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# Language Arts–Writing

*HiSET*® Exam Free Practice Test FPT3

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## Directions

This is a test of some of the skills involved in revising written materials. There are three selections that present draft reports, letters, and articles. Each selection is presented twice, first in a box in a conventional format and then in a spread-out format with certain parts underlined and numbered. Read quickly through the boxed text to get an idea of its purpose and style. Then go on to the spread-out format.

For some of the underlined parts, there is no corresponding question in the right-hand column; instead just four alternatives are listed. Choose the alternative that

- makes the statement grammatically correct
- expresses the idea in the clearest or most appropriate way
- is worded most consistently with the style and purpose of the writing
- organizes the ideas in the most effective way

In some cases, there may be more than one problem to correct or improve. If you think the original underlined version is best, choose “No change.”

Other underlined parts have questions about organization or spelling in the right-hand column. In questions about organization, you will probably find it helpful to look at the boxed text. In the questions about spelling, you are to indicate which of three underlined words is misspelled, if any. If there are no errors in any of the words, choose “None.”

Work as quickly as you can without becoming careless. Do not spend too much time on any question that is difficult for you to answer. Instead, skip it and return to it later if you have time. Try to answer every question even if you have to guess.

Mark all your answers on the answer sheet. Give only one answer to each question.

If you decide to change one of your answers, be sure to erase the first mark completely.

Be sure that the number of the question you are answering matches the number of the row of answer choices you are marking on your answer sheet.

You will have 85 minutes to complete Part 1 and Part 2 of the Writing test.

Language Arts – Writing

Part 1

Time—85 minutes (Part 1 and Part 2)

25 Questions

Questions 1 to 9 refer to the selection below.

Read through the draft report below on an influential twentieth-century literary figure. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

- 1 Today the works of African American author Zora Neale Hurston are widely studied in high school and college classes. Her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* is now put in the category of a literary classic. During her lifetime, however, Hurston’s many works—seven books and over one hundred short stories, plays, essays, and articles—were controversial and subject to much criticism.
- 2 Hurston’s life is a story of optimism and creativity, traits she attributed to her childhood in the African American community of Eatonville Florida, where she grew up, in the early 1900s. As a child, Hurston loved the stories she heard relatives and townsfolk telling, and she became a skilled storyteller herself. When Hurston was thirteen, her mother died. During her high school years, she lived with a series of relatives. Having to work to support herself. She was eventually able to attend Howard University.
- 3 While Hurston was a college student, several short stories she wrote were published in a New York City magazine. She moved to Harlem with no money but plenty of hope, talent, and enthusiasm. In fact, in those days Hurston was as well-known for her flamboyant personality as for her writing. In the 1920s, she was a prominent figure in the African American cultural revival known as the Harlem Renaissance.
- 4 [1] In 1927, Hurston returned to Eatonville to collect from local storytellers the folklore she remembered from her childhood. [2] This folklore became the basis of much of her early work, in which she crafted true-to-life characters who spoke in the dialect of the region. [3] Yet many of her fellow writers did not view her work very favorably, criticizing it for not addressing issues of social injustice. [4] Although they received high praise from literary critics, Hurston’s books did not provide much income or remain in print long. [5] Hurston moved back to Florida eventually. She continued to write until her death in 1960. She lived simply, supporting herself through a variety of jobs.
- 5 In the late 1970s, Hurston’s work was rediscovered. Scholars increasingly recognized that her fiction uniquely captured the voice of the rural Black South, preserving an important time and place in African American history.

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and she became a skilled storyteller herself.  
When Hurston was thirteen, her mother died.  
During her high school years, she lived with a

1. A. (No change)  
B. good enough to be considered by some experts to be  
C. referred to by some who should know as  
D. considered
2. The writer is considering deleting the indicated information. Should the writer delete this material?  
A. No, because these details support the idea that some of Hurston's works are classics  
B. No, because these details help convey the scope of Hurston's work  
C. Yes, because there is nothing significant about the amount of work Hurston produced  
D. Yes, because these details distract from the focus on Hurston's work
3. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?  
A. (None)  
B. optimism  
C. creativity  
D. traits
4. A. (No change)  
B. Eatonville, Florida where she grew up, in  
C. Eatonville, Florida, where she grew up in  
D. Eatonville Florida where she grew up in

series of relatives. Having to work to support

5

herself. She was eventually able to attend Howard University.

- 3 While Hurston was a college student, several short stories she wrote were published in a New York City magazine. She moved to Harlem with no money but plenty of hope, talent, and enthusiasm. In fact, in those days Hurston was as well-known for her flamboyant personality as for her writing. In the 1920s, she was a prominent figure in the African American cultural revival known as the Harlem Renaissance.

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6

region. [3] Yet many of her fellow writers did not view her work very favorably, criticizing it for not addressing issues of social injustice.

5. A. (No change)  
B. relatives having  
C. relatives and had  
D. relatives. While she had

6. A. (No change)  
B. characters, they spoke  
C. characters and speaking  
D. characters, speaking

[4] Although they received high praise from literary critics, Hurston's books did not provide much income or remain in print long.

[5] Hurston moved back to Florida eventually.  
7

She continued to write until her death in 1960.  
7

She lived simply, supporting herself through a variety of jobs.  
7

8

7. Which of the following would be the best way to combine the indicated sentences?
- A. Eventually moving back to Florida and continuing writing, the rest of Hurston's life was lived simply and supporting herself through a variety of jobs until her death in 1960.
  - B. Moving back eventually to Florida and supporting herself through a variety of jobs, Hurston lived simply and also continued writing until her death in 1960.
  - C. Hurston eventually moved back to Florida, where she lived simply, supporting herself through a variety of jobs and continuing to write until her death in 1960.
  - D. Supporting herself through a variety of jobs, Hurston moved back to Florida eventually, living there simply and continuing to write until her death in 1960.
8. The writer would like to add the following information to paragraph 4:

Hurston's first book of Southern folklore, *Mules and Men*, is widely regarded as one of her most important contributions to the preservation of African American culture.

For the most logical organization of ideas, where should this sentence be placed?

- A. After sentence 2
- B. After sentence 3
- C. After sentence 4
- D. After sentence 5

5 In the late 1970s, Hurston’s work was rediscovered. Scholars increasingly recognized that her fiction uniquely captured the voice of the rural Black South, preserving an important time and place in African American history.

9

9. Which of the following sentences, added at the end of paragraph 5, would provide the best concluding sentence for the paragraph?
- A. In 2005, Halle Berry starred in a television movie version of *Their Eyes Were Watching God*, which was nominated for several awards.
  - B. Her books are now back in print, and in Eatonville the Zora Neale Hurston Festival of the Arts annually honors the memory and accomplishments of this significant writer.
  - C. Today, the Hurston/Wright Foundation, named after Hurston and noted African American writer Richard Wright, provides resources for aspiring Black writers.
  - D. Given the important literary contributions she made, it is a shame that Hurston, like Edgar Allan Poe, died poor and largely forgotten by the public.

Questions 10 to 17 refer to the selection below.

Read through the draft story below about an amusing experience. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

- 1 I'm sitting on the bench beginning to figure that I won't be pitching in our annual baseball game against Midtown. This is definitely the most competitive of all our rivalries with other schools. It's the last half of the last inning and we're ahead by one. Midtown is at bat with two outs—but with runners on first and second base. To my surprise, Coach tells me that "I should warm up just in case."
- 2 Ramon, our star pitcher, is tired and wants that third out. When he throws the next pitch, their batter swings wildly but somehow manages to connect. Like a rocket, the ball heads right for Ramon. He tries to grab it, but the ball ricochets off his bare hand. Now they have runners on all three bases, and we have an injured pitcher. Coach signals for me.
- 3 I walk slowly to the pitcher's mound, trying hard to look calm. In the bleachers, someone, probably my mother, is excitedly yelling my name. The catcher, Kevin, is trying hard to look confident. The umpire shouts, "play ball!"
- 4 I finally release the first pitch, and immediately trouble. The ball is hopelessly high. Kevin, making a great attempt to grab it, the ball goes past him. While Kevin goes after it, Midtown's runner on third base starts to run toward home plate, and so do I. Kevin throws the ball. Instantly it's in my glove, my glove's on the runner, and he's out!
- 5 Grinning from ear to ear, I display the ball to the crowd. Kevin keeps laughing about how I can't pitch and he can't catch. Coach doesn't seem to think this is such a humorous coincidence, but he does look relieved. Ramon takes his hand out of the ice bucket long enough to shake everybody's hand. Coach just winks.

1 I'm sitting on the bench beginning to figure that I won't be pitching in our annual baseball game against Midtown. This is definitely the **10** most competitive of all our rivalrys with other **10** schools. It's the last half of the last inning and we're ahead by one. Midtown is at bat with two outs—but with runners on first and second base. To my surprise, Coach tells me that "I **11** should warm up just in case." **11**

2 Ramon, our star pitcher, is tired and wants that third out. When he throws the next pitch, their batter swings wildly but somehow manages to connect. Like a rocket, the ball heads right for **12** Ramon. He tries to grab it, but the ball ricochets off his bare hand. Now they have runners on all three bases, and we have an injured pitcher. Coach signals for me.

3 I walk slowly to the pitcher's mound, trying **13** hard to look calm. In the bleachers, someone,

10. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?
- A. (None)
  - B. definitely
  - C. competitive
  - D. rivalrys
11. A. (No change)  
B. to warm up just in case.  
C. that, "just in case I should warm up."  
D. you should warm up just in case.
12. A. (No change)  
B. As a rocket,  
C. Similar to a rocket,  
D. Literally it was just a rocket,
13. A. (No change)  
B. mound and trying  
C. mound, and trying  
D. mound. Trying

probably my mother, is excitedly yelling my name. The catcher, Kevin, is trying hard to look confident. The umpire shouts, “play ball!”  
14

4 I finally release the first pitch, and immediately  
15  
trouble. The ball is hopelessly high.

Kevin, making a great attempt to grab it, the ball  
16  
goes past him. While Kevin goes after it, Midtown’s runner on third base starts to run toward home plate, and so do I. Kevin throws the ball. Instantly it’s in my glove, my glove’s on the runner, and he’s out!

5 Grinning from ear to ear, I display the ball to the crowd. Kevin keeps laughing about how I can’t pitch and he can’t catch. Coach doesn’t seem to think this is such a humorous  
17  
coincidence, but he does look releived. Ramon  
17  
takes his hand out of the ice bucket long enough to shake everybody’s hand. Coach just winks.

14. A. (No change)  
B. “Play ball!”  
C. “play ball”!  
D. “Play ball”!

15. A. (No change)  
B. with trouble noticeably on its way.  
C. and immediately I know we’re in trouble.  
D. followed by trouble on the way.

16. A. (No change)  
B. Making a great attempt to grab it, the ball  
C. While Kevin attempts grabbing it, the ball  
D. Kevin makes a great attempt to grab it, but the ball

17. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?  
A. (None)  
B. humorous  
C. coincidence  
D. releived

Questions 18 to 25 refer to the selection below.

Read through the draft letter below written by the girls on a softball team about the future of their sport. Then go on to the suggestions for revision that follow.

To the Editor:

- 1 For years Lincoln High has been trying with little success to develop a quality girls' softball team. There has been a number of ongoing problems with the softball program, but we think they can be solved if people are willing to take action.
- 2 The recent deficit in the school district budget has had a devastating effect on our program. Since girls can no longer play school-sponsored softball in middle school, they enter high school lacking basic skills. To make matters worse, since girls don't learn the sport in middle school, less are interested in it in high school.
- 3 Furthermore, our softball facilities are extremely inadequate. For example, our infield is too rough, our pitcher's mound is too high, and we don't have warm-up areas for the pitchers. I mean, how much more pathetic could it be! Other schools have become reluctant to compete with us because our facilities are so poor.
- 4 We have a few ideas that we think will help revitalize this practically nonexistent program. We will lobby the high school administration to direct a bigger portion of the athletics fund to girls' softball. We can also raise money ourselves by having car washes and raffles.
- 5 To try to get girls' softball reinstated in the district's middle schools, we plan to petition the school board to reconsider this issue. We hope that all students will sign this petition, which will be located on the north wall of the cafeteria for the next three weeks.
- 6 If everyone pitches in, softball at Lincoln High could again produce fine athletes and draw enthusiastic crowds. We've got to pull ourselves up by our own bootstraps!

Respectfully,

The remaining members of the Lincoln High Girls' Softball Team:  
Katie Brown, Keisha Hill, Tanya Jackson, Amy Lee, Melinda Martinez,  
Laurie Peters

To the Editor:

1 For years Lincoln High has been trying with little success to develop a quality girls' softball team. There has been a number of ongoing **18** problems with the softball program, but we think they can be solved if people are willing to take action.

2 The recent deficit in the school district budget **19** has had a devastating effect on our program. **19**

Since girls can no longer play school-sponsored **19** softball in middle school, they enter high school lacking basic skills. To make matters worse, since girls don't learn the sport in middle school, less are interested in it in high school. **20**

3 Furthermore, our softball facilities are extremely **21** inadequate. For example, our infield is too rough, our pitcher's mound is too high, and

18. A. (No change)  
B. have been  
C. was  
D. had been

19. Which of the following words, if any, is misspelled?  
A. (None)  
B. deficit  
C. devastating  
D. sponsored

20. A. (No change)  
B. few are  
C. less of them are  
D. fewer are being

21. A. (No change)  
B. In fact,  
C. Instead,  
D. Anyway,

we don't have warm-up areas for the pitchers.

I mean, how much more pathetic could it be!

22

Other schools have become reluctant to compete with us because our facilities are so poor.

- 4 We have a few ideas that we think will help revitalize this practically nonexistent program.

We will lobby the high school administration to direct a bigger portion of the athletics fund to girls' softball. We can also raise money ourselves by having car washes and raffles.

- 5 23 To try to get girls' softball reinstated in the district's middle schools, we plan to petition the school board to reconsider this issue. We hope that all students will sign this petition, which will be located on the north wall of the cafeteria for the next three weeks.

22. A. (No change)  
B. It couldn't be more pathetic!  
C. Talk about pathetic!  
D. (Omit this sentence.)

23. Which of the following sentences, added at the beginning of paragraph 5, would provide the best transition into the paragraph?
- A. New equipment, important though it is, will never be enough in itself for the team to succeed.  
B. There are other issues that are important to consider here.  
C. Without enough players or adequate training, there is really no point in trying to have a high school team.  
D. While adequate equipment and facilities are important, players with experience are also essential.

6 If everyone pitches in, softball at Lincoln High

could again produce fine athletes and draw

enthusiastic crowds. We've got to pull  
24

ourselves up by our own bootstraps!  
24

Respectfully,

The remaining members of the Lincoln High  
Girls' Softball Team:

Katie Brown, Keisha Hill, Tanya Jackson,  
Amy Lee, Melinda Martinez, Laurie Peters

24. Which saying is most appropriate for this paragraph and most consistent with the subject of the letter?

- A. (No change; best as written.)
- B. We can shoot for the moon!
- C. All we need is a little teamwork.
- D. Remember, when the going gets tough, the tough get going.

**Question 25 refers to the letter as a whole.**

25. The writers would like to include the following information in their letter.

Most female athletes pursue the sports that have benefited from the district's continuous support.

The best place to add this sentence would be after the last sentence in

- A. paragraph 2.
- B. paragraph 3.
- C. paragraph 4.
- D. paragraph 5.

**Language Arts – Writing**  
**Part 2**  
**Time—85 minutes (Part 1 and Part 2)**

**Directions**

This is a test of your writing skills. Your response will be scored based on:

- Development of a central position through explanation of supporting reasons, examples, and details from passages and personal experience
- Clear organization of ideas, including an introduction and conclusion, logical paragraphs, and effective transitions
- Language use, including varied word choice, varied sentence constructions, and appropriate voice
- Clarity and correctness of writing conventions

**NO TEST MATERIAL ON THIS PAGE**

**GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE →**

Below you will find two passages in which the authors put forth differing perspectives on an issue of importance. Read both passages carefully, noting the strengths and weaknesses of each discussion. Then, you will write an essay in which you explain your own opinion on the issue.

The following articles about casual dress codes at work were written by columnists of a business magazine and appeared side-by-side in a recent issue.

### Dressing for Creativity

- 1 The business “uniform” of the 1950s was the gray flannel suit. However, modern America has a different uniform. Companies are increasingly adopting dress codes that favor casual wear. They hope to encourage creativity, rather than conformity, in the workplace.
- 2 The term “casual Friday” began in Hawaii in the 1960s, a place and time noted for a more casual outlook. “Aloha Friday” started in support of the state’s garment industry by promoting floral print Hawaiian shirts. As the fad spread to the mainland, more and more businesses saw an increase in employee morale and creativity.
- 3 This trend accelerated with the rise of Internet start-up companies. Most of these companies were formed by young people who dressed very casually. Their typical attire was sneakers, jeans, and T-shirts. This was fitting since some of these start-up enterprises began in dorm rooms, garages, and basements. As the companies became successful, their founders were suddenly in charge of million-dollar businesses.
- 4 Business culture did not change these leaders; rather, they changed business culture. These young professionals adopted casual attire as their dress code, believing that nonconformity in clothing could spawn creativity. In some companies, it is not unusual to see CEOs and employees wearing jeans and sweatshirts. In fact, casual clothing is even considered a company benefit. Who wouldn’t prefer wearing T-shirts rather than suits?
- 5 The business world has entered a less formal age. Research shows that casual clothing inspires confidence and ingenuity. Gone are the days when one had to deny individuality by hiding inside the mandatory business suit. When the White House had problems with its Web site, they brought in an executive from a computer company. To do so, they had to alter their outdated dress code. The good news? The expert wearing tennis shoes solved their problems without a coat and tie.

### The Myth of Casual Friday

- 1 Think of a construction worker, a medical doctor, and a police officer. Chances are, you pictured in your mind a person with a hard hat, a lab coat, or a blue uniform. This illustrates the fact that many careers have standards for employee attire. With some jobs, the picture of what is appropriate to wear may not be as distinctive. However, having a formal dress code in the workplace is important for maintaining professionalism and customer confidence.
- 2 People argue that we live in an informal age, so we should dress less formally. Why is this a problem? One reason is productivity. Research shows that people match their attitudes to the clothing they wear. In fact, having clothes that are worn only at work, whether actual uniforms or simply following company dress code, makes people more focused. Casual clothing contributes to casual attitudes toward work. In fact, one study even connects informal dress with increased absenteeism.
- 3 Another concern is that customers have less trust in people who dress casually at work. Even if an employee is fully engaged in serving the customer, casual clothing signals that comfort, rather than job performance, is the first priority. If employees don't *look* professional, then how can customers trust them to actually *be* professional?
- 4 This is even more important today given the rise of "casual Friday," a day when dress codes are more relaxed. Unfortunately, some people decide to wear clothing more suited to the beach than a place of business. Also, evidence shows that casual dress days influence employees to dress less professionally throughout the week. Casual Friday becomes casual Thursday, and Wednesday, and so on. Before long, the entire week is casual.
- 5 Employees should be required to dress professionally in order to work more efficiently and instill customer confidence. Casual clothes have their place, but it is not in the workplace.

Write an essay in which you explain your own position on the issue of whether or not businesses should allow employees to wear casual clothing in the workplace.

Be sure to use evidence from the text passages provided as well as specific reasons and examples from your own experience and knowledge to support your position. Remember that every position exists within the context of a larger discussion of the issue, so your essay should, at minimum, acknowledge alternate and/or opposing ideas. When you have finished your essay, review your writing to check for correct spelling, punctuation, and grammar.

# Writing Practice Test

## Part 1

### Answer Key

Question Number	Correct Answer	Question Difficulty	Question Type
1	D	Easy	Language Facility
2	B	Difficult	Organization of Ideas
3	A	Easy	Writing Conventions
4	C	Medium	Writing Conventions
5	C	Easy	Writing Conventions
6	A	Easy	Language Facility
7	C	Medium	Language Facility
8	A	Medium	Organization of Ideas
9	B	Difficult	Organization of Ideas
10	D	Easy	Writing Conventions
11	B	Medium	Writing Conventions
12	A	Easy	Writing Conventions
13	A	Easy	Writing Conventions
14	B	Medium	Writing Conventions
15	C	Easy	Language Facility
16	D	Easy	Language Facility
17	D	Medium	Writing Conventions
18	B	Difficult	Writing Conventions
19	D	Medium	Writing Conventions
20	B	Medium	Writing Conventions
21	A	Medium	Organization of Ideas
22	D	Medium	Language Facility
23	D	Difficult	Organization of Ideas
24	C	Medium	Organization of Ideas
25	A	Difficult	Organization of Ideas

# Writing Practice Test

## Part 2

### Scoring Your Essay

The Scoring Guide used for scoring essay responses is given below. One way to see how well you did on your essay in this practice test is to ask someone with experience in scoring essays to score your response using this scoring guide. We also provide sample responses to the practice prompt that have been scored by trained essay raters. You can compare your essay to these scored responses and estimate your score that way.

Please remember that you must achieve a score of at least 2 on the essay portion of the Language Arts – Writing test in order to pass the test as a whole.

#### Scoring Guide

1	<p><i>Essays at this score point demonstrate weak command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The response has little or no development of a central position or claim(s). No correct and/or understandable context of the topic is provided for the discussion. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) may not be clear. A few ideas may be provided but these lack explanation of ideas, only repeat ideas, or ideas are derived entirely from provided texts.</li><li>• The response lacks an introduction and/or conclusion, and fails to demonstrate any understanding of paragraphing. Transitions are not used or may be used incorrectly.</li><li>• Language control is minimal. Word choice and sentence structure are simple. The response lacks formal style and an objective tone.</li><li>• Minimal or no command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling frequently appear.</li></ul>
2	<p><i>Essays at this score point demonstrate limited command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The response demonstrates limited development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic that is only somewhat correct or understandable is provided for the discussion. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) may be somewhat unclear or confusing. A few ideas are provided but explanation is thin and/or superficial and parts of the explanation may be repetitious or derived too heavily from provided texts without interpretation.</li><li>• The introduction and conclusion are minimally developed. Some related ideas are grouped together though paragraphing may not be used. Few transitions are used.</li><li>• Beginning skill in language is demonstrated. Word choice is general and repetitive. The response has repetitive sentence structure and/or long, uncontrolled sentences. The response lacks formal style and/or an objective tone.</li><li>• Limited command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Numerous errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear and may interfere with understanding.</li></ul>

3	<p><i>Essays at this score point demonstrate partial command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The response demonstrates partial development of a central position or claim(s). A brief context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including introduction of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer's own position on the issue or claim(s) is evident. Several ideas with limited or uneven explanation are provided; few or only general examples and/or details support ideas. The response uses evidence drawn from provided texts but this is limited or overused, poorly chosen, or misrepresented.</li><li>• The response has an introduction and conclusion, though one or both of these may be under-developed. Ideas are grouped together in paragraphs, though the relationship among ideas may at times be unclear. Transitions are simple and used inconsistently.</li><li>• Some developing skill in language is demonstrated. Word choice is general and the response demonstrates a little variety in sentence structure, although a few long, uncontrolled sentences may be used. The response attempts to maintain formal style and an objective tone but may fail to sustain these throughout discussion.</li><li>• Partial command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling are regularly present throughout the response and may sometimes interfere with understanding.</li></ul>
4	<p><i>Essays at this score point demonstrate adequate command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• The response demonstrates adequate development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including some discussion of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer's own position on the issue or claim(s) is clear. Several ideas with adequate explanation are provided; some specific and relevant examples and/or details support ideas, including relevant evidence drawn selectively from provided texts and appropriately integrated.</li><li>• A clear, functional introduction and conclusion are provided. Relationships between ideas are clarified by organization: transitions are consistently used, though they may be simple, and some evidence of logical sequencing of ideas is demonstrated. The response uses appropriate paragraphing.</li><li>• Adequate skill in language use is demonstrated. Word choice is mostly specific and somewhat varied. The response demonstrates control of sentences with some variety in length and structure. A formal style is established and an objective tone maintained throughout the discussion.</li><li>• Adequate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Some errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear but do not interfere with understanding.</li></ul>

5	<p><i>Essays at this score point demonstrate strong command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response demonstrates competent development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including balanced discussion of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) is clear and considered. Several ideas with complete explanation are provided; specific, relevant, and somewhat elaborated reasons, examples, and/or details support ideas, including clear and relevant evidence drawn from provided texts and skillfully integrated.</li> <li>• The introduction and conclusion are clear and sufficient. Clear and appropriate paragraphing is used. Varied transitions and logical sequencing of ideas are used throughout to link major sections of text, create cohesion, and clarify relationships between ideas.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates competent skill in language. Word choice is usually precise and varied. The response uses well-controlled sentences that are varied in length and complexity. A formal style is established and an objective tone maintained throughout; counterclaims are discussed fairly, without bias.</li> <li>• Able command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated. Few errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear, and most are superficial.</li> </ul>
6	<p><i>Essays at this score point demonstrate superior command over writing an argument on a given substantive topic using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response demonstrates expert development of a central position or claim(s). A context of the topic is provided for the discussion, including balanced discussion of the strengths and limitations of alternate claims and/or counterclaims. The writer’s own position on the issue or claim(s) is clear, considered, and nuanced. Several ideas with effective and thorough explanation are provided; relevant and fully elaborated reasons, examples, and/or details support ideas, including compelling evidence drawn from provided texts and effectively integrated.</li> <li>• The response has an effective introduction and conclusion. Clear and appropriate paragraphing is used, creating a coherent whole. Effective transitions and logical sequencing of ideas are used throughout to link major sections of text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claims(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaims.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates proficient skill in language. Word choice is precise, varied, and engaging. The response effectively varies sentence length and complexity. A formal style is established and an objective tone that enhances the effectiveness of the response maintained; counterclaims are discussed fairly, without bias.</li> <li>• Expert command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage is demonstrated, and the response demonstrates sophisticated use of grammar, usage, and mechanics. Few or no errors in capitalization, punctuation, and spelling appear.</li> </ul>

## Scored Sample Responses

**Note:** All responses are reproduced exactly as written, including errors, misspellings, etc., if any.

Score = 1

I agree that what I'm wearing don't mean I don't do good work. I work better cuz I am relaxed, comferble. NOT uptight in a suit, NOT able to move around. I get better ideas when Im comferble. If uncomferble, all I think is changing into jeans and a t shirt. So, yea, casual clothes for work is cool for me.

Score = 2

I agree casual clothes is ok at work but some people don't get it. Like if you have a inportant day you should "dress the part" but if its a plane day its ok to leave the suit at home. You have workers who don't know how to dress nice. Maybe someone needs to talk to them about what's nice and what's causal, and get them some nice clothes so they don't get in trouble. If they know the difference they wont make the mistake on the inportant days.

Score = 3

Bosses should allow casual clothes on Fridays. However, employees need to know what casual clothes means. Employees need to understand: the boss expects everyone to dress professional the other days and anytime an important meeting takes place on Friday. If you let people dress casually they will feel more happier in the workplace! The boss should show an example of the dress code, to show workers what's appropriate on each day. This way employees know exactly what types of outfits are allowed.

There are some jobs that just can't allow casual Fridays. It's too bad these workers can't enjoy casual Fridays, but that's the job they choose. You can't let EVERY job have casual Fridays. So, it's okay for some workers to have casual Fridays if the boss explains what types of clothes are okay, it's too bad for the workers like my uncle who is a police officer and has a "uniform" to wear every day, no matter what day. But "that is how the cookie crumbles."

Score = 4

The saying, "Never judge a book by its cover" appropriately addresses the issue regarding casual clothing in the workplace. Since work ethic is determined by one's performance rather than outward appearance, it is unreasonable to consider one's clothing as a factor in determining what makes a good employee.

Those who consider casual clothing as unprofessional claim that Casual Friday will gradually move to Casual Wednesday. However, companies should have firm guidelines that professional dress is reserved for Monday through Thursday, and Casual Friday is a privilege as long as it does not interfere with work. My last two jobs have followed this idea.

There are advantages to Casual Friday such as increased productivity. Absenteeism may decrease since employees will enjoy coming to work on Fridays in jeans and T-shirts instead of suits and ties. Also, casual attire on Fridays will boost morale among employees and lead to more confidence.

The advantages outweigh the negative consequences of casual attire in the workplace. A straightforward guideline regarding professional versus casual clothing will prevent employees of taking advantage of this benefit. Companies that have a Casual Friday policy will benefit from increased productivity, increased company morale, and decreased absenteeism. Therefore, employers should allow casual clothing in the workplace.

Score = 5

"You never get a second chance to make a good first impression." This statement couldn't be more true when it comes to the issue regarding casual dress codes in the corporate world. Rather than maintain professionalism in the workplace, up-and-coming corporations are settling for jeans and T-shirts in the name of creativity and morale.

Allowing employees to dress casually at work sends the wrong message to teenagers. Parents and teachers frequently discuss the importance of dressing appropriately and maintaining dress codes on campus, yet as an adult, you can wear jeans and a T-shirt to work. Teens with part-time jobs have to wear a uniform and look presentable at all times, but CEOs and VPs can dress casually for meetings. Why should I dress professionally for a job interview if expectations change once a job is secured? I've only had one job so far, and I felt uncomfortable because I dressed more professionally than everyone, including my boss.

Casual dress codes confuse teenagers about what is appropriate and professional in business and also boasts benefits that are not supported. People claim casual wear encourages individuality which leads to confidence, which doesn't compare to the confidence one would feel in a business suit. People also claim casual wear inspires rapport and morale, yet nothing does this better than a business suit.

Corporations need to rethink casual dress codes because of the adverse effect it has on employees. First, a casual dress code reduces employee confidence because jeans and a T-shirt, while comfortable, do not exude confidence. Second, company morale reduces because employees will adopt a laid-back attitude towards the company. If corporations expect to maintain a professional image to the general public, they need to display this from the onset because "you never get a second chance to make a good first impression."

Score = 6

From flappers in the 1920s to the hippie movement of the 1960s, every decade has featured a debate about what is and is not appropriate attire. Although we are in a new millennium, the concern over others' perceptions based on clothing has not changed. Thus is the issue over casual clothing in the workplace.

As fashion trends have changed, so have workplace dress codes. The "gray flannel suit" has a long history, with its origins in formal dress appropriate to wear in a king's court. Since those days, the business suit has undergone many changes for many reasons. For example, during World War II, wool was rationed, and men's suits became more simple. Lapels were smaller and pants were no longer cuffed, which saved fabric. Overall, suits were considered a sort of uniform for both male and female businesspeople.

Decades later another shift took place: "start-up enterprises began in dorm rooms, garages, and basements" (Dressing for Creativity article). Anything "traditional" was out, and the business world embraced informality out of the belief that it encouraged creativity and company morale. Professionalism remains even though CEOs and VPs wear jeans and T-shirts instead of suits and ties. This laid-back attire has removed the gilded-ness which existed in the corporate world where the "dog and pony show" indicated a company was successful. Casual attire in the workplace establishes focus ON business rather than "the look of the company." I know a lot of technology workers who have never worn a suit, and I consider all of them to be very professional.

Opponents of casual attire claim productivity suffers, attitudes become lax, and customer trust decreases. However, none of these inherently improve by requiring employees to wear professional attire. Productivity can suffer if executives make poor decisions which adversely affect output. Attitudes can become lax if employees are dissatisfied at work for reasons other than being unable to wear casual clothing. Customers can distrust a company due to poor manufacturing instead of speaking to someone in a suit and tie.

While professional attire and standard uniforms still have their place in the world of work, the shift to casual attire in the office is simply that – a shift attributed to a change in perspective which naturally occurs in society.

**NO TEST MATERIAL ON THIS PAGE**