

Scoring Key: Grade 7

Explanatory Performance Task

Focus Standards

Grade 7: W.7.2b, d, e; W.7.4; W.7.5; W.7.8; W.7.9; L.7.3

4-Point Explanatory Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3–8)

SCORE	4 POINTS	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT	NS
EVIDENCE/ELABORATION	<p>The response provides thorough elaborations of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes the effective use of source material. The response clearly and effectively develops ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated, relevant, and specific clear citations or attribution to source material effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques* vocabulary use is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose effective, appropriate style enhances content 	<p>The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes the use of source materials. The response adequately develops ideas, employing a mix of precise and more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated and relevant, yet may be general adequate use of citations or attribution to source material adequate use of some elaborative techniques* vocabulary use is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose generally appropriate style is evident 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes uneven or limited use of source material. The response develops ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence (facts and details) from the source material may be weakly integrated, imprecise, repetitive, vague, and/or copied weak use of citations or attribution to source material weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques*; development may consist primarily of source summary vocabulary use is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the audience and purpose inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style 	<p>The response provides minimal elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes little or no use of source material. The response is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence (facts and details from the source materials is minimal, irrelevant, absent, incorrectly used, or predominantly copied insufficient use of citations or attribution to source material minimal, if any, use of elaborative techniques* vocabulary is limited or ineffective for the audience and purpose little or no evidence of appropriate style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

*Elaborative techniques may include the use of personal experiences that support the thesis/controlling idea.

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 E/E A	3	<p>This response is clearly organized into categories (mental, emotional, and physical importance of sleep); however, the student provides adequate, rather than thorough, evidence and analysis of these three key ideas. For example, the quote in the second body paragraph (“Longer sleeping hours avoid ‘the most-nap groggy feeling’ . . .”) is not the ideal choice of evidence for the rest of the student’s discussion. The concluding sentence in that paragraph is also somewhat awkward in construction (“By sleeping, happiness and enlightenment can be cherished in life.”), which impacts the overall style of the piece.</p> <p>While the student’s evidence and elaboration is not always thorough, it is clearly adequate. The first body paragraph is the strongest in this category. The entire paragraph stays on the topic of the mental benefits of proper rest. The one piece of evidence is aptly chosen, provides support to the student’s explanation, and is followed with stylistically appropriate elaboration (“By sleeping more, the body can replenish and restore its energy, avoiding the zombie-like behaviors many people seem to have today.”).</p> <p>The final body paragraph stays on topic, but feels rushed and does not provide sufficient elaboration for the evidence that was chosen. Throughout the overall response, there is a mix of precise (“While sleeping, the body is being energized for the next day.”) and more general (“Happiness is something one wants in their life.”) language, and vocabulary use is generally appropriate, with a few awkward word usages (“Our world would be a much appreciated place.”). Ultimately, this response is a strong example of a 3 for Evidence/Elaboration.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 E/E B	1	<p>While this response does incorporate some evidence from the sources, there are no citations, and the elaboration on evidence is minimal. For example, the student copies information about how much sleep is needed by age groups in the first paragraph, but does not follow that up with an explanation of the implications of this evidence. The student includes elaboration on reasons that people at different ages may lose sleep, but does not link this list of reasons to any evidence from the text. While the student makes an attempt at an appropriate style, awkward sentence structures (“Every age section needs a different amount of sleep, most of the sleep hours needed are a big number.”) and misused vocabulary (“perchance,” “authorized”) result in weak style.</p> <p>Overall, the most appropriate score for this response is a 1 in the category of Evidence/Elaboration.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 E/E C	2	<p>This response provides cursory, uneven elaboration and support for ideas. Direct evidence from sources is used only twice, and several ideas are presented without any evidence, even where relevant evidence is readily available in the sources (e.g., “It tends to help people find happiness and avoid mistakes”), causing confusion as to whether the sentence is the student’s idea or an uncited piece of evidence. The sample often jumps to a new idea right after presenting a piece of evidence, rather than elaborating on that evidence. A clear example of that jump takes place at the end of the second paragraph, where there is a disconnect between the evidence in one sentence and the elaboration in the next sentence (“ . . . As a result, they are often sleep-deprived. Emergency-room doctors working at night also have problems sleeping.’ But doctors had been finding out that short naps in the day would improve health, and mental performance.”)</p> <p>The language and style are generally appropriate, but overall the best score for this sample is a 2 in the category of Evidence/Elaboration.</p>
Sample Grade 7 E/E D	2	<p>This response provides an adequate amount of evidence from source material, and adequately cites sources; however, the evidence is weakly integrated, and the student’s analysis of the evidence is not well incorporated. A brief look at the structure of this response quickly demonstrates the issue. The student uses such a large number of citations that there is little room for analysis or elaboration. The midsection of the essay includes eight rather lengthy references to source material, effectively dominating the entire response with source summary.</p> <p>Therefore, although the response demonstrates several characteristics of a level 3, the most appropriate overall score in the category of Evidenc/Elaboration is a 2.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 E/E E	2	<p>This sample is fairly long and contains frequent references to source material, but sources are not cited or referenced. Elaborative techniques are mostly not present; the response relies too heavily upon paraphrased source material that is often weakly integrated. For example, after the list of presidents who napped, the student moves to discussion about naps in various places in the world, creating a choppy paragraph that depends far too much on listed source material (without citation).</p> <p>Vocabulary and style are uneven; the student sometimes demonstrates appropriate style (“For instance the average teen should sleep for around 9-10 hours a day”) but often lapses into informal style (“Or you could also maybe go to library in break that you might have and just lie down and take a breather . . .”) and awkward sentence constructions (“This was because naps were stated to be a small amount of time that could renew a person’s energy, and they were right.”).</p> <p>Holistically, the best score for this sample is 2 in the category of Evidence/Elaboration.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 E/E F	4	<p>This response demonstrates effective use of source material and thorough elaboration to support all of the student’s ideas. The student provides a strong explanation of a number of important factors to consider regarding napping. Each body paragraph includes multiple pieces of textual evidence—both implicit and explicit—and properly cites the research. Quotes are infused into sentences that organically elaborate on evidence, such as “Missing too much sleep every night will add up to a sleep debt and soon ‘sleep loss will affect your health . . .” The evidence is always directly tied to topic sentences, as can clearly be seen in the second body paragraph when the student uses Einstein, da Vinci, and Edison (famous nappers) as examples to support the claim that “another way to boost performance is to take naps.”</p> <p>Stylistically, the deft quote blending that this student employs is highly sophisticated for the grade level. The effect is a fluency that “enhances content” for the reader. The student’s vocabulary shines through in transitions (“Besides,” “Although,” “Despite,” “Ultimately”) and in descriptions (“vital,” “exceptional,” “groggy, drowsy, and moody”) and is completely appropriate for the purpose of the task. As a result, this response rests firmly in score level 4 for evidence and elaboration.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 E/E G	3	<p>This student provides an adequate amount of source material as evidence, but does not always cite it. For example, the first body paragraph has one piece of evidence that is not cited, “The average school-aged child needs at least 10 hours of sleep per day . . .,” which is followed by properly cited information from another source. There is insufficient use of elaborative techniques; for example, in the first body paragraph, uncited ideas from the source materials, while related to the overall idea that napping can be helpful in getting sufficient sleep, are listed without transition or explanation. (“The average school-aged child needs at least 10 hours of sleep per day, however, adults only need 7 to 8 hours of sleep per day. . . . Napping can help increase mental capability and awareness. In the article, <i>The Secret Truth About Napping</i> by Maria Allegra, it is stated that a person who took a ‘nap for as little as 24 minutes improved their mental performance’ greatly (Allegra).”)</p> <p>The student uses layered elaboration effectively in both the introduction and the conclusion: “Take a nap for your health and for your mental capability, because whether or not you work at an office all day, take the night shift, or go to school, it helps.” The style and vocabulary—particularly in the introduction and conclusion—are adequate and generally appropriate for the audience. Despite some variations, and despite the fact that several indicators meet level 2, the preponderance of evidence places this paper at score level 3 for evidence and elaboration.</p>
Sample Grade 7 E/E H	3	<p>This essay has an appropriate amount of textual evidence to support the controlling idea about keeping “an energized body.” The second paragraph synthesizes information from two sources by citing the number of hours of sleep needed to be well rested and what to do when that amount of sleep is not possible (i.e., nap).</p> <p>The ends of the second and third paragraphs could both use more elaborative techniques. The second paragraph includes evidence about famous nappers, which is followed by “Sleep is a great thing, and getting the right number of hours is important.” An elaboration on the specific textual evidence would certainly help the overall quality of the writing. The same is true at the end of the third paragraph.</p> <p>While the vocabulary is sometimes vague (“Also an important thing to keep energized is taking a nap.”), it is also generally appropriate. The essay starts with a sense of style (“The next time it comes down to a steamy cup of coffee. . .”), and continues in an appropriate style for the remainder of the essay. Overall, it is scored as a 3 for Evidence/Elaboration.</p>