



English II

Persuasive Scoring Guide

March 2015

English II

Persuasive Prompt

Read the information in the box below.

Idealistic people are those who pursue great ideas in the hope of changing the world. Because their plans are often quite ambitious, these people can have difficulty accomplishing smaller, concrete goals. In contrast, practical people concentrate on workable ideas and goals. Their approach is likely to lend itself to tangible solutions, even if these people fail to envision grand ideas.

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Which approach is more valuable in life: an idealistic one or a practical one? Think carefully about this question.

Write an essay stating your opinion on whether it's better to dream big or to be realistic.

Be sure to —

- state your position clearly
- use appropriate organization
- provide specific support for your argument
- choose your words carefully
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

Score Point 1

The essay represents a very limited writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is inappropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The writer uses organizational strategies that are only marginally suited to the persuasive task, or they are inappropriate or not evident at all. The absence of a functional organizational structure causes the essay to lack clarity and direction.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, but the writer's position is missing, unclear, or illogical. The writer may fail to maintain focus on the issue, may include extraneous information, or may shift abruptly from idea to idea, weakening the coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is weak. Repetition or wordiness sometimes causes serious disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times the lack of transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections causes the writer to present ideas in a random or illogical way, making one or more parts of the essay unclear or difficult to follow.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is weak. The argument is ineffective and unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are inappropriate, vague, or insufficient.
- ❑ The essay is insubstantial because the writer's response to the prompt is vague or confused. In some cases, the essay as a whole is only weakly linked to the prompt. In other cases, the writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a lack of understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be vague or limited. It reflects little or no awareness of the persuasive purpose and does not establish a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice may impede the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are simplistic, awkward, or uncontrolled, significantly limiting the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer has little or no command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Serious and persistent errors create disruptions in the fluency of the writing and sometimes interfere with meaning.

It is better to dream big to where dreaming so big puts you in the spot where it can become your motivation to actually try to do what you dream.

Dreaming is probably the one thing that will make you believe in something. To open your eyes open and let you see that dreams come true.

Realistic isn't always as good and calm to how dreaming can turn out to be. Dreaming is just another way to be let free and dream what you want to.

Score Point 1

In the opening of this ineffective essay, the writer takes the position that it is better to dream big because a dream can become a person's motivation. Support for this position statement is weak because limited word choice and uncontrolled sentences make the argument unclear and difficult to follow (Realistic isn't always as good and calm to how dreaming can turn out to be. Dreaming is just another way to be let free and dream what you want to). Overall, the writer's lack of fluency at the word and sentence levels causes her response to the prompt to be vague and confused. These problems represent a very limited writing performance.

In my opinion its better to have both because if you have a dream it should be realistic, something you can actually make true because if your dream is to have super powers now thats impossible althow if its to become a doctore, phycologist, veterenarian, etc. that is something that you can make true but you haveto make it true by working hard to achieve it if you have confidence in your self you are already winning but if you dont have want it talkes youll better become a winner because this is what life is about, to love your life and be gratfull of it alsow you should achieve any dream in your head but always have your feet on the ground.

Score Point 1

The writer takes the qualified position that “its better to have both because if you have a dream it should be realistic, something you can actually make true.” Although this is an acceptable position statement, the entire essay is written as one long run-on sentence. The writer demonstrates no command of sentence boundaries, which is a serious and persistent error that disrupts the fluency of the writing and makes the argument ineffective.

Big ideas are always the best and they all come from a practical approach. Practical approach is more valuable in life than a idealistic approach because all big ideas that were made came from a practical approach; and even if the plan fails to achieve its point in the idea something good still came out of it.

Practicing something for a while will lead to achievement. Bigger is always better so the bigger the idea the bigger the success will be. Although a idealistic approach can have ambitiousness plans they are small and fail most of the time. By planning a big idea and practicing little by little the goal will be huge when it's achieved.

The most littlest idea can convert itself to the biggest one by practice. So what approach is more valuable in life? Idealistic or practical? The small idea or the big idea? Think about it.

Score Point 1

The writer begins the essay by taking the position that big ideas are always best if they come from a practical approach. In fact, he contends that “all big ideas” come from a practical approach, but his explanation of what he means by this statement is unclear, in part because he confuses the meanings of the words “practical” and “practice.” Limited and imprecise word choice impedes the writer’s ability to clearly communicate his ideas, and the lack of connections from one sentence to the next makes the argument difficult to follow. For the most part, the writer’s response to the prompt is vague and confused, demonstrating that he does not understand the persuasive writing task.

It is better to be realistic because are you going to dream big when you know you can't have something you been dreaming of. It is better to be realistic. You won't get excited with something or even with someone, you don't want to get out of nowhere get dissapointed. That is why just be realistic and stick with reality so you don't get excited with just "dreaming big". You will already know the reality and don't get slapped on the face with a lie. Leave to the side the "dreaming big" and stick with the reality.

Score Point 1

In this very limited writing performance, the writer offers the position that it is better to be realistic because you will only end up disappointed by big dreams. She does not offer any support for this position; instead, she merely repeats it throughout the essay (just be realistic and stick with reality so you don't get excited with just "dreaming big"; you will already know the reality and don't get slapped on the face with a lie). This repetition not only weakens the development but also stalls the progression of ideas. For these reasons, the argument is ineffective and unconvincing.

Score Point 2

The essay represents a basic writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is evident but may not always be appropriate to the purpose or the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is not always clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are only somewhat suited to the persuasive task.
- ❑ Most ideas are generally related to the issue specified in the prompt, but the writer's position is weak or somewhat unclear. The lack of a clear, effective position or the writer's inclusion of irrelevant information interferes with the focus and coherence of the essay.
- ❑ The writer's progression of ideas is not always logical and controlled. Sometimes repetition or wordiness causes minor disruptions in the flow of the essay. At other times transitions and sentence-to-sentence connections are too perfunctory or weak to support the flow of the essay or show the relationships among ideas.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is minimal. The argument is superficial and largely unconvincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are not always appropriate or are too briefly or partially presented.
- ❑ The essay reflects little or no thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is sometimes formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates only a limited understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer's word choice may be general or imprecise. It reflects a basic awareness of the persuasive purpose but does little to establish a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice may not contribute to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are awkward or only somewhat controlled, weakening the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a partial command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Some distracting errors may be evident, at times creating minor disruptions in the fluency or meaning of the writing.

Your biggest achievers have always had the biggest dreams but always started with baby steps instead of taking giant leaps. It is better to have a realistic point of view in life because realistic people work harder and when you work harder your capable to fulfill your goal and realistic people build up to a bigger picture.

Thinking and Common sense are apart of being realistic. If ^{Sara} wants to be like Beyoncé she can't wake up and be famous. She has to work hard for it, like doing talent shows and other things.

Also realistic people don't rush their goals they set smaller goals to led up to the big goal they have in mind.

Being a realistic person doesn't mean you don't have huge goals. It just means you have a more realistic approach.

Score Point 2

The writer takes the qualified position that people have the best chance of achieving big goals if they take a realistic approach and achieve smaller goals along the way. To support this position, he lists working hard, thinking, and using common sense as important characteristics of being realistic and presents the example of a person who aspires to be like Beyoncé ([Sara] can't wake up and be famous. She has to work hard for it, like doing talent shows and other things). Though this example is clear, it is superficial because it is so briefly developed. In addition, the writer's attempt to generalize the point of the example in paragraph three is unsuccessful because he merely repeats what he has already said in the first two paragraphs, stalling the progression of ideas and weakening the flow of the essay. Overall, this essay represents a basic writing performance.

It's better to be realistic than to dream big, because if you're realistic you have a better chance of accomplishing what you want, and if you dream big you're just going to waste your time because that might never happen.

If you're realistic you don't have to exaggerate on what you want to accomplish.

For example, if you want to get a better job you just have to study and work hard to get it.

Another example is if you want to buy a car you just have to save enough money, or if you want a raise in your job you just have to work hard to show your boss that you deserve it.

Being realistic is to face reality, not expecting more of what you can't have.

So that's why being realistic is better, because if you dream big it might never happen and you might just get tired of waiting.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer takes the position that being realistic will give you “a better chance of accomplishing what you want,” while dreaming big will just “waste your time.” She uses a series of examples (getting a better job, a new car, and a raise) to illustrate the advantages of being realistic and working hard to get what you want. However, the development of each example is brief, and transitions (For example, Another example) are too perfunctory to connect the examples or build any depth. In addition, the writer never addresses the second part of the position statement (how dreaming big will waste your time), weakening the coherence of the essay. Overall, these problems cause the argument to be largely unconvincing and demonstrate that the writer has only a limited understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Do you think it's better to dream big or to be realistic?
I think it's better to dream big because having dreams makes you look forward to things that could bring you a lot of happiness. Approaching your dreams could also bring you success.

Being realistic could bring you down and make you think so low of yourself. But dreaming gives you something to work hard for and having something to look forward to. It makes your life more exciting.

Thinking about your dreams coming true could bring you happiness and hope.

You could be so much successful if you dream big. You take risks just to make those dreams come true. Being positive and going out for what you want could make you succeed in so many different ways.

Instead of being realistic dream big. Dreaming could take you so far in life. Not only will you be more successful but you will also find yourself way more happier. Take risks and fight for what you dream, you have nothing to lose!

Score Point 2

In the position statement, the writer asserts that dreaming big makes you look forward to things and brings you success. To support this position, the writer presents a series of general statements (It makes your life more exciting; Being positive . . . could make you succeed in so many different ways; Dreaming could take you so far in life). The lack of any specificity causes the argument to be superficial and largely unconvincing. The word choice is general throughout and does not contribute to the quality or clarity of the essay. Although the writer demonstrates an adequate control of sentences and command of conventions, his general approach to the topic reflects little thoughtfulness.

It is better to be realistic rather than have an outrageous dream. Sure, we all dream of being a princess or astronaut when we're just four years old. But as we grow older, we gain acknowledgment. In high school, we're constantly told to prepare for the "real" world, that it's tough. As teenagers, most don't care, they can live independently, but for others we comprehend the concept of setting our short term goals like completing homework or do chores. Then set our long term goals, like college or a career. Dreams are great but, getting too caught up in them could sidetrack us from reality. We get told set your goals all the time, so we can strive for them. Ever heard the term "reality check?" the world constantly changes and at fast pace. We need to think of realistic and possible opportunities. Dreams can be outstanding but, outrageous and impossible. Dreams are fantasies but the world is real. Although dreams are great and anything can be done, in the real world, not everything is. Come on, let's be realistic.

Score Point 2

In this basic writing performance, the writer offers the position statement that it is better to be realistic than to pursue "an outrageous dream." The writer briefly explains how high school students are encouraged to prepare for "the 'real' world" and why it's smart to set short-term goals before setting long-term goals. However, in the second half of the essay, the progression of ideas is not always controlled. The writer claims that getting caught up in dreams could "sidetrack" students "from reality," but she neglects to explain how that occurs. In addition, the writer does not move logically from sentence to sentence because each sentence introduces a different idea about dreams or reality. The lack of transitions and logical connections between sentences disrupt the flow of ideas and make the writing jumpy.

Score Point 3

The essay represents a satisfactory writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- The organizing structure of the essay is, for the most part, appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is clear because the writer uses organizational strategies that are adequately suited to the persuasive task.
- The writer establishes a clear position. Most ideas are related to the position and are focused on the issue specified in the prompt. The essay is coherent, though it may not always be unified due to minor lapses in focus.
- The writer's progression of ideas is generally logical and controlled. For the most part, transitions are meaningful, and sentence-to-sentence connections are sufficient to support the flow of the essay and show the relationships among ideas.

Development of Ideas

- The development of ideas is sufficient. The argument is largely convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and appropriate.
- The essay reflects some thoughtfulness. The writer's response to the prompt is original rather than formulaic. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a good understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- The writer's word choice is, for the most part, clear and specific. It reflects an awareness of the persuasive purpose and establishes a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice usually contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- Sentences are reasonably varied and adequately controlled, contributing for the most part to the effectiveness of the essay.
- The writer demonstrates an adequate command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although some errors may be evident, they create few (if any) disruptions in the fluency of the writing, and they do not affect the clarity of the essay.

Life is full of ideas. We all have big plans to change the world, but we must take a practical approach to those ideas. By accomplishing small goals and creating larger goals next, we can accomplish our original big idea.

If you try to work immediately on a big idea, you'll fail almost immediately. However, if you set smaller goals you can almost win every time. The reason is that the big goal is too costly to handle. But the smaller goals are much more easier to handle. And they can work together as well.

When you accomplish a small goal, you want to take it a step further. You build on the last goal to help get to your big-overall-goal. This way, you won't overwork yourself, and by doing so, accomplish what you originally envisioned.

Being practical in life is very important. It is what led the great leaders of the world to become great. But they all had one thing in common: They all worked from small goals to a big one.

Score Point 3

In this satisfactory writing performance, the writer establishes the clear position that taking a practical approach to life and pursuing small goals helps us accomplish big ideas. The writer uses a cause-and-effect organizational strategy throughout the essay to show why working from small goals to big goals is valuable. The development is sufficient to make the argument largely convincing, and both the introduction and the conclusion add some substance. In addition, strong sentence-to-sentence connections and meaningful transitions—both within and between paragraphs—support the flow of the essay. In addition, the writer's control of sentences and command of conventions contribute to the overall quality of the essay.

Big dreams lead to great accomplishments in life. When a person has ambitious plans for their life, they often pursue their dreams whole-heartedly, transforming this extravagant, idealistic idea they have into one that is within reach for them.

Fallon Taylor was merely thirteen years old when she first qualified for the NFR, or National Finals Rodeo, in Las Vegas, something so many professional barrel racers only dream of doing. Fallon had this dream too, but she chased after it in the best way she could, working hard and focusing until she achieved what no one thought was possible — a thirteen year old going to the NFR. Some people, however, choose to live a simpler life, setting goals that are easier to reach and are more practical, but if people choose to never challenge themselves, how are they going to make themselves a better person?

Workable ideas that are more reachable may seem like the simpler, more practical way to live, but those who challenge themselves by dreaming big and pursuing those dreams become better, harder-working people in the long run.

Score Point 3

The writer takes the clear position that big dreams “lead to great accomplishments” because dreaming big gives people the drive to work hard and pursue their idealistic goals. The argument is focused on the specific example of 13-year-old Fallon Taylor and her dream to qualify for the National Finals Rodeo. The argument is largely convincing because this example is specific and sufficiently developed, providing good support for the position statement. Although the writer briefly acknowledges the other side of the argument (some people choose simpler lives with goals that are easier to reach), she refutes this idea in the conclusion. The word choice is specific and clear, helping to establish an appropriate tone. In addition, the writer’s response to the prompt is thoughtful and original; she demonstrates a good understanding of the persuasive writing task.

People will try to put limits on what they can do to prevent a streak of good things from ending badly. They want to assume they can only go so far before they are dissapointed. They would rather just not try because they are too afraid of consequences. But why would you only think of the negatives when a huge positive can result in dreaming big? You will always go farther if you refuse to put limits on yourself.

Claiming to "just being realistic" is a mask trying to hide the fear of failure. You can not let fear dictate your life. Trying and failing is better than not trying and never knowing. Wouldn't you atleast like to give yourself the satisfaction of knowing you tried? Saying you're being realistic is not even giving yourself the opportunity to succeed.

Keeping your dreams alive keeps a person happy. Working hard to achieve that dream makes a person even happier. If you're going to live, live with big expectations. Don't belittle yourself because you're afraid of failure. Fear will always end you before failure does.

Score Point 3

In this concise, satisfactory essay, the writer establishes the clear position that it is better to dream big because when you choose to be realistic, you are placing limits on yourself. The writer uses a compare/contrast organizational strategy to develop the essay. The argument centers on the philosophical idea that choosing to be realistic is just "a mask" that people wear to hide their "fear of failure." He contrasts this idea with the satisfaction and happiness people gain just from attempting to achieve their dreams. Although the essay is relatively short, the development is sufficient because each sentence builds upon the previous sentence. In addition, the writer's approach to the topic is thoughtful and original, and his use of language, particularly his effective use of rhetorical questions, helps to establish an appropriate persuasive tone. The writer's control of sentences and command of conventions contribute to the effectiveness of the essay.

Humans are full of ideas and ambitions. However, people who pursue practical goals are able to accomplish and contribute more to society than those with bigger ideas.

It's better to do more of what you can and move at a faster pace than to wait until you've completed a huge task. For example, Hurricane Katrina left a wave of destruction in New Orleans. Instead of waiting for a master plan to rescue all the victims at once, several groups of people helped distribute food and medicine to those who needed it. Had more people waited to aid in the relief effort, more people would be in danger.

While idealistic people are better at envisioning future goals, practical people are more able to evenly space out and solve problems. It would be more realistic to begin a project immediately after it's been assigned rather than to procrastinate until you come up with an idealistic plan that takes longer to accomplish.

Practical people are more valuable in life than idealistic ones. They are more likely to come up with a realistic solution to the problem at hand in a smaller time frame, which benefits everyone as a whole.

Score Point 3

The writer establishes the clear position that “people who pursue practical goals are able to accomplish and contribute more to society than those with bigger ideas.” In paragraph two, the writer supports her position with the example of rescue workers providing immediate help to some Hurricane Katrina victims rather than “waiting for a master plan to rescue all the victims at once.” This example is sufficiently developed with specific information. The writer extends this idea in paragraph three by contrasting practical people, who “begin a project immediately after it’s been assigned,” with idealistic people, who are more likely to procrastinate until they have an “idealistic plan.” Though the writer does not develop this paragraph with as much specificity as the previous one, the development overall reflects some thoughtfulness. Although the transition between the two body paragraphs could be stronger, the connection between the paragraphs is sufficient to support the flow of the essay. Overall, this essay reflects a satisfactory writing performance.

Score Point 4

The essay represents an accomplished writing performance.

Organization/Progression

- ❑ The organizing structure of the essay is clearly appropriate to the purpose and responsive to the specific demands of the prompt. The essay is skillfully crafted because the writer uses organizational strategies that are particularly well suited to the persuasive task.
- ❑ The writer establishes a clear position. All ideas are strongly related to the position and are focused on the issue specified in the prompt. By sustaining this focus, the writer is able to create an essay that is unified and coherent.
- ❑ The writer’s progression of ideas is logical and well controlled. Meaningful transitions and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of the essay by clearly showing the relationships among ideas, making the writer’s train of thought easy to follow.

Development of Ideas

- ❑ The development of ideas is highly effective. The argument is forceful and convincing because the reasons and evidence the writer uses to support the position are specific and well chosen.
- ❑ The essay is thoughtful and engaging. The writer may choose to recognize the complexities of the issue, consider opposing or alternate points of view, use his/her unique experiences or view of the world as a basis for writing, or connect ideas in interesting ways. The writer develops the essay in a manner that demonstrates a thorough understanding of the persuasive writing task.

Use of Language/Conventions

- ❑ The writer’s word choice is purposeful and precise. It reflects a keen awareness of the persuasive purpose and maintains a tone appropriate to the task. Word choice strongly contributes to the quality and clarity of the essay.
- ❑ Sentences are purposeful, varied, and well controlled, enhancing the effectiveness of the essay.
- ❑ The writer demonstrates a consistent command of sentence boundaries and spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and usage conventions. Although minor errors may be evident, they do not detract from the fluency of the writing or the clarity of the essay. The overall strength of the conventions contributes to the effectiveness of the essay.

Every person has their own approach on life, whether it's their opinions on politics, beliefs, or whether the jelly should go on top of or below the peanut butter in a sandwich. There is one aspect of life that many people can agree on, though: life is short. With that in mind, it's no wonder that so many of our ancestors chose to dream big in their lifetimes in order to improve the world. They understood that their dream may never come true, but isn't it better to try to reach a dream that will help the world prosper than to picture a tomorrow that will only benefit oneself? When time and thought is given, it is easy to come to the conclusion that our nation wouldn't be as grand as it is, as fair as it is, or as free as it is without our forefathers who dreamed as big as they did. Without their idealism, the nation Americans know so well wouldn't exist. By continuing to be as ambitious as those brave men and women of our history, our nation and our world can continue to grow in a positive manner. The world needs innovators and leaders to guide all of the diversified people onto roads that will join together at one point and unify. In order to have a better tomorrow for generations to come, the generations of today must dream of it and strive to make it a reality.

Score Point 4

The writer develops this skillfully crafted essay using a historical context. At the outset of the response, the writer establishes that the one aspect of life that unites people is their mutual mortality (life is short). He uses this philosophical idea as the impetus for his position statement: "With that in mind, it's no wonder that so many of our ancestors chose to dream big in their lifetimes in order to improve the world." The support for this position is narrowly focused: the writer appeals to our patriotism and urges us to see ourselves as part of a historical continuum with an appreciation for the past and a devotion to the future. The essay is thoughtful and engaging. Although it is written as one paragraph, the movement from sentence to sentence is well controlled, and the writer's train of thought is easy to follow. Using purposeful and precise language, the writer is able to communicate complex ideas concisely. Every sentence contributes to this accomplished essay.

Everyone has a dream or a wish patiently sitting in their mind to be achieved. They can be practical, easily reachable with a small jump and a grab, or they can be idealistic, possibly requiring you to grow wings to achieve it. Practical dreams are great, but how can you continue life happily if you're looking into the immediate present and not the future?

My father is an accountant. He receives an adequate pay, but like a lot of adults in our world today, he doesn't exactly love his job. He does not start each day bursting with excitement, nor does he wear a smile that brightens up the room. He missed out on his idealistic dream because he thought an easily achievable practical dream was the best idea. You see, he always wanted to be a sports journalist. Sports have always been his passion in life and they create a light in his eyes when he speaks, coaches, or plays. He tells my family it's too late to change careers now, and he has cursed himself to never achieving his big dream.

My father's big dream is what encourages him to advise my brother and I about following our big dream. Idealistic dreams take a lot of time and effort. You will have failures, it is inevitable. But why have a new practical dream each day? Why set the dream of passing the AP History test, only one small thing to work towards? Why not set the dream of becoming an adventurer, who roams the earth looking at our ancestors, like the Mayans or Spanish conquistadors? You take practical dreams day by day. Idealistic dreams are big, but conquer so much more than thought possible.

Score Point 4

In this accomplished writing performance, the writer uses an anecdote to support the position that in order to live happily, you must be willing to follow your idealistic dream. The writer specifically describes her father's situation: he settled for his practical, achievable dream instead of pursuing his dream of becoming a sportswriter. She uses this anecdote as a cautionary tale, making the point that her father is not just regretful about the past but saddened that he will never achieve his big dream. In the last paragraph, she focuses on the lessons that can be learned from her father's example. She acknowledges the complexity of the issue by noting that following a dream takes hard work and that failures along the way are inevitable. The transitional sentence at the beginning of paragraph three enhances the coherence of the argument by providing a strong connection between paragraphs two and three. Overall, the writer's argument is forceful, demonstrating that she has a thorough understanding of the persuasive task.

Throughout childhood, kids are encouraged by parents to have big dreams. Many imagine themselves as astronauts or even the President. Others wish they could change the world to make it a better place. A select few who continue to dream big succeed at their far-fetched goals. History demonstrates that it's better to dream big as the world's most life changing ideas/inventions were created by those who chose to be idealistic.

Electric lighting is a significant invention in the history of mankind. People can now easily see in the dark with a flip of the switch. The lightbulb's inventor, Thomas Edison, was a big dreamer as he worked to end the era where light came in the form of a fire. Edison differed from the others in his time as he dreamed of a world filled with light from electricity. The invention of the lightbulb won Edison fame and recognition as even today, he is well-known for his accomplishment.

Like the light bulb, airplane transportation has changed the history of mankind. Traveling by airplane is one of the fastest modes of moving around as a journey between continents now takes only a few hours. The Wright Brothers of North Carolina were the first to fly in the new technology that they helped create. They imagined a world where people could soar the skies and created today's world where a major mode of transportation is via airplane.

Both Thomas Edison and the Wright Brothers dreamed big in order to accomplish their feats. If either had taken more practical goals such as improving existing technology, they would have never pioneered a new field. Dreaming big does have its challenges, and even Edison (who failed hundreds of times) and the Wright Brothers (whose first flight crashed after mere seconds) had to deal with difficulties. However, the success of an idealistic goal outweighs the risk of failure as countless lives can benefit greatly. To accomplish big goals, one must dream big.

Score Point 4

This accomplished essay opens with a thoughtful introduction in which the writer clearly establishes the position that “it’s better to dream big as the world’s most life changing ideas/inventions were created by those who chose to be idealistic.” He supports this position with two specific historical examples—Thomas Edison and the Wright Brothers—inventors who gave the world important new technology because they dared to dream. The writer uses an effective transitional sentence (“Like the light bulb, airplane transportation has changed the history of mankind”) to thread these two examples together and unify the argument. The conclusion adds substance to the essay, and strong sentence-to-sentence connections enhance the flow of ideas. The writer’s word choice reflects a keen awareness of the persuasive purpose, and the strength of the conventions contributes to the overall effectiveness of the essay.

Many big dreamers often crash and burn after unfulfilling large goals. These types of people tend to be ambitious; they usually take on more than they can handle. Many believe big dreamers are great people setting out to do good in the world; however, these people are more likely to fail in accomplishing their dreams than other regular people. Being realistic is obviously a better choice than being full of dreams and empty promises.

Being practical and realistic proves efficient when overcoming large obstacles. For example, practical people work on a small scale, reaching certain small goals. They pile these small goals up, eventually leading the way to the finish line. This is a more efficient way to work compared to dreamers, who eagerly take huge steps, leaving room for many errors and setbacks.

It also allows for safe progress. For instance, by working on small goals it takes away the chance of huge errors occurring. Progress can be made quickly without having to worry about these errors because likely outcomes were already thought of beforehand.

Being realistic provides us with an accurate point of view on how things really are. Consequently, people can more appropriately come up with solutions to problems they immediately encounter, safe and well-thought out solutions.

Why be an eager dreamer? Why give in to happy delusions? People need to be more realistic, be people of reason and practical ideas. Ambition will always be rewarded with failure. Why take a risk when you can ensure success? Be realistic.

Score Point 4

In this accomplished writing performance, the writer presents a highly effective argument in support of the position that realistic people accomplish more through steady progress than the “eager dreamers” whose good intentions are usually just “empty promises.” She uses a cause-effect organizational structure to prove that being realistic is the better choice. The development is effective because the reasons are specific and thoughtful. The movement from sentence to sentence is fluid and well controlled, making the writer’s train of thought easy to follow. In addition, the purposeful use of language helps to create a strong persuasive tone that enhances the forcefulness of the argument. Varied, well-controlled sentences and a strong command of conventions contribute to the overall effectiveness of the essay.