

2027 MCAS Sample Student Work and Scoring Guide

Grade 7 English Language Arts Practice Test

Question 28: Extended Response

Reporting Categories: Language and Writing

Standard: [L.PK-12.1](#) – Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

Standard: [L.PK-12.2](#) – Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

Standard: [L.PK-12.3](#) – Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

Standard: [W.PK-12.2](#) – Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

Standard: [W.PK-12.4](#) – Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.

Extended Response Prompt

Write a response that is about **one to two paragraphs** in length. Be sure to:

- Use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

Based on “The Girl Who Changed the Universe,” write a response that explains how Cecilia showed determination in her pursuit to become an astronomer. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Continue to the following page to see the scoring guides for this question. Sample student responses begin on page 3.

Scoring Guide for Written Expression

Select a score point in the table below to view the sample student response.

Score*	Description
<u>3A</u> <u>3B</u>	• effective explanation of ideas • effective selection of evidence to support ideas • effective organization
<u>2A</u> <u>2B</u>	• adequate explanation of ideas • adequate selection of evidence to support ideas • adequate organization
<u>1A</u> <u>1B</u>	• minimal explanation of ideas • minimal selection of evidence to support ideas • minimal organization
<u>0A</u> <u>0B</u>	• does not address the question or incorrectly responds to the question

Scoring Guide for Standard English Conventions

Select a score point in the table below to view the sample student response.

Score*	Description
<u>2A</u> <u>2B</u> <u>2C</u>	• appropriate control of a variety of sentence structures relative to the length of the response • appropriate control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of the response
<u>1A</u> <u>1B</u> <u>1C</u>	• partial control of a variety of sentence structures relative to the length of the response • partial control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of the response
<u>0A</u> <u>0B</u>	• no control of grammar, usage, and mechanics and/or sentences of insufficient length

*In both Scoring Guides, letters are used to distinguish between sample student responses that earned the same score (e.g., 2A and 2B).

Written Expression—Score Point 3A**Standard English Conventions—Score Point 2A**

In the passage "The Girl Who Changed the Universe, Cecelia shows determination in her pursuit of becoming an astronomer in several ways. In this inspiring story, she never stops pursuing her dream. She devotes her entire life to it and perseveres even when encountering unfairness.

Firstly, Cecelia believes in her dream and never gives up. While talking to her friend Betty who informs Cecelia that she can't take astronomy because her shop is science, Cecelia responds "You are perfectly right ... but they can't stop me from attending the astronomy lectures and reading as much astronomy as I can pick up on the side" (Paragraph 13). This shows how much Cecelia is determined to pursue her dream, regardless of the expectations, since she does activities to pursue her dream, even though she has other commitments. Additionally, Cecelia pursues her dream her whole life, even up to her death. "Finally, at age 56, she became the first woman promoted to full professor and then the first woman to become a department chair at Harvard," (Paragraph 32). This reveals that even after discovering and loving astronomy, her passion continued, since she became a Harvard professor at 56, after many years of hard work and determination. Finally, Cecelia showed determination in her pursuit of her astronomy dream by continuing to persevere under unfair conditions. In the passage, "Even after such a brilliant start, Cecelia faced many difficulties making a career in astronomy. For years, she did all the work of a professor but was called a "technical assistant"," (Paragraph 32). This implies that even though Cecelia was treated unfairly because of her gender, she was determined to pursue her career, since she worked for years under unfair conditions just to become a professor. All in all, Cecelia showed determination to pursue her career in several ways. She believes in her dream and never gives up, devotes her entire life to her career, and perseveres under unfair conditions.

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Written Expression—Score Point 3B**Standard English Conventions—Score Point 2B**

In the passage, "The Girl Who Changed the Universe, the main character, Cecilia showed determination in her pursuit of becoming an astronomer by studying, asking questions, and finding out everything she could even though at the time, women were still oppressed and universities did not grant women degrees. This claim is accurate because in the text, "The Girl Who Changed the Universe", it states ". . . She finished her course of study in 1923 but was not awarded an official degree. Cambridge did not grant degrees to women until 1948. Finding no astronomy jobs open to women in England, Cecilia pursued an opportunity in the United States." This evidence references Cecilia's determination because she had to move all the way to the United States in order to get a job that is related to astronomy, and even then, she was employed solely as a "computer" much like every other woman there. There, at her job, the Harvard Collage Observatory (HCO), Cecilia asked the director of the HCO to accept her on a fellowship, he agreed, leading her to become the first student to earn a doctorate degree in astronomy (at Harvard). Yet her degree was recorded at a collage called Radcliffe Collage, because Harvard had yet to offer degrees to women. This can also show that she was determined to become an astronomer because since Harvard refused to grant women their degrees, women like Cecilia had to get fellowships in order to get a degree, yet the degree was by a different collage. Moreover, 40 years later, Cecilia's paper that described her research was labeled "the most brilliant PhD thesis ever written in astronomy" showing that eventually, her determination paid off. Later, she became a professor at Harvard and was the first woman to do so.

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Written Expression—Score Point 2A**Standard English Conventions—Score Point 2C**

In the article "The Girl Who Changed the Universe" by Rachel Bithell, Cecelia demonstrates determination when becoming an astronomer. After listening to Eddington's lecture, she wanted to become an astronomer. In paragraph 8, Bithell writes, "A complete transformation of my world view. I am done with botany. I am going to be an astronomer." This shows that even though Cecelia had a major in botany, after one lecture, she wanted to become an astronomer. Bithell also writes in paragraph 14, "Her presence at astronomy lectures sometimes invited stares, but she was undeterred." This reveals that she didn't care that people were staring at her or what they thought about her. In paragraph 30, Bithell explains, "Over the next three years, Cecilia followed her ambitions at Cambridge." After reading the article, The Girl Who Changed the Universe by Rachel Bithell, it is clear that Cecelisa shows determination when becoming an astronomer.

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Written Expression—Score Point 2B**Standard English Conventions—Score Point 1A**

In the artical Cecilia showed lot of her determination in pursuite to become a astronomer and she showedd it by never giving up and keep on pushing through to reach her dream. The lectur was inspiration and she was entranced and very determined to do it and not give up trying.

The first example are "stomped in time to her steps each time she attended physics class". This shows she had determined because even though she might beintimidatd by others she still went to the lecture. When she left and Betty said she cant switch to astronomy she said "they cant stop from attending the astrology lecturs and reading as much astrology as I can pick up on the side." This just prove here determination because even though the school would not let her change major she would still work and go to lectur as if she was in astrunomy even if no one would admit it.

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Written Expression—Score Point 1A**Standard English Conventions—Score Point 1B**

In the passage by Rachel Bithell the woman Cecilia showed determination in her pursuit to become an astronomer by going to two different colleges and still not getting a degree but still continuing because of her ambitions and even moving to a different country. " Over the next three years, Celia followed her ambitions at Cambridge. "Cambridge did not grant degrees to women until 1948. Finding no astronomy jobs open to women in England, Celia pursued an opportunity in the United States. For decades."

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Written Expression—Score Point 1B**Standard English Conventions—Score Point 0A**

determination showed in her pursuit to become an astronomer by learning more and learning the necessary mathematics for astronomers. it says, "Edington suggested reading, answered questions helped her learn necessary Mathematics and gave rher access to observatory"

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Written Expression—Score Point 0A**Standard English Conventions—Score Point 1C**

In the short story "The Girl Who Changed the Universe" there was a woman named Cecelia. Cecelia had been taking physics but not for very long. Out of 500 people only four women got tickets to the lecture and she was one of them thanks to a woman who became sick and gave Cecelia her ticket. When she got the ticket she was very happy and grateful.

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Written Expression—Score Point 0B

Standard English Conventions—Score Point 0B

I know that she did like the space observatory show and she got a ticket to see the show it talks about expeditions where monkeys were on an island

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