



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**The Pennsylvania System of School  
Assessment  
English Language Arts  
Item and Scoring Sampler  
2016–2017  
Grade 6**

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## INTRODUCTION

### General Introduction

The Pennsylvania Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instructional programs aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS). These tools include Academic Standards, Assessment Anchor documents, assessment handbooks, and content-based item and scoring samplers. This Item and Scoring Sampler is a useful tool for Pennsylvania educators in preparing local instructional programs. It can also be useful in preparing students for the statewide assessment.

### Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)

This sampler contains examples of test questions that are aligned to the new Pennsylvania Core Standards-based 2016 PSSA Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content. The Mathematics, Reading, and Writing PSSA transitioned to PCS-based operational Mathematics and English Language Arts assessments starting with the spring 2015 PSSA administration.

The 2016 PCS-aligned Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content documents are posted on this portal:

- [www.education.pa.gov](http://www.education.pa.gov) [Hover over “K–12,” select “Assessment and Accountability,” and select “Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA).” Then select “Assessment Anchors” from the “Other Materials” list on the right side of the screen.]

### What Is Included

This sampler contains stimulus reading passages with test questions, standalone questions, and mode-specific prompts that have been written to align to the Assessment Anchors that are based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS). The passages represent some of the genres approved by PDE to appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. The test questions provide an idea of the types of items that may appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. Each sample test question has been through a rigorous review process to ensure alignment with the Assessment Anchors.

### Purpose and Uses

The items in this sampler may be used as examples for creating assessment items at the classroom level, and they may also be copied and used as part of a local instructional program.<sup>1</sup> Classroom teachers may find it beneficial to have students respond to the test questions in this sampler. Educators can then use the sampler as a guide to score the responses either independently or together with colleagues within a school or district.

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<sup>1</sup> The permission to copy and/or use these materials does not extend to commercial purposes.

## Item Format and Scoring Guidelines

The PCS-based PSSA has multiple types of test questions. For grade 6, the types of test questions are Multiple-Choice questions (MC), Evidence-Based Selected-Response questions (EBSR), Text-Dependent Analysis Questions (TDA), and mode-specific Writing Prompts (WP).

**Multiple Choice:** Each of this type of test question has four answer choices. Some MC test questions are based on a stimulus reading passage, while other MC test questions are independent of a passage. Each correct response to an MC test question is worth one point.

**Evidence-Based Selected Response:** Each two-part EBSR question is designed to elicit an evidence-based response from a student who has read either a Literature or Informational Text passage. In Part One, which is similar to a multiple-choice question, the student analyzes a passage and chooses the best answer from four answer choices. In Part Two, the student utilizes evidence from the passage to select one or more answers based on his/her response to Part One. Part Two is different from a multiple-choice question in that there may be more than four answer options and more than one correct answer. Each EBSR test question is worth either two or three points, and students can receive partial credit for providing a correct response to Part One or for providing one or more correct responses in Part Two.

**Text-Dependent Analysis Question:** Unlike a writing prompt, the TDA question is a text-dependent analysis question based on a passage or passage set that each student has read during the test event. There are three response pages in the paper-and-pencil format and up to 5,000 characters in the online format. Both Literature and Informational Texts are addressed through this item type. Students must draw on basic writing skills while inferring and synthesizing information from the passage in order to develop a comprehensive, holistic essay response. The demand required of a student's reading and writing skills in response to a TDA coincides with the similar demands required for a student to be college and career ready. The TDA response is scored using a holistic scoring guideline on a 1–4-point scale.

**Writing Prompt:** Each of this type of test question includes an extended response space in which the student composes an answer based on a provided prompt. There are two response pages in the paper-and-pencil format and up to 3,000 characters in the online format. A writing prompt is based on a specific mode of writing and may ask the student to write an argumentative essay, an informative/explanatory essay, or a narrative essay. Each writing prompt is scored on a 1–4-point scale using a holistic, mode-specific scoring guideline. In this sampler, examples of student responses representing each score point can be combined with the mode-specific scoring guideline to form a practical scoring guide.

## Testing Time and Mode of Testing Delivery for the PCS-Based PSSA

The PSSA is delivered in traditional paper-and-pencil format as well as in an online format. The estimated time to respond to a test question is the same for both methods of test delivery. The following table shows the estimated response time for each item type.

During an official test administration, students are given as much additional time as is necessary to complete the test questions.

English Language Arts Item Type:

MC: Estimated Response Time (minutes) 1.5

EBSR: Estimated Response Time (minutes) 3 to 5

TDA: Estimated Response Time (minutes) 45

WP: Estimated Response Time (minutes) 30

## English Language Arts Grade 6

This English Language Arts Sampler is composed of 3 passages, 12 passage-based multiple-choice questions, 4 evidence-based selected-response questions, a text-dependent analysis question, 4 standalone multiple-choice questions, and a mode-specific writing prompt.

There are three passages in this booklet. The first passage is followed by a set of passage-based multiple-choice questions and 2 evidence-based selected-response questions. The second passage is followed by a set of passage-based multiple-choice questions and 2 evidence-based selected-response questions. The third passage is followed by a text-dependent analysis question. This booklet also contains 4 standalone multiple-choice questions and a mode-specific writing prompt.

Each question is accompanied by a chart that contains the Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content coding, answer key(s), depth of knowledge, and testing data. Each question is followed by a brief analysis or rationale. The text-dependent analysis question and the writing prompt are displayed with the item-specific scoring guidelines and examples of student responses with scores and annotations at each scoring level.

The PCS-based PSSA may be administered in paper-and-pencil format or online. As a result, this sampler includes samples of text-dependent analysis question responses and mode-specific writing prompt responses in both formats.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR READING PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS

Directions: On the following pages are the Reading passages and questions.

### **Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:**

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

First, read the passage carefully.

Read each question and choose the best answer.

Only one of the answers provided is correct.

You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.

Record your choice in the answer booklet.

### **Directions for Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions:**

Some questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.

You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.

Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.

Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.

Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.

You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.

Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.

### **Directions for Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Questions:**

The English Language Arts TDA question will ask you to analyze the passage and use evidence from the passage to write an essay.

For the TDA Essay:

Be sure to read the passage and TDA question carefully.

Review the Writer's Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.

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You may look back at the passage to help you write your essay.

Write your essay in the appropriate space in the answer booklet. If you use scratch paper to write a rough-draft essay, be sure to transfer your final essay to the answer booklet.

Be sure to check that your essay contains evidence from the passage to support your response.

Be sure to check your essay for errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

## PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage about the benefits of regular exercise. Then answer questions 1–8.

### Why Exercise Is Wise

You’ve probably heard countless times how exercise is “good for you.” But did you know that it can actually help you feel good, too? Getting the right amount of exercise can rev up your energy levels and even help improve your mood.

### Rewards and Benefits

Experts recommend that teens get 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous physical activity each day. Here are some of the reasons:

**Exercise benefits every part of the body, including the mind.** Exercising causes the body to produce endorphins, chemicals that can help a person to feel more peaceful and happy. Exercise can help some people sleep better. Plus, exercise can give people a real sense of accomplishment and pride at having achieved a certain goal—like beating an old time in the 100-meter dash.

**Exercise can help you feel better.** People who exercise burn more calories and are better toned than those who don’t. In fact, exercise is one of the most important parts of keeping your body healthy.

**Exercise helps people lose weight and lower the risk of some diseases.** Exercising to maintain a healthy weight decreases a person’s risk of developing certain diseases, including type 2 diabetes and high blood pressure. These diseases, which used to be found mostly in adults, are becoming more common in teens.

**Exercise can help a person age well.** This may not seem important now, but your body will thank you later. Women are especially prone to a condition called osteoporosis (a weakening of the bones) as they get older. Studies have found that weight-bearing exercise—like jumping, running or brisk walking—can help girls (and guys!) keep their bones strong.

The three components to a well-balanced exercise routine are aerobic exercise, strength training, and flexibility training.

### Aerobic Exercise

Like other muscles, the heart enjoys a good workout. You can provide it with one in the form of aerobic exercise. Aerobic exercise is any type of exercise that gets the heart pumping and quickens your breathing. When you give your heart this kind of workout regularly, it will get stronger and more efficient in delivering oxygen (in the form of oxygen-carrying blood cells) to all parts of your body.

If you play team sports, you’re probably meeting the recommendation for 60 minutes or more of moderate to vigorous activity on practice days. Some team sports that give you a great aerobic workout are swimming, basketball, soccer, and hockey.

But if you don’t play team sports, don’t worry—there are plenty of ways to get aerobic exercise on your own or with friends. These include biking, running, swimming, skating, tennis, hiking, and

walking quickly. In fact, the types of exercise that you do on your own are easier to continue when you leave high school and go on to work or college, making it easier to stay fit later in life as well.

### **Strength Training**

The heart isn't the only muscle to benefit from regular exercise. Most of the other muscles in your body enjoy exercise too. When you use your muscles and they become stronger, you can be active for longer periods of time without getting worn out.

Strong muscles are also a plus because they actually help protect you when you exercise by supporting your joints and helping to prevent injuries. Muscle also burns more energy than fat when a person is at rest, so building your muscles will help you burn more calories and maintain a healthy weight.

Different types of exercise strengthen different muscle groups, for example:

For arms, try pull-ups and push-ups. Those gym class standbys are also good for building arm muscles.

For strong legs, try running, biking, or skating. Squats and leg raises also work the legs.

For abdominals, or stomach muscles, you can't beat yoga or sit-ups.

### **Flexibility Training**

Strengthening the heart and other muscles isn't the only important goal of exercise. Exercise also helps the body stay flexible, meaning that your muscles and joints stretch and bend easily. People who are flexible can worry less about strained muscles and sprains.

Being flexible may also help improve a person's sports performance. Some activities, like martial arts, obviously require great flexibility, but increased flexibility can also help people perform better at other sports, such as soccer.

Sports and activities that encourage flexibility are easy to find. Martial arts like karate also help a person stay flexible. Ballet, gymnastics, and yoga are other good choices. Stretching after your workout will also help you improve your flexibility.

### **What's Right for Me?**

One of the biggest reasons people drop an exercise program is lack of interest. If what you're doing isn't fun, it's hard to stay motivated. The good news is that there are tons of different sports and activities that you can try out to see which one inspires you.

When picking the right type of exercise, it can help to consider your workout personality. For example, do you like to work out alone and on your own schedule? If so, solo sports like biking or snowboarding may be for you. Or do you like the shared motivation and companionship that comes from being part of a team?

You also need to plan around practical considerations, such as whether your chosen activity is affordable and available to you. (Activities like horseback riding may be harder for people who live in cities, for example.) You'll also want to think about how much time you can set aside for your sport.

It's a good idea to talk to someone who understands the exercise, like a coach or fitness expert at a gym. He or she can get you started on a program that's right for you and your level of fitness.

Another thing to consider is whether any health conditions may affect how—and how much—you exercise. Doctors know that most people benefit from regular exercise. But if you have a health problem or other considerations, talk to your doctor before beginning an exercise plan. That way you can get information on which exercise programs are best and which to avoid.

### **Too Much of a Good Thing**

As with all good things, it's possible to overdo exercise. Although exercising is a great way to maintain a healthy weight, exercising too much to lose weight isn't healthy. The body needs enough calories to function properly. This is especially true for teens, who are still growing.

It's also possible to overtrain—something athletes need to watch out for. If you participate in one sport, experts recommend that you limit that activity to a maximum of 5 days a week, with at least 2–3 months off per year. You can still train more than that as long as it's cross-training in a different sport (such as swimming or biking if you play football).

Participating in more than one activity or sport can help athletes use different skills and avoid injury. Also, never exercise through pain. And, if you have an injury, make sure you give yourself enough time to heal. Your body—and your performance—will thank you.

Considering the benefits to the heart, muscles, joints, and mind, it's easy to see why exercise is wise. And the great thing about exercise is that it's never too late to start. Even small things can count as exercise when you're starting out—like taking a short bike ride, walking the dog, or raking leaves.

If you're already exercising now, try to keep it up. Staying fit is often one of the biggest challenges for kids as they grow older and busier.

## Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Getting the right amount of exercise can rev up your energy levels and even help improve your mood.”

What does the phrase “rev up” mean in the sentence?

- A. protect
- B. accept
- C. increase
- D. reverse

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	3%
p-value B	2%
p-value C	91% (correct answer)
p-value D	3%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to interpret the meaning of a phrase used in a sentence from the passage. Option C is the correct answer since the phrase “rev up” implies that energy levels can increase with the right amount of exercise. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since these options are not supported by information in the passage.

2. Read the sentence from the passage.

“This may not seem important now, but your body will thank you later.”

What does the figurative language in the sentence suggest?

- A. Exercise has long-term effects on the body.
- B. Exercise requirements change as the body ages.
- C. Exercise should be pain free for the body from the beginning.
- D. Exercise methods should be chosen carefully to protect the body.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	67% (correct answer)
p-value B	14%
p-value C	6%
p-value D	13%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to interpret the meaning of figurative language used in a sentence from the passage. Option A is the correct answer since the passage provides several examples of how exercise can have long-term positive effects on the body. Options B, C, and D are incorrect since the options do not support the context of the provided sentence.

3. Read the sentence from the passage.

“When you give your heart this kind of workout regularly, it will get stronger and more efficient in delivering oxygen (in the form of oxygen-carrying blood cells) to all parts of your body.”

What does the word efficient mean as it is used in the sentence?

- A. capable
- B. obvious
- C. necessary
- D. original

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	83% (correct answer)
p-value B	4%
p-value C	9%
p-value D	4%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to use context clues in a sentence to determine the meaning of “efficient.” Option A is the correct answer since “capable” fits the context of the sentence. Options B, C, and D are incorrect meanings of the word “efficient” and do not make sense in the context of the sentence.

4. Which evidence from the passage **best** supports the generalization that “activities that encourage flexibility are easy to find”?
- A. “When picking the right type of exercise, it can help to consider your workout personality.”
- B. “It’s a good idea to talk to someone who understands the exercise . . . ”
- C. “This is especially true for teens, who are still growing.”
- D. “Even small things can count as exercise when you’re starting out . . . ”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.1
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	30%
p-value B	19%
p-value C	9%
p-value D	42% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to analyze sentences from the passage to determine which one best supports a given generalization. Option D is the correct answer. The passage discusses how ballet, gymnastics, and yoga can help keep a person healthy and explains the importance of stretching after working out. Both details are evidence that help support the generalization that “activities that encourage flexibility are easy to find.” Options A, B, and C are incorrect since these options each focus on finding an exercise program that is the right fit for maintaining a healthy weight.

5. Which sentence from the passage **best** explains why teens may want to consider solo sports instead of team sports?
- A. “In fact, exercise is one of the most important parts of keeping your body healthy.”
- B. “In fact, the types of exercise that you do on your own are easier to continue when you leave high school and go on to work or college . . . ”
- C. “When you use your muscles and they become stronger, you can be active for longer periods of time without getting worn out.”
- D. “One of the biggest reasons people drop an exercise program is lack of interest.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	7%
p-value B	70% (correct answer)
p-value C	11%
p-value D	12%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify textual evidence that supports a given inference. Option B is the correct answer because it gives reasons why teens may want to consider solo sports. Options A, C, and D are incorrect because they do not explain why a solo sport should be considered.

6. Why are headings included in the passage?
- A. to define key terms in each section
  - B. to offer a possible solution to a problem
  - C. to answer questions from the author
  - D. to identify the topic of each section

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.2
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	11%
p-value B	5%
p-value C	3%
p-value D	81% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to explain the function of headings in the passage. Option D is the correct answer since the headings identify the topic of each section. Options A, B, and C are incorrect since they do not accurately describe the purpose of the headings.

**Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions**

7. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

What generalization can be made based on the information in the section “Too Much of a Good Thing”?

- A. Athletes should limit the time spent on one sport.
- B. There is a sport or activity to fit every workout style.
- C. Being flexible can improve how well one performs a sport.
- D. Playing several sports will strengthen a variety of muscles.

Part Two

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

- A. “And, if you have an injury, make sure you give yourself enough time to heal.”
- B. “The body needs enough calories to function properly.”
- C. “It’s also possible to overtrain—something athletes need to watch out for.”
- D. “Also, never exercise through pain.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.1
Answer Key Part One:	A
Answer Key Part Two:	C
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.36
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine a generalization that can be made based on information in a section of the passage and then to select a sentence from the passage that best supports the generalization.</p> <p>Part One: Option A is the correct answer since the detail “exercising too much to lose weight isn’t healthy” supports the idea that athletes should limit the amount of time spent on a sport. Options B, C, and D are incorrect since these generalizations are not supported in the section “Too Much of a Good Thing.”</p> <p>Part Two: Option C is the correct answer since the word “overtrain” supports the idea that only a certain amount of time should be spent on a sport. Options A, B, and D do not relate to the correct generalization in Part One.</p>

8. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Based on information in the passage, what is the main difference between aerobic exercise and strength training?

- A. the age of the person each benefits
- B. the amount of money each costs
- C. the amount of practice each requires
- D. the muscles of the body each targets

Part Two

Which evidence from the passage supports the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “Like other muscles, the heart enjoys a good workout.”
- B. “Being flexible may also help improve a person’s sports performance.”
- C. “Those gym class standbys are also good for building arm muscles.”
- D. “If so, solo sports like biking or snowboarding may be for you.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.3
Answer Key Part One:	D
Answer Key Part Two:	A, C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Mean Score	2.03
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine the main difference between aerobic exercise and strength training and then to select evidence that supports this difference.</p> <p>Part One: Option D is the correct answer since the details “the heart enjoys a good workout” and “different types of exercise strengthen different muscle groups” are details that support the idea that different muscles benefit from these types of exercises. Option A is incorrect since the passage does not identify the appropriate age for each type of exercise. Option B is incorrect since the cost of exercise is not discussed. Option C is incorrect since the amount of time to practice each type of exercise is not provided.</p> <p>Part Two: Options A and C are the correct answers since these options identify the types of muscles that benefit from a specific type of exercise. Options B and D are incorrect since these options do not describe the muscles that are targeted by a specific type of exercise.</p>

**PASSAGE 2**

Read the following science fiction passage about an adventure at the South Pole. Then answer questions 9–16.

The South Pole

an excerpt from The Beetle Horde

by Victor Rousseau

Out of the south the biplane came winging back toward the camp, a black speck against the dazzling white of the vast ice fields that extended unbroken to the horizon on every side.

It came out of the south, and yet, a hundred miles farther back along the course on which it flew, it could not have proceeded in any direction except northward. For a hundred miles south lay the South Pole, the goal toward which the Travers Expeditions had been pressing for the better part of that year.

Not that they could not have reached it sooner. As a matter of fact, the pole had been crossed and recrossed, according to the estimate of Tommy Travers, aviator, and nephew of the old millionaire who acted as uncle to the expedition. But one of the things that was being sought was the exact site of the pole. Not within a couple of miles or so, but within the fraction of an inch.

Captain Storm, in charge of the expedition, together with the five others of the advance camp, watched the plane maneuver up to the tents. She came down neatly on the smooth snow, skidded on her runners like an expert skater, and came to a stop almost immediately in front of the marquee<sup>1</sup>.

Tommy Travers leaped out of the enclosed cockpit, which, shut off by glass from the cabin, was something like the front seat of a limousine.

“Well, Captain, we followed that break for a hundred miles, and there’s no ground cleft, as you expected,” he said. “But Jim Dodd and I picked up something, and Jim seems to have gone crazy.”

Through the windows of the cabin, Jim Dodd, the young archaeologist of the party, could be seen apparently wrestling with something that looked like a suit of armor. By the time Captain Storm, Jimmy, and the other members of the party had reached the cabin door, Dodd had got it open and flung himself out backward, still hugging what he had found, and maneuvering so that he managed to fall on his back and sustain its weight.

“Say, what the—what—what’s that?” gasped Storm.

Even the least scientific minded of the party gasped in amazement at what Dodd had. It resembled nothing so much as an enormous beetle. As a matter of fact, it was an insect, for it had the three sections that characterize this class, but it was merely the shell of one. Between four and five feet in height, when Dodd stood it on end, it could now be seen to consist of a hard exterior substance.

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<sup>1</sup>marquee—a roof-like shelter projecting over an entrance

This substance, which was fully three inches thick over the thorax, looked as hard as plate armor.

“What is it?” gasped Storm again.

Tommy Travers made an answer, for James Dodd was evidently incapable of speech, more from emotion than from the force with which he had landed backward in the snow.

“We found it at the pole, Captain,” he said. “At least, pretty near where the pole ought to be. We ran into a current of warm air or something. The snow had melted in places, and there were patches of bare rock. This thing was lying in a hollow among them.”

“If I didn’t see it before my eyes, I’d think you crazy, Tommy,” said Storm with some asperity. “What is it, a crab?”

“Crab!” shouted Jim Dodd, suddenly recovering his faculties. “Captain Storm, don’t you know the difference between an insect and a crustacean? This is a fossil beetle. Don’t you see the distinguishing mark of the coleoptera, those two elytra, or wing covers, which meet in the median dorsal line? A beetle, but with the shell of a crustacean instead of mere chitin. That’s what led you astray, I expect. What a tale we’ll have to tell when we get back to New York! We’ll drop everything else, and spend years, if need be, looking for other specimens.”

“Like fun you will!” shouted Higby, the astronomer of the party. “Lemme tell you right here, Dodd, nobody outside the Museum of Natural History is going to care about your old fossils. What we’re going to do is to march straight to the true pole, and spend a year taking observations and parallaxes. If Einstein’s brochure, in which he links up gravitation with magnetism, is correct—”

“Fossil beetles!” Jim Dodd burst out, ignoring the astronomer. “That means that in the Tertiary Era, probably, there existed forms of life in the Antarctic continent that have never been found elsewhere. Imagine a world in which the insect reached a size proportionate to the great saurians, Captain Storm!”

But Jim Dodd, suddenly realizing that the rest of the party could hardly be said to share his enthusiasm in any marked degree, broke off and looked sulky.

“You say you found this thing pretty nearly upon the site of the true pole?” Captain Storm asked Tommy.

“Within five miles, I’d say, Captain. The fog was so bad that we couldn’t get our directions very well.”

“Well, then, there’s going to be no difficulty,” answered Storm. “If this fair weather lasts, we’ll be at the pole in another week, and we’ll start making our permanent camp. Plenty of opportunity for all you gentlemen. As for me, I’m merely a sailor, and I’m trying to be impartial. And please remember, gentlemen, that we’re well into March now, and likely to have the first storms of autumn on us any day. So let’s drop the argument and remember that we’ve got to pull together!”

Tommy Travers was the only skilled aviator of the expedition, which had brought two planes with it. It was a strange friendship that had sprung up between him and Jim Dodd. Tommy, the blasé ex-Harvard man, who was known along Broadway, and had never been able to settle down, seemed as different as possible from the spectacled, scholarly Dodd, ten years his senior, red-haired, irascible, and living, as Tommy put it, in the Age of Old Red Sandstone.

Tommy was glad that Captain Storm had given them permission to return to the same spot next morning and look for further fossils, though his own interest in them was of the slightest.

The two men hopped into the plane. The snow was crusted hard, the sky overcast with clouds, and a wind was blowing hard out of the south, and increasing in velocity hourly.

“A bad day for starting,” said Captain Storm. “Looks like one of the autumn storms was blowing up. If I were you, I’d watch the weather, Tommy.”

Tommy grinned again and pressed the starter. The engine caught and warmed up. One of the men kicked away the blocks of ice that had been placed under the skids to serve as chocks. The plane taxied over the crusted snow, and took off into the south.

A snowstorm was driving up rapidly, blackening the sky. Tommy was tempted to turn back, but it was only a hundred miles, and Jimmy Dodd would give him no peace if he did so. So he put the plane’s nose resolutely into the wind, watching his speed indicator drop from a hundred miles per hour to eighty, sixty, forty—less.

The storm was beating up furiously. All of a sudden the clouds broke into a deluge of whirling snow.

The plane was no longer controllable. True, she responded in some sort to the controls, but all Tommy was able to do was to keep her from going into a crazy sideslip or nose dive as he fought with the elements.

Round and round went the plane, in circles that gradually narrowed, and it was all Tommy could do to swing the stick so as to keep her from skidding or sideslipping. And as he worked desperately at his task Tommy began to realize something that made him wonder if he was not dreaming.

The snow was no longer snow, but rain—mist, rather, warm mist that had already cleared the windshield and covered it with tiny drops.

And that white, opaque world into which he was looking was no longer snow but fog—the densest fog that Tommy had ever encountered.

Fog like white wool, drifting past him in fleecy flakes that looked as if they had solid substance. Warm fog that was like balm upon his frozen skin, but of a warmth that was impossible within a few miles of the frozen pole.

Then there came a momentary break in it, and Tommy looked down and uttered a cry of fear. Fear, because he knew that he must be dreaming.

Not more than a thousand feet beneath him he saw patches of snow, and patches of—green grass, the brightest and most verdant green that he had ever seen in his life.

He turned round at a touch on his shoulder. Dodd was leaning over him, one hand pointing menacingly upward and onward.

“You fool,” Tommy bellowed in his ear, “d’you think the South Pole lies over there? It’s here! Yeah, don’t you get it, Jimmy? Look down! This valley—Jimmy, the South Pole’s a hole in the ground!”

There was no longer any doubt but that they were dropping into a hole. Not more than a mile around,

which explained why neither Scott nor Amundsen had found it when they approximated to the site of the pole. A hole—a warm hole, up which a current of warm air was rushing, forming the white mist that now gradually thinned as the plane descended. The plateau with its covering of eternal snows loomed in a white circle high overhead. Underneath was green grass now—grass and trees!

Tommy realized that a crash was inevitable. He threw his goggles up over his forehead, turned and waved to Dodd in ironic farewell. He saw the earth rush up at him—then came the crash, and then oblivion!

How long he had remained unconscious, Tommy had no means of determining. All of a sudden he found himself lying on the ground beside the shattered plane, with his eyes wide open.

He stared at it, and stared about him, without understanding where he was, or what had happened to him. Then, when he remembered the expedition, he was convinced that he had been dreaming.

What brought him to a saner view was the discovery that he was enveloped in furs which were insufferably hot. He half raised himself and succeeded in unfastening his fur coat, and thus discovered that apparently none of his bones was broken.

But the plane must have fallen from a considerable height to have been smashed so badly. Then Tommy discovered that he was lying upon an extensive mound of sand, thrown up as by some gigantic mole, for burrow tracks ran through it in every direction. It was this that had saved his life.

Something was moving at his side. It was half-submerged in the sand pile, and it was moving parallel to him with great rapidity.

A grayish body, half-covered with grains of sand emerged, waving two enormously long tentacles. It was a shrimp, but fully three feet in length, and Tommy had never before had any idea what an unpleasant object a shrimp is.

Tommy staggered to his feet and dropped nearer the plane, eyeing the shrimp with horror. But he was soon relieved as he discovered that it was apparently harmless. It slithered away and once more buried itself in the pile of sand.

Now Tommy was beginning to remember. He looked into the wreckage of the plane. Jim Dodd was not there. He called his name repeatedly, and there was no response, except a dull echo from the ice-mountains behind the veil of fog.

## Multiple-Choice Questions

9. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Out of the south the biplane came winging back toward the camp, a black speck against the dazzling white of the vast ice fields that extended unbroken to the horizon on every side.”

How does the sentence contribute to the passage?

- A. It gives the reader clues as to the overall theme of the story.
- B. It explains why the men in the plane are coming back to camp.
- C. It gives the reader a visual image of where the story takes place.
- D. It hints at the problems that the main character will have later in the story.

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.2.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	14%
p-value B	10%
p-value C	65% (correct answer)
p-value D	10%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to explain how the given sentence contributes to the development of the passage. Option C is the correct answer since “vast ice fields that extended unbroken to the horizon on every side” provides an image to indicate where the story takes place. Option A is incorrect since the sentence itself does not provide clues to the overall theme of the passage. Option B is incorrect because the sentence does not explain why the men are coming back. Option D is incorrect since the given sentence does not foreshadow problems the main character will have.

10. Read the sentence from the passage.

“ ‘But Jim Dodd and I picked up something, and Jim seems to have gone crazy.’ ”

How does the sentence help to develop the plot?

- A. It shows that Jim and Tommy already have different viewpoints of the same situation.
- B. It shows that Jim and Tommy are good friends who have known each other for a while.
- C. It suggests that Jim and Tommy will continue to go on expeditions together in the plane.
- D. It suggests that Jim and Tommy are soon to go on a dangerous adventure.

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.2.1.2
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	58% (correct answer)
p-value B	10%
p-value C	12%
p-value D	20%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to analyze how the given sentence helps develop the plot. Option A is the correct answer since the given sentence indicates that Tommy has a different viewpoint than Jim does. Options B, C, and D are incorrect since these answers cannot be concluded from the details in the sentence.

11. What does the word maneuvering mean as it is used in the passage?

- A. marking
- B. moving
- C. mistaking
- D. monitoring

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	7%
p-value B	76% (correct answer)
p-value C	6%
p-value D	11%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to use context clues to infer the correct meaning of the word “maneuvering.” Option B is the correct answer since “maneuvering” means changing positions or moving. Options A, C, and D are incorrect meanings of the word “maneuvering” and do not make sense in the context used in the passage.

12. Based on the prefix “im-,” what does “impartial” mean?

- A. not taking sides
- B. taking opposite sides
- C. taking sides again
- D. the act of taking sides

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	57% (correct answer)
p-value B	18%
p-value C	7%
p-value D	17%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to use the prefix “im-” to determine the meaning of the word “impartial.” Option A is the correct answer. Since the prefix “im-” means “not,” the word “impartial” means “not taking sides.” Options B, C, and D do not reflect the correct meanings of the prefix “im-.”

13. Read the sentence from the passage.

“ ‘So let’s drop the argument and remember that we’ve got to pull together!’ ”

How does the author use the phrase “to pull together”?

- A. to illustrate Captain Storm’s desire to have a group of friends
- B. to suggest that Captain Storm likes to debate with others
- C. to show that Captain Storm enjoys being a sailor on the expedition
- D. to show Captain Storm’s belief in working for the same cause

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.2.1.3
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	21%
p-value B	11%
p-value C	8%
p-value D	60% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how the author uses a phrase in the passage. Option D is the correct answer since “to pull together” suggests people uniting to work for the same cause. Options A, B, and C are incorrect because the ideas are not supported by details from the passage.

14. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Warm fog that was like balm upon his frozen skin, but of a warmth that was impossible within a few miles of the frozen pole.”

What does the simile “warm fog that was like balm upon his frozen skin” suggest?

- A. The fog gave Tommy a reason to feel afraid of the future.
- B. The fog felt very cold to Tommy.
- C. The fog felt very comforting to Tommy.
- D. The fog hinted to Tommy that he was going to crash the plane.

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	22%
p-value C	55% (correct answer)
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to interpret the meaning of a simile. Option C is the correct answer since “balm” indicates something that soothes the skin. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since these ideas are not supported by the context.

**Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions**

15. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Which word describes how Jim Dodd felt when he discovered the fossil?

- A. sympathetic
- B. doubtful
- C. delighted
- D. frustrated

Part Two

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

- A. “It resembled nothing so much as an enormous beetle.”
- B. “This substance, which was fully three inches thick over the thorax, looked as hard as plate armor.”
- C. “ ‘A beetle, but with the shell of a crustacean instead of mere chitin.’ ”
- D. “ ‘We’ll drop everything else, and spend years, if need be, looking for other specimens.’ ”

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.1
Answer Key Part One:	C
Answer Key Part Two:	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.16
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to select which word describes a main character and then to select a sentence from the passage that best supports this inference.</p> <p>Part One: Option C is the correct answer since details in the passage support the idea that Jim Dodd is delighted about discovering the fossil beetles. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since these feelings are not supported by details in the passage.</p> <p>Part Two: Option D is the correct answer since “drop everything else” and “spend years” support the idea that Jim Dodd is delighted when the fossil is found. Options A, B, and C do not support the correct inference in Part One.</p>

16. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

At what point during the storm does Tommy **first** realize that things at the South Pole are not as he expects them to be?

- A. when he sees a snowstorm that blackens the sky
- B. when he sees a shrimp that is of an enormous size
- C. when the plane starts going in circles
- D. when the weather becomes warmer

Part Two

Which sentences support the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “The plane was no longer controllable.”
- B. “The snow was no longer snow, but rain . . . ”
- C. “Fog like white wool, drifting past him in fleecy flakes that looked as if they had solid substance.”
- D. “A grayish body, half-covered with grains of sand emerged, waving two enormously long tentacles.”

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.3
Answer Key Part One:	D
Answer Key Part Two:	B, C
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.56
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine when Tommy realizes things at the South Pole are not as he expects them to be and then to support this answer with two sentences from the passage.</p> <p>Part One: Option D is the correct answer since Tommy begins to wonder if he is dreaming when the snow turns to rain and the fog is seen, both indications that the weather has become warmer. Option A is incorrect because the snowstorm occurs before the rain. Options B and C are incorrect because both events occur after the weather becomes warmer.</p> <p>Part Two: Options B and C provide details that support the correct answer in Part One. Option A is incorrect because it is the snowstorm that causes the plane to become uncontrollable. Option D is incorrect because the grayish body is seen after the weather becomes warmer.</p>

**PASSAGE 3**

Read the following passage about two people with powerful memories. Then answer question 17.

**Two Amazing Tales of Memory**

by Valerie Rodgers

57463396874638586751. Read these numbers slowly, then close your eyes and say them in order. Seems impossible, doesn't it? Yet a man called Mr. S, born with an extraordinary memory, was able to remember lists four times this long. Even more surprising, a young man born with an ordinary memory taught himself to do the same. How can anyone develop a memory this powerful?

To answer this question, let's go back more than seventy years to Russia, where a stranger had just appeared, unannounced, at the laboratory of the famous psychologist Dr. Alexander Luria. The man's name was S. V. Shereshevskii, and he wanted the doctor to test his memory. Dr. Luria noted the man's ordinary appearance and somewhat puzzled expression. Little did he realize that this would be one of the most remarkable people he would meet in his long career of studying the mind.

Mr. S explained to the doctor that he worked as a reporter. Every day he and the other reporters met with their editor to hear their assignments. The instructions were long and detailed, so everyone scribbled notes to help them remember. Everyone, that is, but Mr. S. Seeing this day after day, the irritated editor finally asked him why he never took notes. Mr. S replied that it wasn't worth his effort because he remembered everything. When the editor seemed skeptical, Mr. S repeated, like a tape recorder, every instruction the man had just given. The editor was stunned and urged him to visit Dr. Luria to have his memory tested. Interestingly, this incident amazed Mr. S even more than his editor. Never before had he imagined that there was anything unusual about his memory.

Dr. Luria gave Mr. S a simple test. He slowly read to him a series of numbers, such as 7 . . . 4 . . . 2 . . . 6 . . . 8 . . . , and so on. Mr. S listened intently. When the doctor had finished, Mr. S repeated every number back in perfect order. The doctor presented thirty, fifty, and finally seventy-five numbers, but each time Mr. S recalled all of them. He remembered letters and words as well as numbers and could even repeat the lists backward. In fact, sixteen years later Mr. S could still remember these lists. Although Dr. Luria tested Mr. S extensively over the next thirty years, he never found a limit to the man's memory.

Why was Mr. S's memory so powerful? One reason was that he used powerful mnemonic strategies. The term mnemonic means related to memory, and it comes from Mnemosyne, the Greek goddess of memory. Mnemonic strategies are techniques that people use to aid their memories. Among those that Mr. S used were imagery and the method of loci, or location.

A good way to remember something is to create a picture of it in the mind, called an image. For example, Mr. S mentally pictured the word green as a green flowerpot and red as a man in a red shirt. Even numbers became images. Six was a man with a swollen foot, seven a man twirling his mustache, and eight a woman. For larger numbers Mr. S combined images. Thus for eighty-seven he pictured a man twirling his mustache next to a woman.

Mr. S's mental images often included vivid details—sounds, colors, textures, and even tastes. For example, he once described a fence that he had seen as having a salty taste, rough feel, and sharp sound. This detail made Mr. S's images extremely memorable, because the more vivid and detailed

an image, the better a person can remember it.

To remember items in order, Mr. S used another mnemonic strategy called “the method of loci,” attributed to the Greek poet Simonides (556–468 B.C.). One evening Simonides left a banquet early. Simonides was able to name everyone present by recalling where each person had sat at the banquet table. This taught him that people remember information better when they relate it to a familiar location. Using this idea, he devised a mnemonic strategy, the method of loci. It helped Greek orators remember long speeches, Roman generals name the men under their command, and medieval scholars memorize long texts.

How did Mr. S use this strategy to remember a list of words? First he turned each word into an image. Then he pictured himself walking down a familiar street, placing each image in a different spot along the way. To recall the word list, he simply pictured himself strolling back up the street, naming each item as he passed it. This technique worked remarkably well and had only an occasional glitch. Once Mr. S needed to remember a list that included the word egg. Walking down a familiar street in his mind, he placed his image of an egg against a white wall. Unfortunately, the white egg blended so well with the white wall that when he walked up the street in his mind again, he failed to see it.

Can an average person use mnemonic strategies to develop a memory like Mr. S’s? In the early 1980s, the scientist K. A. Ericsson and his colleagues investigated this question. They recruited S.F., a normal college student with average intelligence. Once a day, three to five times a week, they tested his memory with number lists, much as Dr. Luria had tested Mr. S, and recorded the results. Most adults can, without practice, remember between five and nine numbers immediately after they hear or read them. When first tested, S.F. remembered seven. But with practice his score steadily improved until, twenty months and 230 hours later, he could recall seventy-nine numbers. This is just as good as Mr. S’s performance with Dr. Luria.

How did S.F. remember so many numbers? By using a mnemonic strategy that he invented himself and practicing it a lot. S.F. was a runner, so he converted the numbers he wanted to remember into running times in addition to other meaningful information, like ages or significant dates. To recall the number 34928921944, for example, he might remember 3492 as 3 minutes 49.2 seconds, 892 as 89.2 years old, and 1944 as “near the end of World War II.” This strategy worked because we remember information more easily when it has meaning for us.

Did this show that S.F.’s memory was now as powerful as that of Mr. S? Unfortunately, no. Unlike Mr. S, whose mnemonic strategies helped him remember everything, S.F.’s strategy only worked for numbers. When the researchers later tested him with letters, he could recall only six of them.

On the surface, Mr. S’s memory may seem tremendously useful. Imagine remembering the birth date, phone number, and address of everyone you know. Yet this great gift hid an even greater problem. The same images that helped Mr. S remember information often prevented him from understanding it. One example of this was his difficulty with reading. When Mr. S read a paragraph in a book, the words would form a series of images in his mind. By recalling these images, he could accurately repeat back the words he had read. When asked to tell the story, however, Mr. S was often in trouble. Again, he would recall his images, but too often they had little to do with the meaning of the writing. To tell the story, Mr. S would describe these images, but the resulting jumble of ideas made little sense to his listeners. This often left him confused and frustrated. Mr. S could handle simple, straightforward information with ease, but had difficulty with more complex or changing information.

Images also prevented Mr. S from expressing himself clearly in conversation. As Mr. S spoke, the words would create images in his mind that were often unrelated to what he was saying. Distracted from his train of thought, he would then begin to talk about these images. Making sense of his rambling conversation, as Dr. Luria admitted, was often a chore.

As the images in Mr. S's mind controlled his thoughts more and more, he began to confuse his imagination with reality. This affected his performance in everyday life. For example, once Mr. S needed to defend himself in court on some minor charge. Before going to the courthouse, he vividly pictured the scene that he expected to see. What he actually saw when he arrived in court, however, was not at all what he had imagined. The judge was on the left not the right, and the courtroom looked different. This so flustered Mr. S that he could not defend himself and lost his case. Incidents like this plagued Mr. S throughout his life.

Most of us will never be able to remember as much information as Mr. S. Yet we can still improve our memories if we practice using mnemonic strategies. Who knows how much improvement is possible? S.F.'s extraordinary feat suggests that even an ordinary memory can improve dramatically. With a little work, our minds may be capable of much more than we ever imagined.

**Text-Dependent Analysis Question**

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

**Writer’s Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Question**PLAN before you write

Make sure you read the question carefully.

Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.

Think about how the question relates to the passage.

Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write

Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.

Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.

Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.

I stayed focused on answering the question.

I used evidence from the passage to support my response.

I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.







## Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline

### #17 Item Information

Alignment E.1.1

Depth of Knowledge 3

Mean Score 1.70

### Assessment Anchor:

E.06.1 – Evidence-Based Analysis of Text

### Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E.06.1.1 – Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Score	Description
4	<p>Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s)</p> <p>Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s)</p> <p>Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas</p> <p>Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</p> <p>Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</p> <p>Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose</p> <p>Skillful use of transitions to link ideas</p> <p>Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events</p> <p>Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning</p>

Score	Description
3	<p>Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s)</p> <p>Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s)</p> <p>Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas</p> <p>Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</p> <p>Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</p> <p>Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose</p> <p>Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas</p> <p>Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events</p> <p>Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning</p>
2	<p>Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s)</p> <p>Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s)</p> <p>Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas</p> <p>Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</p> <p>Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</p> <p>Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose</p> <p>Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas</p> <p>Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events</p> <p>Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning</p>

Score	Description
1	<p>Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s)</p> <p>Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion</p> <p>Minimal evidence of an organizational structure</p> <p>Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</p> <p>Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</p> <p>Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s)</p> <p>Few, if any, transitions to link ideas</p> <p>Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s)</p> <p>Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning</p>

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 4 points

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

“8, 9, 3, 72, 81, 9, 10, 13, 14, 1” a man recalls in a memory test. Within one practice saying this sequence of numbers instantly like a voice recorder, you repeat these numbers in the exact order. Are you gifted with an extraordinary memory, or did you always use a technique? This went both ways for Mr. S (a memory genius). This man could speak back exactly a sequence of seventy-five numbers! Although gifted he always used some kind of technique called the mnemonic strategy. By memorizing in depth all of these numbers, his superior memory did have to affect his life somehow. This made him able to remember vivid events extremely well. Also, though super memory has its downsides. First, Mr. S had difficulty remembering actual information from stories, and most of the time, S confused imagination with reality. So, let us use our super memory abilities and recall the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory” by Valerie Rodgers to in depth figure out why Mr. S had these effects on his life through memory.

First of all, Mr. S’s talent recalling had a very good effect on his life. He could remember past experiences very vividly. In paragraph 8, in the start it says, “Mr. S’s mental images often included vivid details—sound, colors, textures, and even tastes.” Rodgers, PSSA pg 50. This tells me that Mr. S can recall a remembrance of an experience to someone very vividly. This would have a good effect on his life because all of the special moments and good memories in his life would be forever cherished in his mind. Although traumatic experiences can scar him. The paragraph then explains how he recalled a fence. After that Valerie explains how the more vivid and detailed you explain an image or an event to someone, the more they can remember it along with you. I sure would love to have this effect on my life.

Next, remember how the author explains how Mr. S had difficulty remembering actual information like stories? Well his techniques of picturing images and his amazing memory sure did have a bad effect on this situation. In paragraph 14, Rodgers shares how some images like a woman, or mustaches prevented S to understand the information given. One example of this was his difficulty with reading. “When Mr. S read a paragraph in a book, the words would form a series of images in his mind.” Rodgers, PSSA pg 60. The writer later says how Mr. S could just remember the words of the story. When he went to tell someone what the story was about, he had a hard time, and a jumble of words came out. Obviously, Mr. S was not good at reading and comprehending the details in a story. Yeah, remembering 1, 72, 0, 9, 4, 3, 19, 10, 72, 31 didn’t have the best effect on Mr. S’s reading skills!

Lastly, another con effect of his recalling memory on his life was that Mr. S began to confuse imagination with reality. In paragraph 16, the text explains how the recalling images method was confusing his brain more and more. This then affected his performance in everyday life. For example, “Once Mr. S needed to defend himself in court for some minor charge. Before going to the courthouse, he vividly pictured the scene that he expected to see.” Rodgers, PSSA pg 60. Then, the same paragraph says that the picture was different than he imagined, so he lost his case. Just by this, I can tell this happened a lot, and it was hard for Mr. S to not be confused in life situations of his in depth imagination. I can totally see how his imagination interfered with

the actual reality of life!

Pro's and con's. There are a lot of them when it comes to the effects on life when someone has a superb memory like Mr. S's! Through the writing, "Two Amazing Tales of Memory" by Valerie Rodgers, The thought of, "I don't think I would want to have a memory like Mr. S" came to my attention quickly. The topics of he could extremely remember vivid pictures and events wells, he had difficulty remembering actual informational recall like in stories, and Mr. S began to confuse imagination with reality were the side-effects on life with a memory as great as his. In the end, being able to remember a seventy-five sequence pattern of numbers really does have an effect on Mr. S's life!

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. There is clear analysis of the effect his memory has on Mr. S's life ("*all of the special moments and good memories in his life would be forever cherished in his mind,*" "*Obviously, Mr. S was not good at reading and comprehending the details in a story. Yeah, remembering 1, 72, 0, 9, 4 . . . didn't have the best effect on Mr. S's reading skills,*" "*Mr. S began to confuse imagination with reality . . . This then affected his performance in everyday life,*" and "*it was hard for Mr. S to not be confused in life situations . . . I can totally see how his imagination interferred with the actual reality of life*"), all of which supports the writer's central idea that the effect Mr. S's memory had on his life "*went both ways.*" There is substantial, accurate reference to the text throughout the response. There is a strong organizational structure, and effective transitions are used to link ideas. There are few errors in conventions, and those present do not interfere with meaning.

**STUDENT RESPONSE****Online Response Score: 4 points**

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

“Two Amazing Tales of Memory” partly explains how having an extraordinary memory might be helpful for recalling simple basics, or long chains of sequences, but could greatly affect a person’s normal life. This is demonstrated by a man called Mr. S in the passage. It may seem great having one of the best memories in the world, but would you love to never forget every single thing?

Mr. S’s superb talent could be a heavy burden when it comes to speaking his mind. According to “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” this was the case. When Mr. S tried to speak, words made pictures in his mind, and this caused a great distraction in his head. The words coming out of his mouth usually had nothing to do with the particular conversation. Why is that? It is because Mr. S used mnemonic devices, or tools for memory, to help him remember certain words. The passage states that Mr. S pictured himself walking down a street, with different images in different locations. When he wanted to remember things, he just strolled along and could clearly name each image associated with a word along the way. This is called “the method of loci.” Why might this be important in his life, one may ask? Thing is, Mr. S had trouble controlling his perception of imagination and reality, making his speech ever more blurred than before. For example, Mr. S once got into some minor trouble with the law and had to go to court. He imagined the scene in his mind but was very surprised when what he pictured was not as it really was. “Two Amazing Tales of Memory” says, “This so flustered Mr. S that he could not defend himself and lost his case.” The passage continues and adds that mishaps like the court incidents occurred heavily throughout Mr. S’s life. As you can see, Mr. S’s memory was helpful for some things, but not when it came to communication.

Also having to do a little with communication, Mr. S’s memory did not show off as he read certain passages. For instance, if Mr. S read this paragraph, he may be able to recite it word for word, but he may be unable to effectively understand what he read. with pictures. If Mr. S read the following sentence: “A dog just ate 38, 897, 642, 135, 675 pieces of pie;” he may be able to recall the amount of pie pieces, but what he remembered could be much different from what he read. If this is confusing, think of it this way, the number 4 is a tree. When Mr. S pictures himself walking down the street, (remember the “method of loci”) he see a tree, but does a tree have anything to do with the sentence he read? No, it doesn’t. This could get very confusing when trying to explain. To wrap it up, Mr. S’s strategies for memorization may be helpful for recall when reading, but his understanding of what he read may not be much to brag about.

A man by the name of Mr. S had an extraordinary sense of memory. Even his wickedly smart psychologist was speechless from his almost super-human ability. Unfortunately, every great thing has its low points. Being born with this rare ability brought some fish out of water. With his confusing speech, awkward perception of reality, and trouble understanding what he read, Mr. S’s life was not easy. Would you want this mental power? Consider the consequences.

In this response, the student effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The response's central idea, that Mr. S's memory had considerable consequences on his life, is developed through thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from the text ("*Mr. S's superb talent could be a heavy burden when it comes to speaking his mind,*" "*Mr. S had trouble controlling his perception of imagination and reality, making his speech even more blurred . . .*," "*Mr. S's memory was helpful for some things, but not when it came to communication,*" and "*With his confusing speech, awkward perception of reality, and trouble understanding what he read, Mr. S's life was not easy . . . consider the consequences*"). In one section of the response, the student embeds a well-chosen text reference within the analysis ("*If this is confusing, think about it this way, the number 4 is a tree. When Mr. S pictures himself walking down the street, (remember the 'method of loci'), he sees a tree, but does a tree have anything to do with the sentence he read? No . . . this would get very confusing when trying to explain*"), thus effectively addressing the question. Additional substantial, accurate, and direct reference is made to the text in support of the student's ideas ("*When he wanted to remember things, he just strolled along and could clearly name each image associated with a word along the way*" and "*mishaps like the court incidents occurred heavily throughout Mr. S's life*"). There is a strong organizational structure, and skillful transitions are used to link ideas ("*Also having to do a little with communication . . .*"). Few errors are present in conventions, and those present do not interfere with meaning.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 3 points

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Mr. S was a man “born with an extraordinary memory.” This memory also had an effect on his life. I am going to tell you about three effects it had on his life. First, the memory prevented him from expressing himself in a conversation. Secondly, it gave him a hard time with reading. Finally, it made him confuse the imagination he uses to memorize things with reality.

First, the memory prevented Mr. S from expressing himself in a conversation. The passage also says “Images also prevented Mr. S from expressing himself clearly in a conversation. As Mr. S spoke, the words would create images in his mind that were often unrelated to what he was saying.” Which is bad because he would probably start talking about what he’s thinking about in his mind.

Secondly, the memory gave him a hard time with reading. The passage also says “When Mr. S. read a paragraph in a book, the words would form a series of images in his mind. By recalling these images, he could accurately repeat back the words he had read. When asked to tell the story, however, Mr. S was often in trouble,” This means that “Again, he would recall his images, but too often they had little to do with the meaning of the writing.”

Finally, the memory made him confuse the imagination he uses to memorize things with reality. The passage also says “As the images in Mr. S’s mind controlled his thoughts more and more, he began to confuse his imagination with reality. This affected his performance in everyday life.” This is bad too because this also made him lose a case in court.

In conclusion, Mr. S’s memory had effects on his life. First, the memory prevented him from expressing himself in a conversation. Secondly, it gave him a hard time with reading. Finally, it made him confuse the imagination he uses to memorize things with reality.

The response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. There is clear analysis of the text (“*memory prevented Mr. S from expressing himself in a conversation,*” “*Which is bad because he would probably start talking about what he’s thinking about in his mind,*” and “*memory gave him a hard time with reading,*” and “*memory made him confuse the imagination he uses to memorize things with reality*”), all of which supports the student’s main idea that memory negatively affected Mr. S in three ways. There is sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text, mostly in the form of appropriately chosen quotes (“*This means that ‘Again, he would recall his images, but too often they had little to do with the meaning of the writing’*”). The essay is appropriately organized, and appropriate transitions link ideas (“*Secondly*” and “*Finally*”). There is a minor issue with commas—specifically, neglecting to employ one before a quote. However, there are no errors present that interfere with meaning.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 3 points

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Mr. S’s memory had a big effect on his life. It was both good and bad. It was good because it was very useful in his job and in his life. It was bad for him because he could make people confused about what he was talking about. Mr. S’s memory had a big effect on his life.

Sometimes Mr. S’s memory had a good effect on his life. One way it was good was that it was useful in his job and in his life. It was useful in his job because he didn’t have to take notes when given directions: It said in the passage that when his editor asked him why he didn’t take notes Mr. S repeated every instruction back like a tape recorder. This made it easier for him to follow the instructions. His memory made his life easier for him because in the passage it said that Mr. S could remember the birth date, phone number, and address of everyone he knew. I think this proves that Mr. S’s memory had a good effect on his life.

Mr. S’s memory could also have a bad effect many ways. One way it could be bad is he can confuse people when he is talking to them. In the passage it said that when telling a story he would recall his images and describe them, but it would make almost no sense to his listeners. Also, when he was talking to people he would see images and lose his train of thought. He would then describe these images and meanwhile confuse his listener. In the passage it also said that when he was sent to court he pictured the room in his mind. When he got there the picture in his mind was so completely different from what he imagined. The judge was on the left not the right, and the courtroom looked different. Mr. S was so flustered that he could not defend himself. All of this is why Mr. S’s memory could have a bad effect on his life.

Mr. S’s memory could have a good and bad effect on his life. It was good because it was useful in his job and in his life. It was bad because he could confuse people and become flustered. As you can see, Mr. S’s memory had a big effect on his life.

In this response, the student adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. Clear analysis of the text supports the writer’s central idea that *“it was very useful in his job and life. It was bad for him because he could make people confused.”* Clear analysis of the text is present (*“This made it easier for him to follow the instructions,” “His memory made his life easier,”* and *“he can confuse people when he is talking to them”*). There is sufficient reference to the main ideas and relevant details of the text (*“when his editor asked him why he didn’t take notes Mr. S repeated every instruction back like a tape recorder,” “Mr. S could remember the birth date, phone number, and address of everyone he knew,” “it would make almost no sense to his listeners,”* and *“when he was sent to court . . . the picture in his mind was so completely different . . . so flustered that he could not defend himself”*). An appropriate organizational structure supports the focus and ideas within the essay. The response is relatively free of errors, and those present do not interfere with meaning.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 2 points

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory” Mr. S’s memory affected his life in many ways. Through this essay I will show exactly how it was checked.

Mr. S’s memory can help him by making his job easier. In the passage it states “Mr. S replied that it wasn’t worth his effort because he remembered everything.” That statement means it helped with Mr. S’s job by having him remember instructions.

Next, it can also be annoying or a curse. In the text it declares “The same images that helped Mr. S. remember information often prevented him from understanding it.” That citation means his mental pictures often didn’t represent what he was comparing and he forgot.

In conclusion Mr. S’s memory affected him in two different ways.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. There is weak inferencing that somewhat supports the claims of the writer (“Mr. S’s memory can help him by making his job easier,” “It helped with Mr. S’s job by having him remember instructions,” and “it can also be annoying or a curse”). The organizational structure of the response is weak, with few transitions to link ideas. There is vague reference to the text, with some details from the passage in the form of direct quotes from the text; however, the ideas lack development and connection to the analysis. The incorporation of more details and relevant information from the text to support or illustrate the analysis could have helped the student achieve a better score. As it stands, a score of 2 is appropriate for this response.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 2 points

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Mr. S’s memory had a great effect on his life. He could remember everything he heard! He worked as a news reporter, and when the editor would give him his subject he wouldn’t write it down. He could remember it! Mr. S went to a doctor who studied the mind and had his memory checked. The doctor gave him long lists of numbers and letters. He recited them perfectly. Seventeen years later, He could still remember these lists.

Mr. S’s memory had many downfalls also. His images in his mind controlled him more and more. He started to confuse imagination with reality. This greatly effected his everyday life. Once Mr. S had to defend himself in court on some minor charge. Before going to the courthouse, he imagined the scene vividly. However, the scene he had imagined was not at all what happened. This frusterated him, and he lost his case.

Mr. S had good things and bad things that came with his memory. Most of us will never remember as much as him, but we can practice to make our memory better and better.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. There is weak analysis in the form of evaluative thinking of the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life (“*Mr. S had good things and bad things that came with his memory*”). References to the main ideas and relevant details of the text are presented in the form of closely paraphrased information from the passage. The organizational structure of the response is weak; it is unclear until the conclusion that the student intended to present good and bad effects, especially considering the lack of an introduction. The weak organizational structure only inconsistently supports the focus and ideas. This is an example of a lower 2.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 1 point

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Since Mr. S had a good memory he didn’t have to take notes. He also probably remebered peoples birthdates phone numbers, and addresses of everyone he knew. But, this had an effect on reality He pictured the courtroom different.

This response minimally addresses part of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. The student’s attempt at analysis (“*He also probably remebered peoples birthdates*”) consists of a weak inference that only loosely relates to the rest of the response. The organizational structure is weak; there is no introduction or conclusion. The student’s ideas could be arranged in any order without affecting the response, in part due to the lack of transitions to link ideas. References to the main ideas and relevant details of the passage are insufficient (“*But, this had an effect on reality*” and “*He pictured the courtroom different*”). There are errors present in punctuation (“*peoples*”) and usage (“*different*” for differently).

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 1 point

17. In the passage “Two Amazing Tales of Memory,” the concept of memory is discussed. Write an essay analyzing the effect that Mr. S’s memory had on his life. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

The effects of this huge talent this man had are just as big. Once thing is that he cannot read or understand anything too complex. Also, once, he didn’t picture the courthouse right in his mind, and became so flustered that he lost his case and went to jail.

The student minimally addresses part of the task in this response, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. The attempt at analysis is insufficient (“*The effects of this huge talent this man had are just as big*”). References to the text only minimally connect to the writer’s main idea (“*he cannot read or understand anything too complex*” and “*he didn’t picture the courthouse right in his mind, and became so flustered that he lost his case*”), and there is minimal reference to the main idea and relevant details of the passage. There is minimal evidence of an organizational structure; there is an introduction, the response lacks a conclusion, and, in spite of some transition use, the writer’s ideas are not purposefully organized.

## ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR LANGUAGE QUESTIONS AND WRITING PROMPT

### **Directions:**

On the following pages are the Language questions and the Writing prompt.

### **Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:**

Each question will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

Read each question and choose the best answer.

Only one of the answers provided is correct.

Record your choice in the answer booklet.

### **Directions for the Writing Prompt:**

Review the Writer's Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.

Read the writing prompt carefully.

Write your response in the appropriate space in the answer booklet.

## STANDALONE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

18. Read the paragraph.

(1) Jamie collected stones for a wall he wanted to build carefully he put each one into place. (2) He wanted the wall to look as if it had been there for many years without any changes. (3) He had carefully selected stones to make the new wall look just as old as the other nearby walls did. (4) Jamie stood back and admired the work that he had already accomplished.

Which sentence is a run-on and should be written as two sentences?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 4

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.1.6
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	78% (correct answer)
p-value B	5%
p-value C	13%
p-value D	3%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the run-on sentence in the paragraph. Option A is the correct answer since it contains two sentences written as one sentence and is therefore a run-on sentence (“Jamie collected stones for a wall he wanted to build” and “carefully he put each one into place”). Options B, C, and D are each grammatically correct complex sentences and are therefore not the correct answer.

19. Which sentence needs an additional comma?

- A. Please check to see that the newspaper has the correct month, the correct day, and the correct year.
- B. My friends and I talked about what we would write about for our project, what resources we would use, and where we would find the information.
- C. Do you plan to read a book, watch a play at the community center, or walk to the park?
- D. Are you planning to walk, ride your bicycle take the bus, or get a ride to the library?

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.2.3
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	7%
p-value B	14%
p-value C	5%
p-value D	74% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which sentence needs an additional comma. Option D is the correct answer since it is missing a comma to separate items in a series (“ride your bicycle” and “take the bus”). Options A, B, and C are not the correct answer since they correctly use commas to separate items in a series.

20. Read the sentence from a newspaper article.

The seventh-grade basketball team lost the district championship game at the last second.

Which sentence could be added to **best** fit the style of this sentence?

- A. The players felt down in the dumps afterward.
- B. Later on, the kids were all totally unhappy.
- C. The team members were greatly disappointed.
- D. After that, the guys were completely crushed.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	13%
p-value B	6%
p-value C	62% (correct answer)
p-value D	19%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to add a sentence that maintains the style of a sentence from a newspaper article. Option C is the correct answer since it uses diction that is consistent with the style of the sentence from a newspaper article (“greatly disappointed”). Options A, B, and D are not the correct answer since they introduce diction that is inconsistent with the style of the sentence from the newspaper article.

21. Read the paragraph.

The carrier crab is an interesting sea creature. Its back legs are designed to help it carry large objects. The crab uses these objects to defend itself.

Which sentence could be added to **best** fit the style of the paragraph?

- A. It's awfully rare to see a carrier crab.
- B. Carrier crabs carry seaweed and other stuff.
- C. This behavior is not common among sea creatures.
- D. Scientists aren't totally sure how many of these crabs exist.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	18%
p-value B	23%
p-value C	45% (correct answer)
p-value D	13%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to add a sentence that maintains the style of the paragraph. Option C is the correct answer because it presents diction that is consistent with the style of the paragraph. Options A, B, and D are not the correct answer since they introduce diction that is inconsistent with the paragraph.

**WRITER'S CHECKLIST AND NARRATIVE WRITING PROMPT**

**22.** Think about writing a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider what happened before, during, and after the adventure.

For your teacher, write a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider story elements (for example, character, setting, and plot) as you develop your narrative.

**Writer's Checklist for the Narrative Writing Prompt**PLAN before you write

Make sure you understand what the prompt is asking you to do.

Think about your task and your audience.

Think about the subject and the story you want to write.

Consider story elements, such as character, setting, and plot.

Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your story.

FOCUS while you write

Stay with the same point of view.

Use descriptive details in your story. Include dialogue, if appropriate.

Use a variety of sentence types.

Tell your story so it has a clear beginning, middle, and end.

PROOFREAD after you write

I stayed with the same tone and point of view.

I used descriptive details in my story.

I corrected any errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

**Directions:**

- 22.** Think about writing a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider what happened before, during, and after the adventure.

For your teacher, write a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider story elements (for example, character, setting, and plot) as you develop your narrative.

Turn the page to begin writing your response.





## Narrative Scoring Guideline

### #22 Item Information

Alignment	C.1.3
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	2.56

### Assessment Anchor:

E06.C.1—Text Types and Purposes

### Specific Eligible Content addressed by this item:

E06.C.1.3—Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.

Score	Description
4	<p>Distinctly established context and point of view that effectively orient the reader and introduce the narrator and/or characters</p> <p>Skillful narrative pattern/story line that clearly sequences events and provides a conclusion</p> <p>Thorough elaboration that effectively supports the writer’s purpose</p> <p>Effective use of narrative techniques to develop characters, experiences, and/or events</p> <p>Effective use of a variety of transitional words and phrases</p> <p>Precise control of literary devices, sensory language, and sentence structure that clearly conveys experiences and events</p> <p>Consistent control of sentence formation</p> <p>Few errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning</p>

Score	Description
3	<p>Clearly established context and point of view that orient the reader and introduce the narrator and/or characters</p> <p>Adequate narrative pattern/story line that sequences events; minor interruptions to the sequence may occur</p> <p>Adequate elaboration that supports the writer’s purpose</p> <p>Adequate use of narrative techniques to develop characters, experiences, and/or events</p> <p>Appropriate use of transitional words and/or phrases</p> <p>Appropriate control of literary devices, sensory language, and sentence structure that conveys experiences and events</p> <p>Adequate control of sentence formation</p> <p>Some errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning</p>
2	<p>Weakly established context and point of view that inconsistently orient the reader and introduce the narrator and/or characters</p> <p>Weak narrative pattern/story line that inconsistently sequences events; interruptions to the sequence may detract from the story</p> <p>Weak elaboration that somewhat supports the writer’s purpose</p> <p>Inconsistent/limited use of narrative techniques</p> <p>Inconsistent/limited use of transitional words and/or phrases</p> <p>Limited control of literary devices, sensory language, and sentence structure that inconsistently conveys experiences and/or events</p> <p>Limited control of sentence formation</p> <p>Errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning</p>

Score	Description
1	<p>Minimally established context and/or point of view</p> <p>Minimal narrative pattern/story line that may or may not sequence events</p> <p>Minimal elaboration that may or may not support the writer’s purpose</p> <p>Minimal use of narrative techniques</p> <p>Minimal use of transitional words and/or phrases</p> <p>Minimal control of literary devices, sensory language, and sentence structure</p> <p>Minimal control of sentence formation</p> <p>Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning</p>

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 4 points

22. Think about writing a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider what happened before, during, and after the adventure.

For your teacher, write a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider story elements (for example, character, setting, and plot) as you develop your narrative.

“An Unforgettable Adventure”

One day, my friends and I decided to take a walk in the park. There was only six of us. It was Cole, Jacob, Jadon, Kiera, Kara, and Me. We all liked to walk through the park. So we all met up together and started our walk. On the way past the food court in the park, we noticed there was a forest right behind the hot dog stand. Out of curiosity, we all wandered into the forest. As we got deeper into the trees, the forest grew dark. Finally my friends and I came across the perfect tree to build a secret hideout in. so we all climbed up and made ourselves at home. After a few hours Cole had to go home so we all agreed to walk him home. On the way out of the forest, the wind began to pick up force. “I’m cold,” Kara complained. “Here,” I said handing Kara my jacket. It was always a little chilly here in Canada during the spring. So the 6 of kept walking. Then something caught Jacob’s eye so he turned his head to look at it. There was some sort of paper blowing in the wind. We all turned our heads toward it. “Should we get it?” asked Jacob. Nobody answered. Just then the mysterious paper flew to the ground and landed at our feet. I slowly bent down to pick it up. I read the front of the paper outloud. It read: “Time Machine Manual.”

“What . . . ?” Cole asked. “I don’t know,” I said. We all fell silent. “I guess i’ll take it home and try it to see if it is a joke,” I decided. So we all walked home. When I got to my house I put the time machine together. Once I got it assembled I invited all my friends over to try it out. It was silver gray in color and it looked like the kind of Go-cart you would ride at an amusement park. Just an older version. So we all climbed in as I dialed the year 1980. Suddenly my bedroom disappeared and the six of us appeared in a café. The waitress rode rollerskates and every girl wore an early version of jeans. Their hair had poofy curls with no headbands or ponytails. The boys had long hair. “I think it worked!” Jadon pointed out. We explored the 1980’s and met a few friends. (We even got to meet our parents)! We stayed for a few hours then we all headed home. No time had passed when we got back. The decided to keep the Time Machine a secret. To this day we still go back and visit our 1980 friends. Still only us six friends know about the Machine. It is truly an unforgettable adventure.

The response provides a distinctly established context consisting of the narrator and five friends taking a walk in the park, where the narrator and five friends explore a forest discovered while taking a walk in the park. The first-person point of view is effective and is consistently used throughout the narrative. Both context and point of view help to orient the reader and introduce the characters. The narrative pattern is skillful and clearly sequences the events in the story (from the park walk, wandering into a forest, leading to the discovery of a time machine manual, the construction of the machine, and the use of the machine to travel back to the 1980s). Elaboration is thorough and effective using vivid details to support the story line (“*Out of curiosity, we all wandered into the forest. As we got deeper into the trees, the forest grew dark*”). Transitions are effective, and the response demonstrates consistent control of sentence formation. Few errors are present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 3 points

22. Think about writing a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider what happened before, during, and after the adventure.

For your teacher, write a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider story elements (for example, character, setting, and plot) as you develop your narrative.

Meg and I were in the woods, but not to far out, just close enough to the house so we wouldn't get lost. That was until Meg decided that it would be fun to go on a adventure, “let's go further into the woods” Meg sugested. “I don't think that's a good idea” I answered, the truth is I was terrified of the woods. “Come on it'll be fun.” She said clearly oblivious to the face I was scared. “no” I stated, not in the mood for agueing. “Come on or are you scared.” she taunted. “fine” I sighed. “Yea” Meg cheered. So we went inside, got four bottles of water, some gragollala bars, and fruit. Soon we were lost, and I was terrified. “Meg do you know where we are”? I questioned. “Uh . . . uh . . . .yea?” she said well it came out like more of a question. “Great, just great” I said sarcasticly. So we kept walking the only sound was the leaves crunching under our feet, and the ocasional bird call. I pulled my windbreaker tighter, the crisp autume air was blowing a lot today. “What's that?” Meg asked. “I didn't . . . ” I didn't get to finish, because I was cut of by a bush moving. Meg being the bravest stepped forward and tried to coax whatever the thing was, out of it's hiding place. All of a suden, a little kitten popped it's head out and ran over to me purring. “So theres what we were afraid of” Meg said and laughed at our're foolishness. So meg, bush, and I kept walking (bush is what we named the cat). Then we heard our names being shouted, so we ran in that direction, only to find our parents. Meg and I practicaly leaped for joy. From that day forward Meg, bush and I made sure never to walk that far away from home again.

The response clearly establishes context and first-person point of view to help introduce the characters and orient the reader (“*Meg and I were in the woods, but not to far out, just close enough to the house so we wouldn't get lost*”). The narrative pattern adequately sequences the events and provides a conclusion. There is adequate elaboration to support the story line (“*the truth is I was terrified of the woods,*” “*the only sound was the leaves crunching under our feet,*” and “*Meg being the bravest stepped forward*”). There is adequate control of literary devices, sensory language (“*leaves crunching*” and “*crisp autume air*”), and sentence structure to develop the narrative. The response demonstrates adequate control of sentence formation. The errors present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with meaning.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 2 points

22. Think about writing a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider what happened before, during, and after the adventure.

For your teacher, write a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider story elements (for example, character, setting, and plot) as you develop your narrative.

An Unforgettable Adventure

Once upon a time my friends and I went on a wiked adventure, and we all carried things. First, Zack carried food and water, Conor brought all the gagets we need, I brought the map and telescope.

On our adventure to the lost city of atliants, we ran into a ton of traps exspaehtly going throught the Jungle. When a monkey get on off, we went across many lakes, intill we get to the desert. When we get there we couldn't find Zack so we kepted looking intill findly we found him in the Jungle playing around with the monkeys. So we tell him to come on our way there we hit alot of traps and doysleals we searched for 2 years, but didn't find it.

The response provides a weakly established context and point of view that inconsistently orient the reader and introduce the characters. The weak narrative pattern is a basic sequence of events that ends with a weak conclusion (“we searched for 2 years, but didn't find it”). Elaboration is weak, and the response demonstrates limited use of narrative techniques. Control of sentence formation is limited. There are many errors present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation. Some errors interfere with meaning (“a wiked adventure,” “exspaehtly,” “a monkey get on off,” and “doysleals”).

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 1 point

22. Think about writing a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider what happened before, during, and after the adventure.

For your teacher, write a story with the title “An Unforgettable Adventure.” Consider story elements (for example, character, setting, and plot) as you develop your narrative.

Well this is my unforgettable adventure. Well first Jeavon and I were rideing dirt bikes. While we where rideing a stom came. It had lightning, bad winds, hail, and rain. All of a sudden my bike stalls. We can't get it to start. So we started pushing it out but we got stuck in mud, and we just sat there until it cleard up. That's my unforgettable story. Do you have an unforgettable story?

The response provides a minimally established context and point of view. There is a narrative pattern that includes few events important to the narrative (“*rideing dirt bikes,*” “*a stom came,*” and “*bike stalls*”) and that lacks elaboration. The response makes minimal use of narrative techniques and demonstrates minimal use of transitions or sensory language. Sentences are simplistic. Many errors are present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—SAMPLE ITEM SUMMARY DATA

MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D	Mean Score
1	B-V.4.1.2	C	2	3%	2%	91% (correct answer)	3%	N/A
2	B-V.4.1.2	A	2	67%	14%	6%	13%	N/A
3	B-V.4.1.1	A	2	83% (correct answer)	4%	9%	4%	N/A
4	B-C.3.1.1	D	3	30%	19%	9%	42% (correct answer)	N/A
5	B-K.1.1.1	B	2	7%	70% (correct answer)	11%	12%	N/A
6	B-C.2.1.2	D	2	11%	5%	3%	81% (correct answer)	N/A
7	B-K.1.1.1	Part One: A Part Two: C	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.36
8	B-K.1.1.3	Part One: D Part Two: A, C	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.03
9	A-C.2.1.2	C	2	14%	10%	65% (correct answer)	10%	N/A
10	A-C.2.1.2	A	2	58% (correct answer)	10%	12%	20%	N/A
11	A-V.4.1.1	B	2	7%	76% (correct answer)	6%	11%	N/A
12	A-V.4.1.1	A	2	57% (correct answer)	18%	7%	17%	N/A
13	A-C.2.1.3	D	2	21%	11%	8%	60% (correct answer)	N/A
14	A-V.4.1.2	C	2	12%	22%	55% (correct answer)	9%	N/A
15	A-K.1.1.1	Part One: C Part Two: D	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.16

**PSSA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE 6**

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D	Mean Score
16	A-K.1.1.3	Part One: D Part Two: B, C	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.56
18	D.1.1.6	A	2	78% (correct answer)	5%	13%	3%	N/A
19	D.1.2.3	D	2	7%	14%	5%	74% (correct answer)	N/A
20	D.2.1.2	C	2	13%	6%	62% (correct answer)	19%	N/A
21	D.2.1.2	C	2	18%	23%	45% (correct answer)	13%	N/A

**TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS AND WRITING PROMPT**

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
17	E.1.1	4	3	1.70
22	C.1.3	4	3	2.56

**ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS**

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# **PSSA Grade 6 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler**

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