

ELPT

English Language Proficiency Test

ELPT Sample Writing Items Annotated Responses

Using the ELPT Writing Samples Annotated Responses

This document contains rubrics, scoring notes, student responses, and annotations for each of the [ELPT Sample Writing Items Grades 6-12](#).

Student writing samples can give teachers and specialists a lot of information about language development. Most writing on the ELPT draws on personal experiences and is written from the first person perspective. Therefore, it can reveal specific areas where a student may be struggling to grasp language conventions.

The following samples are taken from actual student responses to the *ELPT Sample Writing Items Grades 6-12*. After each sample, there is a score and an explanation. These are included to help guide teachers and specialists through the process of evaluating student writing.

When reviewing responses, both those provided here and student responses, consider whether the errors are related to language development, or if the errors are characteristic of weak writing that would be common for most native English speaking students. Many of the score explanations contain suggestions of how to best help the student.

Rubrics have been modified to match the assignments and may differ slightly from the ones in the *ELPT Assessment Guide*.

Item 1: Look at the picture and write a paragraph about what is happening. Be sure to include details that happened before and after the events in the picture.

Item 1 Rubric: Writing – Storyboard (Grade Band 6-12)

Score	Descriptors
5	<p>Responses at the 5 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains a variety of syntactic structures, such as simple, compound, and complex sentences, and vocabulary that are appropriate and relevant. Word choice and grammar are effective and accurate, though the response may contain a few minor and isolated errors that do not interfere with meaning. • The student addresses the topic and task very well by composing a narrative that is coherent and well developed, using relevant information and specific details. The response is well organized, using a variety of transitional words and phrases to connect events and ideas in a logical sequence. • The student’s message is easily understood on a first reading.
4	<p>Responses at the 4 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains vocabulary and simple, compound, and complex sentence structures that are appropriate. Word choice and grammar are generally accurate, but the response likely has several noticeable errors that do not obscure meaning. • The student successfully addresses the topic and task by composing a narrative that is coherent and developed but occasional details may not be fully elaborated or clearly relevant to the prompt. The response is organized, and uses transitional words and phrases to connect events and ideas in sequence, though occasionally connections between ideas may be unclear. • The student’s message is generally clear.
3	<p>Responses at the 3 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains vocabulary and simple sentence structures that are appropriate, though the range may be moderately limited. Errors in word choice or grammar may occasionally obscure meaning. • The narrative partially addresses the task, using a few pieces of information or details from the stimulus. However, some details may be underdeveloped, irrelevant, or missing from the response. The response demonstrates some organizational logic, but connections between ideas may be unclear or obscured at times. Transitional words and phrases used may be inaccurate or may be limited to common linking words. • The student’s overall message is understood, but some reader effort is required.
2	<p>Responses at the 2 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or frequent errors in usage obscure meaning in the response. • The narrative is limited in response to the task. Development may be limited to the most basic information, and details are irrelevant or missing. The organization is generally unclear, and connections between ideas are often obscured or missing. • Considerable reader effort is needed.

1	<p>Responses at the 1 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors in vocabulary and syntax seriously obscure meaning. • The narrative is seriously underdeveloped and lacks coherence.
0	The response does not address the communicative demands of the task OR the response contains no English OR the response is off topic and does not address the prompt.

Sample Response 1

It was a Saturday, I was really bored so I decided to go to the library. It was to night so I decided to go the next day, which was a Monday. I ask my best friend Chavo to come with me and he said yes. So we went to the library I was so amazed and excited because I saw so many books so I didn't know which one to pick. After 2 ½ hours had pass I found the book I wanted my friend Chavo was already ready to go he was waiting for me. Doña Cliatilde is so patient and nice she gave me a big smile, and gave me the book. So we were so excited.

Score 5

The response earned a score of 5 because it is richly developed and contains a variety of sentences and syntactic structures. There is an actual story that follows a logical organization. The errors are mainly related to punctuation which is not specific to language development.

Sample Response 2

In the beginning of this story two young people are in the library. The young people went to the library to look for books. a young man was going to bring a book but the other was going to leave the book. one of them was going to take them to the other one had already read it.

Score 4

The response earned a score of 4 because it has a variety of sentence structures, attempts to develop a story, and establishes a generally clear meaning. The errors are not related to language development. This student would benefit from more instruction related to adding details and developing a story.

Sample Response 3

The two boys walked into the library and checked out the books from a lady that worked at the library. After they left and read their books in the park.

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because it lacks enough development to bring it to a 4, but still addresses the topic. Sentence structure is simple, and while there is at least one transitional word (after), the sentence that follows is not fully developed.

The writing here does not reveal any obvious language development errors. Pronouns are used correctly; subjects and verbs agree, and sentences are organized according to English language conventions. However, the lack of idea development and simplistic structure are indicative of a student who is a struggling writer and would benefit from more writing specific instruction (i.e. seeing more examples of good writing, learning how to revise and develop their own writing more).

Sample Response 4

They are student and a teacher, the teacher is borrow the books to the student, because they are need study for the weeked, the teacher is very happy because they are study every day in the school, they are best students for the classroom, and after the student wait for the turn for your book for can study next week, but before the boy take the book of the teacher. End

Score 2

The response earned a score of 2 because while the overall story is understood. However, some effort by the reader is needed. The student has a grasp of how sentences are organized in English, but errors with subject/verb agreement make the wording awkward. The student uses only present tense verbs. There are no possessives. The errors in this response are related to language development.

Sample Response 5

The place is a library.

There are two kids getting books.

They are all happy.

Score 1

The response earned a score of 1 because the response serves as a list that describes what is in the picture and is not written as a story. The student does not make an attempt to develop a story. Sentence structure is correct, but there are no transition words, and no sentence variety. The response does not fully address the topic. Even though the sample is sparse, there are no errors that are common for students trying to develop English. It may be that the student did not understand the directions, but the use of correct subject/verb agreement and present progressive verb tense makes it seem like the student has enough comprehension to produce a response.

Sample Response 6

The boy rightin the book to the liding, Monday monein was cod today. The lidrein tegre get the book for the book.

The boy gat a new book at the lidrein. The boy gat to the home.

Score 1

The response earned a score of 1 because the frequency of errors greatly impacts the story's meaning. There is some organization of ideas, but they are not conveyed in a way that makes them readily understandable. The errors are indicative of a student who is trying to develop language, but the attempt to develop ideas demonstrates that the student may have a stronger ability to write in her native language and would need to learn how to transfer that skill to English.

Item 2 Rubric: Writing – Respond to a Peer E-mail (Grade Band 6–12)

Score	Descriptors
3	<p>Responses at the 3 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains vocabulary and simple, compound, and complex sentence structures that are appropriate. Word choice and grammar are accurate, though the response may contain a few noticeable errors that do not obscure the student’s meaning. • The student successfully addresses the topic and task by giving at least one suggestion. Organizational logic is clear throughout the response, and transitional words and phrases are used appropriately.
2	<p>Responses at the 2 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains a narrow range of vocabulary and simple and compound sentence structures that are appropriate. Errors in word choice and grammar may occasionally obscure meaning. • The response is partially successful in addressing the topic and task. Suggestions may be somewhat developed, occasionally redundant, or unclearly connected to the main idea. Organizational logic and transitional words are used in parts of the response, but some may be missing or obscure.
1	<p>Responses at the 1 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Limitations in vocabulary and sentence structures obscure meaning throughout the response, though the response may contain some content relevant to the stimulus. • The response is underdeveloped and reasons are insufficient to support the opinion. Connections among ideas are missing or obscure throughout the response, interfering with meaning.
0	<p>The response does not address the communicative demands of the task OR the response contains no English OR the response is off topic and does not address the prompt.</p>

Item 2: Read the email that follows. How should Maya respond to her friend Luna?

Sample Response 1

Hey! Im so happy for you because you are leaving for Puerto Rico tomorrow. Thank for tak the time to ask me if I wanted from Puerto Rico. You can bring me a shirt or a wallet says "I Love Puerto Rico".
Thank you
truely, your friend

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because the student is using vocabulary and sentence structure that is appropriate for the topic and he successfully addresses the topic and gives a suggestion. There are some errors that might be related to language development, or these might be because the student was hurrying and did not re-read the response. The teacher would want to look at other writing samples, or assign another sample that is similar in style to compare those results.

Sample Response 2

Hey Luna! I'm so happy that you're going to Puerto Rico. If you could, I would appreciate if you brought me back a necklace from a shop in Puerto Rico. If not though don't worry about it!
Sincerely,
Maya

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because it addresses the topic with appropriate vocabulary and sentence structure. The student gives a suggestion and remains logically organized. There are no errors in this sample that indicate the student is still struggling with language development with this type of writing.

Sample Response 3

Hey! Ummmm ☹ I don't know.
But a want a beautiful blouse of Puerto Rico, for me.
I want a gift for my mom. Can you give a othe blouse? Please.
And for my oldest sister give please a beautiful shoes.
Thank you!
I hope that you enjoy live in Puerto Rico
Friends,
Maya

Score 2

The response earned a score of 2 because it contains vocabulary that is appropriate, but sentence structure is awkward and requires some effort from the reader to understand the meaning. The student

demonstrates comprehension of the topic and that this response should be written in an informal style. However, the errors present are indicative of a student developing language. This student would benefit from doing more activities on sentence structure and organization.

Sample Response 4

Bring back some Chip from there, that we can eat together
take some picture from a beautiful park that you show to me

Score 2

The response earned a score of 2 because it addresses the topic, and gives several suggestions, but does not contain a variety of vocabulary and sentence structures that would take it to a 3. It also does not follow the format that would be appropriate for this activity. The errors here are not exclusive to language development, but could be addressed with activities that focus on sentence structure, forming plurals, and punctuation.

Sample Response 5

Hey! Friend. So good, I am happy for you, I hope you have good time. I love you. Beware! I all wait you come back.

Score 1

The response earned a score of 1 because the student does not successfully address the topic. The response is underdeveloped and the student does not provide any suggestions. It is written to the audience and in an informal tone, but errors indicate this student is still developing language and does not have strong writing skills.

Sample Response 6

Hello!!
Of course friend desire help you; I tink what I can help, in what you need, only say me what doom have for me 😊. I look forward; my best wishes and see you soon.
Att: a Hug
Maya

Score 1

The response earned a score of 1 because the student's sentence structure and vocabulary obscure the meaning. There is also no suggestion of what to get. The errors in this response are indicative of a student developing language and is possibly still translating directly from her native language to English. This student would benefit from more language instruction paired with writing. Providing examples of good writing and having opportunities to break that writing down would help her to better understand the components of good writing.

Item 3: Writing – Construct a Claim (Grade Band 6–12)

Score	Descriptors
5	<p>Responses at the 5 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains a variety of syntactic structures, such as simple, compound, and complex sentences, and vocabulary that are appropriate or higher. Word choice and grammar are effective and accurate, though the response may contain a few minor and isolated errors that do not interfere with meaning. • The student addresses the topic and task very well, developing an opinion and supporting it effectively with compelling reasons and examples. The response is coherent, demonstrating organizational logic and an effective use of a variety of transitional words and phrases to connect ideas. • The student’s message is easily understood on a first reading.
4	<p>Responses at the 4 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains vocabulary and simple, compound, and complex sentence structures that are appropriate. Word choice and grammar are generally accurate, but the response likely has several noticeable errors that do not obscure meaning. • The student successfully addresses the topic and task by constructing an opinion and supporting it with sufficient reasons and examples. Occasional details may not be fully elaborated or clearly relevant to the prompt. The response is organized, and uses transitional words and phrases to connect ideas, though occasionally connections between ideas may be unclear. • The student’s message is generally clear.
3	<p>Responses at the 3 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains vocabulary and simple sentence structures that are appropriate, though the range may be moderately limited. Errors in word choice or grammar may occasionally obscure meaning. • The response partially addresses the task, providing reasons or examples to support an opinion. However, some ideas may be underdeveloped, irrelevant, or redundant. The response demonstrates some organizational logic, but connections between ideas may be unclear or obscured at times. Transitional words and phrases used may be inaccurate or may be limited to common linking words. • The student’s overall message is understood, but some reader effort is required.
2	<p>Responses at the 2 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or frequent errors in usage obscure meaning in the response. • The response is limited in addressing the task. Reasons and examples may be insufficient and provide inadequate support for the student’s opinion. The organization is generally unclear, and connections between ideas are often obscured or missing. • Considerable reader effort is needed.
1	<p>Responses at the 1 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors in vocabulary and syntax seriously obscure meaning. • The response is seriously underdeveloped and lacks coherence.
0	<p>The response does not address the communicative demands of the task OR the response contains no English OR the response is off topic and does not address the prompt.</p>

Item 3: In the past, civilizations built new settlements close to water. What are the advantages and disadvantages of living near water? Write at least one advantage, one disadvantage, and one reason that shows both in a paragraph form.

Sample Response 1

The advantage is that you don't have to go some where and spent a lot of money. You can do what ever you want. one disadvantage is that wen it rain all the water go up and flood all the houses. little kyds can go in the water and maybe is to big for theme.

Score 4

The response earned a score of 4 because it has both an advantage and disadvantage, and an example of both. All of these are developed, but not to the point that it would earn a 5. There are errors, but the message is generally clear. The student demonstrates a good level of language comprehension with varied vocabulary and sentence structure. The errors here are not limited to an EL.

Sample Response 2

The advantages is you can go fishing, and it will be cool in hot weather.

The disadvantage is in winter if your house near the lake it will very cold.

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because while the student gives an example of an advantage and disadvantage, he did not include a sentence that addresses both. The student develops two reasons, but they are written more as a list of sentences and not organized as a paragraph. The sample does not contain any obvious language development errors, but instead demonstrates a lack of writing development. This student would benefit from more instruction related to developing ideas, including details, and organizing writing into paragraphs.

Sample Response 3

One advantage of living near water is that if the family loves fishing they then can fish if theres fishes, and one of the disadvantages are, that if a flood happens of something then the people who live close will possibly die first.

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because it lacks the example of how living by water is both an advantage and disadvantage. The response is simple and appropriate and the message is understood. There are some EL-specific errors particularly in making the word fish plural. This student would benefit from receiving additional instruction on adding more details to his writing and in seeing more examples of good writing.

Sample Response 4

advantage: these tree house have latter water nex to and if the people living in the house he want to go fishing no need go lorge.

Disadvantage: If the people living in the have kid is dangerous because whe the kid go outside to play maybe hi go inside the water.

Score 2

The response earned a score of 2 because the student does not give an example of how living near water is both. The response is not constructed in paragraph form, and the meaning is sometimes difficult to derive because of the frequency of errors. This student is most likely still developing language skills and would benefit from additional language instruction, as well as practicing and seeing more examples of good writing.

Sample Response 5

They bingnay they hous is de water

Score 0

The response earned a score of 0 because it does not address the topic or give enough information to score according to the elements of the rubric. More than likely, this student is very early in their English development progression and may benefit from early writing skills such as sentence stems, word organization activities and understanding sentence parts.

Item 4: Writing – Construct a Claim (Grade Band 6–12)

Score	Descriptors
5	<p>Responses at the 5 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains a variety of syntactic structures, such as simple, compound, and complex sentences, and vocabulary that are appropriate or higher. Word choice and grammar are effective and accurate, though the response may contain a few minor and isolated errors that do not interfere with meaning. • The student addresses the topic and task very well, developing an opinion and supporting it effectively with compelling reasons and examples. The response is coherent, demonstrating organizational logic and an effective use of a variety of transitional words and phrases to connect ideas. • The student’s message is easily understood on a first reading.
4	<p>Responses at the 4 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains vocabulary and simple, compound, and complex sentence structures that are appropriate. Word choice and grammar are generally accurate, but the response likely has several noticeable errors that do not obscure meaning. • The student successfully addresses the topic and task by constructing an opinion and supporting it with sufficient reasons and examples. Occasional details may not be fully elaborated or clearly relevant to the prompt. The response is organized, and uses transitional words and phrases to connect ideas, though occasionally connections between ideas may be unclear. • The student’s message is generally clear.
3	<p>Responses at the 3 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The response contains vocabulary and simple sentence structures that are appropriate, though the range may be moderately limited. Errors in word choice or grammar may occasionally obscure meaning. • The response partially addresses the task, providing reasons or examples to support an opinion. However, some ideas may be underdeveloped, irrelevant, or redundant. The response demonstrates some organizational logic, but connections between ideas may be unclear or obscured at times. Transitional words and phrases used may be inaccurate or may be limited to common linking words. • The student’s overall message is understood, but some reader effort is required.
2	<p>Responses at the 2 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A limited range of vocabulary and structures and/or frequent errors in usage obscure meaning in the response. • The response is limited in addressing the task. Reasons and examples may be insufficient and provide inadequate support for the student’s opinion. The organization is generally unclear, and connections between ideas are often obscured or missing. • Considerable reader effort is needed.
1	<p>Responses at the 1 level are typically characterized by:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Errors in vocabulary and syntax seriously obscure meaning. • The response is seriously underdeveloped and lacks coherence.
0	<p>The response does not address the communicative demands of the task OR the response contains no English OR the response is off topic and does not address the prompt.</p>

Item 4: Some math tests allow students to use calculators, others do not. Write a paragraph to explain to your math teacher your opinion about using calculators on math tests. Support your opinion with your own experiences.

Sample Response 1

I feel calculators should be used on tests because some problems can't be done in your head or on a sheet of paper. Especially as you get to more advanced math, a calculator can be necessary to solve certain problems.

Score 4

The response earned a score of 4 because it contains a variety of vocabulary and sentence structures but not enough development to earn a 5. The meaning is clear, word choice and grammar is mostly accurate. This student would benefit from additional writing instruction especially as it relates to development and using transitional words.

Sample Response 2

I agree with the use calculator to accelerate processes but to equate increase the complexity of the exercise to show a higher level of development.

I support my argument because international tests measure the understanding of processes and not the net calculation resolution.

This method is the application of the "matemachetas"

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because while the vocabulary is elevated, the reader must use some effort to determine the meaning. This student is very literate in their native language to be able to write like this, and should be able to continue to transfer his writing skills to English. He would benefit from more activities related to editing and revising their own writing.

Sample Response 3

I think the calculators can be used when is necessary because I take Algebra 1 and some question don't need to use calculator.

Score 2

The response earned a score of 2 because it lacks the development and variety that would be needed for a 3. The response is so basic that it demonstrates a limited range of vocabulary and sentence structure. It addresses the topic, but only at an elementary level. The student uses a contraction and different verb tenses, so her language development has progressed to the point where instruction should focus more on idea development and adding details.

Sample Response 4

Some teacher dont mater the student can use the calculator for the math test but the is shearing cause they found the result easy but some teacher they mater that cause they know that is shearing so the teacher dont like the students make the result easy they like the studentst get exforce for the math test.

Score 1

The response earned a score of 1 because the frequent errors in vocabulary and syntax obscure the meaning and make it difficult to determine if the student fully addresses the topic. The errors here are indicative of a student in the earlier stages of language development because he is not able to adequately convey his thoughts in a coherent manner. This student needs both language and writing instruction.

Item 5: Writing – Writing Questions (Grade Band 9–12)

Score	Descriptors
3	Responses at the 3 level are typically characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• The grammar and word choice are largely accurate. The response may contain isolated errors and typos that do not interfere with meaning.• The response successfully addresses the prompt and is consistent with the stimulus.
2	Responses at the 2 level are typically characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Though the student’s overall message may be understood, an error in grammar or word choice may interfere with meaning in part of the response.• Content may be related to the stimulus, but the response does not complete the required task.
1	Responses at the 1 level are typically characterized by: <ul style="list-style-type: none">• Errors in grammar and word choice obscure the overall meaning of the response.• The response consists of a few isolated English words and phrases related to the prompt or stimulus.
0	The response does not address the communicative demands of the task OR the response contains no English OR the response is off topic and does not address the prompt.

Item 5: Robert is buying a plant to grow at home. This will be his first time taking care of a plant. What questions should Robert ask the person at the plant store before he buys his plant? Write at least 3 questions.

Sample Response 1

Robert should ask the person at the plant store if 'how many times a day should he water his plant? Another question is if the "plant should get sun? the last question he should ask her is the "where should the plant be located at?

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because it addresses the prompt, is consistent with the stimulus and contains mostly accurate grammar and word choice. The errors do not obscure the meaning. This student is not exhibiting any common EL errors and would benefit from continued writing instruction.

Sample Response 2

It is an indoor or outdoor plant?
How often does it need to be watered?
What type of soil best supports the plant?

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because it successfully addresses the topic and is logically organized. This response does not contain any obvious EL errors.

Sample Response 3

At what times of the weeks do I have to water my plant?
How long can my plant survive?
Where do I place my plant?

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because it is an error-free, accurate response to the topic. This student should continue to receive writing instruction like his native English peers.

Sample Response 4

How much is it?

How do I take care of a plant?

When do I get a water for them?

Which temperature suitable for my plant?

What should I do if the insect eat my plant?

Score 3

The response earned a score of 3 because it goes beyond the requirement of the task and is largely accurate. It does have some grammar errors, but this could be due to rushing through the assignment. This student may require some additional practice with sentence organization and subject/verb agreement. The teacher may want to assign a similar assignment on another date to see if these errors are repeated.

Sample Response 5

Do you have flower yellow?

How long time this plant stay like that green?

What I need do for my plant stay alive for a long time?

How many yellow flowers do you have?

Score 2

The response earned a score of 2 because while it addresses the topic, the grammar is inaccurate and reveals errors that are indicative of an EL. This student would benefit from seeing more examples of good writing and then comparing her writing to those examples.

Sample Response 6

How much this

What is the name of the plant

Do you have orange tree

Score 2

The response earned a score of 2 because while it addresses the topic, the 2nd question seems to move away from the source material, or the student does not know how to correctly pose a question asking what is the type of plant. These errors are very common for students still developing language.

Sample Response 7

¿How mush and plant large an small?

¿How is shape care?

¿need set apply some fertilizante?

Score 1

The response earned a score of 1 because it uses both English and Spanish syntax and vocabulary. The sentence structure is more reflective of Spanish composition. This student would benefit from more language development.