



Grade 7 Writing

Expository Scoring Guide April 2014

Grade 7 Writing Expository Prompt

READ the following quotation.

True humor is fun—it does not put down, kid, or mock. It makes people feel wonderful, not separate, different, and cut off.

—Hugh Prather

THINK carefully about the following question.

Does humor make life better?

WRITE an essay explaining whether it is important to laugh.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your controlling idea
- organize and develop your explanation effectively
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

Score Point 1

The essay represents a very limited writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies that are only marginally suited to the explanatory task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. The absence of a functional organizational structure causes the essay to lack clarity and direction.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the topic specified in the prompt, but the controlling idea is missing, unclear, or illogical. The writer may fail to maintain focus on the topic, may include extraneous information, or may shift abruptly from idea to idea, weakening the coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is weak. Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the essay. At other times the lack of transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections causes the writer to present ideas in a random or illogical way, making one or more parts of the essay unclear or difficult to follow.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is weak. The essay is ineffective because the writer uses details and examples that are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient.
- ❑ The essay is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt is vague or confused. In some cases, the essay as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the expository purpose and does not establish a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

I believe that humor does make life better. It is important to laugh because it would be boring without it.

It would make you happy not sad. Humor will make you laugh. Humor is funny and it does make your life better with it. It would make you feel wonderful. Your life wouldn't be sad and boring.

If you didn't have humor, nothing would be funny. Life would be boring without humor. You wouldn't be able to laugh because nothing is funny to laugh at. You would have nothing to do. You wouldn't be able to make jokes and funny faces to make people laugh.

This is why you need to have humor or your life would be boring; nothing to do all day and do nothing. You would talk to people but the conversation would be boring to talk about.

Score Point 1

The controlling idea of this expository essay is that it is important to laugh because life would be boring without it. The writer attempts to develop this controlling idea by focusing on what life would be like with humor (paragraph two) as opposed to without it (paragraph three). However, the writer does little more than offer a series of general statements that are, for the most part, unsupported by specific details and examples. The “flip side” organizational structure the writer employs is repetitious and causes the progression and development of ideas to be weak. Overall, the essay is insubstantial and represents a very limited writing performance.

laughing is very important the point of
laughing is to enjoy life to have a little
bit of fun in your life time to be
joyfull not to be grouchy
without you laughing would be
a tiny bit boring you should always
laugh because then it would be unjoyfull
every body waking up in the morning
all grouchy without laughing people
would be so unpolite, and would be so
mean, and it would be a humongus
disaster I think that the word laugh is
very joyfull word that every body can
do but alway, atleast once in a
while you could smile, and laugh and
you'll see you will feel free.
laughing is very important.

Score Point 1

In this essay the writer attempts to explain why laughter is important, but the controlling idea is unclear. The writer shifts abruptly and randomly from idea to idea, causing the essay to lack direction and making it difficult to follow. In addition, the absence of end punctuation throughout the response is a serious problem, especially at the middle school level. The writer's inability to construct basic sentences creates disruptions in the fluency of the writing and significantly weakens the essay.

HI!!!! my name is Marcus and this is my story about how humor makes life better. I think humor is a good thing because life wouldn't be fun without humor. Humor makes just about everyone laugh. But for some people it doesn't like say you were walking down the street and someone just tackles you that's not humor unless it was suppose to happen. I know that if someone just straight up sock's you in the face I know for sure that's not humor. And if you laugh at that shame on you. But I know it may be a little funny but just try not to laugh. Because that would be rude. Not just rude that would be mean.

Score Point 1

The writer's controlling idea is that humor makes life better. However, the development is weak because he focuses on examples of acts that are not humorous (tackling someone or socking someone in the face for no reason). These examples are inappropriate because they do not support the controlling idea. Overall, the writer's response to the prompt is confused and demonstrates a lack of understanding of the expository task.

Humor is something that is funny. My friends can be humorous. But sometimes it's not even humor anymore because they messed it up.

One reason you should have humor is because you need it to get friends. But if you don't have humor you won't get friends to talk to or play with.

Another reason is that your life would be boring without humor because you wouldn't have any friends. If you need some humor find someone with humor and try it out.

Last reason you should have humor is because you won't get anywhere with life. You will be a downer because you don't have humor.

So that is why you should have humor in your life.

Score Point 1

In this ineffective formulaic response, the writer identifies three reasons why you should have humor in your life (you need it to get friends; life would be boring without humor; without humor you won't get anywhere in life). Although these ideas are generally related to the topic specified in the prompt, the controlling idea is missing. The development of these ideas is ineffective because the writer includes vague, insufficient details. The perfunctory transitions do not provide any connections from paragraph to paragraph, so the writer is unable to build any meaning. Repetition is also a problem, not only weakening the development but also stalling the progression of ideas (you need humor to get friends; if you don't have humor you won't get friends; life would be boring without humor because you wouldn't have any friends).

Score Point 2

The essay represents a basic writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is not always clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are only somewhat suited to the expository task.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the topic specified in the prompt, but the writer's controlling idea is weak or somewhat unclear. The lack of an effective controlling idea or the writer's inclusion of irrelevant information interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is not always logical and controlled. Sometimes repetition or wordiness causes minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory or weak to support the flow of the essay or show the relationships among ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is minimal. The essay is superficial because the writer uses details and examples that are not always appropriate or are too briefly or partially presented.
- ❑ The essay reflects little or no thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is sometimes formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates only a limited understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the expository purpose but does little to establish a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice may not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled, weakening the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Some distracting errors may be evident, at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency or meaning of the writing.

True humor is fun - it does not put down, kid, or mock.
It makes people feel wonderful, not separate, different,
and cut off.

-Hugh Prather

Does humor make life better? I never thought about that question before. I suppose it probably does in my perspective, I laugh and joke around alot. I wouldn't stand a day without humor! Humor is something that's apart of me it could probably be a sixth sense in my opinion. I love to laugh which makes it who I am, what do people do to help you feel better? They use humor to cheer you up'. Without humor I would be a boring, bitter girl.

It's not just my opinion which says anything, even the most soulless, and grumpy people have laughed once in their lifetime. Humor is what make all of us, it's what makes everyone! I can't name a day I spent without laughing, in the most days of greiving I had to joke atleast once. My grandfather past away but the only way I moved on was laughing and joking around, and still do it, it's a habit. My favorite genre's in movies is comedy which is a synonym of humor and why do I watch it? "Because it makes me happy." So does humor make life better, "Yes, yes it does!"

Score Point 2

The writer begins the essay by repeating the quotation in the prompt, which is an unnecessary and ineffective way to introduce her ideas. The controlling idea is somewhat unclear since several sentences could work equally well. The writer includes a number of ideas to support her belief that humor makes life better, but the progression from sentence to sentence and idea to idea is not always controlled due to the absence of transitions. For example, paragraph three lacks coherence because the writer moves from explaining how humor is an important part of all people to how humor helped her when her grandfather died to how humor makes comedies her favorite movie genre. The development is minimal because the details and examples the writer uses are too briefly presented. In addition, awkward and run-on sentences are evident. Overall, this essay represents a basic writing performance.

Have you ever laughed at something that was funny? If you have do you think that it is important to laugh?

Sometimes it is good to laugh like when somebody tells a joke, or does something funny. There are also some things that you don't laugh at like funerals, car wrecks, and when somebody is in the hospital. It is important to laugh because it shows you have a sense of humor or that you're not a boring person.

People also make you laugh when you are feeling bad about yourself to try to make you cheer up.

Sometimes laughing can be a bad thing if you laugh at somebody you can hurt there feelings.

It is important to laugh because if you don't laugh you just go along you're life feeling sad or mad, always depressed and never having any fun.

I think people need to laugh sometimes just to have fun.

Score Point 2

The writer begins the essay with two rhetorical questions that are unconnected to the writer's controlling idea. In fact, he does not state his controlling idea until the fourth paragraph (It is important to laugh because if you don't laugh you just go along you're life feeling sad or mad, always depressed and never having any fun). The writer attempts to use a compare-and-contrast organizational strategy; however, because his controlling idea doesn't umbrella the idea that laughter can be both helpful and harmful, only some of the details and examples he uses contribute to the development of the essay. For example, the writer states that it is good to laugh when someone tells a joke, which is clearly connected to the controlling idea and helps to develop it. In the next sentence, though, the writer lists the occasions where laughing is inappropriate, which is not connected to the controlling idea and cannot be considered as development. In addition, weak sentence-to-sentence connections and transitions cause minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. Overall, the writer demonstrates a limited understanding of the expository writing task.

The Importance of Laughing

Many things are hilarious! Jokes, movies, people, and television. Think about this. How would we express we think something is funny without laughter? This is why laughing is important to me.

Laughing comes with many purposes, but I have chosen three. The first reason laughing is special, would be it extends your life time. The longer you laugh, the longer you will live! Laughter is like a medication for life. The next reason laughing is important, is it brings you out of sour, mad, and mean moods. Nobody likes a crusty mood, so they make that person laugh, and the bad mood vanishes! The last, but not least reason laughing is important, would be the joy, smiles, and happiness laughter brings. I think smiles and happiness are two things that make our world go round.

As you can see, laughing comes with so many great, wonderful consequences, that most subjects don't come with. These three reasons really speak to me, and I hope they speak to you too! Laughing is a very important subject, and I hope with all my laughter that everyone can see the importance of laughter.

Score Point 2

While it is clear that the writer believes that laughter is important, the essay lacks an effective controlling idea. The writer provides three reasons why laughter is important, each of which is briefly developed. The third reason is particularly weak because of its generality. Although the writer maintains an appropriate expository form, the minimal details and formulaic approach reflect little thoughtfulness. In addition, transitions (The first reason; The next reason; The last, but not least reason) are too perfunctory to support the flow of the essay. The writer demonstrates an adequate control of sentences and a command of conventions, but the overall effectiveness of this essay is limited and reflects a basic writing performance.

People need humor in their life. It's good to laugh sometimes. It doesn't make fun or tease anyone, it just makes them feel better. Studies show, that lots of people who have lots of laughter in their life, are happy and healthy. I think that is true because, when you make someone laugh, they feel good inside.

Once I made a friend by being nice and funny. I made her laugh a lot and she thought that I was a good friend. Be careful not to joke around too much, because you could easily offend someone and lose them as a friend.

I remember when my friend saw a girl crying about a problem with a friend, so she went to talk to her. I saw them laughing and talking together. Just by making her laugh, my friend made her feel better. Humor and laughter is important to have, because it brings happiness to you and can make your life better.

Score Point 2

The controlling idea of this basic writing performance is that people need humor in their lives. The writer provides two anecdotal examples of times when she and a friend made someone laugh, but each example is only briefly and generally presented. Furthermore, the admonition she attaches to the first anecdote in paragraph two does not support the controlling idea (Be careful not to joke around too much, because you could easily offend someone and lose them as a friend). Overall, the development lacks substance. In addition, the word choice is general and does not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.

Score Point 3

The essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are adequately suited to the expository task.
- ❑ The writer establishes a clear controlling idea. Most ideas are related to the controlling idea and are focused on the topic specified in the prompt. The essay is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is sufficient because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and appropriate, adding some substance to the essay.
- ❑ The essay reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific. It reflects an awareness of the expository purpose and establishes a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are varied and adequately controlled, for the most part contributing to the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although some errors may be evident, they create few (if any) disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity of the essay.

Does humor make life better? The answer is yes, it plays a huge role in everyone's life.

Humor makes everyone feel included, happy, and most of all it makes them feel like all their troubles and worries have vanished. When you're sad, most of the time you're going to tell a friend why, and they are going to try to make you feel better. One way your friends are going to do so is by making you laugh.

What do you do when you're bored? You're going to find something to occupy you, right? Well, I go to my mom and I say to her, "Mom, I'm bored."

So she says, "Hi bored, I'm mom!" which always makes me laugh, and usually gets a conversation going so I'm not bored anymore.

In my family we say, "Humor is your imagination trying to keep you happy." It's a weird saying, but when you think about it, it's true.

So if someone makes a joke it may sound rude but it's just themselves trying to be happy. A life without humor would be dull and very boring, so keep those giggles coming and laugh on.

Score Point 3

The writer's controlling idea is that humor plays a huge role in life. For the most part, transitions within paragraphs (When you're sad...; One way...) and between paragraphs (So she says...) show the relationships between ideas and support the flow of the essay. In paragraphs three and four, the writer uses a personal anecdote that is centered on a conversation with her mom to show how laughter can alleviate boredom. The writer also provides a family saying that illustrates the importance of humor. These examples add some substance to the essay. In addition, the writer's clear and specific word choice reflects an awareness of the expository purpose. Overall, the writer demonstrates a good understanding of the writing task.

Have you ever had a bad day? I'm not talking about a bad hair day either. I'm talking about when you feel like it's you against the world. I've had quite a few bad days and more often than not the thing that cheers me up is laughter. When someone walks up to me and says something hilarious it turns my whole day around! People always say; "laughter is the best medicine." I don't know about you but for me it's true!

What would the world be without laughter? There would be no comedic movies! Only documentaries about animals! Can you even begin to imagine the horror? I think that laughter is one of the most important things this world can offer. It makes the world better. I imagine if everybody was serious all the time. Life would just be a big blob of nothing. Even all the little things that make you laugh like sarcasm would be gone."

I'll be the first one to admit, laughter, smiling and joking around may just be the greatest thing ever. Even if I need to stay focused in school a little more, a little bit of fun in peoples lives could have a big impact.

Score Point 3

In this concise expository essay, the writer asserts that laughter is one of the most important things the world can offer. The writer begins the first two paragraphs with rhetorical questions that invite the reader to think about the effect laughter has on life, both personally and globally. Paragraph two, in particular, represents a philosophical approach to the topic that adds some thoughtfulness to the essay. Both the introduction and conclusion help strengthen the writer's explanation. The progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled, and the word choice is clear and specific, contributing to the quality and clarity of the essay. In addition, the writer demonstrates a good command of conventions, adding to the effectiveness of the piece.

I imagine a world without humor, without laughter. It's a terrible, lonely, dark, sad place. With that in mind, do you think that laughter is not important? Laughing is most definitely important to life.

Friends are a great reason for you to laugh. Who wants a friend that never laughs at anything or tries to make you laugh? Nobody wants a friend like that. I love to laugh; I like to make my friends laugh. My friends and I have so much fun when we are laughing. Whenever you see your friend laughing really hard, it makes you laugh also. I see my friend laughing, hysterically, so I start giggling, making me smile and happy for the rest of the day.

Life is another great reason to laugh. I mean, if life isn't funny and laugh-filled, what is the point to it?

Whenever I am not laughing, I feel a little empty and sad. When I am laughing, though, I feel full and worry-free.

Your life is full of memories. Without laughing, most of those memories will be sad. I have many memories of me laughing so hard I cry and make my stomach and face hurt.

Laughing is a wonderful thing. Who would ever want to do without? Laughing may give you wrinkles, but who really cares about that if you aren't a model or someone who has to have perfect skin. You're not going to be 85 years old and not have wrinkles, so laugh now, while you still can.

Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer focuses on the idea that laughing is important to life, and without it, life would be a “terrible, lonely, dark, sad place.” The writer takes a personal approach to the topic, focusing on the positive effects of a life with laughter versus the negative effects of a life without laughter. For example, when he laughs he feels “full and worry-free,” but without laughter, he feels “a little empty and sad.” Although some ideas are more developed than others, the development overall is sufficient. Both the introduction and the conclusion are effective and add substance to the essay. The progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled, but there is some wordiness in paragraph two that slows the sentence-to-sentence movement. In addition, the transition between paragraph two and three could be stronger. Overall, though, the writer demonstrates a good understanding of the expository writing task.

Some say that laughter gives you life. Which I don't completely disagree with. Laughing may not extend your life, but it sure does make it better.

Laughing is a way of expressing yourself, No matter if you have a loud, deep, quiet, or squeaky one, they all mean the same, wonderful things. Humor most certainly makes a better life, it is not only a beautiful thing, it feels good as well. If you see someone who is feeling down, cheer them up with a great joke; and believe me, they will feel ten times better than they were. When someone says "I had the best time on Saturday", or "oh my gosh yesterday was the bomb". what do you think those moments are filled with? Well to tell you this now, they sure weren't filled with crying or sitting there being bored. They were filled with heart-stopping laughter. Some of those moments have your name written all over them, but you never take that for granted.

Although you might hate how you laugh, and hate how your heart nearly stops beating, you should never hold your laughs in, because that's what makes your life complete.

Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer establishes a clear controlling idea (Laughing may not extend your life, but it sure does make it better). She creates an appropriate tone by directly addressing the reader throughout the essay (If you see someone who is feeling down, cheer them up with a great joke; and believe me, they will feel ten times better than they were). She sustains focus on the different ways in which laughter has a positive effect on our feelings about ourselves and our relationships with others. The development of these ideas reflects some philosophical thoughtfulness. The sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to show the relationships among ideas. In addition, the writer's word choice is clear and specific (heart stopping laughter; moments [that] have your name written all over them), and her control of sentences and conventions is good.

Score Point 4

The essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- The organizing structure of the essay is clearly appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is skillfully crafted because the writer uses organizational strategies that are particularly well suited to the expository task.
- The writer establishes a clear controlling idea. All ideas are strongly related to the controlling idea and are focused on the topic specified in the prompt. By sustaining this focus, the writer is able to create an essay that is unified and coherent.
- The writer's progression of ideas is logical and well controlled. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of the essay by clearly showing the relationships among ideas, making the writer's train of thought easy to follow.

Development of Ideas

- The development of ideas is effective because the writer uses details and examples that are specific and well chosen, adding substance to the essay.
- The essay is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may choose to use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing or to connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the expository writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- The writer's word choice is purposeful and precise. It reflects a keen awareness of the expository purpose and maintains a tone appropriate to the task. The word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.
- The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and age-appropriate spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of the essay. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the essay.

I was not sure about what I thought of that witty remark that Brian had made. It certainly made the rest of the class and even the teacher laugh; I thought the joke was rather immature. I have never really been one to find the humor in a lot of things, and maybe that was the reason people thought I was such a grouch. I was always too stubborn to believe it until it was my own family who told me I needed to let loose and laugh a lot more.

Finding the humor in things really did help me socially. It just so happens that when you laugh, the world is much more open to be friends with you. In my opinion, laughter tends to make the world brighter and more enjoyable. All those times I thought that the jokes my classmates made were stupid, I now realize that they never meant anything bad by them. They just wanted to make people smile.

Laughter is what brings people together. I've learned that even in the worst of times, laughter is always the cure to sadness. Don't wait as long as I did to open up to laughing; laughter is necessary for a healthy life. Get laughing!

Score Point 4

In this skillfully crafted essay, the writer reflects on his own life experiences to explain how he became motivated to learn the value of humor. His personal anecdote is introspective, focusing on his realization that laughter helps people feel more connected to others and makes the world a more inviting and enjoyable place to live. The essay is unified and coherent. Strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of the essay, making the writer's train of thought easy to follow. The essay is thoughtful and engaging because he uses his unique experiences as a basis for writing. Overall, this essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

Humor is truly a god-given remedy. We all have that joke we turn to, and we all have a type of humor we adore. With that being said, I honestly believe everyone loves to laugh.

If you were to question my beliefs, I would have to ask you this: Haven't you ever had a terrible day, but when you hear that one punch line, everything feels alright for a second? It's like you're so caught up in your fit of laughter that you seem to forget that you shouldn't even be smiling under your circumstances. Even if it is just a smile, it still brightens your mood; it's actually a proven fact.

But it's not just that. Whenever you see a funny video, or hear a funny joke, don't you want to share it? When you do so, you make the other person crack up, or twitch out a smile. It spreads the joyous feeling you got when you first witnessed the humor.

That's why laughter is so important; it lifts the spirit. Not only laughter, but humor as well. Without humor there would be no laughter to take part in. So crack a joke or over use puns, it just might make someone's day.

Score Point 4

In this accomplished writing performance, the writer focuses on the idea that laughter is important because "it lifts the spirit." She effectively develops her controlling idea through two hypothetical examples that illustrate how humor can brighten a person's mood and create joyous moments with others. Well-controlled sentences, precise word choice, and a consistent command of conventions strongly contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay. In addition, both the introduction and the conclusion add substance and thoughtfulness, demonstrating the writer's thorough understanding of the expository writing task.

Ever since I was little, I've been told that laughter is the best kind of medicine. Being only a two year old, I used to go around, telling sick family members and friends, "If you laugh you'll feel better. So laugh!" But now I understand that laughter doesn't heal external wounds but internal wounds. Laughter can brighten a day, lighten the mood, and even help a hurt friend.

Sometimes, people have days that make a turn for the worse. They're grounded, there's a fire drill when they're in the locker room, or their dog really did eat their homework, or maybe they've been in one of those heated arguments? Both sides are tense and angry, and the slightest insult can make them explode. Jokes make you smile, all the other emotions—sadness, fear, anger—fade away and happiness takes their place.

Life is good, but sometimes horrible things happen. Family members die. Parents divorce. Natural disasters come. The list is endless. When this happens to someone, it feels like the world's abandoned them. A smile, a laugh, a friendly joke is all they need to remind them it hasn't. Laughter is the best way to turn a frown-upside-down.

True humor is fun—it makes people feel wonderful. All they need is to laugh and all their troubles—bad days, arguments, loss—will go away. Life is magnificent, and what better way to enjoy it than with a smile?

Score Point 4

In this accomplished essay, the writer provides a philosophical explanation to support the controlling idea that laughter heals internal wounds, not external ones, and that humor can counteract the bad things that happen to people. Strong sentence-to-sentence connections clearly show the relationships among ideas and contribute to the unity and coherence of the essay. The writer uses her view of the world as the basis for writing, making the essay particularly thoughtful. The word choice is purposeful and precise, reflecting a keen awareness of the expository purpose. In addition, a strong command of conventions enhances the effectiveness of this accomplished writing performance.

Imagine a world without laughter. Chances are, you imagined a dim grey world with nothing but sadness. But why? After all, laughter and happiness aren't the same. However, they are very intertwined. Laughter is precious, bundling all your happiness and amusement into a single sound. It is like a gift, but it never runs out. For this reason, some laugh freely and easily, showing the world their pleased emotions. Others withhold their laughter, making it all the more special when they do. In both cases, people use laughter to display their feelings. In this way, laughter is similar to a smile. However, there is a key difference between the two.

Laughter is infectious. One giggle or snort can often lead to a whole slew of gut-bursting chortles. Most are willing to laugh provided the opportunity, even for no reason. Although a lot of people bottle up their anger and sadness, it is much harder to hide happiness. And why should they? Happiness is a gleeful emotion, one most wish they had. In this way laughter is different from smiling. Laughing is more easily noticeable, and thus easier to spread.

It is important to laugh because it doesn't just make other people happy, it can make you happy. If you begin to laugh for no reason, you will often begin to find humor and joy in the world. You can find reasons to laugh if you are paying attention, and the world will often seem like a better place.

Laughter is a unique noise. It both conveys and creates amusement and happiness. So go ahead, laugh. The world will seem, and even be, a brighter place because of it.

Score Point 4

The writer of this well-crafted essay explores the relationship between laughter and happiness. The controlling idea is most clearly stated in the conclusion: "Laughter is a unique noise. It both conveys and creates amusement and happiness." The essay is thoughtful and engaging because the writer connects ideas in interesting ways. The strong sentence-to-sentence connections and meaningful transitions make the progression of ideas well controlled. In addition, the purposeful word choice and well-controlled sentences enhance the quality and clarity of the essay. Overall, this essay represents an accomplished writing performance.