

## Response to Literature Writing Task

### Directions:

- Read the following story.
- As you read, you may mark the story or make notes. Marks and notes will not be scored.
- After reading the story, write an essay. You have 60 minutes to read, plan, write, and proofread.
- You may reread or go back to the story at any time during the assessment.

### Scoring:

Your writing will be scored on how well you write an essay that:

- shows your understanding of the author's message and your insight into the characters and ideas presented in the story;
- is organized around several clear ideas and/or images from the story; and
- justifies your interpretation by giving examples and citing evidence from the text.

### To Sleep Under the Stars By Carol Shaw Graham

"But Mom, everybody's going."

"Cecilia, you know that isn't true. All 300 kids in the 7th grade cannot be going." Cecilia's mother looked across the kitchen at her. "And I truly am sorry—but this is the only weekend your father has off until after Christmas. We're going to your Grandmother's. This is very important, Cecilia. Uncle Frank and Aunt Ellen have been taking care of Grandma ever since her surgery, but we need to help out too. There will be other class trips. This time, family has to come first.

"But . . ." Cecilia searched quickly for another reason to stay home.

"Cecilia. I'm disappointed in you. It is time to be unselfish." Her mother turned sadly back to the sink.

Cecilia slowly left the kitchen and wandered out to the porch. "It's not fair," she thought. "My first class trip. I really wanted to see the planetarium." She flopped into a chair and gave herself up to self-pity.

Cecilia was still unhappy when the time came to head for Grandma's. The three-hour trip took the family east through beautiful farmland and several small towns. Usually Cecilia enjoyed the ride, but this time she didn't. Her friends were on a bus heading three hours west towards the Bay City Planetarium.

Grandma looked tired, but she was so happy to see them that Cecilia felt a little better. "Stay and keep me company," requested Grandma when Cecilia's parents went to unpack. "You've grown so tall since the summer!" Grandma exclaimed. "Sit down here next to me—I'm getting a crick in my neck looking up at you! Now tell me, where do you buy the beauty cream you must put on your face every night? I need some!"

