



**NEW ENGLAND  
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items  
Support Materials  
2012**

**Grade 8  
Writing**

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

**7.9.5 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by correctly spelling grade-appropriate, high-frequency words and applying conventional spelling patterns/rules** EXAMPLES: consonant doubling, consonant patterns, units of meaning – common roots, base words, pre/suffixes

- 1 Which word is **misspelled** in the sentence below?

At the beginning of the school year, I definitely make a special effort to be sure all of my assignments are completed on time.

- A. definitely
- B. special
- C. assignments
- D. completed

**7.9.1 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying rules of standard English usage to correct grammatical errors** EXAMPLES: Clear pronoun referent, subject-verb agreement, consistency of verb tense, irregular forms of verbs and nouns

- 2 Which edit should be made to the sentence below?

One of the students are going to tell the members what they will need to prepare for their next meeting.

- A. Change *are* to **is**.
- B. Change *they* to **them**.
- C. Change *will need* to **needed**.
- D. Change *their* to **its**.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

**7.1.1 Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by using varied sentence length and structure to enhance meaning (e.g., including phrases and clauses)**

- 3 What is the **best** way to combine the two sentences below?

Eduardo tripped over a cat. The cat was chasing a butterfly.

- A. Eduardo tripped over a cat when chasing a butterfly.
- B. Eduardo tripped over a cat that was chasing a butterfly.
- C. Eduardo tripped over a cat, he was chasing a butterfly.
- D. Eduardo tripped over a cat, and the cat was chasing a butterfly.

**7.9.4 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying appropriate punctuation to various sentence patterns to enhance meaning**  
EXAMPLES: colons, semicolons

- 4 Which edit should be made to the sentence below?

The rest of the team's uniforms had arrived in boxes, but Mia was unsure where her's was.

- A. Change *team's* to **teams's**.
- B. Change *uniforms* to **uniform's**.
- C. Change *boxes* to **boxes'**.
- D. Change *her's* to **hers**.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

**7.9.2 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying capitalization rules**

- 5 Which word in the sentence below should be capitalized?

The assignment for spring vacation was to read the book *of Mice and Men*.

- A. spring
- B. vacation
- C. *of*
- D. *and*

**7.9.5 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by correctly spelling grade-appropriate, high-frequency words and applying conventional spelling patterns/rules EXAMPLES: consonant doubling, consonant patterns, units of meaning – common roots, base words, pre/suffixes**

- 6 How should the underlined word in the sentence below be spelled?

Pat's impatience vanished when the movie started.

- A. impashence
- B. impatiance
- C. impatience
- D. impateince

**NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING**

**7.9.4 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying appropriate punctuation to various sentence patterns to enhance meaning**  
EXAMPLES: colons, semicolons

- 7 In which box should there be a semicolon (;)?
- A. We left the concert early  and went straight home.
  - B. Apples are my favorite fruit  pears are a close second.
  - C. Because we expected rain  we moved the picnic inside.
  - D. Turn the heat down  That pot is boiling over.

**7.1.1 Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by using varied sentence length and structure to enhance meaning (e.g., including phrases and clauses)**

- 8 What is the **best** way to combine the two sentences below?

The explorer's long journey ended. His team members returned home.

- A. The explorer's long journey ended, his team members returned home.
- B. Although the explorer's long journey ended, his team members returned home.
- C. After the explorer's long journey ended, his team members returned home.
- D. The explorer's long journey ended, but his team members returned home.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

**7.9.2 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying capitalization rules**

- 9 Which edit should be made to the sentence below?

Jason would like us to meet his Uncle, who plays professional football for the Vikings.

- A. Change *Uncle* to **uncle**.
- B. Change *who* to **Who**.
- C. Change *professional* to **Professional**.
- D. Change *Vikings* to **vikings**.

**7.9.1 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying rules of standard English usage to correct grammatical errors EXAMPLES: Clear pronoun referent, subject-verb agreement, consistency of verb tense, irregular forms of verbs and nouns**

- 10 Which of the following is a sentence fragment?
- A. J. C. Greenburg has written a series of adventure books called *Andrew Lost*.
  - B. Andrew, Judy, and a very smart robot called Thud are the main characters.
  - C. Andrew loves to invent things, but they usually do not work.
  - D. The first book that J. C. Greenburg wrote *Andrew Lost on the Moon*.

**NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING**

**Narrative Writing**

(The picture for this prompt is located in Released Items 2012 – Grade 8 Writing.)

**7.4.2** In written narratives, students organize and relate a story line/plot/series of events by establishing context, character motivation, problem/conflict/challenge, and resolution, and maintaining point of view

- 11 Write a paragraph that describes what the climber is thinking. Write the paragraph from the climber's point of view.

**Scoring Guide:**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>4</b>	The paragraph clearly describes what the climber is thinking. The paragraph maintains a clear focus and a consistent point of view (the climber's). The paragraph includes a variety of correct sentences and demonstrates sustained control of grade-appropriate grammar, usage, and mechanics.
<b>3</b>	The paragraph describes what the climber is thinking. The paragraph may have minor lapses in focus or in maintaining a consistent point of view (the climber's). The paragraph includes some sentence variety and demonstrates general control of grade-appropriate grammar, usage, and mechanics.
<b>2</b>	The paragraph is an attempt to describe what the climber is thinking. The paragraph may have major lapses in focus or in maintaining a consistent point of view (the climber's). The paragraph includes some attempt at sentence variety and may demonstrate inconsistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.
<b>1</b>	The paragraph may be unclear <b>and/or</b> a minimal attempt to describe what the climber is thinking. The paragraph includes little or no sentence variety and may demonstrate lack of control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.
<b>0</b>	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
<b>Blank</b>	No response

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 4

11 I am climbing up the rock wall. I am thinking to myself, "I can do it, I can do it!" I feel the cool wind in my hair as I am climbing higher than I already am. "Only half way more to go." I think to myself. That is when suddenly my foot slipped off. My hands were still on the rocks and so was my other foot. I called to the people below who were watching me, "I can make it, I can do it." I swung my foot around and got back on track. I was three-fourths of the way up. That's when I felt the urge to look down. I looked down below me and saw that people below were encouraging me to go on by saying, "You can do it, you can do it." I raced myself all the way to the top! It felt good to accomplish getting to the top of the rock wall. I yelled to myself, "I did it!"

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE A)

11 The climber is thinking that she only has to go a few more feet to reach the top. That she can do this and then if she can do this she will know all things are possible. She is saying in her head that she is strong enough and brave enough to do it. She has faith in herself and believes that she can do it. Once at the top she can look over everything and see how breath taking everything. It is more easy to go down because you don't struggle against gravity. She will be glad when she gets to the top.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE B)

11 I'm almost at the top. I'm very tired and I can feel the burn in my legs and the sweat all over me. Even though this is tough I keep moving farther and farther to the top. The good thing about rock climbing in the woods is their shade from the trees. I look down and I hear and see all my friends cheering me on. Two more steps I tell myself. I made it! I look down to everyone of my friends and I see them cheering me on again because I made it!

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE A)

11 If I go any higher I'm going to fall, I got all this way and now I'm getting tired. I have two choices go down or keep climbing. You know what I'm going to keep climbing I want to get to the top. I will feel so good, just to keep going!

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE B)

11

From the climber's point of view I think she is trying her best to make it to the top of the rock wall without falling. The climber is thinking about what she is going to do to go higher in the wall to make it in time. The climber is thinking what would she do if she falls down and/or slips down a rock. The climber is thinking about where she would put her hands next to make it to the top faster.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE A)

11 Strength endurance  
thats all it takes  
and I'll Be Number  
one to the top and  
everyone will cheer  
my name and I'll  
say Horay.

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE B)

11 I think that the climber is thinking "I  
have to get to the top. I Can't look down or  
else i'll be scared."

**NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING**

## Report

(The organizer for this prompt is located in Released Items 2012 – Grade 8 Writing.)

**7.7.2 In informational writing, students effectively convey purpose by stating and maintaining a focus/controlling idea**

- 12 Write a paragraph that explains what people need to survive in Antarctica. Select **appropriate** information from the organizer to support the focus of your paragraph.

**Scoring Guide:**

<b>Score</b>	<b>Description</b>
<b>4</b>	The paragraph contains a thorough explanation of what people need to survive in Antarctica. The paragraph maintains a focus/purpose throughout, includes relevant facts from the organizer, and is well-organized. The paragraph includes a variety of correct sentence structures and demonstrates sustained control of grade-appropriate grammar, usage, and mechanics.
<b>3</b>	The paragraph contains an explanation of what people need to survive in Antarctica. The paragraph maintains a focus/purpose but there may be minor lapses. The paragraph includes mostly relevant facts from the organizer, and is generally well-organized. The paragraph includes some sentence variety and demonstrates general control of grade-appropriate grammar, usage, and mechanics.
<b>2</b>	The paragraph is an attempt at an explanation of what people need to survive in Antarctica. The paragraph contains major lapses in focus/purpose <b>and/or</b> few relevant facts from the organizer. The paragraph includes some attempt at sentence variety and may demonstrate inconsistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.
<b>1</b>	The paragraph is a minimal or vague statement about what people need to survive in Antarctica.
<b>0</b>	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
<b>Blank</b>	No response

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 4  
(EXAMPLE A)

12

People need a lot of things to survive in Antarctica because it's very cold and has harsh conditions. People use skis to get to places if the snow is really deep. You should bring a very heavy sleeping bag with a tent so that you can stay warm. The temperatures are as low as 100 degrees below zero and the winds as strong as two hundred miles per hour, so bring a lot of warm clothes that you know will keep you warm. You want to dress in many layers of clothes because the air between the layers is heated by your own body heat. Bring an ice ax, and a shovel for building purposes. You can build a snow cave which is a shelter quickly dug out of the snow in an emergency. Bring a first aid kit in case you hurt yourself and sunglasses and sunscreen to protect your eyes and face.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 4  
(EXAMPLE B)

12

You need many things to survive, if you are going to live in Antarctica. The first couple of things you're going to need are skis, a good tent, and an extremely warm sleeping bag. The skis will make transportation from different places easier on the snow and ice. The tent will give you a temporary shelter from the snow and wind before you can get a snow cave built. You may want to bring an ice ax. This ax will help you build a strong snow cave. In addition, you're going to want to bring a first-aid kit, sunscreen, and sunglasses. If you get injured you are going to need the first-aid since there aren't many places you can get help in Antarctica. The sunscreen will make sure your skin doesn't get burned by the sun's strong rays. The sunglasses will protect your eyes from the bright glare of the sun shine on the ice and snow. Most importantly, you are going to want wonderful clothes and snow gear that will keep you warm at night and during the day. These are only some items that will help you stay alive in the harsh climate of Antarctica.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE A)

12

In order for people to live in Antarctica, they need a couple items to survive. One item they need is water, and lots of it. Water will keep people warm, and keep them hydrated. One survival tip is to dress in layers of warm (waterproof) clothes. The layers will be able to heat your body. Some must have items include tent, warm sleeping bag, ice ax, first-aid kit, sunscreen, and sunglasses. The tent can be used for shelter and your sleeping bag can keep you warm at night. You should always have a first-aid kit in case of an emergency or injury. If you keep all these items with you in Antarctica, you will be able to survive.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE B)

12

There are many necessities to surviving in Antarctica. First, you need to dress in warm layers of clothes, to keep your body warm. Also, you need to bring a tent and a very warm sleeping bag. This will provide shelter and prevent you from obtaining hypothermia. Next, you need to bring a first-aid kit, in case of an injury. Bringing an ice ax may also be useful. It is important to eat a lot of high-energy foods and drink lots of water, to stay warm in Antarctica. Lastly, you need to prepare yourself for temperatures as low as  $-100^{\circ}\text{F}$  and 200 mile per hour winds. In order to survive in Antarctica, it is important to bring these essential items and be prepared.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE A)

12

If you are going to Antarctica, you should bring the proper equipment. Wearing layers of clothes can help keep you warm during the really cold days.

You should also have plenty of liquids in you body to keep you hydrated. If you plan on sleeping there make sure you have a nice, strong tent, and your sleeping bag should be nice and heavy.

If you talk to people who live in Antarctica, ask them about the terrain, wildlife, and other things that could help you through the journey.

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE B)

12

To survive in Antarctica you will need many things. Heres a few of those things. You will need lots of warm clothes. You will need to drink a lot of water to stay hydrated. You will also need a first aid kit if you get hurt. Also sunglasses so ice dosnt get in your eyes. Those are some of the things you will need to survive in Antarctica.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE A)

12 If you brake it down  
you need warm cloths, shelter  
sun utencils, and a sleeping bag  
to survive. A couple more  
useful things are water, food,  
a shovel, and an ice ax.

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE B)

12 what people need to survive  
in antartica, you need shelter  
to stay nice and warm, you need  
food to stay alive, you  
need water also to stay alive

## How to Make It Appear as Though You Have Cleaned Your Room in Only 27 Minutes – No Matter How Messy It Is

### Response to Informational Text

(The passage for this prompt is located in Released Items 2012 – Grade 8 Writing.)

**7.3.3 In response to literary or informational text, students make and support analytical judgments about text by using specific details and references to text or relevant citations to support focus or judgment**

- 13 Would this system help an eighth grader who has a messy room? Write a paragraph that explains why or why not. Use details from the passage to support your response.

#### Scoring Guide:

Score	Description
4	The paragraph provides a thorough explanation of whether this system would help an eighth grader who has a messy room. The paragraph maintains a focus/purpose throughout, includes relevant supporting details, and is well-organized. The paragraph includes a variety of correct sentence structures and demonstrates sustained control of grade-appropriate grammar, usage, and mechanics.
3	The paragraph provides a general explanation of whether this system would help an eighth grader who has a messy room. The paragraph has a focus/purpose, but there may be minor lapses. The paragraph includes some supporting details and is generally well-organized. The paragraph includes some sentence variety and demonstrates general control of grade-appropriate grammar, usage, and mechanics.
2	The paragraph is an attempt at an explanation of whether this system would help an eighth grader who has a messy room. The paragraph contains major lapses in focus/purpose and/or few relevant supporting details. The paragraph includes some attempt at sentence variety and may demonstrate inconsistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics.
1	The paragraph may be unclear <b>and/or</b> a minimal attempt to answer the prompt.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 4  
(EXAMPLE A)

13

This system may or may not work depending on the eighth grader. Some love to clean and be organized. On the other hand people like me don't care how messy their room is. It would not work for me because I can't keep myself focused for that long. When my room is messy it's more like trashed. In the passage it says it would take only three minutes to put dirty clothes in a hamper and clean clothes in draws. It takes me almost an hour! Some things 'just don't have a place to go I have no idea where to put them'. Being a teenager that is the last thing I want to do, be all couped up in my house, cleaning my room when I could be with my friends. Cleaning my entire room takes a full school day. If it really took twenty-seven minutes I wouldn't mind cleaning my room.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 4  
(EXAMPLE B)

13

This system would DEFINITELY help an eighth grader with a messy room. I do not have the most organized room, and all these steps would help me tremendously.

Step 3 is a really great one. Making different piles of stuff and taking care of them one-by-one could prove useful. We eighth graders have a lot on our agenda. Many do sports, other extracurriculars, and homework on top of that. Taking things slowly, a little at a time is an excellent tactic.

Using a large garbage bag so you have plenty of trash capacity is smart. Collect all the trash and pile it all in. Ridding yourself of junk you just don't need or use definitely prevents future room disasters. Eighth graders usual have lots of worthless bits of junk stored away.

This article is providing amazing strategies that eighth graders could easily put to use.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE A)

13

This self help paragraph is great for a messy eighth grader. This paragraph helps you not become overwhelmed by the mess in your room. By doing as this passage says and "sort it into piles" it will go a lot faster. When you tackle a mess one step at a time it's not a mess, it's single little projects. Also it says to get rid of stuff you don't need, would it kill you to get rid of a toy you said, "oh I need this", and never used it after? Also you should already have made your bed and picked up dirty clothes, you do that every morning it's one less thing to do. Eighth graders will have super clean rooms after reading this passage.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE B)

13 I definitely support this article, because it is a quick and easy way to clean your room. I like the way it states what stuff you don't need, this could help me out a lot. The way the article is setup is nice too, because you can do these steps in almost any order and still get the job done. Using these helpful hints and steps could help you get the job done faster. The big thing I did really like about this passage was how it suggested common household things that you could use to put things away, like how it suggested to use a jar to put pencils away. So my answer is yes I do think this could very well help an eighth grade student with his or her room.

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE A)

13 I think that this would help an eighth grader, because my room looks like that, and it sounds like a good plan. But, opening a window might be unnecessary. Taking your time cleaning and organizing is good too. I have tried this, and in the end, both my parents were pleased, and so was I.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE B)

13

I think It would help an eighth grader. It would help because an eighth grader's room is real messy. Some eighth graders have a clean room. Then there is some you can't even see their floor. An eighth grader could put dirty clothes in a hamper. Then put clean clothes in the drawers all in 3 minutes. Making a bed in 3 minutes is easy for some. You can open a window in a minute.

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE A)

13

Yes because the eight grader might feel that it could take weeks to clean his room until he reads the paragraph about how easy it is to clean a room in such short amount of time.

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE B)

13

yes because most kids have a messy room. & putting cloths in the hamper would work. sorting out the stuff into piles would work. open a window and make your bed in 10 min would work.

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 0

13

no I would NOT HELP HIM to bad clean it HIMSELF

## Persuasive Writing

(There is no passage that accompanies this prompt.)

### 7.1 Structures of Language – Applying Understanding of Sentences, Paragraphs, Text Structures

- 7.1.1 **Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by using varied sentence length and structure to enhance meaning (e.g., including phrases and clauses)**
- 7.1.2 **Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by using the paragraph form: indenting, main idea, supporting details**
- 7.1.3 **Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by recognizing organizational structures *within* paragraphs or *within* texts** EXAMPLES (of text structures): description, sequential chronology, proposition/support, compare/contrast, problem/solution EXAMPLE: When given a paragraph or text and a description of text structures, students identify structure used or their purposes
- 7.1.4 **Students demonstrate command of the structures of sentences, paragraphs, and text by applying a format and text structure appropriate to the purpose of the writing**

### 7.6 Informational Writing (Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing) – Organizing and Conveying Information

- 7.6.1 **In informational writing, students organize ideas/concepts by using an organizational text structure appropriate to focus/controlling idea** EXAMPLES (of text structures): description, sequential, chronology, proposition/support, compare/contrast, problem/solution
- 7.6.2 **In informational writing, students organize ideas/concepts by selecting appropriate information to set context, which may include a lead/hook**
- 7.6.3 **In informational writing, students organize ideas/concepts by using transition words or phrases appropriate to organizational text structure**
- 7.6.4 **In informational writing, students organize ideas/concepts by writing a conclusion that provides closure**

**NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING**

**7.7 Informational Writing (Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing)**

- 7.7.2 In informational writing, students effectively convey purpose by stating and maintaining a focus/controlling idea**
- 7.7.3 In informational writing, students effectively convey purpose by writing with a sense of audience, when appropriate**

**7.8 Informational Writing (Reports, Procedures, or Persuasive Writing) –  
Using Elaboration Strategies**

- 7.8.2 In informational writing, students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies by including facts and details relevant to focus/controlling idea, and excluding extraneous information**
- 7.8.3 In informational writing, students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies by including sufficient details or facts for appropriate depth of information: naming, describing, explaining, comparing, use of visual images**
- 7.8.4 In informational writing, students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies by addressing readers' concerns (including counterarguments – in persuasive writing; addressing potential problems – in procedures; providing context – in reports)**
- 7.8.5 In informational writing, students demonstrate use of a range of elaboration strategies by commenting on the significance of information, when appropriate**

**NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING**

**7.9 Writing Conventions –  
Applying Rules of Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics**

- 7.9.1 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying rules of standard English usage to correct grammatical errors** EXAMPLES: Clear pronoun referent, subject-verb agreement, consistency of verb tense, irregular forms of verbs and nouns
- 7.9.2 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying capitalization rules**
- 7.9.4 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by applying appropriate punctuation to various sentence patterns to enhance meaning** EXAMPLES: colons, semicolons
- 7.9.5 In independent writing, students demonstrate command of appropriate English conventions by correctly spelling grade-appropriate, high-frequency words and applying conventional spelling patterns/rules** EXAMPLES: consonant doubling, consonant patterns, units of meaning – common roots, base words, pre/suffixes

**NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING**

- 14 Ever since the 1950s, when rock-and-roll music was introduced, adults have worried about how music lyrics affect preteens and teenagers.

Do you think adults should or should not worry about the lyrics in the music that young people listen to today? Write a persuasive letter to a newspaper stating and supporting your opinion.

**Scoring Guide:**

Score	Description
6	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose/position is clear throughout; strong focus/position; OR strongly stated purpose/opinion focuses the writing</li> <li>• Intentionally organized for effect</li> <li>• Fully developed arguments and reasons; rich, insightful elaboration supports purpose/opinion</li> <li>• Distinctive voice, tone, and style effectively support position</li> <li>• Consistent application of the rules of grade-level grammar, usage, and mechanics</li> </ul>
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose/position is clear; stated focus/opinion maintained consistently throughout</li> <li>• Well-organized and coherent throughout</li> <li>• Arguments/reasons are relevant and support purpose/opinion; arguments/reasons are sufficiently elaborated</li> <li>• Strong command of sentence structure; uses language to support position</li> <li>• Consistent application of the rules of grade-level grammar, usage, and mechanics</li> </ul>
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose/position and focus are evident, but may not be maintained</li> <li>• Generally well organized and coherent</li> <li>• Arguments are appropriate and mostly support purpose/opinion</li> <li>• Well-constructed sentences; uses language well</li> <li>• May contain some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics</li> </ul>
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Purpose/position may be general</li> <li>• Some sense of organization; may have lapses in coherence</li> <li>• Some relevant details support purpose; arguments are thinly developed</li> <li>• Generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately</li> <li>• May contain some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempted or vague purpose/position</li> <li>• Attempted organization; lapses in coherence</li> <li>• Generalized, listed, or undeveloped details/reasons</li> <li>• May lack sentence control or may use language poorly</li> <li>• May have errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interfere with meaning</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Minimal evidence of purpose/position</li> <li>• Little or no organization</li> <li>• Random or minimal details</li> <li>• Rudimentary or deficient use of language</li> <li>• May have errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interfere with meaning</li> </ul>
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
<b>Blank</b>	No response

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 6

14

Dear Newspaper,

Parents these days are becoming more and more overprotective by the minute, and I am outraged! When rock-and-roll music was introduced in the 1950s, adults have worried about the effects that song lyrics have on adolescents. These parents are convinced that by listening to a certain kind of music, their teenagers will become juvenile delinquents! I disagree with them. For the reasons stated below, I think adults shouldn't worry about the lyrics in the music that young people listen to today.

First of all, preteens and teenagers are growing up, and should be able to have a life of their own.

Parents should worry about the safety and well-being of their adolescents and the people around them. However, this does not mean that parents need to control every aspect of their children's lives! Adults need to accept that they can't just morph their growing children into the person they want them to be. Every person is different, and has different tastes in music. Just because something is different, it doesn't mean it is bad or wrong. Parents need to realize this, and honor the differences between their children and themselves. No preteen or teenager should have to live in their parents' shadow.

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 6

Also, parents have much more important things to worry about than the music that their adolescents are listening to. Some parents are so concerned about the music their children are listening to that they don't bother considering other things. To all of you parents reading this who are worried about the effects of song lyrics on your children, let me ask you, Are your kids trying their best in school? Do your kids stand up for what is right? What are your kids doing after school? These are the things you should be worried about. You may say, "But those are the very things that song lyrics these days are effecting." However, I disagree. If parents are involved in these areas of their children's lives, their children are probably not going to get into trouble. However, if parents interfere with areas such as music, where kids are just trying to be themselves, their children may feel resentful because they have no control over their own lives. Music lyrics are near the bottom of the list of things to worry about.

Another reason why parents shouldn't worry about the effects of song lyrics on young people is that if parents have raised their children right, then by the time their kids are adolescents, they will probably know how to make good choices. For example, a song about drugs probably won't convince a preteen or

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 6

teenager to do drugs if they have been raised knowing that drugs are harmful. Someone might like a song simply because of the beat or the tune, not necessarily because of the lyrics. If parents encourage their kids to make safe choices, then song lyrics probably won't play a big role in how adolescents live their lives.

I think that these reasons prove that adults do not need to worry about the effects of song lyrics on young people.

- Purpose/position is clear throughout; strong focus/position; OR strongly stated purpose/opinion focuses the writing
- Intentionally organized for effect
- Fully developed arguments and reasons; rich, insightful elaboration supports purpose/opinion
- Distinctive voice, tone, and style effectively support position
- Consistent application of the rules of grade-level grammar, usage, and mechanics

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 5  
(EXAMPLE A)

14

Dear Whom ever it may concern,

Since rock-and-roll was introduced in the 1950s, concern has rose over parents about the lyrics that are sung. But now, more than ever, that concern is stronger, with the newer music styles and themes. In my opinion, there is no need to worry about how it will affect teens and pre-teens. Not all songs are bad; most help us connect. But lyrics, in general, don't have control over, us, teens.

Now, not all songs are inappropite. There are many songs out there that teens and preteens listen to and like, that have good themes and messages. It lets them relate with their own lives. It is true, though, that there some songs that are inappropite, but the lyrics don't directly affect anyone. Most teens and preteens know lyrics to sing-a-long with the artist. (And not all the lyrics.) But they're too busy remembering and singing the lyrics to actually stop and understand them; to know their meaning. How can something affect you if you don't know

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 5  
(EXAMPLE A)

what it means?

But even if you are too concerned about the lyrics and try your best to keep your teen away from those songs, I assure you, you will not get a positive response. It will only make things worse. Teens are practically programmed to rebel. You will only find them listening more and more to it, but also acting out more. Us, teens, connect to music in more ways than you can imagine; and especially now in our life. It lets us know we aren't alone in certain situations and that we aren't the "odd one out." And some of the bad lyrics are just an unfortunate glitch in the system.

Even when you look past all these reasons, it comes down to the final thing: lyrics don't affect us, teens. For this generation, it takes more than a couple of words to change us. Lyrics aren't good enough. If there's anything to worry about in music, it's the people in music; the artists. Their actions are world-known and that's what affects teens. It makes them

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 5  
(EXAMPLE A)

think, just because someone else did it, makes it okay for us to do it. We need to know that it doesn't justify anything. They say words are powerful, but not anymore.

In conclusion, lyrics are the wrong thing to blame in teen and preteen behavior, choices, or anything that concerns you. There are other reasons for the things teens do. Each reason is different for every individual. Lyrics can't affect us all in a negative way.

Thank you for your time and concern.

- Purpose/position is clear; stated focus/opinion maintained consistently throughout
- Well-organized and coherent throughout
- Arguments/reasons are relevant and support purpose/opinion; arguments/reasons are sufficiently elaborated
- Strong command of sentence structure; uses language to support position
- Consistent application of the rules of grade-level grammar, usage, and mechanics

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 5  
(EXAMPLE B)

14

Dear BYCOW,

Ever since our beloved parents were young, music has thrived as entertainment and as a business. But why has it become so vulgar? Music that has become popular is much different than the techno swing of the 70's and 80's. The music that rules our radios is no longer slow love songs of the 60's or heartfelt ballads from the 90's. Our music world has taken a dark turn from pure talent, to hate and death lyrics and raps. The kind of music only people with love issues or anger problems want to listen to. There are songs that go far beyond what parents want their kids hearing. Songs with swears and cursing. Ones that wish some one else would die. Wouldn't you rather here the talent of a symphony swaying through your car, or even the techno beat rushing in your ear drums. We don't want to hear about other peoples problems. We all have enough of our own. The instant you switch your little radio on you here some artist of the year singing about their girlfriend. Music today all sounds the same. As far as I can see artists are choosing between 3 different topics for their

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 5  
(EXAMPLE B)

song. The first topic is money. You always hear songs about some male with lots of money who is going to spoil his girlfriend. The second topic is love. Whether it be about a break up or a person who is mad at someone else it always has to do with love. These often include vulgar language or inappropriate comments and images. Then sadly but truly the third topic is sex. No matter how hard we try to ignore it sex is all around us in the music we listen to. Songs contain graphic words that describe a night or even some talk about parties. Almost every song on the radio includes something about some sort of sex. It may not be exactly sex but the words and ideas of the people in the song are disrespectful and extremely inappropriate. So who really wants their kids listening to this?

The way speech is used in modern music doesn't help. Teens and kids can easily pick up words and phrases from songs. Swears are more common and slang in the English we use are being made more. Teens especially might start to do bad things that

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 5  
(EXAMPLE B)

artists are doing because they think it's cool. Bad music could ruin reputations and destroy young lives. Although not all songs are bad we still need to realize our problems within the music world. Give it a thought and try a new style because for now this ones out!

Sincerely,  
A concerned adult.

- Purpose/position is clear; stated focus/opinion maintained consistently throughout
- Well-organized and coherent throughout
- Arguments/reasons are relevant and support purpose/opinion; arguments/reasons are sufficiently elaborated
- Strong command of sentence structure; uses language to support position
- Consistent application of the rules of grade-level grammar, usage, and mechanics

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 4

14

Dear Newspaper,

Have you ever listened to certain rock-and-roll artists who have piercings and tattoos everywhere and sound as if they just scream random words throughout the song? That is what preteens and teens are listening to in today's society. I believe that adults should worry about how music lyrics affect preteens and teens.

Teenagers are trying many new things that they shouldn't be, and some parents are just letting them. Adults should be paying attention to what they are doing with people and what they are listening to. Adults don't realize that the world has changed since their time as children, and that it is a lot more dangerous because teens are finding out about things that they shouldn't know so much about until they get older and more mature.

Adults should be watching their kids/teenagers because we are getting into things that we shouldn't be, and I believe that the kind of music, like rock-and-roll, is helping to influence us to make not the best choices. Rock-and-roll artists

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 4

are dying their hair, getting peircings and tattoos all over their body, making new styles of clothes to wear, like all black and blood red leather pants and jackets and wearing dark black make-up, like lipstick and eyeliner, and having kids make thier bedrooms the way rockstars are. Adults should try to stop them because our brains aren't fully developed until we are twenty-one.

IF therock-and-roll artist change our lifestyle now then, by the time we are adults the world will be alot different. The population will have alot more people who like rock-and-roll, and alot more stores will be alot more like the style that rock-and-roll people wear. Adults should worry about lyrics affecting teens and preteens so that the teens can have a good life ahead of them.

- Purpose/position and focus are evident, but may not be maintained
- Generally well organized and coherent
- Arguments are appropriate and mostly support purpose/opinion
- Well-constructed sentences; uses language well
- May contain some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE A)

14

Dear newspaper, I think that kids' parents should be worried about what young people listen to today. Listening to that kind of music will motivate kids to make bad decisions like drugs and alcohol. It can also promote violence and other wrong things. Some people think that it is okay to let young people listen to this music because they think that they are going to do them later on. It's best if you prevent it at a younger age because that's when you start to make your own decisions. In all, I think that parents should censor what their children listen to because it can affect them and other people as well. Thank you for reading my opinion of what music young people listen to.

- Purpose/position may be general
- Some sense of organization; may have lapses in coherence
- Some relevant details support purpose; arguments are thinly developed
- Generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately
- May contain some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE B)

14

Dear Providence Journal,

I do not think that parents should worry about the lyrics in the songs that young people listen to. In most songs the problem that parents have are usually the swearing or the violence. Parents don't know this but most of the kids at school swear more than the song does. Your kid probably hears worst swears at school. That's how bad it is. And about the violence, kids see all of that on the news or even some of the TV show parents watch. Violence is everywhere, on the streets, in Iraq, even at school and there is nothing we can do about it. Violence will never go away. I know parents just want to protect the kids, but they need to get over the idea of

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 3  
(EXAMPLE B)

Keeping Kids away from  
swears and violence and all  
that other stuff. It is never  
going to go away.

- Purpose/position may be general
- Some sense of organization; may have lapses in coherence
- Some relevant details support purpose; arguments are thinly developed
- Generally correct sentence structure; uses language adequately
- May contain some errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE A)

14

Parents shouldn't be worried about lyrics in songs because most lyrics in songs are appropriate. Although, some kids listen to rap and hip-hop which most lyrics in that case are not appropriate. If you're the kind of parent that's over-protective let loose a little, everyone needs some type of excitement. And there's worse things that teens and preteens could be doing than listening to music. It's your choice, you can let your kid listen to music or not, your his/her parent not me.

- Attempted or vague purpose/position
- Attempted organization; lapses in coherence
- Generalized, listed, or undeveloped details/reasons
- May lack sentence control or may use language poorly
- May have errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interfere with meaning

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 2  
(EXAMPLE B)

14

I think adults should not be worried about the lyrics in the music because we don't really sit there and think about what they mean. The reason I think this is because not every song is about drugs or violence some are about love and romance. Most kids like rock for its awesome guitar riffs and drum playing not for the singer.

- Attempted or vague purpose/position
- Attempted organization; lapses in coherence
- Generalized, listed, or undeveloped details/reasons
- May lack sentence control or may use language poorly
- May have errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interfere with meaning

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE A)

14

The music teenagers listen to is some bad some good. Some of the music has bad language and bad lyrics as well. We shouldn't worry about our kids because we should trust them even though it is sometimes bad. Just because some is bad doesn't mean they are going to listen to it.

- Minimal evidence of purpose/position
- Little or no organization
- Random or minimal details
- Rudimentary or deficient use of language
- May have errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interfere with meaning

NECAP 2012 RELEASED ITEMS  
GRADE 8 WRITING

STUDENT WRITING SAMPLE – SCORE POINT 1  
(EXAMPLE B)

14

I do not think parents should worry about songs. But I bet there are some songs out there that they don't want their kids listening to. And parents should not worry about what songs their listening to. Because there can be far worst things on tv shows their watching.

- Minimal evidence of purpose/position
- Little or no organization
- Random or minimal details
- Rudimentary or deficient use of language
- May have errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics that interfere with meaning

## Grade 8 Writing Released Item Information – 2012

Released Item Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12	13	14
Content Strand <sup>1</sup>	SC	NW	RW	IR	PW									
GLE Code	7-9	7-9	7-1	7-9	7-9	7-9	7-9	7-1	7-9	7-9	7-4	7-7	7-3	7-6, 7-7, 7-8, 7-1, 7-9
Depth of Knowledge Code	1	1	2	1	1	1	1	2	1	1	2	2	2	3
Item Type <sup>2</sup>	MC	CR	CR	CR	ER									
Answer Key	A	A	B	D	C	C	B	C	A	D				
Total Possible Points	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	4	4	12

<sup>1</sup>Content Strand: SC = Structures of Language & Writing Conventions. Short Responses — NW = Narrative Writing, RW = Report Writing, IR = Response to Informational Text. Extended Response — PW = Persuasive Writing

<sup>2</sup>Item Type: MC = Multiple Choice, CR = Constructed Response, ER = Writing Prompt