

Prompt:It's always a pleasure to give and receive gifts. Sometimes the gift is a present. Sometimes the gift is something someone does for you or someone else. What is the best gift you have ever given or received? Tell about a time you gave or received a gift and why that gift was important to you.

Student Sample H:

VROOM!

It was Christmas day and the whole Family was at my house. I was so excited to open my last present which was the one my uncle was about to give me. He was wearing his plain white shirt and plain blue jeans with dull white socks. While I was wearing a plain red shirt with plain blue jeans that has a million pockets and my dull white and gray socks. He gave me the present with rudolph wrapping paper wrapped around it. There was a card saying To: Hank from Uncle and Auntie. My uncle was smiling as if he got a new car. I slowly ripped the wrapping paper off to reveal the words Remote Control Porsche Carrera GT in bold black letters. After seeing those words I tore all the wrapping paper to reveal the actual car in a Fancy looking box. I opened the box and took out the car. I found triple A batteries and unscrewed the cap and put the batteries in then VROOOOOM! Bang! "Oh No, it crashed. But there is no scratches on it." "I guess I need to practice my driving skills." But even though I can't use it that well that car was one of the best presents I have ever received For Christmas.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Sample H:

Scores: I=3 O=3 V=3 C=3

Ideas: This paper is clear and focused on a Christmas day present from an aunt and uncle. The writer is writing from experience but sometimes includes details that are not needed to enhance his story. *“He was wearing his plain white shirt and plain blue jeans with dull white socks. While I was wearing a plain red shirt with plain blue jeans that has a million pockets and my dull white and gray socks.”* As readers, we are hoping for more detail about the present, rather than the details about what everyone was wearing. We are forced to fill in the blanks about what the car looks like. This paper shows promise, but is not quite fully developed yet.

Organization: The reader can easily follow the progression of events as the writer opens a favorite Christmas present. It possesses a recognizable introduction, although it does not create a strong sense of anticipation. *“It was Christmas day and the whole Family was at my house.”* It also has a clear conclusion, *“But even though I can’t use it that well that car was one of the best presents I have ever received For Christmas.”* The progression of ideas is fairly well controlled, but the writer spent a bit too much time writing about the opening of the present and not enough time on the present itself. The organization is strong enough to move the reader from point to point, however.

Voice: The writer seems sincere in this piece of writing and the reader gets some hints of excitement about the present. *“After seeing those words I tore all the wrapping paper to reveal the actual car in a Fancy looking box.”* The word choice reveals the writer’s attitude toward the topic in some places, but has a tendency to become general in others. *“I found triple A batteries and unscrewed the cap and put the batteries in then VROOOOOM! Bang!”* The writer does establish a connection with the reader and seems aware of his audience.

Conventions: The writer has reasonable control over a limited range of grade appropriate writing conventions. The sentences are generally structured correctly and show some variety. *“It was Christmas day and the whole Family was at my house. I was so excited to open my last present which was the one my uncle was about to give me.”* End punctuation is correct, but internal punctuation is often missing. *“After seeing those words I tore all the wrapping paper to reveal the actual car in a Fancy looking box.”* The errors in this piece of writing do not significantly distract the reader.

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Student Sample I:

It was Chistmas and I was really excited. When I woke up I ran right into the livingroom then I suddenly froze. I didn't breath until I turned as purple as the night sky and then my mom forced me to breath.

There right in front front of me was a brand new cherry red bike from my mother. I nearly fell down knocked out cold because it was as red as burning hot fire, by the way red is my most favorite color in the whole entire world,.

Then I asked my mother if I could ride it and she said "of course you can." So I thanked her from the bottom of my heart. Then I took the red bike outside and road it down the diveway.

The reson why the bike was important is because it was my first bike I have ever goten.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Sample I:

Scores: I=3 O=3 V=3 C=2.5

Ideas: This paper is clear and focused on a Christmas present. The writer seems to be writing from experience when he describes his excitement about the bicycle. *“I didn’t breath until I turned as purple as the night sky and then my mom forced me to breath.”* The writer is still developing the topic and some important details seem to be missing. *“Then I took the red bike outside and road it down the diveway.”*As readers, we wish that the section on riding the bike would be expanded to more than one sentence. The topic shows promise, but is still a bit limited in detail.

Organization: This paper has a recognizable introduction, but it does not create a strong sense of anticipation. *“It was Chistmas and I was really excited.”*It also has a conclusion that sums up the story. *“The reson why the bike was important is because it was my first bike I have ever gotten”.* The sequencing of this story follows a logical path and the transitions get us from point to point without confusion. *“Then I asked my mother if I could ride it and she said of course you can.”*The organization of this piece does not interfere with the main storyline.

Voice: This writer is definitely communicating in an earnest manner at the beginning of the story. *“I nearly fell down knocked out cold because it was as red as burning hot fire, by the way red is my most favorite color in the whole entire world.”* Towards the end of the story, the writer retreats and does not seem as genuinely engaged. *“Then I took the red bike outside and road it down the diveway.”* The reader is left wanting more excitement from the writer about the first bike ride. The word choice in this story reveals the writer’s attitude toward the topic in some places, but definitely becomes general in others.

Conventions: The writer shows some control over a limited range of standard writing conventions, but the reader can see many small mistakes that could have been cleared up with some moderate editing. *“When I woke up I ran right into the livingroom then I suddenly froze.”* Sentences are generally structured correctly, although there are occasional run-ons and fragments present. *“Then I asked my mother if I could ride it and she said of course you can. So I thanked her from the bottom of my heart.”*There are noticeable spelling errors as well. (*“Breath”* for *“breathe”* and *“goten”* for *“gotten.”*)

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Student Sample J:

gift

On sumervaction I wanted a nintendo. A few days later I went to buy and it it was a present from my parent from my parent. I was really happy that time it will be the greatest gife I ever got for now.

It was really important to me because its from my parent and the greatest gift I ever gotten also it is really really fun I have alot of game thank to my parent I wouldn't be bored anymore.

I take care of it and I play it ever Single day 12 hours a day and that why its important to me for now.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Sample J:

Scores: I=2 O=2 V=2 C=2

Ideas: This paper sticks to the very general idea of receiving a Nintendo game system as a gift. There are very few details here that describe the gift or how badly it was desired. “*On sumervaction I wanted a nintendo.*” The writer is developing the topic, but the information is still quite limited. It is also quite repetitious in some areas. “*I was really happy that time it will be the greatest gife I ever got for now. It was really important to me because its from my parent and the greatest gift I ever gotten also it is really really fun.*” The reader really wants more detail about why the gift is so fun.

Organization: The writer does make an attempt to draft an introduction, but it does not create a sense of anticipation. “*On sumervaction I wanted a nintendo.*” There is also a recognizable conclusion where the author tells why the gift was important. “*I take care of it and I play it ever Single day 12 hours a day and that why its important to me for now.*” Other than the introduction and conclusion, there are no other organizational structures present in this piece, although what little there is does follow a logical sequence.

Voice: The word choice reveals the writer’s attitude toward the topic in some places but is very flat in others. “*I was really happy that time it will be the greatest gife I ever got for now.*” The writer does seem sincere, but really does not connect with the audience. There is potential for the writer to show the reader his excitement, but the writer does not take the opportunity to do so. The word choice suffers from the repetition mentioned earlier.

Conventions: There are many errors in this paper, but they do not interfere with the meaning of the piece. The reader immediately notices errors in spelling, capitalization and punctuation. There are also many errors in sentence structure. “*It was really important to me because its from my parent and the greatest gift I ever gotten also it is really really fun I have alot of game thank to my parent I wouldn’t be bored anymore.*” The errors do not make the piece unreadable, but the number of errors makes it clearly below standard.

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Student Sample K:

I have worked hard for the past three years to get here, 1st place team in Pop Waner. After being last place for two years. The Patreits are at the top. It was the best gift I ever got.

We made it to the Play Offs. The Patreits went the in tire normal season with one game lost I worked so hard to make it here.

This grate gift is amaseing. We made it this far why not farther? This is the best give ever!

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Sample K:

Scores: I=2 O=2 V=2 C=2

Ideas: The idea development in this paper is very limited. The reader is in need of more details in order to get the full sense of the gift. “*The Patreits went the in tire normal season with one game lost I worked so hard to make it here.*”The ideas are reasonably clear but the writer really has not begun to develop the topic in a meaningful way. The writer definitely needs more details in order to satisfy the reader.

Organization: The writer does have a weak introduction. “*I have worked hard for the past three years to get here, 1st place team in Pop Waner.*”There is also a weak conclusion. “*This is the best give ever!*”The reader would definitely like more of a beginning and ending for this story. The sequencing of details is almost nonexistent, but it is not totally random. “*We made it to the Play Offs. The Patreits went the in tire normal season with one game lost I worked so hard to make it here.*”The organization in this piece is minimal, but not totally nonexistent.

Voice: The reader will notice a minimum amount of voice in this paper. There is quite a bit of potential for voice, but the word choice seems to flatten it. “*The Patreits are at the top.*”The reader would like to hear some excitement, but the word choice makes it hard to get involved. At times the writer seems sincere and aware of an audience. “*This grate gift is amaseing. We made it this far why not farther?*”The voice in this piece is minimal, but it is not totally lifeless.

Conventions: The reader will immediately notice the variety of the errors in this piece of writing. There are errors in spelling, punctuation, grammar and sentence structure. “*The Patreits went the in tire normal season with one game lost I worked so hard to make it here.*” The errors do not make the piece unreadable, but it is clearly below standard.

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Student Sample L:

When I went to my grandmas She gave me a box, it was in a heart Shape. It had white lace on it, and it had a blue flower on it. It also had a pinkish look to it. It smelled like my Great grandma. In Side it was a gold braclet, it had a pattern on it, but it was just blane gold. I barley knew my Great grandma, but every time I look at that box , and braclet, it reminds me of her and her birds.

I loved her birds, exspeshally Lurch her boy bird. After she did we got her birds, Lurch was a boy he loved the water, Lisel was a girl. One day we went to the pet store, and we came back, and Lurch was dead Lisel killed him. Later on we were moving so we gave lisel away.

Even though I barley knew my Great grandma, I love that braclet, and every time I look at it reminds me of her. The box got destrode so now I only have the braclet, the only reason why the braclet is important to me is because it reminds me of her and her birds.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Sample L:

Scores: I= 3 O=2 V=3 C=3

Ideas: The writer of this piece seems to be writing from an experience she had with a special box and bracelet. *“I barley knew my Great grandma, but every time I look at that box , and bracelet, it reminds me of her and her birds.”* The ideas are reasonably clear, but the reader needs more information to fill in the blanks about how the box was destroyed. *“The box got destrode so now I only have the bracelet, the only reason why the bracelet is important to me is because it reminds me of her and her birds.”*The topic shows promise, but more details are needed and the writer needs to focus on the bracelet rather than the birds.

Organization: Organization is the weakest part of this paper. The reader is forced to make a connection between the ideas of the box, bracelet and birds. The paper is saved by the concluding paragraph, which leaves the reader with a sense of completion. *“Even though I barley knew my Great grandma, I love that bracelet, and every time I look at it reminds me of her. The box got destrode so now I only have the bracelet, the only reason why the bracelet is important to me is because it reminds me of her and her birds.”*Without this last paragraph, the reader would be lost in this piece of writing.

Voice: The writer of this piece communicates in an earnest manner, especially in the last paragraph. *“Even though I barley knew my Great grandma, I love that bracelet, and every time I look at it reminds me of her.”* The word choice reveals the writer’s attitude toward the topic for most of the paper, but becomes quite general when speaking about the birds. *“One day we went to the pet store, and we came back, and Lurch was dead Lisel killed him. Later on we were moving so we gave lisel away.”*The writer tries to establish a connection with the author, but that link is lost in the second paragraph. The reader does not know how the author felt about the birds. Thanks to the last paragraph, that link with the reader is re-established. This paper is a great example of how a last paragraph can save a paper’s score.

Conventions: The writer shows reasonable control over a limited range of standard writing conventions. External punctuation is almost always correct and some grade appropriate internal punctuation is evident. *“I loved her birds, exspeshally Lurch her boy bird.* Sentences are generally structured correctly and show some variety. The *I barley knew my Great grandma, but every time I look at that box , and bracelet, it reminds me of her and her birds.”*The spellingerrors in this piece do not significantly distract the reader.

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Student Sample M:

It was that time of year again. The time of year when gifts are exchanged and smiles are contagious. Yep, Christmas time. But one, of all of my Christmases stands out as the best because I got the perfect gift, Marisal Luna. Morris, my brother, had just finished unwrapping his gift, so it was my turn and I carefully took a rectangular box from underneath our dangouresly tipping Christmas tree. With a gleam in my eye and overflowing with joy I started to unwrap my gift marked: to Martha love Mom-Mom and Granddad, (my grandparents). My family watched expectantly to see what my neatly wrapped box was beholding. They were also trying to dodge the wrapping paper as jet like shreads whizzed by there heads. Then, a scream came from my smiling mouth like the kinds on scary movies, but it was a happy scream. Inside was a new American Girl Doll with a smooth untoched face. She has deep brown and olive hair. She was so special to me. It almost did not seem right to take her out of the box because she was so buetiful. Her name was Marisal and the rest of the night I never let go of Marisal Luna.

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Sample M:

Scores: I=4.5 O=4.5 V=5 C=4.5

Ideas: This paper is clear, focused on a special doll and interesting. The writer controls and develops the topic in an enlightening way. *“My family watched expectantly to see what my neatly wrapped box was beholding. The writer works with and shapes ideas, making connections and sharing insights. It almost did not seem right to take her out of the box because she was so buetiful.”* The ideas in this paper are truly fresh and engaging.

Organization: The writer has clearly developed an inviting introduction. *“It was that time of year again. The time of year when gifts are exchanged and smiles are contagious. Yep, Christmas time. But one, of all of my Christmases stands out as the best because I got the perfect gift, Marisal Luna.”* The rest of this story builds back to the conclusion. The details seem to fit where they are place and the sequencing is logical. *“Morris, my brother, had just finished unwrapping his gift, so it was my turn and I carefully took a rectangular box from underneath our dangouresly tipping Christmas tree.”*The conclusion is not as satisfying as it could be and the reader is left wanting more. *“It almost did not seem right to take her out of the box because she was so buetiful. Her name was Marisal and the rest of the night I never let go of Marisal Luna.”*Other than the slightly weak conclusion, the organization in this piece is clearly above standard.

Voice: This paper’s strongest trait is voice. The writing is very engaging and expressive. *“Then, a scream came from my smiling mouth like the kinds on scary movies, but it was a happy scream.”*The word choice brings the topic to life as well. *“They were also trying to dodge the wrapping paper as jet like shreads whizzed by there heads.”*The writer also establishes a strong connection with the reader and clearly convinces the reader of the writer’s commitment to the topic. *“With a gleam in my eye and overflowing with joy I started to unwrap my gift marked: to Martha love Mom-Mom and Granddad, (my grandparents).”*The voice in this paper makes it a joy to read.

Conventions: This writer demonstrates a good grasp of grade appropriate standard writing conventions. The reader even notices that the writer is beginning to play with grammar in order to add style to the piece and enhances readability. *“But one, of all of my Christmases stands out as the best because I got the perfect gift, Marisal Luna.”* The sentence structures are varied and add to the stylistic effect. *“Then, a scream came from my smiling mouth like the kinds on scary movies, but it was a happy scream. Inside was a new American Girl Doll with a smooth untoched face.”* This piece would only need light editing to polish it.

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Student Sample N:

Wake up! Wake up! Wake up! My brother Nathan was jumping on my bed yelling and screaming in his blue and green pajamas. Nathan was waking me up because it was Christmas morning! Nathan was nine and I was eight years old. I got out of bed without even getting dressed. I usually don't get dressed right when I wake up anyway. I ran downstairs as fast as I could like a race car going 100 mph. My family was already downstairs so I was the last to wake up. *** There was wrapping paper everywhere on the kinda white carpet of my living room. My house was as messy as a garbage truck. We were unwrapping all of the presents and when the last present was opened we started to check our house for any hidden presents. I was to busy looking at all of my neat presents. My dad went into my room and yelled, "I found another one." I looked in my room with my shiny hazel eyes and I saw a desk sitting in my uncleaned room. My desk had a brown top and the rest was white. I was speechless when I saw it! I will never forget that wonderful Christmas gift. (Did I tell you that I don't have to clean as much in my room anymore.) I still have that wonderful Christmas gift sitting in my room right this second. That was the absolute best Christmas ever! For now

How would you score this sample?

(1 = lowest score, 5 = highest score)

_____ Idea Development

_____ Organization

_____ Voice

_____ Conventions

Scorer Annotations for Sample N:

Scores: I=4.5 O=4.5 V=4.5 C=5

Ideas: This paper is clear focused and interesting and the writer definitely seems to be writing from experience. *“I got out of bed without even getting dressed. I usually don’t get dressed right when I wake up anyway.”* Supporting relevant details give the reader important information that he or she could not personally bring to the text. *“My brother Nathan was jumping on my bed yelling and screaming in his blue and green pajamas.”* The ideas in this piece are fresh and engaging and build excitement to discovering the desk. *“We were unwrapping all of the presents and when the last present was opened we started to check our house for any hidden presents.”* The ideas in this piece truly add to this paper’s charm.

Organization: The organization in this piece flows so smoothly the reader hardly thinks about it. The introduction grabs the reader right away and draws them in. *“Wake up! Wake up! Wake up! My brother Nathan was jumping on my bed yelling and screaming in his blue and green pajamas.* The conclusion sums up the piece nicely and the reader feels satisfied. *I still have that wonderful Christmas gift sitting in my room right this second. That was the absolute best Christmas ever! For now.”* The details seem to fit where they are placed and the sequencing is logical as well.

Voice: The writing in this paper is very expressive and the writer is involved in the text. *“I looked in my room with my shiny hazel eyes and I saw a desk sitting in my uncleaned room.”* The writer is very aware of his audience. *“(Did I tell you that I don’t have to clean as much in my room anymore.)”* The word choice reveals the author’s attitude most of the time, but can sometimes be a bit general. *“There was wrapping paper everywhere on the kinda white carpet of my living room.”* The writer’s voice in this paper makes it a joy to read

Conventions: This paper is clearly superior in the trait of conventions. The errors in this piece are so few and minor, that the reader can easily skim right over them unless specifically searching for them. The sentence structures in this piece are varied and add to the stylistic effect. *“I was to busy looking at all of my neat presents. My dad went into my room and yelled, I found another one.”* Internal and external punctuation contain few, if any, errors and guide the reader through the text. *“I will never forget that wonderful Christmas gift. (Did I tell you that I don’t have to clean as much in my room anymore.)”* This is a very polished piece of writing.

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