

MAIN IDEA

1 Squeaky is a character that changes in a story with the title Raymond's Run. I thought it was a good story because Squeaky always tells you what she's thinking and isn't phoney. She's not spoiled either she has a big job on her hands because she takes care of her brother Raymond who has a handicapp and needs her alot. A real tuff person and pretty funny too. The way she describes her life and the people she knows made me laugh. Don't mess with Squeaky because you'll be sorry if you do.

2

- 1** The writer attempts to respond to the prompt and identify the thesis of the composition.
- 2** The main idea is not supported in the first paragraph.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

1 Squeaky like other people throughout life are changing so much because they have new experiences that make the way they see things different. Taking care of her brother Raymond changes Squeaky because she dont want anyone to hurt his feelings. Squeaky likes to be a winner and who can blame her. She wants to beat everyone in the big race because she works hard to be the most fastest runner around. She wants to be the best and gets a little mad at a girl in the story. She's good runner too so maybe Squeaky is jealous or worried that she could win the race instead. Squeaky likes this girl **2** better at the end of story because Squeaky is in first place and the other one just comes in second.

- 1** The writer includes ideas that relate to the thesis.
- 2** The writer provides some details to support his or her ideas; however this paragraph is confusing. Some of the details are inaccurate.

ORGANIZATION

Raymond changes in the story and Squeaky changes right along with him. At first you think Squeaky is the only runner in the family

1 but later on you find out that Raymond could be a pretty good runner **2**
hisself with Squeaky acting as his coach. So a brother and sister change the way they see other people and themselves.

- 1** The conclusion doesn't follow the rest of the essay. The writer introduces new information.
- 2** The final paragraph does not relate to the main idea. It focuses on the changes of Raymond and Squeaky, rather than just Squeaky. It does not summarize the main points of the essay.

COHERENCE

... because she don't want anyone to hurt his feelings. Squeaky likes to be a winner and who can blame her. She wants to beat everyone in the big race because she works hard to be the most fastest runner around. She wants to be the best and gets a little mad at a girl in the story. She's good runner too so maybe Squeaky is jealous or **1** worried that she could win the race instead. Squeaky likes this girl better at the end of story because Squeaky is in first place and the other one just comes in second. This is a change Squeaky has that makes her a better person because now she might even be freinds with the girl. **2**

- 1** The paragraph lacks effective transitions. The pronoun reference is confusing at times.
- 2** The writer attempts to demonstrate how the details support and explain the topic of the composition, but the paragraph lacks focus.

MAIN IDEA

I really like stories that tell about characters who learn new things about themselves and change for the better. Raymond's Run was one of those stories. I wish more people I know would change like Squeaky did, becoming more honest and more understanding of others like people should be.

- 1 This paragraph needs to be more focused towards the main idea.
- 2 The writer does not clearly identify the thesis of the composition. This sentence suggests that the essay is about the need for people to change, rather than about Squeaky's change.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

1 It is the fifty-yard dash that changes Squeaky. During the race she becomes aware of Raymond's own race. She sees him running outside the fence. Winning the race makes Squeaky a different person. Her views of others has changed. She smiles a smile of respect to her opponent Gretchen, and she even considers the idea of Gretchen as an **2** assistant coach for Raymond. During the race, watching Raymond run along the side, Squeaky decided to coach him to run. No longer does Raymond have to be simply in her care because now she is able to see him as having a fuller life.

- 1** The writer includes ideas that relate to the thesis.
- 2** The writer provides details to support his or her ideas, though the essay would be improved if the writer used less plot summary.

ORGANIZATION

1 In conclusion, the recognition and pride of winning the race makes Squeaky become more grown up. She now knows herself better. She can be do well at other things besides running and discovers new ways to improve herself and make things better for her brother too.

2

- 1** The conclusion logically follows the previous paragraph, summarizing the effects of the race on Squeaky.
- 2** The final paragraph refers to the writer's main idea, but does not summarize the main points of the essay.

COHERENCE

1 Squeaky is a girl living in Harlem. She doesn't have to do chores or work for extra spending money. She just cares for Raymond, which is her main responsibility. Raymond is her bigger and older brother. She thinks of him as her little brother though because Raymond relies on her. Squeaky is sensitive about Raymond's differences. He has a large head and is mentally handicapped, so that is why he seems like a younger brother.

2

- 1** The writer does not demonstrate how the details support and explain the topic of the composition.
- 2** The paragraph lacks effective transitions.

MAIN IDEA

Squeaky, the young narrator of "Raymond's Run" by Tony Cade Bambara, changes over the course of the story. In her Harlem neighborhood, Squeaky has earned a reputation as a champion runner who takes great pride in her speed. Competing in the big May Day race has a major impact on her. This event alters how Squeaky views **1**
herself, her mentally handicapped brother, Raymond, and her main
rival, Gretchen. **2**

- 1** The main idea is focused and well-supported in the first paragraph.
- 2** The writer clearly identifies the thesis of the composition.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

1 Competing in the May Day race changes Squeaky's social relationships as well as her family relationships. After the race, she seems more likely to make friends with other girls, especially Gretchen, Squeaky's most challenging competitor. Squeaky no longer treats Gretchen rudely and criticizes her. Instead, Squeaky recognizes Gretchen's athletic skills, gains respect for her, and gives her a warm, sincere smile. Squeaky wonders if Gretchen would like to help coach Raymond too, which is Squeaky's way of paying Gretchen a very high compliment.

2

- 1** The writer includes ideas that support and explain the thesis.
- 2** The writer provides specific, relevant details to support the ideas.

ORGANIZATION

The May Day race is a turning point in Squeaky's life. **1** She discovers new sides of herself, her brother, and Gretchen. These changes transform Squeaky into a more mature young girl with a greater awareness of her own and other people's talents. **2**

- 1** The concluding paragraph returns to the main idea by providing a summary of Squeaky's changes.
- 2** The writer's conclusion provides a logical ending to the essay.

COHERENCE

Early in the story, Squeaky announces, “I run. That is what I am all about.” However, ❶ after the May Day race is over, Squeaky’s self-image broadens. She sees herself as more than just a budding track star and begins to consider other talents she might develop. For example, she thinks about taking piano lessons, studying more, and winning a spelling bee. Because Squeaky is a champion at heart, she feels confident that she can succeed in other areas of her life and welcomes new challenges.

2

- ❶ The writer uses transitions effectively.
- ❷ The writer clearly demonstrates how the details support and explain the topic of the composition.

MAIN IDEA

1 My favorite style of music is classic rock. I grew up listening to my parents' collection of rock-and-roll records and tapes from the sixties and seventies, but I did not become a real fan until I was in sixth grade and received a Led Zeppelin CD for my birthday. I especially enjoy the loud, pounding rhythms of the instruments that also make classic rock great dance music. I like to listen closely to the words of classic rock, too, because there is such a wide range of wonderful song lyrics. **2**

- 1** The writer clearly responds to the prompt and states the subject matter.
- 2** The writer focuses on the main idea while responding to the prompt.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

1 These rhythms make classic rock terrific dance music. Depending on the beat, I can dance fast or slow. Sometimes I blast the CD player and dance alone in my room. I might jump up and down or shake all over. I also make up a dance in which I'm playing the "air guitar." For example, as I listen to the Rolling Stones, I pretend I'm Mick Jagger strumming an invisible electric guitar and strutting across the room. Then I switch roles and imagine I'm the drummer, striking my fingers like drumsticks on any hard surface I can find. **2**

- 1** The reasons given are appropriate for the position taken.
- 2** The details are specific, well-supported, and clearly articulated.

ORGANIZATION

1 In conclusion, classic rock is my favorite kind of music for three main reasons. First, no other style of music can match the exciting rhythms and sounds of instruments such as the electric guitar and the drums. Second, classic rock is excellent music for dancing. Third, the song lyrics help me understand the past as well as my own feelings and situations. **2**

- 1** The writer restates the thesis in the conclusion.
- 2** The conclusion summarizes the main points of the composition.

COHERENCE

Finally, I prefer classic rock because of the great song lyrics. ❶
Some lyrics teach a history lesson because they comment about important issues of the 1960s and the 1970s. For example, Marvin Gaye's song "What's Going On" ❷ sends a personal message about the Vietnam War and the civil rights movement. Other lyrics are about subjects, such as boy-girl relationships, that still concern teenagers today. For example, the words to Led Zeppelin's song "Stairway to Heaven" remind me of a love poem.

- ❶ The reasons are clearly linked to the main point.
- ❷ The writer uses connectives effectively.

MAIN IDEA

Though cars are very useful, they can also be unsafe. Many people are injured in car accidents each year. Traffic reporters on the morning news describe the daily “fender benders” and other car accidents that can result in injuries. Many serious injuries could be prevented, however, if people always wore their seat belts.

- 1 The writer states the problem concisely.
- 2 The writer offers a reasonable solution.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Car manufacturers especially could take steps to make this solution more effective. For example, most cars make a soft warning sound to alert the driver and passengers that the seat belts are not being used. After a short while though, the warning sound goes off automatically, even if the driver has not put on a seat belt. I propose that car manufacturers take a bolder step. They should invent some kind of electronic device that freezes the steering wheel of the car until the driver puts on a seat belt. This safety feature could save many lives.

1

- 1 The writer provides sufficient details to explain the proposed solution.
- 2 The writer provides relevant reasons to support the solution.

ORGANIZATION

Unfortunately, the problem of people suffering injuries in car accidents will never disappear entirely. However, people can turn to a simple solution to help reduce the number

2 of injuries: wear seat belts. With new technology installed in cars and the help of the police, more and more people in the future will buckle up.

1

- 1** The last paragraph sums up the essay.
- 2** The last paragraph restates the problem and solution.

COHERENCE

A public safety ad I watched on television clearly shows what happens when people don't buckle up their seat belts. Picture this scene. A family of crash dummies are riding in a car. Not one is wearing a seat belt. The crash dummy in the driver's seat suddenly slams on the brakes and hits the back of another car. The impact throws the crash dummies around the car and the one in the front seat hits the windshield. Another flies half way out of the window. Then the announcer says, "Don't be a dummy. Buckle up." The message of the advertisement is clear. The smart solution for reducing the number of injuries caused by car accidents is to wear a seat belt.

- 1 The solution clearly follows a thoughtful analysis of the problem.
- 2 The writer achieves coherence through the use of a variety of sentence structures.

MAIN IDEA

1 One of my happiest moments was when I scored the winning goal in our soccer league championship tournament last year. My team, the Strikers, was playing against the Cyclones.
We always played hard to beat the Cyclones, but we were especially anxious to win this time. The Cyclones had beaten us for the league championship the year before. Also, April Ferguson, **2** their center-half, had recently quit our team to play for the Cyclones because she thought they were a better team than the Strikers were.

- 1** The writer identifies the underlying theme or point of the story. The theme relates directly to the prompt.
- 2** The writer clearly explains the significance of the event.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

Number 11 is flying down mid field. She must have wings on her feet. She's in complete control of the ball as she moves toward the sidelines. The Cyclones defense must have shut down. No one can stop her! No one can break Number 11's pace. Now she's heading toward the goal! The clock is ticking. There's only 1 minute left in the game. The goal-keeper feels the pressure as Number 11 draws back

her leg and kicks the ball with incredible force. The goalkeeper is waving her hands wildly as she tries to block the kick coming at her like a rocket. Number 11 scores! Number 11 scores!

- 1 The writer uses a fast-paced narrative to engage the reader.
- 2 The writer uses sensory details to evoke a mood and set the scene so that it is easily imaginable. The supporting details bring the reader into the event by building suspense and excitement.

ORGANIZATION

It was one of the happiest times of my life. That goal won the game, and the champion-
2 ship, for the Strikers. Everyone was cheering. April even came over to say, "Good game!" I
pinned my number 11 jersey on my bulletin board to remind me of my proud, happy moment.

1

- 1** The conclusion establishes a sense of ending, wrapping up the feelings of the essay.
- 2** The writer presents a realistic, fluent progression of events.

COHERENCE

With only about a minute left to play, the score was tied. Then our left forward got the ball and passed it to Beth. Suddenly, **1** April seemed to come from nowhere and stole the ball from Beth. April began to bring the ball down the field, but then I saw my chance. I got the ball away from her, took control for our team, and headed back up the field. **2**

- 1** The writer uses transitional devices to direct the reader's thoughts.
- 2** The writer clearly establishes the sequence of events.

MAIN IDEA

1 I am against introducing a new dress code policy, especially the ban on blue jeans and sneakers. Blue jeans and sneakers are popular with students for practical reasons. Jeans don't wear out quickly and are easy to clean. Each student needs only a few pairs of jeans, which can easily be thrown in the washing machine. Sneakers are also more practical because they are sturdier than dress shoes and provide better support for the feet. In addition, sneakers are safer because they have rubber soles that will prevent students from slipping on the slick tile floors and cement stairways in my school.

2

- 1** The writer clearly states his or her position.
- 2** The writer focuses on the main idea throughout the composition.

SUPPORTING DETAILS

I am against introducing a new dress code policy, especially the ban on blue jeans and sneakers. Blue jeans and sneakers are popular with students for practical reasons. Jeans

- 1** don't wear out quickly and are easy to clean. Each student needs only a few pairs of jeans, which can easily be thrown in the washing machine. Sneakers are also more practical because they are sturdier than dress shoes and provide better support for the feet. In addition, sneakers are safer because they have rubber soles that will prevent students from slipping on the slick tile floors and cement stairways in my school.

- 1** The writer provides two strong reasons to support his or her position.
- 2** The writer supports his or her reasons with details and facts that are appropriate and clearly articulated.

ORGANIZATION

1 In a debate two opposing teams present their arguments for or against a certain issue. As you read this letter, imagine a debate that centers on whether or not my school should have a dress code for students. The guidelines of the proposed dress code are strict. No sneakers or jeans can be worn at school. Girls must wear skirts and dresses, and boys must wear dress pants.

2

- 1** The writer uses an original approach to begin the essay.
- 2** The initial paragraph, by explaining the subject and organizational strategy of the essay, is an effective and logical introduction.

COHERENCE

The principal of my school is for the dress code. **1** These are two of the reasons he would probably give to support his argument. First, the new dress code policy will help prepare students for the real world. Well-dressed students will behave more like grown-ups going to a job. As a result, students will get down to the business of learning; they'll work harder and receive higher grades. Second, the dress code will build students' self-respect because they'll be so proud of their appearance. Therefore, they will respect teachers and other students more and will be less likely to fight or disrupt the class. **2**

- 1** The writer anticipates opposing arguments and addresses them successfully and thoroughly. The writer uses persuasive language effectively to make his or her point.
- 2** The sentences are logically connected.