

GRADES 6–8
ITEM 1
LANGUAGE
ANCHOR

Score:	Language
4	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illustrates consistent and sophisticated command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. • Illustrates sophisticated command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. • utilizes sophisticated and varied transitional words and phrases. • effectively establishes and maintains a formal style.
3	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illustrates consistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. • illustrates consistent command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. • utilizes appropriate and varied transitional words and phrases. • establishes and maintains a formal style.
2	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illustrates inconsistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. • illustrates inconsistent command of syntactic variety. • utilizes basic or repetitive transitional words and phrases. • establishes but inconsistently maintains a formal style.
1	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • illustrates little to no use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary. • illustrates little to no syntactic variety. • utilizes no or few transitional words and phrases. • does not establish or maintain a formal style.

EXPLANATION OF LANGUAGE RUBRIC TERMS

“the writing”

- **The Language trait is scored independent of how the student has addressed the task and stimuli. Only the student’s original writing can be assessed. Students who simply copy from the text and do not create any of their own prose cannot illustrate consistent command in Language.**

“precise language”

- **Precise language refers to the effective use of specific words and phrases, appropriate for the grade level, to elucidate or strengthen an analysis or argument.**

“domain-specific vocabulary”

- **Domain-specific vocabulary refers to words and phrases that are appropriate to the content. While these may often be words used in the given task and text(s), students should demonstrate proper understanding in how to use this vocabulary when appropriate. Students may utilize vocabulary from outside the text that is also specific to the domain.**

“syntactic variety”

- **Syntactic variety refers to the use of varied sentence formations and sentence style in the response.**

“transitional words and phrases”

- **The Language trait is concerned with the types of words and phrases used to transition between ideas in a response. These transitions are only assessed based on the quality of the words and phrases, not how effective they are in organizing information, which would be assessed under the Focus & Organization trait.**

“formal style”

- **Whether writing an Informational/Explanatory essay or an Argument essay, the student should avoid reliance on conversational style.**

You will now review 8 individual student responses, scored only in Language, along with annotations to help you internalize the use of the rubric for this trait.

Language Anchor: Response #1

This story is sad and it is true people allaround the world love this story even I like this story she was a slave sleeping on dirt and no window and it was hot that wolud suck if you or I live like that sleeping on dirt get treated diferent and the make them work all day long. I would hate to live that every day that would suck If I did live like that so would you hate it was this sad the way she was treated it was too me and you will be sad too if that was you being a slave then looking out the window and see a big House but it was'nt it for you. I wolud hate the for treated them bad and they hated it too everybody hate it She saved 75,000 were led to freedom by Harriet tubmen she saved that munch I can't saved that much. There should a station of her for what she did.

She hated the practie of slavey she hated it alot.

SCORE POINT: 1

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 1

- **The response illustrates little precise language and vocabulary:**

- *“sad,” “suck,” “treat,” “hate,” “bad”*

Although these vocabulary choices connote basic emotions, they do not portray the details of Harriet Tubman’s experiences and focus more on the student’s own personal reactions to the text.

- **The response illustrates little syntactic variety. Most sentences demonstrate simple construction. For example:**

- *. . . people allaround the world love this story even I like this story . . .*
- *. . . she saved that munch I can’t saved that much.*
- *She hated the practie of slavey she hated it alot.*

Serious syntax errors in some sentences also illustrate a lack of language skill. For example:

- *. . . that would suck if I did live like that so would you hate it was this sad the way she was treated . . .*

- **The response utilizes almost no transitional words or phrases. If the reader corrects the sentences for formation errors, the corrections do not generally yield appropriate and varied transitions. For example:**

- *. . . if you or I live like that sleeping on dirt get treated diferent and the make them work all day long.*
- *If I did live like that so would you hate it was this sad. . .*
- *. . . if that was you being a slave then looking out the window and see a big House but it was’nt for you.*

Attempts at using the “If” introductory clause as a way of transitioning between ideas are unsuccessful because fragments and syntax errors result.

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Language Anchor: Response #1

- **The response does not establish and maintain a formal style, primarily because the student reacts so strongly to the text with personal opinions and judgments. For example:**
 - *that wolud suck if you or I live like that*
 - *I would hate to live that every day*
 - *that would suck if I did live like that*
 - *so would you hate it*
 - *was this sad the way she was treated it was too me*
 - *I wolud hate the for treated them bad*

Language Anchor: Response #2

When she was 15 she went outside and herd a party in her owners mansion. She said to her self that she well have freedom. Wenn see ecasped she Built a house for the slaves to live in. She freed 75.000 slaves incolding her parints.

She escaped useing the underground railroad a place were whits help Blacks escaped. She Became the condetor of the railroad and Led Blacks to freedom. She used a Lake to hide a trail of scent from dogs. She took them to the Broder for freedom.

She helped thoused arcross the Broder for Liberty and fredom. She changed america and whits for Life. She helped the needed and save the usa.

SCORE POINT: 1

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 1

- **The response illustrates little precise language or specific vocabulary. For example:**

- *. . . helped thoused arcoss the Broder for Liberty and fredom.*
- *. . . helped the needed and save the usa.*

The student uses some original language awkwardly:

- *. . . used a Lake to hide a trail of scent from dogs*
- *. . . changed america and whits for Life.*

Almost all of the other vocabulary and phrasing originates from the text.

- **The response illustrates little syntactic variety. The student does construct a few sentences that demonstrate higher-level structure; i.e., the use of introductory clauses and compound verbs and objects. For example:**

- *When she was 15 she went outside and herd a party in her owners manson.*
- *She helped the needed and save the usa.*

The student relies exclusively on the pronoun “she” as the subject of sentences. This repetition greatly diminishes the sense of syntactic variety.

- **With one exception, the student utilizes no transitions to link paragraphs or ideas within paragraphs. The response contains one introductory clause in the first paragraph to link the idea of Harriet Tubman’s desire for freedom to providing housing for other freed slaves:**

- *Wenn see ecasped she Built a house for the slaves to live in.*

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Language Anchor: Response #2

- The student attempts to establish a formal style in the first paragraph by referencing the subject of the essay in third person. However, the third person pronoun reference—“*she*”—becomes repetitive to the extent that the overall language is informal.

Language Anchor: Response #3

As you can see, Harriet Tubman was a courageous Hero. She helped a lot of slaves become free for their life. She did something amazing for those people. Without Harriet Tubman in this world I have absolutely no clue how things would be today, but because of her and many other courageous heroes we are how we are today!

SCORE POINT: 2

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 2

- **The brief response illustrates inconsistent command of precise language and specific vocabulary. Two better examples of non-text vocabulary and phrasing include:**

- *amazing*
- *absolutely no clue*

Two other original expressions of language are awkward and potentially unclear as to meaning:

- *become free for their life*
- *. . . but because of her . . . we are how we are today!*

- **Given the four sentences that comprise the entire response, the response illustrates inconsistent command of syntactic variety. While the first sentence is complex and the final sentence is compound-complex, two sentences demonstrate simple structure:**

- *She helped a lot of slaves become free for their life.*
- *She did something amazing for those people.*

- **The response contains two instances of transitional phrasing. For example:**

- *for those people*
- *Without Harriet Tubman in this world I . . .*

The brief response does not consistently utilize varied transitional words and phrases.

- **The response establishes a formal style within the first three sentences. In the final sentence of this brief response, the student expresses a very strong personal reaction:**

- *. . . I have absolutely no clue how things would be today . . .*

The concluding exclamation mark emphasizes the level of the student's personal reaction and demonstrates that the response is inconsistent in maintaining a formal style.

Language Anchor: Response #4

Harriet tubman is a strong person. She is thaughtful because she led her family and friends to the underground railroad. Harriet is a good rolemodel to all kids around. You should think of your friends and family. She did a good job saving her friends.

"The Woman Called Moses" is to Inform kids. They should think of slaves back then how they should be glad, that they have a ruff over there head. It is so sad how people did That. Thats my opinion. Its probably yours to.

"The Woman Called Moses" is also to Entertain. It is awsome to that some got away. That storie breaks my heart to see that people disrespect other people. They are like us just different skin color. Im glad some got away.

SCORE POINT: 2

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 2

- **The response illustrates inconsistent command of precise language and specific vocabulary. Some of the language is precise. For example:**

- *thaugful*
- *rolemodel*
- *breaks my heart*
- *disrespect*

Other vocabulary and language choices are less precise. For example:

- *strong*
- *good job*
- *sad*
- *some got away*

- **The response lacks syntactic variety and primarily illustrates simple sentence construction. For example:**

- *Harriet tubman is a strong person.*
- *She did a good job saving her friends.*
- *It is so sad how people did That. Thats my opinion. Its probably yours to.*

- **The response utilizes basic transitional words. For example:**

- *She is thaughtful because . . .*
- *. . . probably yours to.*
- *“The Woman Called Moses” is also to Entertain.*
- *It is awsome to . . .*
- *That storie . . .*

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Language Anchor: Response #4

- **The response establishes but inconsistently maintains a formal style. Each paragraph begins with formal style but changes to informal style when the student attempts to affect the reader with personal judgments and admonitions. For example:**
 - *You should think of your friends. . .*
 - *. . . they should be glad . . .*
 - *Thats my opinion. Its probably yours to.*

Language Anchor: Response #5

When Harriet Tubman was fifteen she was a slave. Harriet lived with her parents. She was a slave at a large plantation in Bucktown, Maryland. 14 years later she made a vow to escape slavery. She told of how much freedom meant to her. She said, "There's two things I've got a right to," she said, "and these are Death or Liberty. One or the other I mean to have. No one will take me back alive; I shall fight for my liberty and when the time has come for me to go, the Lord will let them kill me. In 1849 Harriet Tubman escape from slavery. She was now on her way north to the underground railroad. She now does what's most important to her helping people escape from slavery but when she have first arrive at the underground railroad she couldn't stand to go alone so she turned back and brought along her family and friends. She also realized that she can't be free until her people are free. She soon then traveled to other different states to help slaves free. Then huge rewards were offered for her capture and she became an intense hunt. She led 75,000 slaves to freedom and she loved it. She lead all the slaves north to be free. Often, she would keep them moving by threatening them with an revolver. She did not want to be cruel with them. She knew that if she relaxed her vigilance for a second, her mission, would be over and her freedom and the freedom of her followers would be lost. She has been a conductor for eight years and she has never lost a passenger. This was most important to her when she escaped slavery. She set her goal and did what was important to her.

SCORE POINT: 2

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 2

- **The response illustrates inconsistent command of precise language and specific vocabulary. The response includes some precise language. For example:**

- *. . . she couldn't stand to go alone so she turned back and brought along her family and friends.*
- *She set her goal . . .*

Much of the precise language in the response is copied directly from the text and is not the student's original wording.

- **The response illustrates inconsistent command of syntactic variety. Some original sentences are compound and complex. For example:**

- *She now does what's most important to her helping people escape from slavery but when she have first arrive at the underground railroad she couldn't stand to go alone so she turned back and brought along her family and friends.*
- *She has been a conductor for eight years and she has never lost a passenger.*

Other sentences are more simple in structure. For example:

- *Harriet lived with her parents.*
- *She lead all the slaves north to be free.*

Language taken directly from the text comprises close to half of the response. The student's own sentences rely heavily on the use of "Harriet Tubman" or "she" as the subject, detracting from syntactic variety.

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Language Anchor: Response #5

- **The response utilizes basic and repetitive transitional words and phrases. For example:**
 - *She was now on her way. . .*
 - *She also realized . . .*
 - *She soon then traveled . . .*
 - *In 1849 . . .*

- **The response establishes and maintains a formal style throughout with the consistent use of the third-person voice and the lack of overly personal reaction. The student’s reliance on a long direct quote and three lines of copied text contribute significantly to the response’s sense of formal style. Although the style is formal, language remains inconsistent overall.**

Language Anchor: Response #6

Harriet Tubman is a great and strong women we should congragulate for her bravery. She's been through ups and down's throughout her life.

Harriet Tubman was a soldier in my opion she was brave and willing to take chance's for the team (Her family). She is a women not a girl because she thought of others not just her self. So let me tell you about her.

In the year 1835 Harriet tubman was a 15 year old black girl shared a cabin with her parents in slave quarters. She was born a slave, but made for something bigger. It was a beautiful night with ton's of shinning stars, and a silver moon. As Harriet got older her fear was replaced with a wish to escape from slavery and live free. After fourteen years of back breaking work, Harriet had escaped. She traveld north for freedom using a underground railroad. Although most white people liked the idea of slavery some didn't accept. So while Harriet went to freedom there were people waiting to protect her. At last She has made it to the free soil of Pennsylvania. 365 days after her escape Harriet went back to Maryland to get her family. Harriet Tubman with a great achivement of getting 75,000 people to freedom including herself.

Harriet Tubman had courage to save others and makeing a change and now we stand unite as a team no matter what color.

SCORE POINT: 3

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 3

- **The response illustrates consistent command of precise language and specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. The response contains some original language and vocabulary not from the text. For example:**
 - . . . *we should congratulate for her bravery.*
 - . . . *been through ups and down's throughout her life.*
 - *willing to take chances for the team*
 - *ton's of shinning stars*
 - . . . *people waiting to protect her.*
 - *great achivement*
 - . . . *stand unite as a team no matter what color.*

- **The response illustrates consistent command of syntactic variety through the use of simple and complex sentences. For example:**
 - *She's been through ups and down's throughout her life.*
 - *So let me tell you about her.*
 - *As Harriet got older her fear was replaced with a wish to escape from slavery and live free.*
 - *365 days after her escape Harriet went back to Maryland to get her family.*

- **The student utilizes appropriate and varied transitional words and phrases:**
 - *In the year 1835 Harriet tubman was a 15 year old black girl. . .*
 - *After fourteen years of back breaking work, . . .*
 - *Although most white people liked the idea of slavery. . .*
 - *So while Harriet went to freedom. . .*

- **The response establishes and maintains a formal style by the primary use of third-person voice and the subtle use of first-person voice in the introductory and concluding statements:**
 - *Harriet Tubman is a great and strong women we should congratulate . . .”*
 - . . . *now we stand unite as a team no matter what color.*

Language Anchor: Response #7

After reading this, I can see that Harriet Tubman was a pationate woman who worked hard to acoplish something she beleived in. She was one of the greatest people ever on the underground railroad. She never backed down.

While she was a slave for many years, she gained the pasion for freedom. Without her pasion she could have not even tried to save other slaves, and they would have been stuck at the plantation. I was her pasion that made here want to go back and help other slaves. That very pasion drove her far, and made her work extremely hard.

Her hard work helped make this nation what it is today. Try to imagine how much it took to help many people escape to freedom. The passage says that she led two hundred people to freedom. That had to take a lot of work. While she had to work hard, she also had to be very brave.

Her courage was one of the biggest things that helped her. Think about the courage it took to sneak off the plantation to go to the north. The story also states that she had mutiple rewards for her capture, yet she kept helping free slaves. It also took courage to make the desison to go back and free slaves, insted of staying in the North, where it was safe.

She was an American Hero because of her pasion, hard work, and courage.

SCORE POINT: 3

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 3

- **The response illustrates consistent command of precise language and specific vocabulary appropriate to the task. For example:**
 - *pationate woman*
 - *gained the pasion for freedom*
 - *That very pasion drove her far . . .*
 - *mutiple rewards*

- **The student illustrates consistent command of syntactic variety by crafting compound and complex sentences. For example:**
 - *After reading this, I can see . . .*
 - *Without her pasion she could have not even tried . . .*
 - *The story also states that she had . . .*
 - *. . . yet she kept helping free slaves.*

- **Despite some basic transitions, overall the response utilizes appropriate and varied transitional words and phrases, both within paragraphs and between paragraphs. For example:**
 - *While she was a slave for many years . . .*
 - *It was her pasion . . . That very pasion . . .*
 - *. . . made her work extremely hard. Her hard work . . .*
 - *. . . had to be very brave. Her courage . . .*

- **The response establishes and maintains a formal style. The student utilizes third-person voice, but effectively incorporates first-person and second-person voice without losing formality. For example:**
 - *After reading this, I can see that . . .*
 - *Try to imagine how much it took . . .*
 - *Think about the courage it took . . .*

Focus & Organization Anchor: Response #8

After reading "The Woman Called Jesus", I have concluded that the central idea of the story is to stand up for what is right. Although Harriet Tubman escaped from slavery after 29 years on a Maryland plantation, she felt like a stranger in the North. Courageously, she "set her life's course in an unswerving direction" to free others from the bonds of slavery.

I noticed some quotes from Harriet Tubman that hinted at this determination. One instance was when she said, "As a conductor of the Underground Railroad for eight years, I can say what most conductors can't say—I never ran my train off the track and I never lost a passenger.". To me, this meant that after eight years, she cared for and helped alot of people even though she was already free. Harriet Tubman wouldn't let you stay behind while she helped others. That is how she stood up for what is right.

The authors, Meg Mims and Walter Oleksy, stated, "By her devotion to her cause, she helped open up to all blacks the full benefits of our democracy.". This means that since Harriet was so devoted to the Underground Railroad, she helped slaves be free and open up the opportunities to all slaves to see all the good things of our democracy. American colonists had benefitted from democracy after they stood up for what is right against the British—why couldn't democracy benefit slaves as well? After Tubman was free, she personally brought two-hundred slaves to safety through her courageous acts. The text says, "Harriet defiantly led the frightened, weary slaves northward, maintaining order with a rigid military discipline in order to protect their lives and her own." So, she obviously cared deeply for the non-freed slaves. She always cared about the slaves and had empathy for them, even though she was free.

After her own escape, she headed back to the Maryland plantation where she, her parents, her friends, and her siblings were enslaved. She led them to be freed from the burden they once were. She helped everyone that she could because the treatment was unfair. She didn't only help family, she helped strangers. 200 strangers. She got 3,000 sympathizers to also assist with shelter and aid on the way to freedom.

Freedom meant everything to Harriet Tubman. She fought for her own freedom and brought freedom to others too. She was the woman called Moses - and she most definatley earned the title.

SCORE POINT: 4

Annotations

SCORE POINT: 4

- **The response illustrates consistent and sophisticated command of precise language and specific vocabulary. For example:**

- *So, she obviously cared deeply for the non-freed slaves.*
- *. . . had empathy for them, even though she was free.*
- *freed from the burden*
- *treatment was unfair*

Despite the opening error referencing *Jesus* instead of *Moses* in the title of the text, the student is able to demonstrate command of language appropriate to the task with some sophistication. The student additionally demonstrates the skillful incorporation of precise language from the text.

- **The response illustrates sophisticated command of syntactic variety. For example:**

- *To me, this meant that after eight years, she cared for and helped alot of people even though she was already free.*

The student is able to demonstrate control of syntactic variety by effectively mixing simple, compound, and complex sentences with some effect on meaning and reader interest.

- **The response skillfully utilizes purposeful sentence formation errors for rhetorical effect. For example:**

- *She didn't only help family, she helped strangers. 200 strangers.*

The student uses repetition of language and choppy sentence formation, in this case, to effectively emphasize an idea.

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Language Anchor: Response #8

- **The response utilizes a variety of transitional words and phrases:**
 - *To me, this meant . . .*
 - *That is how . . .*
 - *After her own escape . . .*

The student demonstrates sophistication in the use of transitions, moving beyond basic words and phrases to connect ideas within paragraphs.

- **By balancing textual evidence, quotes, and analysis all focused around the given text, the response effectively establishes a formal style and maintains that style throughout the response.**