

Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards (AIMS DPA)

Student Guide Grade 5



Arizona Department of Education
Tom Horne, Superintendent of Public Instruction

Assessment Section
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AIMS DPA FAQ

What is AIMS DPA?

Arizona's Instrument to Measure Standards Dual Purpose Assessment (AIMS DPA) is a combination of two separate tests. One test is AIMS, which measures how well you know the reading, writing, and mathematics content that all Arizona students in your grade level are expected to know and be able to do. AIMS includes multiple-choice questions in reading and mathematics and one extended writing response. The other test included in the AIMS DPA is the *TerraNova*, which compares your performance in reading, language arts, and mathematics to the performance of other students in your grade level nationwide. The *TerraNova* test questions are all multiple choice questions. They make up a small portion of the reading and mathematics sections of the AIMS DPA test.

Who has to take AIMS DPA?

All students in grades 3 through 8 are required to participate in AIMS DPA testing in the spring, usually in April.

What will be tested on AIMS DPA?

Test items were written to measure specifically the Standards, Concepts, and Performance Objectives described in the Arizona Academic Standards. Standards were articulated by grade level for reading and mathematics and approved by the state Board of Education in March 2003. Reading and mathematics items are multiple-choice. There will be no multiple-choice questions on the writing test. The Writing Standard was articulated by grade level and approved by the state Board of Education in June 2004. There will be an extended writing prompt that students will use to actively engage in the writing process. Your writing will be scored using the Six Trait Rubric™.

How can I use this guide to prepare for AIMS DPA?

This guide is divided into the three subject areas assessed on AIMS DPA. It gives a short explanation of each testing format, hints for test taking, sample test questions, and a scoring guide for written responses. It will NOT teach you what you should know and be able to do to score well on the tests, but it will help you become familiar with the tests.

Read what the guide tells you about the test. Practice completing the test questions and writing a response to the prompt. Ask your teacher about anything you do not understand.

How can I prepare for AIMS DPA?

- Attend school regularly.
- Thoroughly read and become familiar with the Arizona Academic Standards documents so that you understand exactly what you are expected to know and be able to do.
- Ask questions.
- Take charge of your own learning! Monitor your progress. Self -assess what you know, what you can do well, and where you need to improve.
- Actively participate in class.
- Have a scheduled time and place to study and do homework.

Types of Items

Multiple-Choice

Multiple-choice items will require you to select the BEST response from four possible answer choices and indicate your choice by bubbling in the corresponding letter on an answer sheet. Although some responses will require a recall of facts, or the computation of a correct answer, many of the items will require higher-level thinking and processing. Each multiple-choice item is scored correct (1 point) or incorrect (0 points) . Each correct item contributes one point in your overall score.

Extended Writing Response

The extended response item will ask you to respond to a prompt, which might include writing a letter, an essay, or a narrative. These responses will require a well -developed and well-organized presentation of ideas that follow a particular format suitable to the purpose and audience. You will be expected to develop your written response by following the steps in the writing process: prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and producing a final copy. You will be provided with a revision checklist to guide your work. Your finished copy, not your prewriting or rough draft, will be scored using a six -point rubric that scores each trait or characteristic of effective writing. The rubric for this type of item is provided at the end of this guide.

Reading

Reading is fundamental to all learning and supports us as lifelong learners. It can open our minds to people, places, and ideas beyond our own experiences. It gives us the knowledge we need to make informed choices as responsible citizens in a democratic society. One needs only to browse the Internet to realize how much information is available to us at our fingertips. Understanding what we read, using the wealth of information available to us, and thinking critically about what we read, are crucial skills to function successfully in today's world.

About the Test

On AIMS DPA, you will be given several passages to read, both fiction and nonfiction. You may also be given informational text to read – for example, labels or pages from manuals. The questions will assess your ability to understand, interpret, and analyze what you have read. There are approximately 84 multiple-choice Reading items. Thirty-nine items are AIMS questions, 15 items are *TerraNova* and AIMS DPA questions, and 30 items represent ten *TerraNova* reading questions and 20 *TerraNova* language arts questions. The test should be completed in approximately 1-2 hours. One sample passage is provided in this guide followed by a set of questions. Reading this passage and answering the questions may help you prepare for the test. An answer key for the reading questions is included in this guide.

Hints for Taking AIMS DPA Reading

- You will be asked to read different types of fiction and nonfiction, so adjust your reading to your purpose. Read each passage and the accompanying questions carefully.
- Think about each question before you respond.
- In the multiple-choice questions, choose the best response to the question.
- Manage your time so that you won't feel rushed answering questions that require more thought. This is not a timed test, but you do want to use your time well.

Rodeo Chess Champ

Manuel slid his knight in its L-shaped pattern. “Checkmate,” he announced. Danny frowned. It was true that the chess game was over. Both Manuel’s knight and his castle were in perfect position to take the king, and there were no more possible moves for Danny.

“Big surprise,” Danny sighed, as he put away the chess set.

“See you tomorrow,” chirped Manuel, to Danny’s disappearing backpack.

Whistling his favorite radio tune, Manuel headed home down the sidewalk. He heard the skateboarders coming before he saw them. He moved toward the curb to get out of their way, but did not see the yield sign and stepped sideways into it. “Thanks for yielding the right-of-way,” sang Jennifer, Manuel’s classmate.

“Don’t whistle and walk, Manuel,” another girl teased. She executed a perfect series of jumps down some small concrete steps, landing on all four wheels.

“You’ll grow out of it,” Manuel’s father counseled when Manuel explained the scrapes on his elbow. “At least your brain isn’t clumsy, right?” Manuel rolled his eyes. He was not looking forward to the weekend. When his dad and his aunt got together, they would think of all sorts of silly remarks like this one.

A beautiful brown horse greeted Manuel and his dad as they entered the gravel drive to Tía Elena’s ranch. It had three “socks,” as Tía Elena would call the white coloration on its legs. “She was a gift,” Tía Elena explained. “Would you like to learn how to ride, Manuel?”

That weekend, all the embarrassing stories Manuel’s dad and aunt shared seemed to fade away in the comforting, earthy smell of the stable, the calming **procedure** of brushing Oma’s coat, and the new rhythm of riding that Manuel discovered. “*Oma* is the German word for grandmother,” said Tía Elena. “Whoever named her must have had a very spirited *abuela*.” She showed Manuel how to tap the mare’s sides with his heels to get her to move forward and how to “post” for a smoother ride by standing up and sitting down in the saddle.

Manuel’s father allowed him to continue the riding lessons, since Tía Elena’s farm was only an hour away. In a few months, Manuel had learned to ride the barrels with Oma. The first time horse and rider tried making a cloverleaf pattern around all three barrels without knocking any of them over took fifty seconds. Soon they reduced the time to twenty-seven seconds. “Probably not fast enough to compete with the more experienced riders your age, but it’s not too bad for a beginner,” Tía Elena commented.

“Compete?” Manuel repeated. The last time he had done any physical demonstration in public was when his P.E. class danced the Virginia Reel for the History Fair. He had fallen out of step so badly that he kept missing the hands of the partners he was supposed to reel around and caused a few of them to run into each other.

Brain games were Manuel’s strength. Beating Danny in chess had put Manuel in the number one place in his entire school. But where would Manuel go from there? With Oma, he had found a match for his mind, or rather, his will. By “spirited,” Tía Elena meant more than just quick and nimble —she also meant stubborn. “I’ve already entered you and Oma in the rodeo,” Tía Elena said, “so you’d better show that horse that you are in charge.”

On the day of the rodeo, Manuel was nervous. His anxiety increased when he noticed his teacher and ten of his classmates sitting in the stands. “Looks like your dad shared some information with the parent network,” Tía Elena commented. “Show them what you can do.”

As he sat astride Oma, Manuel fidged nervously in the saddle and wondered why he had let himself be talked into this. However, Manuel had no time to worry when the gate swung open. Remembering everything his aunt had taught him, he and Oma managed to run the barrel race in twenty-five seconds. The time was not good enough for a ribbon, but seeing the amazed looks on his classmates' faces was reward enough for Manuel.

"If I had known all you needed was a few more legs for balance, I would n't have made fun of you," Jennifer joked. Manuel reached up to stroke Oma's mane.

"Your brain's not so clumsy, either," he replied.

¹ **Tía:** the Spanish word for aunt.

² **abuela:** the Spanish word for grandmother.

1 What is the conflict in the passage ?

- A A boy overcomes a challenge.
- B A boy wins a ribbon at the rodeo.
- C A boy beats other people in a game.
- D A boy is teased by his father and aunt.

2 What is the theme of this passage?

- A Dreams always come true.
- B Be happy with who you are.
- C It is important to try new things.
- D You can always count on your friends.

Read this sentence from the passage.

The last time he had done any physical demonstration in public was when his P.E. class danced the Virginia Reel for the History fair.

3 In this passage, what does the word reel mean?

- A not imaginary
- B a type of dance
- C walk unsteadily
- D part of a fishing pole

4 What is the climax of “Rodeo Chess Champ”?

- A Manuel beat Danny in a game of chess.
- B Jennifer joked with Manuel after the race.
- C Tía Elena gave Manuel riding lessons on Oma at the ranch.
- D Manuel and Oma ran the barrel race in twenty -five seconds.

Read this statement from paragraph 11 of the passage.

But where would Manuel go from there?

5 What does this statement mean?

- A Manuel did well in the rodeo.
- B Manuel could not find Tía Elena’s ranch.
- C Manuel had difficulty dealing with his fear.
- D Manuel had nobody else to play against in chess.

6 Why did Tía Elena enter Manuel in the rodeo?

- A She knew Manuel was very athletic.
- B She wanted Manuel to challenge himself.
- C She knew Manuel had ridden in other rodeos.
- D She wanted to see Manuel ride Oma in the barrel race.

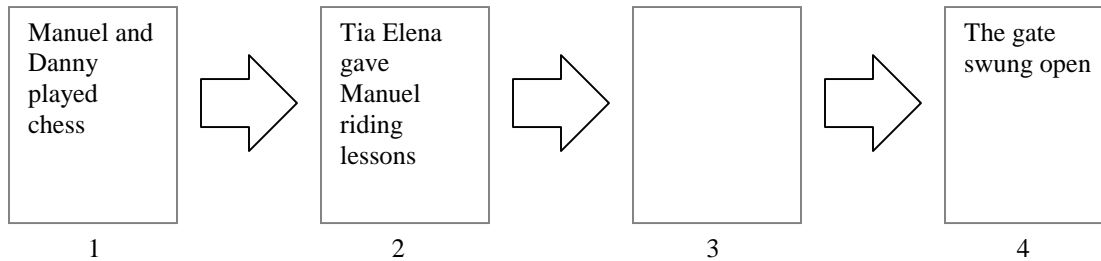
7 Why was Manuel nervous about riding in the rodeo?

- A He was not used to being on a horse.
- B He was awkward with physical activities.
- C His aunt had given him too many directions.
- D He did not like having his classmates watch him.

8 In this passage, what does the word fidgeted mean?

- A squirmed
- B napped
- C paced
- D daydreamed

Look at the graphic organizer that shows Manuel's experience with Oma.



9 Which of these sentences belongs in box 3?

- A Manuel and Oma ran the barrel race in twenty -five seconds.
- B Manuel stroked Oma's mane and made a joke to Jennifer.
- C Manuel and Oma were entered in the rodeo by Tía Elena.
- D Manuel was calmed by the smell of the stable.

10 In this passage, what does the word procedure mean?

- A rhythm
- B scent
- C soft sound
- D process

11 What is the point of view in this passage?

- A first person
- B second person
- C third person limited
- D third person omniscient

12 To which genre does "Rodeo Chess Champ" belong?

- A realistic fiction
- B folktale
- C mystery
- D historical fiction

13 How does the author compare Manuel to the horse, Oma?

- A** Nobody expects either to do well at the rodeo.
- B** They are both spirited and stubborn.
- C** Both learn important things from each other.
- D** They are both nervous about performing in front of people.

14 At the end of the passage, what will Manuel **MOST LIKELY** do?

- A** keep practicing to win a ribbon at the rodeo
- B** be defeated by one of his classmates in chess
- C** be willing to attempt new things
- D** lose interest in the horse and racing

15 Which word **BEST** describes the mood of this passage?

- A** hopeful
- B** cautious
- C** thoughtful
- D** serious

16 What is the **MAIN** reason that Tía Elena encouraged Manuel to learn how to ride a horse?

- A** She knew that Manuel had beaten everybody in chess.
- B** She wanted Manuel to gain confidence.
- C** She wanted Manuel to win a ribbon.
- D** She was tired of people laughing at Manuel's clumsiness.

Writing

Writing is a critical skill for effective communication. Whether you are writing an e-mail message, a personal letter, an ad for your business, or a formal report for school or work, being able to express your ideas clearly to your audience is important. Becoming a good writer is not easy. It takes effort and development of a variety of skills: clear ideas, organization, a voice that holds the interest of your audience, and a consistent control of language, including word choice, sentence structure, and conventions (spelling, grammar, punctuation and capitalization). With new technology, it is possible to electronically communicate in writing with people all over the world in a matter of minutes. Writing will continue to be a communication skill that is required in most professions and workplace environments. Acquiring effective written communication skills will enhance both your personal and professional opportunities.

About the Test

You will be expected to write one extended writing piece on a specific topic. This writing test will be completed in two sessions with a significant break between them. In session one, you will do prewriting, planning, and drafting. This work will not be scored. In session two, you will revise your draft with the Writer's Checklist and write your final draft. Only the final draft will be scored. Examples of scored student responses to a sample writing prompt are included on pages 13-25. A copy of the Official Scoring Guide is also included at the end of this guide.

Hints for taking AIMS DPA Writing

Prior to the test

- Read the three sample student responses to the prompt on the following pages. Note strengths and weaknesses in the paper as you read. Does the writer accomplish the task? Is the writer's message clear? Are the ideas supported with convincing evidence and support? Are the ideas organized so that you can logically follow them? Is the voice appropriate? Did the writer carefully choose words that are clear and convincing? Do the sentences have a natural flow? Is the paper carefully edited?
- Discuss with other students and your teacher why one paper is stronger or more convincing than another. Refer to the Official Scoring Guide when you analyze the sample papers and scores.
- Practice writing a persuasive response to this sample prompt.
- Score your own paper using the Official Scoring Guide to determine what your strengths are, and then work on areas you need to improve to be a more effective writer.

During the test

- Listen to directions and read the prompt carefully and be sure you understand the purpose before beginning to write.
- Take time to organize your thoughts before you begin to write. For the extended writing prompt, you may want to create a graphic organizer (outline, web, chart, etc.) to plan and organize your ideas.
- Take advantage of the opportunity to revise your work using the checklist provided. Keep in mind the six traits (characteristics) of effective writing.
- Edit your writing carefully. Your audience (the reader) needs to be able to understand the ideas you are expressing without being hindered by spelling, punctuation, capitalization, and grammar mistakes that interfere with the message. **You must be sure your handwriting is legible. Printing your work is acceptable; however, be sure to distinguish between upper - and lower-case letters. Do NOT print in all capital letters.**

Keep in mind...

- You will be given two pages in the answer document to write your final copy. It is important that you take advantage of the two pages you are given to develop your ideas fully. This is your opportunity to demonstrate how well you can write.
- Your final copy needs to be handwritten (not done on a computer).
- You may use a dictionary or thesaurus as a reference during the extended writing response portion of the test.
- Be conscious of the traits, or characteristics, of effective writing (idea development, organization, voice, word choice, sentence fluency, and conventions) no matter what kind of writing you are asked to do. The same scoring guide, or rubric, will be used for all the types of writing you may be asked to compose: narrative, persuasive, expository, or formal communication.

The following four examples illustrate the scoring performed for the AIMS DPA Writing.

The first example is scored as “**Falls Far Below.**”

The second example is scored as “**Approaches.**”

The third example is scored as “**Meets.**”

The fourth example is scored as “**Exceeds.**”

Sample writing prompt:

Imagine a train that could take you anywhere on Earth! You have a ticket in your hand for a trip that can make stops at any three places.

Write a story about what happens from the time you get on the train until it returns to your hometown.

This is the Writer's Checklist you will see on the Grade 4 AIMS DPA Writing. Practice using it when writing to revise your rough draft before writing your final copy. If you take time to use it carefully, it will help you write a better paper.

Writer's Checklist

Are my ideas clear?

Does my writing have words that make it interesting?

Does my writing have a clear beginning, middle, and ending?

Does my writing sound right and make sense?

Did I edit for capital letters?

Did I edit for correct punctuation?

Did I edit for correct spelling?

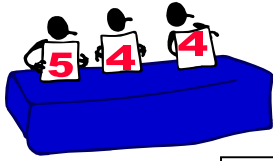
Sample 1

Writing

DIRECTIONS: Now write your final copy on the following two pages.

FINAL COPY

One Day I was sitting on the couch
watching tv. I went to check the mail
and there was a envelope then I opened
it was a ticket to go on a magic
train that can take me any where
I want to go. I went to the
train stop



Score Sheet for Writing Sample 1

Prompt:

Imagine a train that could take you anywhere on Earth! You have a ticket in your hand for a trip that can make stops at any three places.

Write a story about what happens from the time you get on the train until it returns to your hometown.

Paper Falls Far Below the standard

Ideas & Content
6 5 4 3 2 1

Organization
6 5 4 3 2 1

Voice
6 5 4 3 2 1

Word Choice
6 5 4 3 2 1

Sentence Fluency
6 5 4 3 2 1

Conventions
6 5 4 3 2 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

Ideas and Content: The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. The paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea. **Score point is 1.**

Organization: The writing lacks clear organizational structure. While the first sentence does sound like a beginning, the piece is too short to demonstrate organizational skills. **Score point is 2.**

Voice: The writing lacks a sense of involvement. There is a lack of audience awareness; there is no sense of “writing to be read.” **Score point is 1.**

Word Choice: Paper has extremely limited vocabulary. Only the most general kind of message is communicated. **Score point is 1.**

Sentence Fluency: Sentences tend to be incomplete, rambling, or very awkward. The text does not invite smooth oral reading. **Score point is 1.**

Conventions: Numerous errors in spelling, capitalization, and punctuation. Only one occurrence of end punctuation is evident. There is a substantial need for editing. **Score point is 1.**

Sample 2A

Writing

DIRECTIONS: Now write your final copy on the following two pages.

FINAL COPY

I'm going on a train that's taking me to New York, Minnesota, and Canada to go all of those places though, it will take five months. But the rest of my family is staying here in Phoenix, Arizona, I'm the only one who's going because I won the ticket in a raffle to go to any three places that I want to. But the reason is that I'm going to these places is because I want to visit my friends and explore in Canada. The date that I'm leaving is the twenty-second of February, I will stay at all the fanciest hotels in the places that I am going. My mom and dad gave me a cell phone so I could talk and speak to them when I feel like it and to keep in touch with them (ten days later). Well, I'm at the train station, and boy, is it crowded! I'll be back on

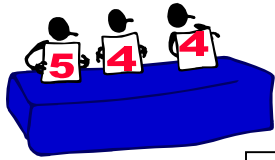
Sample 2B

Writing

FINAL COPY

the Fourth of July, with presents
of all sorts for Bob. I can't wait
to come back, I almost don't want
to go that I'm so excited! Oops, I
have to go, I'll write back soon!
Bye-bye!





Score Sheet for Writing Sample 2

Prompt:

Imagine a train that could take you anywhere on Earth! You have a ticket in your hand for a trip that can make stops at any three places.

Write a story about what happens from the time you get on the train until it returns to your hometown.

Paper Approaches the standard

Ideas & Content

6 5 4 3 2 1

Organization

6 5 4 3 2 1

Voice

6 5 4 3 2 1

Word Choice

6 5 4 3 2 1

Sentence Fluency

6 5 4 3 2 1

Conventions

6 5 4 3 2 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

Ideas and Content: The reader can understand the main idea, but supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally off-topic. For example, “My mom and dad gave me a cell phone so I could talk and speak to keep in touch with them.” shows uneven and somewhat off-topic detail. **Score point is 3.**

Organization: An attempt has been made to organize the paper. The writer makes attempts at sequencing (“ten days later”), but the order and relationship among ideas may be unclear. The writer mentions that his/her family is staying home in sentence three, refers to them again in sentence eight when the information could be combined for clarity in organization. **Score point is 3.**

Voice: A voice is present. In places, the writing is expressive and engaging. “...and boy, is it crowded!” and “...with all sorts of presents too” are two examples of the writer behind the words. **Score point is 4.**

Word Choice: Words effectively convey the message. While the writer demonstrates attempts at colorful language (“explore” and “faciest”), for the most part, he/she uses words that work, but rarely capture the reader’s interest. **Score point is 3.**

Sentence Fluency: The writing flows; however, connections between phrases and sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, but many are constructed with subject-verb beginnings. Even with this drawback, there is a natural sound. **Score point is 4.**

Conventions: The writing demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions. The writer does not use paragraphing and the ideas run together. Errors do not block meaning but do distract the reader (“faciest” for fanciest and “sots” for sorts). **Score point is 3.**

Sample 3A

Writing

DIRECTIONS: Now write your final copy on the following two pages.

FINAL COPY

"Woo-woo? I looked at my mother and she looked back. "I'll miss you man?" I said. "Well then take pictures and send post cards." she said. "Bye!" I said as I ran toward the train. You see I had found a ticket in the street and well it was for the train I'm about to get on. I walked into the train and to my surprise no one was on it! The conductor came up to me and said "Don't be surprised that you're the only one here. Millions of people have found the tickets but have ignored them. So where do you want to go?" Well I guess maybe England, Hawaii, and the Bahamas I guess." He nodded and said "All right take your seat and we're off!" So I sat down and as soon as I did we went off at top speed! Suddenly it stopped "We're in England!" I got off and out onto the platform. "Here you go man." I looked up and saw a man holding out money. "Thank you very much" I said. I was every where in England! I went to practically all the shops! Until the same man that gave me the money said time to go back to the station. I sat down and we were off again. In thirty seconds we were in Hawaii. I hopped off and when I got I was wearing a two piece, a lei, and a very thick grass skirt. I went to the beach to get a surf board when I stopped. I had no money and suddenly I felt something in my hand. I looked down and saw

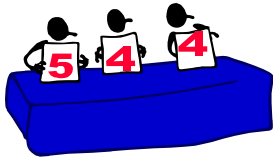
Sample 3B

Writing

FINAL COPY

at least \$300.00 worth of money so I got a surf board and went to exactly all the shops in the town. Then I heard the train whistle. I sighed and went to the train and I sat and in ten seconds we were at the Bahamas. I got out and I was wearing the same thing as I wore in Hawaii and I had a lot of money and spent it all! So by the end of the day I was home. Well I never saw that train again so that's the story.





Score Sheet for Writing Sample 3

Prompt:

Imagine a train that could take you anywhere on Earth! You have a ticket in your hand for a trip that can make stops at any three places.

Write a story about what happens from the time you get on the train until it returns to your hometown.

Paper Meets the standard

Ideas & Content

6 5 4 3 2 1

Organization

6 5 4 3 2 1

Voice

6 5 4 3 2 1

Word Choice

6 5 4 3 2 1

Sentence Fluency

6 5 4 3 2 1

Conventions

6 5 4 3 2 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

Ideas and Content: The writing is clear and focused. Support is present, although it is limited and general. The writer rushes to explore three places and fails to offer detailed support. However, the reader understands the story, especially the sudden appearance of people and money. **Score point is 4.**

Organization: Organization is clear. The use of dialogue is an effective way to begin the story. However, the conclusion lacks subtlety. The body is easy to follow. **Score point is 4.**

Voice: The writer's voice is appropriate for the topic. There is commitment and a sense of "writing to be read". The reader may discern the writer behind the words. The writing has liveliness and excitement: From the beginning "Woo-Woo!" throughout the "top speed!" trip, the writer is excited. **Score point is 5.**

Word Choice: The writer employs words that are functional, conveying the intended message. There are some fine moments, and the writer generally avoids clichés. More action verbs such as "nodded" and hop[p]ed" would add energy. **Score point is 4.**

Sentence Fluency: The writing flows with natural sound; the reader can easily move through the piece. Strong control over simple sentence structure, but variable control over more complex sentences. "I looked at my mother and she looked back." is extremely effective at the beginning of the piece. Dialogue sounds natural for the most part. **Score point is 4.**

Conventions: The writing demonstrates control over standard writing conventions, and the writer stretches to include punctuated dialogue. Paragraphing would enhance the whole piece, especially the dialogue. **Score point is 4.**

Sample 4A

Writing

DIRECTIONS: Now write your final copy on the following two pages.

FINAL COPY

It was a sunny Thursday as I walked to the train station with money banging in my pockets. I walked up to the ticket lady and asked, "May I have a ticket for train number 559?" I waited for an answer. Finally, she said, "Yes dear. Train number 9. Here you go." I tried to tell her that she made a mistake and gave me the wrong ticket, but before I could make a peep, she was gone. Then a man came up to me and said, "Oh! You have a train ticket for number 9? Quick, come with me!" He pulled me into a train that had a big number 9 on it. "Hey!" I yelled. "You don't understand. I have the wrong—" "Now, I'll let you in on a little secret," he interrupted. "This is a magical train that can take you anywhere on Earth! You have a choice to go three places! One at a time though, please." My heart pounded! Should I accept this offer or just go home? "Fine!" I said. "Can we go to Hollywood first?" "Will do," he said. "Strap in your seatbelt." Only in five minutes, we were there. "I'm going to go shopping," I said. "I'll catch up with you later." As I walked around Hollywood, I saw my favorite movie star. I looked at her and noticed that we were both wearing the same thing! She looked at me. "Hey cool!" she said. "You look like a nice girl! What's your name?" My jaw hung open, but I managed to say, "Sammy." We talked for a while and became friends. "Hey, do you want to go to the Bahamas with me?" I asked. "Great! When are we leaving?" "Right now."

Page 5

Go On 

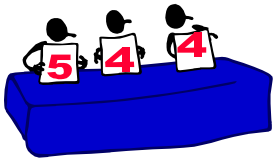
Sample 4B

Writing

FINAL COPY

I said, very excited. Then the train pulled up. "Hop in!" I yelled. In 10 minutes, we were both getting tons on the beach in the Bahamas. "This is so great! I never knew it would end up in the Bahamas with you!" I said. "Yes, but my time is almost up. I'm finishing a movie tomorrow," she replied. We went surfing for 20 minutes, but then she had to leave. "Bye," I said sadly. "Good luck with your movie!" I was sad, but excited for my next destination. "Florida," I said. In 15 minutes, I was paying for a ticket at Disneyworld. I met Mickey Mouse and many other characters. But at the end, I was tired from all of the roller coasters. The man told me it was time to go back. Soon, I arrived at home. "Now remember," the man said, "Don't tell anybody!" "I won't!" I promised. "Thank you. I had a great time." As I walked up the driveway, I turned around to say my last goodbyes. But train number 9 was already gone. "Weird," I whispered to myself, "But I know I'm going to do it again."





Score Sheet for Writing Sample 4

Prompt:

Imagine a train that could take you anywhere on Earth! You have a ticket in your hand for a trip that can make stops at any three places.

Write a story about what happens from the time you get on the train until it returns to your hometown.

Paper Exceeds Standard

Ideas & Content

6 5 4 3 2 1

Organization

6 5 4 3 2 1

Voice

6 5 4 3 2 1

Word Choice

6 5 4 3 2 1

Sentence Fluency

6 5 4 3 2 1

Conventions

6 5 4 3 2 1

The underlined passages are taken from the *Official Scoring Guide for AIMS Writing* (Six Trait Rubric). Papers are original samples of Arizona student writing. Identifying information has been removed.

Ideas and Content: The writing is exceptionally clear, focused, and interesting. Rich details (the disappearing lady agent, meeting a movie star, and roller coasters) are suitable to audience and purpose. The writer has a thorough, balanced, and in-depth exploration of the topic. **Score point is 6.**

Organization: The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text. The writing has an inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a satisfying sense of resolution. There are smooth, effective transitions, although paragraphing is missing. **Score point is 5.**

Voice: The writing is expressive and engaging, and the writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The piece is a narrative with a strong personal voice that is lively. The writing shows originality and the topic has come to life. **Score point is 6.**

Word Choice: The writer employs a rich, broad range of words in an exceptionally interesting and natural way. The paper has fresh, original expression. Phrases such as "... money banging in my pockets", "...before I could make a peep...", and "...excited for my new destination" add life to the paper. **Score point is 6.**

Sentence Fluency: The writing has an easy flow and rhythm; dialogue sounds natural. Phrases such as "Will do!" and "Now I'll let you in on a little secret" offer a fluent sound. **Score point is 5.**

Conventions: Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability. The writer shows skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long piece. Paragraph breaks are missing. The writer took chances and succeeded with the correct use of conventions. **Score point is 5.**

Mathematics

Mathematics is used as a means to communicate about quantities, logical relationships, and unknowns. Such a simplistic statement may make students who are not planning to go to college ask why mathematics is necessary for them. While the ability to do computation is important, it is the skills of problem finding and problem solving, formalizing, abstract thinking, symbolic representation and interpretation, formulation of logical arguments, and objective reasoning that allow us to function effectively and understand our world.

Mathematics is the one area of coursework in the school curriculum where students are taught these skills, and where answers cannot be obtained just by common sense and guessing. Even without an ever-increasing reliance on technology, mathematical skills meet needs for practical everyday life, intelligent citizenship, and future employment. A study by Arizona State University indicated that students who opt out of advanced levels of mathematics and science may now eliminate up to 75% of career opportunities from which to choose[†]. Algebra has been called the academic passport for passage into virtually every facet of the job market. Employers want their employees to be able to set up problems, estimate solutions, identify how accurate solutions need to be, work with other people to reach goals, know the many different types of mathematics that exist, and determine which one is needed in a particular situation. It is clear that the mathematical literacy of the twentieth century will NOT be sufficient for the twenty-first century.

[†]ASU Research Fall 1998, p. 41

About the Test

The AIMS DPA Mathematics test contains approximately 80 multiple-choice questions. Fifty-five of the items are AIMS questions. Fifteen items are *TerraNova* and AIMS questions, and 10 items are *TerraNova* questions. Calculators are not allowed; however, the calculations required can be readily handled with pencil and paper. The questions will emphasize conceptual understanding, process, and problem-solving skills rather than just computation skills.

Hints for taking AIMS DPA Mathematics

- Remember, this is not a timed test. Take your time and do your best work.
- Check to see if your answer is reasonable.
- Since calculators are not allowed on this test, double-check your work!

Sample Questions for Mathematics

What To Expect From This Section

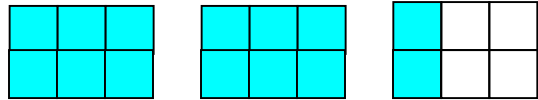
This AIMS DPA Student Guide for Mathematics provides examples of the format and types of questions that will appear on AIMS Mathematics. An attempt has been made to provide a sampling of the types of questions that might be asked; however, not every concept in each standard has a corresponding sample question in this guide. An answer key for all mathematics sample questions is provided in the appendices. Additionally, you will find an AIMS DPA Mathematics Reference Sheet in the appendices. The reference sheet in the actual AIMS DPA Mathematics test will be revised to reflect on the formulas and other information that will be included on the test.

Strand 1: Number Sense and Operations

General concepts you should know :

- Proficiency with the operations of addition, subtraction, multiplication, and division, including their inverse relationships
- Evaluate reasonableness of results using a variety of techniques, including mental math
- Compare and order whole numbers, common fractions, decimals, and rational numbers
- Equivalent forms of numbers
- Factorization of whole numbers
- Proficiency with simple graphs

- 1 What improper fraction does this model represent?



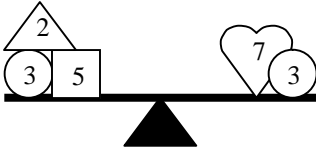
- A $2\frac{6}{14}$
B $\frac{14}{6}$
C $\frac{14}{4}$
D $\frac{6}{14}$

- 2 Which of the following lists the numbers below in order from greatest to least?

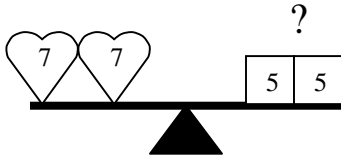
$$3.96, \frac{12}{6}, 3\frac{3}{4}, 4.0$$









- A $4.0, 3\frac{3}{4}, 3.96, \frac{12}{6}$
B $\frac{12}{6}, 3\frac{3}{4}, 3.96, 4.0$
C $\frac{12}{6}, 3\frac{3}{4}, 4.0, 3.96$
D $4.0, 3.96, 3\frac{3}{4}, \frac{12}{6}$

- 3 The scale below is balanced.



Which other shapes are needed on the right side of the scale below to make it balance?



- A  
- B  
- C  
- D  

- 4 Which of the following equations is correct?

- A $4 \times [(7 \times 1) + (4 - 2)] = 36$
- B $4 \times [(7 \times 1) + (4 - 2)] = 40$
- C $4 \times [(7 \times 1) + (4 - 2)] = 52$
- D $4 \times [(7 \times 1) + (4 - 2)] = 58$

- 5 Tom was building a frame for a painting. The painting was 32 inches long and 24 inches wide. Approximately how long of a piece of wood did Tom need to build the frame?

- A 56 inches
- B 120 inches
- C 240 inches
- D 780 inches

Strand 2: Data Analysis, Probability and Discrete Math

General concepts you should know :

- Construct charts, tables and plots using the appropriate graphical format to present the data (for instance, bar, circle, and line graphs; frequency tables, Venn diagrams)
- Compare results of an investigation with a given prediction
- Measures of central tendency (mean, median, mode)
- Counting strategies, outcome sets, probability
- Probability/outcomes of simple events

- 6 Omar is going to San Diego. He packed 3 sweatshirts and 2 pair of shorts. How many different combinations of one sweatshirt and one pair of shorts can he make?

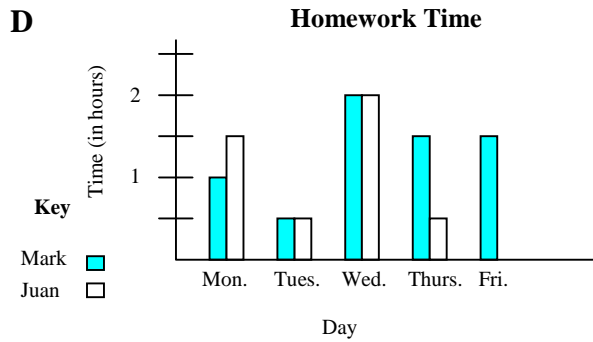
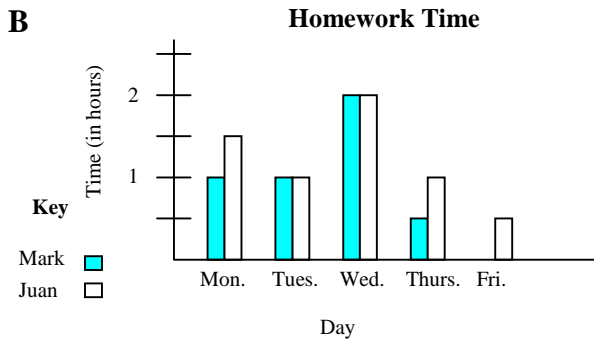
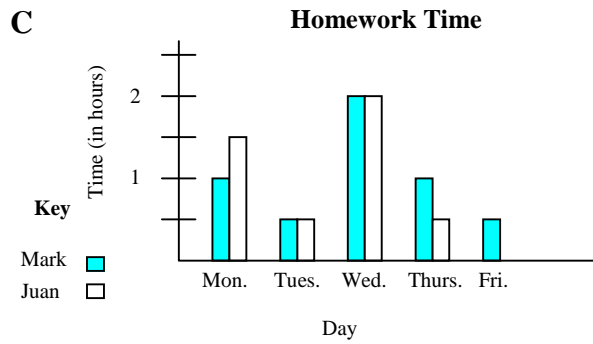
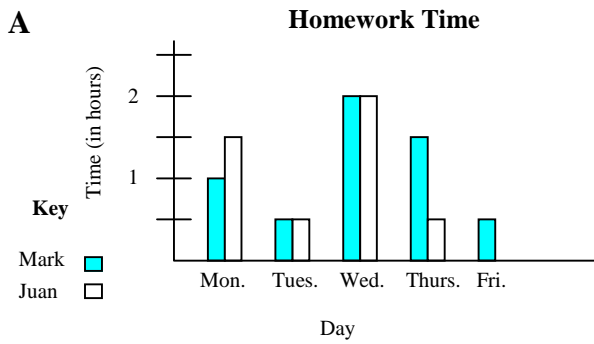
- A 9
- B 6
- C 5
- D 4

Mark and Juan entered the amount of time they spent doing homework each day into the table below.

Time Spent on Homework (in hours)

	Mark	Juan
Monday	1	1 ½
Tuesday	½	½
Wednesday	2	2
Thursday	1 ½	½
Friday	½	0

7 Which graph accurately represents the information in the table?



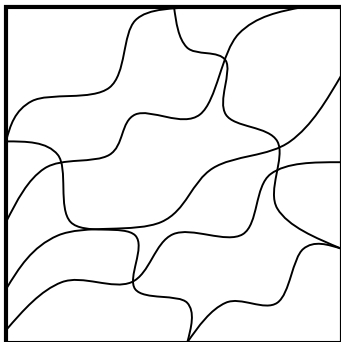
Sue flipped a fair coin 25 times and recorded her results in the table below.

Sue's Experiment Results

	Heads	Tails
Experiment #1	12	13
Experiment #2	9	16

- 8 Sue conducted the experiment twice. Based on her results, which of the following statements could be true?
- A The coin landed on heads more often in one experiment only.
 - B The coin landed on tails more often in one experiment only.
 - C The coin landed on tails more often in both experiments.
 - D The coin landed on heads more often in both experiments.

- 9 Vincent is coloring the artwork below for his Art Club's T-shirts.



Vincent knows that no two like colors can touch along an edge. What is the least number of colors Vincent can use?

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

Strand 3: Patterns, Algebra and Functions

General concepts you should know :

- Simple geometric and number patterns
- Describe a rule for patterns
- "Output" from a given "input"
- Solve simple equations
- Graph given data points (whole numbers)

Nick used an addition rule to make the number pattern below, but forgot one of the numbers.

2, 14, ____, 38, 50, 62

- 10 What number did Nick forget?

- A 24
- B 26
- C 28
- D 30

Bryan used the same rule to change each number in Column A to a different number in Column B.

Column A		Column B
7		12
9		14
11		16
13		18

- 11 Which of the following could be the rule Bryan used?

- A subtract 2 from the number
- B add 2 to the number
- C subtract 5 from the number
- D add 5 to the number

12 The cost of one mini-skateboard is \$2. Which number sentence could be used to determine the cost, M , of 5 mini-skateboards?

- A $\$2 + 5 = M$
- B $5 - \$2 = M$
- C $5 \div \$2 = M$
- D $\$2 \times 5 = M$

Lupita went to a shoe sale. The chart below shows the sale prices.

Pairs of Shoes	1	2	3	4
Total Cost	\$10	\$18	\$24	\$28

13 Which of the following statements could describe the shoe sale?

- A The price, per pair of shoes, decreases with each additional pair of shoes.
- B The price, per pair of shoes, increases with each additional pair of shoes.
- C The price, per pair of shoes, stays the same with each additional pair of shoes.
- D The price, per pair of shoes, decreases by \$2 with each additional pair of shoes.


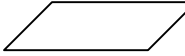


Strand 4: Geometry and Measurement

General concepts you should know :

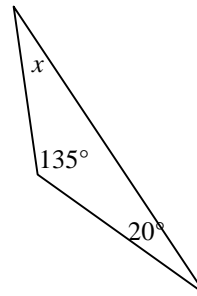
- Properties of simple two- and three-dimensional geometric figures, including how to draw two-dimensional figures
- Basic geometric relationships such as similarity, congruence, angle measure, parallelism and perpendicularity, symmetry
- Transformations (turns, flips, slides)
- Solve problems with given formulas (area and perimeter)
- U.S. customary and metric units and conversion *within* each

- Selection of appropriate measuring tool
- Appropriate degree of accuracy to solve problems
- Distance, perimeter, area, weight
- Calculate area and perimeter of polygons using given formulas
- Effect on perimeter and area when one dimension of an object is altered

14 Which of these appears to have 2 sets of parallel lines, 2 obtuse angles, and 2 acute angles?

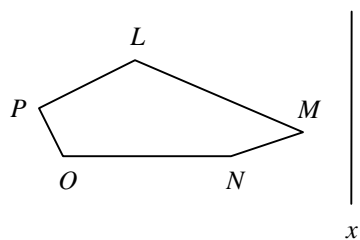
- A 
- B 
- C 
- D 

15 What is the measure of angle x in the triangle below?

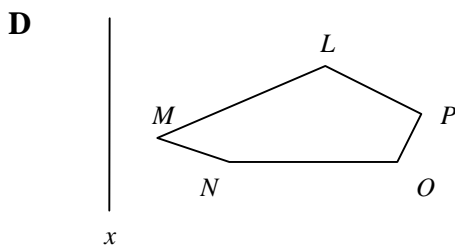
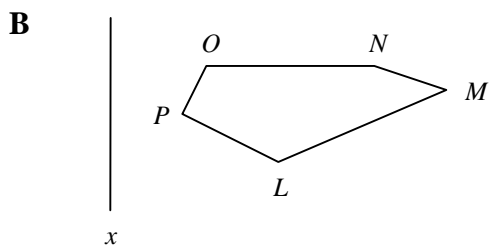
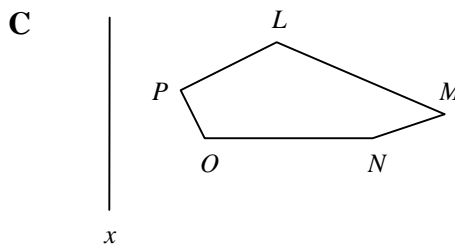
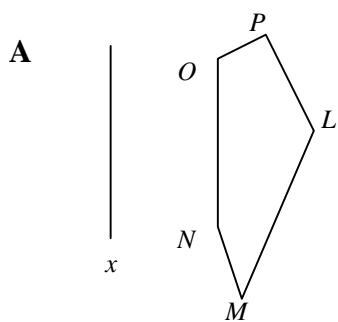


- A 155°
- B 115°
- C 25°
- D 20°

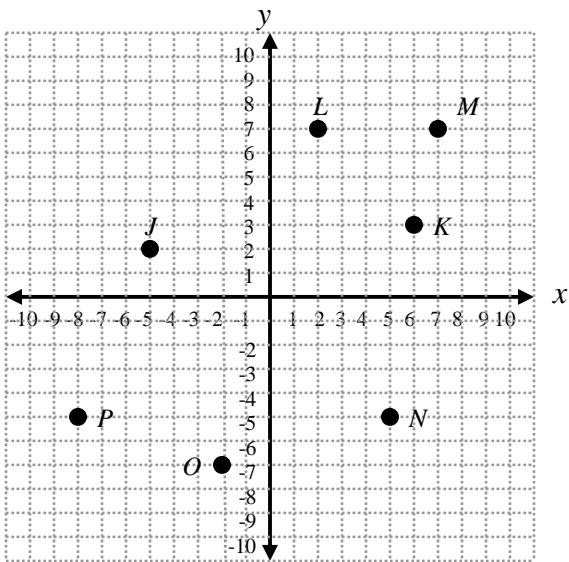
Figure A is shown in the diagram below.



16 Which of the following appears to be a reflection of figure A across the line x ?

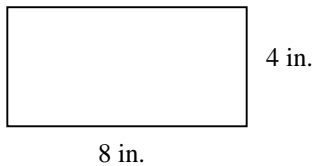


- 17 Which of the following points appears to be at (2, 7) on the coordinate grid below?



- A *L*
 B *M*
 C *N*
 D *O*

- 18 What is the area of the rectangle shown below?



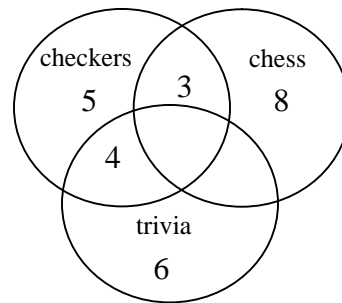
- A 12 square inches
 B 24 square inches
 C 32 square inches
 D 64 square inches

Strand 5: Structure and Logic

General concepts you should know :

- Design simple algorithms
- Identify necessary and unnecessary information
- Identify simple, valid arguments

Tulu asked her friends about the games they like and displayed the results in the Venn diagram below.



- 19 According to the Venn diagram, which statement must be true about her friend Gordon?

- A If Gordon likes chess, then he does NOT like checkers.
 B If Gordon likes checkers, then he does NOT like trivia.
 C If Gordon likes chess, then he does NOT like trivia.
 D If Gordon likes trivia, then he does NOT like any other game.

Scoring Keys

Reading Key

Question #1: A
Question #2: C
Question #3: B
Question #4: D
Question #5: D
Question #6: B
Question #7: B
Question #8: A
Question #9: C
Question #10: D
Question #11: C
Question #12: A
Question #13: B
Question #14: C
Question #15: A
Question #16: B

Mathematics Key:

Question #1: B
Question #2: D
Question #3: C
Question #4: A
Question #5: B
Question #6: B
Question #7: A
Question #8: C
Question #9: B
Question #10: B
Question #11: D
Question #12: D
Question #13: A
Question #14: B
Question #15: C
Question #16: D
Question #17: A
Question #18: C
Question #19: C

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IDEAS and CONTENT

<p>6</p> <p>The writing is exceptionally clear, focused and interesting. It holds the reader’s attention throughout. Main ideas stand out and are developed by strong support and rich details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support • a thorough, balanced, in-depth explanation/ exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well suited to audience and purpose. 	<p>5</p> <p>The writing is clear, focused and interesting. It holds the reader’s attention. Main ideas stand out and are developed by supporting details suitable to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clarity, focus, and control. • main idea(s) that stand out. • supporting, relevant, carefully selected details; when appropriate, use of resources provides strong, accurate, credible support. • a thorough, balanced explanation/exploration of the topic; the writing makes connections and shares insights. • content and selected details that are well-suited to audience and purpose. 	<p>4</p> <p>The writing is clear and focused. The reader can easily understand the main ideas. Support is present, although it may be limited or rather general. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an easily identifiable purpose. • clear main idea(s) • supporting details that are relevant, but may be overly general or limited in places; when appropriate, resources are used to provide accurate support. • a topic that is explored/explained, although developmental details may occasionally be out of balance with the main idea(s); some connections and insights may be present. • content and selected details that are relevant, but perhaps not consistently well chosen for audience and purpose.
<p>3</p> <p>The reader can understand the main ideas, although they may be overly broad or simplistic, and the results may not be effective. Supporting detail is often limited, insubstantial, overly general, or occasionally slightly off-topic. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an easily identifiable purpose and main idea(s). • predictable or overly-obvious main ideas or plot; conclusions or main points seem to echo observations heard elsewhere. • support that is attempted; but developmental details that are often limited in scope, uneven, somewhat off-topic, predictable, or overly general. • details that may not be well-grounded in credible resources; they may be based on clichés, stereotypes or questionable sources of information. • difficulties when moving from general observations to specifics. 	<p>2</p> <p>Main ideas and purpose are somewhat unclear or development is attempted but minimal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a purpose and main idea(s) that may require extensive inferences by the reader. • minimal development; insufficient details. • irrelevant details that clutter the text. • extensive repetition of detail. 	<p>1</p> <p>The writing lacks a central idea or purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ideas that are extremely limited or simply unclear. • attempts at development that are minimal or non-existent; the paper is too short to demonstrate the development of an idea.

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ORGANIZATION

<p>6</p> <p>The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are compelling and move the reader through the text easily. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective, perhaps creative, sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow. • a strong, inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a strong satisfying sense of resolution or closure. • smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, and ideas). • details that fit where placed. 	<p>5</p> <p>The organization enhances the central idea(s) and its development. The order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text. The writing is characterized by.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • effective sequencing; the organizational structure fits the topic, and the writing is easy to follow. • an inviting beginning that draws the reader in and a satisfying sense of resolution or closure. • smooth, effective transitions among all elements (sentences, paragraphs, and ideas). • details that fit where placed. 	<p>4</p> <p>Organization is clear and coherent. Order and structure are present, but may seem formulaic. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • clear sequencing. • an organization that may be predictable. • a recognizable, developed beginning that may not be particularly inviting; a developed conclusion that may lack subtlety. • a body that is easy to follow with details that fit where placed. • transitions that may be stilted or formulaic. • organization which helps the reader, despite some weaknesses.
<p>3</p> <p>An attempt has been made to organize the writing; however, the overall structure is inconsistent or skeletal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas may occasionally be unclear. • a beginning and an ending which, although present, are either undeveloped or too obvious (e.g. “My topic is...”, “These are all the reasons that...”) • transitions that sometimes work. The same few transitional devices (e.g., coordinating conjunctions, numbering, etc.) may be overused. • a structure that is skeletal or too rigid. • placement of details that may not always be effective. • organization which lapses in some places, but helps the reader in others. 	<p>2</p> <p>The writing lacks a clear organizational structure. An occasional organizational device is discernible; however, the writing is either difficult to follow and the reader has to reread substantial portions, or the piece is simply too short to demonstrate organizational skills. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some attempts at sequencing, but the order or the relationship among ideas is frequently unclear. • a missing or extremely undeveloped beginning, body, and/or ending. • a lack of transitions, or when present, ineffective or overused. • a lack of an effective organizational structure. • details that seem to be randomly placed, leaving the reader frequently confused. 	<p>1</p> <p>The writing lacks coherence; organization seems haphazard and disjointed. Even after rereading, the reader remains confused. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a lack of effective sequencing. • a failure to provide an identifiable beginning, body and/or ending. • a lack of transitions. • pacing that is consistently awkward; the reader feels either mired down in trivia or rushed along too rapidly. • a lack of organization which ultimately obscures or distorts the main point.

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VOICE

<p>6</p> <p>The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose and audience. The writer seems deeply committed to the topic, and there is an exceptional sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an effective level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice, while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively, or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.). • an exceptionally strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense. 	<p>5</p> <p>The writer has chosen a voice appropriate for the topic, purpose, and audience. The writer seems committed to the topic, and there is a sense of “writing to be read.” The writing is expressive, engaging or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • an appropriate level of closeness to or distance from the audience (e.g., a narrative should have a strong personal voice while an expository piece may require extensive use of outside resources and a more academic voice; nevertheless, both should be engaging, lively or interesting. Technical writing may require greater distance.). • a strong sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader and of how to communicate the message most effectively. The reader may discern the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction. • a sense that the topic has come to life; when appropriate, the writing may show originality, liveliness, honesty, conviction, excitement, humor, or suspense. 	<p>4</p> <p>A voice is present. The writer demonstrates commitment to the topic, and there may be a sense of “writing to be read.” In places, the writing is expressive, engaging, or sincere. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a questionable or inconsistent level of closeness to or distance from the audience. • a sense of audience; the writer seems to be aware of the reader but has not consistently employed an appropriate voice. The reader may glimpse the writer behind the words and feel a sense of interaction in places. • liveliness, sincerity, or humor when appropriate; however, at times the writing may be either inappropriately casual or personal, or inappropriately formal and stiff.
<p>3</p> <p>The writer’s commitment to the topic seems inconsistent. A sense of the writer may emerge at times; however, the voice is either inappropriately personal or inappropriately impersonal. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a limited sense of audience; the writer’s awareness of the reader is unclear. • an occasional sense of the writer behind the words; however, the voice may shift or disappear a line or two later and the writing become somewhat mechanical. • a limited ability to shift to a more objective voice when necessary. 	<p>2</p> <p>The writing provides little sense of involvement or commitment. There is no evidence that the writer has chosen a suitable voice. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little engagement of the writer; the writing tends to be largely flat, lifeless, stiff, or mechanical. • a voice that is likely to be overly informal and personal. • a lack of audience awareness; there is little sense of “writing to be read.” • little or no hint of the writer behind the words. There is rarely a sense of interaction between reader and writer. 	<p>1</p> <p>The writing seems to lack a sense of involvement or commitment. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • no engagement of the writer; the writing is flat and lifeless. • a lack of audience awareness; there is no sense of “writing to be read.” • no hint of the writer behind the words. There is no sense of interaction between writer and reader; the writing does not involve or engage the reader.

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AIMS Six Trait Analytic Writing Rubric – Official Scoring Guide

WORD CHOICE

<p>6</p> <p>Words convey the intended message in an exceptionally interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a rich, broad range of words, which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate, strong, specific words; powerful words energize the writing. • fresh, original expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective. • vocabulary that is striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone. • ordinary words used in an unusual way. • words that evoke strong images; figurative language may be used. 	<p>5</p> <p>Words convey the intended message in an interesting, precise, and natural way appropriate to audience and purpose. The writer employs a broad range of words which have been carefully chosen and thoughtfully placed for impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • accurate, specific words; word choices energize the writing. • fresh, vivid expression; slang, if used, seems purposeful and is effective. • vocabulary that may be striking and varied, but that is natural and not overdone. • ordinary words used in an unusual way. • words that evoke clear images; figurative language may be used. 	<p>4</p> <p>Words effectively convey the intended message. The writer employs a variety of words that are functional and appropriate to audience and purpose. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words that work but do not particularly energize the writing. • expression that is functional; however, slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not particularly effective. • attempts at colorful language that may occasionally seem overdone. • occasional overuse of technical language or jargon. • rare experiments with language; however, the writing may have some fine moments and generally avoids clichés.
<p>3</p> <p>Language is quite ordinary, lacking interest, precision and variety, or may be inappropriate to audience and purpose in places. The writer does not employ a variety of words, producing a sort of “generic” paper filled with familiar words and phrases. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words that work, but that rarely capture the reader’s interest. • expression that seems mundane and general; slang, if used, does not seem purposeful and is not effective. • attempts at colorful language that seem overdone or forced. • words that are accurate for the most part, although misused words may occasionally appear, technical language or jargon may be overused or inappropriately used. • reliance on clichés and overused expressions. 	<p>2</p> <p>Language is monotonous and/or misused, detracting from the meaning and impact. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • words that are colorless, flat or imprecise. • monotonous repetition or overwhelming reliance on worn expressions that repeatedly distract from the message. • images that are fuzzy or absent altogether. 	<p>1</p> <p>The writing shows an extremely limited vocabulary or is so filled with misuses of words that the meaning is obscured. Only the most general kind of message is communicated because of vague or imprecise language. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • general, vague words that fail to communicate. • an extremely limited range of words. • words that simply do not fit the text; they seem imprecise, inadequate, or just plain wrong.

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SENTENCE FLUENCY

<p>6</p> <p>The writing has an effective flow and rhythm. Sentences show a high degree of craftsmanship, with consistently strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing effortlessly into the next. • extensive variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text. • sentence structure that enhances meaning by drawing attention to key ideas or reinforcing relationships among ideas. • varied sentence patterns that create an effective combination of power and grace. • strong control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well. • stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural. 	<p>5</p> <p>The writing has an easy flow and rhythm. Sentences are carefully crafted, with strong and varied structure that makes expressive oral reading easy and enjoyable. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a natural, fluent sound; it glides along with one sentence flowing into the next. • variation in sentence structure, length, and beginnings that add interest to the text. • sentence structure that enhances meaning. • control over sentence structure; fragments, if used at all, work well. • stylistic control; dialogue, if used sounds natural. 	<p>4</p> <p>The writing flows; however, connections between phrases or sentences may be less than fluid. Sentence patterns are somewhat varied, contributing to ease in oral reading. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • a natural sound; the reader can move easily through the piece, although it may lack a certain rhythm and grace. • some repeated patterns of sentence structure, length, and beginnings that may detract somewhat from overall impact. • strong control over simple sentence structures, but variable control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, are usually effective. • occasional lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, sounds natural for the most part, but may at times sound stilted or unnatural.
<p>3</p> <p>The writing tends to be mechanical rather than fluid. Occasional awkward constructions may force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some passages that invite fluid oral reading; however, others do not. • some variety in sentences structure, length, and beginnings, although the writer falls into repetitive sentence patterns. • good control over simple sentence structures, but little control over more complex sentences; fragments, if present, may not be effective. • sentences which, although functional, lack energy. • lapses in stylistic control; dialogue, if used, may sound stilted or unnatural. 	<p>2</p> <p>The writing tends to be either choppy or rambling. Awkward constructions often force the reader to slow down or reread. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • significant portions of the text that are difficult to follow or read aloud. • sentence patterns that are monotonous (e.g., subject-verb or subject-verb-object). • a significant number of awkward, choppy, or rambling constructions. 	<p>1</p> <p>The writing is difficult to follow or to read aloud. Sentences tend to be incomplete, rambling, or very awkward. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • text that does not invite—and may not even permit—smooth oral reading. • confusing word order that is often jarring and irregular. • sentence structure that frequently obscures meaning. • sentences that are disjointed, confusing, or rambling.

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CONVENTIONS

<p>6</p> <p>The writing demonstrates exceptionally strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong control of conventions; manipulation of conventions may occur for stylistic effect. • strong, effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text. • correct spelling, even of more difficult words. • paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure. • correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style. • skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece. • little or no need for editing. 	<p>5</p> <p>The writing demonstrates strong control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage) and uses them effectively to enhance communication. Errors are so few and so minor that they do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • strong control of conventions. • effective use of punctuation that guides the reader through the text. • correct spelling, even of more difficult words. • paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure. • correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor. • correct grammar and usage that contribute to clarity and style. • skill in using a wide range of conventions in a sufficiently long and complex piece. • little need for editing. 	<p>4</p> <p>The writing demonstrates control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Minor errors, while perhaps noticeable, do not impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • control over conventions used, although a wide range is not demonstrated. • correct end-of-sentence punctuation, internal punctuation may sometimes be incorrect. • spelling that is usually correct, especially on common words. • basically sound paragraph breaks that reinforce the organizational structure. • correct capitalization; errors, if any, are minor. • occasional lapses in correct grammar and usage; problems are not severe enough to distort meaning or confuse the reader. • moderate need for editing.
<p>3</p> <p>The writing demonstrates limited control of standard writing conventions (e.g., punctuation, spelling, capitalization, paragraph breaks, grammar and usage). Errors begin to impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • some control over basic conventions; the text may be too simple to reveal mastery. • end-of-sentence punctuation that is usually correct; however, internal punctuation contains frequent errors. • spelling errors that distract the reader; misspelling of common words occurs. • paragraphs that sometimes run together or begin in ineffective places. • capitalization errors. • errors in grammar and usage that do not block meaning but do distract the reader. • significant need for editing. 	<p>2</p> <p>The writing demonstrates little control of standard writing conventions. Frequent, significant errors impede readability. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • little control over basic conventions. • many end-of-sentence punctuation errors; internal punctuation contains frequent errors. • spelling errors that frequently distract the reader; misspelling of common words often occurs. • paragraphs that often run together or begin in ineffective places. • capitalization that is inconsistent or often incorrect. • errors in grammar and usage that interfere with readability and meaning. • substantial need for editing. 	<p>1</p> <p>Numerous errors in usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation repeatedly distract the reader and make the text difficult to read. In fact, the severity and frequency of errors are so overwhelming that the reader finds it difficult to focus on the message and must reread for meaning. The writing is characterized by</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • very limited skill in using conventions. • basic punctuation (including end-of-sentence punctuation) that tends to be omitted, haphazard, or incorrect. • frequent spelling errors that significantly impair readability. • paragraph breaks that may be highly irregular or so frequent (every sentence) that they bear no relation to the organization of the text. • capitalization that appears to be random. • a need for extensive editing.

Test-Taking Strategies

- **Be physically prepared.** Get plenty of rest the night before. On the day of the test, eat a healthy breakfast.
- **Be mentally prepared.** Try to relax and do your best. View the test as an opportunity to truly show what you know and are able to do.
- **Listen to directions** as the teacher explains them. Ask about any directions you do not understand.
- **Read the directions carefully.**
- **Look for key words** that will help you identify what the question is asking you to do.
- **Take your time** and work at your own pace. AIMS DPA is not a timed test, but you do want to use your time well.
- **Move on** to the next item if you are stuck. Be sure to return to it later.
- **Make educated guesses** if you are unsure of an answer: first eliminate choices that are obviously incorrect, then logically select from the remaining choices.
- **Take the time to review your answers** when you are finished. Re-read your written responses to check that they are clear.

NOTES