English/Language Arts (ELA) Performance Task

Guidance on Short Responses

The Indiana Department of Education (IDOE) is committed to sharing details about the test administration and scoring process for educators and families to better understand the process. IDOE, in collaboration with Cambium Assessment, Inc. (CAI) and Measurement, Inc. (MI), pulled student responses to highlight how responses of varying length might warrant full points on the Opinion Performance Task Writing Rubric.

Please note the following:

- There are no guidelines for character minimums in the scoring rubrics, although a response may not exceed the 20,000 characters allowed by the online response space.
- In grade 3, full score points based on alignment to the rubric were awarded to students’ responses to a PT, ranging from less than 2,000 characters to nearly 15,000.
- The following examples are from a recently released grade 3 opinion task.
  - The first response reflects a perfect score when holistically applying the rubric to an essay of just over 3,000 characters.
  - The second response reflects a nearly perfect score using 600 characters less than the first response.

The examples below demonstrate that items are holistically scored on rubric criteria and not for writing to satisfy a length requirement. Those rubric elements are also presented to students within the Performance Task (PT) Part 2 writing prompt. Sample PTs may be experienced on IDOE’s website within the Released Items Repository.
Score Point 6 (3,336 characters):

I think if I was going to an island I'd like to go to an island that was warm because it has been cold lately and I don't like being cold. Why, because since it has been cold we have to put on our jackets to go outside and when it's warm you don't have to put on a jacket. And when you go outside you don't stay out their as long as you would if it was warm because you'd get to cold. And I'd rather be warm then cold. Here in Indiana you don't usually just see a palm tree somewhere and that is another reason why I'd like to visit a warm island because according to source 2 there is alot of intresting plant life. For example there are more than 2600 kinds of palm trees. Also vines, bushes, and fruit trees. And I'd love to see the stuff that you don't see that much. Now I'm afraid of alot of animals and in source 2 it tells about lots of animals that I am afraid of. Like spiders, sharks, lizards, eels, crabs, and also snakes. But there are some animals from source 2 I do like. Like peacocks, colorful fish, and chimpanzees. But it would still be cool to see the animals I am afraid of because it might be the only time I get to see them. Do you like to watch the sun set, do you ever say mom dad look at the sky. Well I want to go to a warm island because in source 2 it tells about what you might see on a warm island. Like thick forest and alot of sun too. Also lagoons, waterfalls, sandy beaches, mountains, hills, coral reefs, and there's water all around the island. And I just know it would be beautiful.

Also I know I would have alot of fun because of all the fun activites. Like swimming in the ocean, also I love to play in the sand, sail boats, hike, also go fishing. There are so many fun things to do and they are all fun.

If I were to go I know I'd have alot of fun because there would be so much to do. To see. And explore.

Notes:

This student’s response represents full credit awarded on all three rubrics. The student clearly states an opinion (a warm island) and maintains that idea with effective transitions and style throughout the essay from introduction to conclusion. Different supporting ideas are organized into paragraphs (plants, animals, beauty, activities), including the use of citing source material ("in source 2") and incorporating personal experiences (Indiana temperatures). The conventions in the response did contain minor errors, but received a score of two for adequate use.
You should visit a hot island because you can swim in the ocean, it has a bunch of plants, and it is fun. I think you should go to a hot island. Do you want to go?

The first reason you should visit a hot island is because you can swim. If you feel hot, you can jump in the ocean water to cool off. If you go to a cold island and you were cold, well, how would you warm up? Also, if you were at a hot island and you were swimming, and then all of a sudden you get cold, you could go on the island to get warm. If you were on a cold island and you were swimming and you got cold, well, where would you go? The island is cold too. Based on the text in source 2, it says the reason tropical islands are so hot is because the islands are near the equator.

The next reason you should visit a hot island instead of a cold island is because hot islands have a bunch of plants. In source 2, according to the text, it says names some of those plants. For example, tropical islands have many vines, bushes, and some small flowering plants. The text also states that 2,600 types of palm trees grow there. There are also fruit trees. If you visit one of these islands you could eat a banana or a coconut right off of the tree.

The last reason you should visit a hot island is because they’re fun. In source 2 the text states that there are massive waterfalls, coral reefs, and shallow pools. The author included that the shallow pools are sheltered from the ocean by sandbars. The author also said that there is a lot of sealife. That sealife includes sharks, eels, crabs, and lots of colorful fish in the water. There are a lot of insects, like huge spiders. There are also lizards, peacocks, snakes, and you might even find a chimpanzee hanging from a tree. There are many activities on a tropical island. These activities include riding on a sailboat, playing in the sand, going on hiking trails, and swimming and fishing in the ocean.

You really need to visit a tropical island because you can swim, it has a bunch of plants, and it is fun. I really want to go! I hope you do too!

Notes:

The response above received five out of six points. This was achieved by averaging a score of three for Organization/Purpose and Evidence/Elaboration, followed by adding the two points for adequately applied conventions. The essay maintains the opinion throughout, contains an introduction and conclusion (albeit very similar) and demonstrates an adequate use of transitional strategies. The focus is mostly maintained, but sometimes repeats thoughts (about swimming). Sources were used to support points with general language and evidence was cited (“based on text in source 2”) for supporting ideas (swimming, plants, and fun).