



Georgia High School Writing Test Fall 2009

Writing Topic and Sample Papers

Persuasive Writing Topic 135

Writing Situation

Over the past 25 years, the U.S. government has spent billions of dollars on space exploration. Some citizens believe exploring outer space is an important use of government money. Others believe the money could be better spent helping people here in Earth.

Directions for Writing

Write a letter to convince your U.S. Congressional representative to either continue funding space exploration or to redirect those funds to other projects. Include specific details and examples to support your position.

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Paper 1

To whom it may concern,

Over the past 25 years the U.S. government has spent billions of dollars on the space program. We as the people would like to redirect those fundings on something we feel is more important. For insten in cleaning up polution, help with school systems + making communities better.

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With the money not being spent on space exploration. The first concer is that money goes to helping with the school systems to help the next generation have an even greater education. Would you not agree that a great education is very important? For insrince the test scores in Georgia are the lowest in the country. So the money not being spent on space can help raise those scores, + make other stat's scores even higher.

Another thing that the money can do is help polution. Today's society is ~~so~~ so poluated it is disgusting. Trash is all over the sides of roads + highways. Animals die because they get caught in our trash or swallow something deadly from our population. If we keep on poluting our planet the way we do, our great planet is going to be nothing. So another concer is that money

Paper 1 (page two)

goes to help stop polution.

The last thing the people would like to address is helping more communities. To make them better by getting all of the drugs & violence out. For instance some communities are always on the news for violence or a drug bust. That is practically all we see on the news. It is a very big deal when a kid in County brings guns to school and sells them. As the people we do not want that happening or want our children around that. So as a country we need to buckle down & spend more money on our communities.

So government you make a choice, Do you want to keep on exploring space or get kids a better education, stop polution, & help communities? You decide.

Annotations for Paper 1

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (“redirect those funding’s on something ... more important”) is sufficiently developed with relevant supporting ideas (clean up pollution, improve schools, and make communities better). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “Would you not agree that a great education is very important?,” “animals die because they get caught in our trash or swallow something deadly from our polulation,” and get “all of the drugs and violence” out of communities. There is not much specific development, but there is enough information in the paper to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is appropriate to the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. Related ideas about cleaning up pollution, improving schools, and reducing violence in communities are grouped together. Ideas within body paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., “For instince,” and “So as a country”). Transitions between paragraphs are simplistic, however (e.g., “Another thing” and “The last thing”). The conclusion, although repetitive, provides closure. Note that this paper has some characteristics of a formulaic paper (e.g., announcement of position and supporting ideas in the introduction), but this paper lacks the repetition of a formulaic paper. Therefore, the writer is able to demonstrate sufficient control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally interesting (e.g., “help the next generation have an even greater education,” “so poluated it is disgusting,” and “some communties are always on the new’s for violence or a drug bust”). There are occasional lapses into less effective language (e.g., “we do not want that happening or want our children around that”). Tone and voice are clear and appropriate (e.g., “that is practrly all we see on the new’s” and “we need to buckle down”). Rhetorical questions engage the audience (e.g., “Would you not agree that a great education is very important?”). There is some sentence variety. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

The majority of sentences are formed correctly, and there are some examples of compound and complex sentences. There are also some sentence fragments (e.g., “With the money not being spent on space exploration”). Correct sentences outweigh incorrect examples, however, by almost a 2-to-1 ratio. Usage is generally correct; there are more errors in mechanics, such as misplaced apostrophes (e.g., “new’s” and “sell’s”) and misspelled words (“concer,” “instince,” and “communties”). This example falls at the low end of the 3-range, but the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 2

Recently the U.S. government has spent billions of dollars exploring space. Some citizens think exploring space is important for the government. But other believe it is a waste of money and needs to be spending the money helping the earth.

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I believe that it is good that they are using money to explore space. It is good that they are exploring space because one day we might have to all go live on space if we keep polluting the earth.

I also believe that they didn't have to spend billions of dollars just on space we could have just spend some on space and the rest of the money on make the earth a better place to live.

People have there differences on the way they think the government should spend there money. I think the government should use the money on space but I wish they would spend some of the money to make the world a better place.

Annotations for Paper 2

Ideas Score: 1

The writer takes a position (“the government should use the money on space but I wish they would spend some of the money to make the world a better place”). Development for this position, however, is extremely limited. The first paragraph comes directly from the prompt and is not considered original student writing. The second and third paragraphs each contain a brief sentence of development for the writer’s position. In the conclusion, the writer repeats his/her position. Overall, there is not enough information in the paper to determine competence in Ideas.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. The introduction is ineffective because it is taken almost directly from the prompt. There is minimal evidence of grouping and sequencing (a few details about space exploration in paragraph two and a few details about spending money on Earth in paragraph three). The paper contains few transitions (e.g., “I also believe”). The conclusion is ineffective because, in it, the writer simply restates his/her position. Overall, the writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 2

Word choice is mostly simple, ordinary, and repetitive (e.g., “It is good that they are exploring space,” “just spend some on space,” and “use the money on space”). This repetitive word choice undermines the tone that, in parts of the essay, could be called concerned (e.g., “but I wish they would spend some of the money to make the world a better place”). There is some evidence of the writer’s voice (e.g., “I believe it is a waste of money”). Sentence lengths and structures are not especially varied.

Conventions Score: 2

Simple sentences are often formed correctly, but there are also sentence fragments and fused sentences (e.g., “paragraph three). Usage is mixed; there are correct examples, in addition to errors (e.g., “other believe,” “on make the earth,” and “there differcens”). There is little internal punctuation, and there are misspellings (e.g., “poluting,” “diden’t,” and “differces”). Capitalization, too, is somewhat erratic (e.g., “dollars Just on space). Overall, this demonstrates only minimal control.

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 3

Some people think that something like studying outer space or anything beyond Earth is irrelevant to the world. Others can be to differ. There is a lot of money put towards the studying of the world ~~to~~ outside of Earth. In my own opinion, things like funding for space exploration should be continued. This is not only because studying can help benefit us in ways unimaginable, but we can also come close to many unknown questions that people share about outer space.

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If there was anything someone could learn from studying space, there would be a lot to know. There seem to be many unanswered questions about the planets beyond Earth. If the U.S. Congress stopped funding space exploration, that would leave ~~with~~ people on Earth with little knowledge about the world beyond. As ~~a~~ human beings, we are always curious about things unknown. To completely cut off any exploration to ~~our~~ curiosity would drive some people mad. People want to know about planets that might still be undiscovered, or if we might one day benefit from a planet we already know about. Questions like these are important to us, and that's what make funding space exploration even more ~~er~~ crucial.

The Earth itself has been explored in and out. People have their many assumptions of what the Earth is made up of down to the core. Information like this would be ten times more fascinating to know about another planet that is barely visible through a telescope. It is also possible to find these things out with the proper technology and accurate funding for such things.

Many people wonder about what could actually lie beyond the realm of Earth. Some people say they have witnessed supernatural events or beings that can never be explained. Others say they were even abducted or came in contact with something or someone outside of Earth. These things revolve around outer space, ~~it~~. This topic is usually thought of in two ways. Some people will

Paper 3 (page two)

put their own life on the line in belief that there is extra terrestrial life beyond Earth. Others say that they are just signs from god, or it's a figment of some ones imagination. Either way, it would be the best thing to know factly that either of those are true. This would only be possible if the proper funding was given to promote the study in these fields. We could one day truly have fact of life on other planets, or that aliens really do exist. I think that everyone on Earth could definitely benefit from this, as well as put a rest to many assumptions ~~or~~ about what could be living beyond the planet Earth.

Earth is often said to be overpopulated in some areas. This is obviously handled by life and death occurring all the time though. ~~The~~ I imagine if there was a way to actually live ~~some~~ where other than Earth though. With the billions of dollars being funded to space study, this can one day become a possibility. Out of the many reasons for the U.S. Congress to continue funding space exploration, I think the most beneficiary one would be how we as humans could benefit from perhaps resources on other planets. Finding out more and more about our universe will some day help us, until that day ~~ums~~, it is important to keep funding going to actually do so.

Annotations for Paper 3

Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (“funding for space exploration should be continued”) is well developed with relevant supporting ideas (search the unknown, find out more about other planets, and explore whether life on other planets exists). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas with specific elaboration (e.g., “Information like this would be ten times more fascinating to know about another planet that is barely visible through a telescope,” and “Some people say they have witnessed super natural events or beings that can never be explained”). Fuller elaboration in parts of the paper would strengthen the argument (e.g., what do “people want to know about planets”). Overall, though, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Ideas.

Organization Score: 4

In the introduction, the writer establishes a major premise for his/her argument (studying space can help answer questions that people share about outer space”), thereby setting the stage for the development that follows. Related ideas are grouped in paragraphs, and ideas within paragraphs follow an appropriate, purposeful sequence. A variety of transitions link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., “Questions like these,” “Either way,” and “as well as put to rest”). The last sentence of the paper serves as a concluding statement (most of the final paragraph seems to develop the need to discover other planets for living space and natural resources). A more drawn-out conclusion would strengthen the overall plan, but the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 4

The language and tone are engaging (“To completely cut off any exploration to our curiosity would drive some people mad,” “Others say they were even abducted,” and “put a rest to many assumptions about what could be living beyond the planet Earth”). Some of the phrases, however, could be crafted more carefully (e.g., “it would be the best thing to know factly that either of these two are true”). Still, the writer’s voice is distinctive throughout the response, and a variety of sentence lengths and structures helps sustain the reader’s attention.

Conventions Score: 4

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct with appropriate end punctuation. There is a run-on toward the end of the final paragraph, and an occasional lapse in sentence clarity (e.g., “I think everyone on Earth could definitely benefit from this, as well as put a rest to many assumptions about what could be living beyond the planet Earth”). Such instances are few, though. Usage is consistently correct; errors are infrequent and minor (e.g., “I think the most beneficiary one” and “that’s what make funding space exploration even more crucial”). The elements of mechanics are consistently correct, except for a few missing pieces of internal punctuation (e.g., “someones imagination) and a stray capitalization error (e.g., “It is Also possible”). Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of components of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 4

Hear

Congressional representative. I've done some research and have found that US government spends tons of money on space exploration and research. Personally I think the government could find a much better use for this money. Don't get me wrong the knowledge we have of space and our solar system is very helpful.

It's just that I think the money would be better used if it were spread throughout areas where it is more needed. How about using it for global aid. There are many other countries in worse condition than we are. We should use this money to feed the starving children, women, and men - of Africa or Ethiopia where food and water are scarce and there is no education because there's no money for books or desks much less a building to teach the children in.

The people of these countries have been crying out for a helping hand for such a long time. So my question to you is "when are we going to answer? Although this is a very important problem that we're facing in the world today it's not the only one. What about gas prices? Can we not put this money to use on research to find a cheaper and more efficient gas which will eventually lower the prices of gas.

How about prescription medicine? or welfare, college funds, medicare. Lets build more jobs so less people have to go hungry. These are all problems

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Paper 4 (page two)

I think should be taken care before we should worry about space exploration or galaxie research. I mean besides the space, earth, galaxieS, solar system ect are gonna be here for thousands of years for us to studie but ~~every~~ every day a soul is lost due to starvation. Let's take care of what's most important. I hope you take to mind the words of this letter I wrote and please make a change for the better. Thanks for listening.

Annotations for Paper 4

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (knowledge of space is useful, but the world is facing more pressing issues that need funding) is established through relevant supporting ideas (people are starving, alternative energy sources are needed, and the solar system could be explored at a later date). Development of these supporting ideas is somewhat uneven. The writer incorporates specific details about Ethiopia into paragraph two, but the development in paragraph three is quite listy (e.g., “How about prescription medicine? Or welfare, college funds, medicare Lets build more jobs so less people have to go hungry”). Overall, though, there is enough information in the paper to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

In the introduction, the writer acknowledges a counterpoint (“Don’t get me wrong the knowledge we have of space and our solar system is very helpful”), which he/she then addresses in the body of the paper. This approach is appropriate for the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. Related ideas about helping the hungry and finding alternative energy sources are grouped. In paragraph four, evidence of grouping is less clear; only in a general sense do the ideas in this paragraph have something in common: each is a social problem. There is a clear sequence of ideas throughout the paper. Some transitions link ideas across parts of the paper (e.g., “Although this is a very important problem that were facing in the world today it’s not the only one” and “I mean besides space”). The conclusion, which seems to begin on page two with the sentence “I hope you take to mind...,” provides closure.

Style Score: 4

Word choice is consistently engaging (e.g., “people of these countries have been crying out for a helping hand for such a long time” and “every day a soul is lost due to starvation”). This language helps create a concerned tone that is appropriate for persuasive writing. The writer’s voice is clear and appropriate throughout the response (e.g., “I’ve done some research,” “Don’t get me wrong,” and “I mean besides space”). The writer uses rhetorical questions effectively to engage the audience (“When are we going to answer”). Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

The majority of sentences in the paper are formed correctly, including some compound and complex sentences. There are also some overloaded sentences (e.g., last sentence in paragraph two) and run-ons (e.g., first sentence in paragraph four). There are few usage errors (“are gonna be here”). Slightly more problematic are the elements of mechanics; there is quite a lot of missing internal punctuation (e.g., “were facing,” “Lets,” and several missing commas), and there are misspellings as well (“knowledge,” “prescription,” “medicine,” and “build”). Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 5

Dear U.S. Congressional Representative,

I would like to congratulate the wonderful job that you and NASA have been doing with the space exploration missions. At the rate you're going, we'll be living on different planets in no time. Maybe now people will be less likely to live on the streets, and find a job. You and the U.S. Government should definitely continue to fund space exploration.

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Space, after all, is suppose to be explored. Let's face it, if it wasn't, then it probably wouldn't be there. It's in our human nature to be curious. Curiosity makes things more fun. If humans weren't at least somewhat curious, we would probably still be in the stone age.

If the scientists of Earth were to discover and create the technology to have humans live on other planets, not only would Earth's intense over population be decreased, but more opportunities for work would open up. Also, learning experiences are everywhere, and we could have so much more if we just expanded into space. No man nor woman would be without a job. There are 9 planets, there's going to be at least one job for everyone.

Paper 5 (page two)

I hope that everything I've said in this letter will help keep space exploration going. Keep up the good funding.

Annotations for Paper 5

Ideas Score: 2

The writer is clearly focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose, but development for the controlling idea (continue to fund space exploration) is minimal. The supporting ideas are relevant (people are curious, space colonization would help with Earth's overpopulation problem, and space colonization would provide more jobs for people). Elaboration for these supporting ideas is limited and occasionally vague (e.g., "Curiosity makes things more fun," and "we could have so much more is we just expanded into space"). There is not enough information in the paper to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is appropriate to the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. In the introduction, the writer establishes his/her position. Related ideas about human curiosity and the benefits of space exploration are grouped into paragraphs. Ideas within paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. The writer uses some transitions to link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., "At the rate you're going," "after all," and "Let's face it"). The brief conclusion provides some closure.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally interesting ("It's our human nature to be curious," "Earth's intense over population," and "expanded into space"). The writer makes explicit appeals the audience (e.g., "I would like to congratulate the wonderful job that you and NASA have been doing with the space exploration missions"). The writer's tone and voice are clear ("Let's face it" and "No man or woman should be without a job"). There is some variation in sentence length and structure.

Conventions Score: 3

The majority of sentences in the paper are formed correctly, including some compound and complex sentences, with the exception of a run-on at the bottom of page one ("There are 9 planets, there's going to be at least one job for everyone"). There are few usage errors ("Space ... is suppose to be explored"). Most elements of mechanics are correct. More evidence (the writer skips lines and gets about 10 words per line) is required for the writer to demonstrate more than sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 6

Page 3

→ educating our youth

The U.S. government insists on continuing with its space exploration program to discover new information and attempt to prove the existence of extra terrestrial life on other planets. I believe this is an unnecessary program that should be ended immediately. The government should focus its energy on more prominent issues. More focus should be placed on energy conservation within our planet and ~~education~~ because this program is not beneficial to the American people.

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Energy conservation is a vital necessity to this country. With the continuing eradication of the ozone layer, pollution, destruction of our natural resources, and over population, planet earth is slowly crippling away. It would be more logical to invest the billions of dollars spent on the space exploration program into government funding for this issue. This large quantity of money could be used to save our natural resources and trees, create fuel efficient and electric automobiles for the mainstream public, and many other useful things. ~~the~~ Space is infinite, but not our natural resources.

The education of today's youth is another prominent issue within our country. College attendance rates are dropping dramatically and many high schools across our country have a fifty ~~per~~ percent drop out rate. Knowledge about space is not going to help create better jobs, balance the deficit, create total literacy, cut down crime, or make sure that every individual has insurance. ~~the~~ Our country needs to start educating the

Paper 6 (page two)

leaders of tomorrow instead of worrying about something that is "millions of light years away."

Finally, the current space program is in no way beneficial to society. It does not improve the quality of life or make great changes in social, economic, or political ways. No new data or new information has been discovered recently from the missions or studies being performed by scientists. Money seems to be flying out the window while society slowly disintegrates. Also, the space program has brought more negative changes than positive changes. There have been numerous space craft explosions throughout the ~~past~~^{past} forty years. The loss of human life is not necessary for the endeavorment into outer space.

In conclusion, I believe the U.S. government should drop the space program and invest its money into issues that directly involve or effect the American people. If my course of action were to be taken into consideration and eventually executed, then this truly would be "one small step for man, one giant leap for mankind."

Annotations for Paper 6

Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (“The government should focus its energy on more prominent issues”) is well developed with relevant supporting ideas (greater funding should be dedicated to environmental causes and education; space exploration is dangerous and leads to few meaningful discoveries). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas with specific examples and details (e.g., “With the continuing eradication of the ozone layer,” “many high schools across our country have a fifty percent drop out rate,” and “There have been numerous space craft explosions throughout the past forty years”). Fuller elaboration in parts of the paper would strengthen the writer’s position (e.g., how could public funds improve education in America?), but the information in the paper does address reader concerns (e.g., why is it important to redirect space funding to other initiatives?).

Organization Score 4

In the introduction, the writer succinctly maps out his/her argument, thereby setting the stage for what follows in the body. Related ideas are grouped together into body paragraphs, with the exception of paragraph three, in which the writer includes information about jobs, the trade deficit and the uninsured into a paragraph about education. Ideas within body paragraphs follow an appropriate, purposeful sequence. A variety of transitions link ideas within body paragraphs (e.g., “This large quantity of money” and pronoun substitution like “it” for “the space program”). Transitions between body paragraphs are not especially effective though (e.g., “another ... issue” and “Finally”). The conclusion provides closure without repetition; in particular, the final sentence is a successful recasting of Neil Armstrong’s famous words.

Style Score: 5

The writer uses a variety of carefully crafted phrases to establish a serious tone that sustains the audience’s attention (e.g., “The U.S. government insists on continuing with its space exploration program to discover new information and attempt to prove the existence of extra terrestrial life on other planets” and “Our country need to start educating the leaders of tomorrow instead of worrying about something that is ‘millions of light years away’”). The writer’s voice is authoritative throughout the response, and an extensive variety of sentence lengths and structures sustain the flow of the paper.

Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates full command of simple, compound, and complex sentences, with consistent clarity and appropriate end punctuation. A variety of usage constructions (subject-verb agreement, pronoun-antecedent agreement, correct words forms) are consistently correct. The writer correctly uses all elements of mechanics, particularly internal punctuation. There are very few errors in this response.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 7

Dear Congress representative,

It has come to my attention, that over the past twenty five years the government has been spending billions of dollars on space exploration.

Don't you think that the money could be spent on something more efficient? You as the government could spend it on gas or to help the people of Louisiana.

Gas prices is a very important issue these days if you haven't noticed. People are always out of gas because they can't afford gas. The government can help but, choose to spend money on something we don't know anything about.

Something we all know about also is the tragedy in Louisiana. Tons of money has been raised to help them, and they could get even more help if the government didn't spend so much on space and tried to help repair the state and all the citizens of Louisiana.

Thank you for your time and I hope you consider not spending as much on space and a little more on earth.

Thank you

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Annotations for Paper 7

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (“I hope you consider not spending as much on space and a little more on earth”) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas (“spend it on gas or to help the people of Louisiana”) are relevant, but the writer develops them with few details (e.g., “people are always out of gas because they can’t afford gas,” and “help repair the state and all the citizens of Louisiana”). There is not enough information in the paper to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

There is minimal evidence of an organizing strategy in this paper. The introduction is clear. Because the body paragraphs are relatively brief, the writer provides only minimal evidence that he/she can group and sequence ideas. Few transitions are used (e.g., “If the government didnt spend so much”). The brief conclusion provides some closure.

Style Score 2

Word choice is simple and repetitive throughout (e.g., “something more efficient,” “something we don’t know anything about,” and “Something we all know about”). As a result, tone and voice are indistinct. There is little variation in sentence length and structure, and there are few demonstrations of audience awareness (e.g., “Thank you for your time and I hope you consider...”).

Conventions Score: 2

Some sentences are correct, but others are overloaded (e.g., paragraph three and the conclusion). Control of the elements of usage is mixed (“You as the government,” “Gas prices is,” “The government can help but, choose”). There is missing internal punctuation (e.g., “dont” and “didnt”) as well. Overall, there is not a great deal of evidence of control in this paper (the writer gets only about eight words per line).

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 8

Dear U.S. Congressional Representative

I'm writing you to let you know that I think that the U.S. government shouldn't use billions of dollars on the space exploration. They should consider using the money for other projects in the United States. There are many ways that the government can spend the money; they should spend the money on schools, cities and towns, cities that have been destroyed, recreation, and for the people of the United States.

The first way I'm going to inform you on is schools. Some school systems are low in funding. Schools need money for all kinds of things, one example is better school books. You complain when the children test scores are low, one reason why is because the books are old and torn up. They need new and up to date books. Another reason is some schools may need extra funding for athletic purposes. They might need better work out equipment, new uniforms, and the list goes on.

The next way is on the expansion of cities and towns. Cities and towns can always need extra cash. Cities and towns need the money to fix up streets, buildings, and etc. They also need them to bring more and good paying jobs to work at. Maybe if money started rolling in cities and towns then they will expand into a larger and better places to live.

Cities that are destroyed by hurricanes and tornadoes and stuff in that nature really need the money and support.

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Paper 8 (page two)

The city maybe damaged to the point that they need money for the evacuates that have to go live in another place or to eat and for health care.

Another way is for recreation. There are several ways to spend money with recreation. Yall get offended when children hang out on the street corners. The hangs there because they don't have anything for fun to do. If you can spend more money on recreation there would probably be a decrease in teens standing and hanging out on street corners.

My final reason why I support my decision is the people. Everybody in the world need money. The people in the United States need money for almost everything. There are homeless people now living on the streets could use some of that money to try to build themselves up, and try to overcome many obstacles they face.

That is why I support my decision 100%, that the U.S. government should use the money in the United States. I'm not saying don't use it for space exploration but don't use as much as a billion dollars. Thank you for reading my letter.

Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 8

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (“They should consider using the money for other projects in the United States”) is sufficiently developed with relevant supporting ideas (improve schools, use to money on public works projects, help those affected by hurricanes, build recreations centers for youth, and assist the homeless). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “Cities and towns need the money to fix up streets, buildings, etc.,” and “The city may be damaged to the point that they need money for evacuates that have to go live in another place or to eat and for healthcare”). Few of the supporting ideas, however, are developed with specific examples, details, and elaboration (e.g., “You complain when the children test score are low, one reason why is because the books are old and torn up. They need new and up to date books”). Still, there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The introduction, in which the writer states his/her position, fits the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. Related ideas about improving schools, engaging in more public works projects, etc. are grouped together in paragraphs. Ideas within these paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas within paragraphs and parts of the paper, but these transitions are not particularly effective (e.g., “The next way,” “also,” and “another reason”). The conclusion provides closure.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally interesting (e.g., “books are old and torn up,” “damaged to the point that they need money,” and “overcome many obstacles they face”). There are also lapses into more simple, ordinary language (e.g., “Schools need money for all kinds of things,” and “tornadoes and stuff in that nature”). A clear, caring tone and voice are evident (“I’m not saying don’t use it for space exploration, but don’t use as much as a billion dollars”). The writer explicitly addresses the audience (“Yall get offended when children hang out on the street corners”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

A majority of the sentences in the paper are formed correctly—including some compound and complex sentences—with the exception of a run-on in paragraph two (“Schools need money for all kinds of things, one example is better school books”). There are more errors in usage than in sentence formation (e.g., “Some school system are low in funding,” “children test scores,” “money for the evacuates,” and “everybody ... need money”). Most elements of mechanics are correct. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 9

Dear Ted Nugent, my US congressional representative,
I've been hearing about how people are no longer too excited about the space program, and I say they're insane! Do they not remember all the scientific exploration we've done? The jobs and hobbies that space gives to people? Where else would the money go to also? If your not pro-space travel, then thats like saying your pro cancer, and what kind of a jerk is pro cancer?!

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If the government hadn't invested that 25 billion dollar, then those pro cancer jerks wouldn't have some of the amazing technology that is around these days, like the sleep number bed. Being in space and studying things from there have taught us alot about our own planet. Thanks to the space rocks from the moon, we know that the Earth was once molten lava all over, and that our ~~atmosphere~~ magnetosphere helps keep us alive. Einstein, one of the greatest geniuses, figured out many properties and formulas of things that were at the time purely theoretical, and now that we are able to test and explore these in space, we're finding how right he was. Proving Einstein's brilliancy is in itself worth the 25 billion dollar bill... of the governments money... not mine.

Space exploration has also helped out countless people, such as rocket scientists, and total nerds. Some of the greatest

Paper 9 (page two)

thinkers work at NASA, and might not contribute so much to society if they were perhaps working in a deli, or a business cubicle. Those kids that early on watched Star Trek, Star Wars, and deep space? are still a little antisocial and odd, but think what those mild mannered kids could have become if they instead watched wrestling, or played football? Those pocket protector kids could now have been macho boneheads that fulfill the stereotypical all American man idea, but would they have been as happy or had as much meaning in life? No, they wouldn't. With space more on our minds, we helped our kids rather than want to throw a baseball, throw a nerf ball instead. And what's funnier, getting in the eye with a baseball or a Nerf ball? yeah, exactly. Thanks NASA.

If we had chosen not to spend so much cash on space, what do you think we'd have spent it on? War. War. Puerto Rico, and then war with Puerto Rico.

Ted, I think by now you can see that we should not only be content with our money well spent, but that we should spend more! If we hadn't spent it all, then we wouldn't have spaceage knowledge, ~~and~~ we'd have more boneheads, and more war. Now, tell those cancer lovers that you're pro-space!

Annotations for Paper 9

Ideas Score: 5

This is a novel approach to the assigned topic, but through this extended satire, the writer demonstrates full command of the components of Ideas. The controlling idea (the government needs to continue to fund space exploration) is fully developed with relevant supporting ideas (e.g., many gains have been made through space exploration, and it has afforded scientists and “nerds” many opportunities). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas with specific examples and rhetorical devices, like humorous analogy and reasoning (e.g., “If your not pro-space travel, then that’s like saying your pro cancer, and what kind of jerk is pro cancer,” and “Those pocket protector kids could now have been macho boneheads that fulfill the stereotypical all American man idea, but would they have been as happy or had as much meaning in life?”). The response contains an abundance of information that addresses the reader concern “why should we continue to fund space exploration?”

Organization Score: 5

The humorous introduction sets the stage for the writer’s tongue-in-cheek, pro-space argument. Related ideas about the gains made through space travel and the opportunities that space exploration has given to science-minded people are grouped together. Ideas within body paragraphs build logically on one another, and the writer uses a variety of transitional elements to link ideas throughout the response (e.g., “Thanks to the space rocks from the moon,” “Still a little antisocial and odd,” and “yeah, exactly”). The conclusion provides a sense of closure without repetition.

Style Score: 5

The writer uses carefully-crafted phrases to create an ironic tone that engages the audience through humor (e.g., “Those kids that early on watched Star trek, Star Wars, and deep space 9, are still a little antisocial and odd, but think what those mild mannered kids could have become if they instead watched wrestling, or played football?”). Appeals to the state legislator are explicit (“Ted, I think by now you can see that we should not...”). The writer uses a variety of sentence lengths and structures. Control in all of these components helps establish a voice that is, quite simply, unique.

Conventions Score: 4

Simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences are consistently correct, with appropriate end punctuation. All elements of usage are consistently correct, with infrequent errors (“If your not” and “that 25 billion dollar”). There are several missing apostrophes (e.g., that’s,” “the governments money,” and “whats”), but most elements of mechanics are correct. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 10

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I am _____, I am
Sophomore. My should is to finish
the high school and after that
I want to prepare for a carrier
because I want to do a nurse.

So I think to has spent billions
of dollars is a good thing because you
can help people and do other things
withi you need. W

When the hurracake came to
here. when the hurracake come destroy
to much houses and get out much things
So the people don't have nothing. So with
that money you can help all that
people what need.

You can spent money for people
what (you) really need. With that money
what you spent people can use for buy
medacines and other things but if need.
The people need the money for buy some
clothes and food but I think what only
the people need. but when really don't
have nothing for example houses or
something to eat.

I think what that money you

Paper 10 (page two)

Can help the people what was really sick. When the people was sick you can help (the) because is people what really need. I think can you help to donated money for people what really need like medicament and others things. I think what that to spent money is a good thing for help the people what in really need.

Annotations for Paper 10

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (the money should be used to address problems on Earth) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas (help hurricane victims and those in need of food and medicine) are relevant, but the writer develops them with few examples and details (e.g., “the hurricane come destroy to much houses and get out much things to the people don’t have nothing” and “people need the money for buy some clothes and food”). There is not enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. The introduction is ineffective because it does not relate back to the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. There is some evidence of grouping (e.g., ideas about hurricane victims and those in need of food and shelter) and sequencing. There are few transitions in the paper, and conclusion’s effectiveness is limited by its brevity.

Style Score: 1

Word choice is often incorrect, imprecise, or confusing (e.g., “So I think to has spent billions of dollars is a good thing because you can help people and do other things with you need”). Because the writer does not control language effectively, the tone is flat and voice is not apparent. There are too few correct sentences to determine variety.

Conventions Score: 1

Most of the sentences in the paper are unclear (e.g., “With that money what you spent people can use for buy medacines and other things but if need”). There are frequent, severe errors in usage (e.g., “but when really don’t have nothing” and “help to donated money for people what really need”). With respect to mechanics, there is little internal punctuation, in addition to misspellings (e.g., “medicaments”). Because the errors often obscure meaning, the writer does not demonstrate minimal control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 11

Dear the U.S. Congressional representative,

The U.S. government has put billions of dollars into exploring space. Space exploring is ~~extant~~ exellant because we can see what is in outer space, but we are spending too much money on it when we should be spending the money on other things. If we ~~did not~~ did not spend so much money on exploring space the government would be save millions of dollars each year. You could use that money on more important things like new medicines, better technology, and lowering taxes.

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If we stoped spending so much money on space exploration we could spend it on making new medicines. Making new medicines can cost a fortune, but we could save money from space exploration and spend some of it on making new medicines. There are hundreds of diseases in the world that need new medicines to cure them, but if we the government doesn't have the money for them then we can't cure them. It is not the people's fault for getting a deadly disease so they should not be punished for it. If we had good medicines we would have less people dying from diseases.

Another advantage of saving money from space exploration is to make better technology. The technology is superior now, but it has some disadvantages. If the government spent money on better technology then the technology would not break or end up costing lots of money.

Paper 11 (page two)

You could block people from sending viruses to other people's computers and stop people from hacking in on computers and stealing money, so if we saved money on space exploration we could have better technology and safer technology too.

My final reason for saved money on space exploration is to lower taxes. If the government saved millions of dollars each year then they would not have to charge the people of the United States so much on taxes. Taxes are very high right now and they are costing people too much money. If we saved money from space exploration we could have lower taxes.

The U.S. government has spent too much money on space exploration when they should use it for more important things. I like space exploration because I would like to know what is out there, but it is more important to use that money on more important things.

Thanks for your time,

Annotations for Paper 11

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (if the government did not spend the money on space exploration, it could “use that money on more important things”) is established through relevant supporting ideas (improve the quality of medicine, enhance technology, and lower taxes). The writer develops these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “There are hundreds of diseases in the world that need new medicines to cure them” and “Taxes are very high right now and they are costing people too much money”). Few of these details, however, are specific (e.g., “you could block people from sending viruses to other people’s computers and stop people from haking in on computers”). Some repetitive phrases (e.g., “making new medicines”) make the paper look longer than it really is. Overall, though, there is enough information in the paper to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

This paper is a good example of a response that has some elements of a formulaic structure but is better because it shows more control of the components of Organization. The writer states the three supporting ideas in the introduction and then mentions them again in the topic sentence of each body paragraph. The conclusion features a restatement of the controlling idea. Regarding grouping, though, there are quite a few details that the writer groups together in each body paragraph, and these ideas follow a generally clear sequence. There are also some effective transitions within the paragraphs (e.g., pronoun substitution like “it” for “money” and “them” for “diseases”) Some of the repetition in the conclusion and the topic sentences does detract from the competence the writer demonstrates, but sufficient control is still evident.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally interesting (e.g., “hundreds of diseases,” “technology is superior now,” and “block people from sending viruses”). There is also some repetitive, less effective language (“spending too much money,” “spending the money,” and “spend so much money”). Some sentence variety and a generally earnest tone indicate the writer is generally aware of his/her audience. Overall, the writer’s voice is clear and appropriate.

Conventions Score: 4

Sentences are consistently correct, and the writer demonstrates control forming simple, compound and complex sentences. There is not an extensive variety of constructions (e.g., many of the complex sentences have an “If ... then” structure), but clarity of meaning is consistent. There are few usage errors in the response (e.g., “we would have less people dying” and “would be save”). The elements of mechanics are consistently correct, as well, although there are quite a few missing commas after introductory clauses. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 12

To us congress,

First I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter. I have been thinking about the billions of dollars that has been spent over the last twenty five years on space exploration. I do think space exploration has helped our society in a few ways, but on the other hand we could of used the money for other things here on earth. Here in the U.S there are people on the streets without a home to go to and the U.S congress is funding space exploration first. We live in America a free country and I think we should help the homeless and poor to enjoy living the American dream. Some people do believe the money in space exploration is the best thing to spend money on but just think what these billions of dollars could of done to the us. These funds could of went to building new schools or hiring new teachers. We also could have funded children hospitals and helped to find a cure to horrible diseases like cancer or cistic Fibrosis or C.F. These are both diseases young children suffer and die from but we are still paying billions and billions of dollars on space explorations. I would like for congress to discuss and think about these few things I have mentioned and take my statements into consideration. Again I would like to thank congress for taking the time to read my letter and I hope I can make a difference.

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Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 12

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (money could be better spent here on Earth) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (help the homeless, improving schools, and finding cures for diseases), but some are listed (improving schools), while others are partially developed (finding cures for diseases). There is not enough information in the paper to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

The introduction, in which the writer acknowledges the counterargument before establishing his/her position, is clear. There is some evidence of grouping (helping the homeless and finding cures for diseases) and sequencing in the body of the paper, but this evidence is limited by the relative brevity of the response (i.e., there are not many ideas to group and sequence). There are some transitions in the response (e.g., “but on the other hand” and “These are both diseases), and the conclusion provides some closure. Although this example falls at the high end of the “2-range,” more evidence of control is needed for the writer to demonstrate more than minimal competence.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally interesting (e.g., “find a cure to horrible diseases like cancer or cystic fibrosis”), and the writer includes explicit appeals to the audience (e.g., “First I would like to thank you for taking the time to read this letter,” and “I would like for congress to discuss and think about these few things”). The writer’s voice (“I think we should help the homeless and poor to enjoy living the American dream”) and concerned tone are clear. There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

Most of the sentences are clear and correct, including examples of compound and complex sentences. Usage is generally correct, with few errors (“we could of used”). There are several missing commas, as well as missing paragraph breaks. The relative strengths in sentence formation and usage, however, provide sufficient evidence of control in Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 13

Ever since space exploration first began, the United States has spent billions of dollars on the program. Traveling to outer space has played a beneficial role in the history of our country. Many medical experiments that cannot be performed on Earth have taken place on the space station and have saved many lives. In addition to these breakthroughs, our knowledge of the solar system has greatly improved since we first ventured outside our atmosphere. The study of the planets and their movement has significantly affected how we humans view the galaxy. However, some of the excessive funds to the space program could have been better used.

Conditions in some parts of our country are, to say the least, not exactly up to par. Being one of the most powerful nations in the world, the United States has a reputation to live up to. In my opinion, some of the funds that we have dedicated to exploring space could have been better used. For example, after the devastating hurricanes hit the Gulf Coast last year, we could have used that extra money to help with the rebuilding process and to support the victims instead of asking other countries for help. Of course, we did manage to supply sufficient help to these areas, but perhaps a better job could have been done. Also, a portion of the funds could be donated to the education system. Some of the schools in the United States are incredibly lacking in funding, and this leads

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Paper 13 (page two)

to the students not receiving a proper education. If we could just cut part of the space program money for this purpose, a definite increase in education would occur.

I am not suggesting to completely stop space exploration; I am simply saying that it is unnecessary to waste excess amounts of money when it could be put to better use. One thing we could do is travel to space less frequently. Perhaps if we could cut down on the number of trips to space, NASA would be able to spend more time perfecting the space shuttle to reduce the risk to the astronauts. Not only were millions of dollars wasted when the *Challenger* shuttle exploded upon re-entry, but all of the astronauts inside lost their lives. In conclusion, a portion of the funding for space exploration should be given to other organizations within our nation in order to improve the quality of life for some parts of the United States.

Annotations for Paper 13

Ideas Score: 4

The writer is consistently focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. The controlling idea (“Some of the excessive funds to the space program could have been better used”) is well developed with relevant supporting ideas (help hurricane victims; improve schools; space travel is dangerous). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas with specific examples and details (e.g., “after the devastating hurricanes hit the Gulf Coast last year, we could have used that extra money to help with the rebuilding processes” and “when the *Challenger* shuttle exploded upon re-entry ... all of the astronauts inside lost their lives”). Although the supporting ideas are not fully developed, the response does contain complete information that addresses reader concerns (e.g., why should some of the money reserved for space exploration be reallocated?).

Organization Score: 4

The organizing strategy (acknowledge the benefits of space travel, highlight other areas that need funding, and then propose a funding compromise) is appropriate to the persuasive purpose of the prompt. Related ideas about helping hurricane victims, improving schools, and documenting the dangers of space travel are grouped, and ideas within these paragraphs build logically on one another. There are several effective transitions connecting ideas (e.g., “In my opinion,” “Of course,” and “I am not suggesting”). There are a few ineffective transitions, however (e.g., “Also”). The brief conclusion contains some repetition. Overall, though, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 5

Several carefully crafted phrases (e.g., “In addition to these breakthroughs, our knowledge of the solar system has greatly improved since we first ventured outside our atmosphere”) help create a thoughtful, academic tone and voice. The writer uses a variety of sentence lengths and structures. Overall, a full command of the components of Style keeps the audience engaged throughout the response.

Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates a full command of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences with correct end punctuation. Even in the more complex structures, clarity of sentence meaning is consistent (e.g., “For example, after the devastating hurricanes hit the Gulf Coast last year, we could have used that extra money to help with the rebuilding process and to support victims instead of asking other countries for help”). The elements of usage and mechanics are correct in a variety of contexts.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 14

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Dear Ladies and Gentlemen of Congress

I think you should continue to fund space exploration because we need to know what's out there. If you fund space exploration they might be able to see what is going on in other galaxies. It could help save the Earth from getting hit by an asteroid and killing hundreds of thousands of people who live on Earth. If there is something out there that is dangerous and could destroy the Earth they might be able to stop it from destroying Earth. If there was life on other planets, I'm not saying I believe in it, but if there were we could see how they live. We could see how far down we would need to go to get to solid ground and see how many planets there really are in our solar system. We would also know how close the nearest star and galaxy really is. We could also know if there is another Earth in space. We could also know if there are aliens like in Star Wars. We could know if Jedi also existed. If you stop funding the space program we might know if some of these things are true or not. The stuff I have talked about is why I am asking you to keep funding the space program.

Sincerely,

Annotations for Paper 14

Ideas Score: 2

The controlling idea (“I think you should continue to fund space exploration”) is minimally developed. Supporting ideas are relevant (explore galaxies, investigate whether the Earth could be hit by an asteroid, and see if other intelligent life exists). The writer develops these supporting ideas with few details (e.g., “It could help save the Earth from getting hit by an asteroid and killing hundreds of thousands of people who live on Earth”). Overall, there is not enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 2

The writer demonstrates minimal control of the components of Organization. The introduction is limited to the writer stating his/her position. There is minimal evidence of grouping (e.g., ideas about what is going on in other galaxies) and sequencing (e.g., “We could also know if there are aliens like in starwars. We could know if Jedi also existed”). Transitions are few and repetitive (e.g., “We would also” and “We could also”). The brevity of the conclusion limits its effectiveness.

Style Score: 2

Word choice is simple, ordinary, and repetitive (e.g., “They might be able to see,” “We could see, and several examples of the phrase “we could know if”). This repetitive language leaves the tone and voice indistinct. There are some examples of audience awareness (e.g., “If you stop funding the space program”). Sentence errors limit variety. Overall, control of the components of Style is minimal.

Conventions Score: 2

The writer generally controls the elements of sentence formation; there are correct examples of simple and complex sentences. However, the sentence beginning “If their was life on other planets” is somewhat overloaded. Usage errors are more slightly more frequent (e.g., “what is out their” and the vague pronoun reference “They might”). The writer demonstrates the least control in mechanics (e.g., “i’m” and misspellings like “Gaxaly,” “alians,” and “migh”). The main reason this writer demonstrates only minimal control in Conventions is the relative brevity of the response (note that the paper does not begin until line three, and the writer gets about ten words per line).

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 15

To whom this may concern,

Over the past couple of years the United States has spent billions of dollars on researching and exploring space. This has posed many problems to the citizens of United States.

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Many say that we need to spend it on helping people on Earth first and others say we need to at least study the ocean more in depth before going outside our atmosphere. I feel very strong about helping this world or United States at least before going into an universe that is basically unknown. I feel some projects with that money can be spent on: the war in Iraq, medicine care, schools and churches, and more benefits for people less fortunate.

First, and most important, the United States needs to help the needy. There are thousands of people who are homeless and millions who are on the verge of being homeless. They make minimum wage and more likely have children. I know with that money we could make a difference to a lot of people.

Second, I would send more money to Iraq. The price those people pay and the United

Paper 15 (page two)

States can't give them a decent meal or medicine. Those people need a lot of things and not to mention more tools and machines. Those people are in need. It would benefit us to give extra money to troops to help win the war.

The most important thing with this issue is studying the ocean. The ocean needs to be studied more to help endangered species and to help with bacteria that's affecting us. If we know all about the ocean then maybe we can link it to our problems on Earth. The ocean does take up seventy percent of the Earth. We have the rest of millions of years to travel the universe. I think the ocean is more important to us in the present time.

Concerned, I'm thinking how dangerous it is when such people travel in space. Maybe we should start out again with satellites and probes. Gradually, we will work our way up. In this case, more than ever, we need more money as we can get for the citizens of the United States.

Thank you for your time,

Annotations for Paper 15

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (“I feel very strong about helping this world or United States at least before going into an universe that is basically unknown”) is sufficiently developed with relevant supporting ideas (help the needy, spend more on the war in Iraq, and use funds to study the oceans). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas with some examples and details (e.g., “There are thousands of people who are homeless and millions who are on the verge of being homeless” and “Those people need a lot of things and not to mention more tools and machines”). There are not many specific details in the response (e.g., “The ocean does take up seventy percent of the Earth”), but there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting ideas / conclusion) is appropriate for the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. In the introduction, the writer clearly maps out his/her argument. Related ideas about helping the need, spending more on the war in Iraq, and studying the oceans are grouped together. Ideas within paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas within paragraphs (e.g., “Many say” and pronoun substitution like “they” for “the homeless”). Transitions between body paragraphs, however, are formulaic (“First,” “Second,” and “The most important thing”). The conclusion provides closure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Organization.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally interesting (e.g., “going into a universe that is basically unknown” and “The ocean needs to be studied more to help endangered species and to help with bacteria that’s affecting us”). There are, however, lapses into simple and ordinary language (e.g., “a lot of people,” “Those people need a lot of things,” and “The most important thing with this issue”). The writer’s voice (“I’m thinking how dangerous it is when such people travel in space.”) and a concerned tone are clear. There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

The majority of sentences are clear and correct, including examples of compound and complex sentences. The last sentence in the first paragraph loses clarity, however, and there is a fragment at the end of page one. Usage is generally correct, but there are incorrect words forms (e.g., “I feel very strong,” “medicine care,” and “going into an universe,”). There are missing commas, but most elements of mechanics are correct. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 16

To Whom it may Concern:

The first small step for man and giant leap for mankind cost mankind billions of dollars.

Space exploration is a wonderful project, but there are many less expensive, more beneficial ways the United States government could be spending that money. In learning about space an answer to world hunger has yet to be discovered. America is already suffering from a great amount of debt to other countries. How does sending rockets into space bring any money back? Please stop sending people to space and start feeding them. Provide them with health and the knowledge of attaining wealth for themselves and the country.

If life is discovered on other planets there are now two worlds full of mouths to feed. Walking down any street in a big city and even a few streets in suburbia one may, or will, find poor homeless families. A soup kitchen can only do so much without a bit more federal funding.

The government should provide classes and clinics in their shelters. The clinics aid the promotion of health and cleanliness while the classes teach them useful ways of making their money, or lack thereof, work for them through budgeting and investing. Have a place set up where the homeless may find work and give them a hand up, not a handout. With all of these new investors with jobs America can start patching up that gaping hole in the economy. Teach the less fortunate the difference between good and bad debt, help them file

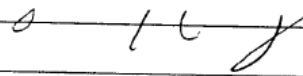
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Paper 16 (page two)

their taxes in such a way, the most can be obtained in tax returns. Once they get on their feet using a fraction of the space exploration money, they may decide to give a little something back and not evade their taxes.

Perhaps, after all of Americas debts are cleared, space exploration may continue. Until then, solve the problems in this world before opening a can of worms in another. Can a giant clod of mars mud plug up the hole American citizens' tax dollars are pouring out of? Can it feed the unemployed, unregistered, uncared for and seemingly unloved percentage of the population? When it's proven that it can send people back to space. The great unknown, as beautiful as it may be, is not going anywhere too soon. Redirect the money to what is going on right here, right now. Thank you for your time.

Sincerely,



Annotations for Paper 16

Ideas Score: 4

The writer is consistently focused on the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. The controlling idea (“Space exploration is a wonderful project, but there are many less expensive, more beneficial ways the United States government could be spending that money”) is well developed with a relevant supporting idea (there are many struggling people who need assistance). The writer elaborates this supporting idea with specific examples and details (e.g., “The clinics aid the promotion of health and cleanliness while the classes teach them useful ways of making their money ... through budgeting and investing”). Fuller elaboration in parts of the paper would strengthen the argument (e.g., more on the “difference between good and bad debt” and how to file income taxes. Overall, though, the paper contains complete information that addresses reader concerns (e.g., why should the money reserved for space exploration be reallocated?).

Organization Score: 5

The organizing strategy (acknowledge the benefits of space travel but then discuss how the money is sorely needed elsewhere) is appropriate for the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. Related ideas about how to help the needy are grouped into paragraph two. Ideas build logically one another throughout the response, and the writer uses a variety of transitional elements to facilitate the communication of ideas (e.g., “How doe sending rocketts into space bring any money back,” “Walking down the street,” “With all of these investors,” and “Until then.” The conclusion provides a sense of closure without repetition.

Style Score: 5

Several carefully crafted phrases (e.g., “give them a hand up, not a hand out,” “Until then, solve the problems in this world before opening a can of worms in another,” and “Can a giant clod of mars mud plug up the hole American citizens’ tax dollars are pouring out of?”) help create a concerned, informed tone and voice. The writer uses a variety of sentence lengths and structures. Overall, a full command of the components of Style keeps the audience engaged throughout the response.

Conventions Score: 5

The writer demonstrates a full command of simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences with correct end punctuation. Even in more complex structures, clarity of sentence meaning is consistent (e.g., “The clinics aid the promotion of health and cleanliness while the classes teach them useful ways of making their money, or lack thereof, work for them through budgeting and investing”). All elements of usage are consistently correct. The elements of mechanics are correct in a variety of contexts.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Paper 17

Over the past twenty-five years, the United States has spent billions of dollars on space exploration. Some citizens believe exploring outer space is an important use of government money. Others believe the money could be better spent helping citizens here on Earth. I agree with the citizens that believe the money could be better spent helping citizens here on Earth. I believe that citizens should know about outer space and what is up there, but there is millions of people here on Earth that need help. There is homeless people that are having to eat out of dumpsters and live in a cardboard box on the streets because they have no money for anything else. There is families that are having to miss one meal during the day because their jobs do not pay that much money and everything is expensive, so they can not buy enough food. This year, we have had several hurricanes in different states. Citizens have had their houses and cars destroyed, but they can not afford to have them fixed. When things like this happens, the government should give these needy ^{citizens} people money to help them out through hard times. There is many projects that the government could give money to. The United States has scientist that are trying to find a cure for cancer, AIDS, and several other diseases, but they need money so they can experiment with different things to try and find a cure. Some parents in the world have children, but they may be mentally ill. Some of the children have to go to a special hospital or school. The parents need help with money so they can go to these places. The government could help with money so they can go to these places. In the United States, there is many charities that lack money. The government could help these charities by giving them money to use. Many childrens parents give them up for adoption. The kids will either end up in an orphanage or a foster ^{home} ~~house~~. The orphanages could use money to buy clothes, shoes, toys, food and many other things. These kids deserve nice toys and clothes too. Foster parents could use the money to buy Christmas and birthday presents.

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Paper 17 (page two)

During the year, if the child needs money to go on a field trip, then they deserve to go. The government should take some of their money to supply an extra amount of money each month so these kids can have nice things and go places. Every child in the United States has to go to school unless they are sixteen and want to drop out. The schools should be provided with more paper and pens. ^{criteria} The ~~safes~~ needs more money so they can buy other food for the students. The teachers deserve to get nicer supplies for their class rooms. Supplies such as these things could be brought with government money. The United States has soldiers fighting for us everywhere in Iraq. They deserve to get more food and clothes from us. They should also get more money for their wages because they are risking their lives from us. There is several organizations and people that deserve money from the government. Government money should be spent on Earth and not on going to ~~space~~ space.

Annotations for Paper 17

Ideas Score: 3

The controlling idea (“The government should consider using the money for other projects in the United States”) is sufficiently developed with relevant supporting ideas (e.g., help the needy, fund medical research, give aid to orphanages, and improve schools). The writer elaborates these supporting ideas somewhat unevenly: sometimes with specific examples and details (e.g., “homeless people that are having to eat out of dumpsters and live in cardboard boxes on the streets”) and other times with more general details (e.g., “The cafeteria needs more money so they can buy other food for the students. The teachers deserve to get nicer supplies for the classrooms”). Although the body paragraphs are not consistently well developed, there is enough information in the response to provide a sense of completeness.

Organization Score: 3

The organizing strategy (introduction / supporting paragraphs / conclusion) is appropriate to the assigned topic and persuasive purpose. Although the first part of the introduction contains wording from the prompt, the writer eventually uses it to establish the position. Related ideas about helping the needy, investing in medical research, and increasing funding for social programs like education are grouped together in paragraphs. Ideas within these paragraphs follow a generally clear sequence. Some transitions link ideas within the paper, but they are rather repetitive (e.g., “The government could,” “The government should,” and “The schools should”). Although it is brief and repetitive, the conclusion provides closure.

Style Score: 3

Word choice is generally interesting (e.g., “eat out of dumpsters and live in a cardboard box,” “give these needy citizens money to help them out through hard times,” and “many charities lack that money”). There are also lapses into simple, ordinary language (e.g., “When things like this happens,” “with different things to try,” and “kids can have nice things and go places”). A clear, caring tone and voice are evident (“They should also get more money for their wages because they are risking their lives for us”). There is some variation in sentence length and structure. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the components of Style.

Conventions Score: 3

A majority of the sentences in the paper are formed correctly, including some compound and complex sentences. There are more errors in usage than in sentence formation (e.g., “there is homeless people,” “When things like this happens,” “The United States has scientist,” and “risking their lives from us”). Most elements of mechanics are correct, but there is some missing internal punctuation (e.g., “childrens parents”), and there are no paragraph breaks. Overall, the writer demonstrates sufficient control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 18

The Money

The money is important in development of country. Exploration space is important of economy so the United state government has spent billions of dollar on space exploration over the past twenty-five years which some citizens believe exploring outer space is an important use of government money. Some countries, is the money could be better spent helping people disease, poor. Then that is the first, they then they did think to develop economy. Some country is so poor can't development is country's development can help to it.

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Annotations for Paper 18

Ideas Score: 1

Most of the information in this brief response comes directly from the prompt. The few sentences of original student writing are not entirely clear (e.g., “Exploration space is important of economy” and “Some country is so poor can’t development is countrys developopt can has helping to it”). Although it is apparent that the student would like to see the funds used to improve the economy, there is not enough development to establish a controlling idea.

Organization Score: 1

Most of the evidence in this brief response comes directly from the prompt. Accordingly, there is insufficient original student writing to determine competence in Organization.

Style Score: 1

Most of the evidence in this brief response comes directly from the prompt. Accordingly, there is insufficient original student writing to determine competence in Style

Conventions Score: 1

Most of the evidence in this brief response comes directly from the prompt. Accordingly, there is insufficient original student writing to determine competence in Conventions.

Performance Level: Does Not Meet the Standard

Paper 19

Dear U.S. congressional Representative,

We all love watching a glamorous spaceship blast off and feel the thrill and joy of the launch. Many people, not just in the U.S., view space exploration in awe and are fascinated. With all due respect, I'd like to introduce another thought on this subject. After reading this letter, I hope you would reconsider on some of the money spent towards space exploration.

Billions of dollars are constantly spent from the government towards space exploration. People actually do live on this planet we call Earth that are in need of desperate help. So instead of trying to find life out in space, wouldn't it be logical to first try and help the people we live around? We seem to try to go out and beyond towards other planets when we have enough problems here.

Just by walking down the street, we know that we don't have to look far to see someone in need. Giving out a small portion to the people that need help can lead to something great. Everyday someone is struggling. It's really as simple as that. You might say, "we can't help every individual," or "They should go and help themselves!" My purpose for this letter is not to ask you to help everyone, but if we do start helping even just one person at a time, that can mean one less criminal out on the streets. Our

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Paper 19 (page two)

planet and everybody in it is just as important, or more, as the life not yet found on other planets.

The money is not only needed for the homeless people. It also can be used by donating even a small portion to other government services. As a young person growing up in the American society as a citizen, I feel that I have a right in wanting a better future. Some services that have been a given to many until now can soon easily disappear if not enough devotion, ~~and~~ time, and money is given.

As a result, I believe that atleast some of the money spent on space exploration can go towards many other causes. This could very well lead to less poverty and a decrease in crime. It also can mean the younger ones could grow to be a better person in a better future full of oppurtunities. This future is in your hands and in your decisions you make today. Who knows how some kids in school right now can later affect the whole world by their achievements? True, U.S. wants to be on top of the world and be more advanced in technology and in many other aspects. However, I believe that changing the flow of money towards the subjects I stated in this letter can also affect other countries and stand out. At this time, I'd like to thank you for your time and I'd appreciate it greatly if you were to take these things into consideration.

5/11/09

Annotations for Paper 19

Ideas Score: 4

The controlling idea (the money used for space exploration should be redirected to help people on Earth) is well developed. The writer begins by acknowledging that space exploration is fascinating, but then counters with a specific appeal to reason (“wouldn’t it be logical to first try and help the people we live around?”). The writer builds on this premise with relevant supporting ideas (help people who are struggling, and give more money to government services) and elaborates them with specific reasoning (e.g., “You might say, ‘we can’t help every individual’ or ‘they should go and help themselves,’ [but] helping even just one person ... can mean one less criminal out on the streets”). Fuller elaboration in some parts of the paper would strengthen the argument (e.g., what kinds of specific government services should receive more funding and why?). Overall, however, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the components of Ideas.

Organization Score: 4

The introduction sets the stage for the writer’s argument. Body paragraphs build logically on one another (acknowledgement that space can be fascinating → but there are many people on Earth who need the money → followed by examples). Ideas within body paragraphs are grouped and follow a clear sequence. A variety of transitions link ideas within paragraphs, as well as parts of the paper (e.g., “Just by walking down the street,” “You might say,” and “The money is not only needed for the homeless”). The conclusion is quite long and somewhat repetitive (e.g., the writer begins by restating the position), but, overall, control is consistent.

Style Score: 4

Word choice is engaging (e.g., “watching a glamorous spaceship blast off and feel the thrill and joy of the launch,” and “This could very well lead to less poverty and a decrease in crime.” Some phrases are not carefully crafted (e.g., “As a young person growing up in the American society as a citizen, I feel that I have a right in wanting a better future”). However, the writer establishes a genuinely concerned tone and voice (e.g., “everybody ... is just as important, or more, as the life not yet found on other planet”). Sentences vary in length and structure. The overall effect is that the writer is consistently aware of his/her audience.

Conventions Score: 4

Simple, compound, and complex sentences are consistently correct. Rarely is sentence clarity an issue (e.g., “I believe that changing the flow of money towards the subjects I stated in this letter can also affect other countries and stand out”). Usage is consistently correct, with few errors (e.g., “the younger ones could grow to be a better person”). The elements of mechanics are also consistently correct, with few errors. Overall, the writer demonstrates consistent control of the elements of Conventions.

Performance Level: Meets the Standard

Paper 20

Page 3

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Dear Mr. Representative:

The topic of space exploration is constantly debated regarding its necessity and whether or not the billions of dollars being put into the space program would be of better use for causes closer to home. I am writing in regards to that very debate, and I for one believe that government funding for space exploration should be used for more important and meaningful issues. The disasters and lack of progress in the space program combined with the growing number of problems on Earth all say that funding for space exploration should take a serious, if not permanent, cutback.

When the space program was first launched, there were great successes. A man was launched into space, another orbited the earth, and finally we landed on the moon. But how much progress has been made since then? As far as scientists know Earth is the only livable place in the entire galaxy. A trip to Mars then, which the next major navigation goal, would be ultimately pointless, not to mention dangerous, time consuming, and extremely expensive. Satellites have already been put into orbit and we have conquered our moon, so how much more is there to really accomplish? And let's say a rational place to explore out in space was discovered, how do we know the shuttle and astronauts would survive the trip. In cases like the Challenger disaster, years of training and planning, hundreds of millions of dollars, and an entire crew of men and women were all lost in one fiery explosion, and that's just one disaster. It just seems logical that the work and money put into the space program should balance out with the results, but that is not happening.

So if billions of dollars of space funding are redirected to other issues

Paper 20 (page two)

what would those issues be? Well, to start could be the war in Iraq, which has already taken billions of dollars to manage up to this point and will take billions more in the upcoming years. Also, there are health and science causes, like the research for finding cures to diseases like AIDS, or cancers, or developing vaccinations for smallpox, anthrax, or other diseases in case of a biological attack. As the world knows, oil is running out and the diverted funds could go to developing alternative fuels or helping other environmental problems like pollution and global warming. There is no doubt the money would go to great use on Earth, and don't these causes seem more meaningful ~~the~~ than sending a man to an uninhabited, unlivable planet?

There is no questioning what space exploration has done in terms of modernizing and improving life on Earth. The question, however, is not what it has done but what it will do, which does not appear to be a whole lot. So what is the harm in taking government funds and applying them to causes which really need to be addressed, at least until a reasonable venture into space is developed. No matter how far we want to extend our boundaries, we have to remember that without a home, there is no reason for moving.

Annotations for Paper 20

Ideas Score: 5

The writer makes a clear, strong case for redirecting space exploration funds to address problems on Earth. Supporting ideas are relevant (space travel has not led to many recent discoveries, it is dangerous, and there are more pressing issues facing humanity). The writer uses ample specific detail to expand on these supporting ideas (e.g., “As the world knows, oil is running out and the diverted funds could go to developing alternative fuels or helping other environmental problems like pollution and global warming”). Such specific development satisfies a variety of reader concerns (e.g., why not fund space exploration, and how could the money be used better elsewhere?).

Organization Score: 5

The response demonstrates full command of the components of Organization. In the introduction, the writer establishes his/her position, which sets the stage for the development in the body of the paper. The writer groups related ideas about the pitfalls of space travel and the present needs on Earth. Ideas within body paragraphs follow a logical sequence. Varied and effective transitions link parts of the paper (e.g., “So if billions of dollars ... are redirected to other issues, what would these issues be?”), as well as ideas within body paragraphs (e.g., “As far as scientists know” and “to start with”). The conclusion provides closure without repetition.

Style Score: 5

The writer frequently uses carefully-crafted phrases to enhance the argument (e.g., “The disasters and lack of progress in the space program combined with the growing number of problems on Earth all say that funding for space exploration should take a serious, if not permanent, cutback”). These phrases create a sustained and authoritative voice. Sentences vary in length and structure. Throughout the response the writer is aware of the audience (“don’t these causes seem more meaningful than sending a man to an uninhabited, unlivable planet?”).

Conventions Score: 5

Simple, compound, complex, and compound complex sentences are consistently correct, and the writer maintains sentence clarity, even in more complex constructions (e.g., “In cases like the Challenger disaster, years of training and planning, hundreds of millions of dollars, and an entire crew of men and women were all lost in one fiery explosion, and that’s just one disaster”). All elements of usage and mechanics are consistently correct. Errors are infrequent and minor.

Performance Level: Exceeds the Standard

Score Key

Paper #	Ideas	Org.	Style	Conv.	Performance Level
1	3	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
2	1	2	2	2	Does Not Meet the Standard
3	4	4	4	4	Meets the Standard
4	3	3	4	3	Meets the Standard
5	2	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
6	4	4	5	5	Exceeds the Standard
7	2	2	2	2	Does Not Meet the Standard
8	3	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
9	5	5	5	4	Exceeds the Standard
10	2	2	1	1	Does Not Meet the Standard
11	3	3	3	4	Meets the Standard
12	2	2	3	3	Meets the Standard
13	4	4	5	5	Exceeds the Standard
14	2	2	2	2	Does Not Meet the Standard
15	3	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
16	4	5	5	5	Exceeds the Standard
17	3	3	3	3	Meets the Standard
18	1	1	1	1	Does Not Meet the Standard
19	4	4	4	4	Meets the Standard
20	5	5	5	5	Exceeds the Standard