1. A public television network is seeking ideas for a new series of shows that would be educational for teenagers. The series will include ten one-hour episodes and will be shown once a week. Some of the titles under consideration are:

"Great Cities of the World"

"Women in History"

"Nature Walks"

"American Legends"

Choose one of these titles. Write a letter to the network president describing your ideas for a new educational series. In your letter, describe what one episode might be like. Use specific examples of what information you would include in the episode so the network president will be able to imagine what the series would be like.
## Scoring Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score &amp; Description</th>
<th>Details</th>
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</thead>
</table>
| **Excellent**       | Develops and shapes information with well-chosen details across the response.  
                      Is well organized with strong transitions.  
                      Sustains variety in sentence structure and exhibits good word choice.  
                      Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation are few and do not interfere with understanding. |
| **Skillful**        | Develops and shapes information with details in parts of the response.  
                      Is clearly organized, but may lack some transitions and/or have occasional lapses in continuity.  
                      Exhibits some variety in sentence structure and some good word choices.  
                      Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with understanding. |
| **Sufficient**      | Develops information with some details.  
                      Organized with ideas that are generally related, but has few or no transitions.  
                      Exhibits control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure, but sentences and word choice may be simple and unvaried.  
                      Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with understanding. |
| **Uneven**          | May be characterized by one or more of the following:  
                      Presents some clear information, but is list-like, undeveloped, or repetitive OR offers no more than a well-written beginning.  
                      Is unevenly organized; the response may be disjointed.  
                      Exhibits uneven control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; may have some inaccurate word choices.  
                      Errors in grammar, spelling, and punctuation sometimes interfere with the understanding. |
| **Insufficient**    | May be characterized by one or more of the following:  
                      Presents fragmented information OR may be very repetitive OR may be very undeveloped.  
                      Is very disorganized; thoughts are tenuously connected OR the response is too brief to detect organization.  
                      Minimal control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; word choice may often be inaccurate.  
                      Errors in grammar or usage (such as missing words or incorrect word use or word order), spelling, and punctuation interfere with understanding in much of the response. |
**Unsatisfactory**
May be characterized by one or more of the following:

- Attempts to respond to prompt, but provides little or no coherent information; may only paraphrase the prompt
- Has no apparent organization OR consists of a single statement.
- Minimal or no control over sentence boundaries and sentence structure; word choice may be inaccurate in much or all of the response.
- A multiplicity of errors in grammar or usage (such as missing words or incorrect word use or word order), spelling, and punctuation severely impedes understanding across the response.

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**Excellent - Student Response (please see the following page)**

1. A public television network is seeking ideas for a new series of shows that would be educational for teenagers. The series will include ten one-hour episodes and will be shown once a week. Some of the titles under consideration are:

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Choose one of these titles. Write a letter to the network president describing your ideas for a new educational series. In your letter, describe what one episode might be like. Use specific examples of what information you would include in the episode so the network president will be able to imagine what the series would be like.
Dear Network president,

Hello! I am a young teenager and I think that teenagers these days would like to see something educational. I think a good idea for a TV show would be "Great Cities of the World."

For example, one episode could be about Chicago and tell famous places you could visit. One place could be the Sears Tower in which a camera could show people going up in an elevator and then seeing the view of downtown Chicago. Another place the TV show could go to is the Shedd Aquarium. In it are many types of ocean life that interesting to see up close. They could also go to the art museum and look at famous paintings. Just for fun, the show could go to F.A.O. Schwartz, a large toy store with many toys you can play with. As a matter of fact, you could just go shopping. Chicago is known for its many stores.

Then you could take a trip to a restaurant such as E. T. Brennan or Planet Hollywood, just to spice up the show a bit. (Even that I've explained where to go in Chicago, I'll tell you a little more about the set-up of the show I think that you should have a host who is young, around eighteen, energetic, and a funky personality. She could act as the tour guide and show the viewers around each city. She could also explain the city's trademarks, such as the Sears Tower. I think that if you use a young person, it would attract young viewers.

And last of all, I think the camera should look at the city as if it was the viewer's eyes. For example, when you look around, you see things as you would see them if you were really there in Chicago, sight-seeing.

Well, I hope you enjoy my input and put it into consideration. I'll be looking
Scorer Comments:
In this "Excellent" response, the student provides details that make the show come alive, enabling the viewer to visualize the sights of Chicago. The writer describes an entire episode of a television series in detail, including such visual elements as how the camera would move: "One place could be the Sears Tower in which a camera could show people going up in an elevator and then seeing the view of downtown Chicago." He or she notes that "I think the camera should look at the city as if it was the viewer's eyes." Though there are occasional minor errors, the student uses language effectively to provide a detailed, well-organized essay.

1  Excellent - Student Response (please see the following page)
Dear Sir or Madam:

There are some ideas that I would like to express concerning your television show, "Great Cities of the World." I am hoping that you will consider at least one of the following ideas.

An idea that could help this series would be to have the show based upon cities in a compartment. This would help streamline where the better cities are. The cities that would be emphasized should be big, have a historical background, and something that the city is known for. Your audience could find out all about the city and give it seven minutes of time on your show. All of the cities your show should be six to seven minutes long. This should be enough time to give a brief summary of its history and tell what it is famous for. They should also mention what the tourist can get more information.

Another idea would be to have the show on location at some cities. This way, you could show the city to the people. Then, your audience should give information on it. For example, if you decided to do Cleveland, Ohio, you could show what features that they have to offer. The Rock and Roll Hall of Fame, Natural History Museum, Great Lakes Science Center, Jacobs Field, and more could be shown off to tourists. The host can talk about its history, present-day, and its future.

The last idea that I have is that you could do the show on several locations and have the host from that city. You can use translators and closed-captioning to help foreign viewers. You can get more information out to the people in other states.

I again hope that you can consider one of the ideas mentioned.
Scored Comments:
This "Excellent" response is well organized with strong transitions, and uses well-chosen details to support suggestions about developing an educational television series. This writer develops two possible alternatives for the topic "Great Cities of the World." The writer provides specific details, as in the suggestion that "All of the cities you do should be six to seven minutes long" and the observation that "This should be enough time to give a brief summary of its history and tell what it is famous for." The specific details about many aspects of the series and clear organization of ideas make this an "Excellent" response.

Skillful - Student Response (please see the following page)

1 A public television network is seeking ideas for a new series of shows that would be educational for teenagers. The series will include ten one-hour episodes and will be shown once a week. Some of the titles under consideration are:

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Choose one of these titles. Write a letter to the network president describing your ideas for a new educational series. In your letter, describe what one episode might be like. Use specific examples of what information you would include in the episode so the network president will be able to imagine what the series would be like.

NAEP released item, grade 8
Dear Network president,

I think that I have a new show for your network. It's called Great Cities of the World. The show is about four teenagers, around the ages of fourteen to seventeen who travel around the world. In each show they travel to two cities. When they arrive in the city they will first talk about the cities, history and what it is like now in the present. They talk about some of the traditions in the city. For example if the students went to Paris, France they would talk about France's past and some of the things they do in their daily lives. They could talk about the people, what they look like and their styles. To keep the show interesting you can show things such as we learn how to say a word from their language or meet many different people from their city. Also to keep the show interesting they can have problems.

Scorer Comments:
This "Skillful" response provides details about the characters in the show, its format and content: "The show is about four teenagers, around the ages of fourteen to seventeen who travel around the world. In each show they travel to two cities." The student gives an extended example (Paris, France) to illustrate the format. Though the paper is not as detailed or specific as the "excellent" response, the student maintains good control of language despite minor errors. The student uses complex sentences and transitions (such as "When they arrive in the city...", "For example...") to tie points together.

1  Skillful - Student Response (please see the following page)
Dear Network President,

I have an idea for a television series that I think would be very educational for teenagers. What I had in mind was a series about nature that could be called "Nature Walks." This series could show how teenagers react and respond to the wildlife on nature hikes and camping trips. They can begin different on each series. The first series can show how five teenagers who are students at the same high school go on these nature hikes for different subjects each time. The first time, they can go to collect bugs for a science project they might have to see what kind of organisms live in the wild. The second time they might go to collect dead organisms, such as dried flowers and plants that they might not see in their regular garden or yard. From these, the students can find different things to talk about on each series. They can also show how the living creatures protect themselves and shelter themselves. I think this would be a very educational series for all teenagers, children and adults of all ages. Not only is it educational, it's fun!

Your Friend,

NAEP released item, grade 8
Scorer Comments:
This "Skillful" response offers an interesting suggestion for a program titled "Nature Walks" (one of the titles suggested in the prompt). The writer goes into impressive detail about how the show might be organized, offering suggestions such as "The second time they might go to catch dead organisms such as dried flowers and plants that they might not see in their regular garden or yard." Errors in capitalization (such as "Idea") and grammar ("They can begin different on each series") are infrequent and do not interfere with meaning. The writer has a clear voice, and develops his or her ideas for a series well.

Sufficient - Student Response (Please see the following page)

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Choose one of these titles. Write a letter to the network president describing your ideas for a new educational series. In your letter, describe what one episode might be like. Use specific examples of what information you would include in the episode so the network president will be able to imagine what the series would be like.
Dear Mr. President,

I think you should have a show about "women in history." A lot of people want to know about women and what they've done to help our country. There have been many women heroes and they should be recognized. You could do the show like "Lischbone," except all the shows be about women in history instead of characters from a book. An idea for a show is Anne Frank. You could go to the place where they hid for so long and do the show right there. Everyone will get the chance to see how Anne lived. But six people haven't heard or seen her story. Well, it's time they do! So, please take into consideration my ideas and respond when you make your decision.

1/27/97

Scorer Comments:
In this "Sufficient" response, the student moves from an extended description of why the series is valuable (the importance of showing "women heroes") to some details about a particular episode: "An idea for a show is Anne Frank. You could go to the place where they hid for so long and do the show right there. Everyone will get the chance to see how Anne lived." Except for that example, the response has few details. The student writes clearly and accurately, however, and the response is well organized.

NAEP released item, grade 8
Dear television network:

I think that a good education program for children is “American Legends.” You could have episodes about many great American Legends that would be interesting to watch. You could do a program on great American baseball players, and have Babe Ruth as the star. You could have a timeline of his life, his greatest accomplishments and about baseball and playing cards that he signed, and what they would be worth today. I think “American Legends” would be an interesting and informative television show for all age groups.

Regards,

[Student Name]

Scorer Comments:
This “Sufficient” response, for the most part, demonstrates good command of the conventions of grammar and syntax. The response, however, is very thinly developed, and does not offer many specific details to help the reader envision the television show proposed. Though there is one example of a show that could be done on Babe Ruth, the writer does not explain what the format of the show might be: who would talk, where the show might be filmed, etc. Though the ideas are not fully developed in this response, the response is clear and organized.
A public television network is seeking ideas for a new series of shows that would be educational for teenagers. The series will include ten one-hour episodes and will be shown once a week. Some of the titles under consideration are:

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Dear Network President,

I think you should do a show on American legends. You can tell about real people like George Washington or Abraham Lincoln. You might want to consider using fictional characters such as Paul Bunyan or Johnny Appleseed. You might want to do shorter section on all of the less popular Presidents like Teddy Roosevelt or Woodrow Wilson.

I would put in how George Washington helped win the Revolutionary War or how he made a good president. You could also tell how John F. Kennedy was assassinated or how Abraham Lincon helped in the Civil War.

Scorer Comments:
In this "Uneven" response, the student enumerates various "American Legends" to be presented in an educational television series, along with an identifying detail or two about George Washington, John F. Kennedy, and Abraham Lincoln: "You could also tell how John F. Kennedy was assassinated or how Abraham Lincon helped in the Civil War." The student, however, does not develop his or her points, essentially just naming the figures to cover.
Dear Network President,

Should think about putting on a show called "Nature Walk." It is about the narrator's different adventures in the woods. On one episode he tells teens about the monkeys. How their life is so quiet. They climb trees and play all day. Another can be about bears.

The narrator shows what kind and eats the beans how long do they think they've been there and what they are good for. How they help tree climbing animals escape danger and how bears store their backs on them.

Another episode is about plants. He shows the good plants and the ones that can be deadly. He shows lilies, dandelions, tulips, violets, and roses. The narrator show the ones you can eat too. The show will have a lot more of the helpful series for teenagers and adults. The show is very good so think about it.

Scorer Comments:
This "Uneven" response presents some interesting ideas for a show (on the subject of "Nature Walks") but loses some effectiveness because of its lack of organization and development. We are told that "One episode he tells teens about the monkeys. How their life is so great," but we do not know who "he" is, and the sentence fragment is problematic. Despite these problems, the writer does attempt to be persuasive, concluding with "The show is very good so think about it." The attempted development combined with a lack of specificity and pervasive sentence-level errors make this response a good example of the "Uneven" category.
Choose one of these titles. Write a letter to the network president describing your ideas for a new educational series. In your letter, describe what one episode might be like. Use specific examples of what information you would include in the episode so the network president will be able to imagine what the series would be like.

Dear President,

I think you should do the series on "Great Cities of the World." If you did the series all of that title it would be best. You would get to learn about all the cities instead of just one city. Because teenagers could learn about other cities in other countries. That's why I think you should do the series on "Great Cities of the World."

Scorer Comments:
In this "Insufficient" response, the student identifies the subject of the series and provides a brief justification for it: "You would get to learn about all the cities instead of just one city." However, the student does not develop that justification by describing the substance of the show.
1 Insufficient - Student Response

Dear Mr. Network President,

I believe that you should have a series that has all four of the topics in its split the time evenly into the 30 minutes.

Scorer Comments:
This "Insufficient" response does little more than restate the assignment, but does so with better control over sentences than most "insufficient" papers display. The writer does offer a new idea ("you should have a series that has all four of the topics in it"). The lack of development and specificity, however, make this a clearly "insufficient" response overall.

1 Unsatisfactory - Student Response

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Our President.

I would like to do a brochure on "Great Cities of the World" I need your opinion should I do it on New York, Tokyo, Taiwan, Los Angeles, or should I do all of them?

Student.

Scorer Comments:
In this "Unsatisfactory" response, the student chooses one of the series titles provided in the prompt and asks what to include, without presenting his or her ideas about what to show on the television series.

NAEP released item, grade 8
I think the name of the show should be called Great Cities of the World and you could teach teenagers about them.

Scorer Comments:
This "Unsatisfactory" response simply restates part of the assignment without offering any concrete examples or developing the idea presented.
1998 National Performance Results

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Percentage of Students</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Unsatisfactory</td>
<td>3%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Insufficient</td>
<td>13%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Uneven</td>
<td>40%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sufficient</td>
<td>34%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Skillful</td>
<td>8%</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Excellent</td>
<td>2%</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

Note:

- These results are for public and nonpublic school students.
- Percentages may not add to 100 due to rounding.

**Purpose for Writing:** *Informative Writing*
Informative writing focuses primarily on the subject-matter element in communication. This type of writing is used to share knowledge and to convey messages, instructions, and ideas. Like all writing, informative writing may be filtered through the writer's impressions, understanding, and feelings. Used as a means of exploration, informative writing helps both the writer and the reader to learn new ideas and to reexamine old conclusions. Informative writing may also involve reporting on events or experiences, or analyzing concepts and relationships, including developing hypotheses and generalizations. Any of these types of informative writing can be based on the writer's personal knowledge and experience or on information newly presented to the writer that must be understood in order to complete a task. Usually, informative writing involves a mix of the familiar and the new, and both are clarified in the process of writing. Depending on the task, writing based on either personal experience or factual information may span the range of thinking skills from recall to analysis to evaluation.