

VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING

Spring 2007 Released Test

# GRADE 8 WRITING

---

Form W0117, CORE 1

**Property of the Virginia Department of Education**

©2007 by the Commonwealth of Virginia, Department of Education, P.O. Box 2120, Richmond, Virginia 23218-2120. All rights reserved. Except as permitted by law, this material may not be reproduced or used in any form or by any means, electronic or mechanical, including photocopying or recording, or by any information storage or retrieval system, without written permission from the copyright owner. Commonwealth of Virginia public school educators may reproduce any portion of these released tests for non-commercial educational purposes without requesting permission. All others should direct their written requests to the Virginia Department of Education, Division of Student Assessment and School Improvement, at the above address or by e-mail to [Student\\_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov](mailto:Student_Assessment@doe.virginia.gov).



**Directions**

Read the passage in each box. Read each question after the passage. Choose the best answer. Then mark the space on your answer document for the answer you have chosen.

**SAMPLE A**

***A Special Person***

**In English class, Sarah has been asked to write a description of someone special to her. Sarah wants to write about her older brother.**

**Which of these would *best* help Sarah write her description of her older brother?**

- A** Calling his friends and telling them about him
- B** Thinking about all the things she likes about him
- C** Making a list of things she wants him to do for her
- D** Asking him to take her to the library

**SAMPLE B**

**Here is the first part of Sarah’s rough draft.**

**(1)A special person in my life is my big brother. (2)His name is Ben. (3)He is tall and thin.**

**How can sentences 1 and 2 *best* be combined?**

- F** A special person in my life is Ben, my big brother.
- G** A special person in my life is my big brother and Ben is who he is.
- H** In my life a special person is my big brother and he is Ben.
- J** My big brother Ben is a special person, he is in my life.

**SAMPLE C**

**Here is the next part of Sarah’s rough draft.**

**(4)He helps me with my homework. (5)He is a good student.**

**In sentence 4, He helps should be written —**

- A** He were helping
- B** He have helped
- C** He help
- D** As it is

## ***A Change of Heart***

**Casey's English teacher asks the students in her class to write a short story.**

- 1 Casey decides to use a hospital as the setting for her story. Which of the following would be *most* helpful for her to use in describing the setting?**
- A** A magazine article about health
  - B** A list of the hospitals in her city
  - C** A book giving the history of a particular hospital
  - D** A visit to a hospital

To help her plan, Casey made this story map. Use it to answer question 2.

**TITLE:**

A Change of Heart

**SETTING:**

A hospital, one week last winter

**CHARACTERS:**

Jennifer  
Her grandmother  
A friendly nurse

**EVENTS:**

1. Jennifer's grandmother is in the hospital.
2. Jennifer and her parents go to visit.
3. Jennifer feels uncomfortable in the hospital.
4. A nurse comes in to care for Jennifer's grandmother.
5. The nurse makes Jennifer feel more comfortable in the hospital.
6. Jennifer imagines herself as a nurse someday.

**2 This story map will help Casey to —**

- F** draw on past experiences for her story
- G** think of an original idea for her story
- H** keep the events she wants to use in her story in order
- J** use good grammar in her story

**Here is the first part of Casey’s rough draft. Use it to answer questions 3–5.**

**(1)**Jennifer walked into the hospital and shivered. **(2)**She did not like them. **(3)**Hospitals were always so cold, and everything in them was so white. **(4)**Reluctantly, she followed her mother and father into her grandmother’s room. **(5)**The room was filled with flowers and get-well cards. **(6)**Up to her chin in blankets, the hospital bed held her grandmother, looking small and frail. **(7)**Jennifer saw a tube in her grandmother’s arm and all types of machines beside her. **(8)**Jennifer had no idea what they were all used for.

**(9)**Her mother gently kissed her grandmother on the cheek, but Jennifer was afraid to get too close. **(10)**Fearful that she might hurt her grandmother or pull out a tube that she wasn’t supposed to touch. **(11)**Her grandmother grinned at her and motioned for her to come closer, and hesitantly Jennifer walked over and took her grandmother’s hand. **(12)**“Hi, Sweetie,” whispered her grandmother. **(13)**“Don’t be frightened by all this stuff. **(14)**It’s still me.”

**(15)**Several days before, her grandmother had been taken to the hospital because her blood pressure was too low. **(16)**Jennifer’s mother had explained that her grandmother was fine now. **(17)**The doctors had decided to monitor her for a few days before allowing her to go home.

**3 How can Casey *best* combine sentences 2 and 3 into one sentence without changing their meaning?**

- A** She did not like hospitals, hospitals were always so cold, and everything in them was so white.
- B** She did not like hospitals because they were always so cold, and everything in them was so white.
- C** She did not like hospitals, and they were always so cold, and everything in them was so white.
- D** She did not like hospitals hospitals were always so cold, everything in them was so white.

**4 How can Casey *best* rewrite sentence 6?**

- F** The hospital bed, up to her chin in blankets, held her grandmother, looking small and frail.
- G** Up to her chin in blankets and looking small and frail, her grandmother lay in the hospital bed.
- H** Looking small and frail up to her chin, her grandmother in the hospital bed in blankets.
- J** Up to her chin in blankets, the hospital bed, looking small and frail, lay her grandmother.

**5 How can Casey *best* rewrite sentence 10 to make a complete sentence?**

- A** Jennifer fearful that she might hurt her grandmother or pull out a tube that she wasn't supposed to touch.
- B** Fearful that she might hurt her grandmother or pull out a tube that she wasn't supposed to touch, she felt.
- C** Fearing that she might hurt her grandmother or pull out a tube that she wasn't supposed to touch.
- D** She feared that she might hurt her grandmother or pull out a tube that she wasn't supposed to touch.

**Read the next part of Casey’s rough draft and use it to answer questions 6–11. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these groups of underlined words.**

**(18)**The nurse came in to check on her grandmother. **(19)**She used a thermometer to take her grandmother’s temperature and a stethoscope to listen to her heart. **(20)**Jennifer found everything the nurse did for her grandmother to be extremely interesting. **(21)**She asked about the medical instruments, and the nurse explained how they were used. **(22)**Jennifer listened closely, examining each instrument thoroughly.

**(23)**The nurse was real attentive toward her grandmother. **(24)**She fluffed her pillows and makes sure she was resting comfortably. **(25)**She supplied her with water, food, and reading materials. **(26)**Jennifer could see what a positive effect the help had on her grandmother. **(27)**She asked, “Do you enjoy being a nurse?

**(28)**“Yes, I love taking care of people,” the nurse replied, “and I find it rewarding to watch people get better. **(29)**It’s exciting to be a part of all these different people’s lives.”

**(30)**As the nurse left the room, Jennifer smiled at her grandmother and her parents. **(31)**She was filled with excitement as she imagined herself attending Nursing School and learning to care for sick people. **(32)**For the first time, she didn’t mind being in a hospital. **(33)**She was as a matter of fact starting to like the smell and the white walls of Grady Memorial Hospital. **(34)**They were signs of people trying to help other people.



**6 In sentence 21, how is they correctly written?**

- F** them
- G** it
- H** those
- J** As it is

**7 In sentence 23, how is real correctly written?**

- A** really
- B** more real
- C** most real
- D** As it is

**8 In sentence 24, how is makes correctly written?**

- F** made
- G** make
- H** making
- J** As it is

**9 In sentence 27, how is nurse? correctly written?**

- A** nurse?"
- B** nurse.
- C** nurse,
- D** As it is

**10 In sentence 31, how is Nursing School correctly written?**

- F** Nursing school
- G** nursing School
- H** nursing school
- J** As it is

**11 In sentence 33, how is was as a matter of fact correctly written?**

- A** was, as a matter of fact,
- B** was as a matter of fact,
- C** was as a matter, of fact,
- D** As it is

**Go to the next  
page and continue  
working.**

***Rags to Riches: Stephen King***

The students in Ellie's English class are asked to write about their favorite modern American author.

**Ellie decides to write about Stephen King. She makes this outline. Use it to answer question 12.**

## **Stephen King**

### **I. Early years**

- A. Born in Portland, Maine, September 21, 1947
- B. Had one brother, David
- C. Brothers mostly raised by mother

### **II. School**

- A. Wrote a column in Lisbon Falls High School newspaper
- B. Graduated from Lisbon Falls High School in 1966
- C. Graduated from University of Maine in 1970
- D. Received a bachelor of arts degree in English
- E. Qualified to teach high school English
- F. Began teaching high school English in 1971

### **III. Professional career**

- A. First short story published in a magazine, 1965
- B. In 1973 first novel, *Carrie*, published
- C. First movie of his work, *Carrie*, 1976
- D. Named 2003 recipient of *The National Book Foundation Medal for Distinguished Contribution to American Letters*

### **IV. Setbacks**

- A. Rejection slips
- B. Frustration
- C. Critical accident

**12** Ellie wants to add this information to her outline: Winner of numerous other writing awards and honors. Where should she add it?

- F** I. Early years
- G** II. School
- H** III. Professional career
- J** IV. Setbacks

**Here is the first part of Ellie’s rough draft. Use it to answer questions 13–16.**

**(1)**If you like horror or suspense books or movies, you are probably a fan of Stephen King. **(2)**Stephen King has written more than fifty novels and numerous short stories. **(3)**Many of these have been made into movies.

**(4)**King was born in Maine, the second son of Donald and Nellie King. **(5)**He lived in Indiana and he also lived in Connecticut before returning back to Maine with his mother when he was eleven. **(6)**King always knew he wanted to be a writer. **(7)**Consequently, his path to success was not an easy one.

**(8)**While in high school, he and his brother David wrote and sold a local newspaper. **(9)**Their paper was named *Dave’s Rag* and sold for just five cents a copy. **(10)**Other than the newspaper, according to King, his high school career was “totally undistinguished.”

**(11)**King earned a bachelor of arts degree in English from the University of Maine. **(12)**Shortly after graduation, he married his wife, Tabitha. **(13)**He was a trained high school English teacher. **(14)**He was not able to find a job. **(15)**While his wife worked at a donut shop, he supported himself by pumping gas and working in a laundry. **(16)**Many people have to take odd jobs as they start their careers. **(17)**He continued to write. **(18)**He sold a few of his short stories to magazines, but he also received numerous rejection letters.

**(19)**He eventually found a job teaching and continued to write at night and on weekends. **(20)**Many of those stories were later compiled into a collection called *Night Shift*.

**(21)**He became frustrated one night and threw the first few pages of a new novel in the trash. **(22)**His wife rescued the papers and read them. **(23)**She urged King to finish the story. **(24)**He did, and in the end his first novel was accepted for publication. **(25)**The book was named *Carrie*. **(26)**The novel was a success and was later adapted for two movies. **(27)**Thanks to his wife’s encouragement, King was now a successful writer.

**13** How can Ellie *best* rewrite sentence 5 so that it no longer needlessly repeats information?

- A** He went back to Maine with his mother when he was eleven, but before he returned to Maine he lived in Indiana and Connecticut.
- B** He returned to Maine when he was eleven; however, he lived in Indiana and Connecticut before he went back to Maine with his mother.
- C** When he was eleven, he went back to Maine with his mother, but before he returned to Maine, he lived in Indiana and Connecticut.
- D** He lived in Indiana and Connecticut before returning to Maine with his mother when he was eleven.

**14** Ellie wants to replace Consequently in sentence 7 with a word that better fits the meaning of the sentence. Which of the following could she *best* use?

- F** Therefore
- G** In addition
- H** However
- J** Because of this



**15** How can Ellie *best* combine sentences 13 and 14 without changing their meaning?

- A** King got trained as a high school English teacher while he still could not find a job.
- B** Even though he was a trained high school English teacher, he was unable to find a job.
- C** Though he was not able to find a trained job, King was a high school English teacher.
- D** King was not able to find a job because he was a trained high school English teacher.

**16** Which of the following sentences should Ellie delete because it is *not* related to the topic of her paper?

- F** Sentence 2
- G** Sentence 10
- H** Sentence 16
- J** Sentence 22

**Go to the next  
page and continue  
working.**

**Read the next section of Ellie’s rough draft and use it to answer questions 17–24. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these groups of underlined words.**

(28)His first published book gave Stephen King financial freedom. (29)He was able to quit his teaching job and write full time. (30)Since the success of *Carrie*, King has become a very productive writer. (31)He has written over one hundred short stories and fifty novels. (32)More than forty movies based on his work has been made. (33)His books have been translated into thirty-three different languages around the world. (34)Over 330 million copys of his books are in publication. (35)King has made appearances in more than a dozen of the movies based on his writing. (36)In addition he has directed and written screenplays for several of his works. (37)King also has published works under an alias, or pen name, Richard Bachman.

(38)In 1999 a vehicle hit King while he was out walking, injuring him very bad. (39)Since his recovery he has brought new projects and writing to the public.

(40)Recently King authored a television drama series called *Stephen King’s Kingdom Hospital*, which is partly autobiographical. (41)Each episodes plot focuses on a strange group of people in a hospital, including a nurse who faints at the sight of blood, a nearly blind security guard, a disabled artist, and a psychic. (42)The artist, while in a coma, encounters a ghostly figure who wants to use him to free the hospital and a young girl from evil influences.

(43)King has also announced that fellow Boston Red Sox fan and writer Stewart O’Nan and he are coauthoring a book recording the baseball team’s 2004 season.

(44)It begins with spring training and continue through Opening Day and the entire season. (45)They will go to the games together, but each will keep his own personal journal regarding the games trades, and players. (46)This highly anticipated book is scheduled to be published in late 2004. (47)Stephen King’s fans will once again be enjoying his work.

**17** In sentence 32, how is work has been correctly written?

- A** work are
- B** work have been
- C** work is
- D** As it is

**18** In sentence 34, how is copys of correctly written?

- F** copys' of
- G** copy's of
- H** copies of
- J** As it is

**19** In sentence 36, how is In addition he has directed and written correctly written?

- A** In addition he has directed, and written
- B** In addition, he has directed and written
- C** In addition he has directed and written,
- D** As it is

**20** In sentence 38, how is very bad correctly written?

- F** worse
- G** very badly
- H** the worst
- J** As it is

**21** In sentence 41, how is Each episodes plot correctly written?

- A** Each episode's plot
- B** Each episodes' plot
- C** Each episodes's plot
- D** As it is

**22** In sentence 42, how is ghostly figure correctly written?

- F** ghosty figure
- G** ghostlier figure
- H** more ghosty figure
- J** As it is

**23** In sentence 44, how is continue correctly written?

- A** continues
- B** continued
- C** has continued
- D** As it is

**24** In sentence 45, how is games trades, and players correctly written?

- F** games trades, and, players
- G** games, trades, and players
- H** games, trades, and, players
- J** As it is



**Answer Key-8091-W0117**

<b>Test Sequence Number</b>	<b>Correct Answer</b>	<b>Reporting Category</b>	<b>Reporting Category Description</b>
1	D	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
2	H	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
3	B	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
4	G	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
5	D	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
6	J	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
7	A	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
8	F	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
9	A	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
10	H	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
11	A	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
12	H	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
13	D	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
14	H	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
15	B	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
16	H	001	Plan, compose, and revise in a variety of forms for a variety of purposes
17	B	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
18	H	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
19	B	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
20	G	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
21	A	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
22	J	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
23	A	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
24	G	002	Edit for correct use of language, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

**Total RS\_SS Conversion for  
Grade 8 Writing W0117 combined with Prompt 918**

From Raw Score (greater or equal)	Converted Scale Score
0	000
1	043
2	085
3	128
4	171
5	213
6	256
7	289
8	306
9	316
10	323
11	329
12	334
13	338
14	342
15	346
16	349
17	352
18	355
19	358
20	361
21	364
22	367
23	370
24	373
25	376
26	379
27	382
28	385
29	388
30	391
31	394
32	397
<b>33</b>	<b>401</b>
34	404
35	408
36	412
37	417
38	421
39	427
40	433
41	439
42	447
43	455
44	465
45	476
46	490
<b>47</b>	<b>509</b>
48	600