

Unit
1

Test Prep

Test-Taking Strategy: Writing an Answer to a Question

Sometimes you will be asked to write an answer on a test. The answer may be as short as one sentence or as long as a whole page. Be sure to read the directions and question carefully so you know what you are supposed to do.

Writing an Answer to a Question

Read these directions and questions. They would follow a story that you would have read. Think about what you should do.

How did the family earn money to fix the barn?
Use details and information from the story to support your answer.

The story was probably about a family living on a farm. That means **you should answer the question based on what you read**. When you write your answer, you should use details from the story to show what the family did to get ready. Do not write about what you or your friends would do—only what the family did in the story.

Here is a different kind of writing task. Read the directions carefully.

You and your friends want to ride along a bike path to school. Your town does not have one. Write a letter to the mayor explaining why your town should have a bike path.

This writing task asks for your ideas. You do not have to read a story to answer it. In this case, you must think about the question and then write a letter using your own thoughts.

In both kinds of writing, you should plan your writing before you begin. Think about what you want to say, and then write in a way that makes it easy for the reader to understand you. Try to use facts to support your opinions.

Test-Taking Practice

Read the story “A Concrete Plan.” Then answer Numbers 1 through 4.

“Look at that!”

The three skateboarders slowed to a full stop. Ahmir pointed to the metal bands screwed into the stairways and low walls in the plaza. These bands had appeared overnight, as if by magic, to foil skateboarders who wanted to ride in the area.

Jessica sat down on her board. She put her head in her hands and said, “That’s it! This was the last place there was to skate in this town, and now it’s gone.”

The group was quiet for a moment, and then Paul asked with forced optimism, “What’s the big deal?” Ahmir and Jessica gave him looks that made it clear what the big deal was. Paul continued. “My dad says that governments exist to help people. All we have to do is tell the city that we really need a skate park.”

“Yeah, but none of the adults in the government are skaters,” said Ahmir.

“Plus,” said Jessica, “where would the money come from?”

Sitting on his skateboard, Paul frowned and replied, “Well, the city pays for lots of other parks. And Jessica, didn’t you say your mom works for the city?”

“She is on the city council,” Jessica replied. “If we could get her interested in a skateboard park, we might have something.”

Unimpressed, Ahmir said, “None of that helps us right now, though.”

“We should at least ride around and look for places where a skate park could go,” said Jessica. She stood up and pushed off on her board.



The next day, the three of them took a ride with Mrs. Katz. “It’s right up here, Mrs. Katz,” Ahmir said as the minivan rolled to a stop beneath a bridge. The bridge’s four lanes of traffic echoed among the pillars and smooth concrete below.

“Mom, this is the spot we thought would make a perfect skateboard park,” Jessica said.

Uncertain, Mrs. Katz asked, “Why here? This spot seems a little out of the way.”

“That’s what makes it good,” answered Paul. “Here, we are not in anyone’s way because nobody uses this area for anything.”

“And we couldn’t be too noisy here because of the traffic,” said Ahmir.

Jessica chimed in, “Plus, we could skate here year-round. The park would be under the bridge, so snow or rain would not matter much.”

The group got out of the car to walk around the shaded concrete area.

“I admire your initiative in getting a park built,” Mrs. Katz said. “This is how things get done. When people like you have a vision, you should get the government involved. First we will come up with a proposal, and then we will need to think about fundraising and what the park will look like.”

Ahmir nudged Paul and whispered, “She said *we!* I always knew this was a good idea.”

Jessica punched Ahmir playfully in the arm. “Listen, if this park gets built, you are going to be the last one allowed to ride in it.”



Use what you learned from the story “A Concrete Plan” to answer Numbers 1 through 4. Write your answers on a piece of paper.

1. Mrs. Katz admired the three skateboarders because they—
 - (A) were good at their sport
 - (B) took steps to solve a problem
 - (C) studied hard
 - (D) figured out how to get money for the park
2. Why did the author write the story “A Concrete Plan”?
 - (A) to teach readers about parks
 - (B) to tell readers about problems with city life
 - (C) to encourage readers to get outside and be more active
 - (D) to entertain readers with a story about three skateboarders
3. Why did Jessica say Ahmir would be the last one to ride in the park?
 - (A) There is only enough room for two people to use the park at a time.
 - (B) She does not like Ahmir and hopes he will not go to the park.
 - (C) Ahmir did not support Jessica’s idea for the park in the beginning.
 - (D) Ahmir does not have the proper safety equipment to ride in the park.
4. Which of these is not mentioned in the story as a reason for choosing the park location?
 - (A) It is out of the way.
 - (B) It is protected from the rain.
 - (C) It would be close to their school so they could get to it easily.
 - (D) It would not be too noisy and would not bother other people.

Test Tips

- Read the directions carefully.
- Read each question carefully.
- Look at the story to find the answer.

