WHAT MOVES A SCORE UP

TEA'S NOTES ON A SCORE 3 PAPER AND A SCORE 5 PAPER

SELECTED FROM TEA'S PUBLISHED STAAR SCORING GUIDES

2026 · 2025 · 2024 · GRADES 3 TO 8 + ENGLISH I AND II · ORIGINAL SPELLING RETAINED

ELEMENTARY

GRADE	2026	2025	2024
GRADE 3	**Score 3 comment** The writer presents an evident claim ("Life was better for cowboys before 1884 when the railroad were populeted"), but it is only partially developed. TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The writer presents the claim that "I think life was better because, the cowboys didn't have to do a lot of work and were able to rest more," which is fully developed. TEA p. 21 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** The writer presents a central idea ("the farmer still belives that he can do it and olivia gives up but tries again"), which is partially developed. TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The organizational structure is effective and supports the logical development of the central idea with a clear introduction and conclusion. TEA p. 21 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** Evidence is limited but generally relevant to the central idea ("Plant need to live in soil," "no animals what will we eat"); however, it is insufficiently explained. TEA p. 15 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The writer presents the clear central idea that "Soil is important to all living things in ways you might not know." TEA p. 19 · Response 1
GRADE 4	**Score 3 comment** The writer includes relevant text evidence to support the central idea ("Catalina's grandfather/Abeulo carved her wooden sculptures of squrels,bears, and deer"; "Abeulo took out of his pocket a whitting knife and began to start to scrape the iceicle"; "Abeulo scraped off the lat chips of ice off te dove's beak"), but the development remains partial due to insufficient explanation. TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. TEA p. 22 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** The writer includes relevant text-based evidence to support the claim, but the writer's additional explanation is insufficient. TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** An organizational structure is evident with a clear introduction. TEA p. 22 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** In this response the writer presents the partially developed central idea in the concluding sentence that "Cody knew he juged Mud to fast." TEA p. 15 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The writer presents the central idea that "The events in the story changed Cody's thoughts about Mud." TEA p. 19 · Response 1
GRADE 5	**Score 3 comment** The writer provides quoted text evidence, although it is not always sufficiently explained ("'Don't worry,she told the other hares,I have a plan.'this evidence shows that she wants to keep them away"). TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** A paragraph is devoted to each of the three reasons that Hare is right to solve her problem the way she does, and these reasons are fully developed. TEA p. 22 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** The evidence, in the form of two quotes from the selection ("The images apper more realistic than the 2D style"; " The characters in 3D films may seem more detailed"), is only partially explained since the explanations mainly repeat the text evidence. TEA p. 16 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The writer provides a clear central idea ("There are so many impacts that technology has had on our animations") that is fully developed. TEA p. 21 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** The evidence provided by the writer is paraphrased but insufficiently explained. TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The expression of ideas is clear and effective ("bannish him," "regain energy," "encounters the fox," "would of been toast"). TEA p. 22 · Response 1

MIDDLE SCHOOL

GRADE	2026	2025	2024
GRADE 6	**Score 3 comment** Multiple pieces of text-based evidence are presented, though there is only partial explanation beyond simply a rephrasing of this evidence. TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The evidence is relevant, well chosen, and thoroughly explained. TEA p. 23 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** Relevant text-based evidence both paraphrased ("during the day they are sleeping with their hooked claws and special tendons in their feet hooked to the ceiling") and quoted ("large enough to house the 20 million bats that roost there") is presented but limited by insufficient explanation ("This shows one of the many facts or details to look at in the cave"). TEA p. 18 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The writer's word choice is purposeful ("your idea will have very good outcomes"). TEA p. 24 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** Evidence is drawn from both texts, but some of this evidence is unclear in its relevance to the stated controlling idea ("in The Last Wind Place Chip belives that more rabbits will come with time"). TEA p. 15 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** Word choice is purposeful and enhances the quality of the response ("evidence," "dangerous," "confident"). TEA p. 20 · Response 1

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MIDDLE SCHOOL (CONTINUED)

GRADE	2026	2025	2024
GRADE 7	**Score 3 comment** A thesis is presented ("For one it has changed our safty regulations in work by a lot"), and it is partially developed. TEA p. 18 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** A purposeful structure that includes an effective introduction and conclusion ("The Golden Gate bridge had a big impact on safety measures not only for bridges but for all types of construction projects") is evident. TEA p. 24 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** The writer makes some general references to the text that are not sufficiently explained ("The author would enjoy doing other things than doing what she has done her whole life"; "shows how the author starts to understand the importance of the craft"). TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The organizational structure is appropriate and supports the development of the controlling idea. TEA p. 25 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** Focus on the topic is not always easy to follow due to limited organization. TEA p. 16 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** An effective conclusion summarizes all the supporting ideas the writer used to develop the argument. TEA p. 24 · Response 1
GRADE 8	**Score 3 comment** The writer includes a counterargument ("even though the maglev trains are fast and are able to get you to places faster") and then refutes it ("it would take a lot of money just to build one maglev train"). TEA p. 19 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** Ideas are fully developed with text evidence that is well-chosen and relevant. TEA p. 23 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** No additional insight or explanations are offered, and overall vocabulary is basic. TEA p. 18 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** This response includes a clear thesis that is stated in the third paragraph ("They were made to solve a problem and shows the creativity and intelligence of past cultures"). TEA p. 24 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** Expression of ideas is basic, and word choice is sometimes general. TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** Focus remains consistent throughout as the writer describes the events that support the thesis and includes relevant evidence with quoted text and explanation ("her thoughts and curiousness on the book made her dream about it. She was very confused and was laying down thinking that she was being mistaken and that some random thought was manipulating her mind"). TEA p. 22 · Response 1

HIGH SCHOOL

GRADE	2026	2025	2024
ENGLISH I	**Score 3 comment** The development of Kevin is only partially explained, while the other part of the thesis, the reader making "a mental image of the scene in their head," is not supported in the essay. TEA p. 19 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** This response begins with the thesis that "The use of stage directions within Winning allows the reader to learn more about the characters' thoughts and feelings, along with their reactions to important pieces of information." The thesis is clearly identifiable and fully developed, and the focus is consistent throughout, creating a response that is unified and easy to follow. TEA p. 24 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** In each case, the writer briefly explains this text evidence ("This shows that even from the 1850 they tried their best to protect the time capsule"; "This shows that they're repeating history and making sure the box is in god condition for the next time they discover it"). TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The essay has a well-crafted introduction and a meaningful conclusion that circles back to the introduction while supporting the whole of the essay without simply repeating information. TEA p. 22 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** There are some attempts to explain the evidence by discussing Helen's relationship with her brother, but this is limited in effectiveness ("so as the van brings hope to her it shows what what she truly wantsa journey beacsue as her brother Andrew is out till dawn she wants to feel that hope"). TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** In this response, the writer provides the clear thesis that "When Miss McGill realized that she was being held back she learned something very important; that she is her own person and that and has a right to her own independence." The response includes an effective introduction and conclusion. TEA p. 22 · Response 1
ENGLISH II	**Score 3 comment** Overall, the development of ideas generally shows how Bond's storytelling builds up to the final encounter with the leopard but lacks examination of any specific language use. TEA p. 18 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** Support for the thesis is fully developed in the second and third paragraphs. TEA p. 25 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** The writer's word choice is general ("better than other," "looking for a place," "neccessary features"). TEA p. 19 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** The essay has a purposeful structure with an effective introduction and conclusion and is organized to support the full development of both ideas in the thesis. TEA p. 27 · Response 1	**Score 3 comment** The expression of ideas is basic because the writer's word choice is general ("dont do anything," "ventures to stop this," "fix the problems"). TEA p. 17 · Response 2 **Score 5 comment** This concise response maintains focus on the two ideas presented in the thesis throughout. TEA p. 23 · Response 1