



Georgia High School Writing Test (GHSWT)

Fall 2012 Writing Topic and
Annotated Sample Papers



Dr. John D. Barge, State School Superintendent
"Making Education Work for All Georgians"

Fall 2012 GHSWT – Main Administration Writing Topic

Persuasive Writing Topic 130

Writing Situation

Many school systems require students to read books for history, science, English, and math classes over the summer break to improve their reading and learning skills. Your school has a committee that is considering whether summer reading should be voluntary or required for students.

Directions for Writing

Write a letter to convince the committee that summer reading for high school students should be required or voluntary. Use specific details to support your position.

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Paper 1

To whom it may concern:

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Many school systems require students to read books for history, science, English, and math classes over the summer break to improve their reading and learning skills. Personally, I believe that reading over the summer should be required. Sometimes you have to force students to pick up a book. Books can do alot for people. Students sometimes need to read to get ready to go back to school.

One reason for them to read over the summer is it will keep them out the streets. When children get bored they find ways to occupy their time. Sometimes those things they choose are not good for them. The more children stay out the streets, the less trouble they are in. Reading a book or two a day may keep some of those kids off the streets.

Reading over the summer will help enhance students vocabulary. As a student, I do not think you I could know enough vocabulary. The more words students know, the smarter they would look around their peers. Also when students enhance their vocabulary they may not have some of those words on their tests. Enhancing vocabulary will not hurt anyone, and that is just one benefit students get when reading over the summer.

Spending time with your family is another benefit students get when reading. A lot of students now are not fortunate enough to spend time with their families. Some students stray away because of this. Reading may bring the families together. If the parents take time to read with their kids it may help them too. As you can see ~~read~~

As you can see ~~read~~ reading over the summer will benefit students in different ways. Reading may not just help the student but it may help

Paper 1 (page two)

the parents also. Not to mention if the kids do not read, they ^{may} forget what they ^{learned} before they got out of school. Students complain about reading without thinking of the benefits that come out of reading. Reading can not hurt anyone, it can only help.

Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 1

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (summer reading should be required) is sufficiently developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (keeps students out trouble, enhances their vocabulary, and helps them bond with family). The writer develops these supporting ideas with relevant examples and details (e.g., “The more children stay out the streets, the less trouble they are in” and “If the parents take time to read with their kids it may help them too”). More specific details would address more reader concerns (specific ways kids might get in trouble on the streets). There is sufficient information to provide a sense of completeness, however.

Organization Score: 3

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is appropriate to assigned topic and persuasive purpose. The introduction is clear. The writer groups related ideas about how summer reading would keep students out trouble, enhance their vocabulary, and help them bond with family. Ideas within paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas in the paper (e.g., “One reason,” “also,” and “As you can see”). The conclusion provides clear closure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “occupy their time,” “Enhancing vocabulary,” and “bring families together”), but there are lapses into simple language (e.g., “Sometimes those things they choose are not good for them”). The writer’s tone and voice are generally clear (e.g., “Sometimes you have to force students to pick up a book”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 4

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct. Usage is consistently correct, but some phrases are missing words (e.g., “keep them out the streets). The elements of mechanics are clear and correct. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the elements of Conventions. Errors are minor and do not interfere with meaning.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 2

Dear High School Committee,

We have approximately arranged for a meeting to occur for reading during the summer time for the high school students. We have require these students read books for history, science, English, and math classes over the summer break to improve their reading skills, and learning skills.

We know that you were wondering whether summer reading should be required or voluntary. Our best interest for the fellow students in county is for them to read during summer break. So yes we think that it should be required.

Reading should be taken into consideration, because knowing what you have read or learned during summer time could benefit you into the near future. We should also have the parents involved in this info. as well. So parents could make sure that their child would be ready for the next year and wouldn't be too confusing while returning back. Parents should also encourage their child to improve their reading skills. Just to help them to become a better reader.

Knowing what the future lies ahead of the students we have to make sure that their learning skills are being advanced, and easier to learn. Knowing how some of them like to be late to class, and not stepping on task. We have to make sure that their learning skills are being onto the right level that they are needed to be on, and good enough for them to understand.

Many **School** systems require students to read

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Paper 2 (page two)

over the summer break. Only for their best interest at heart. That's why we need to start programs that involve those things over the summer. Like opening up a "Book club", or going on trips that involves using your learning skills and ext. So those are the reasons why we should have those students to read, read, read!

Annotations for Paper 2

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (summer reading should be required) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (would prepare students for the next school year and would improve learning skills). These supporting ideas are developed only partially, with general details like “parents could make sure that their child would be ready for the next year”). Overall, there is not enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. There is a clear introduction, but there is minimal evidence of grouping and sequencing in the body of the paper. Instead, the writer often arranges ideas in a less purposeful way. For example, in the third paragraph, the writer begins by noting that students need to learn important skills, followed by the idea that many students are late to class, followed by the idea that students need to be taught “the right level.” There are few transitions in the paper (e.g., “Thats why”). The concluding statement simply reiterates that students should read.

Style Score: 2

Although a caring tone is apparent, the writer has difficulty, at times, controlling language (e.g., “So parents could make sure that their child would be ready for the next year and wouldn’t be to confusing while returning back” and “Knowing what the future lies ahead of the students we have to make sure that their learning skills are being advanced, and easier to learn”). This imprecision limits the writer’s ability to engage the audience.

Conventions Score: 2

There are some correct sentences in the response, but there are also several incorrect attempts, including fragments (e.g., “Just to help them to become a better reader”). Control of usage is mixed: some attempts are correct, but there are also incorrect word forms (e.g., “we have *require*” and “wouldn’t be *to* confusing”), as well as erratic constructions (e.g., “make sure that their learning skills are being onto the right level that they are needed to be on”). The elements of mechanics are generally correct, but issues with sentence formation and usage keep this paper in the 2-range.

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 3

A school system is something all students rely on for a great education. However, not all schools provide enough knowledge, especially during summer break. During the summer, students are more likely to forget what they had been taught. It is at these times, that a school must reinforce a student's knowledge in whatever way. One way this could be done is through summer reading. This reading should not be voluntary, but required by even the incoming ninth graders. Reading helps build vocabulary, develop literary and writing skills, and gives something to do during spare times.

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Everyone, including adults, often stumble upon a word during their reading that prevents the reader from continuing. The reader looks through a ~~text~~ dictionary, finds the definition, and continues reading. This would be the same for students. I believe that a student will remember the word more clearly in this situation than having a student finish a vocabulary worksheet.

Moreover, reading books can help in developing literary skills such as similes and metaphors, symbols, and foreshadowing. It also helps improve writing skills that will prove useful in future years. Different authors use varying writing styles. Therefore, if a student reads many books, he would have been exposed to various writing techniques. An English professor once told me, "The best writers are thieves. They steal writing styles from others and use it as their own." I have followed his advice and saw a great improvement in my writing. In the

Paper 3 (page two)

some way, a student can improve in their writing by reading many different books.

In addition, books offer entertainment when nothing else does. It is a perfect way to pass time in cars or planes while on a family vacation. By reading, a person's imagination can take them anywhere. It can take a reader through the rabbit hole or even into the front lines of war. However, if a student is given an optional assignment, it is very likely that the task will never be touched. On the other hand, if the assignment is required, the student will fall into the wonderful world of books. I believe that everyone is capable of enjoying books.

By having a required reading assignment, students will receive a small nudge into a world revolved around imagination. Unconsciously, a student can gain knowledge of literary and writing skills that only a book can offer. To summarize, reading books for whatever subject is a great way to reinforce what was taught that year. In this way, the knowledge that was gained will not completely dissipate during the summer.

Annotations for Paper 3

Ideas Score: 5

The controlling idea (summer reading should be required) is fully developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (helps improve vocabulary, can make students better writers, and provides entertainment). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific examples, details and elaboration (e.g., “The reader looks through a dictionary, finds the definition, and continues reading. I believe that a student will remember the word more clearly in this situation than having a student finish a vocabulary worksheet”). Rhetorical devices, such as personal anecdote, are used to support assertions. Overall, the information in the response addresses a variety of reader concerns and expectations.

Organization Score: 5

The writer demonstrates full command of the components of Organization. The introduction clearly sets the stage for the development that follows (students could always be learning more → mandatory summer reading could do the trick). The writer groups related ideas about how summer reading helps improve vocabulary, can make students better writers, and provides entertainment. Ideas within paragraphs build logically on one another, and a variety of transitional elements link all parts of the paper (e.g., “One way this could be done,” “Moreover, reading books can help,” and “However, if a student”). The conclusion provides an additional rationale for mandatory summer reading without repeating previously discussed ideas.

Style Score: 5

Word choice, phrases, and sentences are carefully crafted to engage the reader (“helps improve writing skills that will prove useful in future years,” “It can take a reader through the rabbit hole or even into the front lines of war,” and “In this way, the knowledge that was gained will not completely dissipate during the summer”). This effective control of language creates a strong, sustained voice and knowledgeable tone. Overall, the writer demonstrates a full command of the component of Style.

Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates a full command of the elements of Conventions. A variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences are clear and correct, with appropriate end punctuation. All elements of usage and mechanics are consistently correct.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 4

To whome it may concern,
I am writing this letter to
convince the committee that
summer reading for high
school students should not be
required. The students of a
high school are old enough
to start making some of their
own decisions. Reading can be fun
to some students, but not to all.
Some of the teens in school today
may not have the time to read
because they are busy, or have
work or activities after school.

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Voluntary reading would be
better, because when your a teen-
ager in school, you may want to
hang out with your friends or go
to the movies. Growing up they need
their space. On the other hand, for
the students who do volunteer to read,
it may help pass time, or improve their
learning skills. For the ones who want
to go to college, reading books can
help with what you want to major in.

Paper 4 (page two)

I think it should be the students own choice whether they read or not over the ^{lower cases} summer; however, they should not be reading about sex, drugs, violence, or etc. until ^{stuffs} their atleast eighteen years of age. Sometimes reading bad things can actually lead to doing bad things.

The summer is the students time off and away from school and books, so whatever they decide to do is their own choice. I personally believe that whether a student reads over the summer should be based on their life at home or their opinion on how they want to spend their summer. Reading should be voluntary. I appreciate your time to read my letter.

Thanks,

Annotations for Paper 4

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (students should decide whether they do summer reading) is sufficiently developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (different students have different things going on during summer; if students do read during summer, the reading material should be appropriate). The writer develops these supporting ideas with relevant examples and details (e.g., “When your a teenager in school, you may want to hang out with your friends or go to the movies” and “Sometimes reading bad things can actually lead to doing bad things”). There is not much specific development in the response, but there is sufficient information to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is appropriate to assigned topic and persuasive purpose. The introduction is clear. The writer groups related ideas about how different students have different things going on during summer and that if students do read during summer, the reading material should be appropriate. Ideas within paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas in the paper (e.g., “On the other hand,” “For the ones who want to go to college,” and “however, they should not”). Although there is some repetition in the conclusion, it provides clear closure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “start making some of their own decisions” and “they need their space”). There are also some lapses into simple language (e.g., “Sometimes reading bad things can actually lead to doing bad things”). The writer’s tone and voice are generally clear (e.g., “I think it should be the students own choice”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct. There are more usage errors than sentence errors (e.g., “your a teenager” and “until their at least eighteen”). The elements of mechanics are generally correct, but there is some missing internal punctuation (e.g., “the students time off”). If the elements of usage and mechanics were as consistently correct as the sentences, this response would have likely received a higher score in Conventions. The paper is an example of a high 3.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 5

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Dear committee,

My name is _____ I am a _____
sophomore at _____ High School. I have recieved
news that the committee is trying to decide on whether
summer reading should be required or voluntary for students at _____

Well, I am writing you this letter to help you in your
decision. I believe that summer reading for students at _____
should be voluntary.

I believe this because some students might not be at a level
where they feel that reading over "their break" will help them. I know
that it is meant to help out students and to improve their skills, but
I am sure that students would not like the idea of reading school
books over the summer. They are just tired of school and want some
relaxation time for themselves. Why take away the only chance they
have at doing what they want without having to worry about school?

Students have been in school for 10 months. Don't you think we
deserve a break from all of the work we did? We are just asking
for 2 months to ourselves. If you "take" those two months away from
us, how do you think students will react? First, you will have a lot
of angry kids. Second, if you require that students read school
books over the summer, most of them will not do it. Why? They
will feel like, "Why do school work if the school took away our
free time?"

Also, some kids might be going out on vacation. How would

Paper 5 (page two)

you feel if your school required that you read and do school work during your Hawaii vacation? Plus, if you give students books over the summer and they are enjoying their break a little too much, there is a possibility that the books are liable to get lost. That just causes more problems for the student and the school. More problems causes more drama that is not needed.

So again, students should not be required to read school books over their summer break. I am not saying this because of the fact that I am a student. I am saying this because I believe that I am a voice for the student body and I am saying what they believe and feel. I am sure that most of the students share my thoughts with me. I hope that my letter has influenced your decision choice.

Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 5

Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (summer reading should be voluntary) is well developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (students need a break from school, students will be resentful if summer reading is mandatory, and some students have family vacations). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific examples, details, and elaboration (e.g., “How would you feel if your school required that you read and do school work during your Hawaii vacation,” and “Why take away the only chance they have at doing what they want without having to worry about school”). Greater reliance on rhetorical devices, such as anecdote and emotional appeals, would enhance the persuasiveness. Overall, though, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Ideas.

Organization Score: 4

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is appropriate to assigned topic and persuasive purpose. The introduction is clear, though not especially engaging; it is the weakest part of the overall plan. The writer groups related ideas about how students need a break from school, students will be resentful if summer reading is mandatory, and some students have family vacations. Ideas within paragraphs build logically on one another (e.g., “Students have been in school for 10 months. → Don’t you think we deserve a break from all the work we did? → We are just asking for 2 months to ourselves”). Varied transitional elements link ideas throughout the response (e.g., “I believe this because,” “Second, if you require,” and “that just causes more problems”). The conclusion provides effective closure that is free of repetition. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 4

The language and tone are appropriate to the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. Word choice is consistently engaging (e.g., “I know that it is meant to help students and to improve their skills, but I am sure that students would not like the idea of reading school books over the summer”). This effective control of language creates a clear, sustained voice. Audience awareness is consistently effective (e.g., “how do you think students will react,” “How would you feel,” and “More problems causes more drama that is not needed”). Sentences vary in length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 5

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct. All elements of usage and mechanics are clear and correct. Errors are infrequent and do not interfere with meaning. The writer controls the elements of Conventions in well over 90% of the response, in varied contexts.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 6

This letter goes out to the committee or the school board. I think I heard someone talking about a summer reading program? I understand you think summer reading should be required for the students but I have to disagree. I believe summer reading should be voluntary. Some kids have a job or just do not have the time to stay home and read a book. Kids need a break from school sometime. It should be up to the student. It is their summer after all. I think if students are forced to study all summer long, there will be a higher drop out rate. Learning should be a fun thing that kids would want to do. Not have to do. As long as kids are forced to learn, they are not going to enjoy it.

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Annotations for Paper 6

Ideas Score: 2

The writer takes a position (summer reading should be voluntary) and includes some relevant supporting ideas (some students have summer jobs, students need a break from school, the dropout rate will increase, and forced learning is not fun). Some of these supporting ideas are merely listed but others are partially developed (e.g., “Learning should be a fun thing that kids would want to do. Not have to do. As long as kids are forced to learn; they are not going to enjoy it”). There is not enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness. This paper is an example of a low 2 in Ideas.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. There is a brief, clear introduction, where the writer makes his/her position known. There are not many ideas to group together in the body of the response, but there is some evidence of sequencing and transitions (e.g., “It should be up to the student → It is *their* summer *after all*”). It is not clear whether the final sentence is a conclusion.

Style Score: 2

There is some effective word choice and sentence variety in this response. There is also some evidence of a clear tone and voice (e.g., “Learning should be a fun thing that kids would want to do. Not have to do”). Competence in Style, however, is limited by the brevity of the response.

Conventions Score: 2

There are not many errors in sentence formation, usage, or mechanics, but competence in Conventions is limited by the brevity of the response.

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 7

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I think they require to summer reading because it will help people that has problem with reading, to sound out big words so that students that want to can come read over the summer to practice to over the time we have over the summer we have nothing to do. But it always never nothing do over the summer so we should go head and go to the summer reading and learn something when we are out of school with the family and friends, you can even get somebody in your family to come for the reading if the don't have to work or just don't have nothing to just tell them to come out and volunteer with others for the reading. Because the more people the better it will help the student that don't want to come there parents will make them come and read with there classmates because that is where they want to be is with there friend over the summer, so they can have something to talk about when they get back in school they might get picked on about going to the summer reading, but they can say they did something with there summer and not just go swimming every day and eat, play game all summer with there friends that is why I think should required the us go to the summer reading for her on good.

Annotations for Paper 7

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (there should be a summer reading program) is an acceptable response variation. Supporting ideas are relevant (students do not have much to do over the summer, family members could help out, and students would have something to talk about). The writer includes few details, however, to develop these supporting ideas (e.g., “Because the more people the better”). The writer does address the concern that some students might get picked on for participating (“they can say they did something with there summer and not Just go swimmin every day...”), but there is not enough information in this response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. There is a brief introduction and some evidence of grouping (e.g., family members could help out), but there are not many ideas in the response to group together. Evidence of sequencing is minimal (e.g., “Just tell them to come out and volunteer with others for the reading → Because the more people the better...”). Transitions are limited mostly to pronoun substitution (e.g., “they” for “students”). There is a brief conclusion.

Style Score: 1

The writer does not control language to engage the reader. Word choice, phrases, and sentences are imprecise (e.g., “I think they require to summer reading because it will help people that has problem with reading, to sound out big words so that students that want to can come over the summer to commite to over the time we have over the summer we have nothing to do”). There is limited evidence of tone, voice, and audience awareness.

Conventions Score: 1

The response contains frequent, severe errors in all elements of Conventions. Errors do not interfere with meaning, but there is a preponderance of run-ons, word form errors, and erratic mechanics.

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 8

Dear Committee members,

Summer reading has always been a debate between teachers and those who are taught. Teachers would agree that it continues education throughout the year, yet students would contradict with the argument that it consumes their break. I side with the teachers. At least one summer reading assignment is needed for students over summer break. With this in progress, students are able to further their education and develop abilities they thought they did not have. They create skills that will not only guide them through school but life.

When I was only three or four years old, I learned how to read. It was simple, yet had I not mastered it I would not be where I am today. My hunger was insatiable with my new reading skills. This allowed me to learn new vocabulary and ideas that helped me stay ahead in my grade. At eight years old, I was probably one of the most precocious children anyone in town knew. I am fact enough that reading helps further a child's education. By building their vocabulary, the children are able to succeed and have a great range of words at their disposal. During the summer, children need to read, or at least remember, what they were taught during the year. By assigning summer reading based on each class, this is achieved. They are able to stay ahead in schools and

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Paper 8 (page two)

be completely prepared. Finally, Summer reading gives students something to do during the summer months. Although they will disagree, they really enjoy reading. It gives students a break from hanging out around the pool or going to see a movie with friends. They love being able to grab a book, find a quiet, cozy corner, and unwind. It takes them to their own worlds.

Reading is a needed skill within a school's curriculum, but reading is undeniably needed even more during the summer. It allows children to continue and build their education. But more than anything, reading is the basis of creativity. Teachers are constantly pushing students to "do their own thing" or be independent. Reading is the key. It unlocks the door for children and sends them into worlds of the past, present, and future. If you chose to make summer reading voluntary, you are not helping, but you are hindering students. You are not allowing them to grow to their full potentials. I pray and hope that the committee will make the right choice. The choice to make summer reading required. Thank you.

A concerned student,

Annotations for Paper 8

Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (summer reading should be required) is well developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (reading helps students learn, and it gives students something to do over the summer). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific examples, details and elaboration (e.g., “By building their vocabulary, the children are able to succeed and have a great range of words at their disposal,” and “They love being able to grab a book, find a quiet, cozy corner, and unwind”). Rhetorical devices, such as personal anecdote, are used to support assertions (“When I was only three or four years old...”). The second supporting idea (gives students something to do) is not as fully elaborated as the first, but the writer is consistently focused on the persuasive topic and purpose.

Organization Score: 4

The writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Organization. The introduction clearly sets the stage for the development that follows. The writer groups related ideas about how reading helps students learn and gives students something to do over the summer. Ideas within paragraphs build logically on one another, and a variety of transitional elements link ideas (e.g., “At eight years old, I was probably one of the most precocious children anyone in the town knew. → I am fact enough that reading helps further a child's education”). There are places where a transition would more effectively link ideas (e.g., in paragraph two, where the writer moves from a discussion on vocabulary to a discussion on recall, without a transition). The conclusion provides an additional rationale for mandatory summer reading without repeating previously discussed ideas.

Style Score: 5

Word choice, phrases, and sentences are carefully crafted to engage the reader (“My hunger was insatiable,” “a great range of words at their disposal,” and “It unlocks the door for children and sends them into worlds of the past, present, and future”). This effective control of language creates a strong, sustained voice and knowledgeable tone. Overall, the writer demonstrates a full command of the component of Style.

Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates a full command of the elements of Conventions. A variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences are clear and correct, with appropriate end punctuation. All elements of usage and mechanics are consistently correct.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 9

To whom it may concern:

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I believe that summer reading should be voluntary for the students. Students don't like summer reading and half the time don't participate in reading the novels assigned to them. This defeats the purpose of why summer reading is given in the first place. Even if a student reads his/her novel(s), they don't want to read them, and therefore do not improve their reading skills.

However, if you decide that you must keep summer reading around, there are a few modifications that could make it more enjoyable for the students. Administrators can assign less to read and also give their students some kind of option on what they may read. Also, do not attach extra assignments to the reading.

By giving a student an option on a novel to read, they're more apt to be interested in what they are reading. If they're interested, students will enjoy what they're reading and possibly take on a general interest in reading. Then they would begin to read on their own and their skills would improve; which is the original goal of summer reading.

Secondly, if you do not give extra assignments to the reading novels, students will be apt to do and enjoy the reading. Not stress out about an assignment that they have to complete before they go back to school. If

Paper 9 (page two)

makes it seem like a chore, and students tend to put off chores.

In conclusion, abolishing summer reading or changing it for the better will benefit everyone as a whole. Thank you for your time and attention.

Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 9

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (summer reading should not be mandatory, unless some modifications are made) is sufficiently developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (if students do not enjoy summer reading, they will not derive benefits from it; effective modifications would include assigning less reading, giving students options on what they can read, and not including additional assignments on top of the readings). The writer develops these supporting ideas with relevant examples and details (e.g., “If they’re interested [in what they are reading], students will enjoy what they’re reading and possibly take on a general interest in reading”). More specific development would address more reader concerns (e.g., what kinds of literature would students like to read?). There is sufficient information to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is appropriate to assigned topic and persuasive purpose. The introduction is clear. The writer groups related ideas about assigning less reading, giving students options on what they can read, and not including additional assignments on top of the readings. Ideas within paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas in the paper (e.g., “However, if you decide,” “Secondly,” and “Then, they would begin”). The conclusion is brief, but it provides some closure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization. This paper is an example of a high 3 in Organization.

Style Score: 4

Word choice is consistently engaging (e.g., “This defeats the purpose,” “there are a few modifications that would make it more enjoyable,” and “they are more apt to be interested in what they are reading”). This effective word choice creates a sincere tone and a clear voice. Sentences vary in length and structure. There is evidence of audience awareness in the introduction, body, and conclusion (e.g., “However, if you decide that you must keep summer reading...”). This response is an example of a low 4 in Style due to its relative brevity.

Conventions Score: 4

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct. There is a fragment in the fourth paragraph that could be considered functional (“Not stress out about an assignment that they have to complete before they go back to school”). Usage is consistently correct. The elements of mechanics are clear and correct. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 10

To whom it may concern:

It has come to my attention that a committee will be meeting in regards to making summer reading required. I think this is a terrible idea. While many students are avid readers and would have no problems with the program,

Others dislike reading and may be inclined to dislike it even more if it is forced on them.

These students, in the long run, would not benefit from a program like this. Many of them could be turned off to reading for the rest of their lives. This is why the program should be encouraged, but not required. If students are given a list of books they are encouraged, not required, to read they may take it upon themselves to read some of the books. If the books are forced on students they probably won't enjoy them or get anything from them.

These students, and myself, may just seem like lazy kids who are looking for a summer free of school work. This is not true. I am, myself, an avid reader and I will do plenty of reading over the summer. I only ask, for myself and my classmates, to be given the freedom to choose the books I want to read.

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Annotations for Paper 10

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (summer reading should be voluntary) is minimally developed. The lone supporting idea in the response is relevant (making summer reading mandatory would not benefit students). This supporting idea is developed only partially, with details like “If the books are forced on students they probably won’t enjoy them or get anything from them.” Overall, there is not enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The overall plan (introduction / supporting paragraph / conclusion) is clear and appropriate. The introduction sets the stage for the development that follows. The writer groups related ideas about how summer reading mandates do not benefit students. Ideas follow a logical sequence throughout the response (e.g., “Many of them could be turned off to reading for the rest of their lives → This is why the program should be encouraged, but not required”). A variety of transitions link ideas (e.g., “While many students are . . . others,” “in the long run,” and pronoun substitution like “their” for “students”). The conclusion provides clear closure. This paper is relatively short, but the writer demonstrates sufficient control, overall. It is rare for a paper of this length to receive a 3, unless this degree of control is present.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “forced on them,” “should be encouraged, but not required,” and “a summer free of school work”). The tone and the writer’s voice are particularly strong (e.g., “I think this is a terrible idea”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

There are very few errors in sentence formation, usage, and mechanics, and the writer successfully attempts some advanced elements, such as coordination and subordination. The only reason this paper does not receive a higher score is that it is relatively brief.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 11

To whom it may concern,

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Students should definitely have to study and read over the summer.

Whether it is pleasure books or study books. Students should have to read for three reasons, if they do not read they may lose what they have learned; their grades could possibly be better than if they had not; the students parents would be more happy.

If the students do not study for their classes, they would probably forget everything that was taught to them. By studying, the students would be able to keep up better in their classes. They would not be left behind as much. Also by studying, the information would be fresh in their minds, when they go back to school in the fall.

The students grades would be higher, as well. Since they would have all of the information fresh in their minds, they would be more prepared. Going back to school would not be such a slow process anymore. Most of the teachers could just pick up from where they left off, last year. Plus the students would have more useful information taught

Paper 11 (page two)

to them. There would be more time, later on in the year, to do other stuff. Possibly more fun stuff. Most of all, by having it required, students lagging behind might get a chance to catch up with their fellow class mates.

The student's parents would be ~~not~~ more happy. For one, the students would be doing something more productive in the two months they have off. Besides their kids might be able to achieve more. Also the students would have something to do. A lot of kids, about a week or two, into ~~the~~ ~~spring~~ summer break, get bored. They want to go back to school, just so they will have something to do.

I think that by having it ~~required~~ required the students could accomplish great things. They would not lose the information learned while school was still on. They would be more prepared for the up coming year. The parents of the students would be ~~the~~ more happy, and the students might be, as well. Having ~~the~~ studying required is probably the best ~~thing~~ ^{thing} one could do to improve a school, and their students.

Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 11

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (summer reading should be mandatory) is sufficiently developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (reinforces learning; better grades; happier parents). The writer develops these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “They would not be left behind as much,” “Since they would have all of these information fresh in their minds, they would be more prepared,” and the parents would be happier because their kids “would have something to do”). The response does not contain much specific development, leaving some reader concerns unaddressed (e.g., what kind of “useful information” would students pick up through summer reading?). Overall, though, the response contains sufficient information to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization. The introduction is clear, though not especially engaging. The writer groups related ideas about how summer reading reinforces learning, improves grades, and makes parents happy. Ideas within body paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., “Also by studying,” “Most of all,” and pronoun substitution like “they” for “students”). The conclusion is clear, but it is somewhat repetitive.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “the information would be fresh in their minds,” “would not be such a slow process anymore,” and “a chance to catch up with their fellow classmates.”). There are, however, lapses into simple, ordinary word choice (e.g., “There would be more time, later on in the year, to do other stuff”). The writer’s voice is generally clear, and the sincere tone is appropriate to the persuasive topic and purpose. There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are generally correct, though there are quite a few fragments (e.g., “Whether it is pleasure books or study books”). The elements of usage and mechanics are generally correct, though there is not much variety demonstrated. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 12

Dear School Committee,

I think that our School would benefit from requiring students to join reading programs over the summer because it also benefits the students. Students would benefit from this because they would be able to refresh their memory while school was out. This is very important because sometimes students seem to forget what they have learned after they get out of school. I also think that the school would see a significant increase in grades.

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Not only does it help the students remember what they have learned but it also gives something for them to do over the summer. I think that you would see less students get into trouble if we had a summer reading program at our school too.

I have been in one of these programs and my reading level is now equivalent to that of someone in college. It also improved all the grades of the people in that program. It provided a safe haven for students of all ages and an excellent place to further our knowledge. It also set the bar high for students, made them want to achieve more, and made learning fun.

As I said earlier not only would the

Paper 12 (page two)

Students benefit but so would the school system. With students having fun, not getting into trouble, and getting better grades the school system can only go up! When a school gets good grades it doesn't go unnoticed. Parents will see the progress our school has made and want to send their children here.

With students performing well and more students wanting to come here because of our excellent summer reading program our school will grow. The growth of a school means better facilities and better facilities mean more ways to better educate students.

That is why I think that our school should require students to read over the summer and set up a reading program. When we can get our students to actually want to learn, a school is not just a school, it is a learning facility.

Thank you,

Annotations for Paper 12

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (summer reading should be mandatory) is sufficiently developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (improves student achievement, improves the school's performance, leads to growth). The writer develops these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., the personal anecdote of attending a summer reading program and developing college-level reading skills). These examples and details are not well elaborated (e.g., how did the summer reading program that the writer attended "set the bar high for students"?). Overall, though, there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 4

The overall plan (better individual student achievement leads to better school-wide achievement, which leads to notoriety for the school) is logical and appropriate to the persuasive topic and purpose. The introduction is clear but not especially engaging. The writer groups related ideas about how summer reading gives students something to do, increases student achievement, improves the school's reputation, and leads to the school's growth. Sequencing of body paragraphs—and ideas within them—is logical. A variety of transitional elements link all parts of the paper. Some are effective (e.g., "Not only ... but also"), others less so (e.g., "As I said earlier"). The first part of the conclusion simply reiterates the position, but the final sentence provides effective closure.

Style Score: 4

Word choice is consistently effective (e.g., "the school would see a significant increase in grades," "provided a safe haven for students of all ages," and "better facilities mean more ways to better educate students"). This effective word choice contributes to a clear voice and an enthusiastic tone. Sentences vary in length and structure. Audience awareness is clear throughout the response (e.g., "When we can get our students to actually want to learn, a school is not just a school; it is a learning facility"). Lapses into simple, ordinary word choice are infrequent (e.g., "I think that you would see less students get into trouble if we had a summer reading program at our school too"). Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 4

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct. The elements of usage and mechanics are consistently correct. Some elements of mechanics are not present (e.g., there are several missing commas after introductory clauses). Overall, though, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 13

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Dear, committee

I think that if every child in ~~the~~ our school today all know how to read. So if we just start reading more and practicing we will improve in your everyday reading. A lot of school systems is requiring students to start reading more to help them on there talking and listening skills. In the summer when I was waking up every morning. I'll say to my self that I need to read today then time go bye and I just start eating breakfast or playing the game. Then I will forget about reading. So this is a good thing that the systems is trying to do. Because personally reading is boring to me. I never read I really just scan through it. My mom said if the kids that don't read any in school or at home. There not going to read in the summer because its their free time out to have fun. We read in newspapers, on tv, in magazines, and in store on labels of things, we want to buy. Reading is like learning abc's you keep practicing and practicing in to you start to love reading. Or just

Paper 13 (page two)

sound out words you don't know or look
in the dictionary. You can get little spelling
the word taps for the elementary students.

Annotations for Paper 13

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (summer reading should be mandatory) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (kids won't read during the summer unless it is required, and reading helps in everyday life). Development for these supporting ideas is limited (e.g., the brief anecdote of how the writer could not motivate himself/herself to read over the summer, leading to the conclusion "so this is a good thing that the systems is trying to do"). Overall, there is not enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. The introduction is brief but clear. There is limited evidence of grouping and sequencing (e.g., the brief anecdote of how the writer could not motivate himself/herself to read over the summer). Few transitions link ideas (e.g., "Then I will" and "So this is"). The last few sentences are too unclear to be considered a meaningful conclusion.

Style Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Style. Word choice is simple and ordinary (e.g., "A lot of school systems," "this is a good thing," and "reading is boring to me"). The tone is inconsistent: at times, it is appropriate for persuasive writing; toward the end of the response, the paper reads more like a report. There is little variation in sentence length and structure. There is very little evidence of audience awareness.

Conventions Score: 1

The response contains frequent, severe errors in sentence formation, usage, and mechanics. Some errors interfere with meaning (e.g., the final two attempts at sentences).

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 14

My outlook on making the students read Books over the summer is no, it isn't such a good idea to make the kids read school books over the course of the summer. The teachers have one hundred and eighty days or fifty minutes each day to teach us what we need to know. How would you keep track if a student read his books over the summer or not. It would be pretty much impossible, all the kid would have to do is tell his teachers that he read his books over the summer & you have no choice but to believe him/her. Yea you could give the students a log so they can mark the book, pages, and subject that they read, But again they can just write down some false information. Kids should not have the hassle of keeping up with homework during the summer. Kids have a lot of pre-planned activities during the summer such as Baseball practice, Baseball games, Swimming lessons, vacation, and spend time with relatives. Kids are usually so worn out by the end of the day all they want to do is go to sleep the last thing on their mind is reading some school book. If the student needs extra help the help should be appointed by the parents. They should be able to see if ~~if~~ their child is falling behind or not, And if so they can take their time to study or read with their kid not the school. It's the school's responsibility during the one hundred and eighty days that we are in school.

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Paper 14 (page two)

to teach us. I hope my story has persuaded you
to take my side of the argument.

Annotations for Paper 14

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (summer reading should not be mandatory) is clear and developed with relevant supporting ideas (it would be easy for students to “game the system,” students have many other summer activities, and parents can always provide extra reading help over the summer if their son/daughter needs it). The writer develops these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “all the kid would have to do is tell his teachers that he read his books over the summer + you have no choice but to believe him/her,” and “Kids have a lot of preplanned activities during the summer such as Baseball practice, Baseball games, swimming lessons, vacation, and spend time with relatives”). Elaboration is not extensive, but there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization. The introduction is clear. The writer groups related ideas about how students could “game the system,” how they have many other summer activities, and how parents can provide extra reading help, if need be). Ideas within body paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., “But again,” “And if so,” and pronoun substitution like “they” for “students.” The conclusion is clear, but it is somewhat repetitive.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “pretty much impossible,” “write down some false information,” and “the help should be appointed by the parents”). There are some lapses into simple, ordinary language (e.g., “such a good idea” and “Kids have a lot of ... activities”). The writer’s voice is clear and the cynical tone is appropriate to the assigned topic and purpose (“Yea you could give the students a log so they can mark the book, pages, and subject that they read, But again they can just write down some false information”). Audience awareness is evident in most parts of the paper (“How would you keep track...?”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 2

Control of the elements of Conventions is mixed. There are correct sentences but also run-ons (e.g., “It would be pretty much impossible, all the kid would have to do is tell his teachers that he read his books over the summer...”). Some elements of usage are correct, but there are word form errors as well (e.g., “I hope my story has persuade you”). Some elements of mechanics are correct, but capitalization is erratic, there are no paragraph breaks, and there is missing internal punctuation (e.g., it isnt such a good idea).

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 15

To the Board of Education,

Most counties in Georgia today require that their students read a selection of books over the summer. This program is known as Summer Reading, and it serves to improve the literacy of children and adolescents. Books are selected by the school and vary in number and style by grade. Lately, Mathematics, History, and Science have been brought into the program to increase knowledge and understanding as well. Usually, a project or assignment is given to complete along with the literature to check for competence. This issue of summer reading is very controversial to students and parents alike.

I truly believe that summer reading is an excellent idea. In my personal experience, it has expanded my imagination and provided a most entertaining pasttime. I generally enjoy the selections assigned and am grateful for having been exposed to the culture and adventure.

In a world controlled by television, movies, and the Internet, many people have very poor literacy; this is a huge problem. Reading used to be a primary source of fun, laughter, and excitement, but not anymore.

Now it's all about videogames and DVDs. Summer reading changes that, though; it helps to get books back into people's hands and hearts.

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Paper 15 (page two)

As for the requirements, it is necessary that they be altered. Only two or three books need be assigned, and the topics should be interesting. All of the classics formerly loved and cherished could be considered. After all, they have endured hundreds of years for a reason. Projects are a good way to earn extra credit, if the teacher wishes; only selection tests should check for competency.

With all of this being said, summer reading should still play a role in the vacations of students. Literature must not be forgotten; we have to fight to keep it.

Please consider this letter and its contents for our future's sake. Thank you for your time and cooperation.

Annotations for Paper 15

Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (summer reading should be required) is well developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (I have benefitted from reading, students need to improve their literacy skills, and logistics about the program). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific examples, details and elaboration (e.g., “Reading used to be a primary source of fun, laughter, and excitement, but not anymore. Now it’s all about videogames and DVDs,” and “Projects are a good way to earn extra credit, if the teacher wishes; only selection tests should check for competency”). The first supporting idea (how I benefitted from reading) is not well elaborated (what selections were assigned, and what was the “culture and adventure” inherent in them?). Overall, though, the response is consistently focused on the persuasive topic and purpose.

Organization Score: 4

The writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Organization. In the introduction, the writer describes a summer reading program but only briefly introduces the controversy surrounding it. It is not ineffective to open with a description of the program, but the writer could have highlighted the controversy more clearly. In the body of the essay, the writer groups related ideas about how he/she benefitted from reading, how students need to improve their literacy skills, and how the logistics of summer reading would work. Sequencing is effective; ideas within paragraphs build logically on one another (e.g., “All of the classics formerly loved and cherished could be considered. → After all, they have endured hundreds of years for a reason”). A variety of transitions link all parts of the response (e.g., “Reading used to be ... now it’s all about,” “As for the requirements,” and “After all”). The conclusion is brief but offers an effective call to action (“Literature must not be forgotten; we have to fight to keep it”).

Style Score: 5

Word choice, phrases, and sentences are carefully crafted to engage the reader (“I generally enjoy the selections assigned and am grateful for having been exposed to the culture and adventure,” and “Summer reading changes that, though; it helps to get books back into people’s hands and hearts”). This effective control of language creates a strong, sustained voice and knowledgeable tone. Overall, the writer demonstrates a full command of the component of Style.

Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates a full command of the elements of Conventions. A variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences are clear and correct, with appropriate end punctuation. All elements of usage and mechanics are consistently correct.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 16

Dear High School Committee,

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Some schools or classes require students to read a book pertaining to the class over the summer. Many say it should be voluntary. But again many say it should be required. There are a lot of people with different beliefs. I am one that believes summer reading should be voluntary. I strongly believe this because, a lot of the students participate in extra curricular activities. Which most of them have summer practices. Or even students committing to summer school. They may have a full day of classes and a sport practice.

It would be a lot more helpful to make summer reading voluntary versus being a requirement. For many people, the summer time is a time to hang out with friends and family, vacation, or just to relax. So, most students will usually be out enjoying themselves with their own people of choice. Do you think they're going to want to stop and read while everyone is out having fun? I didn't think so!

There is an exception. Many students love to read and have no problem with the idea of summer reading. If they do so, they should be given a certain amount of points for their work. I think that

Paper 16 (page two)

the best idea to go with.

I think that I've put up a good argument about this subject and look forward to the reply.

~~Thank You For Your Time,~~

Thank You For Your Time,

Annotations for Paper 16

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (summer reading should be voluntary) is minimally developed. The supporting ideas are relevant (students have many other summer activities, and students always have the option of doing it voluntarily). These supporting ideas are developed only partially, with details like “For many people, the summer time is a time to hang out with friends and family, vacation, or just to relax.” The response has effective focus, but there is not enough information in it to provide a sense of completeness. This paper is an example of a high 2 in Ideas.

Organization Score: 3

The overall plan (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is clear and appropriate. The introduction is clear and sets the stage for the development that follows. The writer groups related ideas about how students have many other summer activities, and students always have the option of doing it voluntarily. Ideas follow a generally clear sequence throughout the response, and some transitions link ideas (e.g., “Do you think they’re going to want to stop and read while everyone is having fun,” and “There is an exception”). The conclusion is brief, but it provides some closure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “committing to summer school” and “participate in extra-curricular activities”). There are some lapses into simple, ordinary language (e.g., “It would be a lot more helpful” and “a certain amount of points for their work”). The tone and the writer’s voice are particularly strong (e.g., “Do you think they’re going to want to stop and read while everyone is out having fun? I didn’t think so”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

Most of the sentences in the paper are correct, including examples of compound and complex sentences. There are some fragments, however (e.g., “Which most of them have summer practices”). The elements of usage and mechanics are generally correct. The response is relatively brief, but the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 17

Dear committee,

Reading assignments given over the summer should be voluntary for many reasons. One major reason is that the literature selected by teachers is usually boring, and this makes the students avoid reading it. Another reason is that it is summer break, and not many students are going to take the time to read an assigned book. Assigning literature to read for summer break should be voluntary because reading and learning skills only improve if a student is reading something he/she enjoys, and summer assignments are not enjoyable.

"If the literature chosen was more exciting, maybe more kids would read." This was said by a fellow student of mine and I agree with him wholeheartedly. The books distributed for the students to read usually contain hundreds of pages which consist of dull reading material. Reading literature is something students tend to ignore on their own, and when given a book to read over the summer the rebellious youth won't do it. They refuse to read it because it is not interesting to them and therefore boring books distributed by teachers don't spark the interest. Voluntary reading activities for the summer should go through because none of the material assigned by the teachers is worth the time it takes to read the book. A way to make reading more exciting would be to allow the students to choose what to read. That way, they can choose interesting exciting books that interest them. By making reading optional and distributing books which are interesting, a curious student may decide to pick the book up and read it.

In addition to the literature being horrible, summer reading should be voluntary because the odds of the student actually reading are terrible. During the summer, the last thing students want to do is read a book. I'm an exception, I actually enjoy reading so summer reading assignments would be a breeze for me. But in light of my fellow students, not many people I know would be inclined to do the assignments. Therefore, they should not be punished for wanting a break from school. After all, summer break is a time for students to relax and forget about school. So an important reason as to why summer reading should be voluntary is that if it is assigned, the student will get a low grade for not reading; if it is voluntary, they will not be

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Paper 17 (page two)

punished for not reading.

Some people may push for summer reading assignments. Parents want to maximize their child's learning experience and ~~students want~~ teachers want to get a jump on the next year. These are good ideas, but realistically speaking the reading will still not get done. A student learns by focusing on what they are studying, and to be able to focus a student needs incentive. Assignments during the longest break a student has during the year is no incentive for the student. ~~At~~ Summer reading assignments may be supported by teachers + parents, but it will only be beneficial to the student if they do the assignment, and a summer reading assignment will more than likely not get done.

In order to improve reading + learning skills, a student must read + then learn. Most students won't read during the summer so therefore they won't learn. Summer break is a time when everyone takes off from school, trying to force someone to do schoolwork year round is like trying to punch through a concrete wall, it is not going to happen. As the committee, you have the final say on summer reading assignments being voluntary or ~~assigned~~ required. If you are truly here to help the students, giving assignments over the summer that won't be done is no help. Everyone needs time off, and summer break for the student is like the vacation days you take to ~~rest~~ about your job. It is ludicrous to attempt to make students do schoolwork year round. ~~Let's~~ Let's face it, the work won't get done anyways, so allow the students the hard earned break they deserve.

~~Sincerely,~~ Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper - 17

Ideas Score: 5

The controlling idea (summer reading should be voluntary) is fully developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (students are not interested in the books on the reading list, students want to relax during their summer break, and students will not be motivated to complete the work). The writer develops these supporting ideas with effective elaboration (e.g., “Those are good ideas, but realistically speaking the reading will still not get done. A student learns by focusing on what they are studying, and to be able to focus a student needs incentive. Assignments during the longest break a student has during the year is no incentive for the student”). Rhetorical devices, such as simile, are used to support assertions (“trying to force someone to do schoolwork year round is like trying to punch through a concrete wall”). Overall, the information in the response addresses a variety of reader concerns and expectations.

Organization Score: 5

The writer demonstrates full command of the components of Organization. The introduction is clear and sets the stage for the development that follows. The writer groups related ideas about how students are not interested in the books on the reading list, students want to relax during their summer break, and students will not be motivated to complete the work. Ideas within paragraphs build logically on one another, and a variety of transitional elements link all parts of the paper (e.g., “That way,” “In addition to the literature being horrible,” “Those are good ideas, but...,” “Let’s face it”). The conclusion provides effective summary

Style Score: 5

Word choice, phrases, and sentences are carefully crafted to engage the reader (“Reading literature is something students tend to ignore on their own, and when given a book to read over the summer the rebellious youth won’t do it,” “After all, summer break is a time for students to relax and forget about school,” and “realistically speaking, the reading will not get done”). This effective control of language creates a strong, sustained voice and knowledgeable tone. Overall, the writer demonstrates a full command of the component of Style.

Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates a full command of the elements of Conventions. A variety of simple, compound, and complex sentences are clear and correct, with appropriate end punctuation. All elements of usage and mechanics are consistently correct. Errors in any element are infrequent and do not interfere with meaning.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 18

Dear Writing Committee,

All across the nation, schools are requiring students to read over their summer breaks. They expect us to read three to four books in a period of three months. This is a outrage, and AHS is one of the many schools doing this.

Ever since elementary school, I have been reading in classrooms as groups. We would take turns reading every other paragraph. Even then reading two to three a weeks got really old and boring. During middle school I slacked off alot on reading. I read two books my whole three years in middle school. Now, I am in high school and we are reading more books than ever.

During my ninth grade year, we were required to read two books over the summer. When we got back to school we were eventually tested on them. Even though two books are enough, they made us read five more during the actual school year.

There are many negative things about reading over the summer, and I do not think it ~~should~~ be required. Summer break is a time to get away from straining your brain and stressing out. It is a time to spend family time with your relatives. During school you are caught up in work and do not have time for family. Then they expect us to stay away from our family and waste all that time reading stupid books.

I just do not agree with the idea of reading over the summer. You are too caught up in reading and nothing else. On top of that you are pressured to get the books done, and you read too much too long and end up hurting and straining your eyes. I hope you will keep my thoughts about this subject in mind, and hopefully we will not have to read over summer. Thanks again.

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Annotations for Paper 18

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (summer reading should be voluntary) is clear and developed with relevant supporting ideas (reading is boring, and students need a break during the summer). The writer develops these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., being bored during in-class reading in middle school, and “During school you are caught up in work and do not have time for family. Then they expect us to stay far away from our family and waste). Elaboration is not extensive, but there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization. The introduction is clear. The writer groups related ideas about how reading is boring and how students need a break during the summer. Ideas within body paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., “Even then,” “During school,” and “Then they expect”). The conclusion provides clear closure.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally effective (e.g., “slacked off,” “eventually tested on them,” and “end up hurting and straining your eyes”). There are some lapses into simple, ordinary language (e.g., “many negative things” and “reading stupid books”). The writer’s voice is clear; so is the tone (“This is a[n] outrage”). Audience awareness is evident in most parts of the paper (“Then they expect us to stay away from our family and waste all that time”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

The writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions. Most of the sentences in the paper are correct, though some of the syntax is ineffective (e.g., “I have been reading in classrooms as groups”). Usage is generally correct, though there are some incorrect word forms (e.g., “This is a outrage”). Most elements of mechanics are correct, though there are several missing commas after introductory clauses. There are not many errors in the paper, but there is not much variety either. This paper is an example of a high 3 in Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 19

Reading is everywhere. Its in our homes, its in our schools, its everywhere. Almost every single day in school, students have to read. I am here to discuss reading over the summer. I will use examples and other reasons to why I believe reading over the summer, should be optional. So please take the time to read this, thank you.

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Some people think that two most important things in the world are reading and education. But eventually all this reading and education starts to get tiring. After this, some people start to change their mind about the most important things to them. Luckily though reading isn't all about bookwork. There are magazines and other books out there that people read for free time. But even with these items to keep people reading, they start to breakdown. But before they breakdown completely, one thing saves them. A time called "Summer."

Summer is the time to forget about school work and just have fun. But suddenly a letter arrives from the school. The letter explains that students must now read a certain amount of books over the summer. Well that's not so bad, but the letter describes not just any books, certain books. Students must read books about history, science, english and math. There goes summer plans, There goes all the hard work you did so you didn't

Paper 19 (page two)

have to work. The same concept goes towards someone who is in summer school. You are working hard, doing your homework, and studying. You are doing so well, you even have some free time for yourself. But then, you get this letter in the mail. You just lost your free time, and now you have to work even harder. This is one example of how summer reading can affect students. Another flaw is time.

Time is one of the most important things in society today. Some people have enough and some hardly have any. Some people just might not have the time to read over the summer. Then when school starts, they will get in trouble for this. This is a huge flaw about reading over the summer.

This one is very common all year round focusing. With all these summer plans and fun, people may forget about reading. It might be because of time, or they might be having so much fun, that reading is the last thing on their mind. Then when summer is over, they realize they forgot to read. Then they will be in trouble for not reading.

I am not saying reading over the summer isn't bad and won't work. For some, they might have all the time in the world and would love to read over the summer.

I am saying that summer is the time to have fun, and do what you want to do. This is why I believe reading over the summer should be optional.

Annotations for Paper 19

Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (summer reading should be voluntary) is established with relevant supporting ideas (reading loses its appeal as a school year winds down, students want a break over the summer, students don't have the time over the summer, and students do not focus well over the summer). The writer develops these supporting ideas with specific examples and elaboration (e.g., "But suddenly a letter arrives from the school. The letter explains that students must now read a certain amount of books over the summer ... There goes summer plans"). There is some unevenness in the development: the third paragraph is fully developed, but the third and fourth paragraphs are not as well elaborated. Overall, the response is considered well developed.

Organization Score: 4

The writer demonstrates consistent control of components or Organization. The introduction is clear but not especially engaging because the writer announces what he/she will discuss in the body of the essay. Related ideas are grouped together, and sequencing is logical (e.g., "Some people think that two most important things in the world are reading an education. → But eventually all this reading and education starts to get tiring"). Varied transitions link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., "But with these items," "Well thats not so bad," and "This is a huge flaw"). Transitions between body paragraphs are not quite as effective (e.g., "This one is common all year round"). The conclusion provides effective closure.

Style Score: 4

Word choice is consistently effective (e.g., "Luckily though reading isn't all about bookwork," "suddenly a letter arrives from school," and "This is a huge flaw"). This effective word choice contributes to a clear voice and a spirited tone ("There goes summer plans. There goes all the hard work you did so you didn't have to work [over the summer]"). Sentences vary in length and structure. Lapses into simple, ordinary word choice are infrequent (e.g., "There are magazines and other books out there"). Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

Most of the sentences in the paper are correct, including examples of compound and complex sentences. There are some run-ons ("You are doing so well, you even have some free time to yourself") and fragments (e.g., "With all these summer plans and fun"). The elements of usage are generally correct, but there are some incorrect word forms (e.g., "There goes summer plans"). The elements of mechanics are generally correct, but there is some missing internal punctuation (e.g., "Its in our homes" and "thats not so bad"). Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 20

Dear school committee,

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I heard that you are considering whether or not summer reading should be voluntary or required for schools. I personally think it is a wonderful idea.

When students read over the summer it gives them something to do. Everyone can't go on these long trips to the beach all the time. So it gives students something to do when they have time on their hands. Another benefit from reading over the summer is that it improves reading skills. The more practice the better of a reader they become. Reading over the summer gets them ready for the next school year and that means they will be ready to learn. Rising Freshman need to read over the summer so they can get a feel of how high school is going to be. Reading over the summer could also improve grades by raising their vocabulary skills.

I think that having students read over the summer is a great idea. It will benefit the students a lot and let them have a better future. With more education the

Paper 20 (page two)

Further you will get in life.

Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 20

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (summer reading should be required) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (gives students something to do over the summer and prepares students for the next school year). These supporting ideas are developed only partially, with details like “Rising freshmen need to read over the summer so they can get a feel of how high school is going to be”). Overall, there is not enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. There is a brief introduction and some evidence of grouping (e.g., how reading helps prepare students for the next school year), but there are not many ideas to group together. Evidence of sequencing is minimal (e.g., “Everyone can’t go on these long trips to the beach all the time. → So it gives students something to do when they have time on their hands”). Transitions are limited mostly to pronoun substitution (e.g., “they” for “students”). The brief conclusion provides some closure.

Style Score: 2

The paper has some effective word choice, a sincere tone, and a clear voice (e.g., “Reading over the summer could also improve grades by raising their vocabulary skills”). There is also some sentence variety. Competence in Style, however, is limited by the brevity of this response. It is an example of a high 2.

Conventions Score: 2

There are not many errors in sentence formation, usage, or mechanics, but competence in Conventions is limited by the brevity of the response. This paper is an example of a high 2 in Conventions.

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Score Key – 2012 GHSWT Sample Papers

Paper #	Ideas	Org.	Style	Conv.	Performance Level
1	3	3	3	4	Meets the Standard
2	2	2	2	2	Does Not Meet the Standard
3	5	5	5	5	Exceeds the Standard
4	3	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
5	4	4	4	5	Exceeds the Standard
6	2	2	2	2	Does Not Meet the Standard
7	2	2	1	1	Does Not Meet the Standard
8	4	4	5	5	Exceeds the Standard
9	3	3	4	4	Meets the Standard
10	2	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
11	3	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
12	3	4	4	4	Meets the Standard
13	2	2	2	1	Does Not Meet the Standard
14	3	3	3	2	Meets the Standard
15	4	4	5	5	Exceeds the Standard
16	2	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
17	5	5	5	5	Exceeds the Standard
18	3	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
19	4	4	4	3	Meets the Standard
20	2	2	2	2	Does Not Meet the Standard