

Illinois Standards Achievement Test

**Annotated Writing Samples
Grade 3**

2008-2009

2009 ISAT Grade 3 Writing Sample Papers

This document contains sample compositions for grade 3. Also included are the scores the compositions received for each feature, rationales for these scores based on the ISAT Writing rubrics, and the prompts associated with the student responses. These student samples are intended to give educators and students a sense of what is expected on the ISAT Writing Assessment.

Scoring Guidelines

Each scoring rubric is based on a six-point scale on which the features of Focus, Support/Elaboration, Organization, and Integration are rated. The Conventions feature is rated on a three-point scale. The Integration score is weighted (doubled) to reflect the holistic nature of good writing. The “formula” for determining cut scores is
Focus + Support/Elaboration+Organization+Conventions+Integration+Integration

Cut Scores

	Academic Warning	Below Standards	Meets Standards	Exceeds Standards
Grade 3	6 - 13	14 - 20	21 - 27	28 - 33

For access to the Grade 3 Writing Rubrics and for more information concerning ISAT writing assessment, visit our website: <http://www.isbe.net/assessment/writing.htm>

ILLINOIS STANDARDS ACHIEVEMENT TEST

Grade 3 Expository

Assignment

A new student just moved to the area and doesn't know anything about your school. Your teacher wants each student to describe his or her favorite thing to do at school.

Write an expository composition describing your favorite thing to do at school. Be sure and explain in detail why it is your favorite activity.

Directions

Take a few minutes to plan your composition. Make notes on the other side of this page.

- Choose ONE favorite school activity.
- Think about what makes this your favorite activity.
Remember to include specific details and descriptions.
- Organize your ideas carefully.
- Manage your time to allow for the writing of both an introduction and a conclusion.

After you have planned the composition, begin to write on the lined pages. Only what you write on these lined pages will be scored. Finally, proofread your finished composition to check for correct sentences, punctuation, and spelling.

Illinois Standards Achievement Test



4 0 1 6 4 0 1 0 0 0 0 0 3 8

My favorite thing to do in school is journal writing, Reses and Reding.

I think writing in our journal is fun because you can write a story.

It's quiet. And I don't know if any one else would like it but I think it's fun.

Resus is my second favorite thing because, it is very exiting.

And at resus you can do what ever you want! That's why I think it's great.

Reding is my third

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

favorite thing to do
because, one if we've
ben good the whole
morning we get to laidown
on the rug. Second
it's peaceful because
it's like your free
in here. Third it's
quieter than quit.

That's my three favorite
things to do at school

Composition 1

Score 54424 = **23 - Meets Standards**

Focus Score: 5

While the subject and purpose are clearly named in the introduction, the 3 subjects named (journal writing, recess, and reading) act as a controlling preview of multiple subjects, not subordinate points in a specific preview. Therefore, the response is eligible for up to a “5” but not a “6.” Subsequent development in the body helps explain the writer’s affection for the previewed activities, maintaining focus, and a simple conclusion adds the final component need for a “5.”

Support Score: 4

Attempts at support in the first two body paragraphs are limited and list-like with vague (great) and repetitive (fun) to general (is exciting, do what you want) word choice. A place to strengthen support and improve voice (not much in evidence) would be providing an example of excitement during recess. Ironically, more specific support is provided for the writer’s least favorite activity (we get to “lay” on the rug; it’s peaceful like you are free in heaven). Relying on breadth of support in which main ideas refer back to the main topic of the paragraph and not to each other, this paragraph reaches second order development. Though not required to reach the “4” level at grade 3, this helps the response move clearly into the developed range.

Organization Score: 4

An overall framework of coherence is created by the control of multiple subjects. A further refinement in this multiple-subject plan is the ranking of topics by order of importance. All paragraphs are appropriate, but within paragraphs many ideas can be rearranged without changing meaning, a sign of weaker cohesion. Transitions are missing or are intrusive as in the section on recess (Second, Third). Though coherence is generally strong, effective transitions or other devices strengthening cohesion would be required to move from a “4” (noticeable structure) to a “5” (evident structure).

Conventions Score: 2

Sentences are generally correct with some intrusive comma errors; however, a significant number of misspelled basic words (resus, qoiut, reding, ladown, else, heven) make up a noticeable pattern, indicating a partial knowledge of Conventions.

Integration Score: 4

The Support and Organization features are both solidly in the “4” range, easily counterbalancing the lower Conventions score, indicating a developed score at grade 3.

My favorite thing in school is Spelling. It's fun because you get to spell. I'm intelligent when it comes to spelling. I love spelling it's neat. I'm really good at spelling. I get A's when I do spelling.

You no what my spelling book is as green as a leaf. We do spelling after reading. Sometimes we do spelling before reading. When I do spelling I feel like I'm in a Spelling Bee. When I get an A I feel like I got first prize. Spelling is the coolest thing I like to do in the school.

When we do spelling tests on Wednesday we spell 15 words on Friday we spell 15 words there are challenge words. There really neat to spell.

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

If I'm absent on our spelling test day I'll start to cry. But when I am at school and it's spelling test day I'm cheerful. When you spell it's like I'm being up in front of the class and spelling. So it's not real hard to spell. It's really easy. So why don't you come to my class and see how we spell our spelling words?

So now you know I like spelling. What would be your favorite thing to do in class if you were in school? It could be anything like Reading, Spelling, Phonics, Math, or even Language. I think spelling is the neatest thing in the whole I world.

Composition 2

Score 64535 = **28 - Exceeds Standards**

Focus Score: 6

A general introduction going beyond merely naming the subject (spelling) to provide ideas which more clearly set purpose (I'm really good at it. It's fun.), establishing the writer's love of spelling. The sustained discussion that follows clearly maintains focus, and the conclusion invites the reader to assess his/her favorite subject while reiterating the love of spelling (Spelling is the neatest thing in the world.) The conclusion meets the requirements for a Focus "6" at third grade.

Support Score: 5

While some details are given at the beginning (My spelling book is as green as a leaf.) without being extended, clear second-order support is evident in the next paragraph with the specific chronicling of how the spelling lesson is structured (15 words on Friday, we spell 5 words ...are challenging words). Conditional statements link a number of ideas illustrating the writer's love of spelling (If I'm absent... But when I am at school and it's spelling day I am cheerful)), reaching second-order support and providing effective voice. Altogether, there is sufficient second-order development present to move this response into the "5" range for Support, more depth would be required for a "6."

Organization Score: 4

Although the introduction provides a thematic introduction based on the writer's love of and perceived ability in spelling, ideas tend to wander in the body paragraphs. For example, in the first body paragraph, there is a single mention of the design of the book. This idea is then dropped, and other points are developed. Cohesion is stronger in the second body paragraph with some building and connecting of ideas, clearly showing the relationship between second-order support and cohesion. The conclusion does strengthen coherence, but more effective use of transitional devices and more internal control of ideas would be necessary to create an "evident" structure required at the 5 and 6 levels.

Conventions Score: 3

There are few errors in usage, spelling, or mechanics in this sustained response. Sentence structure is mostly correct and of sufficient variety to indicate a strong knowledge of Conventions for grade level.

Integration Score: 5 The stronger scores in Focus, Conventions, and especially Support, relative to the slightly lower score in Organization, result in an overall score of "5" for Integration, indicating a well developed composition for grade 3.

My favorite thing to do at school is go to art. I love what we do there. I have lots of reasons why I like it too.

These are some things we do in art. This weeks project is drawing rain forest animals for the 3rd grade rain forest. I drew a parrot called a macaw. Then we redraw them on bigger paper that is folded. After that we cut them and we have 2 pieces. We have to stuff them with scrap paper and staple them together. One time we made stain glass windows. First we got black paper. Then we drew shapes on them like triangles, ~~squares~~ stars and hearts. Then

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

7
We made a little ~~cut~~ inside the shape
and cut them out. After that we
glued ^{different colored} tissue paper to them and they
looked like stain glass. We also
did weavings and we got
to pick the colors of yarn
and we put fringe on them
and every thing.

This is why I like it.

I love drawing and everyone says

I'm good at it. When I drew

that macaw and all the

children looked at they all

said "Oooooo cool." I love

to do crafts so most of

the stuff Mrs. Williams tells

us to do is pretty easy and

fun. After a finished project,

I love to see them out in the hall. All the children in lower grades look at them and look forward to drawing and making them when they get in the higher grades.

I love art. Art is a good thing. Without art, the world wouldn't be complete.

Composition 3

Score 66636 = 33 - Exceeds Standards

Focus Score: 6

A thematic introduction naming the subject and providing the controlling idea of the composition (I love what we do there.) makes this response eligible for a “6” in Focus. The thorough discussion that follows clearly ties into the thematic direction provided by the introduction. The final requirement, an effective conclusion, is provided when the writer moves beyond mere repetition to finish with a sophisticated statement of art’s intrinsic value to the world (Without art, the world wouldn’t be complete.).

Support Score: 6

Using detailed, complete description, the writer shows a marked ability to provide pertinent detail within an organized framework. Word choice is uniformly specific (redraw them on bigger paper that is folded, made a cut inside the shape) as the writer initially provides such in-depth description of several projects that the reader could probably replicate the plans. The final section on love of art demonstrates strong voice in an insightful discussion of how art goes beyond the classroom to inspire others (“ooooooo cool;” I love to see them out in the hall. All the children in the lower grades look at them and look forward...).

Organization Score: 6

There is an evident progression of ideas that moves the reader smoothly from idea to idea. In the lengthy first paragraph on art projects, the writer effectively uses transitions (One time, then) and logical interrelation of ideas to control description as the writer sees first the parrot and then the faux stained glass take shape. All paragraphs are appropriate and ideas are well controlled, demonstrating cohesion. The final section on love of art makes a connection back to the parrot project, strengthening coherence. Finally, the conclusion goes beyond the introductory remarks to expand on the importance of art, lending unity to this well crafted composition.

Conventions Score: 3

Very few errors mark this sustained piece. Sentence structure is sufficiently varied to indicate a strong knowledge of Conventions for grade 3.

Integration Score: 6

All Features indicate a strongly developed response for grade level that is effectively focused, well developed, organized, and cleanly written.

Do you know what my favorite thing to do at school is? Well if you picked P.E. well your right.

My first reason is that my P.E. teacher Mr. C was my P.E. teacher untill he got a new job. Well, atleast he made up some games such as dogdeball, Cats and Dogs, and Cops and Robbers. My best game is dogdeball because in dogdeball I love to get people out and then they have to sit out untill somebody has to say, "Everybody in." Then they all goin and start to play again.

My second reason is P.E. gives you exercise and muscles. Here is the game races. Races even gives you muscles in your legs and feet. This is why I love P.E. It helps to keep healthy.

These are my two reasons why P.E. is my favorite

IF YOU NEED MORE SPACE, GO ON TO THE NEXT PAGE.

Composition 4

Score 55435 = 27 Meets Standards

Focus Score: 5

Although the writer uses a rhetorical question and a conversational tone to set the subject and purpose and to add voice, these steps do not provide either the extra commentary needed for clearer purpose or a preview that would make this response eligible for a higher score. However, focus is maintained as the detail that follows is clearly meant to explain the writer's choice. The presence of a cursory conclusion (These are my two reasons...) completes the requirements for a "5" at this grade level.

Support Score: 5

In the first body paragraph there is specificity in the description of the games Mr. C__made up. More importantly, the writer expands on one game, dodge ball, providing depth through description and causal linking (then they have to sit out until somebody has to say, "Everyone in.") explaining how the game is played. Though not as sustained as the first section, the subsequent discussion of health benefits is also specific with some second-order support. In total, sufficient specificity and depth is present to move this response into the lower "5" range.

Organization Score: 4

The brief opening statement merely names the subject and purpose and does little to provide coherence; however, both body paragraphs are appropriate and ideas within paragraphs are logically placed. Cohesion is somewhat strengthened by the generally effective, though not varied, use of transitions in the description of dodge ball. Stronger evidence of coherence and a more sustained progression of ideas would contribute to a higher score.

Conventions Score: 3

This composition is clearly written, containing few errors and sufficient sentence variety to indicate a strong knowledge of Conventions for grade 3.

Integration Score: 5

All Features indicate a response that is generally well developed for grade level, although it should be considered a lower "5" for Integration.

My favorite thing to do at school is to play basketball. These are three reasons why I play basketball.

First, I like to play with my friends. We run a lot, dribble the ball and shoot it. If the basketball goes into the hoop, we get two points. If it is a three pointer, we get three points! We all have lots of fun.

Also, playing basketball teaches me how to follow rules. If I do something wrong, the coach tells me to do it right. Sometimes, I do it right. We learn not to foul. The team learns to pay attention to the game only, not the audience. For one thing, we learn to pass the ball to others players.

and shoot it! All these things make basketball fun and teaches us how to follow rules,

Last but not least, I learn teamwork. We don't fight for the ball, We help each other out if someone falls down and we all want to win the game. That's why we shoot all the time.

I like to play basketball with my friends, It teaches me how to follow rules and all about teamwork.

Composition 5

Score: 56636 = 32 Exceeds Standards

Focus Score: 5

A brief opening setting purpose and subject (I like to play basketball.) is present but adding that there are three reasons for the choice does not provide enough specifics to be considered a specific preview or qualify to be a thematic introduction, thus limiting the Focus score to no higher than a “5.” The sustained discussion that follows stays on topic, and an effective conclusion which reprises the main ideas completes the requirements for a “5.”

Support Score: 6

Depth and specificity are evenly presented throughout this response. In a methodical description of the game and what is learned from playing the game, the writer uses exposition and example to describe this favorite activity. Predominantly specific word choice enhances the quality of support, strengthening the overall impact of the writing and providing appropriate voice (The team learns to pay attention to the game, not the audience; If it is a three pointer, we get three points!).

Organization Score: 6

Coherence and cohesion are consistently evident in this fully developed composition. An overall framework is presented through appropriate paragraphing in which causal and content linking combine to create cohesive reasons with some depth of detail. Generally, effective transitions are present although more transitions could be used to separate examples in body paragraphs. Varied sentence structure tightens connections and lends fluency to the response.

Conventions Score: 3

Although there are a few errors present (alot, tings), for a first draft this composition is cleanly written. Also, there is a variety of sentence structures, indicating that the writer has a strong knowledge of Conventions.

Integration Score: 6

The strong scores in both Support and Organization as well as Conventions help move this response to a lower level “6” in Integration.