

OPEN-ENDED QUESTIONS

What does an open-ended question response look like?

- contains 1-2 well-developed paragraphs
- includes elaboration (details and explanation)
- includes specific examples from the text to support the answer
- is generally about 1 page in length

1. **RESTATE IT:** restate the question:

2. **SUPPORT IT:** find evidence from the text to prove your point (3-4 examples). Explain how your evidence relates to the question.

3. **CONNECT IT:** to another text, movie, TV show, your own life, or someone else's life.

4. **CONCLUDE IT:** tie it all together. Take all the parts and make it into a paragraph. Make sure to re-state your main point.

Re-read your paragraph and ask yourself these questions:

- ✓ Do I incorporate all 4 steps?
- ✓ Does my evidence support the question?
- ✓ Do I explain my evidence and how it relates to the question?
- ✓ Does my connection relate to the question and have I explained it?
- ✓ Do I tie it all together and bring it back to the question?

OPEN-ENDED SCORING RUBRIC
For Reading, Listening, and Viewing

Sample Task: The author takes a strong position on voting rights for young people. Use information from the text to support your response to the following.

- *Requirements:**
- Explain the author's position on voting.
 - Explain how adopting such a position would affect young people like you.

Points	Criteria
4	A 4-point response clearly demonstrates understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides an insightful explanation/opinion that links to or extends aspects of the text.
3	A 3-point response demonstrates an understanding of the task, completes all requirements, and provides some explanation/opinion using situations or ideas from the text as support.
2	A 2-point response may address all of the requirements, but demonstrates a partial understanding of the task, and uses text incorrectly or with limited success resulting in an inconsistent or flawed explanation.
1	A 1-point response demonstrates minimal understanding of the task, does not complete the requirements, and provides only a vague reference to or no use of the text.
0	A 0-point response is irrelevant or off-topic.

*Requirements for these items will vary according to the task.

SAMPLE PASSAGE FOR OPEN-ENDED RESPONSE

Memories of Dating

Today I want to talk about dating. This subject was raised in a letter to me from a young person named Eric Knott, who writes:

"I have got a big problem. There's this girl in my English class who is really good-looking. However, I don't think she knows I exist. I want to ask her out, but I'm afraid she will say no, and I will be the freak of the week. What should I do?"

Eric, you have sent your question to the right mature adult, because as a young person, I spent a lot of time thinking about this very problem. Starting in about eighth grade, my time was divided as follows:

- Academic Pursuits: 2 percent
- Zits: 16 percent
- Trying to Figure out How to Ask Girls Out: 82 percent

The most sensible way to ask a girl out is to walk directly up to her on foot and say, "So you want to go out or what?" I never did this. I knew, as Eric Knott knows, that there was always the possibility that the girl would say no, thereby leaving me with no viable option but to leave Harold G. Crittenden Junior High School forever and go into the woods and become a bark-eating hermit whose only companions would be the gentle and understanding woodland creatures.

"Hey, Clueless!" the woodland creatures would shriek in their cute little Chip 'n' Dale voices while raining acorns down upon my head. "You wanna date? Hahahahahahahaha."

So, the first rule of dating is never risk direct contact with the girl in question. Your role model should be the nuclear submarine, gliding silently beneath the ocean surface, tracking an enemy target that does not even begin to suspect that the submarine would like to date it. I spent the vast majority of 1960 keeping a girl named Judy under surveillance, maintaining a minimum distance of fifty lockers to avoid the danger that I might somehow get into a conversation with her, which could have led to disaster.

Judy: Hi.

Me: Hi.

Judy: Just in case you ever thought about having a date with me, the answer is no.

Woodland Creatures: Hahahahahahaha.

The only problem with the nuclear submarine technique is that it's difficult to get a date with a girl who has never, technically, been asked. This is why you need Phil Grant. Phil was a friend of mine who had the ability to talk to girls. It was a mysterious superhuman power he had, comparable to X-ray vision. So, after several thousand hours of intense discussion and planning with me, Phil approached a girl he knew named Nancy, who approached a girl named Sandy, who was a direct personal friend of Judy's, and who passed the word back to Phil via Nancy that Judy would be willing to go on a date with me. This procedure protected me from direct humiliation, similar to the way President Reagan¹ was protected from direct involvement in the Iran-Contra scandal² by complex White House chain of command that at one point, investigators now believe, included his horse.

Thus it was that, finally, Judy and I went on an actual date, to see a movie in White Plains, New York. If I were to sum up the romantic ambience³ of the date in four words, those words would be, "My mother was driving." This made for an extremely quiet drive, because my mother, realizing that her presence was hideously embarrassing, had to pretend she wasn't there. If it had been legal, I think she would have got out and sprinted alongside the car, steering through the window. Judy and I, sitting in the back seat about seventy-five feet apart, were also silent, unable to communicate without the assistance of Phil, Nancy, and Sandy. After what seemed like several years, we got to the movie theater, where my mother went off to sit in the Parents and Lepers Section. The movie was called "North to Alaska," but I can tell you nothing else about it because I spent the whole time wondering whether it would be necessary to amputate my right arm, which was not getting blood flow as a result of being perched for two hours like a petrified snake on the back of Judy's seat exactly one molecule away from physical contact. So it was definitely a fun first date, featuring all the relaxed spontaneity of a real-estate closing,⁴ and in years later I did regain some feeling in my arm. My point, Eric Knott, is that the key to successful dating is self-confidence. I bet that good-looking girl in your English class would love to go out with you. But you have to make the first move. So just do it! Pick up that phone! Call Phil Grant.

¹ **President Reagan:** Ronald Wilson Reagan, 1911-; U.S. president 1981-89

² **Iran Contra scandal:** a case in which US government officials were suspected of improperly selling weapons to Iran to raise funds for Nicaraguan rebel forces.

³ **Ambience:** an atmosphere or environment

⁴ **Real-estate closing:** a meeting at which the rights to land or a building are officially transferred from seller to buyer.

SAMPLE OPEN-ENDED RESPONSES

The author of the essay, "Memories of Dating," uses many strategies to help the reader fully appreciate the story. Explain how the author's use of literary devices helps to convey his message.

Score 4-

In the essay, "Memories of Dating," the writer uses exaggeration in order to help the reader to fully appreciate the story. *Hyperboles* are used effectively to get the message across that the concept of dating really can be terrifying. For example, in the fourth paragraph, the writer states that little woodland creatures would mock him by saying, "You wanna date? Hahahahaha." In reality this would not happen. It is just his imagination. The writer continues his exaggeration when he makes a metaphor between himself and a nuclear-submarine. He says that he kept "a girl named Judy under surveillance, maintaining a minimum distance of fifty lockers." In comparing himself to a submarine, he is explaining to the reader how secretive he was when dealing with the girl he was interested in. Having been in a similar situation, I know exactly what the writer meant when he wrote that he and Judy were sitting about "seventy-five feet apart." All teenagers dread having their parents around, especially when it involves the objects of our affection. Of all of his exaggerations, the author's strongest exaggeration was in the last paragraph when he stated that the first date featured, "all the relaxed spontaneity of a real-estate closing." This sentence sums up the point he makes throughout the entire essay – dating as a teenager can be the most frightening, uncomfortable, and awkward situations anyone would ever have to go through.

Score 3-

In the essay, "Memories of Dating," the writer uses exaggeration in order to help the reader fully appreciate the story. For example, the fourth paragraph that the little woodland creatures would mock him by saying, "You wanna date?" This is clearly a joke. Later, he writes another exaggeration comparing himself to a nuclear-submarine. By doing this, he is comparing hiding when you are trying to date someone to hiding under the ocean. The most effective exaggeration he uses is the one where he wrote that it might "be necessary to amputate" his arm after he was sitting with it behind his date for two hours straight. He uses humor to make his point. Overall, the essay truly shows how difficult it can be to date as a teen.

Score 2-

In the essay, "Memories of Dating," the writer makes funny jokes. He writes that he spent 82 percent of his time in eighth grade "trying to figure out how to ask girls out." He's probably exaggerating because I'm sure that he spent more time on his grades. After all, he did write an entire essay that is now in this GEPA test. He must have done some schoolwork. My favorite exaggeration is when he says that his mother would have "sprinted alongside the car." The image of that happening in my head makes me laugh. It was a good essay.

Score 1-

This story talks about this guy's first date. He is embarrassed because his mom had to go with him on the date. That would be really weird to go on a date with your mom there. The story also talks about going into the woods and talking to the animals. I think he was probably kidding about that, but it sounds funny. In conclusion, the most effective exaggeration was when he wrote, "So just do it!"

Score 0-

I went on a date once. Well, not really a date. This kid liked me and I gave him my number. Then we talked on the phone and held hands in the hallway at school. I have a pet too.