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Language Arts–Writing

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Language Arts – Writing

Directions

Multiple-Choice Questions (MC)

Time – 85 Minutes (MC and Essay Question)

25 MC Questions

1 Essay Question

This is a test of some of the skills involved in revising written materials. There are three selections that present draft reports, letters, or articles. Each selection is presented twice, first in a box in a conventional format and then in a spread-out format with certain parts underlined and numbered. You will be asked to correct or improve the underlined and numbered parts. Read quickly through the boxed text to get an idea of its purpose and style. Then go on to the spread-out format.

For some of the underlined parts, there is no corresponding question in the right-hand column; instead just four alternatives are listed. Choose the alternative that

- makes the statement grammatically correct;
- expresses the idea in the clearest or most appropriate way;
- is worded most consistently with the style and purpose of the writing;
- organizes the ideas in the most effective way.

In some cases, there may be more than one problem to correct or improve. When you have decided which alternative is best, mark your choice on the answer sheet. If you think the original underlined version is best, choose “No change.”

Other underlined parts have questions about organization or spelling in the right-hand column. In questions about organization, you will probably find it helpful to look at the boxed text. In the questions about spelling, you are to indicate which of three underlined words is misspelled, if any. If there are no errors in any of the words, choose “None.”

Work as quickly as you can without becoming careless. Do not spend too much time on any question that is difficult for you to answer. Instead, skip it and return to it later if you have time. Try to answer every question even if you have to guess.

Mark all your answers on the answer sheet. Give only one answer to each question.

If you decide to change one of your answers, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Be sure that the number of the question you are answering matches the number of the row of answer choices you are marking on your answer sheet. The answer sheet may contain more rows than you need.

You will have 85 minutes to complete the multiple-choice questions and essay question of the Writing test.

Questions 1 through 10 refer to the following selection.

After a class trip, students each chose a personal highlight from their visit to write about for a newspaper feature. Read through the draft of one student's account. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

The National Archives

¶1 On our class trip to the U.S. Capital, Washington, D.C., the teachers insisted on taking us to the National Archives, where the government's most important records are kept. Now admitting at first that I did not want to go because a building full of papers and records sounded like a pretty dull thing to see.

¶2 The National Archives is located near what is known as the National Mall, a long parkway stretching westward from the Capitol building. On either side are various Smithsonian museums.

¶3 When my turn finally came to view these historic documents, I lingered a long time too. I was unexpectedly moved. Before me were the handwritten principles that have allowed our country to operate according to law and undergoing change peacefully for 200 years. At the bottom of the documents were extravagantly embellished signatures — those of Ben Franklin, George Washington, and Thomas Jefferson, among many others.

¶4 On the day we visited the Archives, a long line of people waited in the huge, marble Exhibition Hall. The cases containing the Declaration of Independence, the Constitution, and the Bill of Rights were on a pedestal at the front of the room. One by one, people passed in front of them and paused looking. No one just hurried by.

¶5 To ensure that the documents continue to be well preserved, they are sealed in helium-filled glass cases. To protect the documents further, the lights in the Exhibition Hall are kept low, and the temperature and humidity are carefully controlled. Each night the cases are lowered into a fireproof and shockproof vault beneath the building, in case of an emergency, they can be lowered instantly.

¶6 During our trip, we saw the nation's history reflected in many impressive museums and monuments. Much to my surprise, of all the places we visited, the Archives turned out to be my most favorite.

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❶ _____

- A. No change
- B. capital Washington, D.C. the
- C. capital, Washington, D.C., the
- D. Capital, Washington, D.C. the

❷ _____

- A. No change
- B. Now I have to admit that at first
- C. At first admitting that
- D. First I admitted that

❸ _____

- A. No change
- B. stretched
- C. it stretches
- D. which is stretched

❹ _____

- A. No change
- B. and to undergo
- C. and it can undergo
- D. and the undergoing of

❺ _____

Which of these words, if any, is misspelled?

- A. None
- B. extravagantly
- C. embellished
- D. signitures

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¶6 During our trip, we saw the nation's history reflected in many impressive museums and monuments. Much to my surprise, of all the places we visited, the Archives turned out to be my 9 most favorite.

6 _____

- A. No change
- B. pausing looked.
- C. paused to look.
- D. looked pausing.

7 _____

- A. No change
- B. To also protect the documents,
- C. To protect the documents besides,
- D. To increasingly protect the documents,

8 _____

- A. No change
- B. the building. In case
- C. the building in case
- D. the building; and so in case

9 _____

- A. No change
- B. very favorite of them all.
- C. favorite above all others.
- D. favorite.

10 _____

This question concerns the draft as a whole.

For the best organization of ideas, where should paragraph 3 be placed?

- A. No change
- B. After paragraph 1
- C. After paragraph 4
- D. After paragraph 5

NO TEST MATERIAL ON THIS PAGE

Questions 11 through 18 refer to the following selection.

A career counselor was preparing an information sheet about job interviews. Read through the draft. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

Tips for a Successful Job Interview

¶1 In the days preceding an interview, there are a number of steps applicants can take in order to make a great impression.

Step One: Research the Employer

¶2 First, applicants should try to learn about the business or organization. Use the company's website as well as other resources to gather information about its products, services, who the staff is, and accomplishments.

Step Two: Know What to Say

¶3 During interviews applicants should describe themselves in ways that best show how well they fit the position. Nonetheless, be ready to provide information in the following areas. Education and training; any former jobs, especially ones related to the new position; strengths and weaknesses; past challenges; and goals for the future. Become familiar with the following frequently asked interview questions and plan a two-to-three-sentence response for each.

- **What would you like to tell me about yourself?** Applicants can talk about qualities especially talents and prior experiences, that make them a particularly good fit for the job.
- **Why do you want to work here?** This is where prior research about the employer can pay off, enabling applicants to explain why they respect the employer and restate why they are a good fit for the position.
- **Tell me about a time you made a mistake.** How did you resolve it? Choose a mistake that taught a lesson. Emphasize the lesson. Talk about how, in later situations, to act differently.
- **Why should we hire you?** If given this opportunity to distinguish oneself from others, tell the interviewer about any unique qualities, skills, and career goals.
- **Do you have any questions for me?** Ask for more information about the job. For example, this can be a time to ask about hours or pay. It is also the time to ask for clarification of anything discussed during the interview.

Step Three: Practice Being Interviewed

¶4 First practice alone and then ask a friend or a mentor to play the role of the interviewer. During the practice interview, make sure to:

- Give the interviewer a firm handshake.
- Maintain eye contact.
- Give thorough answers.
- Speak clearly and concisely.
- Thank the interviewer at the end of the interview.

At the conclusion of the role-playing, ask that friend of yours to tell you what he or she really, really thought.

Step Four: Look Sharp, Plan Ahead, Be Confident, and Expect Surprises

¶5 For the interview itself, wear clean, appropriate attire and bring along relevant documents and supplies. Before the interview, get plenty of rest, make sure to eat a nutritious meal, and allowing extra time to get to the destination. Most importantly, remember that it is impossible to prepare for every topic that will come up at an interview. If there is a surprise, take a deep breath, relax, and be natural.

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¶3 During interviews applicants should describe themselves in ways that best show how well they fit the position. **12** Nonetheless, be ready to provide information in the following **13** areas. Education and training; any former jobs, especially ones related to the new position; strengths and weaknesses; past challenges; and goals for the future. Become familiar with the following frequently asked interview questions and plan a two-to-three-sentence response for each.

- **What would you like to tell me about yourself?** *Applicants can talk about **14** qualities especially talents and prior experiences, that make them a particularly good fit for the job.*

11 _____

- A. No change
- B. what services it provides, staff,
- C. services, staff employed,
- D. services, staff,

12 _____

- A. No change
- B. For that reason,
- C. So why not
- D. Instead

13 _____

- A. No change
- B. areas; education
- C. areas: education
- D. areas, education

14 _____

- A. No change
- B. qualities, especially talents and prior experiences, that
- C. qualities, especially talents and prior experiences that
- D. qualities especially talents and prior experiences that

- **Why do you want to work here?** *This is where prior research about the employer can pay off, enabling applicants to explain why they respect the employer and restate why they are a good fit for the position.*
- **Tell me about a time you made a mistake.** *How did you resolve it? Choose a mistake that taught a lesson.*
 - 15 Emphasize the lesson. Talk about how, in later situations, to act differently.
- **Why should we hire you?** *If given this opportunity to distinguish oneself from others, tell the interviewer about any unique qualities, skills, and career goals.*
- **Do you have any questions for me?**
 - 16 Ask for more information about the job. For example, this can be a time to ask about hours or pay. It is also the time to ask for clarification of anything discussed during the interview.

15

Choose the best way to combine the indicated sentences.

- A. Emphasizing the lesson, talk about acting differently in later situations.
- B. Talk about how to act differently in later situations that emphasize the lesson.
- C. With the lesson being emphasized, talk in later situations about acting differently.
- D. Talk about how to act differently in later situations with the emphasized lesson.

16

Choose the best way to express the information in the indicated sentences.

- A. Ask for more information about the job, such as the hours or pay, and for clarification of anything discussed during the interview.
- B. Ask for more information about the job hours or job pay and that clarifies anything discussed during the interview.
- C. Ask for more information about the job's hours or pay and its clarifying anything discussed during the interview.
- D. Ask for more information about the job, such as the hours, pay, and to clarify anything discussed during the interview.

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17 _____

- A. No change
- B. to hear something that could help.
- C. for constructive feedback.
- D. if it went ok.

18 _____

- A. No change
- B. to allow
- C. allows
- D. allow

NO TEST MATERIAL ON THIS PAGE

Questions 19 through 25 refer to the following selection.

Read through the draft of a report about an influential sports figure. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

Holcombe Rucker

¶1 When Holcombe Rucker (1926 – 1965) blew the first whistle to start his experiment in summer youth basketball on a Harlem playground in 1947, there were four teams, and he was the only official. By 1965 “The Rucker,” as the program had come to be called, has expanded to include youth, college, and professional divisions that played on several playgrounds in Harlem. As The Rucker continued to thrive, its reputation grew, and, in 1974 New York City renamed its home. The city park at 155th Street and 8th Avenue is now called Holcombe Rucker Park. Many players and commentators believe that after 1965 The Rucker became the major force in reshaping how organized basketball is played.

¶2 Successful basketball can go in either direction, emphasizing interdependent team play or individual brilliance, depending on how “successful” is understood. Before The Rucker, success in organized basketball meant developing a team-oriented, often systematized approach to the game. It was players in The Rucker who brought a new definition of success to basketball, one based on the brilliance and creativity of individuals. Crucial to this innovation was the fact that The Rucker, though it administered leagues with coaches, referees, and champions, did not have teams that provided the players or coaches with a livelihood or that represented institutions such as schools. Thus, although players and coaches certainly wanted to win Rucker games and championships, there were no significant pressures or incentives to do so, other than their own competitive desires. This environment allowed the players more freedom to reinvent how the game was played, opening it up particularly to displays of individual creativity and skill. The Rucker games, played outdoors before large and appreciative crowds, created reputations for players who displayed this individual virtuosity. Beginning in the 1960s, such moments of individual brilliance grew enormously in frequency and at the highest levels of play as well-known professional stars played in The Rucker, often being challenged by legendary playground players.

¶3 Helping players to leave the playgrounds and continue their educations, not changing basketball, was what had motivated Holcombe Rucker. He started his program to give young people something to do outside of school, he monitored how players did in school, and he sent hundreds on to prep schools and to college. He himself provided a model, obtaining a high school equivalency diploma, an undergraduate degree, and a position as a junior high school English teacher while running his program. For Rucker, running his program, including enlarging its size and scope, was always a means to achieve his educational goals for the players.

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19

- A. No change
- B. will have expanded
- C. had expanded
- D. expanded

20

- A. No change
- B. grew and in 1974,
- C. grew and, in 1974
- D. grew, and in 1974

21

The writer is considering whether or not to add the following sentence at the start of paragraph 2:

Athletic contests have two basic forms: matches between highly coordinated teams (e.g., football) or lone individuals competing against each other (e.g., boxing).

Would this be an appropriate sentence to add at this point?

- A. Yes; it summarizes previously discussed information.
- B. Yes; it introduces subjects developed in paragraph 2.
- C. No; it contradicts assertions made in paragraph 1.
- D. No; it presents opinions as documented facts.

22

One of the four indicated words is misspelled. Which change in spelling corrects the error?

- A. inovation
- B. adminestered
- C. livelihood
- D. institutions

wanted to win Rucker games and championships, there were no significant pressures or incentives to do so, other than their own competitive desires. **23** This environment allowed the players more freedom to reinvent how the game was played, opening it up particularly to displays of individual creativity and skill. The Rucker games, played outdoors before large and appreciative crowds, created reputations for players who displayed this individual virtuosity. Beginning in the 1960s, such moments of individual brilliance **24** grew enormously in frequency and at the highest levels of play as well-known professional stars played in The Rucker, often being challenged by legendary playground players.

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25

23

- A. No change
- B. On the other hand, this environment
- C. Nevertheless, this environment
- D. Similarly, this environment

24

- A. No change
- B. became increasingly common and exemplified
- C. happened repeatedly and the demonstration of
- D. were occurring very much more often and

25

Choose the best sentence to add at the end of paragraph 3.

- A. Yet it has been the unintended changes in basketball itself that have done the most to expand educational opportunities for the players, as schools have embraced the individual virtuosity first brought to organized basketball by The Rucker.
- B. Perhaps year-round organized basketball did not begin entirely with Holcombe Rucker in the summers of the late 1940s and early 1950s in New York City, but no other person or place has been put forward as an alternative origin.
- C. The Rucker still continues today, with its outdoor displays of individual virtuosity presented on a removable wooden court at Holcombe Rucker Park in upper Manhattan.
- D. In addition to the city park, there is also a New York public school, the Holcombe Rucker School of Community Research, named for him.

Language Arts – Writing

Directions

Essay Question

Time – 85 Minutes (MC and Essay Question)

25 MC Questions

1 Essay Question

This is a test of your writing skills. Your response will be scored based on

- development of a central position through explanation of supporting reasons, examples, and details from passages and personal experience;
- clear organization of ideas, including an introduction and conclusion, logical paragraphs, and effective transitions;
- language use, including varied word choice, varied sentence constructions, and appropriate voice;
- clarity and correctness of writing conventions.

Below you will find two passages in which the authors put forth differing perspectives on an issue of importance. Read both passages carefully, noting the strengths and weaknesses of each discussion. Then, you will write an essay in which you explain your own opinion on the issue.

The following articles appeared in a flyer entitled “Opposing Views on the GatesburgGoGreen Initiative” printed by a community interest group. The first piece highlights the benefits of a mandatory recycling and composting proposal, and the second piece addresses concerns with the proposal.

Going Green for Gatesburg

¶ 1 The GatesburgGoGreen Initiative is a joint proposal crafted by environmental groups, businesses, city officials, and citizens. The goal is to reduce the amount of waste we add to the county landfill by 90% over the next five years. This plan is ambitious but achievable. It is a goal shared by cities like San Francisco and Cleveland, both of which are much larger than Gatesburg.

¶ 2 The proposal began as a discussion about extending the life of the county landfill, which will close in ten years if we do nothing. Several years ago, the city banned the dumping of construction waste, such as wood, that can be effectively recycled. The city later banned yard waste and started a composting program for leaves and grass clippings. Requiring recycling and composting is nothing new. We are just taking the idea to the next level to save our landfill.

¶ 3 The new plan calls for every resident to have three trashcans: a green one for compost such as food waste, a blue one for recyclable paper and plastic, and a black one for the landfill. According to the Environmental Protection Agency, the average American produces more than four pounds of trash each day and recycles only about a third of that amount. Those daily pounds of trash add up. They result in tons added unnecessarily to our landfill each year.

¶ 4 Purchasing bins and hiring staff will cost money. However, those investments will pay dividends. The city will follow the example of Phoenix, Arizona, which has made more than 500 million dollars in a year by selling its recyclables. We will produce compost that citizens can use in their gardens. We will save money by not having to open a new landfill. We will improve the environment and our budget at the same time.

No Recycling Laws for Gatesburg

¶ 1 Recycling is a great idea. Americans already recycle at a high rate, which is around 95% of lead-acid batteries and 70% of steel cans and newspapers. That is one reason we oppose the GatesburgGoGreen Initiative. It burdens citizens by taking a good idea to ridiculous extremes.

¶ 2 The so-called initiative is a law, plain and simple. If passed, it would criminalize violations of its complicated rules. A newspaper goes into the blue bin, but what about a flyer insert? Well, it depends. Coffee grounds go in the green bin, but what about a plastic container of yogurt that has gone out of date? Careful — make a mistake, and you will be fined. Those fines, along with the increased taxes to pay for the services and personnel, make this a bad idea for taxpayers.

¶ 3 Privacy is another concern. The proposal requires that radio-frequency identification computer chips be attached to each bin. These chips track the pounds of trash each person discards versus how much is recycled. City officials know the average weights thrown out per day, and they know what the numbers should be with mandatory recycling and composting. Falling outside of acceptable ranges summons the trash police to check your bins to see if you have thrown a banana peel into the trash bin instead of the compost bin. The law calls for “administrative personnel” who will have the authority to write tickets. If we aren’t careful, Gatesburg will start to feel like the United Kingdom. In some locations in the UK, compliance with trash laws is monitored with surveillance cameras.

¶ 4 This proposed law is not only unnecessary but also radical in how it sacrifices the needs and comfort of citizens to reach an impossible ideal. We already recycle, and we do not need a law forcing us to go beyond what is reasonable.

Write an essay in which you explain your own position on the issue of whether or not recycling and composting initiatives such as the one described in the flyer should be adopted and put into practice in communities throughout the United States.

Be sure to use specific reasons and examples from your own experience and knowledge to support your position. Evidence from the passages provided should also be used to support your ideas. Remember that every position exists within the context of a larger discussion of the issue, so your essay should, at minimum, acknowledge alternate and/or opposing ideas. When you have finished your essay, review your writing to check for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

