

New Jersey

Assessment of Skills and Knowledge



Grade 8 Explanatory Writing Prompt Annotated Exemplars

DESCRIPTION OF THE WRITING TASK

The responses selected to appear in this document were written by eighth grade students who responded to an explanatory prompt on the May 2008 NJ ASK.

Students were provided an explanatory writing prompt and given 25 minutes to write an essay. Prewriting/planning was encouraged, and space was provided for this endeavor. A Writer's Checklist of important ideas was also provided to encourage students to read, revise, and edit their written work. All students' writing was considered a **first draft** in this writing process since students were not permitted to confer with others nor to refer to outside resources (dictionary or thesaurus) and therefore were unable to rely on the feedback and constructive suggestions that result from strategies appropriate for classroom instruction. In this way, the test obtains a sample of each students' **baseline** writing ability within the context of consistent standards that ensure fairness to all who participate.

The responses appear as the students wrote them; no corrections have been made other than the deletion of specific names that appear to identify the student or the student's school district. A typed version of each response appears before the handwritten response.

A sample is included for each score point of the New Jersey Registered Holistic Scoring Rubric (a 6-point scale). These sample responses, which are grouped by score point, represent the range of approaches that eighth-grade students take with this writing task. Each score point is described in detail, and each response is annotated according to the score point criteria.

NEW JERSEY REGISTERED HOLISTIC SCORING RUBRIC FOR WRITING (Grades 6-8)

In scoring, consider the grid of written language	Inadequate Command	Limited Command	Partial Command	Adequate Command	Strong Command	Superior Command
Score	1	2	3	4	5	6
Content and Organization	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Minimal response to topic; uncertain focus No planning evident; disorganized Details random, inappropriate, or barely apparent No apparent central errors Severe/numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Attempts to focus May drift or shift focus Attempts organization Few, if any, transitions between ideas Details lack elaboration, i.e., highlight paper Numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May lack opening and/or closing Usually has single focus Some lapses or flaws in organization May lack some transitions between ideas Repetitious details Several unelaborated details Errors/patterns of errors may be evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generally has opening and/or closing Single focus Ideas loosely connected Transitions evident Uneven development of details Some errors that do not interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening and closing Single focus Sense of unity and coherence Key ideas developed Logical progression of ideas Moderately fluent Attempts compositional risks Details appropriate and varied Few errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Opening and closing Single, distinct focus Unified and coherent Well-developed Logical progression of ideas Fluent, cohesive Compositional risks successful Details effective, vivid, explicit, and/or pertinent Very few, if any, errors
Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No apparent central errors Severe/numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors/patterns of errors may be evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some errors that do not interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very few, if any, errors
Sentence Construction	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Assortment of incomplete and/or incorrect sentences 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Excessive monotony/same structure Numerous errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Little variety in syntax Some errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Some variety Generally correct 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Variety in syntax appropriate and effective Few errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Precision and/or sophistication Very few, if any, errors
Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Errors so severe they detract from meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Numerous serious errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Patterns of errors evident 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> No consistent pattern of errors Some errors that do not interfere with meaning 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Few errors 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Very few, if any, errors

NON-SCORABLE RESPONSES	Content/Organization	Usage	Sentence Construction	Mechanics
NR = No Response	Student wrote too little to allow a reliable judgment of his/her writing.			
OT = Off Topic/ Off task	Student did not write on the assigned topic/task, or the student attempted to copy the prompt.			
NE = Not English	Student wrote in a language other than English.			
WF = Wrong Format	Student refused to write on the topic, or the writing task folder was blank.			

Note: All unscorable responses (NSRs), with the exception of NR, must be coded by the Scoring Director

Writing Task

As part of a language arts class assignment, you have been asked to consider how the following quotation is related to you.

“If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn’t lead anywhere.”

—Anonymous

Write an essay explaining what this quotation means to you. Use details and examples in your essay.



**New Jersey
Assessment
of Skills and
Knowledge**

Writer's Checklist

Important Points to Remember as You Write

CONTENT/ORGANIZATION

- _____ 1. Focus on your purpose for writing and your audience.
- _____ 2. Develop a clear topic or central idea.
- _____ 3. Support your ideas with details, explanations, and examples.
- _____ 4. Put your ideas in the order that best communicates what you are trying to say.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- _____ 5. Use clear and varied sentences.

USAGE

- _____ 6. Use words correctly.
- _____ 7. Use varied and vivid vocabulary.

MECHANICS

- _____ 8. Capitalize, spell, and punctuate correctly.
- _____ 9. Write neatly.

NEW JERSEY STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



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Score Scale Point 1

The response indicates an **INADEQUATE COMMAND** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

CONTENT/ ORGANIZATION

- May not have an opening and/or closing. These papers are on topic and demonstrate at least a minimal attempt to respond to the topic by stating a subject or giving a list of subjects. Some of the lengthier papers are disorganized, making them consistently difficult to follow. In these papers the reader has to infer what the focus is. The overriding characteristic of many of these papers is a lack of control with no sense of planning. Details may be random, inappropriate, or barely apparent.

USAGE

- May display severe/numerous errors in usage. This includes problems in tense formation, subject-verb agreement, pronoun usage and agreement, word choice, and use of proper modifiers.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- May demonstrate an assortment of grammatically incorrect/incomplete sentences and/or incorrect rhetorical modes. Statements may be either incoherent or unintelligible.

MECHANICS

- May display errors in mechanics so severe as to detract from the meaning of the response.

If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere. For me this quotation means that if you find a path with no obstacles is not going to lead anywhere, that is not going to go anywhere because it has no obstacles. If it had obstacle probably would lead anywhere, but this time it says that if you find a path with no obstacles it probably doesn't lead anywhere. And for another explanation for me it means, that if you find a friend but that friend looks like it tells all your secrets, and it's a liar, and everything that you tell that friend say it to everybody, and you can't trust to him or her, it'll probably won't lead him anywhere. And when I say that it would not probably lead you anywhere is that, that kind of friend is not the right for you, that if you continue with that kind of friend in the future that kind of friend would make you in trouble with everything, For example if you tell all your secrets to that friend and he or she say it to . . . , everybody including your parent's or teacher's, that friend that you have there is not a friend at all it would make you in trouble with everybody. And everybody will know all your secret's and they could make fun of you, they could talk about you, depends on the kinds of secrets is that. That friend won't lead you anywhere, you won't have a good life, you won't have a safe life, all because all that problems that the kind of friend that you have. That's what it means, if you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere. Like that kind of friend, That if that friend doesn't have no trust, no feelings, no fun life inside his or she's heart, it won't lead anywhere His or she, life will be miserable and lonely.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

Begin your writing here.

if you find a path with no obstacles it probably doesn't lead anywhere. For me this quotation means that if you find a path with no obstacles is not going to lead anywhere that is not going to go anywhere because it has no obstacles. If it had obstacle probably would lead anywhere but this time it says that "if you find a path with no obstacles it probably doesn't lead anywhere. And for another explanation for me it means that if you find a friend but that friend looks like it tells all your secrets and it's a lie and everything that you tell that friend say it to everybody and you can't trust to him or her it probably won't lead him anywhere. And when I say that it would

Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY
(continued)

Continue your writing here.

not probably lead you anywhere
is that, that kind of friend is not
the right for you that if you
continue with that kind of
friend in the future that kind
of friend would make you in trouble
with everything, for example if
you tell all your secrets to that
friend and he or she say it to
everybody including your parents
or teacher's, that friend that you
have there is not a friend at all,
it would make you in trouble with
everybody. And everybody will know
all your secrets and they could
make fun of you, they could talk
about you depends on the kinds
of secrets is that, that friend
won't lead you anywhere, you won't
have a good life, you won't have
a safe life but because all that
problems that the kind of

Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY
(continued)

Continue your writing here.

Friend that you have. That's
what it means, if you find a path
with no obstacles, it probably
doesn't lead anywhere. Like that
kind of friend that if that friend
doesn't have no trust, no feelings,
no fun life inside his or she's
heart, it won't lead anywhere.
His or she, life will be miserable
and lonely.

Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

Score Point: 1

The response, though lengthy, demonstrates a minimal attempt to respond to the topic. The student makes more than one attempt to explain the quotation. The first explanation (For me this quotation means ...it probably doesn't lead anywhere.) is repetitive and circular. The second explanation describing the friend is unclear. The student attempts to clarify the second explanation with a lengthy example that is somewhat difficult to follow. The lack of clear organization, errors in usage and poor sentence construction make ideas in this response difficult to follow.

Score Scale Point 2

The response indicates a **LIMITED COMMAND** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

CONTENT/ ORGANIZATION

- May not have an opening and/or a closing. These responses will exhibit an attempt at organization. In other words, there will be some evidence the writer attempted to control the details. The responses relate to the topic, but in some papers, the writer drifts away from the primary focus or abruptly shifts focus. In other papers, there is a single focus, but there are few, if any, transitions, making it difficult to move from idea to idea. Details are presented with little, if any, elaboration—highlight papers.

USAGE

- May have numerous problems with usage, but they are not totally out of control.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- May demonstrate excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be numerous errors in sentence construction.

MECHANICS

- May display numerous severe errors in mechanics.

I think this quotation means that if you take the easy route with no obstacles in life you won't go anywhere. If you take the hard route with many obstacles, then you will do well in life. I think this quote is a good thing to read when you finish middle school because it is a life lesson. For any project or assignment it is never good to take the easy way out.

This quote would help any person get a good start on life. I would really like to have known who wrote this quote because he/she must have been a really smart man or woman. He or she must have been really successful if he/she followed his/her quote. I hope to use this quote in my life because I don't want to take the easy way out. I think this quote is a great quote and everyone who wants to be successful should read it and use it as a life lesson.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

Begin your writing here.

I think this quotation means that if you take the easy route with no obstacles in life you won't go any where. If you take the hard route with many obstacles, then you will do well in life. I think this quote is a good thing to read when you finish middle school because it is a life: life lesson. For any project or assignment it is never good to take the easy way out. This quote would help any person get a good start on life. I would really like to have known who wrote this quote because he/she must have been a really smart man or woman. He or she must have been really successful if he/she followed his/her quote. I hope to use this quote in my life because I don't want to take the easy way out. I think this quote is a great quote and every one who wants to be successful should read it and use it as a life lesson.

Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

Score Point: 2

Although brief, this student's response relates to the topic and there is an attempt to organize the ideas. A general explanation of the quotation is given (this quotation means that if you take the easy route with no obstacles in life you won't go any where.). An example (middle school) is provided as a detail that helps to move the writer's idea forward (taking the easy way out). The limited details given make this response a highlight paper and prevent it from achieving a higher score.

Score Scale Point 3

The response indicates a **PARTIAL COMMAND** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

CONTENT/ ORGANIZATION

- May not have an opening and/or a closing. These responses relate to the topic and usually have a single focus. Some of these papers may drift from the focus or abruptly shift focus; however, in these papers, at least one of the subjects focused upon clearly meets the criteria for a 3. For example, some 3 papers are sparse—they have several details with a little elaboration, but they are organized and controlled; some 3 papers will ramble somewhat, repeating ideas resulting in a lengthy response that otherwise would be sparse; and other 3 papers have elaborated ideas and details, but the writing sample is interrupted by organizational flaws/lapses or by a lack of transition between ideas or between clusters of ideas.

USAGE

- May display a pattern(s) of errors in usage.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- May demonstrate little variety in syntax structure and/or rhetorical modes. There may be errors in sentence construction.

MECHANICS

- May display a pattern(s) of errors in mechanics.

This quote "If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere." I think that this quote means that if you don't go through any problems and if you don't work through something you probably aren't going to get anywhere, in life, in school or even just in general. In my life and comparing this quote with something in my life I think I would have to compare it with school. I picked school because in school there's a path from pre-k all the way to maybe college but in between all of that you're going to be stuck at some point you're going to have a bad grade but those are obstacles you go through you do that and you get better at whatever it is. But some people choose to skip these obstacles they're not going to get anywhere or if a person chooses to just not go to school or work there's going to get anywhere neither. So that's what I think that quote means to me in my life.

By VJ

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

Begin your writing here.

This quote "If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere." I think that this quote means that if you don't go through any problems and if you don't work through something you probably aren't going to get anywhere, in life, in school or even just in general. In my life and comparing this quote with something in my life I think I would have to compare it with school. I picked school because in school there's a path from pre-k all the way to maybe college but in between all of that you're going to be stuck at some point you're going to have a bad grade but those are obstacles you go through you do that and you get better at whatever it is. But some people choose to skip these obstacles they're not going to get anywhere or if a person chooses to just not go to school or work there going to get nowhere neither. So that's what I think that quote means to me in my life.

Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

Score Point: 3

This focused response opens with an explanation of the quotation (if you don't go through any problems) and supports the explanation with a personal example (I would have to compare it with school). There is sufficient, specific elaboration (path from pre-k all the way to maybe college) to move this response beyond the highlight level. Some transitions are used to aid in the progression of ideas. The writer concludes with the idea of what would happen if people choose to skip the obstacles along the path. There are few errors in this response. More elaboration and better transitioning is needed to achieve a higher score.

Score Scale Point 4

The response indicates an ADEQUATE COMMAND of written language. The writing samples in this category:

- | | |
|----------------------------------|--|
| CONTENT/
ORGANIZATION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Generally will have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic. They have a single focus and are organized. There is little, if any, difficulty moving from idea to idea. Ideas may ramble somewhat, and clusters of ideas may be loosely connected; however, an overall progression is apparent. In some papers, development is uneven, consisting of elaborated ideas interspersed with bare, unelaborated details. |
| USAGE | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May display some errors in usage, but no consistent pattern is apparent. |
| SENTENCE
CONSTRUCTION | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May demonstrate a generally correct sense of syntax. They avoid excessive monotony in syntax and/or rhetorical modes. There may be a few errors in sentence construction. |
| MECHANICS | <ul style="list-style-type: none">• May display some errors in mechanics, but these errors will not constitute a consistent pattern, nor do they interfere with the meaning of the response. |

If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere. This quote means everything in life has obstacles. As a performer I have faced many challenges. Like everyone I had to start from somewhere. I had to become a better singer. I knew people would be better than me.

It all started at camp. I like to sing along to music and when my friends heard me sing they pushed me to try out for the camp production "Annie Get Your Gun." My original problem was I was shy very shy. Although I was shy on stage I stuck it out and wasn't shy anymore. There was something else that I was doing wrong, but I did not know what.

I was able to ask around to try and fix the problem and I found out what was wrong, so

my mom got me a singing teacher.

My teacher helped me fix the problem and then we discovered I was great. I trained really hard, twice a week for an hour to be exact. Singing soon became my life.

I was able to accomplish a lot in just a few years. I performed at Carnegie Hall with a group of four people to cheer for me. I knew that if I wanted that feeling all the time I would have to act and dance to. I want to be a Broadway star one day.

I have been in many plays but I have never been a lead, but after being in an ensemble for so long I was finally good enough for a supporting role. My hard work is starting to pay off.

I strive to be the best. If I ever want to be the star of a production I have to be the best. I try so hard to become the best at everything I do. The quote "If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere," truly means to me that nothing is handed out to you on a silver platter everything takes hard work, dedication, and the motivation to be the best you can be.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

Begin your writing here.

"If you find a path with no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead anywhere. This motto means everything in life has obstacles. As a performer I have faced many challenges. Like everyone I had to start from somewhere, I had to become a better singer. I know people would be better than me.

It all started at camp. I like to sing along to music and when my friends heard me sing they pushed me to try out for the camp production "Annie get your gun." My original problem was I was shy very shy. Although I was shy on stage I stuck it out and wasn't shy anymore. There was something else that I was doing wrong, but I did not know what.

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Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY
(continued)

Continue your writing here.

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problem and then we discovered
I was great. I trained really
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to be exact. Singing soon became
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I was able to accomplish
a lot in just a few years. I performed
at Carnegie Hall with a group chorus
which is my biggest accomplishment
so far. I realized how much I loved
to be on stage and for people
to cheer for me. I knew that
if I wanted that feeling all the
time, I would have to act and
dance to. I want to be a Broadway
star one day.

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plays but I have never been a lead,
but after being in an ensemble for so
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Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY
(continued)

Continue your writing here.

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is starting to pay off.
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no obstacles, it probably doesn't lead
any where." truly means to me that
nothing is handed out to you on
a silver platter everything takes
hard work, dedication, and the motivation
to be the best you can be.

Score Point: 4

This writer describes her evolution as a performer as a means to explain the quotation. The writer introduces the "obstacle" in the first paragraph (as a performer I have faced many challenges ... I had to become a better singer.) then gives an explanation of the obstacle in the next paragraph (It all started at camp). The explanation/example is detailed and elaborated. A solution to the obstacle is given and the lesson learned is summarized in the concluding paragraph. Transitions between paragraphs and attention to the errors would help to move this response to a higher score. Ideas progress in a logical manner and are adequately developed. Errors in spelling and punctuation are apparent but do not interfere with the meaning of the response.

Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

Score Scale Point 5

The response indicates a **STRONG COMMAND** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

CONTENT/ ORGANIZATION

- Have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single focus. They are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. The key ideas are developed with appropriate and varied details. Clusters of ideas are strongly connected. Some writers take compositional risks and are, for the most part, successful. Although these papers are flawed, they have a sense of completeness and unity.

USAGE

- Have few errors in usage.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- Demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There are few, if any, errors in sentence construction.

MECHANICS

- Have few errors in mechanics.

This quote means that if you take the easy way out, you are not bettering yourself or improving your future in any way. I can relate this quote to my life in many ways. It tells a very universal message that anyone can use.

For instance, this quote can apply to school work. Last year, our social studies class was assigned a difficult project. I was placed in a group with two diligent students that were leaders. I chose to take the “back seat” in the group and let the other two students do all the work. We all received A’s even though I only completed a fraction of the work my fellow classmates did. I accepted the grade casually because I knew I didn’t earn it. The next week, our teacher tested us on the chapter in the textbook that the project was based on. Many of the questions referred to the project. I was overwhelmed. I felt very guilty and received a poor grade on the test. I cheated myself out of learning valuable knowledge by “taking the path with no obstacles.” This led to a poor grade and a bad understanding. I was glad though because I learned an important lesson that I used in the future.

Another example that relates to this quote is concerned with sports. In the spring, I joined the track team last year. Spring break interfered with the middle of our season. Our coach told us to continue running through break so we would be in good shape for the meet when we came back. On break I felt lazy, so I did not run once. When we returned, the coach asked me if I ran and I lied and said “Yes, almost every day.” I thought to myself. “How would he know he doesn’t even live in this town?” At the meet, my times relapsed a minute and 21 seconds for long distance. I realized that by taking the easy way out, I worsened my performance. The easy road “[didn’t] lead anywhere.

Ultimately, this quote can be applied to all aspects of your life. It teaches that you should not back away from obstacles. Instead, you should face them head on because in the long run, you will get more out of it. This quote sounds similar to the common quote, “Life is about the journey.”

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

Begin your writing here.

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Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY
(continued)

Continue your writing here.

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Continue your writing on the next page if you need to.

Score Point: 5

The ideas presented by this writer are direct and to the point. The response begins with an explanation of the quotation and immediately discusses an example of how it is relative to his life. The examples of school work and sports are detailed and focused. Compositional risk is attempted in the thoughtful treatment of the outcome of each situation (I cheated myself out of learning valuable...) and (I realized that by taking the easy way out ... the road "[didn't]" lead anywhere.). Transitions within and between paragraphs add to the fluency of the response. Ideas are focused and well developed. There are few errors in usage and mechanics. This response demonstrates a strong command of written language.

Score Scale Point 6

The response indicates a **SUPERIOR COMMAND** of written language. The writing samples in this category:

CONTENT/ ORGANIZATION

- Have an opening and a closing. The responses relate to the topic and have a single distinct focus. They are well-developed, complete compositions that are organized and progress logically from beginning to end. A variety of cohesive devices are present, resulting in a fluent response. Many of these writers take compositional risks resulting in highly effective, vivid, explicit, and/or pertinent responses.

USAGE

- Have very few, if any, errors in usage.

SENTENCE CONSTRUCTION

- Demonstrate syntactic and verbal sophistication through an effective variety of sentences and/or rhetorical modes. There will be very few, if any, errors in sentence construction.

MECHANICS

- Have very few, if any, errors in mechanics.

A “path with no obstacles’ would certainly be most people’s dream come true. Imagine living life without any problems. Imagine finding success without having to face failure. Imagine what such a life would be. To me, this quote holds the truth of life. Of course, not having to run into mistakes would be a dream come true for me. But at the same time, it would also be my own dreadful loss. Obstacles; failures; mistakes, every single challenge one encounters happens for a reason. A “path with no obstacles” is not natural. Whether everyone thinks, obstacles are necessary in everyone’s path to succeed.

If one thinks about some of the most successful people in life, nearly every single one had great, if not ostensibly insurmountable obstacles in their “paths.” Albert Einstein, for instance, suffered from mental retardation as well as rejection from the first college he applied to. But those obstacles were necessary for his incredible contributions to the

science community today. Another example is Bill Gates, the second richest man in the world and chairman of Microsoft. Gates was ostracized by his peers during his elementary years, but such hardships made him the successful figure he is today.

Failure is like oxygen in my life. It occurs all around me. It occurs to me. It is an omnipresent “thing!”. Obstacles are what prepares us for life by teaching us a little more about ourselves and the world and people around us. To be where I am today, I had to swim through an enormous pool of failures. Although I drowned at some points I always came back up and kept on swimming. A good example of this as well as the importance of failure is when I first entered middle school. Throughout elementary school, I was able to succeed in all of my coursework without much effort. Only after I got my first failing grade did I learn that it is important to prepare ahead. This failure taught me how its a competitive world, and one has to work to get by.

Now some people may be thinking that there are those that seem to be successful, powerful, and rich without effort. But what I believe is either they had a major failure already, or there is one waiting for them in the corner. Take wealthy people for example. Most wealthy people by birth are so accustomed to royal treatment that they have not learned the importance and difficulty of earning money. As a result, if he or she somehow loses money, survival will be difficult.

Many singers and movie stars have also faced obstacles in their life. Famous Singer Shaleira was renounced by her music teacher because her voice was too strong. Many movie stars were very unsuccessful during their first years but eventually climbed up to fame.

A path without obstacles probably does not lead somewhere because there is probably nowhere to lead to. Paths in life are made up of mistakes, and the destination is the culmination, the results, the golden lessons learned from mistakes. Just how these people failed, I also failed. I failed in my youth and I probably will fail many more times. And to tell you the truth, without failure, I would have absolutely no idea at all where I would have ended up. But I can say this honestly: it would certainly be a bad place.

LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY

Begin your writing here.

A "path with no obstacles" would certainly be most people's dream come true. Imagine living life without any problems. Imagine finding success without having to face failure. Imagine what such a life would be. To me, this quote holds the truth of life. Of course, not having to run into mistakes would be a dream come true for me. But at the same time, it would also be my own dreadful loss. Obstacles; failures; mistakes, every single challenge one encounters happens for a reason. A "path with no obstacles" is not natural. Whether everyone thinks, obstacles are necessary in everyone's path to succeed.

If one thinks about some of the most successful people in life, nearly every single one had great, if not ostensibly insurmountable obstacles in their "paths." Albert Einstein, for instance, suffered from mental retardation as well as rejection from the first college he applied to. But those obstacles were necessary for his incredible contributions to the

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LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY (continued)

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Science community today. Another example is Bill Gates, the second richest man in the world and creator of Microsoft. Gates was ostracized by his peers during his elementary years, but such hardships made him the successful figure he is today.

Failure is like oxygen in my life. It occurs all around me. It occurs to me. It is an omnipresent "thing". Obstacles are what prepared us for life by teaching us a little more about ourselves and the world and people around us. To be where I am today, I had to swim through an enormous pool of failures. Although I drowned at some points, I always came back up and kept on swimming. A good example of this as well as the importance of failure is when I first entered middle school. Throughout elementary school, I was able to succeed in all of my coursework without much effort. Only after I got my first failing grade did I learn that it is important to prepare ahead. This failure taught me how it's a competitive world, and one has to work to get by.

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LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY (continued)

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Now some people may be thinking that there are those that seem to be successful, powerful, and rich without effort. But what I believe is either they had a huge future already, or there is one waiting for them in the corner. Take wealthy people for example. Most wealthy people by birth are so accustomed to royal treatment that they have not learned the importance and difficulty of earning money. As a result, if he or she somehow loses money, survival will be difficult.

Many singers and movie stars have also faced obstacles in their life. Famous singer Shalica was renounced by her music teacher because her voice was too strong. Many movie stars were very unsuccessful during their first year, but eventually climbed up to fame.

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LANGUAGE ARTS LITERACY
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A path without obstacles probably does not lead somewhere because there is probably nowhere to lead to. Paths in life are made up of mistakes, and the destination is the culmination, the results, the guided lessons learned from mistakes. Just how these people failed, I also failed. I failed in my youth and I probably will fail many more times. And to tell you the truth, without failure, I would have absolutely no idea at all where I would have ended up. But I can say this honestly: it would certainly be a bad place.

STOP. Do not write beyond this page.

Score Point: 6

A clear and distinct understanding of the quotation and the task is presented here. The response is thoughtful, organized, well developed and fluent from the introductory paragraph to the concluding paragraph. The writer uses a creative approach (imagine living life without problems) in the introductory paragraph to draw the reader into the response. A personal explanation of the quotation follows. Successful personalities (Albert Einstein and Bill Gates) are purposefully mentioned as examples of those who have faced obstacles and succeeded. The writer then explains the importance of the quotation in his own life using a personal example to further illustrate. This example ends with the lesson learned (This failure taught me how it's a competitive world and one has to work to get by.). The student then presents another perspective of the quotation (there are those that seem to be successful, powerful, and rich without effort) and gives an explanation as to why this perspective is clouded. The writer concludes with a discussion of how failure leads to success on a global and personal level. This response is complete, pertinent, and exhibits verbal sophistication. There are very few, if any errors.