Evaluating and Improving Student Writing
Examining the Argumentative Essay in Grades 6-HS
Objectives

• Review Georgia Standards of Excellence aligned to the Argumentative Essay Item
• Discuss key terms associated with argumentative writing
• Explore the Georgia Milestones English Language Arts scoring philosophy and characteristics of the Argumentative Essay Item
• Navigate the resources aligned to the Argumentative Essay Item:
  • Writer’s Checklist
  • Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric
• Explore the presentation of the Argumentative Essay Item
• Analyze student exemplars aligned to the Argumentative Essay Item
Extended Writing-Response item

Georgia Standards of Excellence alignment
Georgia Milestones

Assessment of the Georgia Standards of Excellence

The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) is a comprehensive summative assessment that measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards.

The extended writing-response item on the ELA test assesses a student’s ability to write an argumentative or informational/explanatory text. However, this presentation will focus solely on argumentative writing. The expectation to write argumentative essays is reflected in standard ELAGSEW1 across all grade levels beginning in grade 6.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
<th>Amer. Lit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELAGSE6W1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</td>
<td>ELAGSE7W1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</td>
<td>ELAGSE8W1: Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</td>
<td>ELAGSE11-12W1: Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
# Georgia Standards of Excellence

## ELAGSEW1: Write Arguments

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Grade 6</th>
<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
<th>Amer. Lit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.</td>
<td>Introduce claim(s), <strong>acknowledge alternate or opposing claims</strong>, and organize the reasons and evidence <strong>logically</strong>.</td>
<td>Introduce claim(s), acknowledge, and <strong>distinguish the claim(s)</strong> from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</td>
<td>Introduce <strong>precise, knowledgeable claim(s)</strong>, establish the significance of the claim(s), distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that logically sequences claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</td>
<td>Support claim(s) with <strong>logical reasoning</strong> and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</td>
<td>Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</td>
<td><strong>Develop claim(s) and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly, supplying the most relevant evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level, concerns, values, and possible biases.</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.</td>
<td>Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.</td>
<td>Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</td>
<td>Use words, phrases, and clauses as well as varied syntax to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Establish and maintain a formal style.</td>
<td>Establish and maintain a formal style.</td>
<td>Establish and maintain a formal style.</td>
<td>Establish and maintain a formal style and <strong>objective tone</strong> while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.</td>
<td>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from <strong>and supports</strong> the argument presented.</td>
<td>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</td>
<td>Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Georgia Standards of Excellence

ELAGSE6L1 and L2: Demonstrate command of conventions

The extended writing-response item also assesses a student’s ability to demonstrate command of conventions in writing. This expectation is reflected in standards ELAGSE6L1 and ELAGSE6L2 across all grade levels.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
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<th>Grade 7</th>
<th>Grade 8</th>
<th>Amer. Lit</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>ELAGSE6L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</td>
<td>ELAGSE7L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</td>
<td>ELAGSE8L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</td>
<td>ELAGSE11-12L1: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>ELAGSE6L2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</td>
<td>ELAGSE7L2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</td>
<td>ELAGSE8L2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</td>
<td>ELAGSE11-12L2: Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.
The Argumentative Essay

Key Terms
Argumentative texts are forms of writing in which the writer makes a claim and supports that claim with reasons and evidence. Argumentative Writing presents an argument and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. When you state your claims, you need to support them with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic.
An argument is the main statement of an argumentative text, which usually appears in the introduction. The argument is the main point on which the writer will develop his or her work in order to convince readers.
Georgia Standards of Excellence

Argumentative Writing Key Terms

**Claims** are ideas and opinions set forth by the writer. For example, a writer could make the claim that the school cafeteria food is too expensive. In a well-developed argumentative essay, the writer should also recognize **counterclaims**. A **counterclaim** is a reasonable argument that opposes or disagrees with another claim. A strong **counterclaim** is supported by evidence and sound reasoning.
An introduction is the beginning of a piece of writing. The introduction should let readers know what they will be reading about, and it should set up the main idea, or thesis, of the writing.
Organization refers to the way in which a piece of writing is structured. In writing, the organization helps present ideas and information more clearly. Similar ideas and illustrations should be grouped together, and the order of the information should make sense. Good writers use transitions to organize information and structure their texts to match their purpose and audience.
Extended Writing-Response

Argumentative Writing Key Terms

Evidence in a text includes reasons given to support a writer’s claims. For example, a writer could include information on the price of school lunch or the number of students who do not want to buy it as reasons to support the claim that the school cafeteria is too expensive. Informational texts may include facts, opinions of experts, quotations, statistics, and definitions that can be used as evidence.
Extended Writing-Response

Argumentative Writing Key Terms

For a claim to be effective, it must be supported with credible evidence and reasoning. Credible evidence and reasoning is supported by facts and is effective in persuading the audience to agree with the writer’s claim.
Extended Writing-Response

Argumentative Writing Key Terms

**Relationships** are the ways in which ideas are connected. Writers should use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships between claims and reasons. **Cohesion** refers to the flow of sentences and paragraphs from one to another. Old and new information is tied together using transitions to help the reader understand how the ideas and concepts within the text are related to each other.
The **concluding statement** is the end of a piece of writing. The concluding statement should sum up the main purpose of the writing and provide an overall takeaway for the reader.
Extended Writing-Response

Key Terms aligned to Argumentative Writing

• Access the Georgia Milestones Study / Resource Guide for Students and Parents by Grade at the following link: https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/Milestones_Resources.aspx

• Students have access to the important argumentative and informative/explanatory terms necessary for student success.
Questions?
Extended Writing-Response: Argumentative Essay Item

Characteristics of the Argumentative Essay Item and Scoring Philosophy
The Extended Writing-Response

Characteristics of the Argumentative Essay Item

• The item is worth seven points aligned to the Writing and Language domains.

• An argumentative essay presents an argument and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. When writers state their claim, they need to support the claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic.

• Students are presented two informational texts to read before responding to the writing prompt.

• Students are expected to refer to BOTH texts when writing.
The Extended Writing-Response
Georgia Milestones Assessment Scoring Philosophy

- Students’ responses are to be viewed as first drafts;
- Students are awarded credit for what they do well; and
- Students are not penalized for errors unless the errors permeate the response and impact or interfere with overall understanding.
Extended Writing-Response Item: Argumentative Essay

The Writer’s Checklist and the Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric
## Extended Writing Response

### Accompanying Resources

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Writer’s Checklists</th>
<th>The Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Acts as a quick guide for students to monitor their individual writing effort during writing</td>
<td>Acts as a guide for student self-reflection during writing conferences after writing</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Provides a broad overview of student expectations aligned to the grade level standards</td>
<td>Provides a consistent scoring process aligned to the writing expectations in the standards</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>May be used as a writing tool throughout the year when administering both formative and summative writing assessments</td>
<td>May be used as an evaluation tool in the classroom throughout the year when evaluating formative and summative writing assessments</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>IS available</strong> to students during the assessment</td>
<td><strong>IS NOT available</strong> to students during the assessment. <strong>IS available</strong> to readers to score student responses</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Writer’s Checklist

Intended Use

Students should consult the writer’s checklist before, during, and after writing.

Before Writing

Students refer to the checklist when planning to write to draw from the reading experience and introduce a claim.

During Writing

Use the checklist as a tool to guide them through the writing process. The checklist provides guidance and reminds students to cite reasons and evidence from the reading that supports their claim.

After Writing

An aid for verifying the essential aspects of evidence-based writing have been clearly addressed. A reminder to check the writing for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.
Writing Task

There is a debate in the dance community as to whether competition is important in a dancer’s life. How can competition affect a dancer, both positively and negatively? Do the drawbacks outweigh the benefits or vice versa?

Weigh the claims on both sides, and then write an argumentative essay in your own words supporting either side of the debate in which you argue for or against dance competitions.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your argumentative essay.

Writer’s Checklist

Be sure to:

• Introduce your claim.
• Support your claim with logical reasons and relevant evidence from the passages.
• Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
• Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
• Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
• Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
• Use words, phrases, or clauses to connect your ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
• Establish and maintain a formal style.
• Use clear language and vocabulary.
• Provide a conclusion that supports the argument presented.
• Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Now write your argumentative essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer’s Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.
Writing Task & Writer’s Checklist

Grade 7

**Writing Task**

There is a debate in the dance community as to whether competition is important in a dancer’s life. How can competition affect a dancer, both positively and negatively? Do the drawbacks outweigh the benefits or vice versa?

Weigh the claims on both sides, and then write an argumentative essay in your own words supporting either side of the debate in which you argue for or against dance competitions.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your argumentative essay.

**Writer’s Checklist**

Be sure to:

- Introduce your claim.
- Support your claim with logical reasons and relevant evidence from the passages.
- Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
- Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Use words, phrases, or clauses to connect your ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Use clear language and vocabulary.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the argument presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Now write your argumentative essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer’s Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.
Scoring the Opinion Essay Item

Characteristics Two-Trait Scoring Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>The Two-Trait Scoring Rubric</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>

- The two assessed traits are:
  - Trait 1: Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence (DOC).
  - Trait 2: Language Usage and Conventions (LUC).

- The two traits have separate scoring scales:
  - Trait 1: DOC score ranges from one to four
  - Trait 2: LUC score ranges from one to three

- Each trait is scored holistically, and scores are reported based on standard alignment. DOC contributes to the student’s Writing score and LUC contributes to the student’s Language score.

- Scorer or reader must determine the criteria and associated point value for each trait that best represents the student’s work.

- The scorer looks for what the student did well, aligns the student work to the proper point criteria, and then determines a final score based on where the preponderance of the evidence lies.
Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric, Grade 7

Overview

Trait 1 – Idea Development, Organization, & Coherence

Trait 2 – Language Usage & Conventions

ELA READING AND EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING ITEM SET

SEVEN-POINT, TWO-TRAIT RUBRIC

Trait 1 for Argumentative Genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Trait</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idea Development, Organization, &amp; Coherence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The student's response is a well-developed argument that effectively relates and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effectively introduces claim(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses an organizational strategy to clearly present reasons and relevant evidence logically.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Supports claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence using specific, well-chosen facts, details, or other information from credible sources and demonstrates a good understanding of the topic or text(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Acknowledges and counters opposing claim(s), as appropriate.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses words, phrases, and clauses that effectively connect and show direct and, strong relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Establishes and maintains a formal style that is appropriate for task, purpose, and audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides a strong concluding statement or section that logically follows from the argument presented.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The student's response is a complete argument that develops and supports claims with some text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effectively introduces claim(s).</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses an organizational strategy to present reasons and evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses facts, details, definitions, examples, and/or other information to develop claims.</td>
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<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts to acknowledge and/or counter opposing claim(s), as appropriate.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses words, phrases, or clauses that connect and show relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses a formal style that consistently is appropriate for task, purpose, and audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The student's response is an inaccurate or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts to introduce claim(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts to use an organizational strategy which may be formulaic.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Attempts to support claim(s) with facts, reasons, and other evidence sometimes, but logic and relevancy are often unclear.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Misses, if any, attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claim(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses few words, phrases, or clauses that connect ideas; connections are not always clear.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses a formal style inconsistently or an informal style that does not fit task, purpose, or audience.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides a weak concluding statement or section that may not follow the argument presented.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The student's response is a real attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May not introduce claim(s), or they must be inferred.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>May be too brief to demonstrate an organizational structure, or no structure is evident.</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Has minimal support for claim(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Makes no attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claim(s).</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses minimal or no words, phrases, or clauses to connect ideas.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Uses very informal style that is not appropriate for task, purpose, or audience.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trait 2 for Argumentative Genre

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Trait</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Language Usage and Conventions</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The student's response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shows command of language conventions when writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Any errors in usage and conventions do not interfere with meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The student's response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Varies some sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shows some knowledge of language and conventions when writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Has minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The student's response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Has fragments, run-ons, and/or other sentence structure errors.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Shows little knowledge of language and conventions when writing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>0</td>
<td>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Blank</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Copy</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Too Limited to Score/Ineligible/Incomprehensible</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Non-English/Foreign Language</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>Off Topic/Off Task/Off Issue.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progression Skills, by Grade” chart for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.}

March 9, 2022
Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric: Grade 7

Writing Trait Description

Trait 1: Idea Development, Organization, & Coherence

This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively establish a claim as well as to address counterclaims, to support the claim with evidence from the text(s) read, and to elaborate on the claim with examples, illustrations, facts, and other details. The writer must integrate the information from the text(s) in his/her own words and arrange the ideas and supporting evidence in order to create cohesion for an argument essay.
Trait 2: Language Usage and Conventions

This trait examines the writer’s ability to demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics as embodied in the grade-level expectations of the language standards.
Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric: Grade 7

The Scoring Criteria: Trait 1

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Trait</th>
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</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>The student's response is a well-developed argument that effectively relates and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>3</td>
<td>The student's response is a complete argument that develops and supports claims with some text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>2</td>
<td>The student's response is an incomplete or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>1</td>
<td>The student's response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Trait 1: Score Point 4
- The student's response is a well-developed argument that effectively relates and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.

Trait 1: Score Point 3
- The student's response is a complete argument that develops and supports claims with some text-based evidence.

Trait 1: Score Point 2
- The student's response is an incomplete or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.

Trait 1: Score Point 1
- The student's response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.
### Trait 2: Score Point 3

- The student’s response demonstrates **full command** of language usage and conventions.

### Trait 2: Score Point 2

- The student’s response demonstrates **partial command** of language usage and conventions.

### Trait 2: Score Point 1

- The student’s response demonstrates **weak command** of language usage and conventions.
Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric: American Lit.

The Scoring Criteria

Trait 2: Score Point 3
• Makes an attempt to attribute paraphrases and direct quotations to their sources via in-text or parenthetical citations

Trait 2: Score Point 2
• Attributes paraphrases and direct quotations inconsistently to their sources via in-text or parenthetical citations

Trait 2: Score Point 1
• Makes little, if any, attempt to attribute paraphrases and direct quotations to their sources.
Two-Trait Rubric Alignment to the Writer’s Checklist, Grade 7

Accompanying Resources Alignment

**ELA READING AND EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING ITEM SET**

**ITEM 5: EXTENDED WRITING-RESPONSE**

**WRITING TASK**

There is a debate in the dance community as to whether competition is important in a dancer’s life. How can competition affect a dancer; both positively and negatively? Do the drawbacks outweigh the benefits or vice versa?

Weigh the claims on both sides, and then write an argumentative essay in your own words supporting either side of the debate in which you argue for or against dance competitions.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your argumentative essay.

**Writer's Checklist**

- Introduce your claim.
- Support your claim with logical reasons and relevant evidence from the passages.
- Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
- Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Use words, phrases, or clauses to connect your ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Use clear language and vocabulary.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the argument presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Now write your argumentative essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer’s Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.

**SEVEN-POINT, TWO-TRAIT RUBRIC**

**Trait 1 for Argumentative Genre**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
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</tr>
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<td>4</td>
<td>The student’s response is a well-developed argument that effectively relates and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.</td>
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</table>
- Effectively introduces claim(s) |
- Uses an organizational strategy to clearly present reasons and relevant evidence logically |
- Supports claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence using specific, well-chosen facts, details, or other information from credible sources and demonstrates a good understanding of the topic or texts |
- Acknowledges and counters opposing claim(s), as appropriate |
- Uses words, phrases, and/or clauses that effectively connect and show direct, strong relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence |
- Establishes and maintains a formal style that is appropriate for task, purpose, and audience |
- Provides a strong concluding statement or section that logically follows from the argument presented |

**Points**

- **3**  
  The student’s response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.  
  - Effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style  
  - Shows command of language and conventions when writing  
  - Any errors in usage and conventions do not interfere with meaning**

*Note: Students are NOT penalized for errors in usage and conventions if the errors DO NOT interfere with meaning.*
Questions?
The Extended Writing-Response

Presentation of the Essay Item
Extended Writing-Response

Presentation within the Platform

There is currently a debate about people owning exotic animals as pets. Think about BOTH sides of the debate. Should people have the right to own exotic animals? Type an argumentative essay in your own words supporting either side of the debate.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your argumentative essay.

Now type your argumentative essay in the space provided. Refer to the Writer’s Checklist as you type and proofread your essay.
Extended Writing-Response

Access to the Platform

https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/Milestones_Resources.aspx
The Argumentative Essay

A Deep-Dive into Authentic Student Responses across the Grades
Extended Writing-Response; Grade 7

Presentation of the Passages

**ELA READING AND EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING ITEM SET**

**Competition Builds Better Dancers**

These days, it is difficult to turn on the television and not find some kind of competition on artists, singers, dancers, and others regularly compete for prizes and fame. Some have a role of competition in the arts, especially dance. However, competition has an importance in helping dancers achieve their long-term goals.

Dance competitions have grown in popularity. There are hundreds of dance competitions in the United States alone. Dancers compete solo or in groups, as well as in age divisions, usually represent their studio, performing routines in such styles as contemporary, ballet, and tap. Judges are often professional dancers themselves. They score each competitor on ability, difficulty, costume, and routine.

Dancers give several reasons for competing. One of the most common is the valuable experience that they get from the judges. Judges write or record notes as they watch and score the routines. They use these notes to help their dancers after the competition.

Dancers can compare their skills with the other competitors. This helps them to know where they are performing at the same level as other dancers in their style or age group. They can also improve their skills by watching other dancers perform.

Preparing for competition has its benefits. Dancers learn the value of hard work, time management, and team work, especially if they are competing in a group dance. They must learn how to deal with stress, and they gain experience in performing in front of others. Competitions also give them a taste of what it is like to be a professional. After all, professional dancers compete for the trophies they go to an audience.

Of course, dance competitions can have their drawbacks too. Dancers must be ready to compete in order to benefit from competition. However, for any dancer who wants to succeed, competition is a necessity.

**ELA READING AND EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING ITEM SET**

**Dance Competitions: The Dark Side of Dance**

Dance is an art form that many students enjoy. Dance can be a way to lower stress, gain flexibility, and have fun if done the right way.

Dance competitions often ruin dance for some students. Dancers sometimes say that pressure, increased stress, and lowered self-esteem make competing difficult. Although dance competitions are popular across the country, not all dance studios participate in them. For these studios, there are more drawbacks to competing than benefits.

Competition judges, for example, come from many dance backgrounds. This means that there are many ways to judge dancers. A dancer could perform the same dance in the same way at two different competitions and receive very different scores.

Some competitions give awards to all participants. This can lead to a false sense of achievement. Many dance teachers feel that true self-esteem comes through hard work and practice and not through winning awards.

Some studios and teachers emphasize competition so strongly that their students feel they can never do well enough. Other competitors and teachers may exhibit poor sportsmanship at events. Dancers sometimes walk away from a competition with lowered self-esteem and high levels of stress.

Dancers can still have the benefits of dance without having to compete. Performing on stage with a dance group can teach cooperation and timing. They can take classes to learn new dance moves and meet other dancers. They can even teach others how to dance.

Many professional dancers never entered a competition before they began their careers. Hard work, determination, and love of the art are far more important to a dancer's future than competing with other dancers.
Extended Writing-Response: Grade 7

Presentation of the Writing Task

Extended Writing Task

There is a debate in the dance community as to whether competition is important in a dancer's life. How can competition affect a dancer, both positively and negatively? Do the drawbacks outweigh the benefits or vice versa?

Weigh the claims on both sides, and then write an argumentative essay in your own words supporting either side of the debate in which you argue for or against dance competitions.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your argumentative essay.
While many people feel that dance competitions are not good for a dancer's career, I feel that dance competitions are necessary for a successful dancing career. There are some negatives to competition but there are more positives. In this essay you will read about these positives.

Everybody looks at the negatives of competition but never the positives. One of the many positives of dance competitions is that dancers learn skills that they can use all their lives. Some of these skills are hard-work, time management, and team-work. Another positive is it helps dancers get used to performing in front of crowds. Finally, dance competitions give dancers a chance to experience what a professional dancer does daily.

When you think about it there are more pros than cons to dance competitions. Even though the negatives can have a impact on a dancer's career so can the positives. When dancers loose it can lower their self-esteem but it can also push them to focus more. Dance competitions also can help a dancer with stage fright. Dance competitions are where careers start.

Dance competitions are essential to have a successful dance career. They give dancers a professional experience. Competitions also give dancers a chance to get feedback from judges so they can hear what they did wrong and fix it. Finally, dance competitions bring different dancers together which ultimately is a good thing.

ELAGSE7W1, ELAGSE7L1, ELAGSE7L2

Response Scores: 

Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence: 4
Language Usage and Conventions: 3

DOC 4: The student’s response is a well-developed argument that effectively relates and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.
LUC 3: The student’s response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.

Scorer’s Annotations

• The response effectively introduces the student’s claim
• The response uses an organizational strategy to clearly present reasons and relevant evidence logically.
• Claims are supported with clear reasons and relevant evidence from the text
• The response acknowledges and counters opposing claims as appropriate
• The response uses words and phrases to connect and show the relationship between claims
• A formal style is established and effectively maintained.
• The conclusion effectively shows how the main ideas support and demonstrate the claim.
• The response effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, interest, and style. Complex and compound sentence structures are mostly used, and the structure is well chosen to convey meaning.
• The response has very few errors, which do not interfere with meaning.
I think that dance competitions help dancers get better at dancing and teaches them important life lessons that will help them in life. Some people think that dance competitions can lower a dancer's confidence if they lose. I do not think that this is true because competition teaches the dancers, never give up, and even if you lose, don't get discouraged or down.

"dancers learn the value of hard work, time management, and teamwork" as stated in paragraph 5 lines 1 and 2. "competitions also give dancers a taste of what it is like to be a professional. After all, professional dancers compete for work every time they go to an audition". These two examples show how dance competitions can teach important life lessons and prepare dancers for a big career.

I think that dance competitions help dancers get better and prepares them for life and a professional career by teaching them important life lessons.

**Scorer’s Annotations**

**DOC**
- A claim is introduced in the first sentence
- The response attempts to use an organizational structure.
- The response uses examples from the passages to support the claim. The student does very little to explain the relevance of this information.
- There is a brief acknowledgement and refutation of a counterclaim in the introduction
- A formal style is attempted.
- The concluding sentence restates the claim.

**LUC**
- The response effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, interest, and style.
- Compound and complex sentences structures are attempted, and most are constructed successfully.
- The response has few errors, which do not interfere with meaning.

**DOC 2:** The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.

**LUC 3:** The student’s response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.
Dance can affect a person postively and negatively. For example, in the passage it state that dance can be a way to lower stress and gain flexibility. Not only that, if you win a dance competitions, you might get famous! Some people say that the pressure from dance competitions increases stress. They say that losing lowers self-esteem, but others think these people are wrong. I don't know what I think. I just think that dancing is fun!

**ELAGSE3W1, ELAGSE3L1, ELAGSE3L2**

**Response Scores:**

- Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence: 1
- Language Usage and Conventions: 1

**DOC 1:** The student’s response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.

**LUC 1:** The student’s response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions.
Extended Writing-Response; American Lit.

Presentation of the Passages

**ELA READING AND EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING ITEM SET**

Get Ready for Roadway Robots

1. Roadways in cities all over the world are crowded. With urban expansion, the number of vehicles in any one location is sometimes staggering. Aside from the obvious annoyances of traffic, longer commutes, and wasted gasoline, there is one larger issue that becomes paramount—crowded highways: traffic accidents. Research shows that the number one cause of all collisions is driver error. Therefore, it makes sense that the use of driverless cars will be a welcome change.

2. Autonomous cars work by using elaborate technology systems that allow the car to drive itself. With driverless cars, drivers may have the option to take over the controls during extreme scenarios. The car itself will make decisions about the majority of the time. As the technology continues to advance, this will include more accurate self-parking abilities and a lesser amount of input from the human occupant. Driverless cars are programmed to avoid collisions and other mishaps the human driver has been consistently to blame. Most accidents occur when the driver is not concentrating on the task of driving. By eliminating the need for the driver to focus, cars will be able to prevent a majority of accidents. While more testing must be done in all types of environments, the technology will remove operator error from the equation.

3. European experts predict that within the next one to two decades, driverless cars will be in the standard. They cite overcrowding, environmental issues, and public safety as the compelling reasons. Newer technology means cleaner emissions and a more smoothly running highway system. Some experts even go so far as to suggest that the driver-operated vehicle of today are outdated and harmful concepts. Several well-known manufacturers are testing autonomous cars in preparation for mass-market use, which they anticipate within the next few years.

4. The time for drastic change has come for the automobile industry. As the population increases, something must be done in order to ensure safety on the road. By using technology to its potential, lives can be saved and people can commute with confidence. Drivers will no longer have to worry about whether the drivers around them are using their cell phones as they will not matter, because the driverless car will usually be in control.

**ELA READING AND EVIDENCE-BASED WRITING ITEM SET**

Putting the Brakes on Driverless Cars

1. It seems that people have a genuine dependence on technology in everyday life. Regularly, a new gadget makes an appearance, and everyone proclaims it to be just what society needs in order to function better than it did just the day before. While some advancements have made improvements on old ideas, some are questionable when put into practice. The latest example of such invention is the driverless car.

2. Designers claim that they will eliminate the need for human drivers and prevent traffic collisions. However, studies show that no such result will be realized by using autonomous vehicles. Although driverless cars can avoid obstacles more quickly than human drivers, they are not beyond the laws of nature. Tests show that a driverless car can stop itself sooner than a human driver could stop it, but it will not miss an obstacle altogether if the obstacle appears suddenly. This means that if something darts out within close range of the car, the car will hit it. So far, the technology has not advanced to the point of sensing when and how to avoid rapid events. A human driver can at least make the distinction between a pedestrian and a boarding box, for instance. The driverless car cannot do this on its own. During a closed-course test of the newest driverless car, the vehicle struck a mock cyclist, further disproving claims of safety.

3. Even if these vehicles were capable of avoiding all accidents, there will be times when they must be controlled by actual drivers. This presents a safety concern. First, drivers will likely be less aware of their surroundings than if they had been driving all along. Second, computers are notorious for functional errors. When the car malfunctions and the driver takes over, what will happen if the driver is not prepared to do so, particularly if driving on a busy highway? Another concern is that humans will be out of practice when it comes to driving, which means that skilled drivers will be rare.

4. While great advancements do help society, the driverless car is not one that needs to be pursued. To have these vehicles in the mainstream will simply add to the already overwhelming problem of traffic safety. Human mistakes are upsetting, but technological blunders are unacceptable when human lives are at stake.
Extended Writing-Response: American Lit

Presentation of the Writing Task

Extended Writing Task

Currently, a public debate is growing about the future of driverless vehicles. While these vehicles are still too expensive for mass production, the technology is fully in place and advancing. Some experts predict that driverless vehicles will become commonplace in the not-too-distant future. Those onboard with the technology welcome the development and predict safer roadways as a result; others, however, fear that driverless vehicles will make roadways even more unsafe.

Weigh the claims on both sides, and then write an argumentative essay in your own words supporting one side of the debate or the other.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your argumentative essay.
American Lit. Exemplar

Authentic Student Response

While both articles display the advantages and disadvantages on driverless cars, the best choice would be to pursue the future usage of driverless cars. It is not only realistic but is also great for several reasons including, the assurance of elder mobility, the decrease in automobile accidents and the logic of furthering human technology.

There are many who would state that elder drivers may be less likely to get into car accidents. Due to the amount of years of trained driving under their belts. However, these claims could easily be argued over due to the mental stability and health condition of elder people. Driverless cars could solve that claim by providing a safe form of mobility to elder folks without the risk of stress on an older mind and body.

When driverless cars become a sure thing, there is sure to be a decrease in automobile accidents. With further safety implications installed in driverless cars the safeness on the road should show an increase. “Research shows that the number one cause of all traffic collisions is driver error” (Get Ready for Roadway Robots). In the most logical sense, the option of driverless cars should prove to be a heavily welcomed one.

If there is one thing that is for certain is that human beings are innovative beings. Ones that push the envelope of discovery and seek out the furthering of human intelligence and technology. While it is true that “Even if these vehicles were capable of avoiding all accidents, there will be times when they must be controlled by actual drivers” (Putting the Brakes on Driverless Cars), the perfection of technology due to trial-and-error should put...
American Lit. Exemplar

Authentic Student Response

Using driverless cars will have a great impact on car accidents. It will make it somewhat safer on the highways, but there are some downsides to the driverless car.

Nothing is a hundred percent safe. There will always be something that can cause harm to someone. With the driverless car, yes it will make the highways safer but what about when something runs out infront of the car and it can't react automatically, it will hit it. If a person were driving it they could prevent hitting this thing.

“So far, the technology has not advanced to the point of sensing when and how to avoid rapid events.”(Passage 2) This can cause a major downfall of the car. It is not safe at all. No one would want a car that can't stop automatically and cause harm to them. They say that it will be safer but this is definitely not safe at all. If something happens so fast the the car cannot react then that person is in immediate danger.

Yes, the car may be able to make things easier for us. “As technology continues to advance, this will include more accurate self-parking abilities.”(Passage 1) But this doesn’t mean that it will always be exactly accurate as with people, there parking isn’t accurate either. Just let people be the driver. Adding a driverless car will just make thing more complicated. People are used to driving and there will always be accidents, it’s just a part of driving.

Using driverless cars are a dangerous hazard, they need to just use regular cars and let people drive them, themselves. Its just safer that way.

Scorer’s Annotations

• The student’s response attempts to introduce a claim saying and a reference is made to opposing claims
• The student attempts to use an organizational structure to present the claim, reasons, and evidence. There is an introductory section and a concluding section, with counterclaims presented and refuted in the body paragraphs.
• The claim and counterclaim are developed, sometimes unevenly, with reasons and evidence from both sources
• The student uses some words and phrases to connect the claim, counterclaim, reasons, and evidence, but cohesion is inconsistent or weak.
• The response attempts to establish an appropriate tone and formal style but does not consistently maintain them
• The response provides a weak concluding statement that states the claim and follows the argument presented.
• The response uses mostly complete sentences, with some variety.
• Paraphrases and direct quotations are attributed to their sources. The response cites evidence from both sources.
• There are minor errors in usage or conventions with no significant effect on meaning.

DOC 2: The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related evidence.

LUC 2: The student’s response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions.
I think driverless cars are a wonderfull idea. With driverless cars there would less accidents and less traffic on the streets. When humans are driving they make mistakes or even look away and don't pay attention which causes wrecks and could lead to serious injuries. Humans tend to check there cellphones while driving which can cause a huge wreck and take lives away from others. Driverless cars would make the roads safer and be a positive thing to this world.
Key Take Aways

In the Classroom,
• read informational texts and model weighing claims and presenting an argument;
• support all learners by modeling how to read the writing prompt and reviewing key vocabulary for argument writing;
• encourage students to practice using the writer’s checklist during writing;
• use rubrics to provide formative feedback on first drafts;
• practice using words, phrases, and/or clauses that effectively connect the major sections of the writing to clarify relationships between claims and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claims and counterclaims, and
• utilize student exemplars to build student capacity in writing

On the Georgia Milestones ELA Assessment,
• student writing is deemed as a first draft and credit is awarded for what students do well;
• students should draw from the reading experience and cite evidence from the passages to support ideas and conclusions in the essay.
• essays are scored using a seven-point, two-trait rubric.
• a score is given for each of the two traits, for a total of seven possible points.
• students are not penalized for errors, unless the errors permeate the response and impact or interfere with overall understanding.
• a checklist is available to assist students with writing essays during the assessment.
Questions?
Reading and Evidence-Based Writing

Additional Resources
Georgia Milestones

Resources

Access to Educator Resources:

- [https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/default.aspx](https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Pages/default.aspx)

- Once on the assessment page, look in the left column under the title “Summative Assessments” and click on “Georgia Milestones Assessment System”.

- Then, once on the “Georgia Milestones Assessment System” webpage, look in the right column under the title “Resources” and click on the link “Georgia Milestones Resources”.

- This page provides access to parent, student, educator, administration, and technology resources. To access the “Educator Resources”, scroll down the page to:
## Additional Resources

### The Essay Item by Text Type

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### Reading and Evidence-Based Writing Text Types for Educators

[https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/Milestones/Resources/ELA_Reading_and_Evidence-Based_Writing_Text_Types.pdf](https://www.gadoe.org/Curriculum-Instruction-and-Assessment/Assessment/Documents/Milestones/Resources/ELA_Reading_and_Evidence-Based_Writing_Text_Types.pdf)