GRADING 7 WRITING
STAAR® Preparation and Practice

- 12 Revision and Editing skill lessons and 18 practice passages
- 6 Composition skill lessons and 5 practice prompts
- 3-step approach for efficient remediation

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*The Color Teacher’s Edition pages immediately follow the Student worksheet pages.*
Dear Students,

The STAAR Grade 7 Writing assessment measures your knowledge of the grade 7 writing standards (TEKS). STAAR tests are not designed to measure many important qualities of character and intelligence — as this cartoon shows. But performing well on the STAAR tests is important, so you want to do all you can to succeed on them. That’s where this workbook comes in!

This workbook was designed to help you prepare for the STAAR Grade 7 Writing test by
• teaching the skills of how to approach and answer different STAAR test questions, and by
• providing lots of practice questions that are similar to those you will have to answer on the actual test.

But as good as this workbook is, it only helps if you use it. So, please use this workbook!

**Practicing Smart is the Secret to STAAR Success**

There is a secret to success on the STAAR tests — practice, practice, and more practice. This is good news because you are in control of how much effort you put into practicing. But not all practice is the same... you need to practice smart.

First, practice with test questions that are very similar to the actual STAAR test. That’s easy because this workbook is full of them! Next, focus on your weaknesses — spend extra time on questions you have trouble with. Think of it like this: if your basketball shot needs improvement, you don’t practice dribbling. Instead, you practice shooting.

Focusing on your weaknesses also means carefully analyzing each test question you get wrong. Why did you get it wrong? Why is another answer correct? You can learn more from test questions you get wrong, so don’t be afraid of making mistakes. If your basketball shot is off, you identify what you are doing wrong (too far left), and correct it with your next shot (aim right).

When you practice, give each question your full attention. Do not take a break until after you answer the question. Your attention is like a muscle that you can build by using it, one practice test question at a time. Do you believe unfocused, sloppy practice of your basketball shot will help you perform during a big game? No! Your attention is your greatest power. You develop it with practice.

Preparing for the STAAR test can actually be a fun challenge. And when you practice smart, you are building life skills while you prepare for the STAAR test!

Your partners in STAAR success,

The Sirius Education Team

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**Qualities Not Measured by Most Tests**

- Persistence
- Curiosity
- Enthusiasm
- Courage
- Leadership
- Creativity
- Civic-Minded
- Resourcefulness
- Self-Discipline
- Sense of Wonder
- Big-Picture Thinking
- Compassion
- Reliability
- Motivation
- Humor
- Empathy
- Sense of Beauty
- Humility
- Resilience

What are some other important qualities of character and intelligence missing in STAAR tests?
About the STAAR Grade 7 Writing Assessment

A New Shorter Test

In 2016, the STAAR Grade 7 Writing test changed to a one-day test. The new test is 4 hours long and includes 1 composition (student writing) and 30 multiple-choice test questions. The multiple-choice questions are divided among four reading passages that contain errors or need improvements. The table shows how the test is structured.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Parts</th>
<th>Number and Types of Questions</th>
<th>% of Score</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Composition</td>
<td>1 Expository essay</td>
<td>35%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Revision</td>
<td>13 Multiple-Choice questions</td>
<td>28%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passage 1 with 6 or 7 questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passage 2 with 6 or 7 questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Editing</td>
<td>17 Multiple-Choice questions</td>
<td>37%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passage 3 with 8 or 9 questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>Passage 4 with 8 or 9 questions</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

In **Composition**, you write an expository essay on a given topic. Your final composition is written inside a 26-line box and scored on three key factors:

1. responding to the prompt and staying on topic
2. the development and organization of ideas, and
3. use of language and correct writing conventions.

Next are the multiple-choice questions. In **Revision**, the questions focus on more clearly and effectively communicating ideas. **Editing** questions test specific grammar and mechanics rules, including punctuation, spelling, and correct parts of speech.

Revision questions are always first, followed by Editing questions. This sequence mimics the writing process in which you first focus on the “big” picture organization and development of your ideas, and then proofread for punctuation and spelling, etc. *

How This Book Is Organized and What It Covers

This workbook is divided into three sections that align with the new STAAR Grade 7 Writing test.

- Section 1: Revision
- Section 2: Editing
- Section 3: Composition

Although composition is first in the actual STAR test, it is last in this workbook because both the revision and editing skills will help you with writing the composition!

A separate workbook titled *Sirius Grade 7 Reading: STAAR® Preparation and Practice* is available for the STAAR Grade 7 Reading test. Both Sirius Grade 7 workbooks provide systematic instruction and practice in the content and format of each STAAR test.

* Note that the actual test does not label or distinguish between the Revision and Editing multiple-choice passages and questions—so they will look the same on the test. Nevertheless, they each include very different kinds of questions and are never mixed together.
Using This Book for STAAR Success

This interactive workbook includes TEKS instruction and STAAR practice in revision, editing, and composition. It is easily adapted for different needs and includes a 3-step approach to efficiently prioritize and individualize remediation when preparation time is limited.

**STEP 1 Identify Your Needs—Diagnostic Tests for Revision and Editing**
Use the Diagnostic Tests for the Editing and Revision sections to identify what you know and what you need to review. Record your results in the Progress Monitoring Chart.

**STEP 2 Focus Remediation—STAAR Instruction and Practice**
Use your Diagnostic results to focus instruction and practice to meet your unique needs. Revision Skills use released STAAR items to model the instruction. Editing Skills teach grammar and usage skills tested on released STAAR tests.

**STEP 3 Monitor Your Progress—Post Tests**
Use the Editing and Revision Post Tests to monitor progress and to identify additional lessons for review.
Using This Book for STAAR Success

Focused Remediation is provided by 12 skill lessons and 12 practice passages.

Revision Skills

5 Revision Skill lessons provide instruction and practice in the sentence improvement skills that are tested. Instruction in how to answer STAAR test questions is followed by Guided Practice where students show their thinking for each answer choice.

Editing Skills

7 Editing Skill lessons provide instruction and practice in the grammar, usage, and punctuation rules and conventions that are tested. Practice includes both free response items and Guided Practice with STAAR test questions.
Using This Book for STAAR Success

Composition Skills

6 Composition Skill lessons provide writing instruction and Guided Practice in the essential components of the scoring criteria.

Analyzing the Prompt

In the STAAR test composition, the prompt has three parts:

1. A quotation from a famous or important person. The quotation is meant to help you think about an important concept.
2. A statement or question clearly related to the quotation. This part of the prompt begins with the phrase “Think carefully.” It acts as a bridge between the quotation and the writing assignment. In some cases, it may be the same as the writing assignment.
3. A writing assignment. The assignment is the most important part of the prompt because you must directly respond to it. Your controlling idea and the ideas you develop in your essay will address the assignment.

STAAR Strategy

The following prompt appeared on the 2014 STAAR test. Read the entire prompt and the rubrics.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION PROMPT

Your basketball team is 0–1 and you must win the next play to keep the season alive. A teammate throws you the ball, and you decide to make a shot from the three-point line. What do you do?

THINK carefully about the following question.

Your teammate is in the best position to make a three-point shot.

WRITE an essay explaining whether it is important to laugh.

Guided Practice

Read the following quotation.

True humor is fun —it does not put down, kid, or mock. It makes people feel wonderful, not separate, different, and cut off.

Does humor make life better?

The following prompt is from the 2013 STAAR test.

An essay explaining why success often takes time.

All great achievements require time.

1. Quote: 2. Statement: 3. Assignment:

Composition Practice

5 Composition Practice prompts provide step-by-step support to help students plan, develop, and write an organized essay using brainstorming, a sandwich organizer, a rough draft, and then the final composition in a 26-line box.

You can jot down your thoughts in the space below the prompt. Don’t worry about writing complete sentences, and don’t judge your ideas at this point. Read the example sentence of thoughts about the prompt on the importance of laughing.

The quote is saying that “true” humor is fun and good for people. The question is asking if humor makes life better. The quote answers this question by saying that humor brings people together.
Student Progress Monitoring Chart

Use the Diagnostic Tests to identify skill lessons you need to review. Use the steps and chart below to monitor your progress. Because some skill lessons cover a broad standard or are assessed in multiple ways, those lessons are referred to more than once in the chart. Boldfaced skill lessons address Readiness TEKS.

1. Diagnostic  Mark a ✓ in the box beside each question that you answered correctly. Find the total correct.
2. Review  Study the skill lesson and practice associated with each question not checked.
3. Post Test  Mark a ✓ in the box beside each question that you answered correctly. Find the total correct. Refer back to the skill lesson for additional practice. (The Post Test questions are in the exact same order as the Diagnostic Test.)

### REVISION: EXPOSITORY

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2 Skill Lesson</th>
<th>3 TEKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Combining Sentences (p. 19)</td>
<td>7.17A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Adding Ideas and Details (p. 22)</td>
<td>7.17A, 7.18C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Improving Word Choice and Clarity (p. 16)</td>
<td>7.14C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Adding Ideas and Details (p. 22)</td>
<td>7.17A, 7.18C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Improving Sentence Structure (p. 10)</td>
<td>7.14C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Adding Transitions (p. 13)</td>
<td>7.14C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>/ 6</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>/ 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### REVISION: PERSUASIVE

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2 Skill Lesson</th>
<th>3 TEKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Adding Ideas and Details (p. 22)</td>
<td>7.17A, 7.18C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Improving Sentence Structure (p. 10)</td>
<td>7.14C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Adding Ideas and Details (p. 22)</td>
<td>7.17A, 7.18C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>10</td>
<td>Improving Word Choice and Clarity (p. 16)</td>
<td>7.14C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>11</td>
<td>Adding Transitions (p. 13)</td>
<td>7.14C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>12</td>
<td>Combining Sentences (p. 19)</td>
<td>7.17A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>/ 6</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>/ 6</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### EDITING

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Question</th>
<th>1</th>
<th>2 Skill Lesson</th>
<th>3 TEKS</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Using Commas and Semicolons Correctly (p. 74)</td>
<td>7.20B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td><strong>Using Pronouns Correctly (p. 77)</strong></td>
<td><strong>7.14D</strong></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>Combining Sentences and Making Complete Sentences (p. 84)</td>
<td>7.19C</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>Using Verbs Correctly (p. 80)</td>
<td>7.19A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>Choosing Correct Capitalization (p. 70)</td>
<td>7.20A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>Choosing Correct Capitalization (p. 70)</td>
<td>7.20A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>7</td>
<td>Using Verbs Correctly (p. 80)</td>
<td>7.19A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>8</td>
<td>Choosing Correct Spellings (p. 63)</td>
<td>7.21A</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>9</td>
<td>Using Apostrophes Correctly (p. 66)</td>
<td>7.14D, 7.20B</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>/ 9</td>
<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
<td>/ 9</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
Adding Transitions  (7.14C)

Transitions help readers understand how ideas are related. Transition words and phrases connect ideas within sentences and between sentences and paragraphs.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Kind of Transition</th>
<th>Purpose</th>
<th>Transition Words and Phrases</th>
<th>Examples</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Chronological</td>
<td>to show movement in time</td>
<td>first, next, before, now, after, then, later, finally</td>
<td>First, boil water. Then, add the pasta and cook for 8 minutes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Cause and Effect</td>
<td>to show how and why things happen</td>
<td>as a result, because, since, so, therefore, consequently</td>
<td>Ann studied hard for the test; as a result, she got an A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Comparison and Contrast</td>
<td>to show how things are similar and different</td>
<td>Comparison: also, another, like, in comparison, too contrast: although, but, however, instead</td>
<td>My aunt is friendly; like my sister, she smiles at everyone. Rosa reads a book a week, but John doesn’t read as fast.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Addition</td>
<td>to show more information</td>
<td>besides, in addition, for example, also, furthermore</td>
<td>The heavy rain flooded the school; it also flooded our house.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

STAAR Strategy

On the STAAR test, you will encounter questions that ask you to revise by adding transitions. Here are steps you can take for responding to questions like this.

1. Read the passage and question.

   (6) Certainly, most people would agree that electronic communication has its profits.  (7) It enhances safety and helps people convey messages quickly. (8) But despite what the common saying claims, you can have too much of a good thing. (9) Some researchers have suggested that relationships formed online are weaker than those formed in real-life situations. (10) If people develop all their relationships electronically, they may boast about having a large number of “friends,” but those friendships aren’t likely to provide the support and satisfaction that come from face-to-face interactions.

   What transition can BEST be added to the beginning of sentence 9?
   
   A  Obviously
   B  For example
   C  However
   D  In the end

   STAAR Grade 7 Writing, 2014, #7

2. Read each answer choice. Then, re-read the section of the passage referred to in the question. Keep in mind what you have learned about improving your writing with transitions.
Cross out the answer choices that do not show the best transition. Choose the answer that shows the best transition word or phrase.

A. Obviously
B. For example
C. However
D. In the end

Obviously usually comes before an idea or fact that is considered common knowledge. The information about the researchers is not common knowledge.

In the end usually precedes a closing idea or summary. This sentence is an example.

Guided Practice

Read the following selection and then respond to the question, following the steps for adding transitions that you have learned.

(9) Imagine that you’re the pilot of a jumbo jet preparing to fly across the country.
(10) Before you can take off, you’ll have to file a flight plan with the local control tower.
(11) In the plan you’ll have to identify the kind of plane you’re flying, where you’re going, and the speed and altitude at which you’re expecting to fly. (12) After you get clearance from the tower, you’ll head to the runway. (13) Controllers on the ground will let you know which runway to use and when it’s your turn to take off.

(14) A regional controller will begin guiding you in order to ensure that you’re out of the way of other planes in the area. (15) This controller will also watch developing weather patterns and give you additional instructions if you need to change your altitude, speed, or course to stay safe. (16) You’ll move from one part of the country to another. (17) You’ll be handed off from one regional control center to another.

Nikki would like to add a phrase to the beginning of sentence 14 to help transition from the third paragraph (sentences 9–13) to the fourth paragraph (sentences 14–17). Which of the following could Nikki add to the beginning of sentence 14 to achieve this goal?

F. Once your plane is in the air
G. Before that
H. With that in mind
J. Over and above all else
## Think About Your Thinking

In the chart below, evaluate each answer choice. One evaluation has been completed for you.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Answer Choices</th>
<th>Evaluation</th>
<th>Is Answer Correct?</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>F</td>
<td></td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>G</td>
<td>Sentence 14 describes what occurs after the plane takes off, not before.</td>
<td>no</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>H</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>J</td>
<td></td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

### Independent Practice

You will have the opportunity to practice revising to add transitions in Revision Practice 1, 2, 3, 4, and 5.
Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

Tyrrell has written the following paper to convince his peers that the school board should stick with textbooks rather than use electronic tablets. Read Tyrrell’s paper and think about the revisions he should make. Then answer the questions that follow.

Textbooks or Tablets?

(1) Yesterday, I was lugging my backpack home, as I do every day. (2) Inside were my math textbook, my science textbook, and my Texas history textbook. (3) Thankfully, my language arts homework was worksheets. (4) They didn’t require the textbook to finish. (5) My feet, shoulders, and back ached from the 15–20 pounds of books! (6) I wondered to myself, why doesn’t our school replace those heavy textbooks with lightweight tablets?

(7) One reason is that tablets are more expensive. (8) Schools must do more than just buy the tablets. (9) They also need to buy the textbook software, build a Wi-Fi structure, and train them. (10) It’s estimated that the cost for a tablet is over $70 per student per class each year. (11) And broken tablets require costly repairs by an IT specialist.

(12) Next, tablets are more likely to be stolen than print textbooks. (13) In public, you
have to keep your eyes and hands on your tablet at all times. (14) A five-pound textbook is a much less attractive prize to a thief than a one- or two-pound tablet that can be slipped into a jacket and easily sold for $200 or more. (15) In 2012, 50 percent of all robberies in San Francisco were of handheld Internet-enabled devices, including tablets.

(16) In addition, tablets can be very distracting. (17) What was your first thought when I mentioned replacing textbooks with tablets? (18) I bet it was about how you’d be able to use your new tablet to play games and surf the Internet. (19) Unlike print textbooks, tablets have a multitude of uses. (20) They also have a multitude of distractions. (21) Apps, email, social media, games, and websites would all compete to pull your attention away from your assignment or teacher.

(22) Tablets also require a lot of bandwidth. (23) According to the FCC, students need broadband access at home to be able to do Internet-based homework. (24) However, about one-third of all Americans do not have broadband access at home. (25) Also, nearly 80 percent of all K-12 schools do not have broadband connections that are adequate to meet their current needs. (26) Imagine what giving each student a tablet would do to that problem! (27) Print textbooks work without any Internet connection.

(28) My opinion will supposedly not be very popular with my peers. (29) What student wouldn’t love to have a shiny new tablet popped into his or her hands for free? (30) Tablets make learning interactive, easy, and make it fun! (31) But the costs, theft risk, distraction factor, and bandwidth concerns cannot be ignored. (32) My back might prefer a lighter tablet, but our school should stick with print textbooks.
1 Tyrrell feels that his position is not clearly stated. Which of these could BEST replace sentence 6 and improve the position statement? (7.18A)

A Why hadn’t our school replaced these heavy textbooks with a lightweight tablet? In fact, there are several good reasons.

B Can you imagine how sore I would have been if my language arts homework had required me to bring home another textbook?

C Sometimes I forget my backpack at school and don’t notice until I’m home. Then my parents have to drive me back to get it later.

D In this paper, I will talk about the topic of whether our school should replace textbooks with electronic tablets.

2 Tyrrell needs to clarify the meaning of sentence 9. What is the most effective way he can do this? (7.14C)

F Change They to Schools

G Change need to want

H Change build to construct

J Change them to teachers

3 Tyrrell needs more support for the idea he presents in the second paragraph (sentences 7–11). Which sentence could BEST follow sentence 11 to help develop the main idea of this paragraph? (7.18C)

A Last month, my mom dropped her tablet and cracked the screen, and it cost her over $100 to fix it!

B Schools already spend a large portion of their budgets on maintenance, and utility bills are also costly.

C For a print textbook, on the other hand, the annual cost per student per class is below $15, and print textbooks can often be fixed with glue or tape.

D Tablet prices do continue to drop each year, so maybe cost won’t be an issue five or ten years from now.
4 Tyrrell would like to add a transition word or phrase to help readers move from paragraph 4 (sentences 16–21) to paragraph 5 (sentences 22–27). Which of these is the most effective transition to add to the beginning of sentence 22?  
(7.14C)  

F However  
G Lastly  
H In conclusion  
J For that reason

5 Some of the wording Tyrrell used in sentence 28 is inappropriate. What is the BEST change for him to make in this sentence?  
(7.14C)  

A Change opinion to viewpoint  
B Change supposedly to probably  
C Change popular with to despised by  
D Change peers to friends

6 What is the BEST way to revise sentence 30?  
(7.14C)  

F Tablets make learning interactive, easy, and fun!  
G Tablets make interactive learning easy and fun!  
H Tablets make learning interactive, easy, and make learning fun!  
J Tablets make learning interactive, make learning easy, and make learning fun!
Using Pronouns Correctly

(7.14D)

A pronoun is a word used in place of one noun or more than one noun. On the STAAR test, questions about pronouns typically ask you to change a pronoun that is being used incorrectly in a sentence. You will likely be asked about one of three kinds of pronouns.

Personal Pronouns

Personal pronouns are used in place of people and things. They can be used as subjects or objects in a sentence. Sometimes a question on the STAAR test will ask you to choose between the subject and object form of a pronoun.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Singular</th>
<th>Plural</th>
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Antecedents

An antecedent is the word that the pronoun in a sentence refers to.

Example: Judy cannot find her book.

The bus must get the children to school quickly or they will be late.
Skill Check

For each sentence below, circle the pronoun in parentheses that makes the sentence correct.

1. Cindy gave the bracelet to (her, she).
2. Did Violet ask (he, him) about the new lunch menu?
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4. I believe you are drinking (my, mine) soda.
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For each sentence below, underline the antecedent and write the correct pronoun on the line.

6. Jenna must wake up at 6 A.M. if ___________ wants to go fishing with me.
7. Raj, did ___________ bring over the equipment for our science project?

STAAR Strategy

Here are the steps you can follow to answer questions about pronouns on the STAAR test.

1 Read the sentence and question.

(20) If the cookie was dunked too long, the liquid dissolved the sugar in the cookie and made them fall apart.

How should sentence 20 be changed?

F Change too long to to long
G Change and to this
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J Sentence 20 should not be changed.

2 Review each answer choice. Then, re-read the sentence. Think about what you have learned about the correct usage of pronouns.

3 Cross out the answer choices that do not show the best way to correct pronoun usage. Choose the answer that shows the best change.

F Change too long to to long
G Change and to this
H Change them to it
J Sentence 20 should not be changed.

The antecedent in the sentence is cookie, which is singular. The pronoun must also be singular. Them is a plural pronoun, but it is singular, so this is the correct answer.
Guided Practice

Read the following short passage and then respond to the items. Follow the steps you have learned for responding to editing questions about pronouns.

(1) Raul and me went to the store by my house with his mother to buy paper for our art project. (2) Two girls asked us to help them look for some supplies to help her with their project. (3) Raul said he would help, but I thought them should find their own supplies. (4) After we helped the girls, they thanked us and then helped find the perfect paper for ours project.

1. How should sentence 1 be changed?
   A. Change me to I
   B. Change my to mine
   C. Change his to him
   D. Change our to ours

2. How should sentence 2 be changed?
   F. Change us to we
   G. Change them to they
   H. Change her to them
   J. Change their to our

3. How should sentence 3 be changed?
   A. Change he to she
   B. Change I to me
   C. Change them to they
   D. Change their to theirs

4. How should sentence 4 be changed?
   F. Change we to Raul and me
   G. Change they to their
   H. Change us to we
   J. Change ours to our

STAAR Tip
- Remove the other subjects, such as Raul, from a sentence to check whether me makes sense and is correct.
- Pronouns can refer both to a number and a gender. Both the gender and number must be referred to correctly in order for the pronoun to be correct.
- A pronoun should be subjective if there is a verb that tells what the pronoun is doing.
- Do not add –s to a personal pronoun if it is followed by a noun.

Independent Practice

You will have the opportunity to practice using pronouns correctly in Editing Practice 1, 2, 3, 4, 5, and 6.
Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

While researching a topic for a student paper, Lilah discovered the following story about a special kind of library in the South American country of Colombia. She wrote the following paper to share what she learned. Read Lilah’s paper and think about the corrections she should make. Then answer the questions that follow.

Books and Burros

(1) How easy is it to go to your library? (2) How about your school? (3) Where I live, it is just a short walk to either place. (4) For other kids, the library and school just a bus ride away. (5) And in many rural communities, a bookmobile—a kind of traveling library—makes it easy to check out books. (6) But what do kids do when they live in hard-to-reach places and have no library close by? (7) Unfortunately, they often have no access to books.

(8) One teacher, however, decided to do something about the problem. (9) Luis Soriano began teaching as a young man. (10) He soon noticed that many of his students was having trouble not just reading, but also completing their homework assignments. (11) A big part of the problem was that many of the student’s came from very poor villages where there were few books. (12) Also, many of the Parents were unable to read or write, so they couldn’t help their children with their studies.

(13) Mr. Soriano came up with an interesting solution to the problem. (14) Since his students had trouble finding books, he would bring books to them. (15) But to reach
these villages meant traveling through rough rocky and even dangerous areas. (16) So Mr. Soriano came up with a plan involving his two donkey’s, Alfa and Beto. (17) The donkeys were outfitted with special saddlebags to hold a lot of books. (18) Each saddlebag had the word *Biblioburro* (“Library Burro”) painted on it in blue letters. (19) Now Mr. Soriano and his traveling library were ready to go!

(20) For the last decade, on every Wednesday and Saturday, as many as 40 to 50 children who live in one of the small villages in northern Colombia wait for Mr. Soriano and his donkeys. (21) The wait can be long—some trips can take up to four hours until the teacher and his donkeys reach their destination. (22) Once they arrive Mr. Soriano will take time to read aloud to the children from one of the books he has brought. (23) He will also help the older children with their studies. (24) Then comes the best part! (25) The children get to choose the books they would like to read.

(26) All too soon, though, it will be time for Mr. Soriano to pack up the donkeys and prepare to return to the town where him lives. (27) Here, he and his wife operate a free library that has over 4,000 books! (28) Many of the books were donated from libraries in the United States. (29) But in a few days, the donkeys’ saddlebags will be packed again, this time for a different village where children wait for their special friends to arrive.
1. What is the correct way to write sentence 4?
   - A For other kids, the library and school was just a bus ride away.
   - B For other kids, the library and school are just a bus ride away.
   - C For other kids, the library and school is just a bus ride away.
   - D Sentence 4 is written correctly in the paper.

2. How should sentence 10 be changed?
   - F Change was to is
   - G Change was to are
   - H Change was to will be
   - J Change was to were

3. How should sentence 11 be changed?
   - A Change student’s to students
   - B Change villages to village’s
   - C Change there to they’re
   - D Change books to book’s

STAAR Tip
For questions with answer choices that use an apostrophe and s, read each word in the target sentence and ask yourself if it is talking about more than one of these things. If so, then the word is plural.
4. What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 12? (7.20A)

- F Add a semicolon after write
- G Change of to off
- H Change Parents to parents
- J No change should be made in this sentence.

5. What is the correct way to write sentence 15? (7.20B)

- A But to reach these villages meant traveling through rough, rocky, and even dangerous areas.
- B But to reach these villages meant traveling through rough, rocky, and even dangerous areas.
- C But to reach these villages meant traveling, through rough, rocky, and even dangerous areas.
- D Sentence 17 is written correctly in the paper.

6. What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 16? (7.14D, 7.20B)

- F Change two to to
- G Change donkey’s to donkeys
- H Change his to their
- J No change should be made in this sentence.
7 What change needs to be made in sentence 22? (7.20B)
   A  Insert a comma after arrive
   B  Insert a comma after children
   C  Change arrive to arrived
   D  No change should be made in this sentence.

8 What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 26? (7.14D)
   F  Delete the comma after though
   G  Change too to to
   H  Change him to he
   J  No change should be made in this sentence.

9 How should sentence 29 be changed? (7.21A)
   A  Change donkeys’ to donkey’s
   B  Change the comma after again to a semicolon
   C  Change diffrent to different
   D  Sentence 29 should not be changed.
Analyzing the Prompt

In the STAAR test composition, the prompt has three parts:

1. A **quotation** from a famous or important person: The quotation is meant to help you think about an important concept.

2. A **question or statement** closely related to the quotation: This part of the prompt begins with the phrase “Think carefully.” It acts as a bridge between the quotation and the writing assignment. In some cases, it may be the same as the writing assignment.

3. A **writing assignment**: The assignment is the most important part of the prompt because you must directly respond to it. Your controlling idea and the ideas you develop in your essay will address the assignment.

All three parts of the prompt are important. The quotation and question or statement will help you think of ideas. The assignment will tell you what to do. Therefore, it is important to read and think about all parts of the prompt.

### STAAR Strategy

The following prompt appeared on the 2014 STAAR test. Read the entire prompt and the callouts.

**WRITTEN COMPOSITION PROMPT**

**READ** the following quotation.

> True humor is fun—it does not put down, kid, or mock. It makes people feel wonderful, not separate, different, and cut off.

—Hugh Prather

**THINK** carefully about the following question.

Does humor make life better?

**WRITE** an essay explaining whether it is important to laugh.

STAAR Grade 7 Writing, 2014
You can jot down your thoughts in the space below the prompt. Don’t worry about writing complete sentences, and don’t judge your ideas at this point. Read the example below of thoughts about the prompt on the importance of laughing.

The quote is saying that "true" humor is fun and good for people. The question is asking if humor makes life better. The quote answers this question by saying that humor brings people together.

Guided Practice
The following prompt is from the 2013 STAAR test.

1. First read the prompt.

Read the following quotation.

If you run into a wall, don’t turn around and give up. Figure out how to climb it, go through it, or work around it.

—Michael Jordan

THINK about the following statement.

No one can achieve success without overcoming obstacles.

WRITE an essay explaining the importance of never giving up.

STAAR Grade 7 Writing, 2013

2. Label each part of the prompt (the quotation, the “think” statement or question, and the writing assignment).

3. Using your own words, restate each part of the prompt in the graphic organizer below.

1. Quote:

2. Statement:

3. Assignment:
READ the following quotation.

All great achievements require time.

—Maya Angelou

THINK carefully about the following question.

How do people become successful?

WRITE an essay explaining why success often takes time.

Be sure to —

• clearly state your controlling idea
• organize and develop your explanation effectively
• choose your words carefully
• use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

Brainstorm Ideas

Use the box below to brainstorm some ideas about this prompt.
Organizing Your Ideas and Examples

Use this sandwich organizer to organize and develop ideas and examples for your essay.

You need enough details and examples to support your controlling idea. They can be part of one large paragraph or separate body paragraphs. Typically, a high-scoring STAAR composition has between two and four details and examples.
Draft Your Composition

Use your information from the organizer to draft your composition. Then use the checklist.

Make sure your composition has
☐ a controlling idea
☐ complete thoughts
☐ an introduction and concluding thought
☐ few to no writing errors
Finalize Your Composition

Copy your edited draft from the previous page in the box below. Do not write outside the box.
Revision and Editing Practice—Answer Choice Explanations

Full answer choice explanations are provided for all STAAR practice test items. These explanations help teachers identify student mistakes and facilitate remediation.

Composition Practice Prompts—Student Responses

Five expository essay prompts provide scaffolded writing practice.
Using Pronouns Correctly (7.14D)

A pronoun is a word used in place of one noun or more than one noun. On the STAAR test, questions about pronouns typically ask you to change a pronoun that is being used incorrectly in a sentence. You will likely be asked about one of three kinds of pronouns.

**Personal Pronouns**

Personal pronouns are used in place of people and things. They can be used as subjects or objects in a sentence. Sometimes a question on the STAAR test will ask you to choose between the subject and object form of a pronoun.

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An antecedent is the word that the pronoun in a sentence refers to.

Example: Judy cannot find her book.

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**Skill Check**

For each sentence below, circle the pronoun in parentheses that makes the sentence correct.

1. Cindy gave the bracelet to (her, she).
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Here are the steps you can follow to answer questions about pronouns on the STAAR test.

1. Read the sentence and question.

   (20) If the cookie was dunked too long, the liquid dissolved the sugar in the cookie and made them fall apart.

   How should sentence 20 be changed?

   F Change too long to to long
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   STAAR Grade 7 Writing, 2015, #12

2. Review each answer choice. Then, re-read the sentence. Think about what you have learned about the correct usage of pronouns.

3. Cross out the answer choices that do not show the best way to correct pronoun usage. Choose the answer that shows the best change.

   F Change too long to to long
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The antecedent in the sentence is cookie, which is singular. The pronoun must also be singular. Them is a plural pronoun, but it is singular, so this is the correct answer.
7 What change needs to be made in sentence 22?  
A Insert a comma after *arrive*  
B Insert a comma after *children*  
C Change *arrive* to *arrived*  
D No change should be made in this sentence.  

Answer Choice Explanations  
7 A Correct. A comma is needed after the introductory phrase.  
B A comma is not needed after *children*.  
C *Arrive* is the correct verb form to use here.  
D The sentence needs a comma after the introductory phrase.

8 What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 26?  
F Delete the comma after *though*  
G Change *too* to *to*  
H Change *him* to *he*  
J No change should be made in this sentence.  

Answer Choice Explanations  
8 F The placement of the comma is correct.  
G *Too* is the correct spelling here.  
H Correct. The subject pronoun *he* is required in this context, not the object pronoun *him*.  
J The object pronoun *him* needs to be changed to the subject pronoun *he*.

9 How should sentence 29 be changed?  
A Change *donkeys’* to *donkey’s*  
B Change the comma after *again* to a semicolon  
C Change *diffrent* to *different*  
D Sentence 29 should not be changed.  

Answer Choice Explanations  
9 A There are two donkeys, so the plural possessive (*donkeys’*) is correct here, not the singular possessive (*donkey’s*).  
B The comma is correct here, but a semicolon would not be correct.  
C Correct. The word *diffrent* is a misspelling and should be corrected to *different*.  
D The spelling of *diffrent* should be corrected to *different*. 
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In the STAAR test composition, the prompt has three parts:

1. A quotation from a famous or important person: The quotation is meant to help you think about an important concept.

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WRITE an essay explaining whether humor is important to laugh.

STAA Grade 7 Writing, 2014

1. This is the quotation. It presents an interesting idea about the topic of humor. Underlining key phrases or ideas in the quote can help you unpack and understand it better.

2. This question is asking you to think about whether humor improves life in some way. The benefit of humor is common to both the quotation and the question.

3. This assignment is asking you to write an essay in which you explain why laughing and humor are important or why they are not important.

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1. Quote:

Sample answer:

The quote is saying that you cannot run from obstacles in life.

2. Statement:

Sample answer:

The statement claims that overcoming an obstacle is necessary for success.

3. Assignment:

Sample answer:

The assignment is asking me to write an essay that tells the reasons why not giving up is important or good.
### Example of a 3- to 4-point essay

Some people are naturally talented at things. People say they have a “knack” for something, like playing music or playing a sport. A knack for something, however, only goes so far. While natural talent is important, success comes mostly from hard work over a long period of time.

Reading is an important skill that takes time to learn. Nobody starts reading as a baby. It takes many months of practice to learn some simple words, and then years to read long books. Every year in school students learn new words, so reading is something that goes on through all of the school years. Success with reading takes years of hard work.

Playing sports is another skill that takes time. Venus and Serena Williams are famous tennis players. They have a lot of strength and speed and good reflexes to help them. They also put in hard work and years of playing and training. They have played tennis since they were girls, so as adults they have a lot of experience. They could not have succeeded without hard work over a long period of time.

Whether it is learning to read or playing tennis, natural talent will only take you so far. In order to have success and achieve great things, you must work long and hard for it.

### Rationale:
The writer introduces the topic clearly with a well-structured introduction. The controlling idea is clear and makes a distinction between natural talent and hard work over time. Each body paragraph is fully developed and organized clearly. The writer explains the example used and connects it back to the controlling idea. The conclusion nicely summarizes the controlling idea and gives advice/a call to action to reinforce the topic of the essay.
GRADE 7 WRITING

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