

# Insights into ECCE Classroom Writing and Assessment

## *Part II*



HELLENIC AMERICAN UNION  
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# THE UNIVERSITY OF MICHIGAN EXAMINATION FOR THE CERTIFICATE OF COMPETENCY IN ENGLISH (ECCE)

## IN-CLASS WRITING AND ASSESSMENT

### In-class Writing

In order for candidates to receive at least a Low Pass (LP) on the ECCE Writing Section, they need to be able to do the following (Level C descriptors on the ELI-UM Scoring Scale):

- adequately develop an argument (content and development)
- convey their ideas clearly, which should be adequately organized, using standard connectors appropriately though somewhat mechanically (organization and connection of ideas)
- use a sufficient range of grammar and vocabulary to fulfill the task though they may make errors in grammar or vocabulary that do not interfere with reader's comprehension (linguistic range and control)
- display an adequate sense of audience and purpose for writing, generally allowing the reader to follow their text (communicative effect)

Students' preparation for this section of the ECCE examination should be systematic and incorporate intensive as well as extensive reading of a wide variety of texts, close examination and analysis of model letters and essays, as well as ample writing practice **both in-class and at home**. In class-writing will give students the opportunity to practice, consolidate and further develop their writing skills as well as learn the process of writing (i.e. brainstorming, outlining, writing drafts, editing, etc.), which is an invaluable life skill. Besides giving EFL teachers an idea of their students' progress, in-class writing also gives students training in making effective use of the writing time set by ELI-UM (30 minutes). On the other hand, at home writing helps students apply the knowledge they gain in the classroom allowing them, however, to work at their own pace and to make use of various resources (e.g. dictionaries, the Internet, etc.)

### ECCE Writing Assessment

An important stage of the ECCE Writing Section preparation is assessment. Students should be made aware of what successful writing is at ECCE level (B2 on the CEFR) by becoming thoroughly familiar with the ELI-UM Writing Section scoring scales and descriptors. Familiarization with the scoring criteria will make students more aware of their strengths and weaknesses and will help them focus more on the areas they need to further develop.

The attached ECCE candidates' letters have been benchmarked by the English Language Institute at the University of Michigan and are distributed by the Hellenic American Union free of charge.

## HOW TO USE ELI-UM BENCHMARKED LETTERS & ESSAYS AND WRITING SECTION SCORING RUBRIC IN THE CLASSROOM

### Objectives:

- To give students insight into ECCE level writing
- To familiarize students with the ECCE Writing Section scoring criteria and levels

**Time:** Approximately four hours for all five stages. The stages could be done on three - four consecutive sessions (Stages 1 & 2 first, then Stages 3 & 4, and Stage 5 on the third or fourth session).

### STAGE 1: Preparing to write a letter or an essay: understanding the prompt.

#### Understanding the letter-writing and essay tasks and the focus question(s). Brainstorming on the topic.

Step 1: Understanding the prompt: Teacher should select one of the prompts of the ELI-UM benchmarked letters or essays and ask students to read it carefully. Students should be encouraged to underline key language in order to ensure thorough understanding of the prompt. Once students have read the prompt, the teacher should ask the students to tell the class in their words what the prompt is about.

- PREPARING TO WRITE A LETTER:** The ECCE Writing prompt provides important information on **who** is writing the letter (e.g. readers of a newspaper or magazine, local community members, citizens, etc.), **to whom** (e.g. the editor of a newspaper or a magazine, City officials, etc.) and **why** (e.g. to express their agreement or disagreement with a new school policy, to make suggestions on how to increase the use of public transportation, to express their opinion on whether a city should be rebuild after a disaster, etc.).
- PREPARING TO WRITE AN ESSAY:** The prompt is used as a stimulus, giving candidates an example of a situation that relates to the essay topic. Students should read the prompt carefully and should make sure that they understand it well before they read the essay task.

Step 2: Understanding the letter - writing or essay task:

- UNDERSTANDING THE LETTER-WRITING TASK:** Teacher should ask students to read the letter-writing task (Task A). Students should be asked to underline key language and then tell the class in their own words whom they have to write their letter to as well as what kind of letter they are required to write (e.g. letter expressing their opinion on a new policy, or a letter giving their suggestions about how to solve a problem, etc.)
- UNDERSTANDING THE ESSAY TASK:** Teacher should ask students to read the essay task (Task B) and underline key language. Students should be asked to think about what the task is asking them to do and to explain it in their own words (e.g. to decide whether students should be allowed to give gifts to teachers, or to decide whether they would use their own car or take public transportation to get to their school or workplace, or to decide whether public and private resources should be used to support development in locations where natural disasters could occur, etc.).

Step 3: Understanding the focus question and brainstorming on the topic: Teacher should ask students to reread the focus question and brainstorm on how they would answer it. Teacher should then work with the class as a group to elicit ideas, suggestions, arguments and examples. With the teacher's assistance students should then select the best ideas, which can be written on the blackboard.

Step 4: Eliciting and/or providing topic-related vocabulary: Teacher should also try to elicit important topic-related vocabulary. Teacher should provide any unknown vocabulary and write it on the blackboard. At the same time, students should be encouraged to also think of synonyms so that they can avoid repetition of words or expressions in the letter they will have to write during the second stage.

Step 5: Brainstorming on how to organize the letter or essay and creating an outline: Teacher should ask students to work in pairs to decide how they will organize their letter or essay. In other words, students

should decide in pairs how many paragraphs the letter or the essay should have and what needs to be included in each paragraph (introduction, main body and conclusion) and create an outline (either mental or written).

Step 6: Class discussion on the organization of the letter or essay: Students should work as a class to exchange ideas about the organization of the letter or essay. Teacher should confirm or reject students' decisions, providing justification and explanations. The final outline of the letter or essay should be written on the blackboard.

Step 7: Organizing ideas within each paragraph: Teacher should discuss with the class as a whole how they should organize their ideas within each one of the paragraphs (i.e. topic sentences, supporting statements and examples, for the main body).

### **STAGE 2: In-class writing. Students write their letter or essay individually or in pairs.**

Step 1: Writing the letter or essay in class without teacher assistance: Students should be asked to write the letter or essay in-class working individually or in pairs. Students should work on the topic that has been discussed in Stage One. They should be asked to write their letter or essay in 30 minutes, just as they would on the actual test.

### **STAGE 3: Students become familiar with and learn how to use the ECCE Writing Criteria.**

Step 1: Understanding the ELI-UM writing criteria: Teacher should help students understand the differences between the various bands (A, B, C, D, and E). Teacher should give students a copy of the ELI-UM scoring scales, ask them to work in pairs and underline important differences between the five bands, and then provide feedback and explanations. Teacher should go over all the bands very carefully.

Step 2: Rating the letter or essay using the ELI-UM writing criteria: Teacher should give students a copy of the benchmarked letters or essays without the ELI-UM comments. Students should work in pairs to rate the letters or essays using the ELI-UM scoring criteria. Teacher should assist students as they are doing this.

Step 3: Justifying assigned rating: Teacher should work with the class as a group. Each pair should report to the rest of the class, giving the rating they have assigned and justifying their rating (A, B, C, D, or E) by referring to the ELI-UM scoring criteria.

Step 4: Confirming assigned rating: Teacher should give students the benchmarked letters or essays with the ELI-UM comments so that they can compare their ratings and justifications with those provided by ELI-UM.

### **STAGE 4: Students compare their letter or essay with ELI-UM benchmarked letters or essays.**

Step 1: Comparing in-class letters or essays with benchmarked ones: Teacher should ask students to exchange letters or essays and to compare the letter of another student or pair with the one(s) benchmarked by ELI-UM. Students should be asked to compare the letters in terms of organization, linguistic range and control, communicative effect and content and development.

Step 2: Grading the letter or essay: Students should grade their classmates' letter(s) or essay (s) and justify the rating they have assigned, referring to the ELI-UM scoring criteria.

### **STAGE 5: Students edit their classmates' letters or essays with their teacher's assistance.**

Step 1: Editing organization of ideas: Students should be asked to edit their classmates' letter(s) or essay(s), focusing only on organization and connection of ideas.

Step 2: Editing content and development: Students should be asked to edit the letter(s) or essay(s), focusing this time on communicative effect and content and development.

Step 3: Editing language: In this step, students should focus on linguistic range and control, checking and editing grammatical or syntactical errors, or errors in vocabulary use.

<p><b>CONTENT AND DEVELOPMENT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Relevance of content to task</li> <li>• Quality of ideas used to develop the response</li> </ul>	<p><b>ORGANIZATION AND CONNECTION OF IDEAS</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Arrangement of content</li> <li>• How language is used to link ideas</li> </ul>	<p><b>LINGUISTIC RANGE AND CONTROL</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Variety and precision of grammar and vocabulary</li> </ul>	<p><b>COMMUNICATIVE EFFECT</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• How well communicative goals are achieved</li> </ul>
<p><b>A</b></p> <p>Richly develops an argument with original supporting details.</p>	<p>Smooth, effective arrangement and connection of ideas. A variety of cohesive devices are used effectively.</p>	<p>Broad range of grammar and vocabulary used accurately. If any errors are present they are minor and insignificant.</p>	<p>Appropriate register, awareness of audience, and establishment of context fully enhance the intended effect on the reader.</p>
<p><b>B</b></p> <p>Fully develops an argument with appropriate supporting details.</p>	<p>Appropriate and clear organization and connection of ideas. Transition markers used appropriately and not mechanically.</p>	<p>Good range of grammar and vocabulary; mostly accurate with only occasional errors.</p>	<p>Appropriate register, awareness of audience, and establishment of context help the reader to follow the text.</p>
<p><b>C</b></p> <p>Adequately develops an argument. May rely on prompt for content.</p>	<p>Ideas clearly and adequately organized. Standard connectors used appropriately but somewhat mechanically.</p>	<p>Sufficient range of grammar and vocabulary to fulfill the task. Errors in grammar and vocabulary do not interfere with reader's comprehension.</p>	<p>Adequate sense of audience and purpose for writing generally allow the reader to follow the text.</p>
<p><b>D</b></p> <p>Inadequate development of argument. Content may be limited or primarily based on prompt. Some content may be irrelevant to the topic.</p>	<p>Simple, basic organization of ideas. Although standard connectors may be present, ideas themselves are not always connected.</p>	<p>A range of structures may be attempted, but grammar and vocabulary errors are frequent and interfere with reader's comprehension.</p>	<p>Some misunderstanding of audience and purpose and inappropriate register may have a negative effect and hinder the reader's comprehension of the text.</p>
<p><b>E</b></p> <p>Little or no development of argument. Content is irrelevant or taken directly from the prompt.</p>	<p>Minimal or no organization. Connectors may be inappropriately used. Connection may not be apparent.</p>	<p>Grammar and vocabulary errors predominate and cause significant confusion.</p>	<p>Lacks audience awareness and purpose for writing.</p>



## ECCE December 2006 Prompts and Benchmarked Letters and Essays

### NO GIFTS FOR TEACHERS

Recently, a teacher at City Elementary School received a very expensive present from one of her students: two airplane tickets to Hawaii. In reaction, the school officials announced that they will no longer allow teachers to accept any gifts from students. Some parents and teachers oppose the new policy and are planning a public meeting to discuss it. *The City Times* wants to know how its readers feel about this issue.

Letter: Do you support the new policy at City Elementary School? Write a letter to the editor explaining your view. Give specific examples of how this policy could be beneficial or harmful. Start your letter, "Dear Editor."

Essay: In many places, it is common for students to give their teachers gifts. Should this be allowed? How might it affect students, teachers, and parents? Discuss this issue using specific examples to illustrate and to support your view.

### PUBLIC TRANSPORTATION CAMPAIGN

Many people who work and shop in the central area of the city drive cars to get there instead of using public transportation (buses, trains, etc.) This causes traffic and pollution problems. City officials want more people to take public transportation. They want to find out from citizens what can be done to make more people leave their cars at home.

Letter: Write a letter explaining how to increase the use of public transportation. Explain why many people are not using public transportation now. Describe specific actions the city can take to improve the situation. Start your letter, "Dear City Officials."

Essay: If you could either drive your own car or take public transportation to get to your school or workplace, which would you choose? What factors would affect your decision? Give details to explain your choice.

### U.S. DEBATE: REBUILD NEW ORLEANS?

In 2005, the city of New Orleans was destroyed by a hurricane and the flooding that followed it. Now, people are debating whether or not to rebuild the city in the same place – where a similar disaster could happen again.

Letter: The editors of *The City Times* are seeking their readers' opinions about rebuilding after a disaster. If a disaster like this happened in your city, what do you think should be done? Should the city be rebuilt in the same place? Or should residents move away? Explain your opinion.

Essay: Should public and private resources be used to support development in locations where natural disasters, such as floods, forest fires, and volcano eruptions, could occur? Explain your views. Give specific reasons and examples.

## ECCE Benchmark Letter: A

Dear Editor of The City Times,

I just read the interesting article that has been recently published in your newspaper concerning the high-profile debacle of rebuilding the city of New Orleans once ravaged by the extreme weather phenomenons. Since I found the relevant discussion very important and challenging, I would like to express my own opinion related to this topic in writting. That's how I decided to compose this letter.

First of all, I would like to point out the fact that the destroyed city is located in the zone where floodings, hurricanes and similar harsh and hazardous weather conditions often occur. Most scientists and weather experts claim that disaster like that is highly possible to happen again one day in that specific area. So what's the point in rebuilding the ruined city at same spot where it could be predictably attacked by another cruel natural catastrophe? Hundreds of human lives, vast sources of funds, could have been prevented from **losing** (1), thousands of houses, public buildings, business centers could have been spared (not talking about the number of rescurers whose lives also had been put in jeopardy during the salvage actions) if the city had been originally built in more safe location.

So what's the conclusion? In my point of view people, local governments and other authorities ought to take into account the threats of nature when considering laying the fondations of the city at the same location...

Kind regards,

**Comments:** Excellent vocabulary throughout. Fits every description of the A level

1 Should be "being lost".

Dear Editor,

I am writing this letter to express my concern about the policy taken at City Elementary School, which I consider really harmful.

It is my opinion that **teachers should have the right to feel thanked** (1) for all their work, and that children should have the right to express their love for their teacher. I think the autorities have not considered several circumstances, that might affect either a student or a teacher, making it hard not to break the prohibition.

For example, last year a girl of seven years had a car accident **while she was coming back** (2) from her winter holidays. She had to stay in hospital for two months, and after that she had to rest at her house for another month. Her teacher not only called her and invited her at the hospital, but also organized daily visits, so that she would meet a classmate everyday, not to feel lonely. When the little girl came back, she didn't know what her teacher had done for her, but, as soon as she was told, she bought the teacher a present and wrote a letter to her. It would have been really mean not to have allowed her to do that. For all these facts, I refuse to accept the measure taken by the auhorities of City Elementary School, which show no respect for human feelings.

I hope the reader will understand and share my views.

Yours, Sincerely,

**Comments:** Richly develops an argument with original supporting details. Smooth, effective arrangement of ideas. The author uses a variety of temporal words and phrases to sequence events.

1 Good use of repetition for rhetorical effect.

2 Consistent, accurate use of verb forms.

**Comments:** Errors are minor and insignificant.



## ECCE Benchmark Letter: B

Dear Editor!

I am writing in regards to your article "NO GIFTS FOR TEACHERS". In reation to your article our headmaster will no longer allow teachers to accept gifts from students! Those are great news for me! Next Monday parents and teachers will have a meeting to discuss the new "school rule."

1 You have to know that it was always very common in our school to make the teacher a present by the end of the school year. I have to admit that I never really agreed with giving my teacher a very expensive present in the end of the semestre. First of all, I believe that it is not necessary because our teachers are payed by the Greek government anyway! Second, my family is not very wealthy and my father can not afford to pay extra money in the end of my school year.

2 You have to know that unfortunately it is very common in Greece to make little presents here and there – not only for school teachers!

Last time I went to hospital and saw a big sign which said that it is forbidden for doctors to take any presents or money from patients. **Isn't that about the same thing? The parents which oppose the new policy can afford to give bribes – but what about the families they cannot? Will I get treated the same way if I cannot make a present to my teacher?** (3)

I believe that our headmaster knows very well that there are some very rich and some really poor children in our school. So with the new rule he tries to give every child the same chance.

**Thank you very much about publishing the article in your newspaper.**4 It helped our school to stop some of the "parents" making redicoulos expensive present in hope the teacher would want their children better and their kids might get better marks!

**I am a great fan of your newspaper** (4)

Sincerely

1 Adds personal experience with the topic.

2 Gives additional social context.

3 Good use of rhetorical questions.

4 Unnecessary filler material in closing.

**Comments:** Sufficient range of grammar and vocabulary to fulfill the task. Errors in grammar and vocabulary do not interfere with reader's comprehension. Fully develops an argument with appropriate supporting details. Some errors in last paragraph.

## ECCE Benchmark Letter: C

Dear Editor,

I am writing to you to express my opinion and my feelings about the new policy at City Elementary School.

First of all, in many places the students give gifts to their teachers to show their love or to say <<Thank you>> because the students learn important things the school year. I think that it is usual! But it is unusual if the gifts are expensive, such as the tickets to Hawaii.

Consequently, the students love her teacher a lot or they want to have good grades. For example, one of my classmates gives often gifts to our teacher. So, my classmate has good grades without studying. It is unfair!

Moreover, my opinion is that this effect is fault not only students' but also teachers' who accept the expensive gifts. All the teachers must discuss the issue with their students and tell them that the only thing they want is to study. Also, the students must realize that gifts have not any value. It is important to study.

To sum up, I agree with the announcement of school officials. I think that the government must make a law for this issue. I hope my arguments and my example are interesting to you.

Yours faithfully,

**Comments:** appropriate development. Connectors are used mostly appropriately but somewhat mechanically. Several examples are mentioned to develop the argument. Good command of an appropriate range of simple and complex structures. Minor errors do not affect comprehension.

Dear Editor,

A disaster is a very unfortunate event. The residents of New Orleans deal with a serious problem. We must help them to find a solution.

First of all, it is difficult for residents to move away, because they are **used to live** (1) in New Orleans. There are their jobs, their families, their likes. **If** (2) they decide to move away, a piece of their heart will be there.

**On the other hand** (3), the city should be rebuilt in the same place. If the residents try again altogether, the city may be rebuilt. It is not easy, **but** (4) if they want it, nothing can stop them. However, some residents would not rebuild the city, because they would like to forget the disaster

All the things considered, the solution will be found by residents. They will decide what they do with their city. They must try to find a solution.

Yours sincerely,

**Comments:** Original opening and ending paragraphs.

1 Used to + verb = in the past used to + verb + ing = accustomed to.

2 Good use of subordinate conjunction.

3 Wrong connector.

4 Good use of subordinate conjunction.

**Comments:** Adequately develops an argument. The original (not memorized) opening and closing give adequate sense of audience and purpose for writing. They are specific to the topic of this letter, not empty, generic, formulaic expressions.

## ECCE Benchmark Letter: D

Dear editor,

I recently read an article in your newspaper about your announce for gifts. In my view it's wrong from teachers to receive gifts from their students.

Firstly, I would like to say that this reaction would not sense good to the rest of the students. It also would not be fair for students whose parents can't afford to buy such an expensive present to their teacher.

Secondly I think that teachers would not have to accept presents from students because it would look like she recollects them. Some students would probably think that the teacher would put a bigger mark at the student, and do not feel well.

Last but not least, parents will probably have a problem with this issue and have an argument with teachers.

Thank you for taking my opinion into account. I look forward to hearing from you soon.

Yours sincerely,

**Comments:** This letter is short and only minimally developed. Organization is adequate, using connectors mechanically but appropriately. However there are numerous basic language errors and they cause confusion (“this reaction would not sense good to the rest of the students” “it would look like she recollects them” and “the teacher would put a bigger mark at the student, and do not feel well”).

Dear editor

I am a high school student and read your article in the newspaper. I will give you some examples of how this policy could be better.

First of all they students can give to their teachers some gifts, because they want to thank their teachers. The teachers **can't** (1) refuse the presents. Secondly the students mustn't do very expensive gifts to their teachers. Thirdly if the students give to their teachers expensive gifts, they must refuse it. Also the teachers must give the gifts to the school official.

In conclusion thas is my opinion about your problem. I suggest you to let the students to give presents to their- teachers.

Your faithfully

1 Wrong modal.

**Comments:** Errors impede comprehension. The 1st and 2nd sentences in paragraph 2 appear to contradict sentences 3 and 4 at first glance. The writer hasn't sufficiently differentiated which gifts are acceptable and which are not. Too short and very undeveloped. This is a 'skeletal' essay: it has a generic, empty beginning and conclusion and basic organizational markers (First of all, secondly, thirdly, also) but no real content for developing an argument.

## ECCE Benchmark Letter: E

Dear Editor

I am writing to give my opinion about the article. First, is not true student doing expensive present for teachers because it looks like help for something and second not allow for teachers received a very expensive present from one of her students because many people feel bad about the subject and must be doing something until the situation making badly.

In my opinion the best way for this subject is the teachers not take present from the student and they have to the job because is a better way.

I think you must making something and all will better.

**Comments:** Grammar and vocabulary errors predominate and cause significant confusion. Only 4 sentences, all with errors, except for the 1st sentence which is a formulaic opening.

Dear City Officials

My family and **me** (1) don't use the public transportation because We have cars. My sister has **your** own car and my parents too **but I used the trains two month ago because I didn't have my car yet.** (2)

My experience with the public transportation was very bad because Sometime I arrived late a my job. **The Traffic for this causes are...** (3)

I buy my car because I need it. The problem with the trains is the schules because I lost my tiempo when I would have to work.

The people need less traffic and the solution would be more order in the city

**Comments:** Grammar errors predominate and cause significant confusion. Minimal organization, connection not apparent.

1 Basic pronoun errors.

2 Unexpected tense shift.

3 Meaningless.

Dear City,

I think, that all the citizens, must be, clean, love, and carefully the city where her life. The people start to walk to run, because that is good for her health. It's not necessary take a public transportation, unless that your destine are far away.

All the people must beging to drive on bycicle or walk, for what the pollution will be over.

I suggest, that you can start with my ideas then everybody continue your example.

Sincerely,

**Comments:** Little development of argument. Minimal organization. Grammar and vocabulary errors predominate and cause significant confusion.

## ECCE Benchmark Essay: A

If I could either drive my own car or take public transportation to get to my workplace, I would choose to take public transportation. In fact, that is what I do everyday, and there are many reasons for that. First of all, the use of public transportation is a very good way to avoid traffic and pollution problems. It is easy to understand that, to transport fifty people, one bus causes less pollution than ten or fifteen cars. And if we think about the subway, then there is even less pollution. Besides, driving to my workplace during the rush hour everyday is something that makes me tired. There are lots of traffic and I also have problems to park my car. On going by bus, I can sleep all the way down to my office, and I just do not have to bother about parking.

Finally, taking a bus is cheaper than driving to my office. As I work about twenty kilometers away from home, I would have to use one gallon of gas to work and another one to return home. These two gallons would cost me eight US dollars. On the other hand, the bus ticket costs one dollar, so, it would cost me only two dollars a day to go to work and to get back home.

**Comments:** Very well developed essay with several specific details and accurate use of rich linguistic resources.

## ECCE Benchmark Essay: B

If I have to choose between going to my workplace by public transportation or by using my own car, I would choose traveling in my own car. This is not a selfish decision, I know that the use of cars affect the quality of the air and causes pollution, but in countries like Uruguay public transportation is not a good choice to go to work (or anywhere).

Here public transportation has many problems, there aren't enough buses to allow people to travel comfortably. Instead of that buses are always crowded and there isn't an **appropriate secuence, that means that if you lose one bus, you'll have to wait twenty minutes or more to take the next one.**

(1)

Besides of that there are more problems, for example people that live in places far from downtown don't have enough buses to travel, there are only two or three buses of different companies to go downtown. This is a real disadvantage for this people, because they have also responsibilities and commitments as people that live downtown or near downtown.

I personally think this situation is not fair, and that's why I would use my car to go to work (or anywhere) if I had one.

However, I think bus companies should evaluat this situation, because it would be better for everyone if they put more buses on streets with more and better frecuencies. This could be a very good solution to improve environment and to help people to go to work and save their money, because public transportation is always cheaper than using your own car.

1 The vocabulary isn't quite right here, but the author goes on to clarify what she/he means.

**Comments:** Appropriate and clear connection of ideas. Uses original, appropriate details. Fully develops an argument with appropriate supporting details.

## ECCE Benchmark Essay: B

This article is about a student that gave his teachers an expensive gift: a trip to Hawaii. In my opinion, students should not give presents to the teachers as it can make grading a very unfair task. For example, if the teacher the article is talking about accepts the gift, the boy may have advantage over other classmates.

I also think that the parents and teachers opposing the “no-more-gifts” rule are totally wrong. The student’s parents must rely only in the abilities of their children, and teachers must work fairly to get their salary, not money or presents from little boys or girls.

Once, in my school, we were finishing a test and when we were about to leave, I noticed one of my classmates giving our teacher a gift. The next day he got a 100% on his work, while the correct grade was in fact just 54%. Students who have been studing for weeks got lower grades than a boy who didn’t studied at all.

In conclusion, I think giving gifts to teachers is amoral and unfair, as it brings injustice to schools.

**Comments:** Effective development and organization. Good introduction, starting with the general context and then moving on to the author’s opinion and particular examples that further illustrate the main idea. Good command of an appropriate range of simple and complex structures. Rich vocabulary used appropriately. Minor errors do not interfere with comprehension.

## ECCE Benchmark Essay: C

Deciding how to get to work can be a difficult task. We have two options, to use our own car or taking the public transportation. As far as I can see, using a car is much better because is a lot faster and more confortable than a bus. However, many people do not share this idea, and think that buses and trains are better.

The way I see it, the greatest advantage of a car is the speed. If going by bus takes you one hour, with the car you will get there in thirty or forty minutes. However, we should not abuse of this, because if we go too fast we can get fined. Other reason why this speed is important is because you can sleep a little longer, and that is always a good thing.

The other advantage of the car is the safety. In the car you depend on your own, but in the bus you are depending of the driver. If he doesn’t have good driving skills and you have an accident in a bus, the hit will be huge and you will hit and hurt the other people that are in the bus.

As far as I can see, the safety and the speed are the greatest advantages of the car. And also you will be always have space to sit. As a result of this three reasons I would choose a car to get to work. I hope many people will understand my point of view and get use to travel by car.

**Comments:** Good development of ideas, with several reasons to support the thesis and examples to illustrate the reasoning. Good organization of ideas with appropriate use of connectors. Some errors in grammar and vocabulary, but they do not impede comprehension.

## ECCE Benchmark Essay: D

Nowadays is very comon people have a car. It's great, the machines makes the life is easier for us, however, for exemple, many people have a car and they uses this machine everyday.

I think in our quality of life and our planet are absolutely bad then I would take a public transportation.

In my country, a "third world" country, the brain of the people seems not think in this problems, they don't believe in the destruction of the planet.

Cars are excelent machines, but you don't need drive your car everyday, you can find another way to transport, a coletive transport, a "bike," or you can walk by yourself.

We must try to look more attent to problems of the nature, because it's my fault, it's your fault.

The cientists needs creat a new form of car that don't affect the planet. While they don't creat we must know how to use our technology.

**Comments:** Although brief, development is adequate to support the writer's argument. He uses several original details to support the main ideas. Organization is present. Most ideas are coherently linked, although connectors are sometimes used inappropriately. A range of grammar structures is used; however, there are frequent grammar and vocabulary mistakes that cause some confusion (missing subject, word order, agreement, incomplete and run-on sentences, verb forms and verb tenses, articles, derivation).

## ECCE Benchmark Essay: E

I belive to give your theachers gifts it is not good because yours theachers they gratsouated grauted you. This is not good because the students how working to take a good bathmo and it is not fear how her parents are rich but her children how he not good at her stydies he don't take the same bathmo with the children how he workes to take. This good bathmo. This is the reason how the theachers they have not accept the gifts for her students. And the children how are not got students the parents of this chidren they must not give to her a lot of money. And to take her theachers presents It is not fear.

**Comments:** Severe language errors predominate and interfere with comprehension. It is not possible to understand the main ideas.

