



English II Writing

Modified

2011 Released Selections and Test Questions

These released test questions represent how the modification process can be applied to the 2011 STAAR Released Test Questions. Not every STAAR released test question has been modified. These test questions are samples only and do not represent all the TEKS student expectations from each reporting category eligible for assessment. Nor do they represent all the ways in which a test question can be modified.



Think Twice About TV Commercials

Television commercials frequently interrupt the network shows you watch. They can be entertaining, but smart consumers need to watch these ads thoughtfully. The advertisers are using propaganda techniques to try to persuade you to buy their products. Some of the techniques used are the bandwagon, the transfer, and the emotional appeal.

Janie wants people to think about the commercials that they watch. She knows that advertisers are paid well for trying to influence their viewers. She wrote the following paper to persuade her readers to be careful consumers. As you read Janie's paper, look for any revisions she should make. Then answer the questions that follow.



Think Twice About TV Commercials

(1) Television ads interrupt network shows every few minutes. (2) In many cases the ads are creative, colorful, and funny. (3) While watching these commercials can be entertaining, consumers should learn to view them thoughtfully. (4) All of us should watch commercials wisely and carefully.

(5) Imagine flipping on the television and seeing a group of people on the beach. (6) They are young and fit and have just finished a game of volleyball. (7) Some are reaching for a refreshing soda. (8) You find yourself pondering the soft drink shown in the

commercial. (9) But before you head to the store, stop and think twice. (10) You've just been a victim of the bandwagon technique.

(11) Perhaps you're watching a show that's suddenly interrupted by some famous athletes. (12) They are recommending a certain brand of shoes. (13) If these athletes are wearing the shoes, surely you need them, too, right? (14) Stop and think twice. (15) Are the shoes really responsible for the athletes' success? (16) You've been led to make this connection by the advertising technique known as transfer. (17) From the ad alone you'll never know or be sure how good the shoes really are. (18) It's also important to remember that the celebrities were paid to wear the shoes. (19) Do they even believe that the shoes are special? (20) You can never be certain.

(21) Many other propaganda techniques are used in today's commercials. (22) Some ads use repetition. (23) The advertisers hope that a catchy jingle or phrase will stick in your mind and persuade you to buy a certain product. (24) Other ads use emotional words to make you have strong feelings about a product. (25) It's important that you learn to recognize the propaganda techniques that are being used.

(26) Commercials are big business, and it's important to remember that advertisers are well paid for influencing viewers.

(27) Don't let yourself be easily swayed. (28) Be a thoughtful consumer who pays attention to the products, not to just what the jingles and celebrities claim.

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- 1** Janie does not like the way she wrote her thesis in sentence 4. Which of the following should replace sentence 4 to create a more effective thesis statement?
- A** Watching commercials is serious business, and people should be careful of what they allow into their minds.
 - B** People shouldn't be blinded by the flashing lights and bright colors that the advertising industry uses to make commercials interesting.
 - C** As potential consumers, we need to know the propaganda techniques advertisers use to tempt us into buying their products.
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- 2** The word ***pondering*** does not effectively convey Janie's meaning in sentence 8. Which of the following would be the best replacement for ***pondering***?
- A** touching
 - B** craving
 - C** carrying
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- 3** Janie wants to tell more about the statement she has made in sentence 10. Which of these ideas would best follow and support sentence 10?
- A** The advertisers have convinced you that you will have as much fun as the people on the beach if you drink the same brand of soda.
 - B** This means that everyone on the beach should drink soda.
 - C** This bandwagon technique is one technique that television and magazine advertisers use to persuade people to buy it.

- 4 What is the most effective revision to make in sentence 17?
- A From the ad alone you'll never know how good the shoes really are.
 - B From the ad alone you'll never know how good for sure the shoes really are.
 - C No revision is needed in this sentence.
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- 5 Reread the fourth paragraph (sentences 21–25) because Janie would like to develop it further.

Which detail could best be added after sentence 24 to add to the main idea of this paragraph?

- A All of these are known as propaganda techniques, and they are evident in most of the commercials you see on television today.
 - B Emotional words are designed to bring about emotions and make you feel strongly about something.
 - C Still other ads resort to snob appeal, trying to convince you that you will have more money or be more popular if you use a certain product.
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- 6 Janie would like to add a sentence to the end of her paper to help bring it to an effective closing. Which of the following would be the best sentence for Janie to add?
- A The jingles that celebrities happily sing are part of a much bigger campaign.
 - B The next time you're watching a commercial, stop and think twice.
 - C In the end, they're probably not worth all that much anyway.



March!

The marching band at Bethany's school had always been a bit of a joke. Then one day Mr. Parker, a new band director from Iowa, took over. He wore an absurd bow tie and acted like a drill sergeant. He was determined to turn the band into a respected, unified group of musicians. Everyone grumbled a bit, but the band soon started rising to Mr. Parker's expectations.

Bethany wrote this paper to tell about how her opinion of Mr. Parker changed over time. Read Bethany's paper and look for the corrections she needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.

March!

(1) For years, the marching band at our school had been a joke. (2) Everyone knew that we were the worst band in the state. (3) But the new band director was determined to change things, his name was Mr. Parker. (4) A year earlier he had moved from Iowa to our little town in Texas. (5) In Iowa he had directed an award-winning marching band. (6) When he heard about the opening for a new band director at our school he applied and was hired immediately.

(7) The first day with Mr. Parker was the end of band life as we knew it. (8) At first we just laughed at his absurd bow tie and drill-sergeant ways. (9) But we weren't laughing for long; Mr. Parker hadn't took the band director's job to be funny. (10) He was there to turn us into a respectable band, and nothing—not even a bunch of lazy teenagers—was going to stop them.

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- 1** What is the correct way to write sentence 3?
- A** But the new band director who was determined to change things had a name of Mr. Parker.
 - B** But the new band director, Mr. Parker, was determined to change things.
 - C** But the new band director was determined to change things, named Mr. Parker.
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- 2** What change, if any, should be made in sentence 6?
- A** Insert a comma after *school*
 - B** Change *applied* to **applied**
 - C** No change should be made in sentence 6.
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- 3** What change needs to be made in sentence 9?
- A** Delete the semicolon
 - B** Change *took* to **taken**
 - C** Change *director's* to **directors'**

4 What change should be made in sentence 10?

A Change *respectable* to **respectible**

B Change *was going* to **were going**

C Change *them* to **him**

(11) I don't think I'll ever forget band camp that year. (12) Mr. Parker was determined to whip us into shape. (13) Every day we started practice early, ended practice late, and polished our instruments until they shone. (14) We went through our final program so many times that I probably could have performed it in my sleep. (15) Mr. Parker refused to allow us to settle for anything less than our best. (16) At first there was a lot of grumbling, a few students were even tempted to quit. (17) After a while, though, we found ourselves somehow rising to Mr. Parker's expectations.



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(18) As we marched onto the field at the first football game, I could almost hear a breathe of amazement from the crowd.

(19) What was once a sloppy crew of halfway-decent musicians had become a unified team. (20) Everyone could see the difference, especially those of us in uniform!

(21) As I look back on that year, I realize that Mr. Parker is probably the best teacher I've ever had. (22) He had a thirst for excellence and a compasionate heart. (23) If a band member couldn't get a ride to an early practice, Mr. Parker would find a ride for him. (24) If someone was having a hard time learning a piece of music, Mr. Parker would spend his lunch hour helping. (25) From the beginning it was obvious that he cared about us. (26) And somehow he was able to bring out the best in everyone. (27) I know that I am a better musician and a better person for having Mr. Parker in my life.

- 5 What change needs to be made in sentence 16?
- A Change ***there*** to ***their***
 - B Change the comma to a semicolon
 - C Change ***were even tempted*** to ***was even tempted***

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- 6 What change needs to be made in sentence 18?
- A Change the comma to a semicolon
 - B Change ***almost*** to ***allmost***
 - C Change ***breathe*** to ***breath***

- 7 What change should be made in sentence 22?
- A Change ***He had*** to **Having**
 - B Change ***excellence*** to **excellent**
 - C Change ***compassionate*** to **compassionate**



READ the information in the box below.

Jane Austen (1775–1817) and Franz Kafka (1883–1924) are considered great writers today. Their books continue to sell, and they are widely read and studied in schools everywhere. However, neither of them sold many books while they were alive.



THINK carefully about the following question.

Can a person be successful without being well known?



WRITE an essay explaining what makes a person successful.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your thesis
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

Item Number	Reporting Category	Readiness or Supporting	Content Student Expectation	Correct Answer
WRITING Selection 1				
1	5	Supporting	E.16(A)	C
2	5	Readiness	E.13(C)	B
3	5	Supporting	E.16(A)	A
4	5	Readiness	E.13(C)	A
5	5	Supporting	E.16(F)	C
6	5	Supporting	E.16(D)	B
WRITING Selection 2				
1	6	Readiness	E.17(C)	B
2	6	Readiness	E.18(B)	A
3	6	Supporting	E.17(A)	B
4	6	Readiness	E.13(D)	C
5	6	Readiness	E.18(B)	B
6	6	Readiness	E.13(D)	C
7	6	Readiness	E.19(A)	C
Sample Prompt for Expository Writing				
	4	Readiness	E.15(A)	Prompt

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