SAGE Writing Scoring Sample: 9th Grade

These writing scoring sample essays were produced by grade-level students. Annotations follow each essay explaining the score in reference to the rubric. The essays were written in response to the SAGE Training Test prompts, and were completed within the time recommendations in the test directions (Argument/Opinion ≈ 60 minutes; Informative/Explanatory ≈ 30 minutes). While SAGE is not a timed test, time estimates are provided as guidance for student writers.

Training Test Informative/Explanatory Prompt: 9-11 Grade Band

Write an informational essay on the relationship between clothing styles and developments in clothing creation. Your essay must be based on ideas, concepts, and information from the passage set.

Manage your time carefully so that you can
- Plan your essay
- Write your essay
- Revise and edit your essay

Your written response should be in the form of a multiparagraph essay. Spend about 30 minutes on this essay, including the time you spend reading, planning, writing, revising, and editing.

See the Training Test to view the passage set associated with this prompt:

http://sageportal.org/

Grade 9 Student Scoring Sample

Have you ever wanted to wear a two piece fox pelt that is only held up by a belt? Nor have I. But without important developments in the creation of clothes, we wouldn't have much of a choice. During the Industrial Revolution, style was largely a practical matter and was influenced by a person's culture. According to "Tailoring," the Scottish had different patterns that showed what clan a person was in. Polynesians would beat plant fibers and tree bark into tapa cloth, a process that had religious significant for Hawaiians. There was also no sizing system, so they would use simple things like belts or sashes to keep clothes on. Because the technology was basic, so was the style.

However, the author of "Tailoring" shows how this all began to change during the Renaissance. Instead of using a sash to make clothes, they sewed several different pieces of fabric together which gave them a more tailored fit. They still didn't have any buttons or zippers, though. As a result, people were sewn into clothes. In the 1600s, making clothes became a lot more complicated with the addition of more intricate patterns. Garments with embroideries, gemstones, and other new patterns took longer to complete and were more difficult to make. The Civil War led to another change—the switch from clothing being made in the home to clothing being made in factories. In order to meet the demands of the increasing number of soldiers, factories made a lot of uniforms. They made them in sizes that were averages of measurements taken from soldiers. This change was driven by need, not by style.

Similarly, mass production of women's clothes started in the late 1920s. With the rise of urbanization, a new fashion emerged. Hand-made clothes were now considered old-fashioned and ready-made clothes were considered more stylish. People started to order clothes or buy them in chain stores. They were easier to get, faster to produce, and cheaper to buy. There was a downside, though. Many clothing companies had their own sizes that were based off of little to no information. This obviously caused problems for the producer and the consumer. Clothes didn't fit right and prices went way up because alterations had to be made to the clothes. But, as the article from the National Institute of Standards and Technology says, the government established a standardized sizing system in 1937 that all companies had to follow.

Along with the new ways of making and purchasing clothes, new styles continued to emerge. Instead of baggy shirts and pants for men, they wore suits. Women who used to wear big custom dresses instead wore more trimmed dresses that closed with zippers and buttons. Tailoring didn't just shut down, though. Wealthier people still got their clothes from tailors, but it was now a luxury. It was less expensive to get clothes from stores or catalogues. These clothing stores and catalogues sold the same things to millions of other people, so a person's clothes would be less unique. People adapted quickly, though, because of how much more convenient it was. Trends changed more quickly as well. Because it was so simple to make these clothes, the makers could have new styles quickly. All this new technology led to new fashions. Without the advances in technology, clothing would look very different than it does now. New technologies have directly resulted in changes in fashion. As technology continues to advance, it's likely that clothing styles will follow suit.

Total Essay Score: 4 – Highly Proficient

Explanation of Scoring:

Statement of Purpose/Focus and Organization: Highly Proficient

The response clearly introduces the controlling idea that production methods have influenced style over the course of clothing's history. The student also maintains this as the primary focus throughout the essay, clearly communicating the essay's purpose to the audience. By using a chronological pattern of organization, and by treating the changes of style and production methods as separate but closely linked entities, the essay progresses logically from the beginning to the end. The use of transitions is strong and appropriate. The writer also varies sentence length and structure well, using short sentences to emphasize points and longer ones to tie together more complex ideas.

Evidence/Elaboration: Proficient

The response integrates a substantial amount of information from the passage set. The information is integrated smoothly. However, the student does not always cite the source of information, leading to confusion about the text from which it came. The language is straightforward and clear, which helps express the ideas clearly. Through the organic and substantial integration of information, the writer supports the controlling idea well and achieves depth of information.

Editing/Conventions: Highly Proficient

Though the student's writing includes a few minor errors, the student consistently applies grade-appropriate grammar and usage, demonstrating adequate command of language conventions.