

Grade 6 / Case Study 1

→ ELA * SMARTER BALANCED PERFORMANCE TASK

Research Question 1

ITEM #2631

Explain what Source #1 and Source #3 say about how robots are able to save lives by paraphrasing the information while avoiding plagiarism.

Student Response

ITEM #2631

Source #1 and Source #3 say robots are able to save lives in many different ways. A Gemini-Scout can take an injured person to safety, and it can tell miners when the air in mines is safe. A Gemini-Scout can even find people or miners who are stuck under the ground, and talk using a two-way radio with the rescue team. The Dante 2, on the other hand, can go in volcanoes when scientists can't because they are too hot. Without the Dante 2, a scientist couldn't get as much information as he could with the Dante 2. Mr. Gower can help doctors, pharmacists, and nurses in the hospital. If a patient needs their doctor, nurse, or pharmacist, they can stay, because Mr. Gower can bring them the medicine that they need. In Source #3, they talk about self-driving cars. Self-driving cars can save lives because cars can't drink, text, eat, or do other things that humans do, which causes tons of accidents each year. This way, the car will stay completely focused on their driving, therefore causing less accidents to happen.

Analysis

ITEM #2631

The student received a score of a 2 out of 2 possible points on this response. The response provides a thorough explanation of the ways robots are able to save lives in Source #1 and #3, appropriately paraphrasing while avoiding plagiarism. It is obvious the student understands the technology and capabilities of the various robots discussed in the sources and is able to make real-world connections.

Research Question 2

ITEM #2632

Many robots are designed to do normal tasks that improve people's lives or jobs. Provide two pieces of evidence from different sources that support this idea and explain how each example supports the idea. Cite evidence for each piece of information and identify the source title or number.

Student Response

ITEM #2632

The first piece of evidence I found to prove that many robots are designed to do normal tasks that improve people's lives or jobs was about the Gemini-Scout. "For example, it tests the air for gases and then tells miners when the air is safe. The robot also has a thermal camera, a special camera that locates heat energy to produce images that help it find miners who are trapped underground," according to Lucas Langley in his article, Meet The Robots. I think that this example supports the idea because, it's saying that if there was bad air in a mine, the Gemini-Scout could tell the miners, so then they wouldn't go onto the bad air. It also says that it can find miners that are stuck underground. If it wasn't for the Gemini-Scout, the miner could have died. Another piece of evidence I found to show that many robots are designed to do normal tasks that improve people's lives or jobs is in Meet The Robots, by Lucas Langley, about the robot Mr. Gower. "Mr. Gower is a robot that moves throughout a hospital, helping doctors and nurses bring medicine to patients." Without Mr. Gower, the doctors and nurses would have to leave their patients to get medicine.

Analysis

ITEM #2632

This response received a score of 1. Although the response is thorough, explaining how each example supports the idea, and the student appropriately cites the source, the student uses specific evidence from only one source (Source #1). The student may not have fully processed the prompt's expectation of using two different sources. The student may have also thought the two examples were from different sources because of the section titles. It is also clear that the student has drawn on much of the same evidence used to answer the first research question (Item 2631). While this may be an efficient test-taking strategy, it means that the student is not acquiring additional/broad knowledge of the sources while progressing through the research questions, which is part of the purpose of these research questions. However, because this is a narrative task, where use of sources is less important to the full write than it is in explanatory or argumentative tasks, this is not likely to have a negative impact on the student's later response to the full write.

Research
Question 3

ITEM #2633

Click on the boxes to show the claim(s) that each source supports. Some sources will have more than one box selected.

Student
Response

ITEM #2633

KEY

X = student response

✓ = correct response

	SOURCE #1 Meet the Robots	SOURCE #2 Robots That Play Well with Others	SOURCE #3 When the Car Is the Driver
Robots are more reliable because they don't get tired.	✓		X ✓
Robots could serve as a substitute pet when a person has an allergy to animals.		X ✓	
Robots often save time and energy.	X ✓		

Analysis

ITEM #2633

The student received a score of 0 for the response on the table. Although the student did identify three of the four sources that support the claims, Source #1 should also be selected for the claim that "Robots are more reliable because they don't get tired." To receive a point for this item, the student would have needed to select all four correct answers. However, the student does not select any incorrect answers, showing that the student likely has a fairly strong grasp on which claims are represented in each source and simply missed one detail. It seems likely that the student may not have noticed the instructions, which state that "Some sources will have more than one box selected." There may be a pattern of this student not fully reading or processing directions, since the lower score on Item 2632 also seems to be related to not following instructions exactly. This student's responses to all three research questions demonstrate an ability to match claims to sources, cite relevant evidence to support claims, and explain evidence from sources. Closer reading of instructions throughout would likely allow this student to receive full credit for all of the research questions.

Full Write * ITEM #2634

Full Write —
Student
Response

ITEM #2634

Hi! My name is Elizabeth. Me and my friends, Alex and Maizie, are in the technology club at my school. For my birthday, my mom bought me my very own robot because she knew I wanted to one! It's supposed to come in the mail today. Let's go see if it came yet!

When I walk inside the door to my house, the first thing I do is look on the table for a big package. I become really surprised and happy when I see that there is a package! I quickly throw my backpack on the ground and run over to the package. My mom walked into the room and notices me looking at the package. I turn around and ask, "Mom, can I open it, can I open it, can I open it please?" Mom smiles and says, "Fine. But then you need to do your homework." I smile and reply, "I don't have any!" I get the scissors and cut the tape from the top of the box off. Before I do anything else, I decide to call and see if Maizie and Alex can come over to see me open it. I quickly pull out my phone and dial their phone numbers. Alex picks up on the first ring, and Maizie picks up on the third. "Hi!" They both say at the same time. Without saying hi, I ask, "Can you guys come over now? My robot came and I want you guys to see me open it!" They both go to ask their parents, who say yes. We all live on the same street, so I say goodbye, hang up the phone, and wait.

After about a minute, they both show up. I hug them and then don't hesitate to take out my robot. The first thing that I pull out is a few layers of bubble wrap. They take turns popping it while I pull out the rest of the stuff. Next, I pull out an instruction packet, which is pretty thick. I skim through the packet, and then take a break to talk to my friends. "What kind of robot do you think it will be?"

When I learned I was getting a robot, my friends and I did research on robots, and we learned that there are many different types of robots. In one source we found called Meet The Robots, we found out that there are robots with the names of Dante 2, Agribots, Gemini-Scout, Mr. Gower, and many more robots. Each robot is designed to do different jobs. There are robots that do jobs like picking fruit, bringing medicine to patients, going in volcanoes, and many more different tasks that are done by robots.

After my friends thought for a few minutes about what kind of robot they thought mine would be, they told me their ideas. "I think it might be an Agribot. Those are the ones that pick fruit," Alex reminded me. "Your mom does have a big garden," Maizie agreed. "But I think it will be a pet robot, like the ones we read about," Maizie decides. In another article we read called Robots That Play Well With Others, we discovered that one company, called I-Pet Companion®, made a type of robot that lets you play with a kitten from a distance. Some of them can even play alone! We saw pictures of them, and we thought they were so cool.

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Full Write –
Student
ResponseITEM #2634
(CONTINUED)

“What kind of robot do you think it will be, Elizabeth?” Maizie asks me. I reply jokingly, “Maybe it will be a robotic car!” We all laugh and Alex says, “You think that box is bit enough?” I sigh and nod my head.

The last article we looked at was about robotic cars. We knew that definitely wasn’t it, but they sounded cool. They’re even legal to drive in Nevada! “I actually don’t know what kind I think it will be,” I say. “Well lets find out!” Maizie yells. I turn back to the box and take out the heaviest thing. I gasp as I hold the robot in my hand. I set it on the ground. My robot is red, with hazel eyes. She looks like a mini-robotic human, which I think is awesome. “MOM!” I yell. She rushes in as I hug her so hard that she looks as if she is about to pass out. “Thank you!” I scream. I let go of her and she asks, “Well, are you going to turn it on yet?” I nod as I pick up the instruction packet and look thorough it to see if it says how to turn it on. I find what I’m looking for in the packet, and I read it out loud. “To turn on robot, press the blue button on robot’s back.” I set down the instructional packet and turn the robot around so I can see the back. I find it easily, it’s right on the back, like the packet says. Right as I’m about to press it, my mom suddenly yells, “Stop!” I turn to face her with a confused look on my face as she pulls out her camera. I hear a click, and I know that means she’s recording this. I turn back to face the robot and press the button. I gasp as I see the little robot coming to life right in front of my eyes. “Hello,” I see the robot speaking for the first time in my living room. “Who do you want me to talk like?” My robot asks in a robot voice. A screen – yes, an actual screen! – pops up on his stomach with names on it. With each button I press, a different voice can be heard from the robot. “Sara.” I ask everyone what they think about each voice I press. There was Sara, Amanda, Carly, Bill, Mark, and Thomas. We all agreed that we like Amanda the best. She sounds happy and cheerful, smart and full of knowledge, quirky, and excited to be here.

We read the packet some more, and the most important thing we read was the kind of robot. Apparently, Amanda can do anything we program her to do, so she isn’t just one type of robot. We went to the website that the packet told us to go to, to program Amanda. I decided to make Amanda be my friend, which everyone thought was a great idea. There were so many things I could do with Amanda, which was fantastic. It turns out that she is water proof, fire resistant, and much more, so Amanda can be extremely safe.

After we taught Amanda some dog tricks, Maizie’s mom called and she has go home. I give Maizie a big hug and thank her for coming over. For the rest of the day, Alex and I played with Amanda and taught her some more stuff. It was a really fun day.

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Full Write – Student Response

ITEM #2634
(CONTINUED)

It's Monday, and I'm bringing my robot to school to show to the technology club. I couldn't wait to see their reactions! Finally, lunch is over and it's time to go to the technology club. I'm walking with Maizie and Alex with my robot safely in my backpack. We talk until we're at the classroom. I walk into the room with my best friends, and I can feel the excitement jolting through my body. "Good afternoon, class," the technology teacher, Ms. Olsen, greets us. "I believe today Elizabeth has brought something to show the class today, is that right?" I nod and reach into my backpack and pull out Amanda. Alex and Maizie give me reassuring smiles as I walk to the front of the room. I place Amanda down and say, "Hi everyone. Today I wanted to show you my robot, Amanda, that I got for my birthday." I hear gasps coming from all around the room as they take in the sight of my amazing robot. I try to not be nervous and continue speaking. "It came in the mail on Friday after school was over. My two friends, Maizie and Alex, came over and we gave Amanda life for the first time.

Amanda can be programmed to do anything you want, and we programmed her to be our friend. Do you guys want me to turn her on?" Everyone cheers and shouts, so I turn her on. "Hello. I am Amanda, your loving and caring friend."

For about ten minutes, I showed everyone some of the cool stuff Amanda can do. When I asked if anyone had questions, almost everyone's hands shot up. The first person I called on, Chloe, asked, "Can you pass her around and we can take turns holding her?" Everyone loved that idea, so I agreed, as long as everyone was extra careful.

Everyone seemed to love Amanda, which was good. I'm super glad that I got a robot, and I can't wait to do more stuff with my new friend and robot, Amanda.

Analysis of Full Write

ITEM #2634

Organization and Purpose: Score 3

There are many clear strengths in this student's narrative writing. It is obvious this student can sustain a long narrative, using narrative strategies, structures, and conventions that are appropriate for this purpose.

At first glance, the story length is impressive for a 6th grade student. It has an effective introduction and leads the reader, with a sense of excitement, into the plot, with an effective introduction to the setting and characters, "Hi! My name is Elizabeth. Me and my friends, Alex and Maizie, are in the technology club at my school." In contrast with the research questions, where it appears the student may not have read instructions carefully, this response clearly connects to the school technology club context provided in the instructions.

The student transitions the setting from school to home by providing a reason for the change in venue: "Let's go see if it came yet!" and begins to build the storyline with the arrival of her robot and the establishment of their relationship. The student provides detailed description

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Analysis of Full Write

ITEM #2634
(CONTINUED)

and impressive dialogue to develop the setting and characters, yet, at times, loses focus by providing irrelevant or ineffective descriptions, “After we taught Amanda some dog tricks, Maizie’s mom called and she has go home. I give Maizie a big hug and thank her for coming over.” These diversions are most obvious, and sometimes awkward, when the student introduces source materials. At times it is driven too heavily by the source materials and loses focus from the main idea, becoming long and meandering.

Development and Elaboration: Score 3

While the student clearly demonstrates the ability to use a variety of narrative techniques, including skillful dialogue and vivid description (e.g., “She rushes in as I hug her so hard that she looks as if she is about to pass out.”), many of the details and diversions in the story are not relevant and do not advance the purpose of the story. Smarter Balanced scoring materials specify that elaboration in narrative writing is the process of “developing the setting(s), character(s), events, and ideas by the careful selection of pertinent, enriching details and the smooth integration of them into the narrative flow,” with the purpose of “*showing*, as well as slowing down and expanding, the important parts (scenes) of a story.” Again, while this writer includes a great deal of detail and includes concrete, sensory, and figurative language, those details sometimes interfere with the progression of the plot.

Conventions: Score 2

The student showed an impressive command of conventions, although there was some inconsistency in the use of present tense throughout the story.

Overview of Student’s Performance

In the three research questions, the student demonstrates the ability to comprehend the source material and identify main ideas and appropriate evidence from the text. However, the student’s responses in two of these questions reveal that the student may need support to fully read and process directions in the prompts. In the full write, the student sustains a long piece of writing using narrative techniques, including quotations and detailed descriptions. The narrative sometimes loses focus and includes some details that interfere with the progression of the plot. The student demonstrates an adequate command of conventions of written English.

Next Steps

Although it is difficult to fault a story for using too much description and too many references to source material for elaboration, the student should focus on avoiding using too many details, especially those details that don’t contribute to the storyline, which may become distracting, confusing, awkward, or, at times, tedious. Use of a graphic organizer, practice writing shorter narratives, or reading concise narratives that utilize source materials, may help this student move from a 3 to a 4 in both Organization/Purpose and Development/Elaboration. Additionally, the student may practice from focused review and revision of the work, including trying to reduce the volume by a certain number of words or percentage of the word count. This strategy may help the student examine what is truly useful to the plot and what is less relevant. This student may also benefit from activities around tense usage. At this grade level, minor slips are expected, yet direct instruction on this skill will help the student avoid tense shifts in the future.