**Extended-Response Rubric with Notes: Explanation**

**Explanation:**
Written explanation of the rationales and steps of the solution process. A justification of each step is provided. Though important, the length of the response, grammar, and syntax are not the critical elements of this dimension.

- Contains an explanation of what the student did to solve the problem and why they took those steps. (The explanation score is not dependent upon the student’s answer—correct or incorrect—to the problem.)
- Phrases that may indicate some possible “why’s”: because, so, therefore, in order to find, to find the total, to show, to help me find
- “Why’s” in an explanation may be implied.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score Level</th>
<th>Description</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4 | ✷ gives a complete written explanation of the solution process; clearly explains what was done and why it was done | The response demonstrates:  
- A clear explanation that completely explains what and why the student took the steps they did to solve the problem.  
- May have an explanation that clearly explains an incorrect solution process. |
| 3 | ✷ gives a nearly complete written explanation of the solution process; clearly explains what was done and begins to address why it was done  
✷ may include a diagram with most of its elements explained | The response demonstrates:  
- The explanation will have a why included. A nearly complete explanation of the important parts of the solution process.  
- The why may be implied within the student’s explanation. |
| 2 | ✷ gives some written explanation of the solution process; either explains what was done or addresses why it was done  
✷ explanation is vague, difficult to interpret, or does not completely match the solution process  
✷ may include a diagram with some of its elements explained | The response may demonstrate one or more of the following:  
- The explanation is mostly “what” was done within the solution process.  
- The explanation may not completely match the presented student work.  
- Explanation may be vague or difficult to interpret, but student attempts to explain what was done to solve the problem. |
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Score</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
<th>Notes</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>✷ gives minimal written explanation of the solution process; may fail to explain what was done and why it was done&lt;br&gt;� explanation does not match presented solution process&lt;br&gt;� may include minimal discussion of the elements in a diagram; explanation of significant elements is unclear</td>
<td>The response may demonstrate one or more of the following:&lt;br&gt;♦ The explanation is a minimal attempt to explain the solution process.&lt;br&gt;♦ The explanation attempts to explain “what” was done to solve the problem, but the explanation does not match the presented solution process.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>✷ no written explanation of the solution process is provided</td>
<td>The response may demonstrate one of the following:&lt;br&gt;• The student offers the answer only, no written explanation of the solution process is given.&lt;br&gt;• The student repeats the prompt.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>