

WRITING PORTFOLIO GUIDE: Grade 2 Opinion Writing



Connecticut State Department of Education

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Smarter Balanced
English Language Arts Education Consultant

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Smarter Balanced
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WRITING PORTFOLIO GUIDE: Grade 2 Opinion Writing

To develop and promote effective writing assessment resources that align to the Connecticut Core Standards, the Connecticut State Department of Education (CSDE) developed training materials to support classroom teachers' instruction of writing throughout the year.

This particular Grade 2 guide includes a grade-appropriate text and an evidence-based writing prompt that was administered to over 140 second-grade students representing a range of writing abilities from across Connecticut. The CSDE collected and scored their responses with guidance from the Writing Assessment Advisory Committee.

These materials can be used for classroom-, building-, or district-level training to support evidence-based student writing.

Background

During the fall and early winter of 2017, English language arts consultants from the CSDE visited seven Grade 2 classrooms in Connecticut in which the mentor text, *One Word From Sophia*, written by Jim Averbeck and Yasmin Ismail, was read aloud to students. Following the reading, the class was asked to write a paper about one thing that they would like more than anything else, and explain why they should receive that thing. Students were directed to provide details to help the reader understand why they should get their one true desire, and to make sure that their writing had an introduction, body, and conclusion.

Student responses were scored across three writing dimensions (Organization/Purpose, Evidence/Elaboration, and Conventions) using Connecticut-developed scoring rubrics aligned to the Smarter Balanced ELA Performance Task Writing Rubrics and the Connecticut Core Standards (CCS) for Grade 2.

The collection represents a range in both depth and abilities. Examining student responses across the three dimensions for writing provides teachers with a closer look at individual and group strengths and weaknesses in writing. In particular, this writing prompt calls for students to use evidence-based examples in their written response. By looking more closely at the three scoring dimensions, teachers can provide students with specific tools and instruction needed to meet the grade-level expectations set in the standards.

The scoring rubrics were meant to be general and can be used with a variety of writing assignments across content areas and purposes. They can be used in part to focus on one particular dimension, such as using Evidence/Elaboration, or in their entirety to identify students' strengths and weaknesses in writing.

Student Exemplars

The exemplar set for Grade 2 opinion writing contains a stimulus, an item stem, scoring rubrics, a Smarter Balanced Performance Task Conventions Scoring Chart, writing anchor papers, and a student-friendly rubric.

Directions for using this ELA/Literacy guide:

1. Start by reading the stimulus and the accompanying item stem.
2. Examine the specific rubrics for each dimension and score point.
3. Read through the condition code document to better understand how to score unusual responses.
4. Read the student's response each time a new rubric is used.

Writing Portfolio Guide Glossary

Source: informational or research-based texts from various academic disciplines for students to use as evidence or support in their writing.

Item Stem/Your Assignment: a paragraph prompting the student to create a focused written response.

Anchor Papers: examples of student responses and scoring comments ordered from high to low by score point. In this set of anchor papers, each student response received three annotated scores: a score for Organization/Purpose, a score for Evidence/Elaboration, and a score for Conventions.

Scoring Rubrics: a description of the item expectations that includes a description of response characteristics typically exhibited at each score point to ensure consistent scoring.

Scores with Plus or Minus

Within a score point there are varying levels, from the low end of the point indicated by a minus sign, to the very high end of a score point, indicated by a plus sign. This allows us to differentiate when hand scoring between those students who are either barely within a score point and those that are close to the next score point. This additional information is beneficial when learning to score a paper and when determining next steps in instruction based on students' strengths and weaknesses.

Grade 2 Opinion Writing

Source: Averbeck, J. and Y. Ismail (2015). *One Word From Sophia*. Atheneum Books, New York, NY.

Item Stem/Your Assignment: In this story, Sophia has one true desire for her birthday. She wants a pet giraffe! She shares this desire with each of her family members to persuade her family why she should receive a pet giraffe as a birthday gift. This giraffe was her one true desire! What is your one true desire? Write about one thing that you would like more than anything, and explain why you should receive that thing. Provide details to help the reader understand why you should get your one true desire. Make sure that your writing has an introduction, a body, and a conclusion.

Standards

The Connecticut Core Standards for English Language Arts and Literacy in History/Social Studies, Science, and Technical Subjects (CCS ELA) are grounded in evidence and designed to ensure that all students have the academic knowledge and skills they need to succeed after high school. The CCS ELA standards progression documents provide a view of learning expectations by strand and by grade level, and can be useful in understanding why the standards are sequenced the way they are across a number of grade levels. The CCS ELA K–5 writing standards progression provides a more comprehensive identification of the skills and expectations at each grade level in the writing strand, and were designed to support organizing curriculum and classroom instruction. To access the learning progression documents, visit www.ctcorestandards.org.

Grade 2 Opinion Writing Scoring Rubrics

Grade 2 Opinion Writing Rubric: ORGANIZATION/PURPOSE				
Score	4	3	2	1
Organization/Purpose	<p>The response is clearly organized and consistently focused. The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clearly introduces and communicates the opinion • strongly maintains the focus for the purpose and audience • effectively uses linking words/phrases to connect ideas and reasons • provides an effective concluding statement/section 	<p>The response is adequately organized and generally focused. The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • adequately states a clear opinion • mostly maintains the focus for the purpose and audience • adequately uses linking words/phrases to connect ideas and reasons, but some ideas may be loosely connected • provides an adequate concluding statement/section 	<p>The response is somewhat organized and unevenly focused. The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • states an opinion that may be somewhat unclear • insufficiently sustains the focus for the purpose and/or audience • inconsistently uses linking words/phrases to connect ideas and reasons • provides a weak concluding statement/section 	<p>The response lacks organization and/or focus. The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • lacks an opinion or the opinion is ambiguous; may be too brief • is unfocused and may drift from the purpose and/or audience • uses few, if any, linking words/phrases to connect ideas and reasons • lacks concluding statement/section

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Grade 2 Opinion Writing Rubric: EVIDENCE/ELABORATION				
Score	4	3	2	1
Evidence/Elaboration	<p>The response provides convincing elaboration of the support/evidence for the opinion and supporting idea(s). The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thoroughly supports the opinion with reasons related to the topic skillfully elaborates on reasons with details effectively integrates evidence from experiences/sources effectively uses vocabulary/language appropriate to the task (may mix precise and more general language) effectively uses an appropriate style that enhances the content 	<p>The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/evidence for the opinion. The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequately supports the opinion with reasons related to topic adequately elaborates on reasons adequately integrates some evidence from experiences/sources adequately uses vocabulary/language appropriate to the task (may mix general language with some precise language) adequately uses an appropriate style to support the content 	<p>The response provides inconsistent elaboration of the support/evidence for the opinion. The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides limited support of the opinion with reasons related to topic provides some elaboration of reasons integrates some evidence from experiences/sources, but may be ineffective, awkward, or vague uses some vocabulary/language appropriate to the task (simplistic language used) attempts to create an appropriate style to support the content, but may be inconsistent or weak 	<p>The response provides very little or no elaboration of the support/evidence for the opinion. The response:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provides no support of the opinion with reasons related to the topic does not provide any elaboration of reasons integrates evidence from experiences/sources that is incorrect, irrelevant, or evidence is missing uses vague, unclear, or confusing vocabulary/language provides little or no evidence of an appropriate style to support content

Grade 2 Opinion Writing Rubric: CONVENTIONS			
Score	2	1	0
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions. The response demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions. The response demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions. The response demonstrates:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling

January 20, 2017

CONVENTIONS
<p>Holistic Scoring:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety: A range of errors includes sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling. Severity: Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors. Density: The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.

Smarter Balanced — Conventions Chart — April 2014 Grades K–1

Spelling	Capitalization	Punctuation	Grammar Usage	Sentence Completion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use regular plural nouns correctly by adding /s/ or /es/ (e.g., dog, dogs; wish, wishes). Use conventional spelling for words with common spelling patterns and for frequently occurring irregular words. 	<p>Capitalize:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> the first word in a sentence. the pronoun I. names of people. days of the week. months of the year. 	<p>Use end punctuation for sentences.</p> <p>Use commas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in dates. to separate single words in a series. 	<p>Nouns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use singular and plural nouns with matching verbs in basic sentences (e.g., He hops; We hop). <p>Verbs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use verbs to convey a sense of past, present, and future (e.g., Yesterday I walked home; Today I walk home; Tomorrow I will walk home). <p>Pronoun:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use common personal, possessive, and in-definite pronouns (e.g., I, me, my; they, them, their; anyone, every-thing). <p>Determiners:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use determiners (e.g., articles, demon-stratives). <p>Conjunctions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use frequently occurring conjunctions (e.g., and, so, but, because). 	N/A

Smarter Balanced — Conventions Chart — April 2014

Grade 2

Spelling	Capitalization	Punctuation	Grammar Usage	Sentence Completion
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Spell words at grade level and below correctly. 	<p>Capitalize:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> holidays. product names. geographic names. greetings and closings. 	<p>Use commas</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> in greetings and closings of letters. <p>Use an apostrophe</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> to form contractions. in [frequently occurring] possessives. 	<p>Nouns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use collective nouns (e.g., group). Correctly use frequently occurring irregular plural nouns (e.g., feet, children, teeth, mice, fish). <p>Verbs:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use the past tense of frequently occurring irregular verbs (e.g., sat, hid, told). <p>Pronouns:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Correctly use reflexive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves). 	N/A

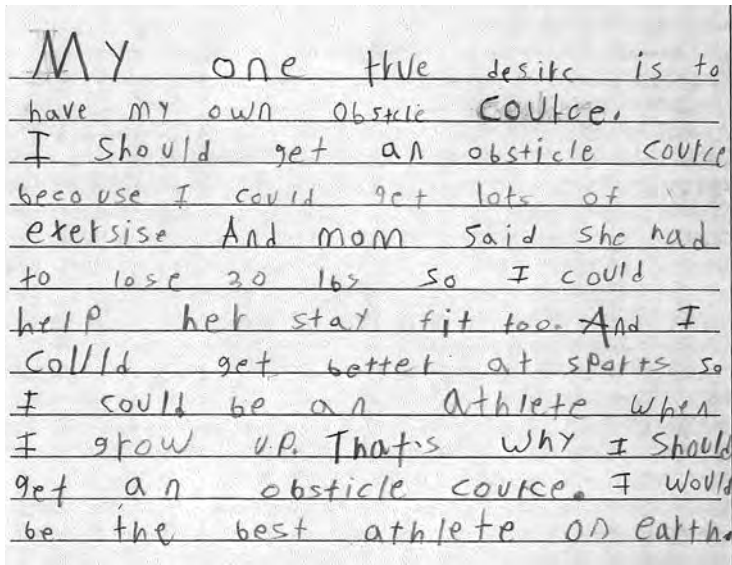
Smarter Balanced Condition Code Categories

For the purposes of scoring open-ended responses on the summative test, including Performance Tasks, Smarter Balanced applies the following Condition Code Categories to capture those responses that do not fulfill the expectation of the test item. In some cases, a student may not provide a response, while another case may include a response unrelated to the question or topic being assessed. These codes allow the handscorer to categorize the type of response and provide more information than merely scoring it a zero.

Condition Codes	Smarter Balanced Condition Code Category Updated April 25, 2017
B	<p>Blank</p> <p>No response provided</p>
I	<p>Insufficient</p> <p>a. Student has not provided a meaningful response. Some examples:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Random keystrokes/handstrokes • Undecipherable text • <i>I hate this test</i> • <i>I don't know, IDK</i> • <i>I don't care</i> • <i>I like pizza!</i> (in response to a reading passage about helicopters) • Response consists entirely of profanity <p>b. For ELA Full Writes, use "I" code (Insufficient) for responses described above and also if:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • student's original work is insufficient to determine whether he or she is able to organize, cite evidence/elaborate, and use conventions as defined in the rubrics; or • response is too brief to determine whether it is on purpose or on topic.
L	<p>Non-Scorable Language</p> <p>ELA/literacy: Language other than English and/or Mathematics: Language other than English or Spanish</p>
T	<p>Off Topic <i>for ELA Full Writes Only</i></p> <p>Definition: A writing sample will be judged off topic when the response is unrelated to the task or the sources, or shows no evidence that the student has read the task or the sources (especially for informative/explanatory and opinion/argumentative).</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Off-topic responses are generally substantial responses.
M	<p>Off Purpose <i>for ELA Full Writes Only</i></p> <p>Definition: A writing sample will be judged off purpose when the student has clearly not written to the purpose designated in the task.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • An off-purpose response addresses the topic of the task, but not the purpose of the task. • Note that students may use narrative techniques in an explanatory essay or use argumentative/persuasive techniques to explain, for example, and still be on purpose. • Off-purpose responses are generally developed responses (essays, poems, etc.) clearly not written to the designated purpose.

Grade 2 Anchor Sets

GRADE 2	P-1	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		4	4	2



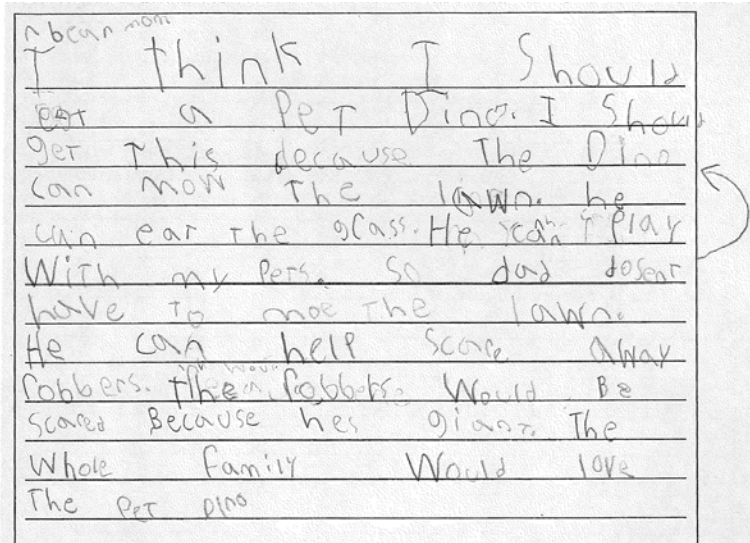
"My one true desire is to have my own obstacle course. I should get an obstacle course because I could get lots of exercise, and mom said she had to lose 30 lbs., so I could help her stay fit, too. And I could get better at sports, so I could be an athlete when I grow up. That's why I should get an obstacle course. I would be the best athlete on earth."

4: The student clearly states an opinion. The focus is maintained and controlled throughout. The response provides a conclusion that synthesizes the paper.

4: The student includes specific details to support the opinion provided. Each point presented is extended to further support the opinion.

2: This response demonstrates an adequate control of conventions. While there are misspelled words, they are well beyond grade level (*obstacle course; exercise*).

GRADE 2	P-2	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		4	4	1-



"I think I should get a pet dino. I should get this because the dino can mow the lawn, so Dad doesn't have to mow the lawn. He can eat the grass. He can play with my pets. He can help scare away robbers. The robbers would be scared because he's giant. The whole family would love the pet dino."

4: This response is clear and maintains control throughout. The revision in the paper serves to better organize the response.

4: The evidence is developed to support the opinion. The student makes a statement and then elaborates on the evidence to further support the opinion.

1-: Backwards lettering, random capitalization, incorrect spelling, and intermittent use of punctuation demonstrate a limited control of conventions.

GRADE 2	P-3	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		3+	4-	2

My one true desire is to have a pet horse. Because I can ride it places without having to use cars. And it's very fast. It's easy to train. It's very nice. I deserve it because I have been very good and I do my chores. The horse does not cost too much and it's food. When you ride it in competitions you can get money. So the horse will not hurt people and it will be easy to clean up its meals and its droppings. It's not a noisy animal, and it's easy to calm down. I deserve it because it does not be rude to people. So I think I deserve it because I will take care of it.

3+: The student clearly introduces the opinion, but there is a need for better organization of the information.

4-: The student provides specific elaboration throughout to support opinion.

2: Even with missing words and minor errors, the student demonstrates a command of conventions.

"My one true desire is to have a pet horse. Because I can ride it places without having to use cars. And it's very fast. It's easy to train. It's very nice. I deserve it because I have been very good and I do my chores. The horse does not cost too much and it's food. When you ride it in competitions, you can get money. So, the horse will not hurt people and it will be easy to clean up its meals and its droppings. It's not a noisy animal, and it's easy to calm down. I deserve it because it does not be rude to people. So, I think I deserve it because I will take care of it."

GRADE 2	P-4	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		3-	3+	1

One thing that I really want is a dog because I am responsible and I am a good girl for days and for a long time I wanted a dog so I kept begging my mom and dad so now we are saving up for a dog and I all ready have twenty dollers and my mam is giveing me more money and she gave me twenty dollers and I was so close to get my dog I was so excited but my bothers wanted one too so we shared and they gave me twenty more dollers and we bot the dog.

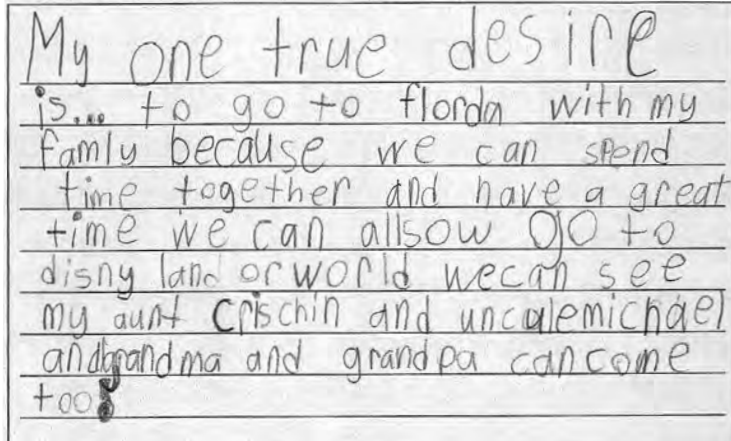
“One thing that I really want is a dog because I am responsible and I am a good girl for days. And, for a long time I wanted a dog. So, I kept begging my mom and dad so now we are saving up for a dog. And, I already have twenty dollers and my mom is giving me more money. And she gave me twenty dollers and I was so close to getting my dog. I was so excited. But, my brothers wanted one too, so we shared and they gave me twenty more dollers and we bought the dog.”

3-: The opinion presented by the student is clear and the response is focused. While there is an ending, the student needs more variety in linking sentences beyond “and.”

3+: While this response is detailed and the writer uses specific vocabulary (*responsible, twenty dollers*), it is repetitive.

1: This paper is one long, run-on sentence with some verb tense issues and spelling errors.

GRADE 2	P-5	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		3-	2+	1

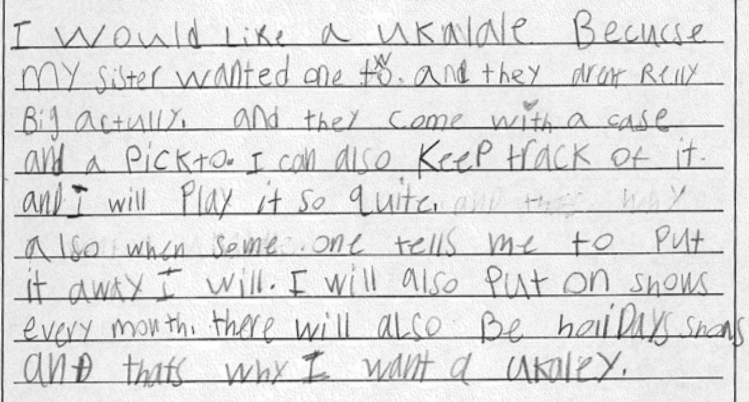


"My one true desire is to go to Florida with my family, because we can spend time together and have a great time. We can also go to Disneyland or World. We can see my Aunt Christian and Uncle Michael. And, Grandma and Grandpa can come too!"

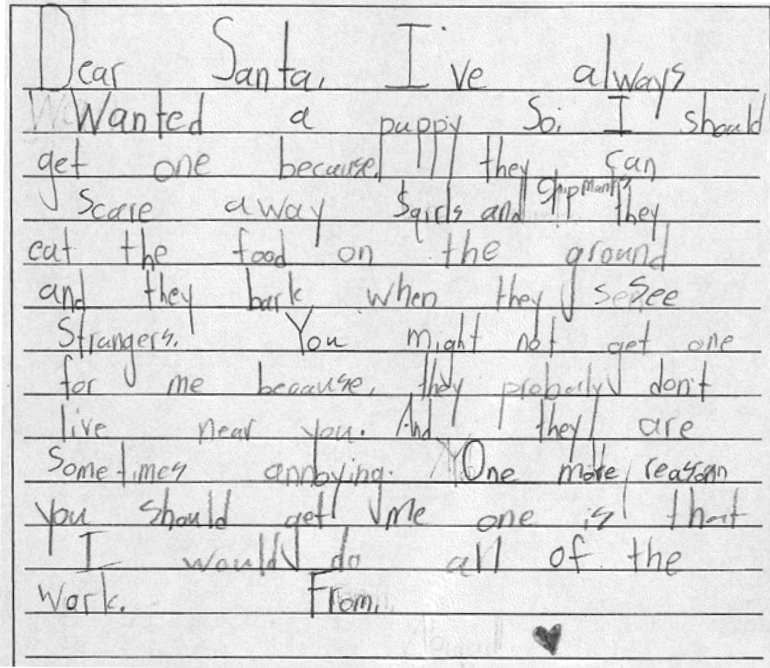
3-: The student clearly introduces the opinion and attempts to maintain a focus. There is very little linking between ideas and no conclusion.

2+: The support for the opinion is there, but it is listed in one long paragraph. It is not well integrated, and drifts detract from the writing.

1: There is no punctuation until the end of the paper. The response includes some capitalization issues and spelling errors.

GRADE 2	P-6	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2+	3	1
 <p>I would like a UKULELE Because MY sister wanted one too. and they are really big actually. and they come with a case and a pic too. I can also keep track of it. and I will play it so quiet. and they way also when someone tells me to put it away I will. I will also put on shows every month. there will also be holiday shows AND that's why I want a UKULELE.</p> <p>"I would like a ukulele because my sister wanted one too and they aren't really big actually. And, they come with a case and a pic, too. I can also keep track of it. And, I will play it so quiet. Also, when someone tells me to put it away I will. I will also put on shows every month. There will also be holiday shows and that's why I want a ukulele."</p>		<p>2+: The student opens the response with a weak introduction and the attempt at a conclusion is limited. But, the response is focused throughout. The student doesn't link concepts with words beyond "also."</p>		
		<p>3: The student develops and supports one idea consistently (<i>getting a ukulele</i>). Where the evidence is, at times, developed, it is awkward in places (<i>I will keep track of it. I will play it so quiet</i>).</p>		
		<p>1: Capitalization, spelling, and sentence structure issues demonstrate a limited control of conventions.</p>		

GRADE 2	P-7	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2	3-	2



"Dear Santa, I've always wanted a puppy. So, I should get one because they can scare away squirrels and chipmunks. They eat the food on the ground, and they bark when they see strangers. You might not get one for me because they probably don't live near you. And they are sometimes annoying. One more reason you should get me one is that I would do all of the work."

2: The student loses focus in the middle of the paper when trying to show the reasons why they might not get their one desire (You might not get one for me because they probably don't live near you). There is a weak ending.

3-: A lot of evidence is provided both for and against having a puppy, but it is awkwardly integrated. However, some evidence provided is specific (scare away squirrels and chipmunks; bark when they see strangers).

2: The student shows a strong understanding of conventions.

GRADE 2	P-8	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2	2+	1-

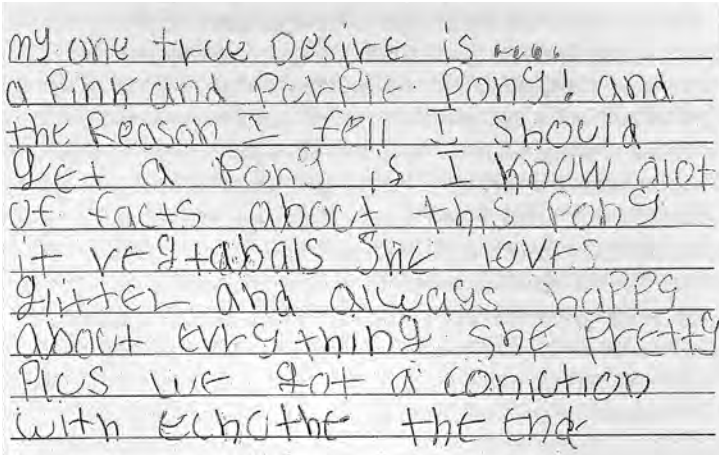
I Would Want a Puppy
 Beacase I can play with my
 Puppy. She can play with
 me in my room too. She
 can sit on my lap when we are
 watching movies. and I would have
 to train her. I would
 name her Ashley. Because
 Ashley is a good name for
 my puppy. Why? Because Ashley
 is a good name. She
 would even sleep with me in
 my bed. I would have
 to give her dog food
 and water. and I would want
 to brush her. and I
 could put one of my headbands
 on my puppy. I love my puppy?

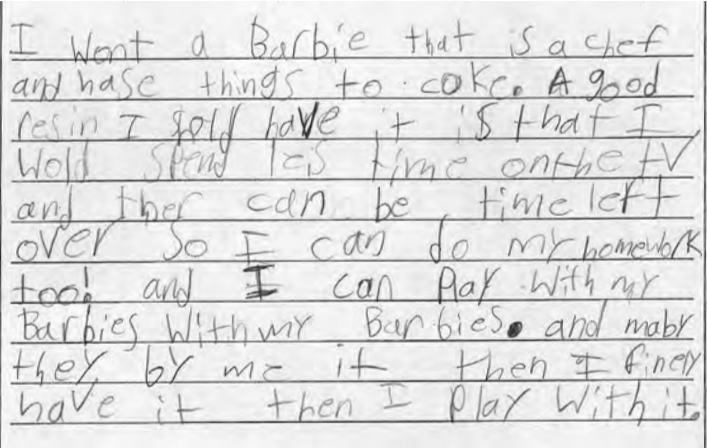
2: The student attempts to establish an introduction, but there is no conclusion. While the response is focused on the topic, it has transgressions that impact the organization of the paper.

2+: Unconnected details and redundant writing make this paper less elaborated and more unclear.

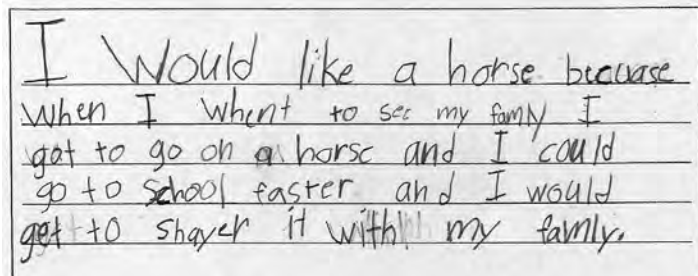
1-: Frequent spelling, capitalization and punctuation errors demonstrate a limited control of conventions.

"I would want a puppy because I can play with my puppy. She can play with me in my room, too. She can sit on my lap when we are watching movies. And, I would have to train her. I would name her Ashley because Ashley is a good name for my puppy. Why? Because, Ashley is a good name. She would even sleep with me in my bed. I would have to give her dog food and water, and I would want to brush her. And, I could put one of my headbands on my puppy. I love my puppy?"

GRADE 2	P-9	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2	2	0
 <p><i>"My one true desire is a pink and purple pony! And the reason I feel I should get a pony is I know a lot of facts about this pony. It vegetables. She loves glitter and always happy about everything. She pretty, plus we got a connection with each other. The end."</i></p>		<p>2: The student establishes an introduction, but provides a weak and abrupt ending.</p>	<p>2: The evidence is not well connected, and the support is general or limited. But, the student uses some effective vocabulary (<i>vegetables; glitter; connection</i>).</p>	<p>0: This response contains incomplete sentences and problematic punctuation. It does not demonstrate a control of conventions.</p>

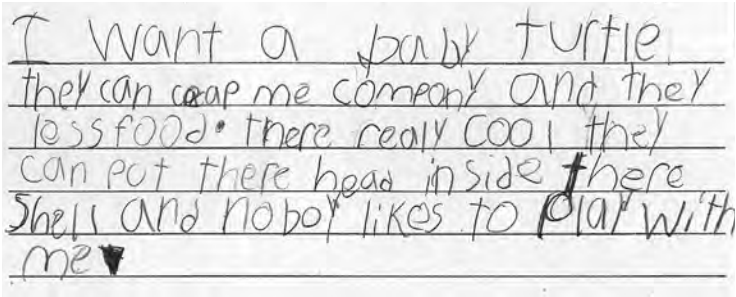
GRADE 2	P-10	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2-	2-	1-
 <p><i>"I want a Barbie that is a chef and has things to cook. A good reason I should have it is that I would spend less time on the TV, and there can be time left over so I can do my homework, too! And, I can play with my Barbies with my Barbies. And maybe they buy me it, then I finally have it. Then, I play with it."</i></p>		<p>2-: There is an attempt at an introduction and a weak conclusion is provided. The student tries to maintain focus, but it fades at the end.</p>		
		<p>2-: There is an ineffective integration of details and at times, the opinion becomes confusing and redundant.</p>		
		<p>1-: Sentence structure, spelling, and punctuation errors contribute to a limited command of conventions.</p>		

GRADE 2	P-11	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		2	1	0








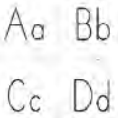


"I would like a horse because when I went to see my family I got to go on a horse. And, I could go to school faster, and I would get to share it with my family."

- 2:** A weak introduction is established. The student did not include a conclusion or use transitional strategies.
- 1:** The student does not include detailed support. This response is not well developed.
- 0:** This response has frequent spelling and punctuation issues. The amount of errors in relation to the amount of writing places this response in the score point 0 category.

GRADE 2	P-12	Organization/ Purpose (1-4 Points)	Evidence/ Elaboration (1-4 Points)	Conventions (0-2 Points)
		1	1	0
 <p>I want a baby turtle. They can keep me company and they less food. They're really cool. They can put their head inside their shell and nobody likes to play with me.</p>		<p>1: The student provides an introduction, but there is no organization and no conclusion.</p>		
		<p>1: The student includes some detail about the turtle, but loses focus.</p>		
		<p>0: Spelling is problematic and punctuation is limited in this response.</p>		

The following optional *Second Grade Writer's Checklist* can be used or modified by the teacher to meet the appropriate writing objectives to assist classroom instruction.

Second Grade Opinion Writer's Checklist		
I wrote an opinion and gave reasons to support my thoughts.		
I supported my opinion with important information and facts from the text.		
I included several reasons from the text to support my opinion.		
My reasons are explained in at least a few sentences for each example.		
I wrote a conclusion or ending that clearly connects to my opinion.		
I double-checked my writing for complete sentences, neatness, correct spelling, and punctuation.	 	
I tried my best!	