

SAMPLE PAGES
from
The Competitive Edge

Passing the
EOG 5 in READING

❖ *SECOND EDITION* ❖

by
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ABOUT THE AUTHOR**PURPOSE**

Authors always have a purpose (motive) when they write. The purpose could be to inform the reader about certain information or ideas, to entertain the reader with something funny, mysterious, or scary, or to persuade the reader to buy or do something.

PURPOSE – to inform the reader about rabies

Rabies, a deadly disease to both animals and humans, is on the increase in many areas of Florida. In fact, the number of reported human exposures to rabies has not been this high since the 1940's. This particular strain of rabies was brought to Florida by Texas coyotes. Truckloads of these coyotes are imported into the state by hunting clubs and used in fox hunts. The disease has always been found among wild animals, but the real problem is that fewer than half of all dogs, cats, and farm animals have been vaccinated against it. In 1994, twenty cats, ten dogs, and three horses contracted rabies, an increase of 500% in the last five years. Domestic animals must be vaccinated, for they are the ones most likely to have contact with humans.

PURPOSE – to entertain, read for fun

A lonely worm had been trying to find a friend for weeks and weeks. After a long search, he found one in the very garden where he lived.

“Hello,” he said. “I’ve never seen you before.”

“Well then, you haven’t looked around very much,” said his new friend.

“Why do you say that?” asked the worm.

“Because,” the second worm laughed, “I’m your other half!”

PURPOSE – to persuade people to recycle

Mineral deposits will not last forever! Sustaining natural resources is a greater challenge than sustaining farmland and forests. Minerals and metals cannot be grown. They can only be generated over thousands of years. Recycling must be a part of everyone's life to conserve our mineral resources. These resources are limited and precious.

CAPTURING INTEREST

Authors usually try to capture your interest in the first sentence or paragraph of a selection. Capturing your interest makes you want to continue reading the selection.

EXAMPLE

“HELP! HELP! FIRE! FIRE!” Marsha and Gaye were running and screaming as they descended the attic steps. Who could have shot the flaming arrow on their thatched roof?

1. How does the author capture your interest in the first sentence?

2. Is there another sentence that the author uses to capture your interest?

For question #1, you should have answered, “By writing the first sentences in capital letters and using exclamation points as punctuation, the author gets your attention.”

For question #2, you should have answered, “The author also captures your interest by ending the paragraph with a question.”

MAKING SELECTIONS EASIER TO READ

Authors can make selections easier to read by putting key words in quotation marks, introducing major sections with bold print, using subheadings, using numerical listings, separating sections by different topics, or defining words.

EXAMPLE

When you are driving

1. Drive with doors locked and windows rolled up.
2. When you park, lock car doors and trunk and take your key.
3. Store valuables out of sight in a locked trunk or glove compartment.
4. Don't pick up hitchhikers.
5. Check inside and underneath the car before getting in.
6. Park in well-lit areas.

How does the author make this selection easier to read?

The answer to this question is, "The author makes this selection easier to read by using bold print and numbering the list."

PRACTICE

Read each selection and answer the “about the author” questions.

NUTRITION AND YOU

Why should a student, or any other person, be interested in nutrition? It’s simple: the process of life requires that we eat to obtain the nutrients that we need to survive. Over a period of many years, scientists and researchers have spelled out the specific nutrients that are essential for life. We know that all foods are a complex mixture of thousands of chemicals. In fact, all nutrients are chemicals. A **nutrient** is a chemical that has specific functions in the body — **providing energy, providing structural components to build the body, or providing regulators to oversee body functions.** A basic understanding of nutrition principles will allow one to make better and more nutritious food selections.

1. How does the author capture your interest in this selection?

2. What is the author’s purpose for writing this selection?

3. How does the author make reading this selection easier?

WRITING PROMPT

PASSING THIS TEST IS REQUIRED FOR PROMOTION TO SIXTH GRADE.

Directions

This test is to find out how well you write prose on a given topic in the time and space allowed. The test has four time periods or parts. Read the directions for each of these four parts carefully. The times given for each part are recommendations, not rules. If you finish any of the given parts early, you may go on to the next part. Notice that you have two pages of lined space in this answer folder on which to write your final draft.

Keep in mind as you plan and write that your final copy must fit into this space. Your paper will be read by persons like your teachers and scored on how well you express your ideas. In order for your paper to be properly scored, it is very impor-

tant that you write on the given topic and in prose. Papers that consist entirely or mostly of poetry, musical lyrics, or rap will not be scored. Additionally, papers which are offensive in language or content may not be scored.

Part 1: Planning/Prewriting (15 minutes)

Read your assigned topic on the Writing Topic and Note Page. Review the Writing Checklist to make sure you cover each of the points listed. Use the Planning/Prewriting Space provided for your notes, jot list, or outline. If you need additional paper, you may obtain it by raising your hand.

Part 2: Drafting (30 minutes)

Using your notes, jot list, or outline write a first draft of your paper on the sheets marked "Rough Draft." Don't worry too much about mechanics at this point.

Concentrate on getting your ideas down on paper in logical order.

Part 3: Revising (35 minutes)

Reread what you have written. Ask yourself if your ideas are clearly and completely expressed. Consider rearranging your ideas and changing words to make your paper better. Rewrite your paper on the folder marked "Final Draft." When you rewrite, make sure that you use a pen and that you write neatly. You may either print or write in cursive. Do not use other pages of the answer folder for your writing, and do not write in the margins.

Part 4: Proofreading (10 minutes)

When you finish writing your paper, review the points on the Writing Checklist and make any needed corrections in your paper. You may strike through words, but do so neatly.

4. What is the author's purpose for writing this selection?

5. How does the author make reading this selection easier?

6. How does the author capture your interest at the beginning of this selection?

THE NATURE OF SCIENCE

What is a human being? There is a biological answer to this question. Humans are *Homo sapiens*, members of the genus *Homo* and species *sapiens*. We are vertebrate animals (animals with backbones), and we are mammals since we suckle our young. Humans are in a particular subcategory of mammals called the primates, characterized by flat nails instead of claws, forward facing eyes, and large brains. A complete biological definition would allow us to distinguish between a human being and any other living thing. It is possible to be a human being without knowing any of this, of course. When we are conceived, our parents provide a “gentle blueprint” that not only provides all the biological information to make a *Homo sapiens*, but also makes each of us a unique individual.

7. What is the author’s purpose for writing this selection?

8. How does the author make reading this selection easier?

9. How does the author capture your interest at the beginning of this selection?

Slowly,
softly,
gently,
the
cat
walked
down
the
stairway.

10. How does the author make reading this selection easier?

11. What is the author's purpose for writing this selection?

12. How does the author capture your interest?

REVIEW

Answer each of the “about the author” questions.

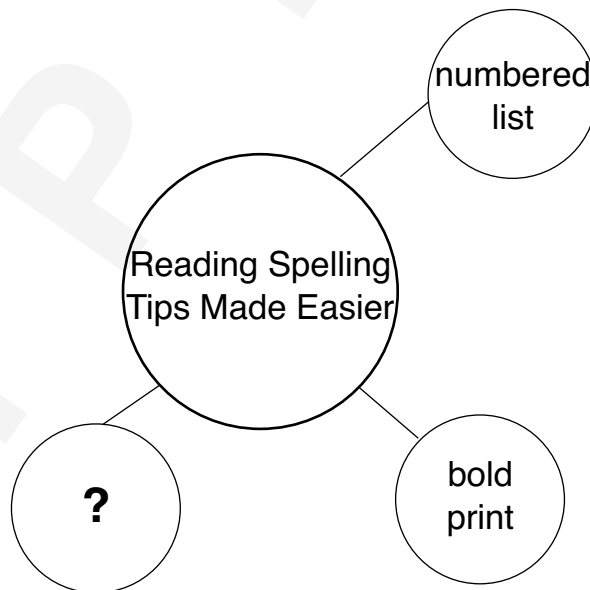
SPELLING TIPS

CAN YOU SPELL CORRECTLY?

1. **Check the words carefully after you write.** Pronounce the words you can't spell well to find any hidden sounds.
2. **Look through your writing and keep a list of words you often misspell.** Look them up in the dictionary, and be sure you know the spellings, pronunciations, and the meanings.
3. **Study the Look-Alikes / Sound-Alikes from Chapter 8.**
4. **Learn the Commonly Misspelled Words from this chapter.**
5. **Test yourself with a partner on your personal spelling list, the Look-Alikes / Sound-Alikes and the Commonly Misspelled Words. Use flashcards and write the words in sentences.**
6. **Study and review the basic spelling rules from this chapter.**

1. What is the purpose of this selection?
 - a. to entertain, to read for fun
 - b. to inform you about tips for good spelling
 - c. to persuade you to spell correctly
 - d. to make you read and spell

2. How does the author capture your interest?
 - a. by asking the question, “Can you spell correctly?”
 - b. by typing in bold print
 - c. by writing about an interesting topic
 - d. by listing in numerical order
3. Which of the following belongs in the empty circle in the graphic organizer?



- a. asking a question
- b. capital letters
- c. separating sections
- d. slanted print

DISAPPOINTING DIET DRINKS

What do LA Dodgers manager Tommy Lasorda and former New York City mayor Ed Koch have in common? Both lost a lot of weight on Slim-Fast, the nation's most widely used over-the-counter meal-replacement drink. And both took part in a multimillion-dollar advertising campaign that helped build the meal-replacement market into a \$1.3-billion business by 1990.

Today, Slim-Fast and other low-calorie powdered drink mixes are losing popularity as quickly as they gained it: sales plunged 44 percent between 1991 and 1992. Why the drop? Probably because consumers nationwide lost about as much weight on these products as respondents to our questionnaire did: not very much.

Many of our respondents also felt that the low-calorie shakes were a poor substitute for real food. More than one-third said they were "always hungry" while using the drinks. Nearly as many complained that drinking a meal instead of eating one was "artificial," and said they started to regain weight as soon as they stopped using the products.

4. What is the purpose of this selection?
 - a. to entertain, to read for fun
 - b. to persuade you to try diet drinks
 - c. to inform you about the disappointment felt by diet drink users
 - d. to make you buy diet drinks
5. How does the author capture your interest?
 - a. by writing about Slim-Fast
 - b. by using a question in the first paragraph
 - c. by being "always hungry"
 - d. by being "artificial"
6. Which of the following helps you read the selection easier?
 - a. subheadings
 - b. words in quotation marks
 - c. numerical lists
 - d. bold print

CRIME PREVENTION

Personal safety and the security of one's property are everyone's responsibility. Developing wise security habits will insure protection of yourself and your possessions.

I. When you are driving:

- Drive with doors locked and windows rolled up.
- When you park, lock car doors and trunk and take your key.
- Store valuables out of sight in a locked trunk or glove compartment.
- Don't pick up hitchhikers.
- Check inside and underneath the car before getting in.
- Park in well-lit areas.

II. If you are walking:

- Don't walk alone.
- Use public, well-lit walkways. Avoid dark, isolated areas.
- Look alert and hold your keys in your hand when you are walking to your car.
- Carry only necessary cash and credit cards.
- Avoid wearing expensive jewelry in public.

III. If you are being followed:

- Cross the street.
- Change direction.
- Keep looking back, so the person realizes you are aware of his/her presence.
- Go to a well-lit, populated area.
- Notice as many physical details as possible, so you can describe the person to the police.

IV. If you are alone in an office or classroom:

- Keep the door locked.
- Always ask who is knocking before opening the door.
- Never prop open locked exterior building doors.

7. What is the purpose of this selection?
 - a. to inform you of safety tips for crime prevention
 - b. to entertain, read for fun
 - c. to persuade the reader to be safe
 - d. to inform the reader about office safety
8. What is the effect of beginning the selection with an opening statement about protecting yourself?
 - a. It defines crime prevention.
 - b. It draws you to the bold print.
 - c. It captures your interest.
 - d. It secures your property.
9. Which of the following is used by the author to make the selection read easier?
 - a. definitions
 - b. bold print and numerical lists
 - c. rhythm
 - d. opening statement

AUSTRALIA'S SUGAR INDUSTRY

The best laid plans of toads and men . . . In June, 1935, Australia's sugar industry imported 101 cane toads from Hawaii in the hope that they would eat the cane beetles threatening the sugar crop. The toad, described by one as "ugly even by toad standards" did not have any interest in eating cane beetles. But it made itself at home. It now exists over half of Queensland and is spreading into New South Wales and the Northern Territory. A single female has been known to lay 54,000 eggs in a clutch, and females may lay eggs twice a year. Australia's toad population is now in the millions — and growing.

10. Which of the following is used by the author to make the selection read easier?
 - a. numerical lists
 - b. use of quotation marks
 - c. bold print
 - d. subheadings
11. What is the purpose of this selection?
 - a. to persuade the reader to visit Australia
 - b. to entertain, to read for fun
 - c. to inform you about the increasing toad population in Australia
 - d. to inform you about sugar
12. How does the author capture your interest?
 - a. bold print
 - b. with the first sentence ending in ". . ."
 - c. numerical lists
 - d. definitions

★ AUDITIONS & OPPORTUNITIES ★

SCRIPT SEARCH

The Peoples Theater, Cambridge, Mass., is conducting a script search for plays on any subject by local writers for possible staged readings.

Scripts may be sent to **SCRIPTS**, 6 Worcester St., Cambridge, MA 02139 no later than Jan. 1.

NORTH END VACANCY

The **Nucleo Eclettico** (North End Theater), Boston, seeks someone to serve as designer-technical director without pay. Person to call is Marco Zarratini, at 742-7445.

EMERSON OPENINGS

Emerson College, has immediate openings for three Support Staffers.

The school, regarded as outstanding in communications, arts and sciences, reports openings in the following departments and expects future openings before long.

Vacancies now to be filled:

In the president's office — a secretary. A mature person is sought who is organized with good interpersonal skills to assist the executive secretary.

In the housing office — an administrative assistant. It's described as an excellent opening for a mature, efficient person to function as the sole support staff member for a large department.

'PIRATES' FOR NEPONSET

The **Neponset Choral Society** holds auditions for "Pirates of Penzance" at 8 p.m. Feb. 4 at the Union Congregational Church, Walpole, Mass. Production dates are April 24–26 at the Foxboro High

School. C.M. Leonard Weaver is director of the Gilbert & Sullivan production.

PLAYERS' 'APPLAUSE'

The Players, Box 2062, Providence, RI 02905, announce auditions for "Applause," as Jan. 20 and 22. Performance dates are March 24–29. The Players home is at 400 Benefit St., two blocks off Rt. 195. Further information at 421-2855.

IF YOU LOOK IRISH

Still River Films, 12 Porter Rd., Cambridge, Mass. 02140 is accepting resumes with photos to cast a motion picture to be done in the Boston area next month. Sought are a woman ages 20–30 with singing ability preferred; a male, 18 to 24, "Irish-looking"; another male, 25–35, "attractive, serious, charming"; a female in her late 40s and "motherly," and a grandmother-type woman 60 to 70 with Irish brogue. Also an Irish-looking man of 50 to 60 to portray a working class-type individual.

KRAKOWIAK DANCERS

The Krakowiak Polish Dancers, Hyde Park, Mass., seeks young men and women to join their group. Experience is not necessary, and there's a chance at a trip into Poland this summer as the group has been invited to take a team of 50 dancers there. Costumes and travel expenses to area performances are supplied. Persons interested are asked to show up for rehearsals at 7:30 p.m. Mondays and Fridays at the Masonic Hall. Dr. Alvin J. Pierce is the director. For further information, call 364-7822.

13. What is the purpose of this selection?
- to persuade the reader to audition
 - to inform the reader of auditions and opportunities
 - to entertain, to read for fun
 - to inform the reader about theaters
14. Which of the following is used by the author to make the selection easier to read?
- numerical lists
 - bold print
 - definitions
 - quotation marks
15. How does the author capture the reader's interest?
- stars around the title
 - by asking questions
 - by defining words
 - by use of punctuation

GEOMETRY

SQUARE

Q

U

I

POLYGON

A

TRIANGLE

E

RECTANGLE

A

LINES

16. What is the purpose of this selection?
- to entertain, read for fun
 - to inform the reader about geometry
 - to persuade the reader to take geometry
 - to inform the reader about figures
17. Which of the following is used by the author to make the selection easier to read?
- single words
 - poetry
 - numerical list
 - title
18. How does the author capture the reader's interest?
- title
 - quotation marks
 - method of writing words
 - definition

MIGHT AMERICANS BE TAKING IN TOO MUCH IRON?

When Art Linkletter warned television viewers 30 years ago that “that worn-out feeling may be due to iron-poor blood,” few people watching him make his pitch for Geritol supplements containing “twice the iron in a pound of calves’ liver” would have taken issue. After all, iron deficiency was often referred to as one of the country’s chief nutritional problems. It’s still considered a major nutritional concern today. In the last few months, however, widespread media attention devoted to research results suggesting that high levels of iron stored in the body may be a significant risk factor for the development of heart disease has some consumers wondering.

“High Level of Iron Tied to Heart Risk” is the way one major newspaper put it. “Bad News for the Geritol Set” proclaimed a well-respected magazine, which then went on to say that it may be wise to avoid meat and fortified cereals, both important contributors of iron to the diet.

The headline-making research that led to the advice was conducted on almost 2,000 middle-aged men in eastern Finland. Scientists there found that every 1 percent increase in the men’s levels of a substance which indicates how much iron the body has stored was associated with an increase of over 4 percent in heart attack risk. That risk was more than doubled for those with the highest measurements, helping to make iron stores a greater predictor of heart attack in the study than several other well-accepted factors such as high blood cholesterol and high blood pressure.

19. How does the author capture the reader’s interest?
 - a. with a title that is a question
 - b. bold print
 - c. fancy lettering
 - d. no conclusion

20. What is the purpose of this selection?
 - a. to inform readers about iron
 - b. to persuade readers to stop taking iron supplements
 - c. to entertain, read for fun
 - d. to caution readers about Geritol

21. Which of the following is used by the author to make the selection easier to read?
 - a. quotation marks
 - b. bold print
 - c. subheadings
 - d. numerical list