Short Answer Response Example 
and Organization

Organization:
Topic Sentence—the superficial answer to the question—one sentence
Explanation of the answer in your own words—two to three sentences
Proof from the text to back up your answer—may be a quote or paraphrase
Connect the proof to your answer by explaining how the proof relates to
the answer or proves the point you are trying to make—three to four
sentences

Example #1:
Who has the “tell-tale” heart in the story—the narrator or the old man? Defend
your position on this question with specific information from the story.

The narrator in the story written by Edgar Allen Poe is the one with the “tell-tale”
heart. Throughout the selection, the narrator experiences bouts of heightened emotional
stress due to the plot against the old man. During these periods, he, the narrator, hears a
muffled heartbeat at critical times in the plot that proves it is his own beating pulsation.

On page 838, when the narrator is about to kill the old man, the “...hellish tattoo of the heart
increased. It grew quicker and quicker, and louder and louder every instant...And now a new
anxiety seized me...” The narrator’s report of the heartbeat provides the reader with the
image of an anxious man on the verge of a murder that barely possesses the ability to control
himself physically or emotionally. The narrator, later in the story, has killed the old man;
however, the heartbeat eventually returns to divulge the narrator’s secret to the
unsuspecting police. Even though the characterization of the narrator has many complexities,
he never truly understands that the heartbeat is his own.