Examples of the Standards for Students’ Writing 2016

English Language Arts Grade 9

• Functional Writing
Contacts

Provincial Assessment Sector Achievement Testing Branch

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Other Information

Follow these steps to access the Alberta Education website:
Step 1: Type education.alberta.ca
Step 2: Click on the “Junior High” card
Step 3: Scroll down to find and click on the “English Language Arts 7–9” card
Step 4: Click on “Provincial Assessments”

On the website, there is a specific link to “Subject Bulletins.” These bulletins provide students and teachers with information about the achievement tests scheduled for the current school year. Please share the contents of the Grade 9 English Language Arts Subject Bulletin with your students.

Also on the website, there is a specific link to “Examples of the Standards for Students’ Writing.” These samples are intended to be used to enhance students’ writing and to assist teachers in assessing student writing relative to the standards embedded in the scoring criteria in the scoring guides.

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Acknowledgements

Publication of this document would not have been possible without the permission of the students whose writing is presented. The cooperation of these students has allowed Alberta Education both to continue defining the standards of writing performance expected in connection with achievement tests and to continue demonstrating approaches taken by students in their writing.

This document includes the valuable contributions of many educators. Sincere thanks and appreciation are extended to the following teachers who served as members of the respective working groups: Exemplar Selection—Ramona Bilsborrow, Lena Corrigan, Sam Dumoulin, Angie Hryhoryshyn-Snow, Laura Pallister, Kelly Thomas, and Anna Wade; Exemplar Validation—Ivona Comba, Katheryn Goods, Diana Gowans, Chandra Hildebrand, Shauna Koopmans, Jaylene Lyons, Aaron Nisbett, and Janet Westworth; and Standards Confirmation—Nora MacGregor, Lyn Moehling, Tasha Neisz, Gary Perfect, Kevin Stacey, Shauna Swerda, Alan Welde, and Susan Woo.

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Introduction

The written responses in this document are examples of Grade 9 English Language Arts writing that meet or exceed the acceptable standard for student achievement. Along with the commentaries that accompany them, they should help teachers and students to understand the standards for the Grade 9 English Language Arts Part A: Writing Achievement Test in relation to the scoring criteria.

The purpose of the sample responses is to illustrate the standards that governed the 2016 marking session and that anchor the selection of similar sample responses for marking sessions in subsequent years. The sample papers and commentaries were used to train markers to apply the scoring criteria consistently and to justify their decisions about scores in terms of each student’s work and the scoring criteria.

The sample responses included in this document represent a very small sample of successful approaches to the Functional Writing Assignment.

Cautions

1. The commentaries are brief. The commentaries were written for groups of markers to discuss and apply during the marking session. Although brief, they provide a model for relating specific examples from student work to the details in a specific scoring criterion.

2. Neither the scoring guide nor the assignment is meant to limit students to a single organizational or rhetorical approach in completing any achievement test assignment. Students must be free to select and organize their material in a manner that they feel will enable them to best present their ideas. In fact, part of what is being assessed is the final effectiveness of the content, the form and structure, and the rhetorical choices that students make. The student writing in this document illustrates just a few of the many successful organizational and rhetorical strategies used by students. We strongly recommend that you caution your students that there is no preferred approach to an assignment except that which enables the student to communicate his or her own ideas about the topic effectively. We advise you not to draw any conclusions about common patterns of approach taken by students.

3. The sample papers presented in this document must not be used as models to be reiterated. Because these papers are only illustrations of sample responses to a set topic, students must not memorize the content of any sample response with the intention of reiterating parts or all of a sample response when either completing classroom assignments or writing future achievement tests. The approaches taken by students at the standard of excellence, not their words or ideas, are what students being examined in the future should emulate. In fact, it is hoped that the variety of approaches presented here will inspire students to experiment with diction, syntax, and form and structure as a way of developing an individual voice and engaging the reader in ideas and forms that the student has considered. Achievement test markers and staff at Alberta Education take plagiarism and cheating seriously.
4. It is essential that each of these examples of student writing be considered in light of the constraints of the test-writing situation. Under time constraints, students produce first-draft writing. Given more time, they would be expected to produce papers of considerably improved quality, particularly in the dimension of Content Management.

5. For further information regarding student performance on Part A: Writing of the Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test, access the Grade 9 English Language Arts 2016 Assessment Highlights document that is posted on the Alberta Education website.

Suggestions
To provide each paper with the most accurate and impartial judgment possible, use only the scoring criteria and the standards set by the Exemplars and Rationales. Each student is a person trying to do his or her very best. All students are completely reliant on your careful, professional consideration of their work.

Markers are responsible for
- reviewing and internalizing the scoring criteria and their application to student writing
- applying the scoring criteria impartially, independently, and consistently to all papers
- refraining from marking a response if personal biases—such as the student’s handwriting, development of topic, idiosyncrasies of voice, and/or political or religious preference—interfere with an impartial judgment of the response
- ensuring that every paper is scored
  - fairly
  - according to the scoring criteria
  - in accordance with the standards illustrated in the Exemplars and Rationales

The scores awarded to students’ papers must be based solely on the scoring criteria with reference to the Exemplars and Rationales. Fairness to all students is the most important requirement of the marking process.

To facilitate fair and valid assessment of all student work during both local and central marking, teachers must not mark or write in student booklets. Teacher-created scoring sheets, which may be used during local marking, are not to be included in student test booklets.

Please feel free to contact Provincial Assessment Sector staff members to discuss any questions or concerns.
Maintaining Consistent Standards

For all achievement test scoring sessions, teacher working groups for Exemplar Selection, Exemplar Validation, and Standards Confirmation are used both to establish expectations for student work in relation to the scoring criteria and to ensure scoring consistency within and between marking sessions. These working groups are crucial to ensuring that marks are valid, reliable, and fair measures of student achievement.

Exemplar Selection Working Group
Exemplars are selections of student work, taken from field tests, that best illustrate the scoring criteria. The Exemplar Selection Working Group is composed of experienced teachers representing various regions of the province who read a large sample of students’ written responses. Working-group members select responses that best match the established standards in the Exemplars and Rationales from the previous marking session. The working group then writes Rationales that explain the relationship between each Exemplar and the scoring criteria in each scoring category. The same process also occurs at this time in the selection of Training Papers. These papers are selected to illustrate characteristics of student work that might not be covered in the Exemplars and that might lead to inconsistent judgments or marking difficulties. While Exemplars usually receive consistent scores across all categories, Training Papers typically do not. This is due to the reality that students rarely perform with equal ability in every scoring category, as well as to the necessity of evaluating each scoring category as a distinct skill area.

Exemplar Validation Working Group
The Exemplar Validation Working Group, another group of experienced teachers from various provincial regions, reviews and approves the Exemplars, Training Papers, and Rationales that have been prepared for local marking. The working group ensures that the Rationales accurately reflect the standards embedded in the descriptors in the Scoring Guide while verifying that appropriate and accurate references have been made to student work. Working-group members also strive to ensure that there is clarity within the Rationales.

Standards Confirmation Working Group
Teachers from throughout the province who serve on the Standards Confirmation Working Group read a large sample of student responses to Part A: Writing to confirm the appropriateness of the standards set by the test in relation to student work on the Achievement Test. The working group ensures that the Exemplars, Training Papers, and Rationales are appropriate for central marking. Working-group members also select student responses that are to be used for daily Reliability Reviews. Once a day, all markers score a copy of the same student paper for inter-rater reliability. Reliability Reviews confirm that all markers are consistently awarding scores that accurately reflect the standards embedded in the scoring criteria.

Working groups for Exemplar Selection, Exemplar Validation, and Standards Confirmation are part of a complex set of processes that have evolved over the years of Achievement Test administration. These teacher working groups are crucial to ensuring that standards are consistently and fairly applied to student work.
Local Marking

Classroom teachers are encouraged to assess students’ writing, using the Scoring Guides, Exemplars, and Rationales that are sent to the schools along with the Part A: Writing tests, before returning the tests to Alberta Education. All papers are scored centrally in Edmonton in July.

Scores awarded locally can be submitted to Alberta Education, where they will be used as the first reading of a student’s response. Local markers are to use the “For Teacher Use Only” section on the back of each Part A: Writing test booklet to record their scores by filling in the appropriate circles. The “School Code” and “Accommodations Used” sections should also be completed (see accommodations in the General Information Bulletin for information). If a teacher wants to know how his or her locally awarded scores compare with the scores that the tests received when scored centrally, then he or she must create a three-digit identification number and enter it in the section labelled “ID No.” on the back of each student booklet. No two teachers from the same school should create and use the same ID number. No other marks are to be made in the test booklet by the teacher.

Tests are to be returned to Alberta Education according to the scheduling information in the online General Information Bulletin. The tests will then be scored centrally by Alberta Education as the second reading. Both sets of scores are used when calculating each student’s final mark. In the case of a discrepancy between these two sets of scores, papers will receive a third reading. All three sets of scores will be used to determine the final scores that a paper is awarded. In this way, valid and reliable individual and group results can be reported. Papers that are not assessed locally by teachers will be scored centrally only once.

After central marking has been completed and school reports have been sent to the schools, teachers who submitted their scores with an ID number will receive a confidential report on their marking. This report is called the Local Marker Report and includes the locally awarded scores, centrally awarded scores, third-read scores if applicable, and the final scores assigned.

Teachers may make photocopies of student writing from only the English Language Arts Part A: Writing tests after the May administration of the test for inclusion in portfolios of the year’s work. Copies can be made for parents who request them.

The levels of student achievement in the scoring guides are identified by specific words to describe student achievement in each scoring category. Classroom teachers are encouraged to discuss and use the scoring criteria with their students during the year.

To determine a student’s mark, convert the word descriptors to the following numeric values: Excellent = 5, Proficient = 4, Satisfactory = 3, Limited = 2, and Poor = 1.
A total score for a student’s written response may be calculated by a teacher using the following procedure. For the **Narrative / Essay Writing Assignment**, assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of Content, Organization, Sentence Structure, Vocabulary, and Conventions. Then, multiply the scores for Content and Organization by 2 as these categories are worth twice as much as the other categories. The maximum score possible for Narrative / Essay Writing is 35. For the **Functional Writing Assignment**, assign a score of 1 to 5 for each of Content and Content Management. Then, multiply each score by 2. The maximum score possible for Functional Writing is 20. To calculate the **Total Part A: Writing Score**, add the Narrative / Essay Writing and Functional Writing scores as follows: **Narrative / Essay Writing /35 (63.6%) + Functional Writing /20 (36.4%) = Total Score /55 (100%)**. The mark for Part A: Writing is worth 50% of the total mark for the Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test. Because students’ responses to the **Narrative / Essay Writing Assignment** vary widely—from philosophical discussions to personal narratives to creative approaches—assessment of the **Narrative / Essay Writing Assignment** on the achievement test will be in the context of Louise Rosenblatt’s suggestion that “the evaluation of the answers would be in terms of the amount of evidence that the youngster has actually read something and thought about it, not a question of whether, necessarily, he has thought about it the way an adult would, or given an adult’s ‘correct’ answer.”


Consider also Grant P. Wiggins’ suggestion to assess students’ writing “with the tact of Socrates: tact to respect the student’s ideas enough to enter them fully—even more fully than the thinker sometimes—and thus the tact to accept apt but unanticipatable or unique responses.”


To assess locally those students with special test-writing needs, specifically a scribed response (test accommodation 5) or a taped response (test accommodation 10), teachers are to refrain from scoring Conventions for Assignment I: Narrative / Essay Writing as well as Content Management for Assignment II: Functional Writing.
**Scoring Guide: Functional Writing Assignment**

**Content**

When marking **Content** appropriate for the Grade 9 Functional Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

- ideas and development of the topic are effective
- the purpose of the assignment is fulfilled with complete and relevant information
- the tone is appropriate for a business letter, and awareness of audience is evident

*Cross-Reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 2.1, 2.2, 2.4, 3.1, 3.2, 3.3, 4.1, 4.3*

| Excellent (E) | • The ideas are perceptive, and development of the topic is clear and effective.  
| | • Pertinent information is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise details that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment.  
| | • A tone appropriate for the addressee is skillfully maintained. |
| Proficient (Pf) | • The ideas are thoughtful, and development of the topic is generally effective.  
| | • Significant information is presented, and this information is substantiated by specific details that fulfill the purpose of the assignment.  
| | • A tone appropriate for the addressee is clearly maintained. |
| Satisfactory (S) | • The ideas are appropriate, and development of the topic is adequate.  
| | • Relevant information is presented, and this information is supported by enough detail to fulfill the purpose of the assignment.  
| | • A tone appropriate for the addressee is generally maintained. |
| Limited (L) | • The ideas are superficial and/or flawed, and development of the topic is inadequate.  
| | • Information presented is imprecise and/or undiscerning. Supporting details are insignificant and/or lacking. The purpose of the assignment is only partially fulfilled.  
| | • A tone appropriate for the addressee is evident but not maintained. |
| Poor (P) | • The ideas are overgeneralized and/or misconstrued, and development of the topic is ineffective.  
| | • Information is irrelevant and/or missing. Supporting details are obscure and/or absent. The purpose of the assignment is not fulfilled.  
| | • Little awareness of a tone appropriate for the addressee is evident. |
| Insufficient (INS) | • The marker can discern no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess **Content**. |

**Note:** **Content** and **Content Management** are equally weighted.

Student work must address the task presented in the assignment. Letters that are completely unrelated to the context established in the assignment will be awarded a score of **Insufficient**.
When marking Content Management appropriate for the Grade 9 Functional Writing Assignment, the marker should consider the extent to which

- words and expressions are used accurately and effectively
- sentence structure, usage, and mechanics (spelling, punctuation, etc.) are controlled
- the formats of an envelope and a business letter are consistently applied

Proportion of error to length and complexity of response must be considered.

Cross-Reference to Outcomes in the Program of Studies for Grade 9 English Language Arts: 4.1, 4.2

| Excellent  | • Words and expressions used are consistently accurate and effective.  
|           | • The writing demonstrates confident and consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that may be present do not impede meaning.  
|           | • The envelope and letter are essentially free from format errors and/or omissions. |
| Proficient| • Words and expressions used are usually accurate and effective.  
|           | • The writing demonstrates competent and generally consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that are present rarely impede meaning.  
|           | • The envelope and letter contain few format errors and/or omissions. |
| Satisfactory| • Words and expressions used are generally accurate and occasionally effective.  
|           | • The writing demonstrates basic control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors may occasionally impede meaning.  
|           | • The envelope and letter contain occasional format errors and/or omissions. |
| Limited   | • Words and expressions used are frequently vague and/or inexact.  
|           | • The writing demonstrates faltering control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors frequently impede meaning.  
|           | • The envelope and letter contain frequent format errors and/or omissions. |
| Poor      | • Words and expressions used are inaccurate and/or misused.  
|           | • The writing demonstrates a lack of control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors severely impede meaning.  
|           | • The envelope and letter contain numerous and glaring format errors and/or omissions. |
| Insufficient | • The response has been awarded an INS for Content. |

Note: Content and Content Management are equally weighted.
Addressing an Envelope

1. Return Address

The return address is the name and address of the person sending the letter. The return address appears in the top left corner of the envelope and consists of the sender’s name, post office box number (if applicable), apartment or unit number followed by a hyphen (if applicable), street address (if applicable), city or town, province or territory, and postal code.

JEAN BROWN
PO BOX 8207
TORONTO ON L2R 3V6

JEAN BROWN
905-12963 61 ST
TORONTO ON L2R 3V6

2. Mailing Address

The mailing address is the name and address to which the letter is being sent. It always appears in the centre of the envelope. In a business letter, the address on the envelope is the same as the inside address of the letter. There may be separate lines for the title of the addressee (e.g., Editor, Director, President), the division or department in which the person works, and the name of his or her company, business, or organization.

SAM HUNT
DIRECTOR
THE KNITTING MILL
1409 3 AVE
TORONTO ON L3V 7O1

Envelope Format

1. Addresses should be typed or written in upper-case or block letters.

2. All lines of the addresses should be formatted with a uniform left margin.

3. Punctuation marks (such as commas and periods) should not be used unless they are part of a place name (e.g., ST. JOHN’S).

4. The postal code should appear on the same line as the municipality and province or territory, and should be separated from the municipality and province or territory by two spaces.

5. The two-letter abbreviation for the province or territory name should be used wherever possible (see next page); abbreviations for street (ST), avenue (AVE), and boulevard (BLVD) should also be used.

6. The return address should be formatted in the same way as the mailing address.

For more information, refer to the “Addressing Guidelines” in the Canada Postal Guide at www.canadapost.ca.
Format of a Business Letter

There are three basic business-letter formats. Any of these formats is appropriate and acceptable for the test. What is most important is that students choose one format and use it consistently so that the overall appearance of the letter is attractive. Note: Students should double-space word-processed work in order to make revisions more easily. This should be applied only to the body of the letter and not to the other parts.

Parts of the Business Letter
(see illustrations on next page)

1. Heading
The heading consists of your address and the date.

PO Box 8207
Toronto ON  L2R 3V6
May 10, 2016

905-12963 61 St
Toronto ON  L2R 3V6
May 10, 2016

2. Inside Address
The inside address consists of the name and address of the person to whom you are writing. It usually appears four lines below the heading if a word processor is used or one line below if it is handwritten.

Sam Hunt
Director
The Knitting Mill
1409 3 Ave
Toronto ON  L3V 7O1

3. Salutation
The most traditional salutation or greeting for a business letter is Dear followed by Mr., Ms., Mrs., or Miss, and the person’s last name, followed by a colon.

Dear Mr. Smith:    Dear Mrs. Brown:
Dear Ms. Black:    Dear Miss Green:

4. Body
The body is the main part of the letter in which you write what you have to say to the addressee. Skip one line after the salutation.

• Be concise. Ensure that sufficient information is given so that your purpose is clearly understood and your request is well received.

• Business letters are usually formal, so the language that you use should also be formal.

5. Closing
The closing is the ending to your letter. It appears at the bottom of the letter, directly under the body. Only the first word in the closing should be capitalized. It is always followed by a comma.

Yours truly,
Sincerely,

6. Signature
The signature is your full name signed. Your signature should appear directly below the closing. It should always be written in ink.

7. Your Name Printed

Commonly Used Abbreviations for Provinces and Territories

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Province/Territory</th>
<th>Abbreviation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Alberta</td>
<td>AB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>British Columbia</td>
<td>BC</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Manitoba</td>
<td>MB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>New Brunswick</td>
<td>NB</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Newfoundland</td>
<td>NL</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Northwest Territories</td>
<td>NT</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nova Scotia</td>
<td>NS</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Nunavut</td>
<td>NU</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Ontario</td>
<td>ON</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Prince Edward Island</td>
<td>PE</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Québec</td>
<td>QC or PQ</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Saskatchewan</td>
<td>SK</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Yukon Territory</td>
<td>YT</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Business Letter Formats

The block format. In this format, all parts of the letter run along the left side of the page (margin). No paragraphs in the body are indented.

The modified block format. In this format, the heading, the closing, and the signature run along the right margin. All the other parts run along the left margin.

The semi-block format. This format is the same as the block format, except that the paragraphs in the body are indented.
Part A: Writing – Description and Instructions

Grade 9 Achievement Test
English Language Arts
Part A: Writing

Description

Part A: Writing contributes 50% of the total Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test mark and consists of two assignments:

• Assignment I: Narrative / Essay Writing
  This assignment contains some material for you to consider. You must then respond in writing to the topic presented in the assignment. You should take about 70 minutes to complete Assignment I.
  Value: Approximately 65% of the total Part A: Writing test mark

• Assignment II: Functional Writing
  This assignment describes a situation to which you must respond in the format of a business letter. You should take about 40 minutes to complete Assignment II.
  Value: Approximately 35% of the total Part A: Writing test mark

Instructions

• You may use the following print references:
  – a dictionary (English and/or bilingual)
  – a thesaurus

• Complete both assignments.

• Record your ideas and/or make a plan before you write. Do this on the Planning pages.

• Write in pencil, or blue or black ink, on the lined pages provided.

• You are to do only one handwritten copy of your writing.

Additional Instructions for Students Using Word Processors

• Format your work using an easy-to-read 12-point or larger font, such as Times.

• Double-space your final printed copy. For the Functional Writing assignment, this should be applied to the body of the business letter but not to the other parts.

• Staple your printed work to the page indicated for word-processed work for each assignment. Hand in all work.

• Indicate in the space provided on the back cover that you have attached word-processed pages.

• You may make handwritten corrections and revisions directly on your printed work.

Before beginning to write, you will have 10 minutes to talk with your classmates (in groups of two to four) about both writing assignments or to think about them alone. During this time, you may record your ideas on the Planning pages provided.

This test was developed to be completed in two hours; however, you may take an additional 30 minutes to complete the test.

Do not write your name anywhere in this booklet. You may make corrections and revisions directly on your written work.

2016
Assignment II: Functional Writing

*(suggested time—40 minutes)*

Read the situation below and complete the assignment that follows.

**Situation**

Northside Leisure Centre has served the needs of the city of Pine Ridge and nearby communities for a number of years. This recreational complex houses an indoor swimming pool, an ice-skating arena, a curling rink, a performing arts theatre, and two gymnasiums. The centre is open daily from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m. The costs of running the centre are covered by the fees paid by individuals who make use of the centre’s facilities and by profits from special events.

You are Jody Windsor, a grade nine student who lives in the neighbouring town of Sycamore View. You have enjoyed being able to visit the leisure centre frequently and you have often spent time taking part in recreational activities with your friends and members of your family. Recently, however, you have learned that the centre’s hours of operation are going to be reduced. According to the general manager of the centre, Ms. Laura Miller, the costs of operating the facilities are rising.

You have decided to write a business letter to Ms. Miller to present your concerns regarding the impact of a reduction in the leisure centre’s hours of operation. You believe that the current hours of operation should be maintained for many reasons. You may wish to propose potential solutions that could be implemented in order to avoid cutting back the hours during which the centre operates.

**Assignment**

Write a business letter to **Ms. Laura Miller, general manager of Northside Leisure Centre**, to **present your arguments regarding the benefits for local residents of the facilities and programs provided by the centre**. Provide enough information to **convince Ms. Miller of the need to maintain the centre’s current hours of operation**.

**When writing,** **be sure to**

- **identify** the **purpose** of the letter
- **explain** the details of the **situation** and request
- **organize** your **thoughts** appropriately in sentences and paragraphs
- **use vocabulary** that is appropriate and effective
- **sign** your **letter** Jody Windsor—**do not sign your own name**
- **address** the **envelope** on page 14
Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Ms. Laura Miller</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Northside Leisure Centre is located in Pine Ridge, Alberta, at 172 Greenside Way. The postal code is T3W 6L5. Ms. Laura Miller is the general manager of the centre.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Jody Windsor</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Jody Windsor lives in Sycamore View, Alberta, and receives mail at post office box 507. The postal code is T9S 4G2.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Envelope
Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2016: General Impressions

Throughout the 2016 marking session, every effort was made to reward student strengths where evident rather than to criticise what was missing or speculate on what a student should have added or included. When marking student responses, markers were encouraged to conscientiously return to the “Focus” section of the scoring categories to consider the extent to which each student had demonstrated competence in the criteria listed. There were several scoring descriptors in each scoring category to be assessed in order to arrive at judgments regarding the qualities of a response. Markers were encouraged to review—at the start of each marking day—each assignment and the prompt materials provided in the test booklet with the expectation that many students’ ideas regarding the assignments were informed by details within the prompts. Occasionally, markers needed to re-read a response to appreciate what a student had attempted and, in fact, accomplished. All markers acknowledged that student responses were first drafts written under time constraints.

In the Functional Writing Assignment, most students were able to connect the context provided in the “Situation” to their own experiences. From the viewpoint of “Jody Windsor, a grade nine student who lives in the neighbouring town of Sycamore View,” students wrote a business letter to “Ms. Laura Miller”—“the general manager” of “Northside Leisure Centre”—to present “concerns regarding the impact of a reduction in the leisure centre’s hours of operation” in order to argue that “the current hours of operation should be maintained for many reasons.” In many responses, students referenced or listed how “Northside Leisure Centre has served the needs of the city of Pine Ridge and nearby communities for a number of years” (by providing a “recreational complex [that] houses an indoor swimming pool, an ice-skating arena, a curling rink, a performing arts theatre, and two gymnasiums” and being “open daily from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m.”). In addition, students often included details pertaining to time spent at the centre (“being able to visit the leisure centre frequently and […] taking part in recreational activities with […] friends and […] family”). The majority of students recognized that, although the “costs of running the centre are covered by the fees paid by individuals who make use of the centre’s facilities and by profits from special events,” “the centre’s hours of operation are going to be reduced” because “the costs of operating the facilities are rising.” In some responses, students chose to “propose potential solutions that could be implemented in order to avoid cutting back the hours during which the centre operates.” However, the extent to which these guidelines were analyzed and particularized to achieve the student’s purpose in the “Assignment”—to “Write a business letter to Ms. Laura Miller, general manager of Northside Leisure Centre,” to “present your arguments regarding the benefits for local residents of the facilities and programs provided by the centre” and to “Provide enough information to convince Ms. Miller of the need to maintain the centre’s current hours of operation”—was what determined the quality of student responses.

Most students identified the value of the programs and facilities offered by Northside Leisure Centre to patrons interested in personal fitness (including “the running track in the gymnasium” and “a first-class weightroom”), the performing arts (including “the modern, well-equipped stage used by both student and adult performers”), and team sports (including “playing shinny hockey in the arena,” “basketball games and other court sports,” and “competitive swimming”). As well, students successfully assumed the role of “one who visits the centre often” and expressed dismay at the prospect of “having less recreational activities to do” if the centre’s hours of operation are “being lessened because it’s becoming too expensive to operate at current levels” in order to support arguments related to why “the working hours of the leisure center shouldn’t be reduced.” To further support their position, some students explored “solutions to the cuts” that included “two
for the price of one admission,” “theme nights,” “raising hourly fees at times when few people are making use of the facilities,” and fundraising through “bake sales, car washes, and pancake breakfasts.” In many responses, students provided information regarding how the addressee could contact the sender should she wish to do so, but this was not a requirement of the assignment.

In some responses, students reiterated verbatim information regarding Northside Leisure Centre that was provided in the test booklet. When assessing student responses, markers were to recognize that the assignment was framed primarily within outcomes specified in **General Outcome 3: Managing Ideas and Information**, and were to assess the extent to which students were successful in incorporating elements of the information provided into their writing in order to achieve their purpose.

As in other years, markers were to acknowledge that there was no prescribed length for responses to the Functional Writing Assignment. While some students concisely fulfilled the requirements of the task, others elaborated more fully on ideas that they presented. Such brevity or embellishment was neither beneficial nor detrimental in and of itself, and markers were to take into account the overall effectiveness of each response when assessing its quality. With regard to envelope and letter format, recommendations were provided in the guidelines of Canada Post. Other formats/styles were to be considered equally acceptable and markers were to assess the extent to which a student had been consistent in applying a chosen format to both the envelope and letter rather than “deduct marks” for deviations from the Canada Post guidelines. There were a number of student responses with varying amounts of white space between the heading, inside address, and salutation in the letter and some students single-spaced the body of the letter while others used double-spacing. Such formatting was not to be viewed as detrimental to the quality of student work and was not to be penalized in the assessment of “Content Management.”

The **Functional Writing Assignment** provided students with the opportunity to successfully demonstrate their attainment of text creation outcomes in the Program of Studies. Most students succeeded in meeting the achievement standards expected of students in the Functional Writing Assignment on *Part A: Writing* of the 2016 Grade 9 English Language Arts Achievement Test.
Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2016:
Qualities of Student Writing That Did Not Meet the Acceptable Standard

Students whose responses demonstrated qualities characteristic of “Poor” or “Limited” scores in “Content” sometimes relied exclusively on verbatim reiteration of the information presented in the assignment with little of their own thinking or development. Other students demonstrated a flawed or misconstrued understanding of the purpose of the letter, evident in contentions that “as the principle of the school at the center I assume you have the right to decide,” “if you open more hours more people will come so you will make more money,” and “80 percent of your customers are students and the school dismissal bell is really late so students won’t have time to go to the centre.” In some instances, students mistakenly argued or inappropriately contended that “It’s not fair to lay off workers which is what you're doing by cutting hours,” “I go there to get fit so if I cant go there I wont be fit and I’ll die,” or “you need to open your eyes and make a better decision.” In other responses, students presented dubious assertions pertaining to how “the center should be open 24 hours a day seven days a week,” how “if you close the leisure centre we’ll just build another one down the street,” and how “the centre has been cutting back for years and this has to stop!”

Ideas such as these are shown in the following excerpts from student responses that warranted “Poor” or “Limited” scores:

- “I personaly would like if you keep these hours at the Lesure center even if it dose cost more because we like to use the gym and pool and ice rink and dont care about if the centere makes a profit because we dont whant to pay more.”
- “It would be horable if we dint have the liesur center. My family loves it! I love it! […] We will hate you if we arent aloud have as much time a day in it it is a place we like to go to so that we have some thing to do.”
- “If you cut hours less peple will go to lots of peple cant go their. […] I am not the only person who dissagrees with the hours cutting so we will not be their nor niether anymore costmers.”
- “Why am writting to you to stop these changes. Cause Me and my friends already have trouble getting money. But now that we have to pay in which means we will all be in dept. […] If all of these this go through then you will make money but kids my age usually go but its going to be empty so its pointless.”
- “You can make some changes that wont effect the hole community. And that don’t make us fat because if we do not go then we will just wacht tv and eat chips […] I think its wronge if you do this or well be very sad and bored.”
- “Moms and babies are the only ones that come in the mornings so it wouldn’t matter if you closed then but then can you imagine how boring the days would be? There needs to be somewere were they can go.”
- “As you know are town is 100 kms away so it takes eight hours to get there and if you close at 8:00 pm we will never get there one time. […] How are we gonna spent time with are freinds and families?”
- “You should stop reducing your stores hours it will impact alot of people. […] I cant see why you cant not shut off lights at night and the seat heaters should be off if not one is in them.”
- “This centre is good for when we have nothing to do so if you close then we will have nothing to do so what are we going to do so were not bored.”
- “As the owner of north side lesure centre I can see why you want to make a profit. But it’s not fair that you get richer by making us poorer.”
In student writing deemed “Poor” or “Limited” in “Content,” as illustrated in these excerpts, ideas were superficial, flawed, overgeneralized, and/or misconstrued and development of the topic was inadequate or ineffective. Information presented was imprecise, undiscerning, irrelevant, and/or missing. Supporting details were insignificant, lacking, obscure, and/or absent, and the purpose of the assignment was only partially fulfilled or not fulfilled. A tone appropriate for the addressee was either evident but not maintained or little awareness of a tone appropriate for the addressee was evident. In responses scored “Poor” or “Limited” in “Content Management,” words and expressions used were frequently vague and/or inexact or inaccurate and/or misused. The writing demonstrated either faltering control or a lack of control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Errors that were present frequently or severely impeded meaning. The envelope and letter contained frequent or numerous and glaring format errors and/or omissions.

As is often the case each year, the connection between the assignment and the ideas contained in some student responses was difficult to determine. Markers were to consult with group leaders when drawing conclusions about whether or not a response sufficiently addressed the task presented in the assignment. Most often, there was evidence that the student had implicitly addressed the topic and/or prompts, and the response was assessable. If, however, extensive examination of a student’s work by both a marker and a group leader led to the conclusion that the response was “Insufficient,” then the floor supervisors in consultation with the examination manager made a final judgment.
Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2016: Qualities of Student Writing That Met the Acceptable Standard

Students whose responses merited a score of “Satisfactory” in “Content” typically recognized that “Northside Leisure Centre has been a part of our community for years” and “provides many activities for people of all ages.” Students argued that “the hours should not be reduced for countless reasons” by expressing appreciation for positive aspects of people’s experiences at the centre, such as in how “my family has lived in Sycamore View for many years, and much of that time has been spent at the Northside Leisure Centre,” how “kids should have somewhere to play and have fun, and Northside Leisure Centre is the best place for them,” and how “people can visit with each other and get healthy at the same time.” In other responses, students advised against a reduction in the centre’s hours of operation by suggesting that “if the centre is open less hours, less people will come,” that “there won’t be enough time for us to make use of as many of the facilities as we want to,” and that “a reduction in the centre’s hours will cause anxiety and congestion with more people wanting to do the activities with less time to do them.”

Qualities of student writing that warranted “Satisfactory” scores are evident in the following excerpts from student responses:

• “My name is Jody Windsor and I am a grade 9 student who lives in the neighboring town of Sycamore View and I have enjoyed recreational activities there with my friends and family. I have recently heard that you will be changing the hours at your facility and I think you should keep the hours the same.”

• “I am writing in concern that you are depleting the amount of hours that the Northside Leisure Centre is open. […] This centre can give people the opportunity to meet new people, children can have family time with their families, and, it gives people the exercise they need to live a healthy life.”

• “For the past few years I have been going to the Northside Leisure Center for quite a while now. The hours are convenient and suit my schedule. […] But recently, I’ve heard that you are interested in reducing the hours for the days because of the costs to operate the center are rising. I think that reducing the hours would be a disadvantage for people who come in to exercise, train etc. […] The center needs to be open when people want to go there.”

• “The Northside Leisure Center has been serving Pine Ridge and many communities with many recreational sports and games to play with friends and family. The current hours of the NSLC are 6:00 am to 10:00 pm and are now being shortened. Many people including myself dislike the idea of the times being shortened. If these hours are not maintained me and my friends will no longer be able to enjoy your facility because we wont have enough time.”

• “People work all day and the only chance they get to go is at night and you will be making less money if you shortened the hours. You will lose profit for your facility. […] I have a few ideas for you to consider. You can make a lot of money off of family packs and passes. If you add them, people pay a certain amount per month to go to your facility when ever they want.”

• “You could do some fundraising or other sorts of activities to raise money. […] Some solutions would be to raise the entrance fee slightly. You could also host different events in hopes to raise some money to go towards the center.”

• “Having volunteers is a great thing. You can give them the job experience they need to get a job when they are old enough. […] Volunteers can help with groups of children and do other jobs to. That way the leisure centre can keep the hours the same.”
• “You could save money by holding fund raisers. People who go to the center would not mind giving some money to keep the place running. People can be very generous if the services and activities you provide are adequate. I am sure people will be willing to donate to the center.”
• “We can make fliers and posters to put up around town to advertise the centre. People will see the posters and come to the centre to buy memberships. Personally, I am willing to help out where needed. We could also have bake sales and ask local businesses for donations.”
• “I really think that the hours shouldn’t be changed at all. You could up the prices the people pay to use the facility and strive to do more big events like concerts to help raise the money needed. It’s a very fun facility and I hope you don’t ignore my ideas and don’t change the hours of operation. Thank you for reading my letter.”

In responses receiving a score of “Satisfactory” in “Content,” as illustrated in these excerpts, students presented appropriate ideas and adequately developed the topic. Relevant information was presented and supported by enough detail to fulfill the purpose of the assignment. A tone appropriate for the addressee was generally maintained. In responses scored “Satisfactory” in “Content Management,” words and expressions used were generally accurate and occasionally effective. The writing demonstrated basic control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics, and contained errors that occasionally impeded meaning. The envelope and letter contained occasional format errors and/or omissions.
Student Exemplar – Satisfactory

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Laura Miller

Northside Leisure Centre is located in Pine Ridge, Alberta, at 172 Greenside Way. The postal code is T3W 6L5. Ms. Laura Miller is the general manager of the centre.

Jody Windsor

Jody Windsor lives in Sycamore View, Alberta, and receives mail at post office box 507. The postal code is T9S 4G2.

Envelope

JODY WINDSOR
PO. BOX 507
SYCAMORE VIEW, AB T9S 4G2

LAURA MILLER
GENERAL MANAGER
NORTHSIDE LEISURE CENTRE
172 GREENSIDE WAY
PINE RIDGE, AB T3W 6L5
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

B - Background
P - Problem
D - Detail
O - Outcome
C - Conclusion
S - Sincerely
S - Signed
P - Print
Jody Windsor
Po Box 507
Sycamore View, AB TAS 462

Tuesday, May 10 2016

General Manager
Northside leisure Centre
132 Greenside Way
Pine Ridge, AB T3W 6L5

Dear Ms. Laura Miller:

I am from Sycamore View. My name is Jody Windsor. I frequently visit the Northside leisure Centre with my friends and family. Recently I found out that the hours of operation at the Northside leisure Centre are going to be reduced. This is a problem for me for other people. There are many people like myself who enjoy going to the leisure centre and cutting the hours of
operation in this Facility make it difficult for
many people.

A lot of people visit the Northside Leisure Centre because of its excellent swimming pool, ice skating arena, performing arts theatre, curling rink, and two gymnasiums. The Facility is open from 6 am to 10 pm which is great because a lot of people get off work at six which gives them a lot of time to go to the leisure centre. There are also children who like to visit after they have finished school. Cutting down the hours of operation makes it difficult for people who want to come later or can't make it in the afternoons. If you cut back the hours the number of visitors that come would probably go down.

I request that you keep the hours of operations for the Northside Leisure Centre the same. You could please contact me back at Jody.windsor@hotmail.co.

Sincerely,

Jody Windsor
# Rationale for Student Exemplar – Satisfactory

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<td><strong>Content</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>• The <strong>ideas</strong> (regarding the prospect that “the hours of operation at the Northside Leisure Centre are going to be reduced” and how “This is a problem”) are <strong>appropriate</strong>, and <strong>development</strong> of the topic through the arguments that, because “a lot of people get off work at six” and “children […] like to visit after they have finished school,” “the number of visitors that come would probably go down” is <strong>adequate</strong>.</td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>• <strong>Relevant information</strong>—in the documentation of how “Cutting down the hours of operation makes it difficult for people who want to come later or can’t make it in the afternoons”—is presented, and this information is <strong>supported</strong> by <strong>enough detail</strong> (related to the centre’s “swimming pool, ice skating arena, performing arts theatre, curling rink, and two gymnasiums” and “The facility” being “open from 6 am to 10 pm”) to <strong>fulfill</strong> the <strong>purpose</strong> of the assignment.</td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>• As is evident in expressions such as “Hello my name is Jody Windsor and I am from Sycamore View,” “Recently I found out that,” and “I request that you keep the hours of operations for the Northside Leisure Centre the same,” a <strong>tone appropriate</strong> for the addressee is <strong>generally maintained</strong>.</td>
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<td><strong>Content Management</strong></td>
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<tr>
<td>S</td>
<td>• As illustrated in “A lot of people visit the Northside Leisure Centre,” “a lot of people get off work at six which gives them a lot of time,” “children who like to visit,” “people who want to come later or can’t make it in the afternoons,” and “cut back the hours,” <strong>words</strong> and <strong>expressions</strong> used are <strong>generally accurate</strong> and <strong>occasionally effective</strong>.</td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>• The writing demonstrates <strong>basic control</strong> of correct <strong>sentence structure</strong> (as in “I frequently visit the Northside Leisure Centre with my friends and family”), <strong>usage</strong> (as in “There are many people like myself who enjoy going to the leisure centre and cutting the hours of operation in this facility make it difficult for many people”), and <strong>mechanics</strong> (as in “You could please contact me back at <a href="mailto:Jody.Windsor@hotmail.ca">Jody.Windsor@hotmail.ca</a>”). <strong>Errors</strong> that include “a problem for me for other people,” “6 am to 10 pm,” “visitors,” and “the hours of operations” may <strong>occasionally impede</strong> meaning.</td>
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<td>S</td>
<td>• <strong>Occasional format errors</strong> and <strong>omissions</strong> are contained in the <strong>envelope</strong> and <strong>letter</strong>, such as the inclusion of punctuation in the return address, mailing address, heading, and inside address, the inclusion of “Jody Windsor” and incorrect presentation of “Tuesday, May 10 2016” in the heading, the omission of the recipient’s name in the inside address, the inclusion of the recipient’s first name in the salutation (in “Dear Ms. Laura Miller:”), and the incorrect presentation of the closing (in “Sincerly”). <strong>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered</strong>.</td>
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Observations from Standards Confirmation and Central Marking 2016: Qualities of Student Writing That Met the Standard of Excellence

In responses warranting scores of “Proficient” or “Excellent” in “Content,” students often contended—from the viewpoint of “a frequent user who patronizes the centre on a daily basis” who is “deeply concerned about any reduction in the centre’s hours of operation”—that Northside Leisure Centre provides “a reprieve from the stress of a long workday” and “builds a sense of belonging among local residents.” Many argued that “the centre is an asset to the community, and with community support, it can maintain its current programs without reducing the hours of operation.” Students frequently expressed praise for “the centre’s exceptionally welcoming and knowledgeable staff,” the “valuable life skills gained while at the centre” in “the field of athletics, the arts, and interpersonal interactions,” as well as for “the many different programs and services offered at the centre” which “reflect the diversity that exists in our community.” To reinforce their arguments, some students included speculation about how “among the centre’s visitors there could be a future Olympic contender or an upcoming star of stage and screen” and provided recommendations regarding how to “seek out alternate revenue streams such as 50/50 draws, silent auctions, raffles, and selling sports apparel.”

The excerpts below, taken from student responses, illustrate qualities of writing that received “Proficient” or “Excellent” scores:

• “Northside Leisure Centre provides our community with many opportunities to exercise, stay in shape, and make our community as a whole healthier and stronger. I myself have made many close friends that I would have never talked to before because of meeting them at Northside. […] I realize that the costs of running your facility have increased by a wide margin, and that is why you are planning to cut the hours. However, I do believe that there are ways to increase your income in order to cover the costs of operating the facility.”

• “The Northside Leisure Centre has served the needs of the community for many years. Your building contains a substantial amount of diverse attractions which provide numerous ways for people to be active, play team sports, and explore the fine arts. Without your building, people in the community would be lacking these essential services that would otherwise be unavailable to them. By reducing the hours of operation for the centre, you are limiting the amount of time that members of the community spend participating in healthy social events.”

• “Residents of Pine Ridge and surrounding communities will be heart-broken to see the hours of operation at the leisure centre reduced. From the pool to the gym to the tennis courts inside, there is something for everyone! […] The centre has been a part of the community for many years. It is a symbol of the kinship we share with others when we are there. […] If we make use of local talent and resources, we can find solutions to address the financial short fall faced by the centre that do not have a negative impact on people who use the facility.”

• “People value being able to swim, skate, curl, or play sports in the gym all in one location. The performances staged in the community theatre are of the highest quality. The facilities are well maintained and staff employed there are welcoming and helpful. Above all, the hours during which the centre has been open, from 6:00 a.m. to 10:00 p.m., have made the leisure centre accessible to everyone, even those with busy schedules.”

• “There are many children who come to the leisure centre after school for swimming lessons. A number of families come to ice-skate and spend time together. Theatre classes from nearby schools have enhanced their skills through workshops held and performances staged in the community theatre. Young athletes have been able to hone their skills in order to be competitive and pursue their dreams. […] My point is that so many opportunities could be lost if access to the centre is reduced in any way.”
• “I ask you to consider the negative impact a reduction in the operating hours could have on members of the community and to propose some possible solutions that could maintain the existing hours at the centre that my family and many others value so highly. […] Keeping the hours the same while making a profit can be difficult, but as they say, for every lock there is a key! I am certain that we can find the money needed by doing a cost-benefit review of the programs currently offered and the times during which use of the facility is low.”

• “Local residents receive many benefits from the facility, like being able to swim on a warm, sunny day or enjoy a musical or theatrical performance on a Friday night. Sports-minded individuals relish playing dodgeball in the gymnasium. […] The citizens of Pine Ridge and nearby communities take pride in the Northside Leisure Centre as it is part of the city’s history. It has brought strangers together, and made them feel that they are part of the community.”

• “People who use the recreational complex understand the reasons behind the decision to reduce the hours of operation. However, many people are quite disappointed with this decision. They have very busy lives and tight schedules, and reducing the hours of operation will further limit the time they may spend at this impressive complex because it will be nearly impossible for them to visit the centre. […] Clearly the centre cannot continue to offer the same programs in the same way. Perhaps you might consider setting minimums for enrolment for programs that are to be offered and cutting those programs that have few participants.”

• “Ensuring that Northside Leisure Centre is open to the public for as many hours as possible is of the utmost importance. The facilities and services provided by the centre are crucial in encouraging community residents to living a healthy lifestyle. It is also a social centre where people feel that they are part of the community. […] Creative solutions are needed to balance the books at the Leisure Centre. We could ask local media to provide complimentary advertising and we could apply for government grants to install environmentally friendly solar panels, which will ultimately lower the costs of lighting and heating the building.”

• “Thank you for taking time out of your busy schedule to read my letter. I sincerely hope that you take my ideas into consideration with regard to your decision to reduce the hours of operation at Northside Leisure Centre. […] If possible, I would very much like to hear from you to see if we can work together to find a solution that will benefit both the leisure centre and the people who value being able to utilize its facilities.”

Student writing judged “Proficient” or “Excellent” in “Content,” as illustrated in these excerpts, was characterized by ideas that were thoughtful or perceptive, and development of the topic was generally effective or clear and effective. Significant or pertinent information was presented, and this information was substantiated or enhanced by specific or precise details that fulfilled the purpose of the assignment. A tone appropriate for the addressee was clearly or skillfully maintained. In responses scored “Proficient” or “Excellent” in “Content Management,” words and expressions used were usually or consistently accurate and effective. The writing demonstrated either competent and generally consistent control or confident and consistent control of correct sentence structure, usage, and mechanics. Any errors present rarely impeded or did not impede meaning. The envelope and letter contained few, if any, format errors and/or omissions.
Student Exemplar – Proficient

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Laura Miller
Northside Leisure Centre is located in Pine Ridge, Alberta, at 172 Greenside Way. The postal code is T3W 6L5. Ms. Laura Miller is the general manager of the centre.

Jody Windsor
Jody Windsor lives in Sycamore View, Alberta, and receives mail at post office box 507. The postal code is T9S 4G2.

Envelope

JODY WINDSOR
PO. BOX 507
SYCAMORE VIEW, AB T9S 4G2

LAURA MILLER
GENERAL MANAGER
NORTHSIDE LEISURE CENTRE
172 GREENSIDE WAY
PINE RIDGE AB, T3W 6L5
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.
P.O. Box 506
Sycamore View, AB  T9S 4G2
May 10th, 2016

Laura Miller
Northside Leisure Centre
172 Greenside Way
Pine Ridge, AB  T3W 6L5

Dear Ms. Miller:

I am Jody Windsor, a grade 9 student who lives in Sycamore View. I like to spend my weekends at the Northside Leisure Centre. I heard that the hours of operation will be reduced because its costing too much to keep it open for so long, so I decided to write this letter to ask you to reconsider this proposition, and keep the centre running as before.

My family and I enjoy spending Saturdays together to play sports, or go swimming. We are very big fans of curling. We have participated in plays that happen in the performing arts theatre, and have helped arrange summer camps that have taken place there. I find that spending time together with my family in the leisure centre is a very good way to bond and enjoy each others company.

Rather than to reduce the amount of hours the leisure centre is open, I suggest that hosting events that are interesting to the community and having
prices lowered on holidays would encourage business and make the community more interested in the leisure centre.

If the Leisure Centre is not open as often as it was, it discourages the people who used to come at those hours, you lose their business. It may also make some events unable to happen, because there are a couple events that can only be hosted early in the morning, or late at night, such as performances in the theatre. I believe the best course of action would be to keep the centre running as before.

Thank you for taking the time to read my letter. I hope you take some of my ideas into consideration. I believe that keeping the centre open is an appropriate course of action, and with my ideas I hope you do too.

Best regards

Jody Windsor

Jody Windsor
## Rationale for Student Exemplar – Proficient

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<td>Content</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>• The ideas that pertain to the writer’s spending “weekends at the Northside Leisure Centre,” the need to “keep the centre running as before,” and the value of “spending time together with […] family in the leisure centre [which] is a very good way to bond and enjoy each others company” are thoughtful, and development of the topic—in the arguments that a reduction of hours of operation “discourages the people who used to come at those hours” and “may also make some events unable to happen […] early in the morning, or late at night”—is generally effective.</td>
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<td>Pf</td>
<td>• Significant information is presented (regarding “the hours of operation” being “reduced because its costing too much to keep it open for so long” and the recommendation that “hosting events that are interesting to the community and having prices lowered on holidays would encourage business”), and this information is substantiated by specific details—such as those related to “spending Saturdays together to play sports, or go swimming,” being “big fans of curling,” participating in “plays that happen in the performing arts theatre,” and helping to “arrange summer camps that have taken place there”—that fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
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<td>Pf</td>
<td>• A tone appropriate for the addressee (as in “I decided to write this letter to ask you to reconsider this proposition,” “I find that,” “Rather than to reduce the amount of hours the leisure centre is open, I suggest that,” “I believe the best course of action would be to keep the centre running as before,” “Thank you for taking the time to read my letter,” and “I believe that keeping the centre open is a appropriate course of action, and with my ideas I hope you do too”) is clearly maintained.</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>- <strong>Words and expressions</strong> used (as in “I like to spend my weekends,” “keep the centre running as before,” “hosting events that are interesting to the community and having prices lowered on holidays,” “If the Leisure Centre is not open as often as it was, it discourages the people who used to come at those hours,” “events that can only be hosted early in the morning, or late at night, such as performances in the theatre,” and “the best course of action” are <strong>usually accurate</strong> and <strong>effective</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>- The writing demonstrates <strong>competent</strong> and <strong>generally consistent control</strong> of correct <strong>sentence structure</strong>—such as in “I am Jody Windsor, a grade 9 student who lives in Sycamore View,” <strong>usage</strong>—such as in “We have participated in plays that happen in the performing arts theatre, and have helped arrange summer camps that have taken place there,” and <strong>mechanics</strong>—such as in “I hope you take some of my ideas into consideration.” <strong>Errors</strong> that are present (including “because its costing too much,” “enjoy each others company,” “a couple events,” and “a appropriate course of action”) <strong>rarely impede</strong> meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>- The <strong>envelope</strong> and <strong>letter</strong> contain <strong>few format errors</strong> and <strong>omissions</strong>, such as in the inclusion of punctuation in the return address, mailing address, heading, and inside address, the incorrect presentation of “May 10th, 2016” in the heading, and the omission of a comma in the closing. <strong>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Student Exemplar – Excellent

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Laura Miller

Northside Leisure Centre is located in Pine Ridge, Alberta, at 172 Greenside Way. The postal code is T3W 6L5. Ms. Laura Miller is the general manager of the centre.

Jody Windsor

Jody Windsor lives in Sycamore View, Alberta, and receives mail at post office box 507. The postal code is T9S 4G2.

Envelope

Jody Windsor
PO BOX 507
Sycamore View AB T9S 4G2

Laura Miller
General Manager
Northside Leisure Centre
172 Greenside Way
Pine Ridge AB T3W 6L5
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

PO Box 507
Sycamore View AB T9S 4G2

POST
Laura Miller, General Manager
Northside Leisure Centre
Pine Ridge AB T3W 6L5

Dear Ms. Miller:

Background
- local resident
- active member of the leisure centre
- just became aware of operating hour reductions

Purpose
- greatly interested in offering other alternatives
- not happy about changes

Details
- love your facilities

Objective
- alternatives

Goodwill Closing
- thank you
- restated brief: purpose/objective
- contact me
PO Box 507
Sycamore View AB T9S 4G2
May 10, 2016

Laura Miller, General Manager
Northside Leisure Centre
172 Greenside Way
Pine Ridge AB T3W 6L5

Dear Ms. Miller,

I am a grade nine student who lives in Sycamore View and an extremely active participant in the leisure centre you manage. I have recently become aware of the possibility that the hours during which the Northside Leisure Centre is open to the public could be reduced as a result of budget cuts and lack of funding. This alteration in the centre’s hours of operation will negatively affect me, and I am greatly interested in offering other measures that could be implemented to ensure full customer satisfaction.

Since my early childhood, I have had many amazing experiences with my friends and family at your well-equipped leisure centre. To this day, I am still an active member and will continue for an extremely long time. All of your recreational equipment is very useful to me, whether I am having fun or attempting a serious workout. In the past, I have been exposed to all aspects of this recreational complex, whether it be the indoor swimming pool or the performing arts centre. However, one of the main reasons that this complex is so amazing is because of its late hours of operation. I am often busy with other sports and activities, especially soccer. My practices end at 8:30 pm, and I am consistently grateful this centre has such late
operating hours. This way, I can still spend time with my friends while fitting in my other extra curricular activities.

Possible solutions to preventing a reduction in operating hours include a simple fundraiser to not only gain more funds, but to also raise awareness of these amazing facilities. If more and more people become interested, the centre will receive more members and ultimately more income. Another alternative to avoid a reduction in the hours of operation is to advertise opportunities for volunteering. One of the many ways the centre is losing money is due to the cost of wages for employees. By attracting volunteers, you will be able to utilize that extra money to be able to keep the facilities open for longer periods of time.

Thank you so much for reading my letter, and I sincerely hope you consider the different alternatives I have recommended you use. Speaking for most of the Northside Leisure Centre’s members, it would be beneficial if the centre could maintain its current hours of operation. Simple actions, such as a fundraiser or offering volunteer opportunities, will significantly improve the centre’s income and ultimate success. If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at jwindsor@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Jody Windsor

Jody Windsor
## Rationale for Student Exemplar – Excellent

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reporting Category</th>
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<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Content</td>
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<td></td>
<td>• As demonstrated in the contention that the “alteration in the centre’s hours of operation will negatively affect” the writer who is “greatly interested in offering other measures that could be implemented to ensure full customer satisfaction” and the argument that “it would be beneficial if the centre could maintain its current hours of operation” through “Simple actions, such as a fundraiser or offering volunteer opportunities, [that] will significantly improve the centre’s income and ultimate success,” the ideas are perceptive, and development of the topic (in referencing “amazing experiences” had with “friends and family” at the “well-equipped leisure centre,” acknowledging having been “consistently grateful this centre has such late operating hours,” contending that “If more and more people become interested, the centre will receive more members and ultimately more income,” and suggesting that “the cost of wages for employees” could be offset by “attracting volunteers”) is clear and effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>Pertinent information (regarding “budget cuts and lack of funding” that have led to “the possibility that the hours during which the Northside Leisure Centre is open to the public could be reduced,” “a simple fundraiser to not only gain more funds, but to also raise awareness of these amazing facilities,” and advertising “opportunities for volunteering”) is presented, and this information is enhanced by precise details—related to the use of “recreational equipment” for “having fun or attempting a serious workout,” “the indoor swimming pool or the performing arts centre,” “late hours of operation,” being “often busy with other sports and activites, especially soccer” until “8:30pm,” and being with “friends while fitting in […] other extra curricular activites”—that effectively fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>A tone appropriate for the addressee is skillfully maintained through the use of expressions such as “I am a grade nine student who lives in Sycamore View and an extremely active participant in the leisure centre you manage,” “I have recently become aware,” “To this day I am still an active member and will continue for an extremely long time,” “one of the main reasons that this complex is so amazing,” “Another alternative to avoid a reduction in the hours of operation,” “Thank you so much for reading my letter, and I sincerely hope you consider the different alternatives I have recommended you use,” and “Speaking for most of the Northside Leisure Centre’s members.”</td>
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<td>Score</td>
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<td>E</td>
<td><strong>Content Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <strong>Words and expressions</strong> used—such as “an extremely active participant,” “This alteration in the centre’s hours of operation will negatively affect me,” “greatly interested in offering,” “ensure full customer satisfaction,” “Since my early childhood,” “at your well-equipped leisure centre,” “All of your recreational equipment is very useful to me, whether I am having fun or attempting a serious workout,” “often busy with other sports,” “I am consistently grateful,” “Possible solutions to preventing a reduction in operating hours include,” “a simple fundraiser to not only gain more funds, but to also raise awareness,” “more members and ultimately more income,” “One of the many ways the centre is losing money,” and “Simple actions, such as a fundraiser or offering volunteer opportunities”—are <strong>consistently accurate</strong> and <strong>effective</strong>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>• The writing demonstrates <strong>confident</strong> and <strong>consistent control</strong> of correct <strong>sentence structure</strong> (as in “In the past, I have been exposed to all aspects of this recreational complex, whether it be the indoor swimming pool or the performing arts centre”), <strong>usage</strong> (as in “By attracting volunteers, you will be able to utilize that extra money to be able to keep the facilities open for longer periods of time”), and <strong>mechanics</strong> (as in “If you have any further questions or concerns, please do not hesitate to contact me at <a href="mailto:jwindsor@gmail.com">jwindsor@gmail.com</a>”). <strong>Errors</strong> that may be present such as “because of it late hours,” “activites,” “8:30pm,” and “extra curricular” <strong>do not impede</strong> meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>• With the exception of the use of a comma instead of a colon in the salutation, the <strong>envelope and letter</strong> are <strong>essentially free</strong> from <strong>format errors</strong> and <strong>omissions</strong>.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.**
Appendix: Marker Training Papers

The Marker Training Papers are intended to provide markers with an opportunity to

- apply the standards embedded in the scoring criteria and illustrated in the Exemplars and Rationales
- grapple with some of the more complex decisions that markers face
- read and score the Training Papers according to the scoring criteria
- compare individually awarded scores with those awarded in each scoring category

Reminders for marking:

- When a student’s work exhibits characteristics of two scoring criteria, a marker must use professional judgment to apply the scoring criterion that most accurately and appropriately describes the features of the paper. Usually, the appropriate criterion is the one from which there are the most descriptors that “fit” the student’s work.

- Be objective in your marking. Mark according to the Scoring Guide and Exemplars ONLY.

- Before marking each scoring category, read the focus information to help you to focus on the key words and phrases of each reporting category that help to distinguish differences among scoring levels.

- Student work must be related to the assignment. An INSUFFICIENT paper demonstrates no evidence of an attempt to address the task presented in the assignment, or the student has written so little that it is not possible to assess Content. A NO RESPONSE paper has absolutely nothing written, drawn, or highlighted.

- Information provided by a student on the planning page can be used to inform a marker’s judgments but is not directly scored.

- Do not be misled by the physical appearance of a response. Poorly handwritten/word-processed responses are not necessarily poorly constructed, just as neatly handwritten/word-processed responses are not necessarily of quality and substance.

- Score each bullet within each reporting category separately, and then assign an overall score for that category. For example, if two of the three bullets in a scoring category are scored as “Pf” and the third bullet as “S,” assign an overall score of “Pf” in this scoring category. You will encounter papers that, according to the scoring guide, are at the high end or low end of the range of a given scoring level; nonetheless, a single score must be awarded for each scoring category.

- A student response does not have to be perfect to receive a score of Excellent in any one or both scoring categories.
Marker Training Paper A

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

**Ms. Laura Miller**

Northside Leisure Centre is located in Pine Ridge, Alberta, at 172 Greenside Way. The postal code is T3W 6L5. Ms. Laura Miller is the general manager of the centre.

**Jody Windsor**

Jody Windsor lives in Sycamore View, Alberta, and receives mail at post office box 507. The postal code is T9S 4G2.

**Envelope**

JODY WINDSOR  
BOX 507  
SYCAMORE VIEW AB T9S 4G2

MS LAURA MILLER  
NORTHSIDE LEISURE CENTRE  
172 GREENSIDE WAY  
PINE RIDGE AB T3W 6L5
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

The hours are good, they are reasonable

Not everybody is available during the day, so it's good to have it open early and late.

- trade admission
- rent out equipment
- hold performances
- put in more activities that people like.

Sycamore View A&B 195 4G2

Ms. Laura Miller, General Manager
Northside Leisure Centre
172 Greenside Way
Pine Ridge AB, T3W 6L5

background
BP
purpose
operations
DGC
polite good-bye
details
Box 507
Sycamore View AB TAS 462
May 18, 2016

Ms. Laura Miller, General Manager
Northside Leisure Centre
172 Greenside Way
Pine Ridge AB TAS 615

Ms. Miller,

It has come to my attention that there is going to be a reduction in the leisure centre's hours of operation; because of costs, many members of this community, including myself, agree that the hours of operation at the leisure centre should remain the same. As a paying member of this facility, we believe that we should be part of making this decision. I am writing to you to request that the hours of operation at the Northside Leisure Centre remain the same.

As you may know, the Northside Leisure Centre is home to many members of the Pine Ridge community. We spend hours there daily, swimming, skating, working out, and much more. The cut-down of hours is very upsetting to many of us. We are all aware that the cost of staffing the facilities...
are exceeding revenues, but there are often much more effective ways of cutting down costs. They could raise admission prices by fifty cents to a dollar so that the leisure center is still making more money but the prices aren't raised so much that customers get upset. Since there is a performing arts theatre, they could hold plays and performances where you have to pay for tickets, or they can hold lessons. The leisure center can also rent out equipment like ice skates, or helmets, or brushes for curling.

The Northside Leisure Center can cut down on costs through different ways instead of cutting down operating hours. Many people have no time to go for this center during the day, so it's good that this leisure center is open early and late. The Pine Ridge community, and many other neighboring communities believe that the hours of operation at the Northside Leisure Center are reasonable, and should not be changed.

Thank you for taking the time to review this letter. I hope you take this request into consideration. I'm looking forward to speaking with you soon about this very important matter. If you have any questions or comments, please contact me on my email @windsorj@gmail.com.

Sincerely,

Jody Windsor
Rationale for Marker Training Paper A

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reporting Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>Content</td>
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<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• The ideas related to the concern that “there is going to be a reduction in the leisure centre’s hours of operation, because of costs” and the “request that the hours of operation at the Northside Leisure Centre remain the same” are thoughtful, and development of the topic—through the arguments that “there are other, much more effective ways of cutting down costs” such as raising “admission prices by fifty cents to a dollar so that the leisure center is still making more money but the prices aren’t raised so much that customers get upset” or holding “plays and performances where you have to pay for tickets, or they can hold lessons”—is generally effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>• Significant information is presented—pertaining to how “the Northside Leisure Centre is home to many members of the Pine Ridge community” and how “Many people have no time to go to this centre during the day, so it’s good that this leisure centre is open early and late”—and this information is substantiated by specific details (regarding “hours [spent] there daily swimming, skating, working out, and much more,” “the costs of staffing the facilities […] exceeding revenues,” the “performing arts theatre,” and renting “out equipment like ice skates, or helmets, or brushes for curling”) that fulfill the purpose of the assignment.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>• As illustrated in “It has come to my attention,” “Many members of this community, including myself, agree that the hours of operation at the leisure centre should remain the same,” “As you may know,” “very upsetting to many of us,” “We are all aware that,” “The Pine Ridge community, and many other neighboring communities believe that the hours of operation at the Northside Leisure Center are reasonable, and should not be changed,” “Thank you for taking the time to review this letter,” “I hope you take this request into consideration,” and “I’m looking forward to speaking with you soon about this very important matter,” a tone appropriate for the addressee is skillfully maintained.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Score</td>
<td>Reporting Category</td>
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<td></td>
<td>Content Management</td>
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<tr>
<td>Pf</td>
<td>• As seen in “We spend hours there daily,” “the costs of staffing the facilities are exceeding revenues,” “other, much more effective ways,” “raise admission prices,” “so that the leisure center is still making more money but the prices aren't raised so much that customers get upset,” “Since there is a performing arts theatre, they could hold plays,” “Many people have no time to go to this centre during the day,” and “speaking with you soon about this very important matter,” words and expressions used are usually accurate and effective.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>• The writing demonstrates <strong>confident</strong> and <strong>consistent control</strong> of correct <strong>sentence structure</strong> (as in “As paying members of this facility, we believe that we should be part of making this decision”), <strong>usage</strong> (as in “The Northside Leisure Center can cut down on costs through different ways instead of cutting down operating hours”), and <strong>mechanics</strong> (as in “If you have any questions or comments, please contact me on my email @ <a href="mailto:windsorj@gmail.com">windsorj@gmail.com</a>”). <strong>Errors</strong> that may be present—such as “I am writing to you request that,” “equipement,” and “Northside Leisure Center”—do not impede meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>E</td>
<td>• The <strong>envelope</strong> and <strong>letter</strong> are essentially free from <strong>format errors</strong> and <strong>omissions</strong>, with the exception of the omission of the recipient’s title in the mailing address. <strong>Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.</strong></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Marker Training Paper B

Address Information

Use the following information for your letter and to address the envelope below.

Ms. Laura Miller

Northside Leisure Centre is located in Pine Ridge, Alberta, at 172 Greenside Way. The postal code is T3W 6L5. Ms. Laura Miller is the general manager of the centre.

Jody Windsor

Jody Windsor lives in Sycamore View, Alberta, and receives mail at post office box 507. The postal code is T9S 4G2.

Envelope

Jody Windsor
Sycamore View, AB
T9S 4G2
P.O. Box 507

Laura Miller
Pine Ridge, AB
T3W 6L5
172 Greenside Way
Assignment II: Planning

Use this page to plan in whatever way you choose.

1st Try and convince her to keep the hours the same.

And tell her why it should stay open late.
Jody Windsor
Sycamore View, AB
T9S 4G2
P.O Box 507

Laura Miller
Pine Ridge, AB
T3W 6L5
172 Greenside Way

Dear Laura Miller,

I would like to talk to you about the hours of the Northside Leisure Center. I think that the hours we have now are pretty reasonable 6:00 am to 10:00 pm. I heard in the local newspaper that you will be shortening the hours of the establishment. Do you need more people working or is there just not enough money? Whatever the case can you try and keep the hours the same as before or at least open a little later than before.

My family and I have really enjoyed our time spent at the Leisure center. It would be a shame if we had to spend less time there because we live in a small town and there isn’t much to do around here. If necessary please open little bit later or something along those lines.

Yours truly,

[Signature]

Jody Windsor.
**Rationale for Marker Training Paper B**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Reporting Category</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Content</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• The ideas pertaining to “the hours of the Northside Leisure Center” are <strong>superficial</strong> and the misconception of the situation—evident in the question “Do you need more people working or is there just not enough money?”—is <strong>flawed</strong>, and development of the topic (in the argument that “the hours we have now are pretty reasonable” and the request to “open little bit later or something along those lines”) is <strong>inadequate</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Information</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Information presented regarding “shortening the hours of the establishment” and “time spent at the Leisure center” is <strong>imprecise</strong>. Supporting <strong>details</strong>—beyond those related to the centre being open “6:00 am to 10:00 pm”—are <strong>lacking</strong> and those related to living “in a small town” where “there isn’t much to do” are <strong>insignificant</strong>. The <strong>purpose</strong> of the assignment is only <strong>partially fulfilled</strong>.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>L</td>
<td>Tone appropriate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• A <strong>tone appropriate</strong> for the addressee (such as in “I would like to talk to you about,” “I think that,” “I heard in the local newspaper that,” and “It would be a shame if we had to spend less time there”) is <strong>evident</strong> but <strong>not maintained</strong> (as seen in “Whatever the case can you try and keep the hours the same as before or at least open a little later than before”).</td>
<td></td>
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<td>Score</td>
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<tr>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td><strong>Content Management</strong></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• <em>Words</em> and <em>expressions</em> used (such as “the hours we have now are pretty reasonable,” “try and keep the hours the same as before,” “a shame if we had to spend less time there,” “we live in a small town and there isn’t much to do around here,” and “If necessary please open”) are <em>generally accurate</em> and <em>occasionally effective</em>.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>S</strong></td>
<td>• The writing demonstrates <em>basic control</em> of correct <em>sentence structure</em>—as in “I would like to talk to you about the hours of the Northside Leisure Center,” <em>usage</em>—as in “I heard in the local newspaper that you will be shortening the hours of the establishment,” and <em>mechanics</em>—as in “My family and I have really enjoyed our time spent at the Leisure center.” <em>Errors</em> (such as in “Northside Leisure Center,” “6:00 am to 10:00 pm,” “the Leisure center,” and “please open little bit later”) may <em>occasionally impede</em> meaning.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>L</strong></td>
<td>• <em>Frequent format errors</em> and <em>omissions</em> are contained in the <em>envelope</em> and <em>letter</em>—in the misplacement and incorrect presentation of “P.O Box 507,” the inclusion of a comma, and the placement of the postal code on a separate line in the return address and heading; the inclusion of the recipient’s name and omission of the date in the heading; the omission of the recipient’s title and organization, the misplacement of “172 Greenside Way,” the inclusion of a comma, and the placement of the postal code on a separate line in both the mailing address and inside address; the incorrect presentation of “Dear Laura Miller,” in the salutation; and the inclusion of a period after the printed name.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**Proportion of error to length and complexity of response has been considered.**