



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

# **Grades 6–8**

# **Reading Language Arts**

Constructed Response  
Scoring Guide

Sample

## General Information

Beginning with the 2022–2023 school year, Reading/Language Arts assessments will include an extended-constructed response, or essay, at every grade level. They will also include short-constructed response questions. Students will be asked to write the essay in response to a reading selection and will write in one of three modes: informational, argumentative, or correspondence.

This State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness (STAAR®) constructed response scoring guide provides student exemplars at all score points for one extended-constructed response prompt and two short-constructed response prompts from the STAAR reading/language arts grade 6 and grade 7 stand-alone field tests. The prompts are presented as they appeared on the field test, and responses were scored based on the rubrics included in this guide, which were developed with the input of Texas educators. Essays will be scored using a five-point rubric. Short-constructed responses in the reading domain will be scored using a two-point prompt-specific rubric. Short-constructed responses in the writing domain will be scored using a one-point rubric.

The five-point rubric for extended-constructed responses includes two main components—organization and development of ideas and language conventions. A response earns a specific score point based on the ideas and language 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 6 Reading Passage  
with Short Constructed  
Response and Extended  
Constructed Response**

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## Mission-Ready

by Melanie Kletter

- 1 Life can be very unpredictable for astronauts living and working on the International Space Station (ISS). Parts of the station might stop working at any time. Space objects come flying at the station out of nowhere.
- 2 To be ready for all possibilities in space, astronauts go through a tough training regimen. NASA astronaut Ricky Arnold, a former science teacher, is in the midst of preparing for a long mission on the ISS.
- 3 “We are training every day,” Arnold told *Time for Kids*, “and no days are alike.” Although he has been to space before, his previous mission lasted only 12 days. “We are going to be up there for six months,” he said. “And things can change rapidly up there. We need to be prepared.”

### A Unique Lab

- 4 The ISS is a giant flying space lab operated by the United States, Russia, Japan, Europe, and Canada. It is the size of a football field, but it zips around the Earth. Astronauts from around the world live and work together aboard the ISS. They spend much of their time conducting experiments. They also make observations of Earth and repairs to the station.



5 Mission prep begins about two years before liftoff. It covers many subjects, from astronomy and geology to aviation and photography. “[Astronauts] also learn about all the science experiments they will be doing in space,” says Tamara York, a training officer at NASA’s Johnson Space Center, in Houston, Texas. “The experiments come from all over the U.S. and the world.”

6 NASA currently relies on a Russian spacecraft to get crew to and from the ISS. Astronauts study the Russian language. They spend long periods of time at Russian facilities.

### **Space Conditions**

7 One of the most difficult tasks astronauts aboard the ISS face is going outside the station to do repairs. Practicing for these spacewalks is a key part of training.

8 To prepare, astronauts spend time in NASA’s Neutral Buoyancy Lab in Houston. It is the world’s largest indoor pool. The conditions there are close to those in space. While diving, astronauts wear the space suit they would wear on a spacewalk.



An astronaut practices a spacewalk underwater at the Neutral Buoyancy Lab.

NASA

9 Astronauts also spend time in a virtual-reality lab. They wear a headset while inside a space-like environment. “Technology has given us better training materials and methods,” York says. “We have more robotics and 3D virtual training.”

### **Safety First**

10 Arnold says that much of his training focuses on preparing for problems that might come up in space. “All manner of emergencies can happen,” York says. “Very critical things can occur, and the astronauts need to be ready.” Astronauts learn what to do if there is a fire on the station, for example. They must know how to fix parts of the ISS. All astronauts need to learn how to solder metal. Arnold has even completed a round of training at a hospital emergency room. “If you need stitches, it’s going to be you or one of your buddies doing it for you,” he says.

11 Astronauts must relearn how to get dressed, go to the bathroom, and take care of their living areas in a weightless environment. They get tips from other astronauts.

- 12 “On my first mission, a guy who had flown before told me about the best way to set up my sleeping bag and toothbrush,” Arnold says.
- 13 Arnold notes that a safe mission always involves teamwork. “You are part of an international team working together to make something spectacular happen,” he says. “That sense of teamwork and purpose is the best part of the job.”

### **A New Class**

- 14 It’s not easy to become a NASA astronaut. In 2017, 12 people were selected for NASA’s new astronaut class. The seven men and five women were chosen from a field of more than 18,000 applicants. Candidates need a degree in engineering, biological science, physical science, computer science, or math.
- 15 “We look forward to the talent of these astronauts fueling our exciting future of discovery,” Robert Lightfoot, NASA’s administrator, said in June, when the class was announced.
- 16 The new astronauts have already begun a two-year training program at NASA’s Johnson Space Center, in Houston, Texas. They will study spacecraft systems, aviation, spacewalking skills, team building, and the Russian language.

“Mission-Ready” by Melanie Kletter from TIME FOR KIDS, Time, Inc. © 2017.

## Grade 6 Reading Short Constructed Response

**Prompt:** What is the author’s main message in the article? Support your answer with evidence from the article.

### Item-Specific Rubric

#### Score: 2

A complete response will provide one of the following explanations about the author’s main message in the article.

- Many types of teamwork are needed on the ISS.
- There is a lot of planning that is needed for life at the ISS.
- Astronauts show hard work in their life at the ISS.

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:

- “We are training every day,” Arnold told *Time for Kids*, “and no days are alike.” (paragraph 3)
- “Astronauts from around the world live and work together aboard the ISS.” (paragraph 4)
- “Mission prep begins about two years before liftoff. It covers many subjects, from astronomy and geology to aviation and photography.” (paragraph 5)

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 the author’s message in the article.

#### 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 0s

Its going to the stuff of a nasa astronauts life staying in there the jobs they have to do there and how to move safely

#### *Score Point 0*

The writer states (“Its going to the stuff of a nasa astronauts life staying in there the jobs they have to do there and how to move safely”). The response is incorrect and not valid because the answer is unclear and confusing. The writer does not provide clear evidence from the article to support the answer.

What I think is his main message is that you can try to follow you’re dreams and to keep trying no matter what.

#### *Score Point 0*

The writer states (“try to follow you’re dreams and to keep trying no matter what”). The response is incorrect because it does not address the author’s main message. In addition, the writer does not provide evidence from the article.

### Score Point 1s

In this article, the author’s main message is showing how much preparation goes into being an astronaut on the ISS. The astronauts have to do many things to get ready for living in space, and the author conveys that in this article.

#### *Score Point 1*

The writer states the author’s main message is (“showing how much preparation goes into being an astronaut on the ISS”). This is an acceptable answer. The writer includes evidence that is insufficient, too broad, and vague (“astronauts have to do many things to get ready for living in space”).

“its not easy to become a NASA astronaut. In 2017, 12 pepole were selected for NASA’s new artonaut class. there were seven men and fine women were chosen from a field of more than 18,000 applicants. Candidates need a degree in engineering, biological science, physical science,or math.”

#### *Score Point 1*

The writer does not state the author’s main message and copies paragraph 14 from the article. Relevant text-based evidence demonstrating how difficult it is to be chosen as an astronaut is included (“there were seven men and fine women were chosen from a field of more than 18,000 applicants. Candidates need a degree in engineering, biological science, physical science,or math”).



## Score Point 2s

I think the main message the author is trying to construct is "Working on the ISS is difficult and is a struggle for people even if they already know a lot of science and technology. It takes a lot of time and effort for the people who really believe they want to be an astronaut."

Supported sentences from article.

Paragraph 1, "Life can be very unpredictable for astronauts on the ISS"

"part of the station might stop working at any time."

Paragraph 5 "Mission prep begins but two years before liftoff"

Paragraph 14 "12 out of 18,000 applicants were approved by NASA's"

### Score Point 2

The writer states the author's main message is ("Working on the ISS is difficult and is a struggle for people even if they already know a lot of science and technology"). This is an acceptable answer. The writer includes relevant evidence to support the author's main message ("Life can be very unpredictable for astronauts on the ISS") and ("part of the station might stop working at any time"). Additional quotes from the article provide supplementary evidence to the author's main message ("Mission prep begins but two years before liftoff" and "12 out of 18,000 applicants were approved by NASA's").

I think the main message is that it takes a lot of hard work and training to become a part of the ISS, "Mission prep begins about two years before liftoff."

### Score Point 2

The writer states the author's main message is ("it takes a lot of hard work and training to become a part of the ISS"). This response is an acceptable answer. Relevant evidence is included as support ("Mission prep begins about two years before liftoff").

## Grade 6 Writing Extended Constructed Response

**Prompt:** Explain how the author develops the idea in the article that it is not easy to become a NASA astronaut.

### Informational Writing Rubric

Score Point	Organization and Development of Ideas
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <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.</li> <li>• <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.</li> <li>• <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 EOC, evidence is drawn from both texts. The response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.</li> <li>• <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.</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <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.</li> <li>• <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.</li> <li>• <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.</li> <li>• <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.</li> </ul>

<p><b>1</b></p>	<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 EOC, 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>
<p><b>0</b></p>	<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.</li> <li>• 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>
<p><b>Score Point</b></p>	<p><b>Conventions</b></p>
<p><b>2</b></p>	<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>
<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>

<b>0</b>	<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>
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## Sample Student Responses

### Score Point 0s

If you want to be a astronaut it is going to be realy hard to go to space. If i wanted to turn into a astronaut i would first learn or studie about it so i can know what to do or learn facts about going to space or be a astronaut.

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

A controlling idea is not evident because the writer reiterates the prompt, “If you want to be a astronaut it is going to be realy hard.” The response lacks an introduction and a conclusion. An organizational structure is not evident with only two sentences. The evidence provided (“If i wanted to turn into a astronaut i would first learn or studie about it so i can know what to do or learn facts”) is irrelevant and does not support a controlling idea. The expression of ideas is unclear because the writer does not address the prompt question of why it is not easy to become a NASA astronaut (“it is going to be realy hard to go to space”). Overall, this response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

#### *Conventions – 0*

If a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

the have not lunch the rocet in over 2 years and they work for the ISS in outer space and they went to the station and all the stuff was flying evry where.

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

A controlling idea is not evident. The response lacks an introduction and conclusion. An organizational structure is not evident with only one sentence. The writer’s attempt to provide evidence is irrelevant (“the have not lunch the rocet in over 2 years and they work for the ISS in outer space and they went to the station and all the stuff was flying evry where”) and does not support a controlling idea. The expression of ideas is unclear because the writer does not answer the prompt. Overall, this response reflects a lack of understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 0*

If a response receives a score point 0 in the Organization and Development of Ideas trait, the response will also earn 0 points in the Conventions trait.

**Score Point 1s**

He is sayng it Hard beacouse in paragraph 2 and 3 u see he says "is in the midst of preparing for a long mission on the ISS we are training every day."They have to learn a lot of many difrent thing like a difrent language many difrent subjects,they have to get ready for any emergency like in paragraph 10 it says "all manner of emergencies can happened.

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 1*

The writer presents the controlling idea that becoming an astronaut is not easy because "in the midst of preparing for a long mission on the ISS we are training every day." An introduction and a conclusion are not present. An organizational structure is not evident with only two sentences. The writer provides little paraphrased ("They have to learn a lot of many difrent thing like a difrent language many difrent subjects") and quoted evidence ("all manner of emergencies can happened"). While the writer attempts to explain the provided evidence ("it Hard," "have to get ready for any emergency"), it is insufficient. Overall, this response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 0*

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level appropriate conventions with many errors in sentence construction with a run-on sentence ("They have to . . . emergencies can happened"), missing commas before quoted evidence ("says 'is in'" ; "says 'all manner'"), capitalization ("says 'is in'" ; "says 'all manner'"), grammar ("He is sayng it Hard") and spelling ("sayng," "beacouse," "u," "difrent"). Given the short length of the response, these errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader's understanding of the writing.

it does take a lot of work to be a astronaut you need to do a lot of things that might be easy to do in gravity but when there is none it is very hard,as in the suits you need to take them all off while using the bathroom and when you are done you have to put it all back on without no gravity think about it as you put on some jeans as soon as you get out of the shower and they are hard to get on thats is how it is just a bit more harder cause of how even and how many things you need to put on your body all at once.

getting to be a astronaut is also hard cause you need to know everything and to be safe if something bad happends cause it is a lot of responsibility to be a astronaut and it takes a lot of work too,you need to watch out for you and you're teamates too,it is very hard to become a astronaut,you won't always get pickd cause there is a long line of others wanting to be one and it really really isn't easy to just get a job like that.

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 1*

The writer presents the controlling idea that "it does take a lot of work to be a astronaut you need to do a lot of things that might be easy to do in gravity but when there is none it

is very hard.” A brief introduction (“it does take . . . it is very hard”) and conclusion (“you won’t always get picked . . . isn’t easy to just get a job like that”) are present. The organization is minimal as each paragraph addresses the writer’s key ideas; getting dressed in a weightless environment and safety. The writer provides insufficient evidence, as most of the information is summarized using general language (“the suits you need to take them all off while using the bathroom and when you are done you have to put it all back on without no gravity think about it as you put on some jeans as soon as you get out of the shower and they are hard to get on thats is how it is just a bit more harder cause of how even and how many things you need to put on your body all at once.”) The expression of ideas is ineffective because the writer’s word choice is vague (“bit more harder”; “you need to know everything”) which impedes the clarity of the essay. Overall, this response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 0*

The writer demonstrates little to no command of grade-level appropriate conventions with many errors in sentence construction: run-on sentences in both paragraphs, missing apostrophes (“thats”), no capitalization in the entire response, grammar (“a astronaut”; “without no gravity”; “you’re teammates”), and spelling (“happends,” “teammates”). These errors impact the clarity of the writing and the reader’s understanding of the writing.

**Score Point 2s**

It is hard to become a NASA astronaut because they said “It’s not easy to become a NASA astronaut.In 2017,12 people were selected for NASA’s new astronaut class”.In paragraph 14 it shows the evidince

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 1*

In this response, the controlling idea that “In 2017,12 people were selected for NASA’s new astronaut class” is evident, but it is not developed appropriately. An introduction and conclusion are not present. An organizational structure is not evident with only three short sentences. The writer attempts to provide evidence by stating (“In paragraph 14 it shows the evidince”) but this statement is insufficient without a specific quote. In addition, paragraph 14 also includes the writer’s controlling idea (“In 2017,12 people were selected for NASA’s new astronaut class”). The expression of ideas is ineffective because there is very little original writing in this response. Overall, this response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 1*

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions with several errors in punctuation with a missing comma before the quote (said “It’s not easy”), and spelling (“evidince”), but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

It has been thown at us that being an astronaut is no easy because of the training and the laerning and also the presure. Reason 1 why I think that it is not easy is because of the training, astronauts have to learn how to fix and work things in zero gravity, and how to live in zero gravity it just seems to hard for me to think that actually have to do that. Second reason Is because of the learning.

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 1*

In this response, the controlling idea that “being an astronaut is no easy because of the training and the laerning and also the presure” is evident but is not developed appropriately in response to the writing task. A brief introduction (“It has been thown at us that being an astronaut is no easy”) is present but a conclusion is absent. The organizational structure that supports logical development is not always evident as the writer loses focus (“how to live in zero gravity it just seems to hard for me to think that actually have to do that”). Little relevant paraphrased evidence is given to support the controlling idea (“astronauts have to learn how to fix and work things in zero gravity”) but is not explained. The expression of ideas is ineffective because the writer’s word choice is vague (“also the presure”; “learn how to fix and work things”). Overall, this response reflects a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 1*

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions. The response has several errors in sentence construction with a run-on sentence (“Reason 1 . . . have to do that”), missing commas (“the laerning and also”; “Reason 1 why”), capitalization (“reason Is because”), and spelling (“thown,” “laerning,” “presure”), but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

**Score Point 3s**

Life really can be hard working on the International Space Station (ISS) for many reasons. One of them being is that you are working for NASA specifically. NASA expects a lot from one person, and they don't want anyone being lazy or slacking off on their job. NASA is a very cool yet unique place to work. Not everyone gets to say that they work for NASA or get to say that they are an astronaut. It can even be challenging to send an application to work for NASA, as it can take many months to recieve an answer or even get it sent correctly.

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 1*

The writer presents the controlling idea that “Life really can be hard working on the International Space Station (ISS) for many reasons.” An introduction and conclusion are not present. The organizational structure is minimal because the response is a single paragraph. The writer attempts to provide paraphrased evidence (“It can even be challenging to send an application to work for NASA”) but the reason given (“as it can take many months to recieve an answer or even get it sent correctly”) is not information from the article. The remainder of the response is irrelevant (“NASA expects a lot from one person, and they don't want anyone being lazy or slacking off on their job. NASA is a very cool yet unique place to work. Not everyone gets to say that they work for NASA or get to say that they are an astronaut”). The expression of ideas is ineffective because the writer’s word choice is vague (“expects a lot from one person”; “get it sent correctly”). Overall, this response represents a limited understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 2*

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions, despite a few errors in grammar (“or get to say”) and spelling (“recieve”). These errors do not impact the clarity of the writing.

It is not easy to be an asrtronaut because you have to aply to get in NASA then you train for two years before lift off and you learn all types of stuff like in the text it states “ spacecraft systems,aviation,spacewalking skills, team building”. and then they learn about the russian language and the you do space repairs and also underwater repairs all sorts of stuff and you have to learn about sience and math and thecnology and lots more.

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 2*

In this response, the writer presents a controlling idea that “you have to aply to get in NASA then you train for two years before lift off and you learn all types of stuff.” A brief introduction (“It is not easy to be an asrtronaut because . . . before lift off”) is given but a conclusion is not present. The organizational structure is limited but not always consistent as the writer quickly shifts ideas from the training program to space repairs and learning science and math. The writer provides limited quoted (“ spacecraft systems, . . . underwater repairs”) and paraphrased (“you have to learn about sience and math and thecnology”) evidence that is insufficiently explained. The expression of ideas is basic because the writer’s word choice is general (“you learn all types of stuff”; “all sorts of stuff”; “and lots more”). Overall, this response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 1*

The writer demonstrates an inconsistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions. The response has several errors in punctuation (it states “ spacecraft”), capitalization (“. and then”; “russian”), grammar (“and the you do”), and spelling (“asrtronaut,” “aply,” “sience,” “thecnology”) but the reader can understand the writer’s thoughts.

**Score Point 4s**

The author devlops the idea that it is not easy to become an astronaut by telling us how much they have to train and have a degree. In the text it says you have to have a degree in engineering, math, and or science and those are not too easy to get. Also in the text it says they have to train so much like to speak russian, spacewalks, astronomy and so many other things. Also in the text it said we have to train for 2 years. This proves it is hard to be an astronught because of the extensive training they have to go through.

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 2*

The writer presents the controlling idea that “The author devlops the idea that it is not easy to become an astronaut by telling us how much they have to train and have a degree.” A brief introduction (“The author devlops the idea . . . have a degree”) and conclusion (“This proves it is hard . . . extensive training they have to go through”) are present. The organization is limited as the writer includes some sentence-to-sentence transitions (“In the text”; “Also”; “This proves”). The writer provides paraphrased evidence (“In the text it says you have to have a degree in engineering, math, and or science and those are not too easy



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to get. Also in the text it says they have to train so much like to speak russian, spacewalks, astronomy and so many other things. Also in the text it said we have to train for 2 years”) that is insufficiently explained (“it is hard to be an astronught because of the extensive training”). The expression of ideas is basic because the writer’s word choice is general (“how much they have to train”; “have to train so much”). Overall, this response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 2*

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions. A few errors in capitalization (“russian”) and spelling (“devlops,” “astronught”) do not impact the clarity of the writing.

I know that the author is developing the idea that being an astronaut is not an easy job because in the introduction she tells you about having to be ready for all possibilities that require a lot of training since astronauts have to be ready for everything. In “Unique Lab”, Paragraph 5, she writes about the process to prepare for a mission which requires the study of many subjects and experiments and requires 2 years of preparation before the mission. In “Space Conditions”, she mentions another difficult task astronauts have to face which is going outside the station to do repairs. In the section “Safety First”, she writes about all the training astronauts have to go through for emergencies. Lastly, in “A New Class” she shows us that it is hard to become an astronaut by telling us that out of 18,000 applicants, only 12 were selected. In summary, she used to details and facts about being an astronaut to inform us about how hard the job actually is.

*Organization and Development of Ideas – 2*

The writer offers the controlling idea that being an astronaut is not easy because you have “to be ready for all possibilities that require a lot of training.” A purposeful organizational structure with an introduction (“I know . . . for everything”) and a conclusion (“In summary, . . . how hard the job actually is”) are evident. The organization is limited as the writer uses basic sentence-to-sentence transitions (“In ‘Unique Lab’, Paragraph 5, she writes . . .”; “In ‘Space Conditions,’ she mentions . . .”; “In the section ‘Safety First’ she writes . . .”; “Lastly, in ‘A New Class’ she shows . . .”). Relevant paraphrased evidence (“study of many subjects and experiments and requires 2 years of preparation”; “going outside the station to do repairs”; “training astronauts have to go through for emergencies”) is insufficiently explained. The expression of ideas is basic because the writer’s word choice is general (“how hard the job actually is”). Overall, this response reflects a partial understanding of the writing purpose.

*Conventions – 2*

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions. A few errors in punctuation (“Unique Lab”, Paragraph; “Space Conditions”, she; “Safety First”, she”) do not impact the clarity of the writing.

## Score Point 5s

Being an astronaut is not an easy task. You have to go through lots of training to get into the NASA programs. And even if you get through all the training, there is not a high chance that you will make it into the program. For example, in 2017 there were about 18,000 applications for getting selected into NASA’s new astronaut class. But, only 12 people out of the 18,000 were selected for that class. And even after you make it into the NASA program, you have to go through harsh training before you get to go on your first mission. Though, lots of the training has to do with problems and issues you face when on your missions. Even a current astronaut said it himself, “Arnold says that much of his training focuses on preparing for problems that might come up in space.” (p10) and NASA relies on Russian spacecrafts to get the crews to and from the ISS. This is why you also have to study the Russian language. Which astronauts spend long periods of time in Russian facilities. A difficult task that astronauts aboard the ISS face is going outside the station to do repairs. This is why they practice this in a Buoyancy Lab in Houston. It is the largest indoor pool in the world and the conditions there are close to those in space when you dive in astronauts space suits.

This is why becoming an astronaut is not easy. And, even after you become an astronaut you have to go through lots of harsh training after. And this is why becoming an astronaut is a difficult process.

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

The writer offers a clear controlling idea that “even after you make it into the NASA program, you have to go through harsh training before you get to go on your first mission.” An effective introduction (“Being an astronaut . . . make it into the program”) and conclusion (“This is why . . . becoming an astronaut is a difficult process”) are present. The organization effectively maintains focus on the training that occurs after acceptance into the program, and the writer includes some sentence-to-sentence transitions (“For example”; “Though”). The writer provides relevant quoted (“Arnold says that much of his training focuses on preparing for problems that might come up in space”) and paraphrased (“A difficult task . . . is going outside the station to do repairs”; “NASA relies on Russian spacecrafts to get the crews to and from the ISS”) evidence which is clearly explained (“ . . . lots of the training has to do with problems and issues you face when on your missions”; “This is why they practice . . . when you dive in astronauts space suits”; “This is why you also have to study the Russian language”). The expression of ideas is clear as almost all sentences contribute to the overall quality of the response and the writer’s word choice is specific (“not a high chance;” “harsh”). Overall, this response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

### *Conventions – 2*

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions. A few errors in punctuation (“astronaut’s”) and spelling (“indor”) do not impact the clarity of the writing.

"We are training everyday..." In the selection "Mission-Ready" by Melanie Kletter, she explains how it can be tough to become NASA astronaut. There are a lot of steps, studying, and preparing to do before becoming a certified astronaut. The training is serious and you need to stay focused in order to get every step and piece of information correct. You need to work hard and try your best!

The author develops the idea that it is not easy to become a NASA astronaut in many different ways, depending on the heading. One way that she describes that it is not easy to become a NASA astronaut, is by explaining the conditions in space and how the astronauts prepare for that. "One of the most difficult tasks astronauts aboard the ISS face is going outside the station to do repairs." (paragraph 7). Soon after, the astronauts would go to a special lab in Houston to prepare. The lab provides the world's largest indoor pool where the astronauts can dive in and experience conditions similar to the conditions in space. "To prepare, astronauts spend time in NASA'S Neutral Buoyancy Lab in Houston. It is the world's largest indoor pool. The conditions there are so close to those in space. While diving, astronauts wear the space suit they would wear on a spacewalk." (paragraph 8). In the picture, to me, the pool looks really deep with a pole attached to it so that the astronauts can practice their spacewalks.

Another way that the author develops the idea that it is not easy to become a NASA astronaut is by stating how the astronauts have to learn how to take care of their own medical issues if one occurs during their mission. "Arnold says that much of his training focuses on preparing for problems that might come up in space." (paragraph 10). In space, you would have to know how to fix and solve different kinds of situations. Some of them may require one person, while others may require some more hands. "They must know how to fix parts of the ISS..." "If you need stitches, it's going to be you or one of your buddies doing it for you..." (paragraph 10). It seems that space just makes stuff harder than they already are! "Astronauts must relearn how to get dressed, go to the bathroom, and take care of their living areas in a weightless environment." (paragraph 11).

Lastly the author also develops the idea that it is not easy to become a NASA astronaut by stating how long it takes for the classes to get done, and how many classes they actually have to take. "Candidates need a degree in engineering, biological science, physical science, computer science, or math." (paragraph 15).

As you can see, it's not that easy to become a NASA astronaut. It takes a lot of patients and effort, studying and working. Maybe one day, you can become a NASA astronaut!

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

The writer offers the clear controlling idea that "There are a lot of steps, studying, and preparing to do before becoming a certified astronaut." An effective introduction ("We are training . . . try your best!") and conclusion ("As you can see, . . . NASA astronaut!") is present. The organization effectively supports the controlling idea as the writer uses paragraph-to-paragraph transitions ("Another way"; "Lastly"; "As you can see,"). The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. The writer provides relevant quoted evidence ("To prepare, astronauts . . . wear the space suit they would wear on a spacewalk"; "If you need stitches, it's going to be you or one of your buddies doing it for you...") that is clearly explained ("by explaining the conditions in space and how the astronauts prepare for that"; "how the astronauts have to learn how to take care of their own medical issues"). The expression of ideas is clear as almost all sentences and phrases are effectively crafted to convey the writer's ideas. This response reflects a thorough understanding of the writing purpose.

Grades 6–8 Reading Language Arts  
Constructed Response Scoring Guide

*Conventions – 2*

The writer demonstrates a consistent command of grade-level appropriate conventions. A few errors in spelling (“haave,” “Austronauts,” “patients”) do not impact the clarity or the overall effectiveness of the writing.

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# **Grade 7 Writing Short Constructed Response**

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## Grade 7 Writing Short Constructed Response

**Article:** “Hill Country Capture the Flag”

**Original Paragraph:**

(1) Every July my family packs suitcases to prepare for two weeks away from home. (2) I always dream that I’m packing for a European vacation or mountainous adventure, but in reality we are packing to spend two weeks at my grandparents’ house. (3) Lolly and Pops live on a few acres in the Hill Country. (4) It’s not Europe or the mountains, but it’s a lot more fun than staying at home all summer, which is not fun.

**Prompt:** Sentence 4 needs to be revised. In the box provided, rewrite sentence 4 in a clear and effective way.

### Item-Specific Rubric

**Score: 1**

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

**Score: 0**

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

### Sample Student Responses

**Score Point 0s**

its not eroupe or the mountains, but its way more fun than staying at home all summer, which is not fun.

*Score Point 0*

This response does not express ideas in a clear and effective way. The writer copies the original sentence and inserts the adjective “way” to “more fun,” which does not satisfy the prompt as a sufficient rewrite of the sentence.

Europe and the mountains are not fun,I like staying home all summer.

*Score Point 0*

This response does not express ideas in a clear and effective way. In an attempt to rewrite the sentence, the writer changes the meaning by reversing the ideas.

### Score Point 1s

It's not Europe or the mountains , but it's more fun than staying home all summer.

#### *Score Point 1*

This response is a complete sentence that expresses ideas clearly and effectively. By removing the redundant phrase “a lot” and the redundant clause “which is not fun,” the sentence is more effective, and the meaning is not changed.

*It's not European vacation or the mountains, but it is more fun than staying at home all summer.*

#### *Score Point 1*

This response is a complete sentence that expresses ideas clearly and effectively. By removing the redundant phrase “a lot” and “which is not fun,” the sentence is more effective. The addition of the word “vacation” does not change the meaning of the original sentence.