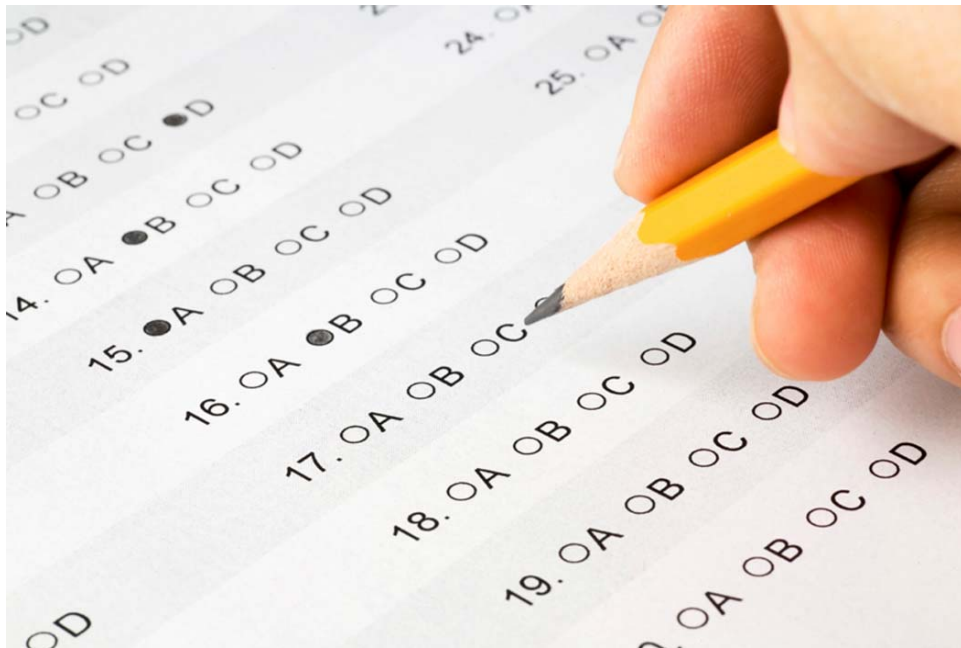


English High School Assessment

Review



Dear Parent and/or Student,

All students beginning high school after 2004 are required to take and pass the state-mandated English High School Assessment in order to graduate. During the test, students are asked to demonstrate their ability to: respond to a text, compose in a variety of modes, control language, and evaluate the content, organization, and language use of texts. To be considered proficient, students must receive a score of 396 or higher. The test is approximately three hours long, with a total of fifty items: two Extended Constructed Responses (4 points total each), two Brief Constructed Responses (3 points total each), and forty-six Selected Response items (1 point each).

To help review and prepare for the English HSA, parents and students should review the information on the next several pages. Also included is a complete test that has been released from the Maryland State Department of Education which students may take and score their responses. This packet includes the following information to help students prepare for the HSA:

- “What Do I Need to Know About the English HSA” – answers to frequently asked questions (page 3)
- “Websites” – links to helpful sites, including *HSA Online* (page 4)
- “Sample Items” – MSDE public-release practice items with answers for each of the four assessed goals, anchor papers for constructed response items, and rubrics (pages 5-25)
- “Terms You Should Know for the HSA” – a glossary of literary terms and language usage terms students may encounter on the HSA (pages 26-30)
- “Readings” – passages that are referenced in the “Sample Items” (pages 31-35)

Good luck with this important endeavor!

What Do I Need to Know About the English HSA?

When is the test?

- April 22, 2009
- Make-up: April 24, 2009

What does the test measure?

- The English HSA will measure indicators of the English Core Learning Goals:
 - Reading, Reviewing, and Responding to Texts
 - Composing in a Variety of Modes
 - Controlling Language
 - Evaluating the Content, Organization, and Language Use of Texts
- It will assess application of knowledge.



What does the test look like?

- There are three sessions:
 - Each of the first two sessions lasts 60 minutes.
 - The third session lasts 50 minutes.
 - There will be a five-minute break between sessions.
- All three sessions will include selected response items.
 - Some will be based on literary passages.
 - Others will be based on drafts of “student-written” work.
 - A few items will be not connected to a reading passage.
- Each session is likely to include one or more Brief Constructed Response (BCR) items.
 - BCR items will be based on passages of literary merit.
 - BCR items will be scored using a 3-point rubric.
 - Students will have approximately 10 minutes for responding to a BCR.
- The English HSA will include two Extended Constructed Responses (ECR).
 - You will respond to a prompt with an essay that requires you to write to *inform*.
 - You will respond to a prompt that requires you to compose a *persuasive* essay.
 - Each ECR will be scored using a 4-point rubric. (see p.)
 - Students will have approximately 20 minutes for responding to an ECR.
- At least one item will ask you to read a picture, photograph, poster, cartoon, etc.
 - The non-print text could relate to an SR item or a BCR item.

What will help me during the test?

- You have been preparing all year in your English class.
 - You have been reading and responding to literature.
 - You have been writing, revising, and editing essays.
 - You have participated in class discussions about literature, language, and writing.
- Read and follow *all* directions; read selections carefully.
- Answer questions in the order in which they are presented.
- You *may* annotate and write in the test booklet.
- Pace yourself so that you answer all items in each session.
- Answer Brief Constructed Responses (BCR) and Extended Constructed Responses (ECR) on the lined pages in the answer booklet. Do *not* skip lines.
- Erase stray marks from your answer booklet.
- Remember, it is to your advantage to respond to *every* item.

Websites

www.mdk12.org

This website allows students to receive an overview of the English HSA , including what it looks like, what it tests, and how it is scored. Students may also take a sample test and receive feedback.

Steps:

1. Click on “**User Guides**” on the right side of page.
2. Choose either “Students’ Guide” or “Parents’ Guide” and begin.

www.msde.mdk12online.org

HSA online includes web-based, interactive tools that will help students prepare for the English High School Assessment.

With HSA online, students and parents can:

- Learn or review HSA content.
- Practice questions that mirror the HSA format.
- Receive feedback through computer-based practice exercises.

Steps:

1. At the login screen, enter the following information:
Username: online.course
Password: parent
2. Once you have logged in, the best place to begin is with the tutorials. The “**New Users**” section on the right lists tutorials that show you how to use the online courses.

Sample Items: Reading, Reviewing, and Responding to Texts

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 31 for the reading.)

Read the essay "In the Country of Grasses." Then answer the following.

Skimming which of these books would best prepare a reader to understand what the author describes in the essay?

- A. *Large Prey Animals Around the World*
- B. *Lions and Tigers and Bears: Fear of the Wild*
- C. *Africa in the Nineteenth Century: The Colonial Experience*
- D. *An Illustrated Guide to the Wildlife of Africa*

Correct Answer:
D

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 31 for the reading.)

Read these sentences from [paragraph 10](#) of "In The Country of Grasses."

Anticipation is another gift for travelers in unfamiliar territory. It quickens the spirit.

The word *quickens* most nearly means

- A. angers
- B. excites
- C. hurries
- D. lightens

Correct Answer:
B

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 37 for the reading.)

Which of these best states the main idea of both "My People" and "I, Too"?

- A. People should learn to be patient.
- B. People should be proud of who they are.
- C. People learn to appreciate beauty in nature.
- D. People who are unhappy will grow stronger.

Correct Answer:
B

Brief Constructed Response (BCR) Item - Released in 2005

Carefully examine the details of the photograph below.



[View Scoring Information](#)

Write a response that explains whether the photograph communicates ideas that are similar to the ideas found in the essay "[In the Country of Grasses](#)." In your response, support your conclusion with appropriate details from both the essay and the photograph.

Use the space on page ___ of your Answer Book for planning your response. Then write your response on the lines on page ___.

Anchor Paper #7

The photograph communicates ideas that are similar to the ideas found in the essay, "In the Country of Grasses." The narrator in the essay travels to Africa, a country at that point she had not explored. The narrator travels with a tour guide named Samuel and together they see Africa's wildlife. The narrator elaborates, "Hundreds of zebras walk the skyline. They become animated heat waves. We drive closer. I have never seen such concentration of animals." The picture itself is a group of four in a land rover watching a herd of zebras and antelope. The narrator's elaboration of, "Anticipation is another gift for travelers in unfamiliar territory. It quiets the spirits" exemplifies the excitement and thrill that is to be found in not only the African wildlife but in the beautiful African landscape. The picture is a breathtaking view of African landscape - the tour group is isolated in the African plain except for the zebra and antelope that surround them. In addition, upon seeing a lion, the narrator exclaims, "No wonder that in the Masai mind every aspect is imbued with magic." From the picture, it is easy to discern the "magic" present within Africa - the beautiful and exotic wildlife, the breathtaking landscape, and the magic of seeing something for the first time.

Score for Anchor Paper #7: Rubric Score 3

Annotation: This response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the texts. The student begins with a simple summary of the essay (narrator in the essay travels to Africa, a country at that point she had not explored) and gives some text support (hundreds of zebras walk the skyline; I have never seen such concentration of animals). A succinct description of the picture (a group of four in a land rover watching a herd of zebras) is then provided, proving the commonality of the texts. Moving beyond the literal, the student recognizes the "magic of seeing something for the first time" and supports this idea (upon seeing a lion...every aspect is imbued with magic; the magic present within Africa - the beautiful and exotic wildlife, the breathtaking landscape).

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 31 for the reading.)

Read the essay "In the Country of Grasses."

Which phrase best describes Samuel?

- A. helpful but quiet in manner
- B. witty and clever with words
- C. polite but uncertain of himself
- D. sad and mysterious to strangers

Correct Answer:
A

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 31 for the reading.)

Read this sentence from the last paragraph of "In The Country of Grasses."

As my eyes become acquainted with lion, I begin to distinguish fur from grass.

Which of these statements best explains the meaning of this sentence?

- A. At first, all lions look alike to the author, but once she gets a better look, she can tell individual lions apart.
- B. The lions are camouflaged in the tall grass, but the longer the author looks, the better she can make them out.
- C. Though fearful of the lions as they hide in the tall grass, the author soon begins to make friends with the animals.
- D. Having never seen lions, the author has no idea what they look like, but little by little, she begins to identify their features.

Correct Answer:
B

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 37 for the reading.)

Read the poems "My People" and "I, Too" by Langston Hughes. Then answer the following.

In "My People," the speaker compares the souls of his people to

- A. their eyes
- B. their faces
- C. the stars
- D. the sun

Correct Answer:
D

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 35 for the reading.)

Read the excerpt from "On Safari with the Experts," an article about a safari outfitting camp in Kenya, East Africa. Then answer the following about both "In the Country of Grasses" and "On Safari with the Experts."

Correct Answer:
C

Which pair of words best completes the following statement?

While the essay "In the Country of Grasses" is mostly written in a ___ style, the article "On Safari with the Experts" is mostly written in a ___ style.

- A. poetic...creative
- B. formal...scholarly
- C. descriptive...factual
- D. journalistic...conversational

Selected Response Item - Released in 2008

(See page 34 for the reading.)

Read the essay "The Architecture of a Soul." Then answer the following item.

Correct Answer:
D

Based on information in the essay, with which of these statements would the author most likely agree?

- A. Children need constant supervision during their leisure time.
- B. Walking on the beach detracts from a child's good use of time.
- C. Souvenirs carefully preserved will increase in monetary value over time.
- D. A systematic and precise study of the natural world is a valuable way to spend time.

Selected Response Item - Released in 2008

(See page 34 for the reading.)

Read the essay "The Architecture of a Soul." Then answer the following item.

Correct Answer:
D

Which of these words best identifies the tone created by the author's description of her grandmother?

- A. grieving
- B. humorous
- C. puzzled
- D. sentimental

Which of these ideas is most closely related to a theme of "In the Country of Grasses"?

- A. anxiety about encountering danger
- B. thrill of exploring the natural world
- C. enjoyment from making new friends
- D. concern about seeing a habitat destroyed

Correct Answer:
B

Sample Items: Composing in a Variety of Modes

Extended Constructed Response (ECR) Item - Released in 2008

Read the prompt below. Follow the directions in the prompt for writing your essay.

Write a well-organized essay in which you explain a difficult decision that you or someone you know had to make. Develop your ideas by explaining what led to the decision, why it was difficult, and what the results of the decision were. Be sure that your essay is fully developed, that it is logically organized, and that your choice of words clearly expresses your ideas.

Use the space on page ___ of your Answer Book for planning your essay. Then write your essay on the lines on pages ___ and ___.

The following Anchor Paper represents a response with a high score used in conjunction with the rubrics to assess student responses. For additional samples with a range of score points and are students and parents should visit mdk12.org, "What Does the HSA Look Like?"

Ever since I was a little boy, I've been playing baseball. My dad introduced me to the wonderful sport as soon as I could walk. And I loved it. I started with T-Ball, progressed to coach pitch, and finally made it to little league. I was never one of the best players back then, but I wasn't one of the worst, either. I was kind of in the middle; some games I would do well, others I would stink. But my father kept pushing me.

After a while, the _____ Lion's Club park became a familiar sight. As I grew older and bigger, I kept moving up through the different levels of play. Next in line was the minors. Then came the majors, in which I stayed for a few years. Then, finally, I reached the level I had been looking forward to since I entered the world of baseball: The Seniors. This was the highest level, the "top of the food chain." Now the aspect of travel team seemed possible. Could I do it? Was I good enough to step up and play more important, more competitive ball? Sadly, the answer was no. I tried out, but was shot down after missing a few too many ground balls and striking out a few too many times. So I would have to settle for in-house ball, the less competitive, easier version of baseball. Hey, no big deal, right? But the words spoken over the phone by coach Steve, "Sorry bud, but you didn't make the squad," still stung in the back of my mind. As did the disappointment in my father's face. I just wanted him to be proud of me. As it turned out, that was a lot more important than I had thought.

Before I knew it, February of the next year

had rolled around, It was time again to decide whether or not I would try out for the Travel Team. Along with a little help from my father, I decided yes. Trust me when I say, the try-out was very interesting. All started off well, I was hitting great, fielding every ground ball; but then something happened that I'll never forget: A choppy grounder was hit hard at me. I stuck my glove up, but I was too late. "SMACK!" The ball smashed into my nose and pain seared through me as I fell to my knees. Blood poured from my face, and while everyone else finished the tryout, I sat in the E. R. The results: it was broken. Not too surprising. But the results that came over the phone a few nights later were. I made the team. My father was proud, I was playing 4 games a week, and all was well, I played out the season, showing great improvement, and ended strong. But something didn't feel right. After thinking it over for a long time, I decided not to continue my baseball career the next year. My father was devastated. But I had to much going on and I was decided... at least I thought.

But my parents worked on me tirelessly, and after some long, convincing talks with my dad, I decided to change my mind. I tried out for travel team and made it! I got a new bat and glove, and new confidence. The season is half way over, and I'm having a blast. I'm back in the "swing" of things, no pain intended. I'm batting .364, and my dad is happier than ever. This has been my best season yet, by far.

Score for Anchor Paper #8: Rubric Score 4

Annotation: In this fluent and insightful response, the writer explores the decision to try out for a baseball "travel team," despite not having made the squad the previous season. Complete and relevant support and elaboration are provided through purposeful word choice (top of the food chain; a choppy grounder), vivid descriptions ('Smack!' The ball smashed into my nose and pain seared through me as I fell to my knees), and specific, carefully chosen details (so I would have to settle for in-house ball, the less competitive, easier version of baseball). These elements are interwoven into a cohesive essay that brings the events to life and effectively illustrates the complex relationship between the writer and a beloved, but demanding, father. (But the words spoken over the phone by coach Steve, 'Sorry bud, but you didn't make the squad,' still stung in the back of my mind. As did the disappointment in my father's face. I just wanted him to be proud of me.) The result is a thoroughly developed response that fulfills the writing purpose.

Extended Constructed Response (ECR) Item - Released in 2006

Read the prompt below. Follow the directions in the prompt for writing your essay.

Consider the following:

Some school systems in the United States and in other countries are using a year-round school schedule. With this schedule, students go to school the entire year and are given several breaks of two to three weeks throughout the year instead of one extended summer break. Do you think that this is a schedule your school system should adopt?

Write a well-organized essay in which you agree or disagree with the idea of a year-round school schedule. Support your position with specific examples from your studies, experiences, or observations. Be sure that your essay is fully developed, that it is logically organized, and that your choice of words clearly expresses your ideas.

Use the space on page ___ in your Answer Book for planning your essay. Then write your essay on the lines on pages ___ and ___.

The following Anchor Paper represents a high score used in conjunction with the rubrics to assess student responses. To examine a range of score points, students and parents should visit mdk12.org, "What Does the HSA Look Like?"

Several school systems in the United States and in other countries are using a year-round school schedule. Instead of one long summer vacation and short winter and spring vacations, ~~the~~ children go to school year-round with two-to three-week breaks throughout the year. I do not think our school system should adopt this schedule.

The biggest argument against year-round school is the elevated cost. It is hot here in the summer. If we were in school then, the county would have to pay to have the school air-conditioned. Transportation costs, would also go up. The staff would need to be paid more. After all, no one really wants to be at school in the summer. Students pay as well, though not in money. They are giving up time with their families—for many, summer is the only time their parents don't have to go to work everyday—to sit in a classroom.

When kids think "summer," they automatically think of the beach, pool parties, playing outside, or just relaxing with a good book. But now the tyrannical school board wants to take that away from them by instituting a year-round school schedule. What these people don't realize is that school is not the most important thing in a child's life. Many kids go to camp or get jobs during the summer. These activities help them build responsibility, leadership, and new friendships. These traits are far more valuable in life than ~~the~~ doing math problems out of a textbook.

Proponents of year-round school argue that, without a two-month summer break, students don't forget everything they learned. They have a nice two-

week break and come back ready to learn. The vast misconception about year-round school students is that they score much higher on standardized tests. This simply isn't true. Studies have shown that there is no significant difference in test scores between year-round and traditional school systems. So, if two things produce the same results, but one is much more expensive, which would you pick?

Going to school is important. Kids need education. But they also need time to relax. Summer vacation is short enough already. It shouldn't need to be any shorter.

Score for Anchor Paper #7: Rubric Score 4

Annotation: Consistent attention to the audience's understanding and interest is demonstrated in this organized and complete essay against year-round schooling. Relevant elaboration (elevated cost; school is not the most important thing in a child's life; there is no significant difference between year-round and traditional school systems) and purposeful word choice (the tyrannical school board; vast misconception) contribute to a strong persuasive tone throughout the response and result in a well-developed essay that fulfills the writing purpose.

Selected Response Item - Released in 2003

After reading a novel set in the future, students were asked to write about significant changes that occurred in the last two centuries. Pedro decided to write about changes in communication technology.

Correct Answer:
C

Which of these would most likely contain useful information about Pedro's essay topic?

- A. a list of types of communication technology devices
- B. an Internet article about using technology efficiently
- C. a book about the history of communication technology
- D. a table of data showing the falling cost of new technology

Selected Response Item - Released in 2007

(See page 36 for the reading.)

This [student paragraph](#) requires revisions and edits. Read the paragraph. Then answer the following:

Correct Answer:
C

Which sentence best adds supporting details and fills the blank in the paragraph?

- A. This presidential monument, a famous tourist attraction, has been featured in many movies.
- B. Surprisingly, many Americans cannot name the presidents of the 20th century.
- C. The faces of Washington, Jefferson, Lincoln, and Roosevelt overlook a dense grove of trees.
- D. Impressive stone monuments to Washington, Jefferson, and Lincoln can also be seen in Washington, D.C.

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

Read the underlined sentence. Then choose the clearest and most effective revision of the sentence.

Correct Answer:
C

I was excited when I saw myself on the six o'clock news, and I called all my friends, and they turned on their televisions.

- A. Excited, I called my friends, and when I saw myself on the six o'clock news, they turned on their televisions.
- B. Excited, I saw myself on the six o'clock news, and I called my friends, and they turned on their televisions.
- C. Excited, I called my friends to tell them to turn on their televisions when I saw myself on the six o'clock news.
- D. Excited, I saw myself, and I called my friends to tell them to turn on their televisions when I was on the six o'clock news.

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 33 for the reading.)

Yuri is writing an article for the school paper about science in the classroom. The [draft of Yuri's article](#) requires revisions and edits. Read the draft. Then answer the following.

Correct Answer:
D

Yuri found the information below in a language handbook.

Avoid vague words and phrases that are not exact enough to be effective in writing.

According to this information, which sentence should be revised?

- A. Sentence 3
- B. Sentence 4
- C. Sentence 7
- D. Sentence 10

Selected Response Item - Released in 2008

In Jessica's English class, students are writing about artists they admire. Jessica decided to write about the piano player and composer Eubie Blake. The draft of Jessica's essay requires revisions and edits. Answer the following item.

Correct Answer:
A

After reading about Eubie Blake, Jessica wanted to learn more about jazz music. Which of these books would provide her with the best introduction to jazz?

- A. *Jazz 101: A Complete Guide to Jazz*
- B. *Modern Jazz Piano: A Study in Harmony*
- C. *Jazz Genius: Biographies of American-Jazz Musicians*
- D. *Jump into Jazz: The Basics and Beyond for Jazz Dance Students*

Selected Response Item - Released in 2007

Terry is writing about the War of 1812 and the origin of the national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner." The draft of the first part of Terry's essay, "[Oh, Say Can You See](#)," requires revisions and edits. Answer the following:

Correct Answer:
C

In his essay, Terry used information from a pamphlet published by the Smithsonian Institution. Which piece of information must be included in a bibliography entry for the pamphlet?

- A. the name of his school
- B. the name of his school librarian
- C. the publication date of the pamphlet
- D. the number of sections in the pamphlet

Sample Items: Controlling Language

Selected Response Item - Released in 2006

Read this line from the screenplay *Anna and the King*.

Dearest family, I desire you all to be educated in English language, science, and literature.

Which word is used as a modifier in this line?

- A. family
- B. English
- C. language
- D. science

**Correct
Answer:
B**

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 36 for the reading.)

Read the student-written paragraph about Plants Used as Medicine. The paragraph requires revisions and edits. After reading, answer the following question.

Which of these should be revised to correct an incomplete sentence?

- A. Plants throughout the world are used to create medicines.
- B. For example, the Madagascar rosy periwinkle is used to make several different medicines.
- C. Also, the leaves of foxgloves to make heart medications.
- D. It is important to discover what healthful benefits plants have before we destroy them and their habitats.

**Correct
Answer:
C**

Selected Response Item - Released in 2008

(See page 34 for the reading.)

Read the essay "[The Architecture of a Soul](#)." Then answer the following item.

**Correct
Answer:
C**

Read these sentences related to the essay.

1. My grandmother found a conch shell on a beach in Hawaii.
2. She gave me the conch shell.
3. It was a present for my birthday.

Which of these most effectively combines the ideas into one sentence?

- A. Having found it on a beach in Hawaii, for my birthday, my grandmother gave me a conch shell as a present.
- B. For my birthday, my grandmother gave me a present of a conch shell, and she had found it on a beach in Hawaii.
- C. As a present for my birthday, my grandmother gave me a conch shell that she had found on a beach in Hawaii.
- D. After my grandmother had found a conch shell on a beach in Hawaii, she gave me, as a present for my birthday, the shell

Selected Response Item - Released in 2008

(See page 33 for the reading.)

Read Sentence 8 from [Ricky's draft](#).

**Correct
Answer:
B**

Sailor and Canton were bred with other dogs.

Which sentence clearly and effectively adds supporting details to Sentence 8?

- A. Sailor and Canton were strong swimmers, and they were bred with other dogs that had hunting abilities which is what was wanted in their offspring.
- B. Sailor and Canton were strong swimmers and were bred with other dogs to develop hunting abilities in their offspring.
- C. Sailor and Canton, they were strong swimmers who were bred with other dogs with hunting abilities in order to develop those hunting abilities in their offspring.
- D. Sailor and Canton, strong swimmers, were bred with other dogs because they wanted hunting abilities in their offspring.

Selected Response Item - Released in 2007

Read the essay "[A Sea Worry](#)." Then answer the following:

Read this sentence from the first paragraph.

The ocean pulls at the boys, who turn into surfing addicts.

In this sentence, the phrase "pulls at the boys" suggests that the ocean

- A. carries the boys out to sea
- B. creates problems for the boys
- C. captures the interest of the boys
- D. causes the boys to act strangely

**Correct
Answer:**
C

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005

(See page 33 for the reading.)

Yuri is writing an article for the school paper about science in the classroom. The [draft of Yuri's article](#) requires revisions and edits. Read the draft. Then answer the following.

At the end of a school year, one student said, "I like science now, its not just about studying fungi with teachers in white coats."

What is the correct way to edit the underlined part of Sentence 11.

- A. now; it's
- B. now, it's
- C. now; its
- D. Best as it is

**Correct
Answer:**
A

Selected Response Item - Released in 2007

Terry is writing about the War of 1812 and the origin of the national anthem, "The Star-Spangled Banner." The draft of the first part of Terry's essay, "[Oh, Say Can You See](#)," requires revisions and edits. Read the draft. Then answer the following:

**Correct
Answer:
A**

Terry found this information in a language handbook.

Periods and commas are placed inside quotation marks: *Sally decided to recite the poem "Birches," but Stan chose to memorize "The Raven."*

According to this information, what is the correct way to edit Sentence 11?

- A. Originally titled "The Defense of Fort McHenry," the poem soon became known as "The Star-Spangled Banner."
- B. Originally titled "The Defense of Fort McHenry", the poem soon became known as "The Star-Spangled Banner".
- C. Originally titled "The Defense of Fort McHenry", the poem soon became known as "The Star-Spangled Banner."
- D. Best as it is

Sample Items: Evaluating the Content, Organization, and Language Use of Texts

Selected Response Item - Released in 2005 *(See page 37 for the reading.)*

Read these lines from the poem "I, Too."

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.

The poet most likely includes these lines to

- A. predict social change in the future
- B. tell where he will eat the next day
- C. express anger for past treatment
- D. warn uninvited guests to stay away

**Correct
Answer**

Selected Response Item - Released in 2003 *(See page 36 for the reading.)*

After reading a novel set in the future, students wrote essays about significant changes that occurred in the last two centuries. Pedro decided to write about changes in communication technology. For the following question, choose the best answer to questions about Pedro's essay. Read Pedro's essay: "[Communication Technology](#)."

Which of these is the best way to revise Sentence 9 so that the tone is consistent with the rest of the essay?

- A. The language was useful, but it was difficult to learn.
- B. The language was hard to learn, but it sure worked great.
- C. The language worked well, but it was not a snap to learn.
- D. The language was awful to learn, but it was practical to use.

**Correct
Answer:
A**

HSA English - BCR Rubric

Score 3

The response demonstrates an understanding of the complexities of the text.

Addresses the demands of the question
Uses expressed and implied information from the text
Clarifies and extends understanding beyond the literal

Score 2

The response demonstrates a partial or literal understanding of the text.

Addresses the demands of the question, although may not develop all parts equally
Uses some expressed or implied information from the text to demonstrate understanding
May not fully connect the support to a conclusion or assertion made about the text(s)

Score 1

The response shows evidence of a minimal understanding of the text.

May show evidence that some meaning has been derived from the text
May indicate a misreading of the text or the question
May lack information or explanation to support an understanding of the text in relation to the question

Score 0

The response is completely irrelevant or incorrect, or there is no response.

Revised March 2006

HSA English - ECR Rubric

Score 4

The response is a well-developed essay that fulfills the writing purpose.

- Develops ideas using relevant and complete support and elaboration
- Uses an effective organizational structure
- Uses purposeful word choice
- Demonstrates attention to audience's understanding and interest
- Has no errors in usage or conventions that interfere with meaning

Score 3

The response is a complete essay that addresses the writing purpose.

- Develops ideas using adequate support and elaboration
- Uses an organizational structure that supports the writing purpose
- Uses clear word choice
- Demonstrates an awareness of audience's understanding and interest
- Has few, if any, errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning

Score 2

The response is an incomplete or oversimplified attempt to address the writing purpose.

- Has incomplete or unclear support and elaboration
- Attempts to use an organizational structure
- Demonstrates little awareness of audience's understanding and interest
- May have errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning

Score 1

The response provides evidence of an attempt to address the prompt.

- Has minimal or no support or elaboration
- May be too brief to demonstrate an organizational structure
- Demonstrates little or no awareness of audience
- May have errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning

Score 0

The response is completely irrelevant or incorrect, or there is no response.

Terms You Should Know for the HSA

TERM	DEFINITION
Reading Strategies	<p>The skills and strategies for before, during, and after reading.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Preview • Set a Purpose • Connect • Use Prior Knowledge • Predict • Visualize • Monitor your understanding • Make Inferences
Character	<p>Characters are the individuals that participate in the action of a literary work.</p> <p>Characters display certain qualities; they develop and change over time; they have motivations, or reasons, for their behaviors.</p>
Setting	The time and place of the action of a story.
Conflict	A struggle between opposing forces that can be internal or external. Almost every story has a main conflict—a conflict that is the story’s focus.
Point of View	<p>Refers to the method of narration used in a short story, novel, narrative, poem, or work of nonfiction.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • First-person (I, we) • Third-person (he, they) • Third-person omniscient (omniscient narrators can tell everything – including thoughts – of all characters) • Third-person limited (limited narrators can not tell everything about the other characters)
Tone	The attitude the writer takes toward a subject. Tone reflects the feelings of the writer about the subject expressed through choice of words and details.
Voice	<p>A writer’s unique use of language that allows a reader to “hear” a human personality in the writer’s work.</p> <p>Elements of style that contribute to a writer’s voice include sentence structure, diction, and tone.</p> <p>Voice can reveal much about the author’s personality, beliefs, and attitudes</p>
Connotation	<p>An attitude or a feeling associated with a word. The connotations of a word may be positive or negative.</p> <p style="padding-left: 40px;">ex. Enthusiastic has positive associations, while rowdy has negative ones.</p>
Denotation	The literal or dictionary meaning of a word.
Non-print text	Any medium/text that creates meaning through sound or images or both, such as symbols, words, songs, speeches, pictures, and illustrations.
Speaker	In poetry the speaker is the voice that “talks” to the reader, similar to the narrator in fiction. The speaker is not necessarily the poet.

Organization	A pattern of organization is a particular arrangement of ideas and information. Such a pattern may be used to organize an entire essay or a single paragraph within a longer work. The following are the most common patterns of organization: cause/effect, chronological, compare/contrast, order of importance, problem/solution, and sequential.
Sentence Structure	The grammatical arrangement of words in a sentence.
Diction	A writer's or speaker's choice of words and way of arranging the words in sentences is called diction.
Rhythm	A pattern of stressed and unstressed syllables in a line of poetry.
Imagery	Consists of descriptive words and phrases that re-create sensory experiences for the reader. Imagery usually appeals to one or more of the five senses—sight, hearing, smell, taste, and touch—to help the reader imagine exactly what is being described.
Theme	An underlying message about life or human nature that a writer wants the reader to understand. In most cases, themes are not stated directly and must be inferred.
Rhetoric	The art of using words to persuade in writing or speaking.
Rhetorical Devices	Techniques writers use to enhance their arguments and communicate more effectively. One strategy is using the rhetorical appeals of ethos (ethical appeal), logos (logical appeal), pathos (emotional appeals). Rhetorical devices include: Analogy, parallelism, rhetorical questions, and repetition
Structure	Structure is the way in which the parts of a work of literature are put together. A common structural unit in poetry is the stanza. Paragraphs, for example, are basic units in prose, as are chapters in novels and acts in plays.
Prewriting	A way of organizing your thoughts and beginning to put the information you have on paper.
Subject	The noun or pronoun that carries out the action of the verb in a sentence. What or whom the sentence is about.
Noun	A word that names a person, place, or thing or idea.
Verb	A word that shows action or being in a sentence.
Modifier (adjective, adverb, prepositional phrase, participle, infinitive, article)	A modifier is a word or group of words that describes another word and makes its meaning more specific. Often modifying phrases add information about "where," "when," or "how" something is done. A modifier works best when it is right next to the word it modifies.

Predicates (verb, verb phrase, simple, compound)	Tells what the subject is or does or what happens to the subject. Every sentence has two basic parts: a subject and a predicate. A simple predicate is the verb or verb phrase that tells something about the subject. ex: Huge cresting waves pound the sailboat .
Conjunction (coordinating, subordinating, correlative, and conjunctive adverbs)	A word that joins other words, phrases, clauses or sentences. Some conjunctions are <i>and, as, because, but, or, since, so, until, and while</i> .
Phrase	A group of related words that acts as a single part of speech. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Appositive phrase: made up of an appositive plus its modifiers ex: Barack Obama, our current president, was born in Honolulu in 1961. • verbal
Clause	A group of words containing a subject and verb which forms part of a sentence. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • dependent • restrictive • non-restrictive
Repetition	A technique in which a sound, word, phrase, or line is repeated for emphasis or unity. It often helps to reinforce meaning and create an appealing rhythm. ex: Go back to Mississippi. Go back to Alabama. Go back to South Carolina. Go back to Georgia. Go back to Louisiana. Go back to the slums and ghettos of our Northern cities.... – Martin Luther King, Jr., “I Have a Dream”
Parallelism	The use of similar grammatical constructions to express ideas that are related or equal in importance. It involves an arrangement of words, phrases, sentence, and paragraphs so that elements of equal importance are equally developed and similarly phrases. ex: He loved swimming, running, and playing tennis.
Allusion	A brief, often casual reference to a historical or literary figure, event, or object.
Analogy	A point-by-point comparison between two things that are alike in some respect. Often, writers use analogies in nonfiction to explain unfamiliar subjects or ideas in terms of familiar ones.
Figurative Language	Language that communicates meanings beyond the literal meanings of words. Writers use figurative language to create effects, to emphasize ideas, and to evoke emotions. Simile, metaphor, extended metaphor, hyperbole, and personification are examples of figurative language. ex: “March comes in like a lion, goes out like a lamb.” (simile) “He’s got a heart of gold.” (metaphor) “The morning sun smiled upon our arrival.” (personification) “The stack of bills was a mile high.” (hyperbole)

Transitions	<p>Words and phrases that show connections between details. Clear transitions help show how your ideas relate to one another. Kinds of transitions include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Time or Sequence – use when telling a story or describing a process, you can connect ideas: <i>first, second, always, then, next, later, soon, before, finally, after, earlier, afterward, tomorrow</i> • Spatial Relationships – helps the reader visualize a scene: <i>in front, behind, next to, along, nearest, lowest, above, below, underneath, on the left, in the middle</i> • Degree of Importance – may be used to rank ideas or to show degrees of importance: <i>mainly strongest, weakest, first, second, most important, least important, worst, best</i> • Compare and Contrast – show similarities between details: <i>similarly, likewise, also, like, as, neither...nor, either...or</i>; show differences: <i>however, by contrast, yet, but, unlike, instead, whereas, while</i> • Cause and Effect – helps clarify the cause-effect relationship: <i>since, because, thus, therefore, so, due to, for this reason, as a result</i>
Syntax	The arrangement of words and the order of grammatical elements in a sentence.
Organizational Patterns	<p>A pattern of organization is a particular arrangement of ideas and information. Such a pattern may be used to organize an entire composition or a single paragraph within a longer work.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Cause-and-effect • Chronological Order • Compare-and-contrast • Problem-solution • Sequential
Foreshadowing	A writer's use of hints or clues to suggest events that will occur later in a story. It creates suspense and makes readers eager to find out what will happen.
Flashback	An account of a conversation, an episode, or an event that happened before the beginning of a story. Often, a flashback interrupts the chronological flow of a story to give the reader information needed for the understanding of a character's present situation.
Purpose (inform, persuade, express personal ideas)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Informative or expository writing explains an idea or teaches a process. • Persuasive writing is intended to convince the reader of a particular point of view or course of action. • Expressing Personal ideas is writing that focuses on expressing the writer's own thoughts, experiences, and feelings.
Plot	<p>A story's plot focuses on a central conflict or problem faced by the main character. The actions that the characters take to resolve the conflict build toward a climax. In general, it is not long after this point that the conflict is resolved and the story ends. A plot typically develops in five stages: exposition, rising action, climax, falling action, and resolution.</p>
Audience	One's readers or listeners are the audience.
Coordination	Using coordinating conjunctions (<i>and, but, or, nor, for yet, but</i>) to join similar or contrasting ideas. Always use a comma before a coordinating conjunction that joins two independent clauses

Subordination	Using subordinating conjunctions (<i>when, after, before, until while, as long as, since because, although, though, unless, if, whether</i>) to make the less important sentence a subordinate clause, then combining it with an independent clause to create a complex sentence. Subordinating conjunctions show clearly the relationship between the main idea and the less important idea.
Active Voice	When a verb's subject performs the action expressed by the verb, the verb is in the active voice. ex. A group of 16 countries constructed the International Space Station.
Passive Voice	When a verb's subject receives the action expressed by the verb, the verb is in the passive voice. ex. The International Space Station was constructed by a group of 16 countries.
Comma	Commas (,) can make the meaning of sentences clearer by separating certain sentence elements. ex. Early fans enjoyed rock on the radio, at concerts, and on records.
Semicolon	A semicolon (;) marks a break in a sentence; it is stronger than a comma but not as strong as a period. Use a semicolon to join the parts of a compound sentence if no coordinating conjunction is used, before a conjunctive adverb that joins the clauses of a compound sentence (therefore, however, otherwise, consequently, moreover), and when commas occur within parts of a series, use semicolons to separate the parts. ex. The first recorded Olympics took place in 776 B.C. in Olympia, Greece; only one athletic event was held that year. The first 17 ancient Olympics featured only footraces and ended in one day; however , the program changed in the 18 th Olympics, when wrestling and the pentathlon were added. The first modern Olympics were held in Athens Greece; the second in Paris, France; and the third in St. Louis, Missouri.
Apostrophe	Use apostrophes (') to form the possessive forms of nouns. ex. Alaska's animal life is part of our biology class's studies.
Subject/verb agreement	A verb must agree with its subject in number. ex. Singular: This book <i>describes</i> ways to analyze evidence of all kinds. Plural: These books <i>describe</i> ways to examine physical evidence.
Recording and Documenting Information	A systemic way of logging and keeping information; the identification of documents or other sources used to support the information reported in an essay or other discourse; usually cited in endnotes or in parentheses.
Works Cited	A list of works consulted names all the works a writer consulted in order to create his or her text. It is not limited just to those works cited in the text.

Readings for Practice Items



When traveling to new country, it is a gift to have a guide. They know the nuances¹ of the world they live in. Samuel smells rain the night before it falls. I trust his instincts and borrow them until I uncover my own. But there is danger here. One can become lazy in the reliance on a guide. The burden of a newcomer is to pay attention.

The Land Rover slips into the savannah like a bird dog entering a marsh. We are fully present. I watch Samuel's eyes scan the horizon. He points south.

“Zebra,” he says. “They are migrating north from Tanzania. Thousands more are on their way.”

Hundreds of zebras walk the skyline. They become animated heat waves.

We drive closer. I have never seen such concentrations of animals. At one point I think I hear thunder. It is the hooves of wildebeests. Suddenly, the herd of zebra expands to include impalas, gazelles, and animals I do not recognize.

“Topi,” Samuel says.

I flip through my field guide of African mammals and find it. An extraordinary creature, it is the color of mahogany with blue patches on its flanks and ocher² legs. I look at the topi again, this time through binoculars. Its black linear face with spiraling horns creates the illusion of a primitive mask. The topi I watch stands motionless on a termite mound. Binoculars down, I look at Samuel. He says the topi resemble hartebeests. A small herd of topi runs in front of the vehicle in a rocking-horse gait³ and vanishes.

⁸Samuel gives away his knowledge sparingly—in gentle, quiet doses. He is respectful of his teachers and those he is teaching. In this way he is generous. He gives me the pleasure of discovery. Slowly, African riddles unravel themselves like a piece of cut linen.

The sweet hissing of grasses accompanies us as we move ahead. We pass the swishing tails of wildebeests. We are looking for lions.

¹⁰Anticipation is another gift for travelers in unfamiliar territory. It quickens the spirit. The contemplation of the unseen world; imagination piqued⁴ in consideration of animals.

We stop. Samuel points. I see nothing. I look at Samuel for clues. He points again. I still see nothing but tall, tawny grasses around the base of a lone tree. He smiles and says, “Lions.”

I look. I look so hard it becomes an embarrassment—and then I see eyes. Lion eyes. Two amber beads with a brown matrix. Circles of contentment until I stand; the lion’s eyes change, and I am flushed with fear.

“Quiet,” Samuel whispers. “We will watch for a while.”

As my eyes become acquainted with lion, I begin to distinguish fur from grass. I realize there are two lions, a male and a female lying together under the stingy shade of a thorn tree. I can hear them breathe. The male is breathing hard and fast, his black mane in rhythm with the breeze. He puts his right paw on the female’s shoulder. Ears twitch. We are no more than ten feet away. He yawns. His yellow canines are as long as my index finger. His jowls look like well-worn leather. He stands. The grasses brush his belly. Veins protrude from his leg muscles. This lion is lean and strong. No wonder that in the Masai mind every aspect of a lion is imbued⁵ with magic.

- ¹ **nuances:** degrees of difference in meaning
- ² **ocher:** color having shades of yellow, orange, and brown
- ³ **gait:** way of moving by lifting the feet in a different order or rhythm such as a trot, gallop, or run
- ⁴ **piqued:** excited one’s interest or curiosity
- ⁵ **imbued:** filled; saturated

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The JASON Project

¹The movie *Titanic* and the expeditions to explore the ship's remains took thousands of viewers into the depths of the ocean. ²After seeing the high-tech equipment used to recover treasures from the sunken ship, students from around the world wrote letters to expedition leader Dr. Robert Ballard, asking to accompany him on an adventure. ³He couldn't take the students on his ship, but he did the next best thing: he created the JASON Project to bring the thrill of discovery to millions of students worldwide. ⁴The project offers students in grades 4 through 9 opportunities to explore the world through videos, interactive Internet programming, and live satellite broadcasts.

⁵The JASON Project named after the Greek hero Jason. ⁶The seas were first sailed by Jason, the first great explorer, according to ancient myths. ⁷Dr. Ballard chose the name Jason because he sees his project as one that will also make great explorations. ⁸The JASON Project is training a new generation of explorers by developing their skills in science, technology, math, geography, and language arts.

⁹Using the curriculum and materials of the JASON Project, students can complete many activities during the school year. ¹⁰For example, they can use really great equipment, send e-mail to lots of researchers, and conduct all sorts of investigations. ¹¹At the end of a school year, one student said, "I like science now, its not just about studying fungi with teachers in white coats." ¹²The sunken ships of the JASON Project have raised students' curiosity. ¹³They now want to know about the bottom of the sea plus the world above it.

The Chesapeake Bay Retriever

¹Maryland's official state animal is its own breed of dog, the Chesapeake Bay retriever. ²The breed, America's only native hunting dog, and was bred especially for bay conditions. ³Early settlers around the Chesapeake Bay liked to hunt, especially for ducks.

⁴The Chesapeake Bay retriever is thought to have originated with a shipwreck. ⁵In 1807, the crew of a Baltimore ship the *Canton* saw an English ship sinking at sea. ⁶The sailors of the *Canton* rescued the crew and two puppies aboard the English ship. ⁷The puppies, a type of Newfoundland breed, were given the names Sailor and Canton.

⁸Sailor and Canton were bred with other dogs. ⁹For the next seventy years, sportsmen and dog fanciers called Sailor's and Canton's descendants "Chesapeake Bay ducking dogs." ¹⁰The breed's most distinguishing characteristic, its short, thick hair, helps the dog withstand the bay's tough conditions.



Pink murex. *Melongena corona*. Cowry. Conch. Mussel. Left-sided whelk. Lightning whelk. True-heart cockle. Olivella. *Pribilof lora*. Angel wings.

These are the names of shells, the shells my grandmother and I catalogued together during the winter of 1963. I was eight years old.

With field guides all around us, we thumbed through plates of photographs, identifying each shell. Mimi would read the descriptions out loud to be certain our classifications were correct. Then, with a blue ball-point pen, we would write the appropriate name on white adhesive tape and stick it on the corresponding shell.

“It’s important to have a hobby,” Mimi said, “something to possess you in your private hours.”

My grandmother’s hobby was spending time at the ocean, walking along the beach, picking up shells.

For a desert child, there was nothing more beautiful than shells. I loved their shapes, their colors. I cherished the way they felt in the palm of my hand—and they held the voice of the sea, a primal sound imprinted on me as a baby.

“Your mother and I took you to the beach shortly after you were born,” Mimi said. “As you got older, you played in the sand by the hour.”

I played with these shells in the bathtub. The pufferfish was my favorite animal. I knew it was dead, dried out, and hollow, but somehow when it floated in the hot water next to my small, pink body, it came to life—a spiny globe with eyes.

Mimi would knock on the bathroom door.

“Come in,” I would say.

She surveyed my watery world. I handed her the puffer, wet.

“When I die,” she said smiling, “these shells will be your inheritance.”

Thirty years later, these shells—the same shells my grandmother collected on her solitary walks along the beach, the shells we spread out on the turquoise carpet of her study, the shells we catalogued, the shells I bathed with—now rest in a basket on a shelf in my study. They remind me of my natural history, that I was tutored by a woman who courted solitude and made pilgrimages to the edges of our continent in the name of her own pleasure, that beauty, awe, and curiosity were values illuminated in our own home.

My grandmother’s contemplation of shells has become my own. Each shell is a whorl¹ of creative expression, an architecture of a soul. I can hold *Melongena corona* to my ear and hear not only the ocean’s voice, but the whisperings of my beloved teacher.

¹ **whorl:** a circular arrangement of like parts, such as leaves or flowers around the same point of a stem; anything shaped like a curl



¹A new generation of Masai safari guides is growing up in Kenya, and their expertise can lead to memorable encounters with cheetah and other big game.

²At the airstrip, in the heart of the Masai Mara game reserve in Kenya, a fleet of safari vehicles is lined up, waiting to take incoming visitors to their camps and lodges. The driver-guides are dressed for the part in faded khaki—all except one, who sits at the wheel of his Toyota Land Cruiser wearing the blood-red robes of a Masai elder. Jackson ole Looseyia is an Il Dorobo Masai, a clan of hunter-gatherers who live in the hills just outside the reserve.

³On the way to Rekeru, the tented camp where Jackson is both a guide and a shareholder, we pause to watch a herd of buffalo. “Did you know a buffalo can produce 20 litres of saliva a day?” he says. This, I discover, is Jackson’s style. He dispenses his knowledge in handy sound-bytes.

⁴Rekeru is owned by Ron Beaton, a third-generation Kenyan who also runs a lodge on the reserve’s northern fringes. It is an idyllic campsite—the loveliest I have ever seen—in a secluded part of the reserve where other vehicles seldom venture. Blue flycatchers and golden orioles flit among the leaves. By day, herds of zebra come down to drink at the Talek River. There are no fences; and at night, elephant, buffalo, hippo, and lion regularly wander between the tents.

⁵Next morning Jackson has planned a full-day game drive to the Mara Triangle, a remote and beautiful area bordering the Serengeti National Park.

“On Safari with the Experts” by Brian Jackman, copyright © Brian Jackman, from www.aardvarksafaris.com. Used by permission.

Student Paragraph

¹Mt. Rushmore in the Black Hills of South Dakota is the site of the worlds greatest mountain carving. ²The sculpture features 60-foot-tall faces of four American presidents who led the country from colonial times into the 20th century. ³_____ ⁴Interest in creating a national monument in the Black Hills began in 1923. ⁵Sculptor Gutzon Borglum, who had previous experience in large-scale mountain carving, began work in 1927. ⁵His memorial in stone was completed fourteen years later.

Plants Used as Medicine

¹Plants throughout the world are used to create medicines. ²Pain, infections, burns, and ailments are treated by native people with certain tropical plants found in rain forests. ³For example, the Madagascar rosy periwinkle is used to make several different medicines. ⁴Also, the leaves of foxgloves to make heart medications. ⁵In fact, many plants that grow only in Madagascar, an island off the coast of Africa, are known to have medicinal qualities. ⁶It is important to discover what healthful benefits plants may have before we destroy them and their habitats.

Communication Technology

Here are the first three paragraphs of Pedro's essay.

¹Every day after school Tyrone talks on the telephone, watches television, sends e-mail to his cousin, and plays music on his compact disc player. ²Never even thinking about the technology required to make it all happen. ³The last two centuries saw rapid increases in communication technology, and in the new millennium, inventors will continue to move technology forward.

⁴One of the earliest inventions in communication technology was the telegraph. ⁵It had wires but did not carry a voice. ⁶Using a metal lever, words were tapped out using short and long electrical impulses. ⁷Someone on the receiving end translated the series of sounds into words. ⁸This language of dots and dashes was called Morse code. ⁹The language worked great, but it was a pain to learn.

¹⁰Alexander Graham Bell intended to improve the telegraph, but his invention, the telephone, made the telegraph go down the tubes. ¹¹It took a long time to make it work well. ¹²First, thousands of miles of wire had to be installed on poles. ¹³Then equipment had to be manufactured and operators needed to be hired.

My People

The night is beautiful,
So the faces of my people.

The stars are beautiful,
So the eyes of my people.

Beautiful, also, is the sun.
Beautiful, also, are the souls of my people.



I, Too

I, too, sing America.

I am the darker brother.
They send me to eat in the kitchen
When company comes,
But I laugh,
And eat well,
And grow strong.

Tomorrow,
I'll be at the table
When company comes.
Nobody'll dare
Say to me,
"Eat in the kitchen,"
Then.

Besides,
They'll see how beautiful I am
And be ashamed—

I, too, am America.

—Langston Hughes

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