

**4ELA-R**

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***New York State  
Testing Program***

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**English Language Arts Test  
Reading/Writing**

Grade **4**

**2009 Scoring Guide  
Scorer Training Materials**

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# Swan Song

written and illustrated by James Marshall

A cow was waiting at the bus stop minding her own business, when a frightened swan ran up to her.

“Help! Help!” cried the swan. “A fox is after me!”

“Oh dear,” said the cow. “That’s not good.”

“Do something!” cried the swan.

“Now calm down,” said the cow. “I will help, but you must do *exactly* as I say.”

A moment later a panting fox rounded the corner and skidded to a halt.

“Pardon me, madam,” he said, bowing low to the cow. “Did you by any chance see a swan pass this way?”

“Why do you ask?” said the cow.

“Er,” said the fox. “She’s a friend of mine, and I have a present for her.”

“No,” replied the cow. “I did not see your friend.”

The fox scratched his chin.

“Well, thanks all the same,” he said. “And by the way, that is an exquisite hat you are wearing.”

“Thank you,” said the cow. “It is new.”

“Ha, ha, ha!” sang out the swan. “It’s not a hat at all! It’s *me*! We fooled you! We fooled you!”

“Aha!” cried the fox.

And he leapt up and tried to snatch the swan from atop the cow’s head.

“Hold on tight!” called out the cow.

And with that she pulled up her skirts and tore off down the road at a tremendous clip, leaving behind the wicked fox coughing and wheezing in a cloud of dust. He was absolutely furious.



When they had gotten a safe distance away, the cow put the swan down.

“You did not keep quiet as I instructed,” said the cow.

“Well my heavens,” said the swan. “I *had* to show that fox how smart we are.”

“Sometimes being *really* smart is knowing when to say nothing,” said the cow. “But I see that I was all wrong about you. I mistook you for a swan, when you are nothing but a silly goose.”

# After the Error

*by Jerry Spinelli*

I first played organized baseball in the Norristown, Pennsylvania, Little League. I was second baseman for the Green Sox.

One day we were playing the Red Sox. I don't remember the inning, but I remember they had the bases loaded. And I remember exactly what happened next.

The batter hit a ground ball right at me. I crouched down, feet spread, glove ready, as I had been taught in baseball school. I could hear the ball crunching along the sandy ground. It hit my glove—but not the pocket. Instead, it glanced off the fat leather thumb and rolled on behind me.

My first error!

I was heartbroken. I stomped my foot. I pounded my fist in the stupid glove. I squeaked and whined. I did everything but flop down on my stomach and bawl like a baby.

When the inning was over and I slunk to the Green Sox bench, the manager was waiting for me. I thought he was going to console me. I thought he was going to say, "Tough luck, Jerry. Nice try." And he would take me in his arms and pat my head.

That's not what happened.

What he really did was glare angrily at me. And what he really said was, "Don't you ever do that again."

I thought he meant the error. I said, "I won't. I'll never miss another grounder as long as I live."

"Miss?" he said. "You'll miss lots. That's not the problem. It's what you did after. While you were standing there, the other team scored three runs."

He pointed his finger at me. "Next time you miss the ball, you turn around, you chase down the ball, and when you get it you do something good with it. You don't just stand there feeling sorry for yourself. Understand?"

I nodded. And I never forgot.

My manager was right. I've made lots of errors since then, both on and off the baseball field. And sometimes I just want to stand there feeling sorry for myself. It's then that I think of my old Little League manager, and I chase down my mistake and do something good with it.

## Grade 4 English Language Arts Rubric

### Reading/Writing (Questions 32, 33, 34, 35)

#### 4 points

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Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill all or most requirements of the tasks
- address the theme or key elements of the text
- show an insightful interpretation of the text
- make connections beyond the text
  
- develop ideas fully with thorough elaboration
- make effective use of relevant and accurate examples from the text

In addition, the extended response

- establishes and maintains a clear focus
- shows a logical, coherent sequence of ideas through the use of appropriate transitions or other devices
  
- is fluent and easy to read, with vivid language and a sense of engagement or voice
- is stylistically sophisticated, using varied sentence structure and challenging vocabulary

#### 3 points

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Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill some requirements of the tasks
- address many key elements of the text
- show a predominantly literal interpretation of the text
- make some connections
  
- may be brief, with little elaboration, but are sufficiently developed to answer the questions
- provide some relevant examples and details from the text
- may include some minor inaccuracies

In addition, the extended response

- is generally focused, though may include some irrelevant details
- shows a clear attempt at organization
  
- is readable, with some sense of engagement or voice
- uses some sentence variety and basic vocabulary

## Grade 4 English Language Arts Rubric (continued)

### **2 points**

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Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill some requirements of the tasks
- address basic elements of the text, but the connections may be weak
- show some misunderstanding of the text or reflect gaps in the student's understanding of the text as a whole
  
- may begin to answer the questions but are not sufficiently developed
- may provide some relevant text-based examples and details
- may include some inaccurate information

In addition, the extended response

- may attempt to establish a focus
- shows some attempt at organization
- may include some irrelevant details
  
- is mostly readable, but with little sense of engagement or voice
- uses only simple sentences and basic vocabulary

### **1 point**

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Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill few requirements of the tasks
- miss basic elements of the text
- show evidence that the student understood only parts of the text
- make few, if any, relevant connections
  
- may include a few accurate details

In addition, the extended response

- may focus on minor details or lack a focus
- shows little or no organization
  
- is often repetitive, with little or no sense of engagement or voice
- uses minimal vocabulary

### **0 points**

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The responses are completely incorrect, irrelevant, or incoherent.

**Grade 4 English Language Arts Rubric Chart  
Reading/Writing (Questions 32, 33, 34, 35)**

	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<b>Quality</b> <i>Meaning:</i> The extent to which the response exhibits understanding and interpretation of the task and text(s)	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fulfill all or most requirements of the tasks</li> <li>address the theme or key elements of the text</li> <li>show an insightful interpretation of the text</li> <li>make connections beyond the text</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fulfill some requirements of the tasks</li> <li>address many key elements of the text</li> <li>show a predominantly literal interpretation of the text</li> <li>make some connections</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fulfill some requirements of the tasks</li> <li>address basic elements of the text, but the connections may be weak</li> <li>show some misunderstanding of the text or reflect gaps in the student's understanding of the text as a whole</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>fulfill few requirements of the tasks</li> <li>miss basic elements of the text</li> <li>show evidence that the student understood only parts of the text</li> <li>make few, if any, relevant connections</li> </ul>
<b>Development:</b> The extent to which ideas are elaborated, using specific and relevant evidence from the text(s)	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>develop ideas fully with thorough elaboration</li> <li>make effective use of relevant and accurate examples from the text</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may be brief, with little elaboration, but are sufficiently developed to answer the questions</li> <li>provide some relevant examples and details from the text</li> <li>may include some minor inaccuracies</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may begin to answer the questions but are not sufficiently developed</li> <li>may provide some relevant text-based examples and details</li> <li>may include some inaccurate information</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>Taken as a whole:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may include a few accurate details</li> </ul>
<b>Organization:</b> The extent to which the response exhibits direction, shape, and coherence	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>establishes and maintains a clear focus</li> <li>shows a logical, coherent sequence of ideas through the use of appropriate transitions or other devices</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is generally focused, though may include some irrelevant details</li> <li>shows a clear attempt at organization</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may attempt to establish a focus</li> <li>shows some attempt at organization</li> <li>may include some irrelevant details</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>may focus on minor details or lack a focus</li> <li>shows little or no organization</li> </ul>
<b>Language Use:</b> The extent to which the response reveals an awareness of audience and purpose through effective use of words, sentence structure, and sentence variety	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is fluent and easy to read, with vivid language and a sense of engagement or voice</li> <li>is stylistically sophisticated, using varied sentence structure and challenging vocabulary</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is readable, with some sense of engagement or voice</li> <li>uses some sentence variety and basic vocabulary</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is mostly readable, but with little sense of engagement or voice</li> <li>uses only simple sentences and basic vocabulary</li> </ul>	<b>Responses at this level:</b> <i>The extended response:</i> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>is often repetitive, with little or no sense of engagement or voice</li> <li>uses minimal vocabulary</li> </ul>

**SCORE POINT 0** = The responses are completely incorrect, irrelevant, or incoherent.

## Reading/Writing Specific Rubric

*Each description below represents the cluster of responses typically found at that score point level. Anchor papers (sample student responses) as well as the generic English language arts rubric should be used with the specific rubrics to help you determine the appropriate score point level for each student's cluster of responses. If you still have questions, please consult your scoring table leader.*

### Reading/Writing Task (Questions 32, 33, 34, 35) “Swan Song” and “After the Error”

#### **4 Points**

The 4-point responses fulfill all or most requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a thorough understanding of both passages. The student demonstrates an understanding of how actions have consequences and supports that understanding with details from the texts. The student shows an insightful interpretation of both passages and makes connections beyond them, using accurate text-based examples to fully support the responses. The graphic organizer (Question 32) is complete and accurate. The student lists two events from the passage in proper sequence. The first short response (Question 33) includes text-based details to explain why Jerry's manager was upset with him. The second short response (Question 34) includes text-based details to describe how Jerry acted after his error and to explain how his manager's advice changed the way Jerry has reacted to errors since then. The extended response (Question 35) is logical, well organized, focused, and fluent, with a sense of engagement or voice. The student uses details from both passages to thoroughly describe how the swan and Jerry both get into trouble because of their behaviors and to explain what can be learned from the results of their behaviors.

#### **3 Points**

The 3-point responses fulfill some requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a predominantly literal understanding of both passages. The student makes some connections, but the responses may be brief with little elaboration. The student uses some relevant text-based examples to support an understanding of how actions have consequences but may only include support from one of the texts. The graphic organizer (Question 32) is essentially complete and accurate. The first short response (Question 33) includes an explanation of why Jerry's manager was upset with him, and the second short response (Question 34) includes a description of how Jerry acted after his error and explains how his manager's advice changed the way Jerry has reacted to errors since then. Both short responses include details from the passage but may be less than fully elaborated or have less than thorough text-based support. The extended response (Question 35) is generally focused, organized, and readable but may contain some minor inaccuracies or irrelevant information. The student may concentrate more on how the swan's behavior gets her into trouble and what can be learned from that than on Jerry's behavior and what can be learned from his behavior, or vice versa.

## **Reading/Writing Specific Rubric (continued)**

### ***2 Points***

The 2-point responses fulfill some requirements of the tasks but demonstrate some misunderstanding of both passages or reflect gaps in the student's understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections, but the connections may be weak. The student may provide some relevant text-based examples to support the responses but may also provide some inaccurate information. The graphic organizer (Question 32) may be incomplete or contain inaccuracies. The first short response (Question 33) may be somewhat brief and general. The second short response (Question 34) may be incomplete or contain redundancies. The student may insufficiently describe Jerry's reaction to his error or explain how his manager's advice changed the way Jerry has reacted since then. The extended response (Question 35) may be incomplete or indicate that the student has some confusion. The student may attempt to describe how the swan's and/or Jerry's behaviors get them into trouble without explaining what can be learned from their behaviors. The response may not include much information from either passage.

### ***1 Point***

The 1-point responses fulfill few requirements of the tasks and demonstrate that the student has understood only sections of the passages. The student makes few or no relevant connections but may include a few accurate text-based examples as support. For example, the graphic organizer (Question 32) may reveal some confusion about the sequence of events in the passage. The short responses (Questions 33 and 34) may indicate that the student has some confusion. The extended response (Question 35) may be repetitive, show little organization, or indicate that the student has focused on minor details of the texts. The student may simply retell the passages.

### ***0 Points***

The responses are completely incorrect, irrelevant, or incoherent.

**Reading/Writing Specific Rubric Chart**  
**Reading/Writing Task: “Swan Song” and “After the Error” (Questions 32,33, 34, 35)**

	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Responses at this level:</b>	<b>Responses at this level:</b>	<b>Responses at this level:</b>	<b>Responses at this level:</b>
<b>Quality</b>	fulfill all or most requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a thorough understanding of both passages. The student demonstrates an understanding of how actions have consequences and supports that understanding with details from the texts. The student shows an insightful interpretation of both passages and makes connections beyond them, using accurate text-based examples to fully support the responses.	fulfill some requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a predominantly literal understanding of both passages. The student makes some connections, but the responses may be brief with little elaboration. The student uses some relevant text-based examples to support an understanding of how actions have consequences but may only include support from one of the texts.	fulfill some requirements of the tasks but demonstrate some misunderstanding of both passages or reflect gaps in the student’s understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections, but the connections may be weak. The student may provide some relevant text-based examples to support the responses, but may also provide some inaccurate information.	fulfill few requirements of the tasks and demonstrate that the student has understood only sections of the passages. The student makes few or no relevant connections but may include a few accurate text-based examples as support.
<b>Overall</b>				
<b>Graphic Organizer (Question 32)</b>	are complete and accurate. The student lists two events from the passage in proper sequence.	are essentially complete and accurate.	may be incomplete or contain inaccuracies.	may reveal some confusion about the sequence of events in the passage.
<b>Short Response (Question 33)</b>	include text-based details to explain why Jerry’s manager was upset with him.	include an explanation of why Jerry’s manager was upset with him. Responses include details from the passage but may be less than fully elaborated or have less than thorough text-based support.	may be somewhat brief and general.	may indicate that the student has some confusion.
<b>Short Response (Question 34)</b>	include text-based details to describe how Jerry acted after his error and to explain how his manager’s advice changed the way Jerry has reacted to errors since then.	include a description of how Jerry acted after his error and explain how his manager’s advice changed the way Jerry has reacted to errors since then. Responses include details from the passage but may be less than fully elaborated or have less than thorough text-based support.	may be incomplete or contain redundancies. The student may insufficiently describe Jerry’s reaction to his error or explain how his manager’s advice changed the way Jerry has reacted since then.	may indicate that the student has some confusion.
<b>Extended Response (Question 35)</b>	are logical, well organized, focused, and fluent, with a sense of engagement or voice. The student uses details from both passages to thoroughly describe how the swan and Jerry both get into trouble because of their behaviors and to explain what can be learned from the results of their behaviors.	are generally focused, organized, and readable but may contain some minor inaccuracies or irrelevant information. The student may concentrate more on how the swan’s behavior gets her into trouble and what can be learned from that than on Jerry’s behavior and what can be learned from his behavior, or vice versa.	may be incomplete or indicate that the student has some confusion. The student may attempt to describe how the swan’s and/or Jerry’s behavior get them into trouble without explaining what can be learned from their behavior. The response may not include much information from either passage.	may be repetitive, show little organization, or indicate that the student has focused on minor details of the texts. The student may simply retell the passages.

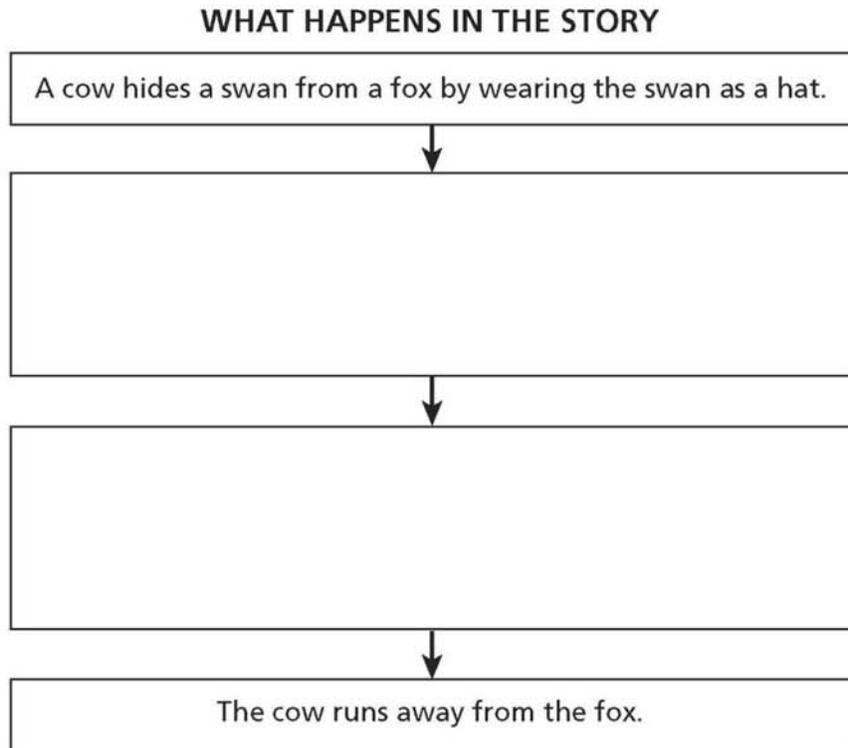
**SCORE POINT 0** = The responses are completely incorrect, irrelevant, or incoherent.

## Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points

### Reading/Writing Task: “Swan Song” and “After the Error”

#### Question 32

The chart below shows what happens in the story “Swan Song.” Complete the chart with details from the story in the order in which they happen.



#### Possible Exemplary Responses:

*Events from the story in the order they occur*

- The fox asks the cow if she has seen a swan.
- The fox tells the cow he likes her hat.
- The swan sings out that it is her, not a hat.
- The swan calls out that they have fooled the fox.
- The fox sees the swan.
- The fox tries to grab the swan.
- other relevant text-based response in sequence

NOTE: The student should not be penalized for referring to the swan as a “goose.”

## Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points (continued)

### Reading/Writing Task: “Swan Song” and “After the Error”

#### Question 33

*In “After the Error,” why was the manager of Jerry’s team upset with him? Use details from the passage to support your answer.*

#### Possible Exemplary Response:

The manager was upset with Jerry’s behavior after the error. Jerry wasted time being angry over his error instead of chasing the ball down, so the other team ended up scoring three more runs.

#### Possible details to include in answer:

- Jerry missed the ball and did not chase it down.
- Jerry stomped his foot/pounded his fist in the glove/squeaked and whined.
- The manager said it was what Jerry did after the error that was a problem.
- The other team scored three runs while Jerry was standing there.
- The manager tells Jerry next time not to stand there and feel sorry for himself.
- other relevant text-based detail

## Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points (continued)

### Reading/Writing Task: “Swan Song” and “After the Error”

#### Question 34

*How did Jerry act after he made the error? How has his manager’s advice changed the way Jerry has reacted to errors since then? Use details from “After the Error” to support your answer.*

#### **Possible Exemplary Response:**

Jerry stomped his foot, pounded his glove, and whined. The other team scored more runs because he was busy being upset. Jerry says he never forgot his manager telling him not to feel sorry for himself. He says when he wants to feel sorry for himself, he thinks of his manager and just “chases down his mistake.”

#### **Possible details to include in answer:**

- Jerry stomped his foot/pounded his fist in the glove/squeaked and whined.
- The manager said it was what Jerry did after the error that was a problem.
- The other team scored three runs while Jerry was standing there.
- The manager tells Jerry next time not to stand there and feel sorry for himself but to chase down the ball.
- Jerry says when he wants to feel sorry for himself, he thinks of his old manager, chases down his mistake, and does something good with it.
- other relevant text-based detail

## Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points (continued)

### Reading/Writing Task: “Swan Song” and “After the Error”

#### Question 35

*The swan in “Swan Song” and Jerry in “After the Error” both get into trouble because of how they behave. How does the swan’s behavior get her into trouble? How does Jerry’s behavior get him into trouble? Explain what can be learned from the results of their behaviors. Use details from **both** passages to support your answer.*

*In your answer, be sure to*

- *describe how the swan’s behavior gets her into trouble*
- *describe how Jerry’s behavior gets him into trouble*
- *explain what can be learned from the results of their behaviors*
- *use details from **both** passages to support your answer*

#### **Possible Exemplary Response:**

Both the swan and Jerry get into trouble because of their behavior. The swan tries to hide from the fox by pretending to be a hat on the cow’s head. The fox tells the cow she has a nice hat but doesn’t know the hat is really the swan. Instead of being glad that the fox does not see her, the swan yells that she has tricked the fox. The fox then tries to grab her, so the cow and the swan have to run away.

Jerry gets into trouble by getting upset that he made an error on the field. Instead of shaking off the error and continuing to play, he gets upset. He stomps the ground and hits his glove. While he does that, the other team scores three more runs. The manager doesn’t get upset at Jerry for the error. He gets upset at Jerry because Jerry felt sorry for himself and pouted instead of playing.

Both the swan and Jerry learn that it is better to say nothing sometimes. The swan has to run for her life when the fox hears her yell at him. The cow tells the swan that sometimes being smart is knowing when to say nothing. Jerry ends up allowing more runs for the other team because he wastes time being upset over his error. The manager tells him that next time he shouldn’t feel sorry for himself like that. Jerry realized that he needs to chase down his mistakes and do something good with them.

#### **Possible details to include in answer:**

- The swan tries to hide from the fox by pretending to be the cow’s hat.
- The fox sees the swan when the swan yells out.
- The cow has to run off with the swan to escape the fox.
- The cow tells the swan that sometimes it is smarter to say nothing.
- Jerry was heartbroken when he made an error.
- Jerry stomped his foot/pounded his fist/squeaked and whined.
- The other team scored three runs because Jerry wasted time being upset.
- The manager was upset with Jerry.
- The manager told Jerry that next time, he should chase the ball down.
- The manager told Jerry not to just stand there feeling sorry for himself.
- Jerry learned from his mistake and never forgot what his manager told him.
- other relevant text-based detail

## ELA Grade 4 Scoring Considerations

### Reading/Multiple Choice (Questions 1–28)

- 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 29, 30, 31)

- Deduct one point if either Question 29 *or* 30 is not answered.
- If neither Question 29 *nor* 30 (the short-response questions) is answered, the total maximum Listening/Writing score possible is 2.
- If Question 31 (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 32, 33, 34, 35)

- Deduct one point if any two short-response questions (32 and 33 *or* 33 and 34 *or* 32 and 34) are not answered.
- If none of the short-response questions (32, 33, 34) are answered, the total maximum Reading/Writing score possible is 2.
- If Question 35 (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 31 and 35)

- 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 consists of 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.