually accurate and effective.
|           | • The writing demonstrates competent and generally consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present rarely impede meaning.
|           | • The envelope and letter contain few format errors and/or omissions. |
| Satisfactory | • Words and expressions used are generally accurate and occasionally effective.
|           | • The writing demonstrates basic control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors may occasionally impede meaning.
|           | • The envelope and letter contain occasional format errors and/or omissions. |
| Limited    | • Words and expressions used are vague, inexact, and/or frequently taken from the prompt.
|           | • The writing demonstrates limited evidence of control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors may frequently impede meaning.
|           | • The envelope and letter contain frequent format errors and/or omissions. |
| Poor       | • Words and expressions used are inaccurate, misused, and/or essentially quoted from the prompt.
|           | • The writing demonstrates a lack of evidence of control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors may severely impede meaning.
|           | • The envelope and letter contain numerous and glaring format errors and/or omissions. |
| Insufficient | • The response has been deemed insufficient in Content. |

Note: Content and Content Management are equally weighted.
Addressing an Envelope

1. Return address

The return address is the name and address of the person sending the letter. The return address appears in the top left corner of the envelope and consists of the sender's name, post office box number (if applicable), apartment or unit number followed by a hyphen (if applicable), street address (if applicable), city or town, province or territory, and postal code.

JEAN BROWN
PO BOX 8207
TORONTO ON  L2R 3V6

JEAN BROWN
905-12963 61 ST
TORONTO ON  L2R 3V6

2. Mailing address

The mailing address is the name and address to which the letter is being sent. It always appears in the centre of the envelope. In a business letter, the address on the envelope is the same as the inside address of the letter. There may be separate lines for the title of the addressee (e.g., Editor, Director, President), the division or department in which the person works, and the name of his or her company, business, or organization.

SAM HUNT
DIRECTOR
THE KNITTING MILL
1409 3 AVE
TORONTO ON  L3V 7O1

Envelope format

1. Addresses should be typed or written in upper-case or block letters.

2. All lines of the addresses should be formatted with a uniform left margin.

3. Punctuation marks (such as commas and periods) should not be used unless they are part of a place name (e.g., ST. JOHN’S).

4. The postal code should appear on the same line as the municipality and province or territory, and should be separated from the municipality and province or territory by two spaces.

5. The two-letter abbreviation for the province or territory should be used wherever possible (see page 11); abbreviations for street (ST), avenue (AVE), and boulevard (BLVD) should also be used.

6. The return address should be formatted in the same way as the mailing address.

For more information, refer to the “Addressing Guidelines” in the Canada Postal Guide on the Canada Post website.
Format of a Business Letter

There are three basic business-letter formats. Any of these formats is appropriate and acceptable for the test. What is most important is that students choose one format and use it consistently so that the overall appearance of the letter is attractive.

Note: Students should double-space word-processed work in order to make revisions more easily. This should be applied only to the body of the letter and not to the other parts.

Parts of a business letter
(see illustrations on page 12)

1. Heading
The heading consists of your address and the date.

PO Box 8207
Toronto ON  L2R 3V6
May 8, 2019

905-12963 61 St
Toronto ON  L2R 3V6
May 8, 2019

2. Inside address
The inside address consists of the name and address of the person to whom you are writing. It usually appears four lines below the heading if a word processor is used or one line below if it is handwritten.

Sam Hunt
Director
The Knitting Mill
1409 3 AVE
Toronto ON  L3V 7O1

3. Salutation
The most traditional salutation or greeting for a business letter is Dear followed by Mr., Ms., Mrs., or Miss, and the person’s last name, followed by a colon.

Dear Mr. Smith:
Dear Mrs. Jones:
Dear Ms. Black:
Dear Miss Green:

4. Body
The body is the main part of the letter in which you write what you have to say to the addressee. Skip one line after the salutation.

- Be concise. Ensure that sufficient information is given so that your purpose is clearly understood and your request is well received.

- Business letters are usually formal, so the language that you use should also be formal.
5. Closing
The closing is the ending to your letter. It appears at the bottom of the letter, directly under the body. Only the first word in the closing should be capitalized. It is always followed by a comma.

Yours truly,
Sincerely,

6. Signature
The signature is your full name signed. Your signature should appear directly below the closing. It should always be written in ink.

7. Your name printed

Commonly used abbreviations for provinces and territories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province/Territory</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>MB</td>
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<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>NB</td>
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<td>Newfoundland and Labrador</td>
<td>NL</td>
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<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>NT</td>
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<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>NS</td>
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<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>NU</td>
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<td>Ontario</td>
<td>ON</td>
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<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>PE</td>
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<tr>
<td>Québec</td>
<td>QC or PQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>SK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon</td>
<td>YT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Business Letter Formats

The block format. In this format, all parts of the letter run along the left side of the page (margin). No paragraphs in the body are indented.

The modified block format. In this format, the heading, the closing, the signature, and the printed name run along the right margin. All the other parts run along the left margin.

The semi-block format. This format is the same as the block format, except that the paragraphs in the body are indented.
Part A: Writing – Description and Instructions

Grade 9 Provincial Achievement Test

English Language Arts

Part A: Writing

Description

Part A: Writing contributes 50% of the total Grade 9 English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test mark and consists of two assignments:

• Assignment I: Narrative / Essay Writing
  This assignment contains some material for you to consider. You must then respond in writing to the topic presented in the assignment. You should take about 70 minutes to complete Assignment I.
  Value: Approximately 65% of the total Part A: Writing test mark

• Assignment II: Functional Writing
  This assignment describes a situation to which you must respond in the format of a business letter. You should take about 40 minutes to complete Assignment II.
  Value: Approximately 35% of the total Part A: Writing test mark

Before beginning to write, you will have 10 minutes to talk with your classmates (in groups of two to four) about both writing assignments or to think about them alone. During this time, you may record your ideas on the Planning pages provided.

Time: 2 hours. You have up to 4 hours to complete this test should you need it.

Do not write your name anywhere in this booklet. You may make corrections and revisions directly on your written work.

2019

Instructions

• You may use the following print references:
  – a dictionary (English and/or bilingual)
  – a thesaurus

• Complete both assignments.

• Record your ideas and/or make a plan before you write. Do this on the Planning pages.

• Write in pencil, or blue or black ink, on the lined pages provided.

• You are to do only one handwritten copy of your writing.

Additional Instructions for Students Using Word Processors

• Format your work using an easy-to-read 12-point or larger font, such as Times.

• Double-space your final printed copy. For the Functional Writing assignment, this should be applied to the body of the business letter but not to the other parts.

• Staple your printed work to the page indicated for word-processed work for each assignment. Hand in all work.

• Indicate in the space provided on the back cover that you have attached word-processed pages.

• You may make handwritten corrections and revisions directly on your printed work.
Assignment II: Functional Writing

(suggested time—40 minutes)

Read the situation below and complete the assignment that follows.

Situation

You are Dana Cline, a Grade 9 student who attends Granite Hills School in Merridale, Alberta. As an individual who has benefited from having positive role models in your life, you recognize the potential merits of a mentorship program. Positive aspects of a mentorship program, for both mentors and the students that they mentor, may include:

- fulfillment of personal goals
- social interaction
- academic success
- strengthening of communication skills
- practical life experience
- increased self-confidence and self-esteem

Your school does not have a mentorship program, but you believe that older students can have a positive influence on younger ones. As a result, you are interested in establishing a school-based mentorship program that would provide Grade 9 students with the opportunity to mentor younger students.

You have decided to write a business letter to Ms. Catherine Flores, the school principal, to ask her to support the establishment of a mentorship program at Granite Hills School. Present your ideas regarding the advantages for all participants in such a program. In your letter, you may choose to present suggestions regarding how to ensure the success of the program.

Assignment

Write a business letter to Ms. Catherine Flores, principal of Granite Hills School, to present your arguments that support the establishment of a school-based mentorship program. Provide enough information to convince Ms. Flores of the benefits of such a program for both mentors and the students that they mentor.

When writing, be sure to

- identify the purpose of the letter
- explain the details of the situation and request
- organize your thoughts appropriately in sentences and paragraphs
- use vocabulary that is appropriate and effective
- sign your letter “Dana Cline”—do not sign your own name
- address the envelope on page 15
Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Catherine Flores
Granite Hills School is located in the town of Merridale, Alberta. The postal code is T6Y 4R1 and the post office box number is 1545. Ms. Catherine Flores is the principal.

Dana Cline
Dana Cline lives on Bloomfield Lane in the neighbouring town of Banworth, Alberta. The house number is 97. The postal code is T7N 8J6.

Envelope
Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2019: General Impressions

Throughout the 2019 marking session, every effort was made to reward student strengths where evident rather than to critique what was missing or speculate on what a student should have added or included. When marking student responses, markers were encouraged to conscientiously return to the “Focus” section of the scoring categories to consider the extent to which each student had demonstrated competence in the criteria listed. There were several scoring descriptors in each scoring category to be assessed in order to arrive at judgments regarding the qualities of a response. Markers were encouraged to review—at the start of each marking day—each assignment and the prompt materials provided in the test booklet with the expectation that many students’ ideas regarding the assignments were informed by details within the prompts. Occasionally, markers needed to re-read a response to appreciate what a student had attempted and, in fact, accomplished. All markers acknowledged that student responses were first drafts.

In the Functional Writing Assignment, nearly all students were able to connect the context provided in the “Situation” to their own experiences. From the viewpoint of “Dana Cline” (“a Grade 9 student who attends Granite Hills School” and is “interested in establishing a school-based mentorship program that would provide Grade 9 students with the opportunity to mentor younger students”), the majority of students were able to successfully present ideas regarding “positive role models,” “the potential merits of a mentorship program,” and “Positive aspects of a mentorship program, for both mentors and the students that they mentor.” Many students cited how Granite Hills School “does not have a mentorship program” and commented on how a mentorship program could provide opportunities for “older students” to “have a positive influence on younger ones.” Some students also added “suggestions regarding how to ensure the success of the program” with regard to organizing, timetabling, and supervising the participants in the program.

Many students directly referenced information provided in the “Situation” regarding the “establishment of a mentorship program at Granite Hills School” and the “advantages for all participants in such a program” including “fulfillment of personal goals,” “social interaction,” “academic success,” “strengthening of communication skills,” “practical life experience,” and “increased self-confidence and self-esteem.” When assessing student responses, markers recognized that, although many students adhered closely to the information provided in the test booklet, doing so was acceptable given the manner in which the assignment was framed primarily within outcomes specified in General Outcome 3: Managing Ideas and Information. The extent to which these guidelines were analyzed and particularized to achieve the student’s purpose in the “Assignment”—to “Write a business letter to Ms. Catherine Flores, principal of Granite Hills School,” to “present your arguments that support the establishment of a school-based mentorship program” and to “Provide enough information to convince Ms. Flores of the benefits of such a program for both the mentors and the students that they mentor”—distinguished the quality of student responses.

Most students were able to successfully present ideas aimed at encouraging Ms. Flores to consider the beneficial impact of one-on-one assistance, reassurance, and advice on students who are mentored. Some students commented on the success achieved by students who are
mentored in attaining a goal such as passing a test, winning a race, or fulfilling a long-held dream. Other students analyzed how mentors gain experience in providing support to others, confidence in themselves in witnessing the success of those they mentor, and skills that will serve them well in adulthood. In other responses, students elaborated on the ability of mentors to serve as confidantes who provide encouragement by sharing insights and expertise, and offering suggestions regarding potential courses of action. In addition, some students included anecdotal illustrations of individuals who have acted as mentors, particularly close friends, family members, teachers, and community members, or shared personal experiences documenting the impact of a mentor on their lives.

As in other years, markers were to acknowledge that there was no prescribed length for responses to the Functional Writing Assignment. While some students concisely fulfilled the requirements of the task, others elaborated more fully on ideas that they presented. Such brevity or embellishment was neither beneficial nor detrimental in and of itself, and markers were to take into account the overall effectiveness of each response when assessing its quality. With regard to envelope and letter format, recommendations were provided in the guidelines of Canada Post. Other formats/styles were to be considered equally acceptable and markers were to assess the extent to which a student had been consistent in applying a chosen format to both the envelope and letter rather than “deduct marks” for deviations from the Canada Post guidelines. There were a number of student responses in which there were varying amounts of white space between the heading, inside address, and salutation in the letter, and some students single-spaced the body of the letter while others used double-spacing. These factors specifically were not to be viewed as detrimental to the quality of student work and were not be penalized in the assessment of “Content Management.”

The Functional Writing Assignment provided each student with the opportunity to successfully demonstrate his or her attainment of text creation outcomes in the Program of Studies. Most students succeeded in meeting the achievement standards expected of students in the Functional Writing Assignment on Part A: Writing of the 2019 Grade 9 English Language Arts Provincial Achievement Test.
Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2019: Qualities of Student Writing That Did Not Meet the Acceptable Standard

Students whose responses demonstrated qualities characteristic of “Poor” or “Limited” scores in “Content” sometimes relied on verbatim reiteration of information presented in the assignment with little of their own thinking or development. Other students misconstrued the role of the writer of the letter to be that of the principal of Granite Hills School advocating the need for a school-based mentorship program or that of a parent wishing to become a mentor at the school. In other responses, students misrepresented information when contending that a mentorship program “Has been working for years at the school,” that the “costs of paying the mentors will be covered by bake sales or a gofundme page,” or that the program is dependent on “mentors who live in our community that might not want to work for free.” In some instances, students mistakenly argued against the need for a mentorship program or inappropriately contended that a mentorship program would “give students free time when they can get into trouble” or “benefit the teachers more than any of the kids.” In some instances, students used an inappropriately inflammatory tone in a misguided effort to persuade Ms. Flores to support the establishment of a school-based mentorship program at the school.

Ideas such as these are shown in the following excerpts from student responses that received “Poor” or “Limited” scores:

• “I'd like to purpose the idea of a mentor program in our school this program may not be for everyone but it will be good for some. [...] No one will be forced into the program it is optional for who ever can be bothered to do it, I don’t know how many will join it.”

• “The teachers here just laff and walk away from helping the students. They dont help the students when the ask for help how are they sposed to be able to lern any thing we need a mentor program to stop everone from been grumpy and wasteing time.”

• “Our genration is geting worse for me because I have seen bad habits depression and self esteem. We donot have a mentor ship program so we will keep doing this cuz we don’t care about anything. Its all up to you if you want to do some thing or don’t.”

• “Ther are quite a few merets in Granite Hill school including me, so I have put together a mentorship program. We will give good mentoring and need you to hold meetings to tell everybody how to do it for them selves.”

• “My son goes to Granite Hills School and he needs some one to help him. He has difficulty learning and would do better if he had a tutor. You should have a mentor program that could provide tutors to kids like my son so they can do better in school.”

• “I am a resident of the community of Merridale and I would like to volunteer for the mentorship program. I have had a lot of jobs in my lifetime and learned a lot of things that I could share with the youth to help them make good career choices.”
• “It would be fun if we had a mentor program lots of kids will join. [...] It would be a good support for the hole school and put kids on the track to going were they want and doing what ever they want and have fun at school.”

• “Don’t worry I know what you’re thinking and you can stop right there. It won’t cost any thing and will run its self so that it can keep going into the future and the students futures. It’s so obvious how could any body who cares not say yes to this program.”

• “As principal of Granite Hills School, I have decided to establish a mentorship program. We need this mentorship program there because all the students in the younger grades are failing there classes. We need to plan different stuff to teach.”

• “A mentorship program is a utter waste of time that will just give kids the chance to goof off and get in trouble at school just so teachers can leave the room more. Everbody should just look after themselfs like they always do.”

In student responses scored “Poor” or “Limited” in “Content,” such as those from which these excerpts were taken, ideas were superficial, flawed, and/or merely a repetition of the situation presented in the assignment or overgeneralized, misconstrued, and/or essentially a verbatim reiteration of the situation presented in the assignment. Development of the topic was inadequate or ineffective. Information presented was imprecise, undiscerning, and/or simply a restatement of the prompt provided or irrelevant, missing, and/or essentially copied from the prompt provided. Supporting details were insignificant and/or lacking or obscure and/or absent, and the purpose of the assignment was only partially fulfilled or not fulfilled. Some or little awareness of a tone appropriate for the addressee was evident. In responses scored “Poor” or “Limited” in “Content Management,” words and expressions used were vague, inexact, and/or frequently taken from the prompt or inaccurate, misused, and/or essentially quoted from the prompt. The writing demonstrated either limited evidence or a lack of evidence of control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that were present may have frequently or severely impeded meaning. The envelope and letter contained frequent or numerous and glaring format errors and/or omissions.

As in other years, the connection between the assignment and the ideas contained in some student responses was difficult to determine. Markers were to consult with group leaders when drawing conclusions about whether or not a response sufficiently addressed the task presented in the assignment. Most often, there was evidence that students had implicitly addressed the topic and/or prompts, and the responses were assessed accordingly. If, however, extensive examination of a student’s work by both a marker and a group leader led to the conclusion that the response was “Insufficient,” then the floor supervisors in consultation with the examination manager made a final judgment.
Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2019: Qualities of Student Writing That Met the Acceptable Standard

Students whose responses received a score of “Satisfactory” in “Content” typically recognized that “Grade 9 students have a lot to offer the younger students in the school” and “could share their experience and offer advice” to students that they mentor. Many students highlighted the benefits to the students who are mentored—including “having positive role models to follow,” “reaching a goal they didn’t think they’d achieve,” “passing a class they were failing,” and “being confident and able to communicate with other people”—as well as the benefits for mentors—including “having someone to look up to them,” “being a leader and showing how to do something,” gaining “maturity and the respect of others,” and “seeing how students that are mentored can become successful in their lives.” Some students elaborated on the sense of belonging experienced by participants in the program. Still others included reflections on positive experiences with mentors not only in school but in their personal lives as well as in the lives of family members. In some responses, students suggested that mentoring could “take place at noon or after school” or could involve “class time when mentors could give assistance to students in classes of teachers requesting it.” Most students understood the need to provide Ms. Flores, principal of the school, with information that would encourage her to support the establishment of a “mentorship program operated by students of the school.”

Qualities of student writing awarded “Satisfactory” scores are evident in the following excerpts from student responses:

• “I am a grade nine student of Granite Hills School. I’ve benefitted from all of my mentors from when I was little and I still look up to those people today. That’s why I was thinking of starting a mentoring program for grade nine students. […] Older students can have a big affect on young ones, they could teach them a lot of things like strengthening their communication skills and be an example for how to share ideas and work with others.”

• “A mentorship program can greatly strengthen confidence for students who do not beleive in their selves enough. This program can decrease the chances of failure in tests and possibly end the lowering of students marks. […] The older students can help prepare young students for challenges they are going to come across in the up coming grades they are getting into. They can give advice and provide support when the young student's need it.”

• “Academic success could come from the mentorship program by having a homework buddy, kind of like a tutor. The student and his mentor could meet at noon or after school in an empty classroom or the school cafeteria. A older student would help the younger student by teaching new ideas in a different way which could help the understanding of the new topics.”

• “I myself have benefited from having role models in my life in the last few years. I’ve had team mates that have helped me become a better person to others. I’ve had coaches and teachers that have helped me push myself to my limits as far as I can possibly go. I really recognize the potential merits of a mentorship program. It could really help and push students to reach their goals.”
• “A mentorship program would improve communication skills. Communication skills are crucial later in life. Good communication skills can make applying and obtaining a job quicker and stress-free. A mentor can show how good communication can make getting a point across in a speech or a presentation easier. You can also understand others better and that’s an important skill.”

• “It can be hard for young students who come to our school to feel comfortable because older students can seem scary. Setting up a mentorship program could help that. A mentor can help them out with school or solve a problem they are having. Having a mentor can give a younger student someone to talk to or look up to who will look out for them.”

• “The students could benefit greatly from this. In this program, older students could have a positive influence on the younger students, such as the grade 9s. I believe that the student body can benefit immensely from having this program. Because if the younger students are talking to the older students, they could learn how to socially interact if they had not had the chance to before.”

• “A mentorship program at our school would help younger students develop good habits, learn important life skills, and be able to pass their courses. Older students can learn and mature as a result of being a mentor. They will gain skills that could help them when they get a job where they have to work with other people. […] The school as a whole will have a friendlier vibe and students will feel welcome knowing they have someone to share their day with.”

• “Kids in younger grades are still learning and growing. They are still learning how to communicate and get along with each other. A mentor can help them with social interaction by talking to them and showing them how to act towards others. […] Once they can do things on their own each student will know that they can succeed at what they want to do in life.”

• “Supporting this mentorship program will help many students keep their life going in a positive direction. They will gain confidence and be able to interact with people around them. If you want and decided to support this program it will mean a lot to us. Thank you for taking your time reading this letter. If you would like to discuss further about this program you can reach me at DCline@myschool.ca.”

In responses scored “Satisfactory” in “Content,” as illustrated in these excerpts, students presented appropriate ideas and adequately developed the topic. Relevant information was presented and supported by enough detail to fulfill the purpose of the assignment. A tone appropriate for the addressee was generally maintained. In responses scored “Satisfactory” in “Content Management,” words and expressions used were generally accurate and occasionally effective. The writing demonstrated basic control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics and may have contained errors that occasionally impeded meaning. The envelope and letter contained occasional format errors and/or omissions.
Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Catherine Flores

Granite Hills School is located in the town of Merridale, Alberta. The postal code is T6Y 4R1 and the post office box number is 1545. Ms. Catherine Flores is the principal.

Dana Cline

Dana Cline lives on Bloomfield Lane in the neighbouring town of Banworth, Alberta. The house number is 97. The postal code is T7N 8J6.

Envelope
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.
Dana Cline  
Banworth, AB  T7N 8J6  
May 8, 2019

Ms. Catherine Flores, Principal  
Granite Hills High School  
Box 1545  
Merridale AB  T6Y 4R1

Dear Ms. Catherine Flores:

I am Dana Cline, a grade 9 student of Granite Hills High School. I have personally benefited from having a great role model in my life. That’s why I think that it would be a great idea to have a mentorship program. I really do think that having a mentorship program would help the kids being mentored and the ones mentoring. My idea is to have the grade 9 students be given the opportunity to mentor a younger student.

A few of the benefits of having a mentorship program is that it has been shown to help students with achieving their goals. It can increase academic success in school for both the student and the mentor with higher grades. Another benefit is that it can help show both sides of the mentorship about getting better life skills through real experience. When an older student mentors a younger student it can teach them about better communication with people. When I had a mentor, it really helped me get more confident and it
helped me feel good about myself. A mentor ship program would really be great for our school.

I really think that a mentorship program would be a good idea. Thank you so much for your time and consideration. Please write me back at dcline@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Dana Cline.
Rationale for Student Exemplar – Satisfactory

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<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
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<td>• The ideas related to “a mentorship program” in which “the grade 9 students [would] be given the opportunity to mentor a younger student” are appropriate, and development of the topic—in the discussion of how the writer personally benefited from having a great role model” by becoming “more confident” and feeling “good”—is adequate.</td>
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<td>• Relevant information pertaining to “having a mentorship program [that] would help the kids being mentored and the ones mentoring” is presented, and this information is supported by enough detail (regarding “the benefits of having a mentorship program” such as helping “students with achieving their goals,” “academic success in school for both the student and the mentor with higher grades,” “better life skills through real experience,” and “better communication with people”) to fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
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<td>• As seen in “I really do think that,” “My idea is to have,” “Another benefit is that it can help,” “When an older student mentors a younger student,” “When I had a mentor, it really helped me,” “A mentor ship program would really be great for our school,” and “Thank you so much for your time and consideration,” a tone appropriate for the addressee is generally maintained.</td>
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<td><strong>Content Management</strong></td>
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<td>• As shown in “That’s why I think that it would be a great idea,” “help the kids being mentored and the ones mentoring,” “mentor a younger student,” “it has been shown to,” “show both sides of the mentorship,” “it can teach them,” “helped me feel good about myself,” and “would be really great for our school,” words and expressions used are generally accurate and occasionally effective.</td>
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<td>• The writing demonstrates basic control of correct sentence structure (as in “I am Dana Cline, a grade 9 student of Granite Hills High School”), usage (as in “I really think that a mentorship program would be a good idea”), and mechanics (as in “Please write me back at <a href="mailto:dcline@gmail.com">dcline@gmail.com</a>”). Errors—such as in “personaly,” “opportunity,” and “A few of the benefits of having a mentorship program is”—may occasionally impede meaning.</td>
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<td>• Occasional format errors and omissions are contained in the envelope—in incorrect presentation of “97 Bloomfield lane” in the return address and inclusion of punctuation in “Ms. Catherine Flores” in the mailing address—and letter—in the inclusion of “Dana Cline,” omission of the street address, and inclusion of punctuation in “Banworth, AB” in the heading, incorrect presentation of “Dear Ms. Catherine Flores:” in the salutation, and inclusion of punctuation in the printed name.</td>
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Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.
Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2019: Qualities of Student Writing That Met the Standard of Excellence

In responses awarded scores of “Proficient” or “Excellent” in “Content,” students often broadened the discussion of the merits of establishing a school-based mentorship program to the wider implications of strengthening the relationships and interactions among students in the school and in the community beyond the school. In other responses, students examined how “the program will be cost-effective because all mentors will perform services on a voluntary basis,” how “mentors will be given guidelines and the training needed to be effective in providing guidance to those they mentor,” and how “Student Council members will assume responsibility for and coordinate the enlistment of mentors, identification of students in need of assistance, and monitoring of meetings between mentors and mentees.” Some students commented on the diverse backgrounds and interests of students and of the significance of mentors in promoting the success of all students. Other students effectively contended that Ms. Flores and the teachers in the school would see an improvement in student behaviour and in their ability to perform well in their classes. In some responses, students referenced the example of other schools and evaluated the successful elements that could be incorporated into a program at Granite Hills School, while other students argued that such a program at Granite Hills School could provide an example to other schools in the jurisdiction to follow. Still other students reasoned that the connections made between mentors and the students they mentor could forge bonds that might have a lifelong impact on their lives.

The excerpts below were taken from student responses that received “Proficient” or “Excellent” scores:

• “Adolescence is a difficult time in the lives of many students, and sometimes they can feel uncertain, confused, or isolated from others. This can result in failure in school and the inability to form relationships with other students. Moreover, it can have a detrimental impact on individuals that can last into adulthood. […] A school-based mentorship program would afford students the opportunity to make connections in what could become a support network involving all of the students in the school. It would raise the morale of students and give them a sense of pride.”

• “I have had many role models who have inspired me to accomplish my dreams. Their genuine interest in and concern for my well-being gave me support when I was uncertain of what to do or lacked the insight needed to make a wise decision. […] Under the supervision of a mentor, younger students at our school can adopt problem solving strategies and explore alternative courses of action, gaining wisdom and experience along the way. Mentors, too, benefit from the leadership skills acquired in guiding and empowering those they mentor. The experience they gain will serve them well in adulthood, especially if they become parents someday.”
• “In a mentorship program students will become part of what is, in essence an extended family, with mentors filling the role of an older brother or sister in advising and providing reassurance to a youngster. This would be particularly important for students who do not have an older sibling to confide in or look up to. Young children lack experience and have impressionable minds that can be directed down a path of success during their years at Granite Hills School. They and their mentors can set goals to achieve and work together step by step toward their fulfillment.”

• “When I arrived at Granite Hills School one year ago, I was disappointed to find that there were no school programs to help me get to know my new environment. I spent a lot of time getting to know where my classes were, what to do to access the library, how to find the lunchroom, and sometimes I felt lost. I was unsure of how to ask the students who were bustling through their day for help and disappointed in myself for not having the courage to speak up. […] A mentorship program would give young students confidence and courage in getting to know older students and learning to ask questions. Mentors could save the students they mentor from the feelings of isolation that I had.”

• “Through one-on-one interactions, mentors can use strategies to help students with different learning styles and give them practice in learning about their own abilities. Mentors can share their own successes and failures and demonstrate how they are able to manage their daily schedule and make effective use of class time. Students who are mentored will trust in their mentor and feel comfortable asking questions they might not other wise ask an older person.”

• “Throughout my years at Granite Hills School, I have seen how well the students get along with each other and I appreciate all that I have learned. But I am most greatful for the times when a kind student welcomed me at their lunch table in the cafeteria or pointed me toward the classroom I couldn’t find. Now that I am in Grade 9 I try to go out of my way to help any other student who looks like they could use some advice or support or just a friendly hello. I would like to maximize the chances that other students will be like me and a mentorship program is a great way to do it.”

• “What better way is there to show students who are new to the school that they are welcome and enable them to become acquainted with their teachers and the procedures of the school? Grade 9 students have knowledge gained from their years at the school that can save other students from being frustrated or feeling alone. As mentors they will make a young student feel important and glad that someone cares about them. A mentor will help them explore the unknown and take risks if they show them that they have their unconditional support regardless of the outcome.”

• “Mentors would also assist teachers in their classrooms, helping students with organization by making checklists of daily tasks, a schedule for extra curricular activities, or developing note taking and good study habits. […] As principal, I am sure that you would be interested in being able to increase the academic achievement of students. Not only that, a mentorship program can create a stronger school community where every student feels they belong.”

• “There are reciprocal benefits for mentors and the students they mentor. When a younger student passes a test or completes a project, their mentor can feel satisfaction in helping them get there. Each time a youngster scores a goal on the soccer field the mentor who showed them how to strategize and outmaneuver the opponent can cheer loudly from the sidelines. […] Implementing this program would not be disruptive in any way to the day to day operation of the school. In fact, a mentorship program could make every day at Granite Hills School go even more smoothly and give students a place where anything is possible.”
• “The success of this program rests not only on the students involved but in the support it receives from the school’s administration and teaching staff. I have shared my ideas with some of my teachers, who have expressed interest and offered feedback, and I believe that it is possible to make a mentorship program a reality at our school. I would welcome the opportunity to prepare a presentation that I could share with you if we could meet in person. Please contact me at Dana.Cline@GHS.ca at your convenience. Thank you for your consideration of my proposal. I look forward to hearing from you.”

Student responses scored “Proficient” or “Excellent” in “Content,” such as those from which these excerpts were taken, were characterized by ideas that were thoughtful or perceptive, and development of the topic was generally effective or clear and effective. Significant or pertinent information was presented, and this information was substantiated or enhanced by specific or precise details that fulfilled the purpose of the assignment. A tone appropriate for the addressee was clearly or skillfully maintained. In responses scored “Proficient” or “Excellent” in “Content Management,” words and expressions used were usually or consistently accurate and effective. The writing demonstrated either competent and generally consistent control or confident and consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Any errors present rarely or in no way impeded meaning. The envelope and letter contained few, if any, format errors or omissions.
Student Exemplar – Proficient

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Catherine Flores

Granite Hills School is located in the town of Merridale, Alberta. The postal code is T6Y 4R1 and the post office box number is 1545. Ms. Catherine Flores is the principal.

Dana Cline

Dana Cline lives on Bloomfield Lane in the neighbouring town of Banworth, Alberta. The house number is 97. The postal code is T7N 8J6.

Envelope

DANA CLINE
97 BLOOMFIELD LANE
BANWORTH, AB T7N 8J6

CATHERINE FLORES
PRINCIPAL
GRANITE HILLS SCHOOL
P.O. BOX 1545
MERRIDALE, AB T6Y 4R1
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

B who you are
P why you're writing
D detail how X would run
D detail benefits
O operations
G goodbye
97 Bloomfield Lane
Banworthy, AB T7N 8J6
May 7, 2019

Catherine Flores, Principal
Granite Hills School
P.O. Box 1545
Merridale, AB T6Y 4R1

Ms. Flores,

My name is Dana Cline, a grade nine student attending Granite Hills School. I did very well academically from having positive role models in my day to day life. Therefore, I propose that the school should start a school-sponsored mentorship program that would allow the grade nine students to have the opportunity of mentoring younger students.

When children grow up with a role model to help them throughout school, they grow up to be smarter and more confident. The mentorship program will give the grade nines a responsibility
to be the role models for the school's younger learners. Each grade nine student will be assigned a few students in each grade and be their mentor for the rest of the school year. When the younger students have an upcoming test, they will have an older, experienced role model to help them prepare. Even if the assigned student just has trouble on general homework, or needs someone to cheer them on in gym class, the mentor can be allowed to take time cut of class and accompany the student.

The benefits of the mentorship program are that academic skills will improve, and social skills will drastically increase. The students and mentors will also have a confidence and self-esteem boost. The grade nine students will be rewarded for accomplishing their responsibility of being one's role model, and it will prepare them for parenthood. The younger students will have the experience of what it's like to have a mentor, and have proper "training" to be one when they become grade nine students. Overall, the current and future students of this school will benefit socially and academically.
If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to email me at: DanaCline4@gmail.com or call me at 403 555 7087.

Thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I hope to hear from you soon.

Sincerely,

Dana Cline
# Rationale for Student Exemplar – Proficient

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<tr>
<td><strong>Pf</strong></td>
<td>The ideas—related to “a school-sponsored mentorship program that would allow the grade nine students to have the opportunity of mentoring younger students” and “be the role models for the schools younger learners”—are thoughtful, and development of the topic (in the arguments that “When children grow up with a role model to help them throughout school, they grow up to be smarter and more confident,” that “The grade nine students will be rewarded for accomplishing their responsibility of being one’s role model, and it will prepare them for parenthood,” and that “The younger students will have the experience of what it’s like to have a mentor, and have proper ‘training’ to be one when they become grade nine students”) is generally effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pf</strong></td>
<td>Significant information is presented (regarding how “Each grade nine student will be assigned a few students in each grade and be their mentor for the rest of the school year” and “allowed to take time out of class and accompany the student,” how “academic skills will improve, and social skills will drastically increase,” and how “students and mentors will also have a confidence and self-esteem boost”), and this information is substantiated by specific details—pertaining to preparing for “an upcoming test” with “an older, experienced role model to help them,” having “trouble on general homework,” and needing “someone to cheer them on in gym class”—that fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pf</strong></td>
<td>A tone appropriate for the addressee (as in “I do very well academically from having positive role models in my day to day life,” “I propose that the school should start,” “The benefits of the mentor ship program are,” “Overall, the current and future students of this school will benefit socially and academically,” “If you have any questions, please don’t hesitate to email me at <a href="mailto:DanaCline4@gmail.com">DanaCline4@gmail.com</a> or call me at 403 555 7087,” and “Thank you for taking the time to read this letter”) is clearly maintained.</td>
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<tr>
<th><strong>Pf</strong></th>
<th><strong>Content Management</strong></th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pf</strong></td>
<td>Words and expressions used (such as “allow the grade nine students to,” “grow up to be smarter and more confident,” “be their mentor for the rest of the school year,” “When the younger students have an upcoming test,” “an older, experienced role model,” “the assigned student,” “take time out of class and accompany the student,” “prepare them for parenthood,” and “proper ‘training’ to be one when they become grade nine students”) are usually accurate and effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pf</strong></td>
<td>As seen in “My name is Dana Cline, a grade nine student attending Granite Hills School,” “The mentorship program will give the grade nines a responsibility to be the role models for the schools younger learners,” and “I hope to hear from you soon,” the writing demonstrates competent and generally consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present such as in “acidemically,” “therefore I propose,” and “mentor ship program” rarely impede meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Pf</strong></td>
<td>The envelope and letter contain few format errors, such as the inclusion of punctuation in “Banworth, AB” in the return address and heading as well as in “P.O. Box” and “Merridale, AB” in the mailing address and inside address, and the use of a comma in “Ms. Flores,” in the salutation.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.
Student Exemplar – Excellent

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Catherine Flores

Granite Hills School is located in the town of Merridale, Alberta. The postal code is T6Y 4R1 and the post office box number is 1545. Ms. Catherine Flores is the principal.

Dana Cline

Dana Cline lives on Bloomfield Lane in the neighbouring town of Banworth, Alberta. The house number is 97. The postal code is T7N 8J6.

Envelope

DANA CLINE
97 BLOOMFIELD LANE
BANWORTH AB  T7N 8J6

CATHERINE FLORES
PRINCIPAL
GRANITE HILLS SCHOOL
PO BOX 1545
MERRIDALE AB  T6Y 4R1
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Practice life skills:
- Patience with children
- Better teacher
- Leadership skills

Social skills:
- Interact with others
  - Role model make you want to be better
  - Learn other ways of teaching
97 Bloomfield Lane  
Banworth AB T7N 8J6  
May 8, 2019

Catherine Flores  
Principal  
Granite Hills School  
PO Box 1545  
Merridale AB T6Y 4R1

Dear Ms. Flores:

My name is Dana Cline, and I am a Grade 9 student at Granite Hills School. I am writing to you because I believe our school should have a school-based mentorship program. This program would give Grade 9 students the opportunity to mentor younger students. I believe if the program were implemented, it would be largely beneficial to all the individuals involved.

A mentorship program would be a great way for students to learn new skills and strengthen the ones they already have. The program would help all the students involved better their ability to interact socially with others. Younger students would learn how to better interact with older students, and older students would learn to have patience with younger students. The Grade 9 students would also learn leadership skills. They would learn how to teach others in an effective way. By working closely with a younger student, a mentor could gain an understanding of their different learning style and help them to succeed in achieving their goals. These skills could help them later in life, such as in a workplace. They may need to train someone for a
specific job. Since they would have had experience teaching others, they would be better able to communicate with the other person.

The establishment of a mentorship program would result in an overall higher academic achievement for many students. I have had many positive role models in my life, and they have driven me to work harder in my education. Mentors may offer suggestions on how to research a topic, how to present ideas in an essay, or how to make study notes for an upcoming test. I believe it would be beneficial for the younger students to have the same experience. If younger students were to have a positive role model, it would enable them to gain confidence in their abilities and in themselves. Moreover, those teachers who are currently spending time out of class working with students would be provided with more time to do other tasks, such as marking and planning lessons. Granite Hills School could show other schools how a school-based mentorship program could be successfully implemented.

I wish to thank you for taking time to read my letter. I believe a mentorship program would help our school in many ways. I hope to hear back from you soon and look forward to further discussing such a worthwhile program. You can reach me at 587-555-5555 or email me at ClineD@GHSmail.com.

Sincerely,

D. Cline

Dana Cline
Rationale for Student Exemplar – Excellent

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<th>Score</th>
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<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
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<td></td>
<td>• As seen in the discussion of how “a school-based mentorship program [...] would give Grade 9 students the opportunity to mentor younger students” and “be largely beneficial to all the individuals involved,” how mentors who “would have had experience teaching others [...] would be better able to communicate with the other person,” and how “a mentorship program would result in an overall higher academic achievement for many students,” the ideas are perceptive, and development of the topic—in the reasoning that “Younger students would learn how to better interact with older students, and older students would learn to have patience with younger students,” that “Grade 9 students would also learn leadership skills” and “how to teach others in an effective way,” that “If younger students were to have a positive role model, it would enable them to gain confidence in their abilities and in themselves,” and that “teachers who are currently spending time out of class working with students would be provided with more time to do other tasks, such as marking and planning lessons”—is clear and effective.</td>
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<td>• Pertinent information is presented with regard to enabling “students to learn new skills and strengthen the ones they already have,” helping “all the students involved better their ability to interact socially with others,” and gaining “an understanding of their different learning style and help them to succeed in achieving their goals,” and this information is enhanced by precise details (documenting the “skills [that] could help them later in life, such as in a workplace” where “They may need to train someone for a specific job,” the possibility that “Mentors may offer suggestions on how to research a topic, how to present ideas in an essay, or how to make study notes for an upcoming test,” and the expectation that “Granite Hills School could show other schools how a school-based mentorship program could be successfully implemented”) that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
</tr>
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<td>• A tone appropriate for the addressee is skillfully maintained, such as in “I am writing to you because I believe,” “A mentorship program would be a great way,” “I have had many positive role models in my life, and they have driven me to work harder in my education,” “I believe it would be beneficial for the younger students to have the same experience,” and “I wish to thank you for taking time to read my letter. I believe a mentorship program would help our school in many ways. I hope to hear back from you soon and look forward to further discussing such a worthwhile program.”</td>
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<tr>
<td>Score</td>
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</table>
| **Excellent E** | **Content Management**  
- Words and expressions used—such as in “learn new skills and strengthen the ones they already have,” “better their ability to interact socially with others,” “Younger students would learn how to better interact with older students, and older students would learn to have patience with younger students,” “By working closely with a younger student, a mentor could gain,” “would have had experience teaching others,” “better able to communicate with the other person,” “driven me to work harder,” “Mentors may offer suggestions,” “provided with more time to do other tasks,” and “show other schools how a school-based mentorship program could be successfully implemented”—are **consistently accurate and effective**.  
- The writing demonstrates **confident** and **consistent control** of correct **sentence structure** (as seen in “My name is Dana Cline, and I am a Grade 9 student at Granite Hills School”), **usage** (as seen in “I believe if the program were implemented, it would be largely beneficial to all the individuals involved”), and **mechanics** (as seen in “You can reach me at 587-555-5555 or email me at ClineD@GHSmail.com”). **Errors** that may be present do **not impede** meaning.  
- The **envelope** and **letter** are **essentially free** from **format errors** and **omissions**. **Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.** |
Appendix: Marker Training Papers

The Marker Training Papers are intended to provide markers with an opportunity to

- apply the standards embedded in the scoring criteria and illustrated in the Exemplars and Rationales
- grapple with some of the more complex decisions that markers face
- read and score the Training Papers according to the scoring criteria
- compare individually awarded scores with those awarded in each scoring category

Reminders for marking:

- When a student’s work exhibits characteristics of two scoring criteria, a marker must use professional judgment to apply the scoring criterion that most accurately and appropriately describes the features of the paper. Usually, the appropriate criterion is the one from which there are the most descriptors that “fit” the student’s work.
- Be objective in your marking. Mark according to the Scoring Guide and Exemplars ONLY.
- Before marking each scoring category, read the focus information to help you to focus on the key words and phrases of each scoring category that help to distinguish differences among scoring levels.
- Student work must be related to the assignment. An INSUFFICIENT paper demonstrates no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Content. A NO RESPONSE paper has absolutely nothing written, drawn, or highlighted.
- Information provided by a student on the planning page can be used to inform a marker’s judgments but is not directly scored.
- Do not be misled by the physical appearance of a response. Poorly handwritten or word-processed responses are not necessarily poorly constructed, just as neatly handwritten or word-processed responses are not necessarily of quality and substance.
- Score each bullet within each scoring category separately, and then assign an overall score for that category. For example, if two of the three bullets in a scoring category are scored as “Pf” and the third bullet as “S,” assign an overall score of “Pf” in this scoring category. You will encounter papers that, according to the scoring guide, are at the high end or low end of the range of a given scoring level; nonetheless, a single score must be awarded for each scoring category.
- A student response does not have to be perfect to receive a score of Excellent in one or both scoring categories.
Marker Training Paper A

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Catherine Flores

Granite Hills School is located in the town of Merridale, Alberta. The postal code is T6Y 4R1 and the post office box number is 1545. Ms. Catherine Flores is the principal.

Dana Cline

Dana Cline lives on Bloomfield Lane in the neighbouring town of Banworth, Alberta. The house number is 97. The postal code is T7N 8J6.

Envelope

Dana Cline
97 Bloomfield Lane
Banworth AB T7N 8J6

Ms. Catherine Flores, Principal
Granite Hills School
PO Box 1545
Merridale AB T6Y 4R1
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

- Teaches leadership
- Learning different ways of doing stuff
- Easier to relate to each other and communicate
- More comfortable
- Life skills
- More patient by working with students
- Role model
97 Bloomfield Lane  
Banworth AB  T7N 8J6  
May 6, 2019  

Ms. Catherine Flores, Principal  
Granite Hills School  
PO Box 1545  
Merridale AB  T6Y 4R1  

Dear Ms. Flores:

I am Dana Cline, a grade nine student attending Granite Hills School. I have had the benefit of having outstanding role models in my life. A school based mentorship program would be a great way for older students in our school to positively influence younger ones, in the same way that my role models have. The program would bring many positive aspects for both the mentors and the students they mentor.

One positive aspect of a mentorship program would be leadership skills gained by the mentors. Older students could provide guidance and know what it feels like to have others look up to them. By taking responsibility for mentoring a younger student, a mentor can become more self-confident. They can learn how they can help others to achieve a goal or succeed in doing something they want to do. The experience they get will show them that they have the ability to have a positive impact on others not only in school but in the rest of their lives.
Another aspect of a mentorship program could be an opportunity for the students that are mentored to get one on one help with solving problems in math class or getting homework done. They can ask questions and get answers that they can understand. This will help them to see that they can do something they didn’t know they could do and they will get better grades in school. They will also have more self esteem by being able to fulfill goals they want to achieve.

I am hoping very much that you will consider having a mentorship program at Granite Hills School. If you would like to discuss this with me or ask any questions, you can contact me at 567-898-1212 or email me at clined@schoolmail.com.

Sincerely,

Dana Cline
## Rationale for Marker Training Paper A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Scoring Category</th>
<th>Content</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Proficient Pf</td>
<td>Content</td>
<td>• The ideas (related to “outstanding role models” in “A school based mentorship program [that] would be a great way for older students […] to positively influence younger ones” and why “The program would bring many positive aspects for both the mentors and the students they mentor”) are thoughtful, and development of the topic in the discussion of the “leadership skills gained by the mentors” that “will show them that they have the ability to have a positive impact on others not only in school but in the rest of their lives” as well as the “opportunity for the students that are mentored to get one on one help” and “fulfill goals they want to achieve” is generally effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Proficient Pf</td>
<td></td>
<td>• Significant information—regarding how “Older students could provide guidance and know what it feels like to have others look up to them” and “help others to achieve a goal or succeed in doing something they want to do” and how students who are mentored “can ask questions and get answers that they can understand” and “get better grades in school”—is presented, and this information is substantiated by specific details (pertaining to “taking responsibility for mentoring a younger student,” becoming “more self-confident,” “solving problems in math class or getting homework done,” and having “more self esteem”) that fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent E</td>
<td>Content Management</td>
<td>• As illustrated in “I have had the benefit of having,” “in the same way that my role models have,” “One positive aspect of a mentorship program,” “Another aspect of a mentorship program could be,” “This will help them to see,” “I am hoping very much that you will consider having a mentorship program at Granite Hills School,” and “If you would like to discuss this with me or ask any questions,” a tone appropriate for the addressee is clearly maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent E</td>
<td></td>
<td>• The writing demonstrates confident and consistent control of correct sentence structure—as in “I am Dana Cline, a grade nine student attending Granite Hills School,” usage—as in “This will help them to see that they can do something they didn’t know they could do and they will get better grades in school,” and mechanics—as in “If you would like to discuss this with me or ask any questions, you can contact me at 567-898-1212 or email me at <a href="mailto:clined@schoolmail.com">clined@schoolmail.com</a>.” Errors that may be present such as in “A school based mentorship program,” “one on one help,” and “self esteem” do not impede meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>• The envelope and letter are essentially free from format errors and omissions other than the inclusion of punctuation in “Ms. Catherine Flores” in the mailing address and inside address.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.
Marker Training Paper B

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Catherine Flores

Granite Hills School is located in the town of Merridale, Alberta. The postal code is T6Y 4R1 and the post office box number is 1545. Ms. Catherine Flores is the principal.

Dana Cline

Dana Cline lives on Bloomfield Lane in the neighbouring town of Banworth, Alberta. The house number is 97. The postal code is T7N 8J6.

Envelope

DANA CLINE
97
BLOOMFIELD LANE

GRANITE HILLS
MERRIDALE, AB
P.O BOX 1545
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

Background
Purpose
Details
Preparation
Good will Closing

Heading
Inside Address
Solutions
Body
Conclusion
Sign name

Name
Status/Title
Company
Address
City & Postal code
Bloomfield Lane

Granite Hills
Merridale, AB
P.O Box 1545

My name is Dana Clint. I'm a student at Granite Hills School and I'm thinking that we should add a mentorship program to our school. I want to start a mentorship program because the older students can mentor the younger ones. I want to influence the younger kids by telling them what it's like to be older and how important school is. I hope that the older kids can teach them on how to bring their self-esteem or self-confidence up, maybe they might be able to bring their social skills up.
The mentorship program might help the younger kids with their academic skills, with this mentor program it might motivate kids to strive for their goals. I hope you can consider adding that program.

Sincerely,

Dana Clinc
### Rationale for Marker Training Paper B

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Scoring Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td><strong>Satisfactory</strong></td>
<td>Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>• The ideas regarding why “we should add a mentorship program to our school” in which “older students can mentor the younger ones” are appropriate, and development of the topic (in the discussion of the benefits of being able to “influence the younger kids by telling them […] how important school is”) is adequate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>• Information presented in relation to the need to “start a mentorship program” is imprecise. Supporting details pertaining to bringing “self-esteem or self-confidence up” and “social skills up,” helping “younger kids with their academic skills,” and motivating “kids to strive for their goals” are lacking. The purpose of the assignment is only partially fulfilled.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>• A tone appropriate for the addressee—such as in “I’m thinking that we should,” “I want to start,” “I want to influence,” “I hope that the older kids can teach them,” “they might be able to,” “The mentorship program might help,” and “I hope you can consider adding that program”—is generally maintained.</td>
</tr>
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</table>

| **Limited** | Content Management |
| L | S | • Words and expressions used (as in “I want to start a mentorship program,” “influence the younger kids,” “how important school is,” “hope that the older kids can,” “they might be able to bring their social skills up,” “The mentorship program might help,” and “it might motivate kids to strive for their goals”) are generally accurate and occasionally effective. |
| L | • The writing demonstrates limited evidence of control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics, as is evident in “My name is Dana Cline, I’m a student at Granite Hills School and I’m thinking that we should add a mentorship program to our school.” Errors such as in “younger,” “telling them what’s it like,” “teach them on how,” “self-esteem,” “younger,” and “consider” may frequently impede meaning. |
| L | • Frequent format errors and omissions are contained in both the envelope and letter—in the return address and heading (in the incorrect presentation of “97 / BLOOMFIELD LANE” and omission of the town, province, and postal code) and the mailing address and inside address (in the omission of the recipient’s name and title, incorrect presentation of “GRANITE HILLS,” misplacement and incorrect presentation of “PO BOX 1545,” and omission of the postal code)—as well as in the omission of the date in the heading, omission of a salutation, incorrect presentation of the closing (in “Sincerely,”), and omission of a signature in the letter. |

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.