

**6ELA-W**

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***New York State  
Testing Program***

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**English Language Arts Test  
Writing Mechanics**

Grade **6**

**2006—2009 Scoring Guide  
Scorer Training Materials**

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**Writing Mechanics Rubric**  
**(Questions 30 and 34)**

**3 points**

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The writing demonstrates control of the conventions of written English. There are few, if any, errors and none that interfere with comprehension. Grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing are essentially correct. Any misspellings are minor or repetitive; they occur primarily when a student takes risks with sophisticated vocabulary.

**2 points**

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The writing demonstrates partial control of the conventions of written English. It contains errors that may interfere somewhat with readability but do not substantially interfere with comprehension. There may be some errors of grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, or spelling.

**1 point**

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The writing demonstrates minimal control of the conventions of written English. There may be many errors of grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling that interfere with readability and comprehension.

**0 points**

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The writing demonstrates a lack of control of the conventions of written English. The errors make the writing incomprehensible.

**Writing Mechanics Rubric Chart  
(Questions 30 and 34)**

<b>Quality</b>	<b>3 Points</b>	<b>2 Points</b>	<b>1 Point</b>
<p><b>Conventions: The extent to which the response exhibits conventional spelling, punctuation, paragraphing, capitalization, grammar, and usage.</b></p>	<p>The writing demonstrates control of the conventions of written English. There are few, if any, errors and none that interfere with comprehension. Grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and paragraphing are essentially correct. Any misspellings are minor or repetitive; they occur primarily when a student takes risks with sophisticated vocabulary.</p>	<p>The writing demonstrates partial control of the conventions of written English. It contains errors that may interfere somewhat with readability but do not substantially interfere with comprehension. There may be some errors of grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, or spelling.</p>	<p>The writing demonstrates minimal control of the conventions of written English. There may be many errors of grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling that interfere with readability and comprehension.</p>

**SCORE POINT 0** = The writing demonstrates a lack of control of the conventions of written English. The errors make the writing incomprehensible.

## English Language Arts Grade 6 Scoring Considerations

### Reading/Multiple Choice (Questions 1–26)

- In the multiple-choice segment of the test, a student receives credit only for those questions that are answered correctly. An answer left blank receives no credit. There is no additional penalty for not answering questions.

*For the Listening/Writing and Reading/Writing sections of the test, first apply the English Language Arts scoring rubric. Then apply the following rules as appropriate. The lowest score a student can receive is zero.*

### Listening/Writing (Questions 27, 28, 29, 30)

- Deduct one point if any two short-response questions (27 and 28 *or* 28 and 29 *or* 27 and 29) are not answered.
- If none of the short-response questions (27, 28, 29) is answered, the total maximum Listening/Writing score possible is 2.
- If Question 30 (the extended-response question) is not answered *or* is not responsive to the task, the total maximum Listening/Writing score possible is 2.
- If the student answers only one question, and that question is *not* the extended-response question, the score is zero.
- If none of the questions is answered, condition code A (blank) should be applied.

### Reading/Writing (Questions 31, 32, 33, 34)

- Deduct one point if any two short-response questions (31 and 32 *or* 32 and 33 *or* 31 and 33) are not answered.
- If none of the short-response questions (31, 32, 33) is answered, the total maximum Reading/Writing score possible is 2.
- If Question 34 (the extended-response question) is not answered *or* is not responsive to the task, the total maximum Reading/Writing score possible is 2.
- If the student answers only one question, and that question is *not* the extended-response question, the score is zero.
- If none of the questions is answered, condition code A (blank) should be applied.

*For Writing Mechanics score, check for sufficient response before applying the appropriate rubric.*

### Writing Mechanics (Questions 30 and 34)

- Students must answer both extended-response questions for the responses to be scored for Writing Mechanics. If the student answers only one extended-response question, the score is zero.

**New York State Testing Program  
English Language Arts Condition Codes**

**Score of Zero**

Responses to the Listening/Writing cluster, Reading/Writing cluster, or Writing Mechanics cluster are scored a zero if the entire response:

- is illegible or may be only scribbling, or
- consists of an indication of the student's refusal to respond, or
- is written in a language other than English, or
- corresponds to a description of a score of zero in the English Language Arts Scoring Considerations, or
- corresponds to a description of a score of zero in the English Language Arts scoring rubrics.

**Condition Code A**

Condition Code A is applied to the Listening/Writing cluster, Reading/Writing cluster, or the Writing Mechanics cluster when a student who is present for a test session leaves all of the questions in that section blank.

# Annotation Key

## Abbreviations

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cap	faulty capitalization
lc	lowercase
lu	language usage
ow	omitted word
p	faulty punctuation
r-o	run-on sentence
sf	sentence fragment
sp	error in spelling

30

Study the two lessons below.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

Do not be too quick to judge others.

Write an essay in which you tell which lesson better fits the story "Lydia's Lasso." Use details from the story to support your answer.

In your answer, be sure to

- choose **one** of the two lessons
- explain why this lesson is appropriate to the story
- use details from the story to support your answer



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

missing quotation marks

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again. A simple but meaningful phrase that was important to this story.

sf

Had Lydia not followed the instruction of this phrase, a calf would have lost its life. When Lydia first heard the crack in the ice, she rushed to see what it was. When she realized it was a calf, she threw her lasso.

Cluster Score Point 3

(r-o) [The first time, it fell short, the second time, it bounced off the calf's soft pink nose.] The third time, it looped perfectly around the calf's neck. Lydia gently pulled the rope, as if pulling a tugboat through icy waters.

If Lydia had given up on the first or second time, the poor calf would have died.

Since she did not give up, she was able to rescue the calf, and convince Mike and Uncle Carlos that she could really use her lasso well.

I have learned to never give up from that story.

34

If you were an animal, would you rather be a catfish or a bird? Write an essay in which you explain your choice. Use details from both "Flights of Fancy" and "A Fish with Whiskers" to support your explanation.

In your answer, be sure to

- describe which animal you would be
- explain your choice
- use details from both articles as support



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

If I had to pick to be either a catfish or a bird I would choose to be a bird. (P)

Just imagine. I can fly & soar above anything & get to feel so free! I think it would feel like magic to dip & dive. I would get a wonderful view of the whole world! I could be named for my speed, just like a swift. Or I could be an albatross with the longest of all bird wings.

I would rather be a bird because I do not really like the idea of being a catfish

Cluster Score Point 3

underwater all day & night, not knowing what is lurking for you next. I also would not want to have whiskers! For example I would not want to be an upside down fish, because then I would have to swim around upside down! I would also not want to be the fish that lived in Texas, because then I would have no eyes + not be able to see!

As you can see I would much rather be a bird soaring in the sky than a catfish upside down, or with no eyes! What about you?

**Cluster Score = 3**

The responses as a whole show a control of the conventions of written English. The first paper has a punctuation error, a sentence fragment, and a run-on sentence. The second paper has a minor punctuation error and a language usage error. The errors do not interfere with comprehension or readability.

**Cluster Score Point 3**

30

Study the two lessons below.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

Do not be too quick to judge others.

Write an essay in which you tell which lesson better fits the story "Lydia's Lasso." Use details from the story to support your answer.

In your answer, be sure to

- choose **one** of the two lessons
- explain why this lesson is appropriate to the story
- use details from the story to support your answer



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

→ The lesson, "don't be too quick to judge others," fits more into the story than the lesson, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again."

Annotations: (cap) above 'd' in 'don't', (lc) above 'q' in 'quick', (lu) above 'l' in 'less', (sp) above 's' in 'succeed'.

→ Even though the lesson, "If at first you don't succeed, try, try again," was a little bit to do with the story, the lesson, "Do not be too quick to judge others" fits more.

Annotations: (p) above 'p' in 'too', (lc) above 'q' in 'quick', (ll) above 'l' in 'less'.

→ It fits more because in the beginning they didn't trust Lydia, but in the end they knew they could trust her.

Annotations: (sp) above 's' in 'succeed', (sp) above 's' in 'succeed'.

Cluster Score Point 2

34

If you were an animal, would you rather be a catfish or a bird? Write an essay in which you explain your choice. Use details from both "Flights of Fancy" and "A Fish with Whiskers" to support your explanation.

In your answer, be sure to

- describe which animal you would be
- explain your choice
- use details from both articles as support



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

If I were an animal I  
would be a catfish because they are like  
humans and I also like being a human.

I chose catfish because some  
can walk, some can breath on land, some can  
also electricate.

All a bird can do that is  
amazing is fly but I can go on an  
airplane for that.

Catfish also get better food  
choses. I love to eat fish. I just wouldn't  
want to be eaten as a fish.

That's why I would chose catfish.

Cluster Score Point 2

**Cluster Score = 2**

The responses as a whole demonstrate partial control of the conventions of written English. In both papers, there are several errors in spelling, language usage, capitalization, and punctuation. The errors cause some difficulty in readability, but do not interfere with comprehension.

30

Study the two lessons below.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

Do not be too quick to judge others.

Write an essay in which you tell which lesson better fits the story "Lydia's Lasso." Use details from the story to support your answer.

In your answer, be sure to

- choose one of the two lessons
- explain why this lesson is appropriate to the story
- use details from the story to support your answer



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

missing quotation marks

DON'T BE TOO QUICK TO JUDGE  
OTHERS, LIKE IN THE STORY WHEN  
MIKE SAID THAT LIDIA COULD  
NOT LASSO COWS OR CATTLE, SO  
HE TOLD HER TO STAY NEXT TO  
THE POND. SHE STARTED TO HEAR  
THE ICE CRACK. THERE WAS  
A CALF ON THE ICE SHE TRIED  
TO LASSO THE CALF 3 TIMES.  
THE 3<sup>RD</sup> TIME SHE GOT THE CALF'S  
HEAD, AND PULLED IT TO SAFETY.

Cluster Score Point 1

MIKE AND UNCLE CARLOS WERE  
VERY HAPPY FOR HER AND NOW  
SHE WILL PROBABLY BE IN THE <sup>(sp)</sup>  
ROUND UP WITH THEM.

THE

END

34

If you were an animal, would you rather be a catfish or a bird? Write an essay in which you explain your choice. Use details from both "Flights of Fancy" and "A Fish with Whiskers" to support your explanation.

In your answer, be sure to

- describe which animal you would be
- explain your choice
- use details from both articles as support



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

IF I WERE AN ANIMAL I  
WOULD BE A BIRD I WOULD BE  
A PHEASANT BECAUSE ITS WINGS  
ARE BROAD AND SHORT SO IT  
CAN LIKE A JET AIRPLANE  
TO ESCAPE FROM ITS ENEMIES.  
I WOULDN'T WANT TO BE A  
CAT FISH BECAUSE A CAT FISH  
HAS SMOOTH SLIPPERY SKIN A  
SHARP, BONY SPINE AND I DON'T  
HAVE SCAVES. I WOULD SOAR IN  
THE SKY LIKE A ALBATROSS.  
I WOULD FLAP SIXTY TO

Cluster Score Point 1

SEVENTY TIMES LIKE A  
HUMMINGBIRD. I ALSO WOULDN'T  
WANT TO BE A CAT FISH BECAUSE  
THEY ELECTRICUTE PEOPLE LIKE  
THE ELECTRIC CAT FISH. THESE  
ARE ALL REASONS WHY I WOULD  
PREFER TO BE A BIRD RATHER  
THAN A CAT FISH BECAUSE I  
THINK IT WOULD BE MORE  
INTRUIGUEING TO BE A BIRD

Annotations: (OW) above 'LIKE A'; (sp) in circles next to 'WANT', 'THEY', 'THE', 'ARE', 'THAN', 'INTRUIGUEING'; (P) in a circle at the end of the last line. A large arrow on the right points to the text with the label 'awkward sentence'.

**Cluster Score = 1**

The responses as a whole demonstrate minimal control of the conventions of written English. Both papers have many errors in spelling, syntax, and punctuation. The errors impede the reader's ability to comprehend.

**Cluster Score Point 1**

30

Study the two lessons below.

If at first you don't succeed, try, try again.

Do not be too quick to judge others.

Write an essay in which you tell which lesson better fits the story "Lydia's Lasso." Use details from the story to support your answer.

In your answer, be sure to

- choose one of the two lessons
- explain why this lesson is appropriate to the story
- use details from the story to support your answer



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

Do NOT let too quick to  
judge others. She  
caw.

34

If you were an animal, would you rather be a catfish or a bird? Write an essay in which you explain your choice. Use details from both "Flights of Fancy" and "A Fish with Whiskers" to support your explanation.

In your answer, be sure to

- describe which animal you would be
- explain your choice
- use details from both articles as support



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, and punctuation.

And Bird have  
willing to go to  
down and fly in the  
sky.

**Cluster Score = 0**

The responses as a whole demonstrate a lack of control of the conventions of written English. Both papers have errors that make the writing incomprehensible.

**Cluster Score Point 0**