



## ECCE-Writing Samples with Commentary

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### **About the Test**

The ECCE Writing test measures test takers at the B2 level of English on the Common European Framework of Reference (CEFR). Test takers have 30 minutes to write a response from a choice of two options: an email/letter or an essay.

### **How to Practice**

To practice for the ECCE Writing test, use the additional prompts provided. Write about one page in response to the prompt in the time allotted.

To evaluate your performance, please refer to the Sample Responses and Commentaries below.

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## Prompt 1 – Email

Dear Ms. Johnson,

I have been thinking about the end of the year trip that your school is planning. And this trip can be both good for the students, so they learn about new cultures and about a new place, and good for the school in planning for the next year because it can use the trip as a basis for its planning, by making activities and tests using the knowledge acquired in the trip.

Thinking about it all, I have done some research, and I found Paris to be the best place for the students to be taken. I think this for several reasons.

First of all, Paris has the most beautiful museums that are full of culture, where the students can learn about many artists, styles of art, and the history of art in France. While visiting museums, the teachers can come up with ideas for projects for the students to do the following school year, like art projects (painting or sculptures) or reports about artists. In addition to going to museums, I think students would want to visit places like the Eifel Tower and Pantheon while they are in Paris. Before they go, they could study the history of those places, and then when they are there, they can see them in person. They can take tours and learn even more about the history of France. The teachers can connect this experience with the curriculum by having students create fun videos about each place, and then they can show those videos to their students next year. I think that this would make students more excited about learning.

I am sure that this trip would be a great choice. Both of students and teachers would love to go to Paris!

Sincerely,

Melinda W.

### Commentary

- The writer provides multiple reasons and details to support her idea that the school’s trip should be to Paris. Her inclusion of specific supporting details, like locations to visit and activities to do while there, as well as her reasons for visiting the different areas (“learn about history,” “make students more excited about learning”), makes her argument strong.
- Ideas within this email are appropriately organized. The writer uses transition markers to connect ideas clearly: “First of all,” “While visiting museums,” “Before they go.” The use of cohesive devices helps the information flow in a logical manner.
- The writer demonstrates a good range of vocabulary in this email: “using the knowledge acquired,” “see them in person,” “connect this experience with the curriculum.” A good range of grammar is also evident as the writer only makes occasional errors.
- The context is established well in the paragraph 1 where the writer explains her purpose for writing as well as how the trip can be beneficial for both students and teachers. Addressing how it can be beneficial in an academic way shows that the writer understands and can appeal to her audience (the principal of the school). The register used in the email is appropriate for the audience as well.

► **This test taker is well prepared to take the ECCE Writing section.**

## Prompt 1 – Email

Dear Ms. Johnson,

I write this letter for our year trip. I have many locations in my mind like Volos, Athens, Kerkira. But my opinion is we are go to Volos.

Volos it is the big city it has many museums, restaurants, hotels, views, and more. I had gone with my family when I was twelve years old and I really like it. One reason I like so much is Volos have great food. All childrean we like the food, so students like it. Also, at night we can go to the center of volos it has a great view at dark. I believe we have very fun all students. It will be a fantastic trip for all.

What do you think for this trip to volos Ms Johnson? Do you agree with me?

Yours Faithfully,

Angelica

### Commentary

- The argument in this email is adequately developed. The content includes a brief discussion of why the writer thinks visiting Volos is good; she gives her opinions of the things she enjoyed when she went there.
- The email is organized simply into a short introduction, body paragraph, and closing paragraph. Ideas are presented in the body paragraph as a list with some connectors between sentences: “One reason,” “Also.”
- The writer attempts to use a range of structures, but grammar errors are present, including run-on sentences and incorrect verb tense use. In general, the vocabulary used in this email is sufficient to fulfill the task of writing an email. Despite mistakes, the reader is able to understand what the writer intends.
- Some misunderstanding of audience and purpose for writing is evident. The tone of the closing sentences (“What do you think for this trip to volos Ms Johnson? Do you agree with me?”) is slightly inappropriate for the task of writing an email to a teacher. In addition, while the purpose for writing is to give an opinion about where students should go, the writer does not include the idea of students going on a trip and instead focuses on why she thinks it would be a fun trip. She also does not provide the context that she is writing this from a student’s point of view.

▶ **This test taker is on track but should continue to prepare for the ECCE Writing section.**

## Prompt 1 – Essay

Being a teenager means that you have more responsibilities. In a few years you will be an adult, so you will have to find a job. Having working experience is good but should teenagers work in an after-school job?

To begin with having already working experience is beneficial, as it is easier to find a job. Furthermore during teenage years you will get paid and you can save the money, so you can buy something in the future or pay your own studies. Also, you become more independent and your self-esteem levels higher, which make you feel more confident about yourself.

On the other hand if your afternoons are full from your job you do not have enough free time to hang out with your friends, to relax or even to do your homework for the next day. Moreover working may seem boring to some teens. There is also another downside which should be mentioned; the fact that the employer might not pay you enough for your working hours.

In short having an after-school job is has more positive than negative aspects. This is the reason why I believe that teenagers should be required to have an after-school job.

### Commentary

- The writer develops his argument adequately by presenting both the positive (paragraph 2) and negative (paragraph 3) sides of requiring a teenager to have an after-school job. He concludes by stating that he agrees with the statement provided in the prompt that teenagers should be required to have an after-school job.
- Ideas within the response are clearly and adequately organized. The writer uses some standard connectors: “To begin with,” “Furthermore,” “On the other hand.” However, beginning each sentence with standard transitional words or phrases makes the use of the connectors within the essay seem mechanical.
- The writer’s use of language is sufficient in this essay. He uses simple, compound, and complex sentences. Some sentences contain grammatical errors (“having an after-school job is has more positive than negative aspects”), but the reader can understand what the writer is trying to say. Vocabulary is generally used appropriately: “beneficial,” “independent,” “self-esteem,” “hang out,” “downside.”
- The writer has an adequate sense of audience as is evidenced by appropriate use of tone for the essay-writing task. His purpose for writing is clear as he poses the question “Having working experience is good but should teenagers work in an after-school job?” in paragraph 1 and then proceeds to answer the question in the rest of the essay. Therefore, the reader is generally able to follow the text.

► **This test taker is adequately prepared to take the ECCE Writing section.**

## Prompt 1 – Essay

Teenagers have an after-school job

First of all, teenagers must have got after-school job because this help them to understand the value of money. For example, if they make money by themselves, they will know how or where to spend the money. Secondly, the job helps teenagers to become more carefully about how to spend the money, also they will be carefully with their lifes.

Furthermore, job helps teenagers to become sociable and kind with others people. Also the job will learn teens to help other people or to be worry about others people. Also job makes the teens to help everyone who have got problems or money problems. Thirty, teens they will learn how to leave alone for a little away from their parents and this help teens for their graduate. Also, they learn to speak another language which they are speaking now. And there are the reasons which I believe that teenager must be work after school.

### Commentary

- This essay has an inadequately developed argument. The writer states his argument in the first sentence of the response, but the rest of the paragraph 1 is basically repeating the same information: that having a job will teach them how to spend money. Paragraph 2 lists benefits of having a job, but the writer does not elaborate on any of them or explain how having a job causes these results (i.e., the writer does not explain how having a job would help the student to learn another language).
  - Ideas are organized in a simple and basic manner in this essay. In paragraph 2, the writer lists some benefits of having a job, but almost every sentence uses the connector “Also.” The ideas within the paragraphs are not always connected despite the use of connecting words.
  - The writer attempts to use a range of grammatical structures, but the essay contains many errors. Vocabulary errors are also present (e.g., “learn” instead of “teach,” “leave alone for a little”). At times, the reader may have difficulty understanding what the writer is trying to communicate.
  - The writer does not establish the context for writing and instead begins the essay with benefits of working. This, along with some misunderstanding of audience, has a negative effect on the reader’s ability to comprehend the text.
- ▶ **This test taker is not prepared and should work on developing their writing skills before taking the ECCE Writing section.**

## Prompt 2 – Email

Dear Teachers,

Our school is sometimes a little bit boring for many students. This is because we do the same things all the time, and we do the lessons the same way every time. So many students decided to give you some ideas to make our school better. I think our ideas are very good, and I appreciate that you want to hear them.

Our first idea is about how to do lessons. We think that reading books and doing exercises aren't very interesting, and we were thinking of doing some games that contain the most important information from the unit. Doing the lesson this way is very useful and smart because kids love playing games. If the games contain information from the unit, students will learn it better. One more idea for the lessons is, not to give many tests because children have to study more. This makes them more anxious, and they can't write as well as when they are relaxed. When we take tests, we often think that we haven't learned many things because we look only at the grades.

Another idea we had is to go on trips and see theatre plays based in history, ancient tragedy, and others. Like when we are studying Shakespeare, we could go see Romeo and Juliet at a famous theatre. This is a great way for us to visit and learn about new places as well as learn history and drama. These are important subjects that we would have fun learning about if we go on trips, and of course books are not as exciting as trips.

A final idea is that we would like to design our classroom. For example, we would like to paint the walls a different color so we feel more relaxed, and we want to place our desks wherever we want. If we could put them in a circle, it would make the classroom feel more welcome.

In conclusion, we need to do fun things while we learn about new subjects, like play games or go to the theatre. We also need a better design for our classroom so it will be easier and more comfortable to learn. I think we can do these things, and they will make our school more interesting.

We hope you like our suggestions for our class! Thank you for taking the time to ask us how we could make our school better.

Thank you,

Sergio

### Commentary

- The writer presents several ideas about how school could be improved in three areas: lessons, going on trips, and the design of the classroom. Each idea is supported by original details that provide the logic behind the request.
- The writer doesn't rely solely on traditional connecting words and is able to use varied cohesive devices to link the ideas within his response, including connectors like "Our first idea" and pronoun referents like "These are important subjects" (referring back to history and drama). Ideas flow smoothly within the email.
- The email demonstrates a good range of grammar and vocabulary. The writer uses simple, compound, and complex sentences effectively with only occasional errors. Vocabulary used is appropriate, though it could benefit from more specificity (e.g., in paragraph 1: "do the same things all the time, and we do the lessons the same way every time"). However, this email still displays a good variety of language.
- Context is established well in paragraph 1 of the email as the writer sets up the background that some students find school boring at times, so he is writing with ideas about how to make

it more interesting. The writer shows a keen awareness of audience as displayed in the final sentence of paragraph 1 (“I appreciate that you want to hear them”) as well as in the final paragraph (“Thank you for taking the time to ask us how we could make our school better”). Appropriate register is used throughout the email.

- ▶ **This test taker is well prepared to take the ECCE Writing section.**

## Prompt 2 – Email

Dear Teachers,

My name is Mariana and I am a student on the third grade of Junior High school. I write this email because I have some ideas about this situation.

It is true that many students are bored in class and one reason is the school and more specifically the teachers. In my opinion of doing the class more interesting is that you can do the lessons with a funny way. for example the History lesson for many students is boring, but if you teach them with a different way like showing them videos about this days lesson they maybe concentrate more at the history and not in other things apart from history.

If I wanted to come to a conclusion I would say that teachers must do the students to love their class and the best way to teach them the days lesson is to play online games that is about history.

Thank you for giving me the chance to express my viewpoint.

Your sincerely

Mariana

### Commentary

- The argument in this email is inadequately developed. The writer provides one suggestion about how classes can be more interesting: “you can do the lessons with a funny way.” However, this idea is not supported beyond the example of “showing them videos.” In paragraph 3, the writer introduces the idea of playing online games about history, but no further support is presented.
- Ideas within this email are adequately organized. The writer uses standard connectors to link ideas: “In my opinion,” “for example,” “If I wanted to come to a conclusion.”
- The writer displays a sufficient range of grammar and vocabulary to fulfill the task. The writer has some difficulty controlling more complex sentences: “In my opinion of doing the class more interesting is that you can do the lessons with a funny way.”
- The writer attempts to establish the context for writing in paragraph 1 but is only partially successful as she does not mention what “this situation” refers to. However, the reader is generally able to follow the text because the following paragraph mentions that “many students are bored in class.” In addition, an adequate sense of audience is displayed as the writer states: “Thank you for giving me the chance to express my viewpoint.”

▶ **This test taker is on track but should continue to prepare for the ECCE Writing section.**

## Prompt 2 – Essay

There are many ways to exercise such as team sports or sports that you do alone.

I think that the best way to exercise is by doing a sport that you are alone. Firstly in team sports you might not play all the time period of the game, so you don't exercise a lot. Secondly when you do a sport that you are alone the trainer looks almost all the time what you are doing, so if you make a mistake the trainer corrects you so you don't learn something not right. Finally if you are not good at a sport, the other people that play in your team might make fun with you, something that can affect you and not play good or feel bad.

In my opinion I think that the best way to exercise is to do sports alone.

### Commentary

- The writer states her argument in the first sentence of paragraph 2: "I think that the best way to exercise is by doing a sport that you are alone." The rest of the paragraph provides three reasons and one supporting detail per reason to support the argument. The writer's argument is adequately developed.
- Ideas are clearly organized in this response. The writer uses standard connectors a bit mechanically: "Firstly," "Secondly," "Finally." The connection of ideas within this essay is adequate.
- The writer uses a range of grammatical structures in this essay. Errors are present in the more complex sentences, but they do not interfere with the reader's ability to comprehend the message. Vocabulary is generally related to the task ("game," "trainer") and is sufficient to complete the task requirements.
- The writer briefly establishes her context for writing in the first sentence of the essay. This demonstrates that she has an adequate sense of the purpose for writing. The register is appropriate for the essay-writing task. The reader is able to follow the text.

▶ **This test taker is adequately prepared to take the ECCE Writing section.**

## Prompt 2 – Essay

I agree with the playing team, of basketball or the football. But I disagree because you can excercise you can better when you are your team. Why specific reasons? Because you are not axotic when you are own. Because you can better when you are own. When you are with your team you are axotic sometimes and sometimes no. When you are with your team you can not do good exercise because sometimes her or him coach see you sometimes or see you enithynk. Now I agree with playing teams because you can have friends. You can have an expirience. for example with your team you can go a travelling, you can have metalic. But disagree with this because when you are own you can better for exercise. For example you can se your self in every exercise you can do. That's my opinion.

## Commentary

- The writer's argument is unclear as he states "I agree with the playing team," but then he discusses that there are both positive and negative aspects of exercising alone and playing a team sport. Therefore, the writer's argument is inadequate, and the content that follows is limited.
  - This essay contains minimal organization. Some connectors are used ("for example;" simple coordinating conjunctions: "and," "but"); however, the connection between ideas within this essay is not apparent.
  - Nearly every sentence contains grammar errors: "Because you can better when you are own;" "you can better for exercise." Vocabulary errors are also present: "axotic," "enithynk," "metalic." These mistakes make it difficult to understand what the writer is trying to say and cause significant confusion for the reader.
  - The writer seems to understand that he should be writing about preferred ways to exercise; however, his lack of a clear position on the topic has a negative effect on the reader and interferes with the reader's ability to comprehend the text.
- ▶ **This test taker is not prepared and should work on developing their writing skills before taking the ECCE Writing section.**