# Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: Grade Seven
## Annotated Student Response Packet
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<td>Persuasive Prompt</td>
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<tr>
<td>Annotated Student Responses</td>
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Introduction

In late February 2009, Alabama seventh graders participated in the \textit{Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: Grade Seven}. Students read one of the following writing prompts and responded to the prompt during the sixty minute testing period:

\textbf{Descriptive}—— Everyone has had a teacher who is hard to forget. Think of a teacher that you will always remember. Describe this teacher. You may want to describe how the teacher looks and sounds, as well as how the teacher makes you feel.

\textbf{Narrative}—— You and your friend are exploring a dark cave in the woods. All of a sudden you hear a strange sound. Write a story about what happens next.

\textbf{Expository}—— Think about a person who has had an influence on you and your life. This person might be someone famous, someone from history, or someone you know personally. Write an essay telling who this person is and explaining why he/she has had such an influence on you. Be sure to supply reasons and/or specific examples.

\textbf{Persuasive}—— Some people think that there should be a limit on the amount of homework teachers can assign each night. Do you think limiting homework is a good or bad idea? Write a persuasive letter to your school board stating your opinion and explaining why you feel this way. Be sure to supply convincing reasons and/or specific examples.

This packet contains samples of scored student papers with accompanying annotations explaining the rationale for the scores that were assigned by the readers. Use caution when reviewing these papers. The student responses are samples, \textbf{not models}, and are to be used only to aid in understanding how the focused holistic rubric is applied to evaluate student writing. \textbf{Do not use these sample papers to teach students how to write.}
Overview

Type of Assessment

This assessment is criterion-referenced and measures levels of writing achievement ranging from **Level I - Does not meet standard** (a limited understanding of the writing task) to **Level IV - Exceeds standard** (a thorough understanding of the writing task). The specific criteria and corresponding achievement levels are described on the Alabama Focused Holistic Rubric and the Alabama Analytic Rubric. See pages 9-13. The scores should be interpreted using these rubrics.

Training of Readers

The readers who score student responses for the *Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: Grade Seven* are provided intensive training in the use of the Alabama Focused Holistic Rubric and the Alabama Analytic Rubric. Readers must qualify according to the stringent requirements of the Alabama State Department of Education and the contracting company. Once readers have qualified as scorers, they must participate daily during the scoring process in recalibration activities to ensure that they remain consistent in the application of the Alabama Focused Holistic Rubric and the Alabama Analytic Rubric.

Explanation of Focused Holistic Scoring

Focused holistic scoring requires the reader to focus attention on a set of prescribed compositional characteristics and to assign scores based on the level of proficiency that the writer demonstrates in these areas. This process requires each possible score to represent a specified level of proficiency for the set of compositional characteristics being observed.

Each point of the scale is anchored by a statement or series of statements describing the proficiency level that the point represents. When a composition is evaluated using Alabama’s Focused Holistic Rubric, a single score is assigned reflecting the writer’s sense of purpose and audience as well as content, organization, and clarity.

Explanation of Scores

Each paper is scored independently by two readers on a 4-point scale that ranges from a low of 1 to a high of 4. The scores of the two readers are summed to yield an overall score ranging from 2 to 8. If the scores of the two readers differ by more than one point, the score is resolved by a master reader. The paper’s score, then, is the resolution reader’s score doubled.
Reporting of Scores

The scores on the report forms are arranged along the following continuum:

**Not Rated:** To receive this score, papers may be blank, insufficient, off topic/off mode, illegible, incomprehensible, in a foreign language, copied verbatim from the prompt, or refusals to write.

**Level I (0 or 2 points):** To receive this score, a student must receive scores of 1 from both readers or a score of 0 as a non-scorable response. This writing shows little understanding of the writing task.

**Level II (3-4 points):** To receive this score, a student must receive scores of 1 from one reader and a score of 2 from the other reader or 2 from both readers. This writing reflects some understanding of the writing task but more author involvement than author control.

**Level III (5-6 points):** To receive this score, a student must receive scores of 2 from one reader and a score of 3 from the other reader or 3 from both readers. This writing indicates a good understanding of the writing task and is sufficiently developed with a sense of audience, purpose, and author control.

**Level IV (7-8 points):** To receive this score, a student must receive scores of 3 from one reader and a score of 4 from the other reader or a score of 4 from both readers. This writing is thorough with a strong sense of audience and purpose and is precise, consistent, and elaborated with details that are clear and coherent.

The group reports (State, System, and School) provide the number and percent of students scoring at the various levels of achievement for each mode of discourse. In addition, a **Mean Raw Score Across Modes** shows the average for all students’ responses across the four modes of discourse. The Individual Student Report provides a score and an explanation of the student’s performance on both the Focused Holistic Rubric and the Alabama Analytic Rubric.
Sample Group Report for 2009

ALABAMA DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF WRITING
GRADE SEVEN

SYSTEM REPORT FOR
ABC County

System Code: 999
Test Date: 02/2009
Number Tested: 18

FOCUSED HOLISTIC SCORES
MEAN RAW SCORES ACROSS MODES = 6.72

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS</th>
<th>DESCRIPTIVE</th>
<th>NARRATIVE</th>
<th>EXPOSITORY</th>
<th>PERSUASIVE</th>
<th>TOTAL</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>N = 4</td>
<td>N = 5</td>
<td>N = 4</td>
<td>N = 5</td>
<td>N = 18</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Number</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL IV (7-8 points)</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>80</td>
<td>60</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>9</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL III (5-6 points)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>20</td>
<td>100</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL II (3-4 points)</td>
<td>1</td>
<td>25</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially Meets Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL I (0 or 2 points)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Meet Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>(Includes Not Rated Category)*</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

* NOT RATED CATEGORIES:
- Blank
- Inadequate
- Out of scope or off topic
- Refused/incomprehensible/foreign language/illegal

NOTES: A raw score of "1" on the Focused Holistic Rating Scale is not possible because of the scoring guidelines.
The raw score for an individual student ranges from 2 to 8 points or 0.
The raw score for a student is the sum of test scores.
The Mean Score is the average raw score for all students in the group.

ANALYTIC SCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>ACHIEVEMENT LEVELS</th>
<th>WRITING MECHANICS</th>
<th>SENTENCE FORMATION</th>
<th>GRAMMAR AND USAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
<td>Percent</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL IV (4 points)</td>
<td>39</td>
<td>33</td>
<td>50</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Exceeds Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL III (3 points)</td>
<td>50</td>
<td>61</td>
<td>39</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Meets Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL II (2 points)</td>
<td>11</td>
<td>6</td>
<td>11</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Partially Meets Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>LEVEL I (0-1 points)</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
<td>0</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Does Not Meet Standard</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

ADAW 7-6
ALABAMA DIRECT ASSESSMENT OF WRITING
GRADE SEVEN

NAME: SMITH, JOHN
STUDENT ID: 999999999
DATE OF BIRTH: mm/dd/yy
SERVICES:

MODE OF DISCOURSE: PERSUASIVE

FOCUSED HOLISTIC SCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>LEVEL I</th>
<th>LEVEL I</th>
<th>LEVEL II</th>
<th>LEVEL II</th>
<th>LEVEL III</th>
<th>LEVEL III</th>
<th>LEVEL IV</th>
<th>LEVEL IV</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>0 points</td>
<td>2 points</td>
<td>3 points</td>
<td>4 points</td>
<td>5 points</td>
<td>6 points</td>
<td>7 points</td>
<td>8 points</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

A response at Level I indicates little understanding of the writing task. There is little or no sense of audience and purpose. The writer may drift off topic and/or off topic. The writer displays little or no organizational plan and gives little or no attention to topic development.

A response at Level II indicates some understanding of the writing task. The writer displays more author involvement than author control. Some success is evident with an organizational plan, but ideas are loosely organized. The writer introduces the topic, but may wander from it or may develop it minimally with basic/functional vocabulary.

A response at Level III indicates a good understanding of the writing task. A sense of audience and purpose is evident. The writer displays a sense of author control, using one controlling idea with minimal wandering from it. The organization of this sufficiently developed response and the use of meaningful, precise vocabulary sets this Level III response apart from the Level II responses.

A response at Level IV indicates a thorough understanding of the writing task. The writer successfully addresses and controls the writing task with a strong sense of audience and purpose. This thoroughly developed response is precise, consistent, and elaborated. The response displays clear and coherent ideas that flow smoothly. The use of vivid and precise vocabulary sets this Level IV response apart from the Level III responses.

NOTE: A score of "1" on the Focused Holistic Scale is not possible because of the scoring guidelines.

ANALYTIC SCORES

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>WRITING MECHANICS</th>
<th>SENTENCE FORMATION</th>
<th>GRAMMAR AND USAGE</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>SCORE: LEVEL IV</td>
<td>SCORE: LEVEL III</td>
<td>SCORE: LEVEL III</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Few errors in mechanics and
Success with use of advanced techniques

Few errors in sentence formation and
Some use of varied and/or advanced sentence structure or formation

Few errors in grammar and usage and
Meaningful, precise word choice
Interpretation of Scores

The rubric describes the achievement levels for each score point on the 4-point Alabama Focused Holistic Rubric. By studying the rubric, one understands the writing characteristics found in each achievement level.

For example, students who received a Level I - Does not meet standard score demonstrated a little understanding of the writing task with little or no sense of audience and purpose, little or no organizational plan and little or no topic development. In contrast, students who received a Level III - Meets standard score demonstrated a sense of purpose and audience with sufficiently developed details and organization to meet the standard. By referring to the rubric, one can obtain a description of the writing proficiency demonstrated in the student response.

While reviewing the student’s responses, refer to the performance statement(s) in the Focused Holistic Rubric in order to understand more fully how the reader scored the individual student’s paper. Student papers for each score point and for each mode of discourse are included in this annotated packet. The student’s paper will have an annotation from the reader and will correspond to the number at the bottom of the student’s response.

If there are any questions concerning this assessment, the reports, or the contents of the annotated student response packet, contact Kanetra Germany, Assessment and Accountability, State Department of Education, (334) 242-8038.
Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: Grade Seven
Focused Holistic Rubric

Level I - Does not meet standard

Responses at Level I indicate little understanding of the writing task. There is little or no sense of audience and purpose. The writing exhibits little or no organizational plan and gives little or no attention to topic development. Level I responses at the seventh grade are characterized by the following:

**Purpose:**
- Indicates little understanding of the writing task.

**Content:**
- **Descriptive:** Attempts to describe someone or something. Presents limited information/details in vague, general terms.
- **Narrative:** Presents an unclear sequence of events that tells what happened in a poorly organized manner. May present a vaguely defined time frame.
- **Expository:** Attempts to present reasons, explanations, or steps in a process. Displays little or no attention to appropriate sequencing of steps or ideas. Presents few details and a vague main idea.
- **Persuasive:** Contains an opinion and presents limited persuasive details, reasons, and/or examples supporting the position.

**Audience:**
- Displays little or no sense of audience and purpose in word choice (tone and language).

**Organization/Clarity:**
- Displays little or no evidence of an organizational plan or strategy.
- Displays little or no sense of author involvement.
- Presents one or more weak, unclear controlling idea(s).
- Gives little or no attention to topic development.
- May present irrelevant ideas.
- May commit many obvious errors in sentence formation, grammar, usage, and mechanics that interrupt the flow of communication.
Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: Grade Seven
Focused Holistic Rubric

Level II - Partially meets standard

Responses at Level II indicate some understanding of the writing task. The writers may drift off mode and/or off topic. The writers display some sense of audience and purpose but more author involvement than author control. Some success is evident with an organizational plan, but ideas are loosely organized. The writers introduce the topic but may wander from it or may develop it minimally with basic/functional vocabulary. Level II responses at the seventh grade are characterized by the following:

**Purpose:**
- Indicates some understanding of the writing task.

**Content:**
- **Descriptive:** Describes someone or something. Presents general information/details.
- **Narrative:** Presents a sequence of events that tells what happened in a poorly organized manner. Presents a vaguely defined time frame.
- **Expository:** Presents reasons, explanations, or steps in a process. Displays some attention to appropriate sequencing of steps or ideas. Presents incomplete development, with limited details. May include a stated or implied main idea.
- **Persuasive:** Contains an opinion and presents some persuasive details, reasons, and/or examples supporting the position.

**Audience:**
- Displays some sense of audience and purpose in word choice (tone and language).

**Organization/Clarity:**
- Displays some evidence of an organizational plan or strategy, although ideas are loosely organized.
- Displays some sense of author involvement but weak author control.
- Uses a controlling idea but may wander from it or uses several controlling ideas.
- Introduces the topic and develops it minimally.
- Presents ideas with minimal attention to their flow.
- Uses basic-functional vocabulary.
- May commit some errors in sentence formation, grammar, usage, and/or mechanics that interrupt the flow of communication.
Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: Grade Seven
Focused Holistic Rubric

Level III - Meets standard

Responses at Level III indicate a good understanding of the writing task. A sense of audience and purpose is evident. The writers display a sense of author control, using one controlling idea with only minimal wandering from it. The organization of these sufficiently developed responses and the use of meaningful, precise vocabulary set the Level III responses apart from the Level II responses. Level III responses at the seventh grade are characterized by the following:

Purpose:
- Indicates a good understanding of the writing task

Content:
- Descriptive: Describes someone or something. Presents specific information/details. Includes other relevant details.
- Narrative: Presents clearly a sequence of events, telling what happened. Establishes a time frame.
- Expository: Presents reasons, explanations, or steps in a process. Displays logical order: appropriate sequencing of steps or ideas. Contains a main idea and supporting details and may provide a conclusion.
- Persuasive: Contains a clearly stated opinion and presents sufficiently persuasive details, reasons, and/or examples supporting the position.

Audience:
- Displays a sense of audience and purpose in word choice (tone and language).

Organization/Clarity:
- Displays an organizational plan or strategy.
- Displays a sense of author control.
- Uses one controlling idea with only minimal wandering from it.
- Introduces the topic and develops it sufficiently.
- Presents ideas so that they flow smoothly from one to the next with clarity.
- May provide a conclusion.
- Makes occasional errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that do not interrupt the flow of communication.
- Uses a variety of sentence structures.
- Uses meaningful, precise vocabulary.
- May display creativity in presenting information.
Responses at Level IV indicate a thorough understanding of the writing task. The writers successfully address and control the writing task with a strong sense of audience and purpose. These thoroughly developed responses are precise, consistent, and elaborated. The responses display clear and coherent ideas that flow smoothly. The use of vivid and precise vocabulary sets these responses apart from the Level III responses. Level IV responses at the seventh grade are characterized by the following:

**Purpose:**
- Indicates a thorough understanding of the writing task

**Content:**
- Descriptive: Describes clearly someone or something. Uses precise, vivid sensory details. Includes other relevant details.
- Narrative: Presents clearly a sequence of events, telling explicitly what happened. Provides a definite time frame.
- Expository: Presents reasons, explanations, or steps in a process. Uses logical order and the appropriate sequencing of steps or ideas. Contains a main idea, supporting details, and a conclusion.
- Persuasive: Contains a clearly stated opinion and presents persuasive details, reasons, and/or examples that thoroughly support the position.

**Audience:**
- Displays a strong sense of audience and purpose in word choice (tone and language).

**Organization/Clarity:**
- Displays a strong organizational plan or strategy with overall completeness.
- Displays a strong sense of author control.
- Uses one clear controlling idea and does not wander from it.
- Introduces the topic and develops it thoroughly.
- Presents clear ideas so that they flow smoothly from one to the next with clarity and coherence, using appropriate transitions.
- May provide a conclusion.
- Displays limited minor errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics.
- Uses a variety of sentence structures appropriately.
- Uses vivid and precise vocabulary.
- May display creativity in presenting information.
Alabama Direct Assessment of Writing: Grade Seven
Alabama Analytic Rubric

WRITING MECHANICS
Level IV
• Few if any errors in mechanics and
• Success with use of advanced techniques

Level III
• Few errors in mechanics and
• Some use of advanced techniques

Level II
• Some or no errors in mechanics and
• No use of advanced techniques

Level I
• Frequent, serious errors in mechanics and
• No use of advanced techniques

SENTENCE FORMATION
Level IV
• Few if any errors in sentence formation and
• Success in the use of varied and advanced sentence structure or formation

Level III
• Few errors in sentence formation and
• Some use of varied and/or advanced sentence structure or formation

Level II
• Some or no errors in sentence formation and
• No variety in sentence structure or formation

Level I
• Frequent, serious errors in sentence formation and
• No variety in sentence structure or formation

GRAMMAR AND USAGE
Level IV
• Few if any errors in grammar and usage and
• Expressive, powerful, creative word choice

Level III
• Few errors in grammar and usage and
• Meaningful, precise word choice

Level II
• Some or no errors in grammar and usage and
• Appropriate, basic-functional word choice

Level I
• Frequent and/or serious errors in grammar and usage and
• Inappropriate, repetitive, vague word choices