

# CUNY Assessment Test in Writing

## Practice Material

Text: "Praising Effort or Performance?"

Writing Directions

Guidelines for Summaries

CATW Rubric

Sample Responses and Articulations

## Assignment

Begin by reading the passage below.

### Praising Effort or Performance?

by Tara Parker-Pope

Are children really learning the lessons that will help them succeed?

Many child development experts are concerned that the answer may be no. They say the emphasis on academic performance and test scores means many children aren't developing life skills like self-control, motivation, focus, and resilience, which are far better predictors of long-term success than high grades.

"What are we really trying to do when we think about raising kids?" asked Dr. Kenneth R. Ginsburg, an expert in adolescent medicine at Children's Hospital of Philadelphia. "We're trying to put in place the ingredients so the child is going to be a successful 35-year-old. It's not really about getting an A in algebra."

Take the question of praising a child's academic achievement. Academic achievement can certainly help children succeed. But for parents there should be a distinction between praising effort and praising performance. Words need to be chosen carefully. Instead of saying "I'm so proud you got an A on your test," a better choice is "I'm so proud of you for studying so hard." Both replies rightly celebrate the A, but the second focuses on the effort that produced it, encouraging the child to keep trying in the future.

Dr. Ginsburg notes that parents also need to teach their children that they do not have to be good at everything. Subjects they enjoy and excel in may become the focus of their careers. Challenging but interesting classes or sports can become hobbies.

"We need to approach failure and difficulty and struggle as data that teach us what we should do with our lives," he said. "It's when you say to a child, 'I expect you to do well in everything,' that we're preparing them to fail."

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Adapted from: "School Curriculum Falls Short on Bigger Lessons," by Tara Parker-Pope, *The New York Times*, September 6, 2011, page D5.

### Writing Directions

Read the passage above and write an essay responding to the ideas it presents. In your essay, be sure to summarize the passage in your own words, stating the author's most important ideas. Develop your essay by identifying one idea in the passage that you feel is especially significant, and explain its significance. Support your claims with evidence or examples drawn from what you have read, learned in school, and/or personally experienced.

Remember to review your essay and make any changes or corrections that will help your reader follow your thinking. You will have 90 minutes to complete your essay.

## Guidelines for Summaries

### “Praising Effort or Performance?”

In response to the writing assignment, writers may present ideas from the text in conventional summaries or throughout the response.

Writers who receive a score of 4, demonstrating competent understanding of the complexity of the ideas in the reading passage, usually refer to the following points:

- Many child development experts are concerned that children may not be learning the lessons that will help them succeed.
- Parents should distinguish between praising effort and praising performance. Words need to be chosen carefully: Instead of saying to a child, “I’m so proud you got an A on your test,” it is better to say, “I’m so proud of you for studying so hard.” The first reply emphasizes the grade, but the second focuses on the effort, which encourages the child to keep trying.
- One expert, Kenneth R. Ginsberg, says that parents should teach their children that they don’t have to be good at everything. He says, “It’s when you say to a child, ‘I expect you to do well in everything,’ that we’re preparing them to fail.”

Additional points that may be mentioned:

- Emphasis on academic performance and test scores means that many children aren’t developing life skills like self-control, motivation, focus, and resilience, which are better predictors of long-term success than high grades.
- Ginsburg said, “We’re trying to put in place the ingredients so the child is going to be a successful 35-year-old. It’s not really about getting an A in algebra.”
- Subjects children excel in may become the focus of their careers, and challenging or interesting classes or sports can become hobbies.
- Ginsburg says that “failure and difficulty and struggle” are data that teach us what we should do with our lives.

# CATW Analytic Scoring Rubric

## Side B

| Critical Response to the Writing Task and the Text  | Development of the Writer's Ideas   | Structure of the Response  | Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice  | Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics   |
|---|---|--|--|---|
| <p><b>3</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response integrates some ideas from the text with some relevant elements of the writer's reading and experience, but may do so in an uneven manner.</li> <li>The response demonstrates some understanding of the main ideas in the text, but understanding is uneven, superficial, or incomplete.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of ideas is general or uneven, but approaches to development sometimes support the clarity of the writer's ideas.</li> <li>The response uses some reasons and specific details and examples from the text and from the writer's reading and experience to develop ideas.</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response uses a basic or uneven organizational structure that sometimes supports the writer's central focus and clarity of ideas. For the most part, relevant ideas are grouped together.</li> <li>Some simple and obvious transitions are used to convey relationships among ideas.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentence control is uneven, but there is some structural variety to support the clarity of ideas.</li> <li>Word choice is simple but usually clear enough to convey meaning.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Command of language is uneven. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are generally correct, but some errors are distracting and may occasionally impede understanding.</li> </ul>              |
| <p><b>2</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is little integration of ideas from the text with elements of the writer's reading and experience.</li> <li>The response demonstrates a weak understanding of the main ideas in the text.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Development of ideas is weak, and there may be little use of relevant approaches to development.</li> <li>If present, reasons, details, and examples from the text and from the writer's reading and experience are brief, general, inadequately developed, or not clearly relevant.</li> </ul>            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response shows an attempt to create a central focus and to put related ideas together, but relationships among ideas may be unclear.</li> <li>Few, if any, transitions are used to convey relationships among ideas.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences demonstrate weak control, and there is little, if any, sentence variety to provide clarity.</li> <li>Word choice is simple, and sometimes meaning is not clear.</li> </ul>    | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response demonstrates a weak command of language. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are sometimes correct, but errors are often distracting, and some impede understanding.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>1</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is minimal, if any, integration of ideas from the text with elements of the writer's reading and experience.</li> <li>The response demonstrates little, if any, understanding of the main ideas in the text.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is minimal or no development of ideas and little, if any, use of relevant approaches to development.</li> <li>If any reasons, details, and examples from the text or from the writer's reading and experience are present, these elements are brief, general, undeveloped, or irrelevant.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There may be an attempt to group related ideas together, but the main focus of the response is unclear.</li> <li>Transitions are rarely used.</li> </ul>  | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences demonstrate minimal or no control.</li> <li>Word choice is often unclear and often obscures meaning.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response demonstrates minimal command of language. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are often incorrect, and errors frequently impede understanding.</li> </ul>                       |

# CATW Analytic Scoring Rubric

Side A

| Critical Response to the Writing Task and the Text   | Development of the Writer's Ideas  | Structure of the Response  | Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice  | Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics  |
|--|--|--|--|--|
| <p><b>6</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>A thoughtful and skillful response to the task effectively integrates a critical discussion of ideas in the text with relevant elements of the writer's reading and experience.</li> <li>The discussion demonstrates a thorough understanding of the main ideas and the complexity of ideas in the text.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas are fully developed, and approaches to development (e.g., summarizing, evaluating, narrating) are used skillfully to support and convey the writer's ideas throughout the response.</li> <li>Reasons and specific details and examples from the text and from the writer's reading and experience are used effectively to develop ideas.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization demonstrates a well-designed progression of ideas that supports the writer's central focus and the clarity of the writer's ideas throughout the response.</li> <li>Sophisticated, effective use of transitions conveys relationships among ideas throughout the response.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences are consistently well controlled, with effective variety in structure.</li> <li>Word choice is sophisticated, precise, and effectively conveys the complexity of the writer's ideas throughout the response.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Though there may be a few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, strong command of language is apparent, and meaning is clear throughout the response.</li> </ul> |
| <p><b>5</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response effectively integrates a critical discussion of ideas in the text with relevant elements of the writer's reading and experience.</li> <li>The discussion demonstrates a good understanding of the main ideas and the complexity of ideas in the text.</li> </ul>                                       | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Ideas are well developed, and approaches to development (e.g., summarizing, evaluating, narrating) are usually used skillfully to support and convey the writer's ideas.</li> <li>Reasons and specific details and examples from the text and from the writer's reading and experience are usually used effectively to develop ideas.</li> </ul>          | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Organization generally demonstrates a clear plan with some progression of ideas that supports the writer's central focus and the clarity of the writer's ideas.</li> <li>Transitions clearly convey relationships among ideas throughout the response.</li> </ul>   | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Sentences are usually well controlled, and there is some effective variety in structure.</li> <li>Word choice is usually specific and usually effective in conveying the writer's ideas.</li> </ul>                               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Though there may be a few errors in grammar, usage, and mechanics, good command of language is apparent, and meaning is usually clear.</li> </ul>                   |
| <p><b>4</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response competently integrates a critical discussion of ideas in the text with relevant elements of the writer's reading and experience.</li> <li>The discussion consistently demonstrates an understanding of the main ideas and of some of the complexity in the text.</li> </ul>                            | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most ideas are competently developed, and approaches to development (e.g., summarizing, evaluating, narrating) are competently used to support and convey the writer's ideas.</li> <li>Reasons and specific details and examples from the text and from the writer's reading and experience are competently used to develop ideas.</li> </ul>             | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>An organizational structure is evident and competently supports the writer's central focus and the clarity of the writer's ideas. Relevant ideas are grouped together, and there may be some evidence of progression of ideas.</li> <li>Though often simple and obvious, transitions are usually made to convey relationships among ideas.</li> </ul> | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Most sentences demonstrate competent control, and there is enough structural variety to support the clarity of the writer's ideas.</li> <li>Word choice is somewhat general but clearly conveys meaning.</li> </ul>               | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Language use is competent. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are generally correct, and meaning is usually clear.</li> </ul>  |

1

Begin essay on this page

Effort is more important than performance. The essay I read questions that same topic. Reading the essay by Tara Parker-Pope, made me see that my views on "parenting and achievement" are similar. Children need to be balanced, just as adults should be. This needs to be taught in an early age so as the child gets older, effort, still practiced.

I am a mother, I have a beautiful three year old boy. I think it is very important for a child to be praised for the effort he puts into something. A few weeks ago, him and I were doing a dinosaur puzzle together. During this time he got anxious because he couldn't find where the piece of the puzzle was supposed to go. I stated cheering him on, telling him happily "you could do it", from that one little statement, he got so excited he had found where the piece of the puzzle was supposed to go. He was so pleased with himself, and so was I. As a parent I need to be my sons biggest fan, and cheerleader. I believe that effort can only come to success.

In the essay I have read I really liked what Dr Kenneth R. Ginzburg said, "We're trying

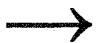


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to put in place the ingredients so the child is going to be a successful 35 year old!"

I know people that got A's in school all the time. They were good test takers, very smart, and learning was easy for them. Unfortunately, that's was all they could do. I know people that got B's, A's, and C's, but they tried, they put alot of effort, they also were great in volley ball, trivia games, swimming, handball, soccer. I think being able to do many things, with effort is very good.

It is very important for the child to be diverse, and be able to do many things, not only get good grades. Ten years ago I went to this school, I didn't put any effort. I dropped out. In those 10 years I learned that with effort comes good things. I do well in my studies and tests because I try, and I have my parents to cheer me on.



## Scoring Articulations for “Praising Effort or Performance?”

**Paper 1      Scores: 5 5 4 4 4**

**Critical Response to the Writing Task and the Text:** The writer integrates her own experience with ideas from the text in a response that demonstrates good understanding of the main ideas and complexity of ideas in the text: “I know people that got A’s in school all the time. They were good test takers, very smart, and learning was easy for them. Unfortunately, that was all they could do.”

**Development of the Writer’s Ideas:** The response is developed skillfully with personal experience and observations as well as ideas and quotes from the text. Specific details provide effective support for the writer’s central idea: “I know people that got B’s, A’s, and C’s, but they tried, they put a lot of effort, they also were great in volleyball, trivia games, swimming, handball, soccer. I think being able to do many things, with effort is very good.”

**Structure of the Response:** The writer competently weaves ideas from the text with her own ideas, and the organizational structure competently supports the writer’s central focus and clarity of ideas.

**Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice:** Sentence control is competent, and word choice clearly conveys meaning.

**Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:** Grammar, usage, and mechanics are generally correct, and meaning is usually clear: “Ten years ago I went to this school. I didn’t put any effort. I dropped out. In those 10 years I learned that with effort comes good things.”



\* In "Praising Effort or Performance?" by Tara Parker-Pope, she tries to shed light on whether or not children are learning the skills they need to become a successful adult and what parents can do to help.

\* Child development experts are concerned that children are not learning lessons or skills they need to be successful. They say this because the focus of children's focus ~~are~~ on academic performance and test scores. They are not learning skills ~~such~~ like self-control, motivation, and focus. In the passage it says that academic achievement helps children succeed. If parents praise the child on their efforts rather than their actual performance children would be motivated to try harder. ~~Dr. G. S. Shure~~ ~~Dr. G. S. Shure~~ states that parents should let their children know that they don't have to be good at everything. If they do then they are setting ~~up~~ their children up for failure.

\* One idea in this passage that I find significant is that parents should praise their children's efforts rather than their performance.



(2)

I say this because if parents worry about the child's grade, the child won't be focused on the actual process of getting the grade. If a parent praises the efforts of the child, they would be more focused on studying and focusing on what they need to do to make the grade. It is a proven fact that children are motivated by praise. If ~~parents~~ parents put praise in the skills that children are supposed to be learning then there would not be a problem with children learning to be successful.

# A personal experience that I had would be when I got a really good score on my history regents in highschool. I took a lot of time focusing on what I needed to learn and study. I really didn't think that I would do well on the test so I just focused on trying to ~~remember~~ remember all the information that I needed to take the test. When I got my scores back my history teacher said that I did very well. She told me that I must have studied really hard to get the score that I had. I didn't like history that much but when she said that



(2)

to me, I was motivated to do well in my next history class.

I think that Parker-Pope was trying to tell people that the effort that you put into something is just as important as the results you get from it. If you are highly motivated then you can succeed in whatever you are doing.



## Scoring Articulations for “Praising Effort or Performance?”

**Paper 2      Scores: 4 4 4 4 4**

**Critical Response to the Writing Task and the Text:** The response follows the sequence of tasks in the writing directions in a competent, workmanlike manner. There is a discussion of a key idea in the text, and supporting details are incorporated using the writer’s personal experience. The writer’s summary demonstrates competent understanding of the main ideas in the text.

**Development of the Writer’s Ideas:** The writer’s ideas are competently developed. He or she presents details of a personal experience of preparing for the Regents history exam in high school as well as a brief but clear conclusion: “I think that Parker-Pope was trying to tell people that the effort that you put into something is just as important as the results you get from it.”

**Structure of the Response:** There is a competent organizational structure that consistently supports the clarity of the writer’s ideas.

**Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice:** Sentences demonstrate competent control and have sufficient structural variety to clearly convey the writer’s ideas.

**Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:** Language use is competent. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are generally correct, and meaning is clear throughout the response.

Begin essay on this page

When a child does well in school should the parent praise the grades or praise the effort that was put into getting that grade? In the passage "Praising effort or Performance?" by Tara Parker-Pope, Dr. Kenneth R. Ginsburg states if you tell your child that you expect him/her to do well in everything then you're setting them up to fail. Also when a child gets an A, you shouldn't praise the grade but the effort that was put into getting that grade. Sometimes its not all about the grade, its about the time and effort it took to get that A.

I agree with Dr. Ginsburg when he said if you ~~the~~ tell your child to do well in everything you're setting them up to fail. I agree with him because you can't expect a child to be good in everything, it puts too much pressure on them and they just might end up failing instead. Especially if its a teenager. When you set high expectations like that for a teenager they might crack under the pressure, and when they don't get their grades their parents want, they feel disappointed in themselves. I speak from experience because I've always been in that type of situation even till today as a college student my mom still piles on the pressure. Sometimes I don't think the parents realize the type of pressure they put on their kids.



3

Parents expect and want their kid to be the best at everything but what they don't realize is no kid is that perfect. I know a lot of kids who are pressured by their parents to do well in school but with parents most of them only care about the grades. They don't care or know what the child has to go through in order to get that A. All the sleepless nights of studying, the rewriting of papers and the pressure from their friends to just go hang out. If parents knew this then I'm sure they would appreciate the child's effort and not care ~~about~~ about the grade as much.

Parents should think more of the child's efforts and praise that in order for the child to keep doing well in school. A child is like a flower you have to nurture and care for it in order for it to ~~be~~ bloom. Praising a child's grade will make them feel good for a little while but praise their effort and you give them motivation to always ~~do~~ do well.



## Scoring Articulations for “Praising Effort or Performance?”

**Paper 3      Scores: 4 4 4 4 4**

**Critical Response to the Writing Task and the Text:** The response demonstrates a competent integration of ideas in the text with relevant aspects of the writer’s own experience. There is consistent understanding of key ideas in the text and their complexity.

**Development of the Writer’s Ideas:** Most ideas are competently developed and supported. The writer consistently uses ideas from the text: “I agree with Dr. Ginsburg when he said if you tell your child to do well in everything you’re setting them up to fail.” These ideas are supported with examples from the writer’s experience: “I’ve always been in that type of situation even till today as a college student my mom still piles on the pressure.”

**Structure of the Response:** There is a clear organizational structure that competently supports the writer’s focus: “Sometimes I don’t think the parents realize the type of pressure they put on their kids.”

**Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice:** Sentences demonstrate competent control and consistency throughout the response and clearly convey meaning. Word choice is general but clear.

**Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:** Despite a few errors, language control is competent.

Why should parents praise effort and performance of their child? Parents should choose words carefully when speaking to their child. They also need to let them know, that it's ok if they don't do good in everything. Praising Effort or Performance by Tara Parker-Pope informs the parents that, they need to approach failure and difficulty struggles their child ~~may~~ might be going through.

Choosing the correct words to explain to your child will not be easy. Instead of telling them "I'm proud of you for getting an A" you should ~~say~~ say "I'm proud of you for doing all of that studying." Even though parents want their child to do well, they have to let them know it's ok if you fail. Parents have to keep on encouraging the child to keep on trying in the future. Furthermore parents should ~~praise~~ <sup>appreciate</sup> all the work the child does and push them to do more.

Praising effort and performance is every important to me. Just to hear my parents say "you did great or even next time try harder," makes me feel great. It lets me know that they





4A

are here for me no matter what. I'm not a perfect person but at times that little push and confidence my parents gave me; made me feel like I'm on top of the world. So yes parents should praise their child's effort and performance.

In conclusion, Praising Effort or Performance by Tara Parker-Pope gives parents a new way to approach their child ~~effort~~ difficult struggles. No matter how good or bad the child is doing just let them know you are proud. Getting that feeling from your parents is priceless. Furthermore parents learn something and the child feels great.



## Scoring Articulations for “Praising Effort or Performance?”

**Paper 4      Scores: 3 3 3 3 3**

**Critical Response to the Writing Task and the Text:** The response integrates the most salient idea from the text—that parents should praise effort—with a general statement from the writer but does not discuss other points, such as developing life skills.

**Development of the Writer’s Ideas:** The response includes only a general example from the writer’s experience: “I’m not a perfect person but at times that little push and confidence my parents gave me; made me feel like I’m on top of the world. So you parents should praise their child’s effort and performance.”

**Structure of the Response:** For the most part, relevant ideas are grouped together. The response begins with a rhetorical question that is answered in a general way.

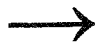
**Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice:** Generous scorers may consider a 4 in this domain. Sentence control is at times uneven, and word choice is simple but clear enough: “Praising Effort or Performance by Tara Parker-Pope informs the parents that, they need to approach failure and difficulty struggles their child might be going through.”

**Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:** Generous scorers may consider a 4 in this domain. Grammar, usage, and mechanics are generally correct, but there are occasional distracting errors: “Praising effort and performance is every important to me. Just to hear my parents say ‘you did great or even next time try harder,’ makes me feel great.”

Begin essay on this page

In the passage "Praising Effort or Performance," by Tara Parker-Pope. The author wants to tell parents how to raise kids successfully. First, Parker-Pope says a lot of child development experts are not agree that children who learning the lessons can be succeed. Second, the author keep says when child successful at 35 year-old because only reason is put the child in place, not rely about the child getting an A or B in algebra. Third, the author focus talk about college achievements can help students succeed, but for parents should know what is praising effort and Praising Performance. Finally, the author says Parents shouldn't need children they good at everything, as long as children can focus of their careers. I strongly agree with author ~~then~~ at last point.

When author says "That parents also need to teach their children that they do not have to be good at everything, subjects they enjoy and excel in may become the focus of their careers." The author wants to say children are not need to know everything, but <sup>do</sup> need focus on something they really enjoy. like <sup>English</sup> teacher no need good at Chinese, but the English teacher should know English very well. People do not like everything we know a little bit



5

everything we did bad job. Even just do one thing as long as this one thing we can successful.

when I was ten years old, I started workout Judo in my school. Since I start I went to Judo group five time a week, so, six months later, we had Judo Competition ~~at~~<sup>in</sup> our City, I got champion. This is just like the author said, children not need good at everything, but Parents should happy their children focus on what they like. ~~Because children~~

In Conclusion, according to this reading the author tells us ~~as~~ about how to Parents raising kids to be success. The author ~~give~~ mentioned fews points are really good at children who want be successful in future.



## Scoring Articulations for "Praising Effort or Performance?"

**Paper 5**      **Scores: 1 1 1 1 1**

**Critical Response to the Writing Task and the Text:** Because of weaknesses in writing skills, the response demonstrates very little understanding of ideas in the passage: "the author keeps says when child successful at 35 year-old because only reason is put the child in place, not relly about the child getting an A or B in algebra."

**Development of the Writer's Ideas:** The writer cuts portions from the text and pastes them throughout the response; however, there is minimal explanation, discussion, or defense of any original ideas: "People do not like everything we know litbit everything we did bad job."

**Structure of the Response:** There is an attempt to organize ideas, but the focus of the response is unclear, and transitions between ideas are rarely used.

**Language Use: Sentences and Word Choice:** There is minimal control of language, and much of the vocabulary is derived from the text: "Even just do one thing as long as this one thing we can succeful."

**Language Use: Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics:** There is minimal command of language, and errors frequently impede meaning: "lots of child development experts are not agree that children who learning the lessons can be succeed."