

# ELPT

English Language Proficiency Test

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## SAMPLE WRITING ITEMS

### GRADES 6-12

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## INTRODUCTION

The English Language Proficiency Test (ELPT) is designed to measure the performance of English Learner (EL) students as they progress through their education and achieve college and career readiness. The test measures a student's English proficiency in four domains: reading, writing, listening and speaking. The writing domain contains both multiple-choice and constructed-response items.

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## PURPOSE

The ELPT sample writing items provide students and test administrators an opportunity to practice the type of constructed-response items used to assess students' proficiency in the writing domain. This document contains five items that are scored using the following rubrics for the student's grade from the [ELPT Assessment Guide](#):

- **Item 1:** *Writing-Storyboard Grades 6-8, Storyboard Grades 9-12*
- **Item 2:** *Writing-Respond to a Peer E-mail Grades 6-8, Respond to a Peer E-mail Grades 9-12*
- **Item 3:** *Writing-Construct a Claim Grades 6-8, Construct a Claim Grades 9-12*
- **Item 4:** *Writing-Construct a Claim Grades 6-8, Construct a Claim Grades 9-12*
- **Item 5:** *Writing-Writing Questions Grades 6-8, Writing Questions Grades 9-12*

## ADMINISTRATION

Teachers can access the ELPT Sample Writing Items through the [Assessment Guidance Library](#). While these are paper-based items, students may want to and should be allowed to produce their responses electronically. In addition, the items may be used as often as needed, and teachers may use the items to create additional practice items.

## GUIDANCE

The ELPT Sample Writing Items should be used to familiarize students and teachers with the types of writing items they will encounter on the summative. Teachers have the opportunity to go through the scoring process, using the rubrics from the [ELPT Assessment Guide](#), with the student and/or with the student’s ELA teacher. Additionally, these items could be used to identify weaknesses and strengths in the student’s writing.

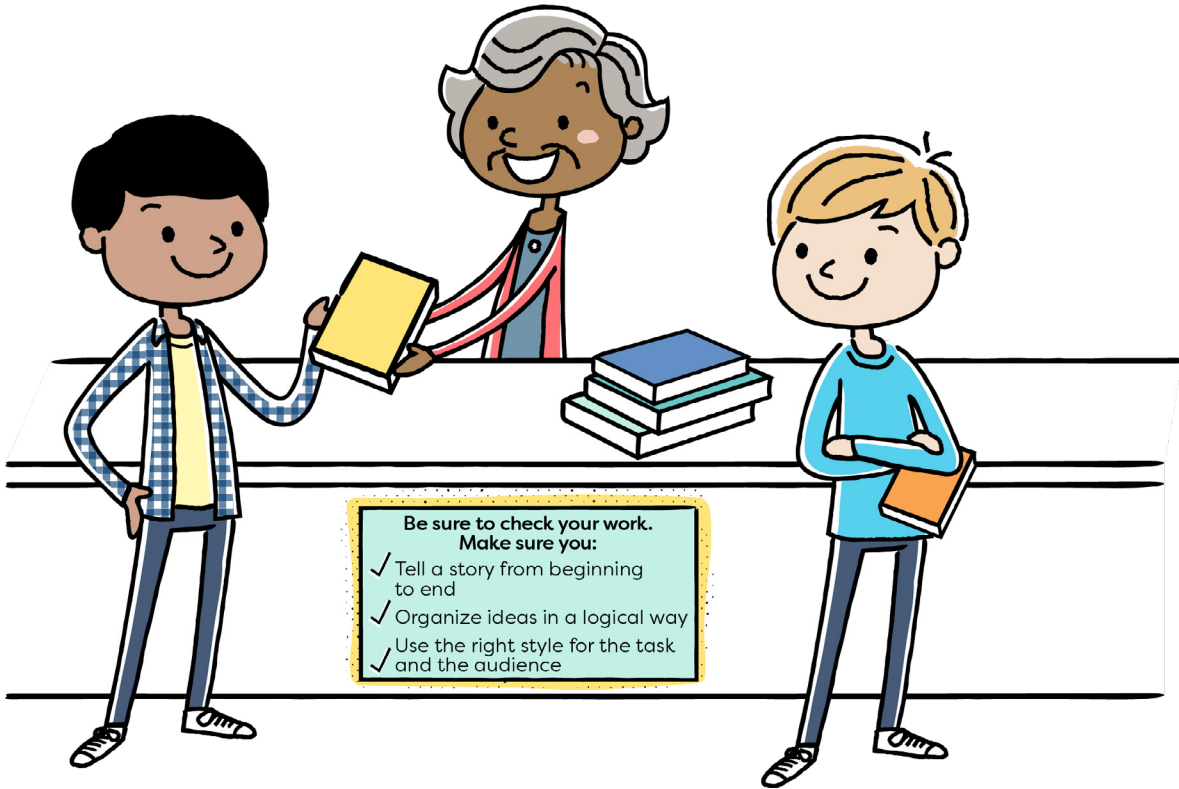
General Use	Specific Guidance	How to Use
<b>Examine ELPT Sample Writing Items to evaluate instruction</b>	Think about how to prepare students for the sample writing items by examining content instructional materials and strategies.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Notice how the sample items are presented and what language skills are being taught.</li> <li>• Make sure you are building the skills and knowledge necessary for students to demonstrate strong writing skills across several genres.</li> </ul>
	Use as a basis of comparison for other supplemental writing materials.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Examine classroom assessments and materials and ask questions such as, “Do these support a language based approach to writing?” “How can I create additional opportunities for my students to practice these types of writing items?”</li> </ul>
	Examine the ELPT writing rubrics and use the Scoring Activity to better understand expectations for written responses.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Use the <a href="#">Scoring Activity</a> with fellow teachers and with students to practice using <a href="#">ELPT Rubrics</a> and to identify qualities of writing that meets the <a href="#">LA Connectors for ELs</a>.</li> </ul>
<b>Examine ELPT Sample Writing items to design classroom/ supplemental items with similar features.</b>	Integrate writing items into instruction and assessments.	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Create similar items that integrate reading, writing and language skills.</li> </ul>

## DIRECTIONS

The ELPT sample writing items help students practice writing in English. There are 5 prompts. Read each prompt carefully. Then write your answer in the space provided.

## WRITING SAMPLE ITEMS GRADES 6-12

**Item 1:** Look at the picture and write a paragraph about what is happening. Be sure to include details that happened before and after the events in the picture.



**Answer:**

**Item 2:** Read the email that follows. How should Maya respond to her friend Luna?

**Gifts from Puerto Rico**

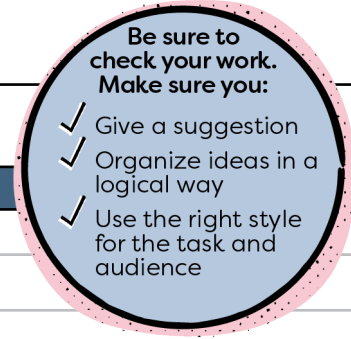
Maya@studentemail.com

Gifts from Puerto Rico

Hey! I'm leaving for Puerto Rico tomorrow and need to know what you want me to bring you back. Remember, we are a small island, but I know I can find you whatever you want. Just let me know!

Friends,

Luna



**Answer:**

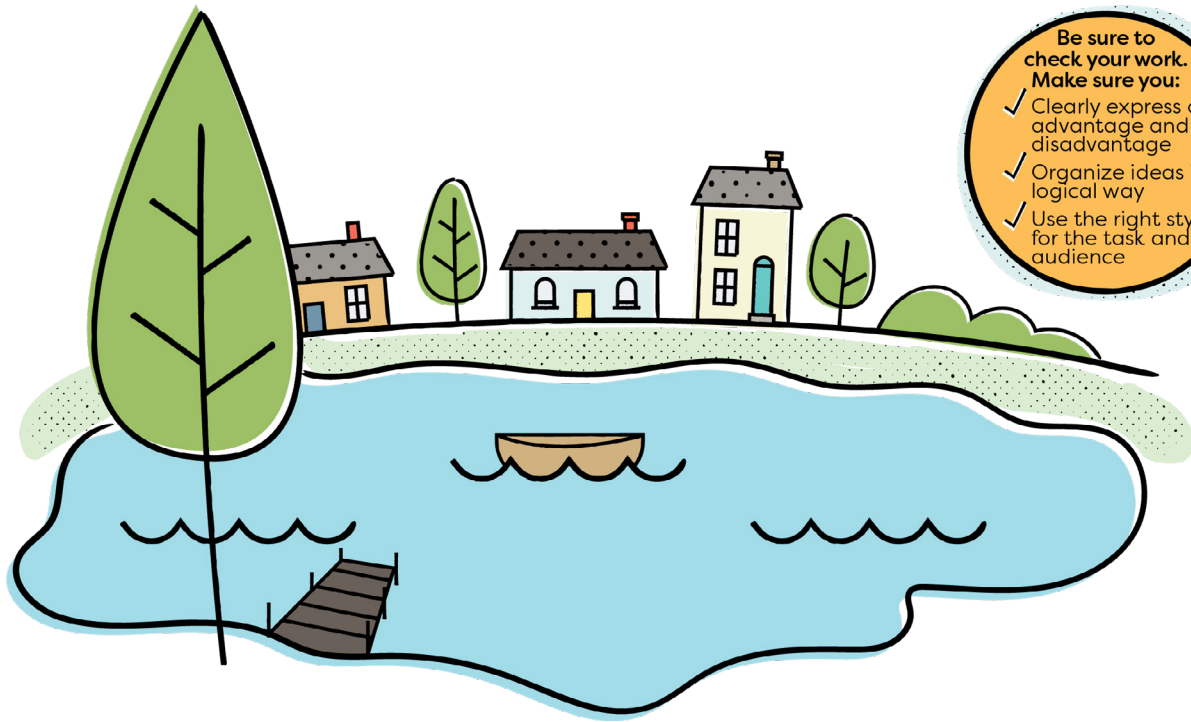
**Re: Gifts from Puerto Rico**

To: Luna

Re: Gifts from Puerto Rico

**Item 3:** In the past, civilizations built new settlements close to water. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living near water?

Write at least one advantage, one disadvantage, and one reason that shows both in a paragraph form.



Be sure to check your work. Make sure you:

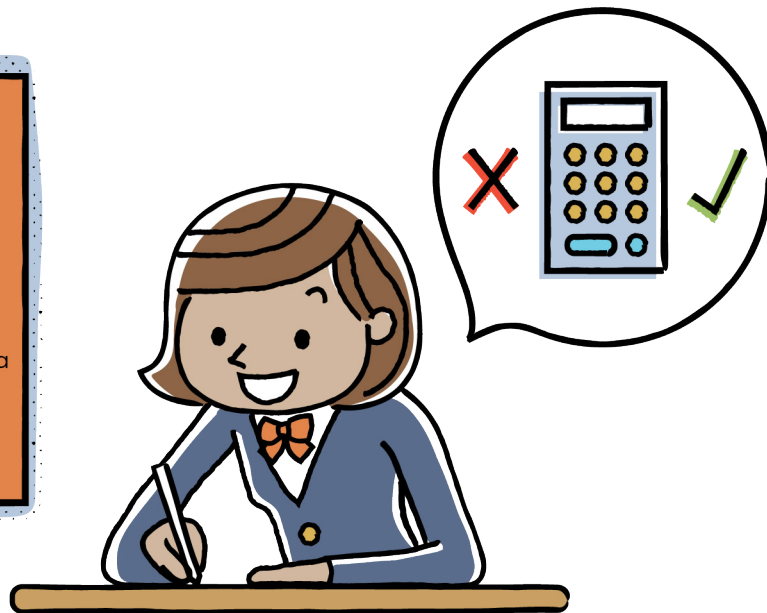
- ✓ Clearly express one advantage and one disadvantage
- ✓ Organize ideas in a logical way
- ✓ Use the right style for the task and audience

**Answer:**

**Item 4:** Some math tests allow students to use calculators, others do not. Write a paragraph to explain to your math teacher your opinion about using calculators on math tests. Support your opinion with your own experiences.

**Be sure to check your work. Make sure you:**

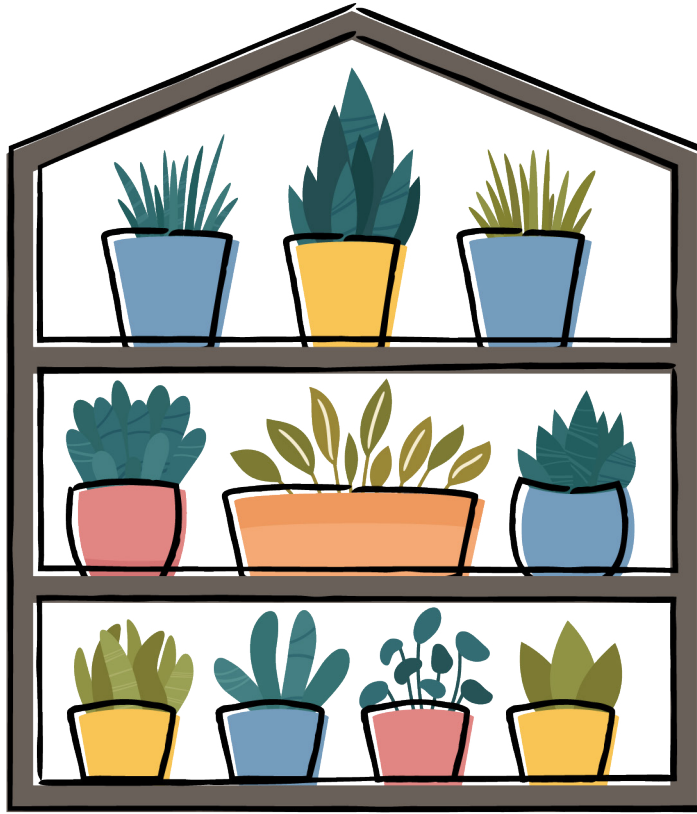
- ✓ Clearly express an opinion
- ✓ Support your opinion with reasons or examples
- ✓ Organize ideas in a logical way
- ✓ Use the right style for the task and audience



**Answer:**

A large, empty rectangular box provided for the student to write their answer to the writing prompt.

**Item 5:** Robert is buying a plant to grow at home. This will be his first time taking care of a plant. What questions should Robert ask the person at the plant store before he buys his plant? Write at least 3 questions.



**Answer:**



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## SCORING ACTIVITY: SCORING STUDENT WRITING USING RUBRICS

### **PURPOSE:**

- To establish common expectations for student writing

### **OUTCOMES:**

- Learn to use an ELPT writing rubric and identify qualities of writing that meet LA Connectors for ELs
- Reveal grade-specific expectations in a school
- Learn about and discuss different approaches that can improve the student's writing.

### **PROCESS:**

1. Have students respond in writing to a common prompt. Suggested prompts:
  - a. Items from the ELPT Sample Writing Items
  - b. Items created at the school/district level for ELA
2. Collect students' written responses to the common prompt.
3. Work collaboratively to understand the rubric.
  - a. Review the scoring criteria on the chosen rubric. Read through each row. Highlight the key words on the rubric that shows the differences between each score.
  - b. Annotate the papers to identify which qualities match the rubric. They will serve as models of each score point on the rubric.
4. Score the responses collaboratively (either with other EL specialists and/or, when possible, with ELA teachers).
  - a. Individually score the responses using the rubrics and anchor set.
  - b. Then come together as a group. Read each response aloud and, as a group, discuss the individual scores using the rubrics and the anchor papers.
  - c. Try to reach a consensus on the scores for each response. Discuss the scores that are not consistent.
5. After the responses are scored, discuss the responses in general—strengths, weaknesses, different approaches to the item, etc. Determine any patterns that exist in the responses as a whole (e.g. difficulty with a particular area of writing (construction or development)).
6. Finally, discuss the instructional implications, “How will we address the general weaknesses? How will I address my students’ weaknesses or deficits?”
7. Develop a plan to address your findings.