



# **Grade 8**

# **Reading Language Arts**

Constructed Response  
Scoring Guide

Spring 2023

## General Information

Beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, reading language arts assessments include an extended constructed response, or essay, at every grade level. They also include short constructed-response questions. Students are asked to write the essay in response to a reading selection and write in one of two modes: informational or argumentative.

This State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) constructed-response scoring guide provides student exemplars at all score points for extended constructed-response and short constructed-response prompts from the STAAR reading language arts grade 8 operational test. The prompts are presented as they appeared on the test, and responses were scored based on the rubrics included in this guide, which were developed with the input of Texas educators. Essays were scored using a five-point rubric. Short constructed responses in the reading domain were scored using a two-point prompt-specific rubric. Short constructed responses in the writing domain were scored using a one-point rubric.

The five-point rubric for extended constructed responses includes two main components: organization and development of ideas and conventions. A response earns a specific score point based on the ideas and conventions of that particular response as measured against the rubric. The annotation that accompanies each response is specific to that response and was written to illustrate how the language of the rubric is applied to elements of the response to determine the score the response received. Extended constructed responses are scored by two different scorers, and the scores are summed to create a student's final score, so students may receive up to 10 points for their essay.

The responses in this guide are actual student responses submitted online during the testing window. To protect the privacy of individual students, all names and other references of a personal nature have been altered or removed. Otherwise, the responses appear as the students wrote them and have not been modified.

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**Grade 8 Reading Passage  
with Extended Constructed  
Response and Short  
Constructed Response**

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**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.**

***from Say What, Horse?***  
*by Jessie Haas*

- 1 Humans have been communicating with horses since we first domesticated them, around 5,500 years ago. But the conversation has been pretty one-way. We gave orders. They behaved as if they understood—or not.
- 2 Meanwhile horses have been watching us, reading our moods, and communicating in ways that we usually fail to understand. But science is finally catching on to that and taking a fresh look at the horse-end of this long relationship.

**I See What You're Saying**

- 3 Horses are highly visual animals. In groups, they establish a pecking order,<sup>1</sup> mainly by making threats. The longer the horses have known each other, the more subtle the threats become, until just a squinty-eyed look from a boss can get a lower-ranked animal to move away. So it makes sense that facial expressions would be important to them, but horse facial expressions went unstudied until very recently.
- 4 Research at the University of Sussex in England has identified 17 different facial expressions in horses. That's more than dogs (16) or chimpanzees (14). Some horse expressions are similar to those of humans—for instance, both horses and humans raise the skin above their eyes when experiencing negative emotions.
- 5 Next, the Sussex researchers wondered whether horses recognize human facial expressions. They showed horses photos of people with angry or happy faces. Horses turned their heads to view the angry expressions with their left eyes. Dogs also tend to look at angry faces this way. The horses' heartbeats sped up while viewing angry faces. Smiling expressions didn't prompt either a head turn or a change in heart rate. Scientists were interested to learn that, though horses and people have very differently shaped faces and skulls, horses appeared to accurately read human emotions.
- 6 Horse people have always known that horses are good at reading our moods, but we've attributed that to some kind of sixth sense. Turns out they're using vision, one of the same five senses we do—sort of. Horses see very differently than we do. Their large eyes magnify objects so they seem up to 50 percent larger than they do to us. (To them, a bike might appear as big as a pony!) They're also highly attuned to motion. A little twitch of a frown on a human face may seem like a great big scary scowl to horses. They interpret it as a threat.

<sup>1</sup> Pecking order is the status ranking among members of a group.

### **Can You Get Me That?**

- 7 So we know horses communicate with each other through expressions and that they understand some human expressions. Could they ever communicate with us using these skills? Another new study indicates they can.
- 8 Researchers based at the School for Ethical Equitation in Italy created an experiment in which they placed a bucket of oats, carrots, or apples beyond the reach of a horse. A human stood passively nearby. Researchers observed horses looking at the bucket, then at the human, then back at the bucket. If the human did nothing in response, the horse would try other tricks to attract the human’s gaze—nod its head, jerk its nose quickly toward the bucket, or change position so it could make eye contact. If the human walked away, some horses would go over and touch the person.
- 9 Up until now, scientists had only formally observed this type of purposeful interspecies communication in dogs. Which makes you wonder, as the title of Frans de Waal’s bestselling book asks, *Are We Smart Enough to Know How Smart Animals Are?* Horses might have an opinion about that!

### **Flashcards for Horses**

- 10 Horses can use more than body language to tell us things. A 2016 Norwegian study showed that horses can use abstract symbols to communicate. Basically, they can read.
- 11 Putting blankets on horses in winter is common, but controversial. Opinions differ on whether they actually need or prefer it. So the Norwegian scientists decided to ask.
- 12 Horses were trained to distinguish among simple shapes presented on boards. A vertical bar meant “Take my blanket off.” A horizontal bar meant “Put my blanket on.” And a blank board meant “No change.” The horses were systematically trained, using positive reinforcement (treats), to touch the appropriate board. All 23 horses in the study learned the symbols within 14 days, in sessions lasting 10 or 15 minutes.
- 13 Next, the horses were given a challenge—a heavy blanket on a warm day or no blanket on a cold day. When presented with the three symbols, all horses chose appropriately, asking to have a blanket taken off on a warm day, or put on when it was cold and rainy. On another rainy, moderately cool day, 10 out of 12 horses asked for a blanket. Two signaled, “I’m good!”

### **It’s About Time!**

- 14 Horses have been watching us more closely than we imagined, for thousands of years. They’ve been trying to tell us stuff, which we’ve mostly ignored. Now, finally, we’re starting to create ways for them to speak in more detail, ways that we’re capable of hearing. What else might they have to say?
- 15 Probably “What took you guys so long?”

From “Say What, Horse?” by Jessie Haas, *Muse*, April 2017. Copyright © 2017 Carus Publishing dba Cricket Media.

## Grade 8 Extended Constructed Response

### Prompt

Read the excerpt from "Say What, Horse?" Based on the information in the article, write a response to the following:

Explain what new research reveals about horses' ability to communicate.

Write a well-organized informational composition that uses specific evidence from the article to support your answer.

Remember to —

- clearly state your thesis
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- use evidence from the selection in your response
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar

Manage your time carefully so that you can —

- review the selection
- plan your response
- write your response
- revise and edit your response

Write your response in the box provided.

# Grade 8 Reading Passage with Extended Constructed Response

## Informational Writing Rubric

Score Point	Organization and Development of Ideas
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>3</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="415 432 1432 558"> <p>• <b>Controlling idea/Thesis is clear and fully developed</b>            The controlling idea/thesis is clearly identifiable. The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="415 569 1432 758"> <p>• <b>Organization is effective</b>            A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and conclusion is evident. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the controlling idea/thesis. The sentences, paragraphs, or ideas are logically connected in purposeful and highly effective ways.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="415 768 1432 957"> <p>• <b>Evidence is specific, well chosen, and relevant</b>            The response includes relevant text-based evidence that is clearly explained and consistently supports and develops the controlling idea/thesis. For pairs in grades 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from both texts. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="415 968 1432 1125"> <p>• <b>Expression of ideas is clear and effective</b>            The writer’s word choice is specific, purposeful, and enhances the response. Almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer’s ideas and contribute to the overall quality of the response and the clarity of the message.</p> </li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;"><b>2</b></p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li data-bbox="415 1142 1432 1268"> <p>• <b>Controlling idea/Thesis is present and partially developed</b>            A controlling idea/thesis is presented, but it may not be clearly identifiable because it is not fully developed. The focus may not always be consistent and may not always be easy to follow.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="415 1278 1432 1478"> <p>• <b>Organization is limited</b>            A purposeful structure that includes an introduction and conclusion is present. An organizational structure may not be consistent and may not always support the logical development of the controlling idea/thesis. Sentence-to-sentence connections and clarity may be lacking.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="415 1488 1432 1709"> <p>• <b>Evidence is limited and may include some irrelevant information</b>            The response may include text-based evidence to support the controlling idea/thesis, but it may be insufficiently explained, and/or some evidence may be irrelevant to the controlling idea/thesis. For pairs, evidence is drawn from at least one of the texts. The response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.</p> </li> <li data-bbox="415 1719 1432 1877"> <p>• <b>Expression of ideas is basic</b>            The writer’s word choice may be general and imprecise and at times may not convey the writer’s ideas clearly. Sentences and phrases are at times ineffective and may interfere with the writer’s intended meaning and weaken the message.</p> </li> </ul>

<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>Controlling idea/Thesis is evident but not developed</b>            A controlling idea/thesis is present but not developed appropriately in response to the writing task.</li> <li>• <b>Organization is minimal and/or weak</b>            An introduction or conclusion may be present. An organizational structure that supports logical development is not always evident or is not appropriate to the task.</li> <li>• <b>Evidence is insufficient and/or mostly irrelevant</b>            Little text-based evidence is presented to support the controlling idea/thesis, or the evidence presented is mostly extraneous and/or repetitious.             Explanation of any evidence presented is insufficient and may be only vaguely related to the writing task. For pairs in grades 6 through EII, evidence is drawn from only one text. The response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.</li> <li>• <b>Expression of ideas is ineffective</b>            The writer’s word choice is vague or limited and may impede the quality and clarity of the essay. Sentences and phrases are often ineffective, interfere with the writer’s intended meaning, and impact the strength and clarity of the message.</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• A controlling idea/thesis may be evident.</li> <li>• The response lacks an introduction and conclusion. An organizational structure is not evident.</li> <li>• Evidence is not provided or is irrelevant.            The response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.</li> <li>• The expression of ideas is unclear and/or incoherent.</li> </ul> <p><b><i>Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Development and Organization of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.</i></b></p>
<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Conventions</b>
<b>2</b>	<p>Student writing demonstrates <b>consistent command</b> of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• sentence construction</li> <li>• punctuation</li> <li>• capitalization</li> <li>• grammar</li> <li>• spelling</li> </ul> <p>The response has few errors, but those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.</p>



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<p><b>1</b></p>	<p>Student writing demonstrates <b>inconsistent command</b> of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including limited use of correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sentence construction</li><li>• punctuation</li><li>• capitalization</li><li>• grammar</li><li>• spelling</li></ul> <p>The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.</p>
<p><b>0</b></p>	<p>Student writing demonstrates <b>little to no command</b> of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including infrequent use of or no evidence of correct:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• sentence construction</li><li>• punctuation</li><li>• capitalization</li><li>• grammar</li><li>• spelling</li></ul> <p>The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.</p>

## Sample Student Responses

### Score Point 0

#### Response 1

with them now being able to communicate with us there are so many things that we can learn about the past and being able to talk to them means we can communicate with other animals and if that is happening we can live with them better and be able to talk to them and work with them and do many things

#### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 0**

The writer of this response does not present a controlling idea. The response lacks an introduction and conclusion. An organizational structure is not evident. Relevant evidence is not provided, as statements are vague and not supported by details and examples from the text (“there are so many things that we can learn about the past and being able to talk to them means we can communicate with other animals . . .”). The expression of ideas is unclear (“and if that is happening we can live with them better and be able to talk to them and work with them and do many things”). The response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

#### **Conventions: 0**

Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

## **Response 2**

Horses,this animal holds a new world for the human kind and could be the solvation of some problems.But in 'Say what,Horse we would be explaining it.In the first sub title I see what you're Saying talks about the first encounter and information based data that could help us understand more on this.This gift for the horse could be a huge help to some species.Becuase who knows what other creature could just talk to us but hasn't developed it yet of what if monkeys are just like the human kind but stronger,faster and maybe even smarter than us.

This animal is an animal worth researching because whith the advanced tech we have in this world we could find problems or answers with the horses help we can do so much.Because to have horses ageing thousands of years with horses maybe know this and could not tell us.But in the summary of this we can find these horses verry smart and mabe the can be a part of society and be almost like a human.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 0**

The writer of this response presents a controlling idea that is not developed appropriately in response to the writing task ("Horses,this animal holds a new world for the human kind and could be the solvation of some problems"). No organizational structure is evident. Evidence provided is irrelevant ("Becuase who knows what other creature could just talk to us but hasn't developed it yet of what if monkeys are just like the human kind but stronger,faster and maybe even smarter than us"). The expression of ideas is unclear ("Because to have horses ageing thousands of years . . ."; "But in the summary of this we can find these horses verry smart and mabe the can be a part of society and be almost like a human"). Overall, the response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 0**

Please note that if a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

## Score Point 1

### Response 1

We all know what horses are and some of us own horses but horses are evolving they can communicate with us and that is pretty impressive they use abstract symbols to communicate and I can't even do that so that's how you know that horses are the next big thing they can threaten other people just with a facial expression and studies have showed that horses can do 17 different facial expressions and I think that is really cool so and horses can tell a human's mood and horses have been around for 5,500 years that is a pretty long time so I'm telling you one day horses may be able to talk because they are smart.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 1**

The writer presents the controlling idea that “they use abstract symbols to communicate . . .,” but it is not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. An organizational structure that supports logical development is weak, as details from the text follow a random order and vaguely relate to the controlling idea (“they can threaten other people just with a facial expression and studies have showed that horses can do 17 different facial expressions and I think that is really cool so and horses can tell a human's mood and horses have been around for 5,500 years . . .”), which impacts the clarity of the message. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 0**

The writing demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including no evidence of correct sentence construction. The entire response consists of a single run-on sentence. Punctuation and capitalization are missing in the creation of correct sentence structures. Errors in spelling (“impressive,” “that's,” “threaten,” “different,” “expressions”) are present. The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

## **Response 2**

in this article is shows how horses have their ways to communicate and some of those ways are very simple to understand for an example some researchers found out that horses make expressions to communicate which will be nodding its head,jerk its nose,or changing its position because of A experiment they did with food .another way horses can communicate is by symbols which will be having symbols like a circle saying "take my blanket off" or a square saying "put it on" you see what i mean.so horses have a lot of ways to communicate you just have to study them more.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 1**

The writer of this response presents the controlling idea that “in this article is shows how horses have their ways to communicate and some of those ways are very simple to understand.” The writer provides a conclusion (“so horses have a lot of ways to communicate you just have to study them more”), but the organization of the essay is minimal. The writer includes some paraphrased evidence (“horses make expressions to communicate . . .”; “another way horses can communicate is by symbols . . .”) that is insufficiently developed. The writer’s word choice is limited, and the expression of ideas is ineffective. Overall, the response reflects a limited understanding of the writing task.

### **Conventions: 0**

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including errors in sentence structure (three run-on sentences), punctuation, and capitalization, primarily to begin and end sentences. An error in spelling (“is” [it]) is present. The response has many errors, and these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

## Score Point 2

### Response 1

The new reasearch of hores comunication can change everything. If horses learn to read or understand us speaking, it could be a huge help.

"Horses were trained to distingwish among simple shapes presented on boards." Horses could learn how to read and learn our schudule to remind us and help us with things.

Horses have been learning us for a very long time and a long time to come so who know they could learn how to cummunicate

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 1**

The writer provides a controlling idea that "The new reasearch of hores comunication can change everything. . . . it could be a huge help." The writer includes a conclusion ("Horses have been learning us for a very long time and a long time to come so who know they could learn how to cummunicate"). An organizational structure that supports logical development is not evident. Little text-based evidence is presented to support the controlling idea ("Horses were trained to distingwish among simple shapes presented on boards") and the explanation of this evidence is insufficiently developed ("Horses could learn how to read and learn our schudule to remind us and help us with things"). Additionally, the expression of ideas is ineffective and the writer's word choice is limited ("it could be a huge help," "remind us and help us with things"), impeding the quality and clarity of the essay. The response reflects limited understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 1**

The writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Although sentence construction and capitalization are mostly correct, there is one punctuation error with a missing period at the end of the final sentence. Additionally, misspelled words ("reasearch," "hores," "comunication," "distingwish," "schudule," "cummunicate") as well as grammar and usage errors ("Horses have been learning us . . . ," "so who know they could learn . . .") are present, but the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

## **Response 2**

The way that horses communicate with us very similar to our communication, some of the horses expressions are very similar to ours like both horses and humans raise the skin above their eyes when we give negative emotions, and another way horses express is by turning their head to point out an angry expression with their left eye and their heartbeats sped up while they are angry, when they are smiling nothing changes no heartbeat or no movements on the head.

Horses have a good way in reading us as human emotions on how we are feeling and expressions, horses have a way they communicate with each other through expressions they are capable of understanding our expressions the way the horses try to get our attention is by gaze-nod its head and jerk its nose and make sounds for them to attract our attention, horses between each other and us communicate is body language in a way we all us and where we as humans are capable of understanding.

In this way or examples I have given are the ways horses they communicate with us and thus each other.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 2**

The writer of this response presents the controlling idea that “The way that horses communicate with us very similar to our communication”). A conclusion is present (“In this way or examples I have given are the ways horses they communicate with us and thus each other”). A purposeful organizational structure is evident as the writer uses the first and second paragraph to illustrate ways horses use bodily movements and expressions that are similar to those used by humans to communicate. Sentence-to-sentence connections provide some logical connection between ideas (“horses express is by turning their head to point out an angry expression with their left eye and their heartbeats sped up while they are angry, when they are smiling nothing changes no heartbeat or no movements on the head”). Evidence is provided by the writer in the form of paraphrased text-based information (“both horses and humans raise the skin above their eyes when we give negative emotions . . .”; “get our attention is by gaze-nod its head and jerk its nose . . .”), and the writer provides some explanation that supports the controlling idea (“horses between each other and us communicate is body language . . .”). The expression of ideas is basic since sentences and phrases, at times, are ineffective (“Horses have a good way in reading us as human emotions on how we are feeling and expressions . . .”). Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing task.

### **Conventions: 0**

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. There are many errors including sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. These errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

## Score Point 3

### Response 1

Ever since we first domesticated horses, around 5,500 years ago, we just gave them orders. Scientific research has shown that horses have been watching us, reading our moods, and communicating in ways that we usually fail to understand. After research was completed at the University of Sussex in England, it was discovered that horses have the ability to have many different facial expressions (17 to be exact). These facial expressions can indicate their mood and opinion. At the School for Ethical Equititation in Italy, it was shown that horses can change their actions based on the actions from humans. Horses have been watching us very closely, and it's interesting to finally have the ability to understand them.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 1**

In this response, the writer presents the controlling idea that “Scientific research has shown that horses have been watching us, reading our moods, and communicating in ways that we usually fail to understand,” but this idea is not appropriately developed in response to the writing task. An introductory sentence and conclusion are present, but an organizational structure that supports logical development is not evident. Insufficiently explained information about the University of Sussex study is provided (“After research was completed at the University of Sussex in England, it was discovered that horses have the ability to have many different facial expressions [17 to be exact]. These facial expressions can indicate their mood and opinion”) and although the Italian study is also mentioned by name, only vague details of its findings are included. Overall, development to support the controlling idea is insufficient. The writer’s word choice is specific as it adheres closely to text-based vocabulary. The response reflects a limited understanding of the writing task.

### **Conventions: 2**

The writer demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Even though most sentences are close paraphrases of text-based information, all sentences are constructed correctly (“Ever since we first domesticated horses, around 5,500 years ago, we just gave them orders”). Although one error in spelling is present (“Equititation”), it does not impact the clarity of the writing.



## **Response 2**

Horses have been watching us for thousands of years and we havn't even noticed until recently. They have many ablititys and we are starting to notice the way they communicate not justb with us but with other animals to. In the article it talks about how horses make groups and those are called pecking order , mainly making threats. The longer the horses have known eachother the more subtle the threats become, but if you even give them a squnty eyed look froma boss can get a lower ranked animal to move away. This shows how the animals communicate with eachother even if we can't see it.

Horses can also communicate with humans just in diffrent ways. There was an experiment that some researchers had where they put a bucket of food infront of the horse and the owner standing right next to them. The horse would try signolling to the owner about the bucket of food, they would try everthing jerking there head toward it or making movment to make the owner look at them and sometimes when the owner walked away the horses would go and tap them. Horse have many ways of communicating with humans and this is just one of them.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 2**

The writer presents the controlling idea that "They have many ablititys and we are starting to notice the way they communicate not justb with us but with other animals to." An introduction and conclusion are present. The writer includes evidence to support the controlling idea ("In the article it talks about how horses make groups and those are called pecking order . . ."; "There was an experiment that some researchers had where they put a bucket of food infront of the horse and the owner standing right next to them. The horse would try signolling to the owner about the bucket of food, they would try everthing jerking there head toward it or making movment to make the owner look at them and sometimes when the owner walked away the horses would go and tap them"). An organizational structure with sentence-to-sentence connections that support logical development is limited but present ("This shows how the animals communicate with eachother even if we can't see it"). The writer's word choice is basic ("it talks about," "and this is just one of them"). The response reflects partial understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 1**

The writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including errors in sentence construction that include a comma splice ("bucket of food, they would try . . .") and a missing comma in a compound sentence ("communicating with humans and this is just one of them"). Even though word choice relies heavily on text-based vocabulary, errors in spelling ("havn't," "ablititys," "justb," "to" [too], "squnty," "diffrent," "signolling," "there" [their], "movment") are present. The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

**Response 3**

reserchers wonder if horses try to comunicat with humant or try hiving  
ther hints to comunicar well in a universety of sussex in england  
reserchers have founs some symdols of horses giving use singhs of trying  
to communicate with use.

horses have been watching us reading our moodes trying to comunucate  
but we faild to understand what there saying. reserarchers have discovered  
that there are 17 different facial expressions in horses witch is more than  
dogs and chimpanzees. Some horses expressions ore simulat to humans  
for example horses and humans reise the skin abouve their eyss win they  
have a negativ emothon so horses try to communicate but humand dont  
know it.

The reserchers from sussex try to see if hourses reconize human  
expreshons so they showed a haours picturs with angry and happy  
expresons. the horses turned thier head to view the angry face with here  
left eye and th horses hairt beat speeds up wil hooking at the angry  
expreson. horses hade no emothin to the happy pictur. hourses see 50%  
larger than they do to us there also highly attuned to moshon.  
horses can use more than a head nodding and a look for comucicashon  
they can use abstract symdols so they can basecy read. they were doing a  
simpl task on the hourse and the task was if the hours wanted a blanket  
when it was cold or wanted a blanket when it was hot or not 10 out of the  
12 horses askes for a blanket when it was cool or rany days the other two  
signakled "im good".

so know he know that horses have been watching us and trying to  
comunicat with us ang horses are relly intelegent amilanes hopfully we  
can lerar more about horses oand how they communicate.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 3**

The writer presents a clearly identifiable controlling idea that “reserchers have founs [found] some symdols [symbols] of horses giving use singhs [us signs] of trying to comunicate with use [us].” The writer includes an introduction and a conclusion (“so know [now] he know that horses have been watching us and trying to comunicat with us . . . hopfully we can lerar [learn] more about horses oand how they comunicate”). The organization is effective with a structure that effectively supports the development of the controlling idea. The sentences, paragraphs, and ideas are logically connected in purposeful ways. The writer includes paraphrased, text-based evidence that is specific, well chosen, and relevant (“reserarchers have discovered that there are 17 different facial expressions in horses witch is more than dogs and chimpanzees. Some horses expressions ore simulat to humans for example horses and humans reise the skin abouve their eyss win they have a negativ emothon so horses try to comunicate but humand dont know it”). The focus is consistent throughout, emphasizing the controlling idea that “horses giving use singhs [us signs] of trying to comunicate with use [us],” and evidence is clearly explained and consistently supports this idea. The expression of ideas is clear and effective with almost all sentences and phrases effectively crafted to convey the writer’s ideas. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 0**

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. There are many errors including sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. These errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

## Score Point 4

### Response 1

With new scientific research, horses have been proved to be communicating with us this whole time through facial expressions, and even abstract symbols. Humans and horses have been communicating for thousands of years now, but we have never fully understood them. "But science is finally catching on to that and taking a fresh look at the horse-end of this long relationship." When humans make a specific facial expression, horses can actually understand the way we feel, but making the wrong face may threaten them. "Scientists were interested to learn that, though horses and people have very differently shaped faces and skulls, horses appeared to accurately read human emotions." Other reading human facial expressions, horses can actually communicate with symbols. "If the human did nothing in response, the horse would try other tricks to attract the human's gave-nod its head, jerk its nose quickly toward the bucket, or change position so it could make eye contact." This shows that horses are trying to use their own ways to communicate with us, and scientific research has successfully proven that.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 2**

The writer presents the controlling idea that "horses have been proved to be communicating with us this whole time through facial expressions, and even abstract symbols." Evidence is provided in the form of paraphrased text-based information, intentionally weaving together direct quotes from the passage. An organizational strategy which includes an introductory and concluding sentence is present. Sentences are logically connected "When humans make a specific facial expression, horses can actually understand the way we feel, but making the wrong face may threaten them." In addition, the response relies heavily on textual quotes with insufficient explanation in several instances. Overall, the response reflects partial understanding of the writing task.

### **Conventions: 2**

The writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including correct sentence construction, punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. A single verb tense error ("have been proved") is present. This response has few errors, and those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

**Response 2**

Have you ever wonderd do horses understand us.Well I have, and it reveald that horses are smarter then you think.You see horses can read a human face or understand emotions as well as distinguish thought symbols and the meaning.

First we found out that horses can read human emotion. These means that horses can tell a humans happy face and sad face in a way.they did these over thousand of years learning what diffrent shifts in the face mean. there vision helps as well they have a better vision that amplifies objects so a tinny jerk in the face looks like a huge frown to them these was but to a test. A university showed angry and happy facial expresion.When showed the angry face the horses jolted and heart accelerated ,but when presented with the happy expretion nothing changed.

secondly, they can tell the meaning and its simple. theses is a great finding to the sciences world becuase we now know how communicate to horese in a way we both understand. this was discoverd when another university tought the horses abstract symboles to tell there care taker if the wished to take a blanket off and on or they were fine.The resualts were unbelivable it was found that they couod describe what they wanted.

To conclude, horses are smarter then humans think and can communicate with us.well these lead to us finally fully understanding them?only the futer can tell.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 3**

The writer presents a clearly identifiable controlling idea that "it revealed that horses are smarter than you think. You see horses can read a human face or understand emotions as well as distinguish thought symbols and the meaning." The focus is consistent throughout, with a purposeful structure that includes a meaningful introduction and conclusion, emphasizing the controlling idea that "horses are smarter than humans think and can communicate with us." Paragraphs are organized according to text-based information, and the use of transitional phrases, ("First we found"; "These means that"; "secondly, they can tell") move the essay forward and create a logical flow from one idea to the next within paragraphs. Relevant, well-chosen evidence supports the writer's ideas. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 1**

The writing demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including limited use of correct capitalization and spelling. Usage and spelling errors ("wonderd," "reveald," "then" [than], "These" [this], "diffrent," "there" [their], "tinny," "expretion," "becuase," "horese," "discoverd," "tought," "symboles," "resualts," "unbelivable," "fully," "futer"), as well as awkward phrases, ("to them these was but to a test"; "theses is a great finding to the sciences world") are present. The response has several errors, but the reader can understand the writer's thoughts.

## Score Point 5

### Response 1

With new research coming in about horses, we begin to learn more about its relationship with humans like us. Now with several experiments completed, it reveals that horses do know how to perform an interspecies communication (in this case to us) and through choosing shapes.

According to a study performed by the School of Ethical Equitation in Italy, horses could actually communicate to humans similarly like how dogs do. They saw how "if the humans did nothing in response, the horse would try other tricks to attract the human's gaze." When the "human walked away, some horses would go over and touch the person". This form of communication was only observed in dogs previously, and now knowing that horses do indeed perform it as well shows their ability to talk to humans.

It's not only body language that allows the horses to communicate with us. A 2016 Norwegian study even showed that horses can use abstract symbols to communicate with humans as well.

According to the research, "horses were trained to distinguish among simple shapes presented on boards." The shapes had different meanings indicating whether they wanted to put on a blanket or not. Then when the horses were given a challenge to decide whether a "heavy blanket on a warm day or no blanket on a cold day", the researchers saw how "all horses chose appropriately." On another rainy day, "10 out of 12 horses asked for a blanket. Two signaled "I'm good!". The study reveals that horses can indeed communicate to us through shapes and symbols, revealing a new way the animal could talk to humans.

These new research regarding horses reveals a whole lot of new information that we had not previously known before. It shows that horses communicate to us not only by body language, but through picking shapes and symbols to show what they want as well. This means horses can talk with us and as we find more creative means, there will be even more ways for them to speak with even more details in the future.

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 3**

The writer presents a clear and identifiable controlling idea that “Now with several experiments completed, it reveals that horses do know how to perform an interspecies communication (in this case to us) and through choosing shapes.” Focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. The organizational structure is appropriate and effectively supports the development of the controlling idea. Sentences are logically connected in purposeful ways (“According to a study performed by the School of Ethical Equitation in Italy, horses could actually communicate to humans similarly like how dogs do. They saw how ‘if the humans did nothing in response, the horse would try other tricks to attract the human’s gaze’”). A purposeful structure that includes a meaningful introduction is evident, and the conclusion repeats the controlling idea and is clearly explained (“These new research regarding horses reveals a whole lot of new information that we had not previously known before”; “This means horses can talk with us and as we find more creative means, there will be even more ways for them to speak with even more details in the future”). Evidence is specific, well chosen, and relevant, as each experiment from the research is cited and explained (“A 2016 Norwegian study even showed that horses can use abstract symbols to communicate with humans as well”). The writer’s word choice is specific and contributes to the clarity of the writing (“The study reveals that horses can indeed communicate to us through shapes and symbols, revealing a new way the animal could talk to humans”). The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 2**

The writing demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions, including punctuation, capitalization, grammar, and spelling. The response has few errors in usage or spelling (“These” [this], “previously”), and those errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.



**Response 2**

Have you ever thought about how smart the horses at the fair are? The new research presented about horses communicating shows us that horses are smarter than we think and can read and perform tasks based on a human's expression. Horses can present signals and acknowledge humans' emotions.

Horses are able to use symbols to show what their needs are. "The horses were systematically trained, using positive reinforcement (treats), to touch the appropriate board" (Paragraph 12). The horses were able to communicate, whether or not, they wanted to use a blanket. Since horses aren't able to speak any human languages, they showed humans that they could communicate using a different language, reading symbols. If horses can read, that leads to more possibilities of how smart these creatures could be.

The horses were also able to read the expressions on a person's face and see if they were mad or happy. "The horses' heartbeats sped up while viewing angry faces" (Paragraph 5). Horses get scared when we, humans, show negative expressions, but when we show positive expressions, horses are more likely to be happy and interact normally with us. The fact that they can read faces is incredible because horses would have to memorize what each expression means.

Horses have been put aside for research, but are now getting reeognized for the incredible things they can do. They are smarter than we think, and can perform a wide variety of tasks if we teach them. Horses are truly horse-incredible!

### **Organization and Development of Ideas: 3**

The writer presents a clear and fully developed controlling idea that “The new research presented about horses communicating shows us that horses are smarter than we think and can read and perform tasks based on a human’s expression. Horses can present signals and acknowledge humans’ emotions.” Focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and a meaningful conclusion is evident, as the controlling idea is reinforced in the conclusion “Horses have been put aside for research, but are now getting reeognized for the incredible things they can do. They are smarter than we think, and can perform a wide variety of tasks if we teach them.” Sentences are logically connected in purposeful ways. Evidence is specific, well chosen, and relevant. Each experiment from the passage is explained in detail, with insightful personal commentary to summarize each example (“If horses can read, that leads to more possibilties of how smart these creatures could be.”) and (“The fact that they can read faces is incredible because horses would have to memorize what each expression means”). The writer’s word choice is specific and purposeful (“Have you ever thought about how smart the horses at the fair are?” and “Horses are trully horse-incredible!”). The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

### **Conventions: 2**

The writer demonstrates consistent command of grade-level-appropriate conventions. Sentence construction is appropriate, as many sentences are connected accurately with correct punctuation. Two spelling errors (“possibilties,” “reeognized”) are present. The response has few errors, and these errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

## The Antique Shop

- 1 Jesse walks the short distance from school to the front door of Tío Roland and Tía Gloria's small antique business, just as he does every Monday and Wednesday afternoon. He passes by the neighborhood café where his friends sit in booths, talking and laughing. He wishes he could join them, but "helping family is important." Or at least that's what Papa tells him every time he complains about working for his uncle for free.
- 2 As he approaches the shop, Jesse sees his uncle through the large window, chatting happily with a customer. Pausing to glance at all the junk set out in the window display, Jesse remembers Papa bringing him here when he was little. The shop had seemed magical then, packed with shiny instruments, diverse decorations, and some strangely shaped furniture.
- 3 One summer morning, Papa had released Jesse's tiny hand to open the door, inviting him to enter this wonderland. Jesse's eyes shot from one end of the wide room to the other, taking in its treasures.
- 4 "Mi hijo," Papa said, "come see what is back here."
- 5 At the back of the shop, behind the glass counter was a shelf displaying a cowboy hat like Jesse had seen in those old movies Papa liked to watch.
- 6 "This is the first item your *abuelo* displayed when he opened the shop over 40 years ago," Papa explained. "It's a nineteenth-century charro cowboy sombrero, given to him by his own grandfather back in Mexico."
- 7 Jesse's young mind tried to grasp this information. *His abuelo had an abuelo, and the hat was that old!*
- 8 "Is Tío Roland going to sell it?" Jesse asked.
- 9 "Oh no," Papa had replied. "This is a family heirloom. We just keep it here for customers to admire."
- 10 The bell on the door rings as a customer leaves, and Jesse snaps out of his thoughts.
- 11 He enters the shop and joins his uncle behind the counter, letting his backpack fall to the floor. The store no longer fills Jesse with awe. Although the sombrero still sits in its stately place, everything else seems like old junk.
- 12 Jesse sits on a tall wooden stool and watches people come and go. Not everyone who comes into the store buys something, but those who do often find that one perfect item in the sea of clutter and always seem to have silly grins on their faces when they leave, like children exiting a candy store.
- 13 "Why do people like all this junk?" Jesse wonders out loud as he looks around the store. "It's old, and some of it doesn't even work anymore."

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- 14 Tío Roland sighs and shakes his head. "When people come here, they're not just buying a rusted trombone or an old bicycle. Customers are taking a piece of history with them, something that brings back a happy memory or sparks their imagination."
- 15 Jesse can tell that Tío Roland is tired of trying to explain this to him, so when Tía Gloria walks in carrying a large brown box, Jesse welcomes the diversion.
- 16 "Here," Tía Gloria grins as the box lands on the counter with a heavy thud. "This is what I got from that garage sale yesterday."
- 17 "What's this?" Tío Roland asks as he reaches into the box. Inside, in perfect condition, is an action figure from one of Jesse's favorite film sagas, and it is still in the original packaging.
- 18 "Oh, wow! How cool!" Jesse gasps as he grabs for the action figure.
- 19 "Ha!" Tío Roland exclaims, pointing to Jesse with a huge grin on his face. "You feel that? That's what customers feel when they come here, like they have found just the thing they needed."
- 20 Jesse nods as if to tell his uncle that he understands. He turns the item over, squinting to read the print on the package and wiping the dust off on his shirt. "Can I keep it?" Jesse asks quietly, feeling a little sheepish. Tío Roland and Tía Gloria look at each other, and after a brief moment, they both nod. Jesse waves the action figure triumphantly in the air.
- 21 "Thank you!" Jesse exclaims as he slips the item into his backpack. *Maybe this shop is a place of great discoveries and history*, he thinks, glancing back at the sombrero.

## **Grade 8 Short Constructed Response**

### **Prompt**

Read the question carefully. Then enter your answer in the box provided.

What is one way the setting in “The Antique Shop” affects Jesse’s values? Support your answer with evidence from the story.

## Item-Specific Rubric

### Score: 2

A complete response may include, but is not limited to, one of the following responses about how the setting of the antique shop affects Jesse's values:

- When Jesse is young, he thinks the antique shop is a wondrous place filled with fascinating treasures. Later, Jesse grudgingly works in the antique shop but wishes he could be with his friends instead.
- Jesse thinks the items in the store are junk, and he cannot understand why anyone would want them or why they make customers happy. Jesse later finds a wonderful action figure in the shop, and he becomes excited about it. He then realizes why people might value the items in the shop.

A complete response will include at least one piece of supporting evidence from the text.

A complete response may include, but is not limited to, the following evidence cited or paraphrased from the text:

- *He wishes he could join them, but 'helping family is important.' Or at least that's what Papa tells him every time he complains about working for his uncle for free. (paragraph 1)*
- *The shop had seemed magical then, packed with shiny instruments, diverse decorations, and some strangely shaped furniture. (paragraph 2)*
- *'Why do people like all this junk?' Jesse wonders out loud as he looks around the store. 'It's old, and some of it doesn't even work anymore.' (paragraph 13)*
- *'Oh, wow! How cool!' Jesse gasps as he grabs for the action figure. (paragraph 18)*
- *'Thank you!' Jesse exclaims as he slips the item into his backpack. Maybe this shop is a place of great discoveries and history, he thinks, glancing back at the sombrero. (paragraph 21)*

Evidence is accurately used to support the response.

The response and the evidence to support it are based on the text.

### Score: 1

#### Partial Credit

A partial response may include one of the answers expected in the complete response. However, the evidence included does not support the answer stated, or no evidence is provided.

A partial response may cite or paraphrase relevant text evidence, but the student does not include an accurate answer about how the setting of the antique shop affects Jesse's values.

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**Score: 0**

No Credit

- The response is incorrect.
- The response is not based on the text.
- No response is provided.

## Sample Student Responses

### Score Point 0

#### Response 1

beacouse they are in a antique shop so her values might not look as valuable as the other things in the shop.

The writer states (“beacouse they are in a antique shop so her values might not look as valuable as the other things in the shop”). The response is incorrect because the answer is confusing and does not clearly respond to the question. In addition, the writer does not provide relevant textual evidence from the article to support the answer.

#### Response 2

“The antique shop” represents Jesse’s values by showing how she was giving up some of her old antiques, even though some were gifted to her.

The writer states that “The antique shop’ represents Jesse’s values by showing how she was giving up some of her old antiques, even though some were gifted to her.” The response receives no credit because the answer is not based on the text. The claim that Jesse gives up some of his old antiques cannot be supported by the information in the story. Because the answer is not based on the text, the response receives a score point 0. In addition, the writer does not provide supporting evidence from the article.

#### Response 3

jesse exclaims he slips the item item into his back pack.

The writer does not state a way the setting in “The Antique Shop” affects Jesse’s values and provides irrelevant text from paragraph 21. The text provided (“jesse exclaims he slips the item item into his back pack”) describes a specific act by Jesse and does not clearly reveal how the setting of the antique shop affects his values.

#### Response 4

It changes the way he thinks of the shop

The writer states “It changes the way he thinks of the shop.” The response is not valid because the answer is vague and does not clearly describe in what way Jesse’s thoughts about the shop change. In addition, the writer does not provide relevant supporting evidence from the story to support the answer.



## Score Point 1

### **Response 1**

He goes in there every day so nothing in there seems to be important but once he gets the action figure he realized that all the stuff in there is meaningful to someone

The writer states one way the setting in “The Antique Shop” affects Jesse’s values (“He goes in there every day so nothing in there seems to be important but once he gets the action figure he realized that all the stuff in there is meaningful to someone”). This is an acceptable answer. However, the writer does not provide supporting evidence from the story. Overall, the writer offers a reasonable answer but does not provide relevant textual support, which makes this a partial response.

### **Response 2**

Because he says " Why do people want all of this junk?"

In this partial response, the writer does not state one way the setting in “The Antique Shop” affects Jesse’s values but does provide relevant text evidence from paragraph 13 (“ Why do people want all of this junk?”). This evidence shows how the Antique Shop affects Jesse’s values at that point in the article.

### **Response 3**

Paragraph 11 it states, " The store no longer fills Jesse with awe. Although the sombrero still sits in its stately place, everything else seems like old junk."

The writer does not state a way the setting in “The Antique Shop” affects Jesse’s values and copies the last two lines of paragraph 11 from the article. This relevant text-based evidence demonstrates Jesse’s indifference and negative feelings about the antique shop at that point in the article (“ The store no longer fills Jesse with awe. Although the sombrero still sits in its stately place, everything else seems like old junk”).

### **Response 4**

One way the setting of the antique shop affects jesse's values is by making him lose that awe feeling he used to have when he first entered the store in paragraph 3 where you can see him being excited but then in paragraph 11 you see him bored.

The writer states one way the setting in "The Antique Shop" affects Jesse's values ("by making him lose that awe feeling he used to have when he first entered the store in paragraph 3 where you can see him being excited but then in paragraph 11 you see him bored"). This is an acceptable answer that shows the change in Jesse's view of the shop from amazement to boredom. However, no evidence is provided to support the answer. The writer only cites paragraphs ("paragarah 3," "paragraph 11") which is not a sufficient substitute for supporting evidence.

## Score Point 2

### **Response 1**

The antique store, filled with clutter and old decorations, once seemed magical to Jesse. Now, however, the monotony of working there twice every week, instead of being with his friends, changes his perspective on the shop. "The store no longer fills Jesse with awe. Although the sombrero still sits in its stately place, everything else seems like old junk."

In this complete response, the writer states one way the setting in "The Antique Shop" affects Jesse's values ("The antique store, filled with clutter and old decorations, once seemed magical to Jesse. Now, however, the monotony of working there twice every week, instead of being with his friends, changes his perspective on the shop"). This is an acceptable answer that shows Jesse's view of the shop changing from magical to monotonous. Relevant evidence is included to support the answer ("The store no longer fills Jesse with awe. Although the sombrero still sits in its stately place, everything else seems like old junk").

### **Response 2**

Jesse doesn't see the shop as much if anything he sees it as a bunch of junk, then one day in the shop his mind gets changed by an action figure that his aunt got him. So to him he understands now why the customers value the old items in the shop. As shown here "Maybe this shop is a place of great discoveries and history, he thinks.."

The writer states one way the setting in "The Antique Shop" affects Jesse's values ("Jesse doesn't see the shop as much if anything he sees it as a bunch of junk, then one day in the shop his mind gets changed by an action figure that his aunt got him. So to him he understands now why the customers value the old items in the shop"). This is an acceptable answer that reveals the transformation in how Jesse views the belongings in the shop from junk to now seeing them as valuable. The writer provides relevant text evidence from the story ("Maybe this shop is a place of great discoveries and history, he thinks.."), making this a complete response.

### **Response 3**

The setting in The Antique Shop affects Jesse's values by giving him a different view on life, he knows that the store is there to help people bring back good memories like when he found the action figure. "You feel that? That's what customers feel when they come here, like they have found just the thing they needed."

The writer states one way the setting in "The Antique Shop" affects Jesse's values ("by giving him a different view on life, he knows that the store is there to help people bring back good memories like when he found the action figure"). This is an acceptable answer. The writer provides relevant text from Jesse's uncle that sufficiently supports Jesse becoming aware that the shop brings people good memories ("You feel that? That's what customers feel when they come here, like they have found just the thing they needed").

### **Response 4**

The setting in "The Antique Shop" affects Jesse's values because this story shows us how even though people might think a place doesn't have value or importance, doesn't mean that there's not something valuable there. Jesse values things that are important to him. We see that he does (In paragraph 1, lines 6 and 7), even if it's unfair to him. Jesse ends up finding something valuable and important to him later on in the story at the antique shop, and he realizes maybe the shop isn't all junk.

The writer states one way the setting in "The Antique Shop" affects Jesse's values ("even though people might think a place doesn't have value or importance, doesn't mean that there's not something valuable there. Jesse values things that are important to him"). This is an acceptable answer. In addition, the writer provides relevant evidence in the form of paraphrased text that accurately supports the answer ("Jesse ends up finding something valuable and important to him later on in the story at the antique shop, and he realizes maybe the shop isn't all junk"). The combination of a reasonable answer and relevant paraphrased text make this a complete response.

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# **Grade 8 Writing Short Constructed Response**

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## Grade 8 Writing Short Constructed Response

### Passage: "The Value of Community Celebrations"

#### Original Paragraph:

(1) By definition, celebrations are intended to be fun. (2) However, this expectation does not mean that they should be viewed as something extra or expendable. (3) In fact, they are usually very well attended. (4) They are important to the health and well-being of a town. (5) They bring together people of different backgrounds and remind them of shared goals. (6) This can foster a sense of pride and unity. (7) These positive feelings make people want to work for the community's success.

#### Prompt

Gage wants to combine the ideas in sentences 5 and 6. In the box provided, write a new sentence that combines these ideas in a clear and effective way.

#### Item-Specific Rubric

##### Score: 1

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way.

##### Score: 0

The response is not a complete sentence or does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way.

## Sample Student Responses

### Score Point 0

#### Response 1

Fourth of July bring people together from different backgrounds which fosters a sense of pride and unity.

The response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer left out important information from sentence 5, “remind them of shared goals.” In addition, stating “Fourth of July” alters the meaning because it excludes other celebrations as mentioned in the article.

#### Response 2

Bring people together from different backgrounds and sharing are goal. This can sense of pride and untiy.

The response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way. The response is still in the form of two sentences. Furthermore, the writer does not include information from sentence 5 (“they,” “remind them of”) and sentence 6 (“foster a”).

#### Response 3

Community celebrations bring together people who remind them of shared goals and helps them foster a sense of pride and unity.

The response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way. In an attempt to combine the ideas in sentences 5 and 6, the writer does not include important information from sentence 5 (“different backgrounds”).

#### Response 4

These events bring people together as a whole, and make people want there community to succeed.

The response does not combine the ideas in a clear and effective way because the writer combines the wrong sentences. Some of the information from sentence 5 is combined with sentence 7 (“make people want there community to succeed”). Since the writer does not include important information from sentences 5 and 6, this response is a score point 0.

## Score Point 1

### **Response 1**

They bring together people of different backgrounds and remind them of shared goals, which can foster a sense of pride and unity.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer creates a complex sentence by using the subordinating conjunction *which* to combine the ideas in sentences 5 and 6.

### **Response 2**

By bringing people together from different backgrounds, this can foster a sense of pride and unity for the community and remind people of shared goals.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer accurately places the ideas from sentence 6 between ideas from sentence 5. Additionally, using the prepositional phrase "By bringing" at the beginning is an acceptable replacement for "they" since celebrations are clearly implied in the response.

### **Response 3**

They bring people of different backgrounds together and remind them of shared goals; this can foster a sense of pride and unity.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer accurately uses a semicolon to combine the ideas presented as two independent clauses.

### **Response 4**

Celebrations can foster a sense of pride and unity through bringing people of different backgrounds together and reminding them of shared goals.

The response is a complete sentence that combines the ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer places the ideas from sentence 6 near the beginning of the response and accurately combines it with information from sentence 5 by using *through* as a preposition. Additionally, the word "Celebrations" is an acceptable replacement for "they" from sentence 5 since it refers to all types of celebrations.