



ELA 9 PreAP STAAR Distance Learning Packet: Week 1

Directions:

- 1. Complete each day's work.**
- 2. Read for 30 minutes each day.**
- 3. Complete the reading log daily.**

Week 1:
Composition: Expository Essay
Genre: Fiction

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

Danny read about a friendship that inspired him. He wrote the following paper to tell about the two friends. Read Danny's paper and look for any revisions he should make. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.

True Friendship

(1) In many ways Mack Bawden and Cameron Judd were typical high school friends. (2) They enjoyed playing video games, bowling, and watched movies together. (3) Both boys loved sports and did well in school. (4) But Mack and Cameron's friendship was different in one important way. (5) In fact, it might actually be described as extraordinary.

(6) Cameron had been born with cerebral palsy, a condition that limits a person's ability to move. (7) He used a wheelchair to get around. (8) He communicated through a sophisticated computer system that responded to his eye movements. (9) Cameron loved sports and hoped to be a coach someday. (10) Mack enjoyed sports, too. (11) He was also an excellent student and served as senior class president. (12) The boys had met years before when Mack was the new kid in the neighborhood. (13) By first grade the two had become inseparable, and by high school they were still best friends. (14) "We laugh at the same things," Mack once said, "but we're also different. (15) Cam's into following sports, while I'm more nerdy and into good grades. (16) He's fun to be around, so we find things we can do together."

(17) Although Mack and Cameron had been friends most of their lives, no one had ever expected them to run in high school track meets together. (18) Mack was determined. (19) He wanted his best friend to participate in that part of high school life, too. (20) Beginning in their junior year, the boys teamed up, and Mack used a special wheelchair to push Cameron in every race. (21) Mack understood that this meant he couldn't earn points at the meets. (22) But as he later explained, he didn't really care about that.



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Mack Bawden (*right*) and a Teammate
Pushing Cameron Judd in a Race

(23) As the seasons progressed, the boys had some memorable experiences together on the track. (24) In one race the front wheel of Cameron's wheelchair fell off. (25) Mack quickly unharnessed Cameron and carried him across the finish line in his arms. (26) At other meets Cameron held the baton during the 4x400-meter relay. (27) Each of the runners would take a turn pushing Cameron around the track while he carried the baton. (28) Running with Cameron slowed Mack down some, but the pair still managed to beat some other kids in races. (29) "We're not like the best, but we're not bad," Mack said proudly.

(30) Today both boys have finished high school and moved on to college. (31) They're still friends, and they still run together. (32) In fact, they recently completed a half marathon, finishing in less than an hour and a half, which is faster than seven minutes a mile!

- 1** What is the most effective way to revise sentence 2?
- A** They enjoyed playing video games, they bowled and watched movies together.
 - B** They enjoyed playing video games, bowling, and watching movies together.
 - C** They enjoyed playing video games and watched movies together and bowling.
 - D** They enjoyed playing video games, while they also enjoyed movie watching and bowling.
-

- 2** What is the most effective way to combine sentences 7 and 8?
- F** He used a wheelchair to get around and communicated through a sophisticated computer system that responded to his eye movements.
 - G** He used a wheelchair to get around, he communicated through a sophisticated computer system that responded to his eye movements.
 - H** Using a wheelchair to get around and communicating through a sophisticated computer system, he responded to his eye movements.
 - J** He used a wheelchair to get around, which communicated through a sophisticated computer system that responded to his eye movements.
-

- 3** Danny would like to add the following detail to the second paragraph (sentences 6–16).

He was a top-ten runner on the track and cross-country teams at Copper Hills High School.

Where is the most effective place to insert this sentence?

- A** After sentence 9
- B** After sentence 10
- C** After sentence 11
- D** After sentence 12

4 What is the most effective transition to add to the beginning of sentence 18?

- F** Consequently
 - G** In fact
 - H** However
 - J** In the end
-

5 Danny would like to add a relevant quotation to the end of the third paragraph (sentences 17–22). Which of the following could best follow sentence 22 and help support the ideas in this paragraph?

- A** “He hangs out with Cameron every weekend,” Mack’s mom noted.
 - B** “I just felt like it needed to be done,” Mack said, “so I did it.”
 - C** “High school has been just great,” Mack commented.
 - D** “Mack was nice to me and really funny,” Cameron explained.
-

6 Danny ended his paper abruptly. Which sentence could be added after sentence 32 to bring this paper to a more effective close?

- F** Isn’t it hard to imagine a person in a wheelchair traveling that fast in a race?
- G** In conclusion, only time will tell how much these amazing runners will be able to accomplish if their friendship stays strong and their determination brings hope to others.
- H** Mack and Cameron’s story is inspirational, a reminder to the world that challenges can never stop true friendship.
- J** Obviously, Mack and Cameron will be friends forever and will be sure to make a difference in many exciting ways.

WRITTEN COMPOSITION: Expository

Read the information in the box below.

A Gallup poll found that Americans are 20 percent happier on weekends than on workdays. Americans also ranked working as one of their least pleasurable activities, while socializing after work was one of their most pleasurable activities.

Although most people must structure their days around school or work, they still prefer their free time. Think carefully about this statement.

Write an essay explaining the importance of making time for both work and play.

Be sure to —

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

USE THIS PREWRITING PAGE TO
PLAN YOUR COMPOSITION.

MAKE SURE THAT YOU WRITE YOUR COMPOSITION ON
THE LINED PAGE IN THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.

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STAAR WRITTEN COMPOSITIONS

A large rectangular box with a thick black border, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the box, providing a structured area for students to write their compositions.

STUDENTS MAY NOT WRITE OUTSIDE THE BOX

FICTION

Genre Definition: Imaginative narrative in any form that is designed to entertain

Genre Examples: Novels, short stories, folktales, legends, myths, fables, historical fiction

Thinking Jobs:

1. Who are the characters?
2. What's the problem?
3. How does the problem get resolved?
4. What's the lesson learned?

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

T. J. has moved from a rural area to a large city. After meeting the narrator and the narrator's friends on an abandoned rooftop where they regularly spend time together, T. J. suggests they make a rooftop garden to grow watermelons. He hopes the activity will bond them as friends as well as bring a sense of Alabama, where he had his own acre of farmland, to his new home. The boys have established the garden after much hard work.

from **Antaeus**

by Borden Deal

- 1 Then an adult voice said behind us: "What are you boys doing up here?"
- 2 It startled us, for no one had ever come up here before, in all the time we had been using the roof of the factory. We jerked around and saw three men standing near the trap door at the other end of the roof. They weren't policemen, or night watchmen, but three men in plump business suits, looking at us. They walked toward us.
- 3 "What are you boys doing up here?" the one in the middle said again.
- 4 We stood still, guilt heavy among us, levied by the tone of voice, and looked at the three strangers.
- 5 The men stared at the grass flourishing behind us. "What's this?" the man said. "How did this get up here?"
- 6 "Sure is growing good, ain't it?" T. J. said conversationally. "We planted it."
- 7 The men kept looking at the grass as if they didn't believe it. It was a thick carpet over the earth now, a patch of deep greenness startling in the sterile industrial surroundings.
- 8 "Yes, sir," T. J. said proudly. "We toted that earth up here and planted that grass." He fluttered the seed catalogue. "And we're just fixing to plant us some watermelon."
- 9 The man looked at him then, his eyes strange and faraway. "What do you mean, putting this on the roof of my building?" he said. "Do you want to go to jail?"
- 10 T. J. looked shaken. The rest of us went silent, frightened by the authority of his voice. We had grown up aware of adult authority, of policemen and night watchmen and teachers, and this man sounded like all the others. But it was a new thing to T. J.

- 11 "Well, you wasn't using the roof," T. J. said. He paused a moment and added shrewdly, "So we just thought to pretty it up a little bit."
- 12 "And sag it so I'd have to rebuild it," the man said sharply. He turned away, saying to a man beside him, "See that all that junk is shoveled off by tomorrow."
- 13 "Yes, sir," the man said.
- 14 T. J. started forward. "You can't do that," he said. "We toted it up here, and it's our earth. We planted it and raised it and toted it up here."
- 15 The man stared at him coldly. "But it's my building," he said. "It's to be shoveled off by tomorrow."
- 16 "It's our earth," T. J. said desperately. "You ain't got no right!"
- 17 The men walked on without listening and descended clumsily through the trap door. T. J. stood looking after them, his body tense with anger, until they had disappeared. They wouldn't even argue with him, wouldn't let him defend his earth-rights.
- 18 He turned to us. "We won't let 'em do it," he said fiercely. "We'll stay up here all day tomorrow and the day after that, and we won't let 'em do it."
- 19 We just looked at him. We knew that there was no stopping it. He saw it in our faces, and his face wavered for a moment before he gripped it into determination.
- 20 "They ain't got no right," he said. "It's our earth. It's our land. Can't nobody touch a man's own land."
- 21 We kept on looking at him, listening to the words but knowing that it was no use. The adult world had descended on us even in our richest dream, and we knew there was no calculating the adult world, no fighting it, no winning against it.
- 22 We started moving slowly toward the parapet and the fire escape, avoiding a last look at the green beauty of the earth that T. J. had planted for us . . . had planted deeply in our minds as well as in our experience. We filed slowly over the edge and down the steps to the plank, T. J. coming last, and all of us could feel the weight of his grief behind us.
- 23 "Wait a minute," he said suddenly, his voice harsh with the effort of calling. We stopped and turned, held by the tone of his voice, and looked up at him standing above us on the fire escape.
- 24 "We can't stop them?" he said, looking down at us, his face strange in the dusky light. "There ain't no way to stop 'em?"
- 25 "No," Blackie said with finality. "They own the building."

- 26 We stood still for a moment, looking up at T. J., caught into inaction by the decision working in his face. He stared back at us, and his face was pale and mean in the poor light.
- 27 "They ain't gonna touch my earth," he said fiercely. "They ain't gonna lay a hand on it! Come on."
- 28 He turned around and started up the fire escape again, almost running against the effort of climbing. We followed more slowly, not knowing what he intended. By the time we reached him, he had seized a board and thrust it into the soil, scooping it up and flinging it over the parapet into the areaway below. He straightened and looked us squarely in the face.
- 29 "They can't touch it," he said. "I won't let 'em lay a dirty hand on it!"
- 30 We saw it then. He stooped to his labor again and we followed, the gusts of his anger moving in frenzied labor among us as we scattered along the edge of earth, scooping it and throwing it over the parapet, destroying with anger the growth we had nurtured with such tender care. The soil carried so laboriously upward to the light and the sun cascaded swiftly into the dark areaway, the green blades of grass crumpled and twisted in the falling.
- 31 It took less time than you would think . . . the task of destruction is infinitely easier than that of creation. We stopped at the end, leaving only a scattering of loose soil, and when it was finally over, a stillness stood among the group and over the factory building. We looked down at the bare sterility of black tar, felt the harsh texture of it under the soles of our shoes, and the anger had gone out of us, leaving only a sore aching in our minds like over-stretched muscles.
- 32 T. J. stood for a moment, his breathing slowing from anger and effort, caught into the same contemplation of destruction as all of us. He stooped slowly, finally, and picked up a lonely blade of grass left trampled under our feet and put it between his teeth, tasting it, sucking the greenness out of it into his mouth. Then he started walking toward the fire escape, moving before any of us were ready to move, and disappeared over the edge while we stared after him.

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1 What does the point of view used in the excerpt help the reader understand?

- A How the adults found the garden
 - B How T. J.'s reactions differ from the reactions of the other boys
 - C How long the boys worked on the garden
 - D How the boys agreed to help T. J. plant the garden
-

2 How is the first sentence of the excerpt important to the plot?

- F It foreshadows the resolution.
 - G It introduces the main character.
 - H It initiates the main conflict.
 - J It presents an unanswered question.
-

3 In paragraph 30, what does the word *laboriously* mean?

- A At great cost
- B For good reason
- C Quietly and in secrecy
- D Slowly and with difficulty

4 Read this quotation from paragraph 20.

"It's our earth. It's our land. Can't nobody touch a man's own land."

The irony of this quotation is that it calls attention to —

- F the love T. J. has for the outdoors while he is on a man-made structure
 - G the rooftop being abandoned and the men still caring about its welfare
 - H the fact that T. J. does not have the right to use the rooftop despite creating the garden
 - J the effort used to create a garden when it can be easily destroyed
-

5 What is a central theme of the excerpt?

- A Adults often lose their sense of accomplishment as they age.
 - B People take pride in their work.
 - C People rely on authority figures to maintain order.
 - D It is important to recognize the value of green spaces.
-

6 What does T. J.'s climb back up the fire escape in paragraph 28 reveal about him?

- F He has difficulty following rules.
- G He enjoys being the leader of a group.
- H He behaves in ways that others consider immature.
- J He takes action once he makes up his mind.

7 In paragraph 25, why does Blackie say, “They own the building”?

- A** To help the men by supporting their claim
 - B** To rally the boys to go against what T. J. has planned
 - C** To indicate the limitations of what the men can do
 - J** To convince T. J. that it is pointless to resist
-

8 In paragraph 32, what does the blade of grass represent for T. J.?

- F** A final remnant of something precious
- G** The harvest he anticipated
- H** The new home he has found
- J** His friendship with the other boys

Antaeus | QUESTION 1

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 1.

A B C D

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Antaeus | QUESTION 2

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 2.

F G H J

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Antaeus | QUESTION 3

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 3.

A B C D

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Antaeus | QUESTION 4

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 4.

F G H J

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Antaeus | QUESTION 5

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 5.

A B C D

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Antaeus | QUESTION 6

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 6.

F G H J

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Antaeus | QUESTION 7

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 7.

A B C D

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Antaeus | QUESTION 8

Part 1: Circle the correct answer for Question 8.

F G H J

Part 2: Provide justification for your answer.

Part 3: Provide justification for why the other answer choices that you did not select were incorrect.

Incorrect Answer	Rationale

Student Name: _____

Class Period: _____

Independent Reading Log

Day and Date	Title	Pages	1 question or prediction
Day: <i>Monday</i> Date: _____			
Day: <i>Tuesday</i> Date: _____			
Day: <i>Wednesday</i> Date: _____			
Day: <i>Thursday</i> Date: _____			
Day: <i>Friday</i> Date: _____			