

8ELA-R



***New York State
Testing Program***

**English Language Arts Test
Reading/Writing**

Grade 8

**2009 Scoring Guide
Scorer Training Materials**

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Bill Watterson is the artist and writer behind the cartoon strip *Calvin and Hobbes*, which takes a look (and laugh) at the world from the perspective of a young boy and his tiger friend Hobbes. In this excerpt, he describes some of the practical difficulties of publishing comics.

Drawing

Calvin and Hobbes

I think I learned to be a writer so I could draw for a living. Actually, I enjoy writing as much as drawing, but working on a deadline, the drawing is easier and faster.

People always ask how cartoonists come up with ideas, and the answer is so boring that we're usually tempted to make up something sarcastic. The truth is, we hold a blank sheet of paper, stare into space, and let our minds wander. (To the layman, this looks remarkably like goofing off.) When something interests us, we play around with it. Sometimes this yields a funny observation; sometimes it doesn't, but that's about all there is to it. Once in a while the cartoonist will find himself in a beam of light and angels will appear with a great idea, but not often.

Occasionally I'll have a subject or issue in mind that I want to talk about, but if I don't have a ready topic, I try to think of what I'd like to draw. My goal is to feel enthusiastic about some aspect of the work. I think one can always tell when an artist is engaged and having a good time: the energy and life comes through in the work. I like to sit outside when I write, partly because it seems less like a job that way, and partly because there are bugs and birds and rocks around that may suggest an idea. I never know what will trigger a workable idea, so my writing schedule varies a great deal. Sometimes I can write several strips in an afternoon; sometimes I can't write anything at all. I never know if another hour sitting there will be wasted time or the most productive hour of the day.

I write my ideas in an ordinary school notebook. I spend a lot of time fussing with the wording, juggling the various concerns of timing, clarity, brevity, and so on. I write in pencil, and go through erasers at an alarming rate. Once I bang an idea into form, I make a small doodle of the characters to give the strip a rough outline. My purpose at this point is mostly to show who's speaking each line, but I try to suggest gestures and rough compositions, so I will think about the idea in visual terms when it comes time to ink it up. I reevaluate the roughs over several days, when I'm fresher and more objective. Often the writing needs more work, and sometimes I just cross the whole thing out. On occasion, I've ripped up entire stories—weeks of material—that I didn't think were good. Obviously, if I'm right on deadline, that kind of editing becomes a luxury, so I try to write well ahead of due dates. It's very embarrassing to send out a strip I think is bad, so I like a long lead time and, given the need to fill newspaper space every day, I weed out as much mediocre work as possible.

After I have about thirty daily strips, I show them to my wife. She can usually intuit what I'm trying to say, even when I don't get it right, so she's a good editor, and a pretty accurate Laugh-o-meter. After reworking or scrapping weak strips, I ink up the ones I like.

I typically ink six daily strips, or one Sunday strip, in a long day. I'd enjoy the inking more if I could take more time, but I need to draw efficiently in order to gain back the time lost writing bad ideas. I lightly pencil in the dialogue first, as that determines the space left for drawing. Next, I sketch in the characters very loosely, establishing the composition of each panel. I frequently make revisions, so I use a light pencil and I erase as needed. If the picture is unusually complex, I'll render the difficult parts completely, but generally, I try to do as little pencil work as possible. That way, the inking stays spontaneous and fun, because I'm not simply tracing pencil lines. Inking mistakes and accidents are whited out.

I draw the strip with a small sable brush and waterproof India ink on Strathmore bristol board. I letter the dialogue with a Rapidograph fountain pen, and I use a crowquill pen for odds and ends. It's about as low-tech as you can get.

The Sunday strips also need to be colored. This is a time-consuming and rather tedious task, but the color is an integral part of my Sunday strips, so I think it's important to choose all the colors myself. (Foreign collections of my work are sometimes recolored, and the results rarely please me.) When I first started *Calvin and Hobbes*, there were 64 colors available for Sunday strips; now we have 125 colors, as well as the ability to fade colors into each other. The colors are incremental percentage combinations of red, yellow, and blue, and we have a pretty good range, although I wish there were more pale colors. Each color has a number, so I color my strip on an overlay, and mark the corresponding numbers. The syndicate sends this to American Color, a company that processes all the Sunday comics into color negatives for newspaper printing.

After a batch of strips is inked and colored, I send them to the syndicate, where my editor corrects my spelling and grammar, and looks for anything offensive. A copyright sticker is affixed and the strip is printed up and sent to subscribing newspapers. Then I start writing again.

Lucky Break

by Roald Dahl

To me, the most important and difficult thing about writing fiction is to find the plot. Good original plots are very hard to come by. You never know when a lovely idea is going to flit suddenly into your mind, but by golly, when it does come along, you grab it with both hands and hang on to it tight. The trick is to write it down at once, otherwise you'll forget it. A good plot is like a dream. If you don't write down your dream on paper the moment you wake up, the chances are you'll forget it, and it'll be gone forever.

So when an idea for a story comes popping into my mind, I rush for a pencil, a crayon, a lipstick, anything that will write, and scribble a few words that will later remind me of the idea. Often, one word is enough. I was once driving alone on a country road and an idea came for a story about someone getting stuck in an elevator between two floors in an empty house. I had nothing to write with in the car. So I stopped and got out. The back of the car was covered with dust. With one finger I wrote in the dust the single word ELEVATOR. That was enough. As soon as I got home, I went straight to my workroom and wrote the idea down in an old school exercise book that is simply labeled *Short Stories*.

I have had this book ever since I started trying to write seriously. There are ninety-eight pages in the book. I've counted them. And just about every one of those pages is filled up on both sides with these so-called story ideas. Many are no good. But just about every story and every children's book I have ever written has started out as a three- or four-line note in this little, much-worn, red-covered volume. For example:

What about a chocolate factory that makes marvellous and fantastic things—with a crazy man running it?

This became CHARLIE AND THE CHOCOLATE FACTORY.

A story about Mr. Fox who has a whole network of underground tunnels. They lead to all the shops in the village. At night he goes up through the floorboards and helps himself.

FANTASTIC MR. FOX

Jamaica and the small boy who saw a giant turtle captured by native fishermen. Boy pleads with his father to buy turtle and release it. Becomes hysterical. Father buys it. Then what? Perhaps boy goes with turtle.

THE BOY WHO TALKED WITH ANIMALS

A man acquires the ability to see through playing cards. He makes millions at casinos.

THE WONDERFUL STORY OF HENRY SUGAR

Sometimes, these little scribbles stay unused in the notebook for five or even ten years. But the promising ones are always used in the end. And if they show nothing else, they do, I think, demonstrate from what slender threads a children's book or a short story must ultimately be woven. The story builds and expands while you are writing it. All the best stuff comes at the desk. But you can't even start to write that story unless you have the beginnings of a plot. Without my little notebook, I would be quite helpless.

Grade 8 English Language Arts Rubric

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

5 points

Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill the requirements of the tasks
- address the theme or key elements of the text
- show a thorough interpretation of the text
- make some connections beyond the text

- develop ideas fully with thorough elaboration
- make effective use of relevant and accurate examples from the text

In addition, the extended response

- establishes and maintains a clear focus
- shows a logical sequence of ideas through the use of appropriate transitions or other devices

- is fluent and easy to read, with a sense of engagement or voice
- uses varied sentence structure and some above-grade-level vocabulary

4 points

Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill some requirements of the tasks
- address some key elements of the text
- show a predominantly literal interpretation of the text
- make some connections

- may be brief, with little elaboration, but are sufficiently developed to answer the questions
- provide some examples and details from the text
- may include minor inaccuracies

In addition, the extended response

- is generally focused, though may include some irrelevant details
- shows a clear attempt at organization

- is readable, with some sense of engagement or voice
- primarily uses simple sentences and basic vocabulary

Grade 8 English Language Arts Rubric (continued)

3 points

Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill some requirements of the tasks
- address a few key elements of the text
- show some gaps in understanding of the text
- make some connections

- may be brief, with little elaboration or development
- provide few examples and details from the text
- may include minor inaccuracies

In addition, the extended response

- shows an attempt to maintain focus, though may include some tangents
- shows an attempt at organization

- is readable, with some sense of engagement or voice
- primarily uses simple sentences and basic vocabulary

2 points

Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill some requirements of the tasks
- address basic elements of the text
- show little evidence that the student understood more than parts of the text
- make few connections

- provide very few text-based examples and details
- may include some inaccurate details

In addition, the extended response

- may show an attempt to establish a focus
- may include some irrelevant information
- shows little attempt at organization

- is readable, with little sense of engagement or voice
- uses minimal vocabulary
- may indicate fragmented thoughts

Grade 8 English Language Arts Rubric (continued)

1 point

Taken as a whole, the responses

- fulfill very few requirements of the tasks
- address few elements of the text
- show little evidence that the student understood more than parts of the text
- make few to no connections

- provide almost no text-based examples and details
- may include inaccurate information

In addition, the extended response

- shows little attempt to establish a focus
- may be repetitive, focusing on minor details or irrelevant information
- shows little attempt at organization

- is difficult to read, with little or no sense of engagement or voice
- uses minimal vocabulary
- may indicate fragmented thoughts

0 points

The responses are completely incorrect, irrelevant, or incoherent.

**Grade 8 English Language Arts Rubric Chart
Reading/Writing (Questions 31, 32, 33, 34)**

Quality	5	4	3	2	1
Meaning: The extent to which the response exhibits understanding of the task and text(s)	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fulfill the requirements of the tasks address the theme or key elements of the text show a thorough interpretation of the text make some connections beyond the text 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fulfill some requirements of the tasks address some key elements of the text show a predominantly literal interpretation of the text make some connections 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fulfill some requirements of the tasks address a few key elements of the text show some gaps in understanding of the text make some connections 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fulfill some requirements of the tasks address basic elements of the text show little evidence that the student understood more than parts of the text make few connections 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> fulfill very few requirements of the tasks address few elements of the text show little evidence that the student understood more than parts of the text make few to no connections
Development: The extent to which ideas are elaborated, using specific and relevant evidence from the text(s)	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> develop ideas fully with thorough elaboration make effective use of relevant and accurate examples from the text 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be brief, with little elaboration, but are sufficiently developed to answer the questions provide some examples and details from the text may include minor inaccuracies 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may be brief, with little elaboration or development provide few examples and details from the text may include minor inaccuracies 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide very few text-based examples and details may include some inaccurate details 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>Taken as a whole:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> provide almost no text-based examples and details may include inaccurate information
Organization: The extent to which the response exhibits direction, shape, and coherence	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> establishes and maintains a clear focus shows a logical sequence of ideas through the use of appropriate transitions or other devices 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is generally focused, though may include some irrelevant details shows a clear attempt at organization 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows an attempt to maintain focus, though may include some tangents shows an attempt at organization 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> may show an attempt to establish a focus may include some irrelevant information shows little attempt at organization 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> shows little attempt to establish a focus may be repetitive, focusing on minor details or irrelevant information shows little attempt at organization
Language Use: The extent to which the response reveals an awareness of audience and purpose through effective use of words, sentence structure, and sentence variety	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is fluent and easy to read, with a sense of engagement or voice uses varied sentence structure and some above-grade-level vocabulary 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is readable, with some sense of engagement or voice primarily uses simple sentences and basic vocabulary 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is readable, with some sense of engagement or voice primarily uses simple sentences and basic vocabulary 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is readable, with little sense of engagement or voice uses minimal vocabulary may indicate fragmented thoughts 	<p>Responses at this level:</p> <p><i>The extended response:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is difficult to read, with little or no sense of engagement or voice uses minimal vocabulary may indicate fragmented thoughts

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

Reading/Writing Specific Rubric

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

Reading/Writing Task (Questions 31, 32, 33, 34) “Drawing Calvin and Hobbes” and “Lucky Break”

5 Points

The 5-point responses fulfill the requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections beyond the texts, using relevant and accurate text-based examples to fully support the responses. The student demonstrates an understanding of the similarities and differences between the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl. The graphic organizer (Question 31) is accurate, complete, and thorough. The student lists three challenges Bill Watterson faces in his work. The first short response (Question 32) includes text-based details to explain the relationship between Bill Watterson's cartoon and his method of working. The second short response (Question 33) includes text-based details to describe the importance of Roald Dahl's notebook to his writing process. The extended response (Question 34) is organized, focused, and addresses all parts of the task. The student uses ample text-based details to compare the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl and to explain how their habits contribute to their success. The writing is fluent and has a sense of engagement or voice.

4 Points

The 4-point responses fulfill some requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a predominantly literal understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections, but the responses may be brief with little elaboration. The student uses some relevant text-based examples to support the responses but may generalize or present facts without synthesizing them. The graphic organizer (Question 31) is essentially accurate. The first short response (Question 32) may explain the relationship between Bill Watterson's cartoon and his method of working but may not be fully elaborated. The second short response (Question 33) may describe how Roald Dahl's notebook helps his writing process but may be somewhat general without much text-based support. The extended response (Question 34) shows a clear attempt at organization but may occasionally include extraneous information. The student may begin with a discussion of the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl but may end without a clear explanation of how those work habits contribute to their success, or vice versa.

Reading/Writing Specific Rubric (continued)

3 Points

The 3-point responses fulfill some requirements of the tasks but demonstrate some gaps in the student's understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections, but the responses may be brief with little elaboration or development. The student may use a few relevant text-based examples to draw some accurate conclusions about the similarities and differences between work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl, but the responses may be sketchy or may include some inaccurate information. The graphic organizer (Question 31) may be very brief or may contain some inaccuracies. The short responses and the extended response may contain some accurate information, but they may be incomplete or may include unrelated, unsustained ideas. For example, the first short response (Question 32) may include a brief explanation of Bill Watterson's cartoon and his method of working, but the connection may be weak. The second short response (Question 33) may include minimal text-based support to generalize the importance of Roald Dahl's notebook to his writing process. The extended response (Question 34) may attempt to address all parts of the task and maintain a focus but may be missing some important details or be weakly organized.

2 Points

The 2-point responses fulfill some requirements of the tasks but demonstrate little evidence that the student has understood more than sections of the passages. The student makes few connections and provides very few text-based examples as support. The responses may also include some inaccurate information. The graphic organizer (Question 31) is incomplete or contains inaccuracies. The short responses and the extended response may address only parts of the tasks or show a misinterpretation of the tasks. The responses may contain some accurate details, but the student may not make meaningful connections or draw conclusions. For example, the first short response (Question 32) may include an attempt to discuss either Bill Watterson's cartoon or his method of working but may not make connections between the two. The second short response (Question 33) may describe the importance of using a notebook without connecting it to Roald Dahl's particular writing process. The extended response (Question 34) may show little organization and only attempt to establish a focus. The student may only describe in general terms the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl without connecting them.

1 Point

The 1-point responses fulfill few requirements of the tasks and demonstrate that the student has understood only sections of the passages. The student provides almost no text-based examples as support and may include some inaccurate information. The graphic organizer (Question 31) is incomplete or inaccurate. The responses may not include any of the challenges Bill Watterson faces, or the same information may be repeated in all three sections. The short responses (Questions 32 and 33) show that the student has some confusion and misunderstanding of the texts. The extended response (Question 34) is unfocused or focuses solely on minor details or extraneous information, or may consist of an opinion unsupported by the passages.

0 Points

The responses are completely incorrect, irrelevant, or incoherent.

Reading/Writing Specific Rubric Chart
Reading/Writing Task: “Drawing Calvin and Hobbes” and “Lucky Break” (Questions 31, 32, 33, 34)

	5	4	3	2	1
Points	Responses at this level: fulfill the requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a thorough understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections beyond the texts, using relevant and accurate text-based examples to fully support the responses. The student demonstrates an understanding of the similarities and differences between the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl.	Responses at this level: fulfill some requirements of the tasks and demonstrate a predominantly literal understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections, but the responses may be brief with little elaboration or little elaboration. The student uses some relevant text-based examples to support the responses but may generalize or present facts without synthesizing them.	Responses at this level: fulfill some requirements of the tasks but demonstrate some gaps in the student’s understanding of the passages. The student makes some connections, but the responses may be brief with little elaboration or development. The student may use a few relevant text-based examples to draw some accurate conclusions about the similarities and differences between the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl.	Responses at this level: fulfill some requirements of the tasks but demonstrate little evidence that the student has understood more than sections of the passages. The student makes few connections and provides very few text-based examples as support. Responses may also include some inaccurate information.	Responses at this level: fulfill few requirements of the tasks and demonstrate that the student has understood only sections of the passages. The student provides almost no text-based examples as support and may include some inaccurate information.
Overall	are accurate, complete, and thorough. The student lists three challenges Bill Watterson faces in his work.	are essentially accurate.	may be very brief or may contain some inaccuracies.	are incomplete or contain inaccuracies.	are incomplete or inaccurate. The responses may not include any of the challenges Bill Watterson faces, or the same information may be repeated in all three sections.
Graphic Organizer (Question 31)	include text-based details to explain the relationship between Bill Watterson’s cartoon and his method of working.	may explain the relationship between Bill Watterson’s cartoon and his method of working but may not be fully elaborated.	may contain some accurate information but may be incomplete or may include unrelated, unsustained ideas (e.g., may include a brief explanation of Bill Watterson’s cartoon and his method of working, but the connection may be weak).	may address only parts of the tasks or show a misinterpretation of the tasks. Responses may contain some accurate details, but the student may not make meaningful connections or draw conclusions (e.g., may include an attempt to discuss either Bill Watterson’s cartoon or his method of working but may not make connections between the two).	show that the student has some confusion and misunderstanding of the texts.
Short Response (Question 32)	include text-based details to describe the importance of Roald Dahl’s notebook to his writing process.	may describe how Roald Dahl’s notebook helps his writing process but may be somewhat general without much text-based support.	may contain some accurate information but may be incomplete or may include unrelated, unsustained ideas (e.g., may include minimal text-based support to generalize the importance of Roald Dahl’s notebook to his writing process).	may address only parts of the tasks or show a misinterpretation of the tasks. Responses may contain some accurate details, but the student may not make meaningful connections or draw conclusions (e.g., may describe the importance of using a notebook without connecting it to Roald Dahl’s particular writing process).	show that the student has some confusion and misunderstanding of the texts.
Short Response (Question 33)	are organized, focused, and address all parts of the task. The student uses ample text-based details to compare the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl and to explain how their habits contribute to their success. The writing is fluent and has a sense of engagement or voice.	show a clear attempt at organization but may occasionally include extraneous information. The student may begin with a discussion of the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl but may end without a clear explanation of how those work habits contribute to their success, or vice versa.	may include minimal text-based support to generalize the importance of Roald Dahl’s notebook to his writing process. (e.g., may attempt to address all parts of the task and maintain a focus but may be missing some important details or be weakly organized).	may address only parts of the tasks or show a misinterpretation of the tasks. Responses may contain some accurate details, but the student may not make meaningful connections or draw conclusions (e.g., may show little organization and only attempt to establish a focus. The student may only describe in general terms the work habits of Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl without connecting them).	are unfocused or focus solely on minor details or extraneous information, or may consist of an opinion unsupported by the passages.
Extended Response (Question 34)					

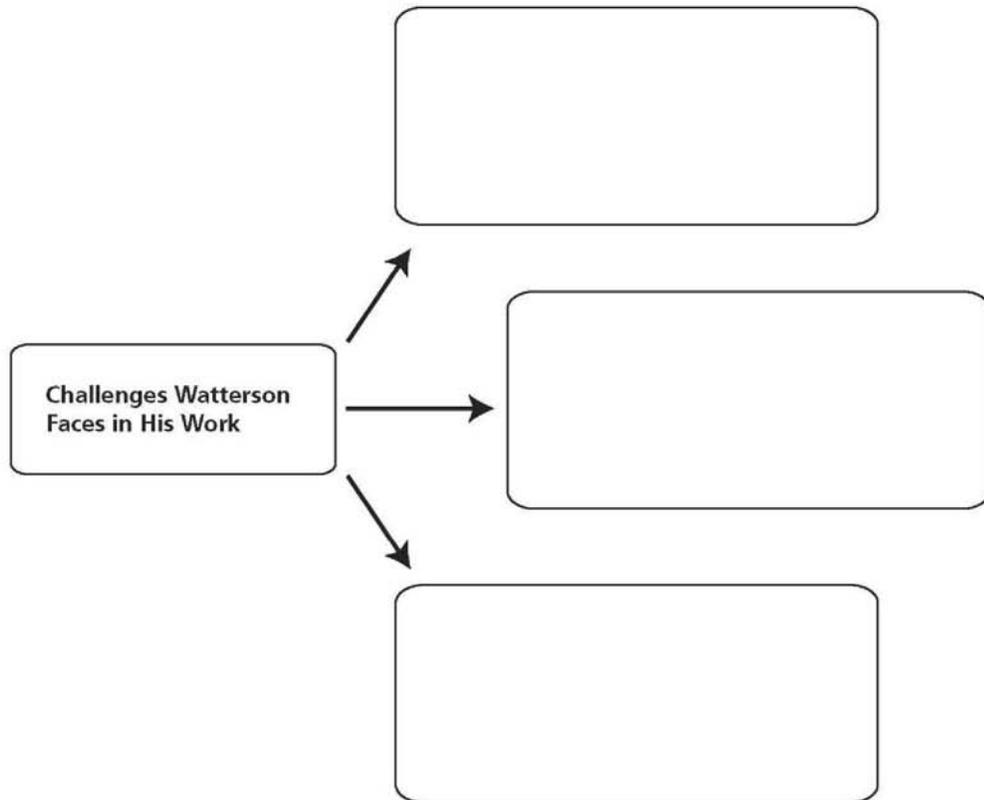
SCORE POINT 0 = The responses are completely incorrect, irrelevant, or incoherent.

Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points

Reading/Writing Task: “Drawing Calvin and Hobbes” and “Lucky Break”

Question 31

Bill Watterson discusses several challenges he faces in his work. In the diagram below, describe three of those challenges.



Possible Exemplary Responses:

- thinking of good ideas
- working under time/deadline pressure
- feeling enthusiastic about some aspect of the work
- writing schedule varies a great deal
- sometimes cannot write anything at all
- fussing with the wording
- weeding out mediocre work
- reevaluating the rough compositions
- time-consuming and tedious tasks like coloring Sunday strips
- other relevant text-based response

Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points (continued)

Reading/Writing Task: “Drawing Calvin and Hobbes” and “Lucky Break”

Question 32

How does the message in this cartoon by Bill Watterson apply to his own method of working? Use details from both the cartoon and the passage to support your answer.



Possible Exemplary Response:

The cartoon tells about Watterson’s method of working. The cartoon starts with Calvin looking as if he’s goofing off. Watterson says when he stares at a blank paper to come up with ideas, it looks like he is goofing off. Calvin says that creativity cannot be turned on and off like a faucet. Watterson says great ideas rarely come easily. Calvin says the right mood for creativity is “last-minute panic.” Watterson says sometimes he is up against a deadline and must just get his writing done.

Possible details to include in answer:

- Any detail from the cartoon matched up with a similar idea from the passage:
 - To come up with ideas, Bill Watterson holds up a blank sheet of paper, stares into space, and lets his mind wander.
 - Watterson says his method of coming up with ideas can look like goofing off.
 - Watterson says great ideas rarely appear suddenly.
 - Watterson likes to sit outside when he writes.
 - Watterson never knows what will trigger a workable idea.
 - If Watterson is right on deadline, he does not have the luxury of extra editing.
- other relevant text-based detail

Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points (continued)

Reading/Writing Task: “Drawing Calvin and Hobbes” and “Lucky Break”

Question 33

In what way does Roald Dahl’s notebook, Short Stories, play an important role in his writing process? Use details from “Lucky Break” to support your answer.

Possible Exemplary Response:

Roald Dahl writes most of his initial story ideas in his notebook. The promising ones are always used and most of his children’s books started out as notes in this notebook. Dahl says that his notes show that a story can be created out of slender threads of ideas. He cannot begin to write a story without the beginnings of a plot which springs from ideas in his notebook.

Possible details to include in answer:

- Dahl records his story ideas in an old school exercise book labeled Short Stories.
- Just about every story and book Dahl has written started out as 3- or 4-line note in his notebook.
- The promising ideas are always used.
- The idea notes demonstrate from what slender threads a book or story can be woven.
- The story builds and expands while it is being written.
- Dahl says a story cannot be started unless the beginnings of a plot are there.
- The notebook gives Dahl the beginnings of his plots.
- other relevant text-based detail

Reading/Writing Rubric Key Points (continued)

Reading/Writing Task: “Drawing Calvin and Hobbes” and “Lucky Break”

Question 34

Bill Watterson in “Drawing Calvin and Hobbes” and Roald Dahl in “Lucky Break” discuss their approaches to their work. Write an essay in which you describe the similarities and differences between the work habits of Watterson and Dahl. Explain how their work habits contribute to their success. Use details from **both** passages to support your answer.

In your essay, be sure to include

- a description of the similarities between the work habits of Watterson and Dahl
- a description of the differences between the work habits of Watterson and Dahl
- an explanation of how their work habits contribute to their success
- details from **both** passages to support your answer

Possible Exemplary Response:

Bill Watterson and Roald Dahl are both successful writers. They both are disciplined and work very hard to develop ideas for their work. They have similar work habits. Both write their ideas in notebooks and work with them to develop a cartoon or a story. Dahl says that the trick is to write an idea down at once or you’ll forget it. Watterson says he never knows what will trigger a workable idea, while Dahl says he never knows when an idea is going to flit suddenly into his mind.

There are some differences in their work habits. Because Watterson draws cartoons, he often thinks of what he would like to draw before he begins writing. He focuses on a blank page and lets his mind wander. Dahl finds inspiration everywhere like driving alone on a country road. Watterson also works on his ideas before he writes his comic strips, spending a lot of time fussing with the wording, and juggling timing, clarity, and brevity. Dahl, however, says that a story builds and expands while you are writing it.

Both Watterson’s and Dahl’s habits contribute to their success. Watterson’s habits help him be successful because he is able to come up with a wide variety of ideas for his comic strip. If he is able to write ahead of due dates, he is able to do a lot of editing to make his comic strip as good as possible. Dahl’s habit contributes to his success by providing a way to record his ideas, many of which turned out to be very popular children’s books.

Possible details to include in answer:

Similarities between Watterson and Dahl

- Both Watterson and Dahl get ideas from almost anywhere.
- Both write their ideas in a notebook.
- Neither wastes their inspirations.
- Both work in a “low-tech” way.
- other relevant text-based similarity

Differences between Watterson and Dahl

- Watterson is inspired by looking at a blank paper, while Dahl gets inspiration out of the blue.
- Watterson draws cartoons, while Dahl writes stories.
- Watterson prefers to work outside, but Dahl says his best work comes at his desk.
- Watterson has a set of writing tools, but Dahl will write with anything available.
- other relevant text-based difference

How their work habits contribute to their success

- Both Watterson and Dahl keep track of their ideas.
- Watterson's ideas turn into sketches and strips that he likes to edit many times to make sure they are not mediocre.
- Dahl builds stories around his ideas and most turn into popular children's books.
- other relevant text-based detail

ELA Grade 8 Scoring Considerations

Reading/Multiple Choice (Questions 1-26)

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

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

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

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

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

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

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

Writing Mechanics (Questions 30 and 34)

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

New York State Testing Program
English Language Arts Condition Codes

Score of Zero

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

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

Condition Code A

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