

# Scoring Key: Grade 7

## Explanatory Performance Task

### Focus Standards

Grade 7: W.7.2 a, c, f; W.7.4; W.7.5

## 4-Point Explanatory Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6–11)

SCORE	4 POINTS	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT	NS
ORGANIZATION AND PURPOSE	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure, creating a sense of unity and completeness. The organization is fully sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thesis/controlling idea of a topic is clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience</li> <li>consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas.</li> <li>effective introduction and conclusion</li> <li>logical progression of ideas from beginning to end; strong connections between and among ideas with some syntactic variety</li> </ul>	<p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness. Though there may be minor flaws, they do not interfere with the overall coherence. The organization is adequately sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thesis/controlling idea of a topic is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience</li> <li>adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety to clarify the relationships between and among ideas.</li> <li>adequate introduction and conclusion.</li> <li>adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end; adequate connections between and among ideas</li> </ul>	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure. Some flaws are evident, and some ideas may be loosely connected. The organization is somewhat sustained between and within paragraphs. The response may have minor drifts in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thesis/controlling idea of a topic may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience</li> <li>inconsistent use of transitional strategies and/or little variety</li> <li>introduction or conclusion, if present, may be weak</li> <li>uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end; and/or formulaic, inconsistent, or unclear connections between and among ideas</li> </ul>	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may be related to the topic but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>thesis/controlling idea may be confusing or ambiguous; response may be too brief or the focus may drift from the purpose and/or audience</li> <li>few or no transitional strategies are evident</li> <li>introduction and/or conclusion may be missing</li> <li>frequent extraneous ideas may be evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have an unclear progression</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient (includes copied text)</li> <li>In a language other than English</li> <li>Off-topic</li> <li>Off-purpose</li> </ul>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
<b>Sample Grade 7 O/P A</b>	<b>3</b>	<p>This response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness that is adequately sustained within and between paragraphs.</p> <p>The introduction seems to present two ideas that may be further developed: how much sleep is necessary and the value of napping. This lack of clarity is seen again in the first body paragraph, as the student begins by discussing the amount of sleep needed at various ages and the benefits of napping. The evidence used in this paragraph is somewhat disjointed as well. For example, the writer mentions increased mental capacity and awareness, but this idea is further developed in paragraph 4, and these examples would be more appropriate if included there. Overall, the claim of the benefits of napping becomes the focus and is maintained for the remainder of the response.</p> <p>Paragraphs 3 and 4 each begin with a specific claim (upsetting your internal clock and increased mental capacity), and the writer then provides supporting evidence for each claim. The internal structure of these paragraphs is adequately organized with connections between ideas and related examples.</p> <p>The writer uses some transitional words and phrases, such as “However,” “In addition,” and “In conclusion,” to introduce and clarify the relationships among ideas.</p> <p>The conclusion remains focused on the benefits of napping but does not specifically reference the claims presented in the body paragraphs. Rather, it is more of an editorialization on the benefits of napping.</p> <p>Due to the somewhat disorganized introduction and the failure to initially present a controlling idea, this response is adequate and results in a holistic score of 3 for Organization/Purpose.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 O/P B	1	<p>This response has little discernible structure, and although it is certainly related to the topic, it lacks focus.</p> <p>The first paragraph introduces two different ideas but does not have a unifying thesis statement or controlling idea; the reader does not know what to expect from the response. The topic of sleep is referenced, but no clear purpose is established. The second paragraph's topic sentence indicates that it will be about the correct amount of sleep that a student of a certain age should get. It continues in this vein for the first two sentences but then veers into the idea of taking a nap. Paragraph 3 starts off by explicitly mentioning naps and unusual job schedules. This paragraph stays fairly connected, with each sentence related to the topic. Paragraph 5 keeps a stronger focus than previous paragraphs on the topic of famous people and napping. The sentences in this paragraph utilize specific examples from the sources.</p> <p>There are few transitional strategies utilized, and the use of "although" as a transition is ineffective, as it begins an incomplete sentence.</p> <p>A conclusion is present and a clearer idea begins to emerge in the final few sentences, but it does not make up for the lack of focus in earlier paragraphs or for the ineffective first paragraph, which does not function as an introduction.</p> <p>Overall, this response lacks cohesiveness and form. The best score for the response is a 1 for Organization/Purpose.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 O/P C	3	<p>This response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness, with adequate organization within and between paragraphs.</p> <p>The introductory paragraph establishes the ideas that sleep is “crucial for your concentration and health” and that it is sometimes difficult to get enough sleep. The first body paragraph focuses on getting enough sleep, and, although the topic sentence does not adequately introduce the details that follow, there is an overall coherence to the paragraph. The second body paragraph presents information about napping as a way to “deal with sleep loss,” which is related to the main idea of the response as a whole. However, this paragraph would make more sense after the subsequent paragraph, which returns to the idea of the challenge of getting enough sleep by describing various jobs that interfere with productive sleep patterns. A reordering of body paragraphs 2 and 3 would make the progression of ideas in this response more logical.</p> <p>Transitions are limited (“however,” “One way”), but the sentences have adequate coherence and flow. The concluding paragraph reiterates the ideas presented to support the thesis that sleep is important, yet sometimes difficult to get; however, it strays somewhat by including information about naps.</p> <p>Adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end and adequate connections between and among ideas result in an Organization/Purpose score of 3 for this response.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
<b>Sample Grade 7 O/P D</b>	<b>2</b>	<p>This response demonstrates an inconsistent organizational structure, with an unclear controlling idea and an uneven progression of ideas. The thesis does not establish a clear controlling idea, but it does list three topics; the body paragraphs do not align to these three topics, resulting in an uneven progression of ideas across paragraphs.</p> <p>The second body paragraph is the most sustained in focus internally; it explains various ways that people try to address the problem of lack of sleep, and the ideas within the paragraph progress adequately, but the other paragraphs drift internally. For example, the first body paragraph addresses at least four different ideas, all loosely related (sleep debt, night-shift workers' health concerns and memory loss, late bedtimes, and being unable to fall asleep).</p> <p>The introduction, while formulaic, is adequate, but the body of the paper does not extend the ideas presented in the introduction. The few transitions ("however," "well") are inconsistent, with little variety, and do not serve to introduce or link ideas. The conclusion is weak and is a collection of ideas without a clear connection to the rest of the response.</p> <p>An uneven, flawed organizational structure with few transitional strategies results in a score of 2 in the category of Organization/Purpose.</p>
<b>Sample Grade 7 O/P E</b>	<b>3</b>	<p>This response is inconsistently organized, with loosely connected ideas, and lacks focus throughout.</p> <p>The first paragraph seems to indicate that the thesis will focus on the amount of sleep needed and the importance of receiving that sleep. The following paragraph continues this idea with descriptions of recommended hours of sleep and the potential for sleep debt. However, the third paragraph veers into the dangers of extended napping, an idea that was not included in the original thesis. The internal organization of this paragraph is focused on napping, but has an uneven progression of ideas (lengths of naps, ages of nappers, important people who napped), with little reference to the overall thesis. The final paragraph is not an effective conclusion; it contains a disparate collection of ideas with a loose connection to the general ideas of napping and sleeping.</p> <p>The overall lack of organization, evidenced by an uneven progression of ideas with unclear connections between and among ideas, results in a score of 2 in the category of Organization/Purpose for this response.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 O/P F	3	<p>This response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness that is adequately sustained within and between paragraphs.</p> <p>The writer begins by stating a clear but general thesis that sleep is very important in a number of ways, thereby laying the groundwork for the subsequent paragraphs. The following body paragraphs expand on this idea with specific examples of mental, emotional, and physical benefits of sleep. Each body paragraph stays focused on one idea, with a topic sentence and a concluding sentence for each (for example, “. . . sleep can benefit humans mentally” and “. . . sleeping enables humans to create and gain knowledge”). Transitions, such as “First,” “Lastly,” and “In conclusion,” support an adequate, though somewhat formulaic, progression from one paragraph to the next.</p> <p>In some paragraphs, the internal focus is somewhat weak, such as body paragraph 2, which follows statements about how sleep can increase happiness with a quote about how “Longer sleeping hours avoid the most-nap groggy feeling.”</p> <p>The conclusion reiterates the three main ideas of the body paragraphs but loses some focus with the addition of somewhat unrelated and generalized statements (for example, “Sleeping more can benefit the world and decrease the number of depressed people, and the increasing death rates.”).</p> <p>Because the response is somewhat formulaic in structure, and the thesis statements and topic sentences are more general than precise, overall the organization is adequate rather than effective, resulting in a score of 3.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 O/P G	4	<p>This response has a clear and effective organizational structure, and it maintains a consistent focus on its main idea: that sleeping well (which includes getting the right amount of sleep at night, taking naps, and sleeping at the right times to keep the biological clock in sync) is the best way to stay healthy and perform well in life. Each of the three body paragraphs focuses on one aspect of the three-part thesis.</p> <p>The introduction effectively uses a connection to real-life experience to engage the reader with the topic and lead into the evidence-based controlling idea: “There is a feeling that hits people sometimes: being exceptionally sleepy, having minimal energy, and the day feels like trash. Luckily, there are studies . . .” The conclusion mostly restates the paper’s main ideas in new words, but it effectively ties up the explanation with a connection back to the introduction: “To prevent the groggy, drowsy, and moody feeling . . .,” contributing to an overall sense of unity and completeness in the response.</p> <p>The order of the body paragraphs establishes a logical progression of ideas; each paragraph demonstrates internal focus on one component of the controlling idea, moving from the importance of getting enough sleep at night to the usefulness of naps for people who can’t get adequate sleep at night, and then to caution about sleeping at the right times. These are not just three unrelated ideas about sleep and napping; each paragraph builds on the previous one to support and develop the controlling idea.</p> <p>The paragraphs also employ a variety of internal transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas: “Although naps may be regarded . . .”; “Even great minds . . .”; “If taking naps could fight the top killer in our country that well, then taking naps has great potential.”; and “Therefore, sleeping at the right time . . .” This effective use of transitions and syntactic variety contributes further to the logical progression of ideas throughout the response.</p>

SAMPLE NUMBER	SCORE	SCORE JUSTIFICATION
Sample Grade 7 O/P H	2	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure with some flaws and minor drifts in focus.</p> <p>The student begins with a clear thesis that napping is not a remedy for lack of sleep, but the response does not sustain this idea throughout. The controlling idea is continued in the first body paragraph, with references to the sources, but the subsequent paragraphs shift focus from the need for adequate sleep to the benefits of napping, creating a drift in focus and an uneven progression of ideas.</p> <p>The student adequately uses transitional strategies with some variety (“hence,” “therefore,” “thus”) to connect ideas and clarify relationships. The conclusion, like the bulk of the paper, is inconsistent with the controlling idea, presented in the introduction, that napping is not a replacement for adequate sleep.</p> <p>The preponderance of evidence places this response at a level 2 score for Organization/Purpose.</p>