



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**The Pennsylvania System of School
Assessment
English Language Arts
Item and Scoring Sampler
2016–2017
Grade 8**

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INFORMATION ABOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Introduction	1
General Introduction	1
Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS).	1
What Is Included	1
Purpose and Uses.	1
Item Format and Scoring Guidelines	2
English Language Arts Grade 8	3
English Language Arts Test Directions for Reading Passages and Questions	4

PSSA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE 8

Passage 1.	6
Multiple-Choice Questions	11
Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions	18
Passage 2.	20
Multiple-Choice Questions	22
Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question	28
Passage 3.	29
Text-Dependent Analysis Question.	32
Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline.	36
English Language Arts Test Directions for Language Questions and Writing Prompt	49
Standalone Multiple-Choice Questions	50
Writer’s Checklist and Informative/Explanatory Writing Prompt	54
Informative/Explanatory Scoring Guideline.	58
English Language Arts—Sample Item Summary Data.	65

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS 67

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 [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.¹ 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.

¹The 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 8, 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 8

This English Language Arts Sampler is composed of 3 passages, 13 passage-based multiple-choice questions, 3 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 an evidence-based selected-response question. 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.

INFORMATION ABOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

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 drama about a person who borrows a necklace. Then answer questions 1–9.

The Necklace

adapted by Mack Lewis from a story by Guy de Maupassant

Cast of Characters

Maupassant: the cat

Matilda Loisel

Marie-Claire: the maid

Monsieur Loisel: Matilda's husband

Madame Forestier: Matilda's friend

Madame Ambassador: the Ambassador's wife

The Ambassador

Scene 1: Chez¹ Loisel

Maupassant (*arrogantly*): Oh, hello there. Or shall I say, *bonjour*. After all, we are in Paris. My name is Maupassant. As you can see, I am a cat. I live here with Madame Loisel, a young lady as charming as she is discontent . . . Ah, here she comes now.

Matilda (*seeming distressed*): Oh, Maupassant, you're the only thing of value in this whole house! Marie-Claire? Marie-Claire!

Marie-Claire: *Oui*, Madame.

Matilda: Marie-Claire, do try to straighten up before the master gets home. Everything looks so shabby!

Marie-Claire: But, Madame, you have such a beautiful home.

Matilda: Nothing but faded wallpaper and worn furniture. How it tortures me to live here!

Maupassant: As I was saying, Madame is a charming young lady. But she has rich tastes.

Matilda: Make it better, Marie-Claire.

Marie-Claire: Madame?

Matilda: Dust, Marie-Claire! Straighten! Fluff!

Maupassant: Unfortunately, Madame is about to learn a hard lesson. It seems that what's least important in life is often the most costly. Wait, here comes Monsieur Loisel. Madame wishes he were royalty or wealthy. He is neither, but tonight he has a gift for her.

Loisel: Dear Matilda, have I a surprise for you!

¹Chez—at the home of

Matilda: What's this?

Loisel: It's an invitation to the Ambassador's Ball. I went to a great deal of trouble to get it.

Matilda (*suddenly angry*): What would I want with this?

Loisel: But I thought it would make you happy. You never go out—and this is such a big event! Everyone important will be there.

Matilda: What do you think I have to wear to such a fancy affair?

Loisel: Why . . . howabout that dress you wear to the theater? It's pretty enough.

Matilda: The dress I wear to the theater? The dress I wear to the theater?! Are you mad?

Loisel: But what's the matter? Please don't cry, Matilda. What's wrong?

Matilda: Nothing . . . Only I can't go because I have nothing to wear. Give the invitation to someone whose wife is better dressed than I.

Loisel (*after a pause*): Don't be sad, Matilda. How much would a nice outfit cost—something elegant?

Matilda: Well . . . I don't know exactly. I should think four hundred francs ought to do it.

Loisel (*after another pause*): Very well. I will give you four hundred francs. But do try to get a dress you'll be happy with.

Maupassant: Poor Loisel. He looks a little pale.

Scene 2: Chez Loisel

Marie-Claire: Oh my, Madame! You look . . . you look . . .

Maupassant: I believe the phrase she's looking for is *bon chic*—very hip.

Loisel: Stunning, my dear!

Matilda: Something's not right.

Marie-Claire: Madame?

Loisel: But what could be wrong?

Matilda (*suddenly crying*): Oh, no. Oh, no! What am I to do?

Loisel: What is it, Matilda?

Matilda: I haven't any jewelry! Not a single stone with which to adorn myself. I shall look so poor!

Loisel: You can wear some flowers. They're very *chic* this time of year.

Matilda: How embarrassing it would be to appear so shabby in the midst of rich women. No, I can't

go.

Loisel: I have it. We're so silly. Call on your friend, Madame Forestier! She will certainly lend you some jewels.

Matilda: *C'est vrai*²! I hadn't thought of that. Come, Maupassant. We must go at once!

Scene 3: Chez Forestier

Matilda: Oh, Maupassant, I do so hope Madame Forestier takes pity on me.

Forestier: Why, Matilda, how nice to see you! And you've brought Maupassant! What a handsome animal!

Maupassant (*while being scratched*): Yes, yes, it's true! Under the chin, please!

Forestier: What brings you here, Matilda?

Matilda: It seems I've been invited to the Ambassador's Ball. Dear Monsieur Loisel has gone out of his way to get me an invitation and buy me a new dress.

Forestier: Oh my. The Ambassador's Ball! You must be thrilled!

Matilda: Yes . . . and no. I'm ashamed to say I haven't any jewelry to wear. Monsieur Loisel means well, but after all, he's only a clerk. May I borrow some jewelry from you?

Forestier: Why, of course you can! Look, here's my case.

Matilda: *Oh là là!* However will I choose? There are so many wonderful pieces!

Forestier: Just trinkets, my dear.

Maupassant: Matilda and a case full of jewels? This could take a while, so allow me to advance the story. It seemed nothing in Madame Forestier's case satisfied Matilda's tastes . . . until she discovered the necklace. Her heart skipped a beat. Her hands trembled.

Matilda: Could you lend me this diamond necklace? Only this?

Forestier: Certainly! Now go enjoy the Ambassador's Ball!

Scene 4: The Ambassador's Ball

Maupassant: Madame and Monsieur Loisel are at the ball.

Madame Ambassador: And who's this elegant young lady?

Loisel: Ambassador, Madame, I'd like you to meet my wife, Matilda.

Madame: What a lovely smile you have. Come, darling, let me show you around.

²C'est vrai—it's true

Ambassador: That's a fine lady you have there, young man. The prettiest thing here!Maupassant: Madame was a hit. The necklace sparkled. Madame Ambassador showed her off as if she were her own daughter. Everyone wanted to dance with her. It was 4 A.M. before Monsieur could convince her to leave.

Matilda: We must hurry out, dear husband, before someone sees my coat.

Loisel: No one will notice your coat, Matilda.

Matilda: All the other women are wearing furs, whereas mine is old and out of fashion. Please, let's hurry.

Loisel: At least let me call you a cab. It's chilly out.

Matilda: But we'll be noticed. We can walk down the street. A cab will happen by sooner or later.

Loisel: Very well, my dear. If only to keep up appearances.

Scene 5: Chez Loisel

Loisel: I thought we'd never find a cab. I'm still shivering.

Matilda: Oh, but it was worth it. What a splendid evening! Madame Ambassador was so wonderful. And, did you know, I waltzed with the Ambassador?

Loisel: I'm glad you enjoyed yourself, Matilda, but I still have to report to work in the morning.

Matilda: Just one more look.

Maupassant: That's when Matilda stepped in front of the mirror one last time.

Matilda: Oh, no! The necklace . . . Madame Forestier's diamond necklace . . . it's gone.

Loisel: What? How's that? Are you sure you had it when we left the ball?

Matilda: Yes, I felt it as we came out.

Loisel: I will go out and look for it.

Maupassant: Loisel searched the streets. Later that day, he went to the cab offices. He put an ad in the newspaper and offered a reward.

Matilda: Darling, I'm so glad you're home! Tell me you found it!

Loisel (sadly): Write your friend: Tell her you must have the clasp on the necklace repaired. That might give us time to find a replacement.

Maupassant: After a great deal of shopping, they found a necklace that seemed to them exactly like the one they had lost. But it was very expensive, thirty-six thousand francs. True, they couldn't afford it. So they borrowed the money, and then spent ten years paying it back. They fired the maid. They moved to a truly shabby, one-room apartment. Loisel found a second job at night. Even Matilda took in work as a washwoman. Just after making the final payment, Matilda bumped into Madame

Forestier.

Matilda: Madame Forestier! Good morning.

Forestier: Do I know you?

Matilda: It's me, Matilda!

Forestier: My poor Matilda! How you've changed.

Matilda: It's true. I've had some hard times—and all because of you.

Forestier: Because of me? Whatever do you mean?

Matilda: You recall the necklace you loaned me? Well, I lost it.

Forestier: But you returned it to me.

Matilda: I returned another exactly like it. It has taken us ten years to pay for it. You can understand how hard it's been for us to live in poverty for so long, but it is finally finished, and I am decently content.

Forestier: You say you bought a necklace to replace mine? My poor Matilda. Had you only come to me. My diamonds were false. They weren't worth but five hundred francs.

Maupassant: That is a hard lesson indeed. A lesson for all of us.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. The meaning of the prefix “dis-” helps the reader know that the word “discontent” means
- A. not satisfied.
 - B. without success.
 - C. lacking knowledge.
 - D. below standards.

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	74% (correct answer)
p-value B	7%
p-value C	9%
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to use the prefix “dis” to determine the meaning of “discontent.” Option A is the correct answer. Since the prefix “dis” means “not,” the word “discontent” means “not satisfied.” Options B, C, and D are not the correct answers since they do not reflect the correct meaning of the prefix “dis.”

2. How does Maupassant’s point of view **best** create suspense in the drama?
- A. by providing the reader with the location of the Loisels’ home
 - B. by revealing to the reader that Monsieur Loisel is not wealthy
 - C. by stating to the reader that the maid was eventually fired
 - D. by informing the reader that Matilda will learn a hard lesson

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.2.1.1
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	3%
p-value B	14%
p-value C	4%
p-value D	80% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify how Maupassant’s point of view best creates suspense in the drama. Option D is the correct answer. Having Maupassant inform the reader that Matilda will learn a hard lesson allows the author to generate suspense by hinting at the difficult experiences Matilda will have later in the drama. Options A, B, and C are incorrect since they refer to details that develop the setting, character, and plot.

3. Which of Monsieur Loisel’s lines **best** supports the idea that he sees himself as a problem solver?
- A. “It’s an invitation to the Ambassador’s Ball.”
 - B. “Everyone important will be there.”
 - C. “You can wear some flowers.”
 - D. “I thought we’d never find a cab.”

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.1
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	8%
p-value B	7%
p-value C	77% (correct answer)
p-value D	8%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which line from the drama best supports the idea that Monsieur Loisel sees himself as a problem solver. Option C is the correct answer. By suggesting that Matilda can wear flowers, Monsieur Loisel offers a solution to Matilda’s problem of not having any jewelry to wear. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since these options are statements that do not support Loisel as a problem solver.

4. Read the line from the drama.

“Forestier: Just trinkets, my dear.”

What does the phrase “Just trinkets” suggest to the audience?

- A. Madame Forestier believes in wearing only cheap jewelry.
- B. Madame Forestier has paid a lot of money for her jewelry.
- C. Madame Forestier is casual about the significance of her jewelry.
- D. Madame Forestier is impatient when people handle her jewelry.

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	27%
p-value B	6%
p-value C	64% (correct answer)
p-value D	3%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to interpret a figure of speech in a line from the drama. Option C is the correct answer. By using the phrase “just trinkets,” Madame Forestier suggests that her jewelry is of little value. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since they are not supported by Madame Forestier’s use of the phrase “just trinkets.”

5. Read the line from the drama.

“Madame Ambassador showed her off as if she were her own daughter.”

Why does the author use the phrase “showed her off” in the line?

- A. to highlight Madame Ambassador’s delight in Matilda
- B. to illustrate Madame Ambassador’s curiosity in Matilda
- C. to explain Madame Ambassador’s jealousy of Matilda
- D. to reveal Madame Ambassador’s family connection to Matilda

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.2.1.3
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	85% (correct answer)
p-value B	4%
p-value C	6%
p-value D	5%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the author’s reason for using the phrase “showed her off.” Option A is the correct answer since the given phrase indicates Madame Ambassador’s delight in Matilda, which is revealed in the details “this elegant young lady,” “what a lovely smile,” and “as if she were her own daughter.” Options B, C, and D are incorrect since these options are not supported by details in the drama.

6. Which character type does Maupassant **best** represent?
- A. meek leader
 - B. wise sage
 - C. foolish villain
 - D. respected hero

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.3.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	79% (correct answer)
p-value C	3%
p-value D	5%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to evaluate the details in the drama to determine which character type from traditional stories best represents Maupassant. Option B is the correct answer since the details “is about to learn a hard lesson” and “what’s least important in life is often the most costly” support the idea that Maupassant is wise. Options A, C, and D are incorrect since these descriptions are not supported by details in the drama.

7. Read the line from Scene 5 of the drama.

“**Maupassant:** That’s when Matilda stepped in front of the mirror one last time.”

How is the plot **most** advanced by the line?

- A. by extending the rising action
- B. by initiating the main conflict
- C. by foreshadowing the resolution
- D. by flashing back to unseen events

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.3
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	35%
p-value B	42% (correct answer)
p-value C	16%
p-value D	6%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how a given line from the drama most advances the plot. Option B is the correct answer. While looking in the mirror, Matilda realizes that she has lost the necklace she borrowed from Madame Forestier. This event leads to the main conflict of the story. Options A and C are incorrect since the rising action and resolution occur later in the story. Option D is incorrect since it is not supported by the given line from the drama.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions

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

Part One

Read the line from Scene 1 of the drama.

“Matilda: Everything looks so shabby!”

What does the line suggest about Matilda’s opinion of her home?

- A. respect
- B. sympathy
- C. jealousy
- D. disapproval

Part Two

Which of Matilda’s lines from the drama **best** supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

- A. “Nothing but faded wallpaper and worn furniture.”
- B. “How it tortures me to live here!”
- C. “Make it better, Marie-Claire.”
- D. “Dust, Marie-Claire! Straighten! Fluff!”

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.2.1.3
Answer Key Part One:	D
Answer Key Part Two:	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Mean Score	1.36
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to infer how the use of a word reveals a character’s opinion and to identify a line from the drama that supports the opinion.</p> <p>Part One: Option D is the correct answer since Matilda’s use of the word “shabby,” which means “in poor condition,” indicates that she disapproves of her home. Options A, B, and C are incorrect since these opinions are not supported by details in the drama.</p> <p>Part Two: Option B is the correct answer since the phrase “tortures me” supports the idea that Matilda strongly disapproves of her home. Options A, C, and D are incorrect since they do not convey as strong a sense of disapproval.</p>

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

Part One

Which theme is developed through the character Matilda?

- A. Sincerity with others is not always rewarded.
- B. Hard work does not always bring material success.
- C. Being vain may lead to a feeling of never being satisfied.
- D. Searching for answers to problems may lead to unique solutions.

Part Two

Which of Matilda’s lines from the drama support the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “Give the invitation to someone whose wife is better dressed than I.”
- B. “Not a single stone with which to adorn myself.”
- C. “It seems I’ve been invited to the Ambassador’s Ball.”
- D. “There are so many wonderful pieces!”

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.2
Answer Key Part One:	C
Answer Key Part Two:	A, B
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	2.15
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine a theme that is developed through Matilda and then to identify lines from the drama that support this theme.</p> <p>Part One: Option C is the correct answer. Matilda’s excessive concern about how she might appear to others at the ball causes her to feel dissatisfied. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since these themes are not supported by the character Matilda.</p> <p>Part Two: Options A and B are the correct answers since these lines support the idea that Matilda is not satisfied. Options C and D are incorrect since these lines do not support the theme.</p>

PASSAGE 2

Read the following speech given by the writer Mark Twain. Then answer questions 10–16.

Mark Twain Reveals Stage Fright

Introduction by William Safire

“I shall never forget my feelings before the agony left me . . .”

—Mark Twain

He came and went with Halley’s Comet, which appeared in 1835 and 1910. Born Samuel Langhorne Clemens, America’s greatest and most embittered humorist took the pseudonym Mark Twain from a term used on the Mississippi River for “two fathoms deep.” The author of *Huckleberry Finn* and *The Innocents Abroad*, Twain gained fame not only as a major figure of American literature but also as a first-rate raconteur, able to move as well as amuse his audiences.

With white hair, white mustache, and white suit, Twain took to the stage and entertained his listeners with barbed observations and humorous anecdotes. Among the best of these seemingly impromptu talks is “Mark Twain’s First Appearance,” delivered after one of his daughters had made her singing debut as a contralto in Norfolk, Connecticut. He attended her recital and then addressed the audience about his own stage debut.

In the speech, given on October 5, 1906, Twain recounts his own first public appearance.

My heart goes out in sympathy to anyone who is making his first appearance before an audience of human beings. By a direct process of memory I go back forty years, less one month—for I’m older than I look.

I recall the occasion of my first appearance. San Francisco knew me then only as a reporter, and I was to make my bow to San Francisco as a lecturer. I knew that nothing short of compulsion would get me to the theater. So I bound myself by a hard-and-fast contract so that I could not escape. I got to the theater forty-five minutes before the hour set for the lecture. My knees were shaking so that I didn’t know whether I could stand up. If there is an awful, horrible malady in the world, it is stage fright—and seasickness. They are a pair. I had stage fright then for the first and last time. I was only seasick once, too. It was on a little ship on which there were two hundred other passengers. I—was—sick. I was so sick that there wasn’t any left for those other two hundred passengers.

It was dark and lonely behind the scenes in that theater, and I peeked through the little peek holes they have in theater curtains and looked into the big auditorium. That was dark and empty, too. By and by it lighted up, and the audience began to arrive.

I had got a number of friends of mine, stalwart men, to sprinkle themselves through the audience armed with big clubs. Every time I said anything they could possibly guess I intended to be funny, they were to pound those clubs on the floor. Then there was a kind lady in a box up there, also a good friend of mine, the wife of the governor. She was to watch me intently, and whenever I glanced toward her she was going to deliver a gubernatorial laugh that would lead the whole audience into applause.

At last I began. I had the manuscript tucked under a United States flag in front of me where I could get at it in case of need. But I managed to get started without it. I walked up and down—I was young in those days and needed the exercise—and talked and talked.

Right in the middle of the speech I had placed a gem. I had put in a moving, pathetic part which was to get at the hearts and souls of my hearers. When I delivered it, they did just what I hoped and expected. They sat silent and awed. I had touched them. Then I happened to glance up at the box where the governor's wife was—you know what happened.

Well, after the first agonizing five minutes, my stage fright left me, never to return. But I shall never forget my feelings before the agony left me, and I got up here to thank you for her for helping my daughter, by your kindness, to live through her first appearance. And I want to thank you for your appreciation of her singing, which is, by the way, hereditary.

Multiple-Choice Questions

10. Read the sentence from William Safire’s introduction to the speech.

“He came and went with Halley’s Comet, which appeared in 1835 and 1910.”

What does the figurative language in the sentence mean?

- A. Mark Twain was born in 1835 and died in 1910.
- B. Mark Twain’s popularity reached its peak in 1835 and again in 1910.
- C. Mark Twain had the luck to witness a rare event in 1835 and in 1910.
- D. Mark Twain’s work had a significant influence on literature between 1835 and 1910.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	57% (correct answer)
p-value B	20%
p-value C	8%
p-value D	15%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to interpret figurative language used in the introduction of a speech. Option A is the correct answer. The phrase “came and went with Halley’s Comet” suggests that Twain was born in 1835 and died in 1910. Options B, C, and D are incorrect since these options are not supported by details in the introduction of the speech.

11. In Twain’s speech, what is the main function of the first sentence of the second paragraph?
- A. to emphasize an internal conflict
 - B. to introduce an extended flashback
 - C. to reveal the speaker’s point of view
 - D. to highlight the speaker’s purpose

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.2
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	11%
p-value B	67% (correct answer)
p-value C	12%
p-value D	11%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the main function of a particular sentence in a speech. Option B is the correct answer since the use of “recall” and “first appearance” in the sentence suggests that Twain will talk about an earlier experience. Option A is incorrect since the sentence does not describe an internal conflict. Option C is incorrect since the point of view has been introduced earlier in the speech. Option D is incorrect since the sentence does not convey the author’s purpose.

12. Which words from the second paragraph of the speech **best** help the reader understand the meaning of the word malady?
- A. “knees” and “shaking”
 - B. “whether” and “stand”
 - C. “awful” and “seasickness”
 - D. “fright” and “pair”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	15%
p-value B	4%
p-value C	55% (correct answer)
p-value D	25%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify which words from a particular paragraph best help the reader understand the meaning of “malady.” Option C is the correct answer since “awful” and “seasickness” help the reader understand that “malady” is an illness or ailment. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since these pairs of words do not provide context to support the meaning of “malady.”

13. Which quotation **best** describes the connection between Twain’s first speech and the speech he gave in 1906?
- A. “By a direct process of memory I go back forty years, less one month—for I’m older than I look.”
 - B. “I knew that nothing short of compulsion would get me to the theater. So I bound myself by a hard-and-fast contract so that I could not escape.”
 - C. “I had stage fright then for the first and last time. I was only seasick once, too.”
 - D. “But I shall never forget my feelings before the agony left me, and I got up here to thank you for her for helping my daughter, by your kindness, to live through her first appearance.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.3
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	29%
p-value B	11%
p-value C	24%
p-value D	36% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to analyze the text of a speech to identify details that establish a connection between Twain’s first speech and his speech in 1906. Option D is the correct answer since Twain is comparing his feelings at his first appearance to those his daughter must have felt at her first appearance. Options A, B, and C are incorrect since they do not describe a connection between Twain’s first speech and the speech he gave in 1906.

14. Which statement **best** describes how Twain develops the central idea of the speech?
- A. Twain shows the severity of a problem by comparing it to an illness.
 - B. Twain explains how to solve a problem by offering advice based on his life.
 - C. Twain calls attention to his accomplishments by pointing out his failures.
 - D. Twain illustrates a common problem by telling a story about his experiences.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.2
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	14%
p-value B	15%
p-value C	16%
p-value D	54% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify how Twain develops the central idea of the speech. Option D is the correct answer since Twain develops the central idea by telling the story of his personal experience with stage fright. Options A, B, and C are incorrect since these options are not supported by details in the speech.

15. What is the **best** description of the shift in tone that occurs in the last sentence of the speech?
- A. from sincere to playful
 - B. from respectful to proud
 - C. from humble to contented
 - D. from formal to sentimental

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.3
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	33% (correct answer)
p-value B	29%
p-value C	14%
p-value D	24%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how the tone shifts in the last sentence of the speech. Option A is the correct answer. The phrase “thank you” and the word “appreciation” show sincerity while the words “which is, by the way, hereditary” create a more playful or humorous tone. Options B, C, and D are incorrect because these options do not fit the context of the sentence.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question

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

Part One

In Twain’s first speech, what can be inferred to have happened when he delivered the “moving, pathetic part” of the speech?

- A. The governor’s wife expressed embarrassment in the author’s story.
- B. The governor’s wife expressed amusement toward the author’s words.
- C. The audience was moved to tears.
- D. The audience began to whisper.

Part Two

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

- A. “I got to the theater forty-five minutes before the hour set for the lecture.”
- B. “It was on a little ship on which there were two hundred other passengers.”
- C. “She was to watch me intently, and whenever I glanced toward her she was going to deliver a gubernatorial laugh that would lead the whole audience into applause.”
- D. “I had the manuscript tucked under a United States flag in front of me where I could get at it in case of need.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.1
Answer Key Part One:	B
Answer Key Part Two:	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Mean Score	1.53
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to make an inference based on a particular event in the speech and then to select a sentence from the speech to support the inference.</p> <p>Part One: Option B is correct because Twain had made a previous arrangement with the governor’s wife to laugh when he glanced toward her. Options A, C, and D are incorrect because these options are not supported by details in the speech.</p> <p>Part Two: Option C is the correct answer because it is the sentence from the speech that shows Twain’s arrangement with the governor’s wife. Options A, B, and D are incorrect because these options do not support the inference in Part One.</p>

PASSAGE 3

Read the following passage about how ancient Romans built a city. Then answer question 17.

Building a Roman City

by David Macaulay

The engineers worked throughout the winter measuring, designing, and drawing. By the spring of 25 B.C. (the Roman year 728) the master plan for Verbonia was ready. The center of the castrum³ became the center of the city. The main street running from north to south was now called the cardo, the one from east to west, the decumanus. Both were widened and lengthened, and the rectangular area of the camp was increased to seven hundred and twenty yards long by six hundred and twenty yards wide. This space allowed a maximum population of approximately 50,000. A greater number, the planners believed, would make the city too large and unable to meet the needs of the people.

The entire area was divided by roads into a chessboard pattern. Almost all of the blocks, called insulae, were eighty yards square. A high wall was designed around the city in which fortified gates were located where the main streets cut through. Around the city but inside the wall a thirty-foot-wide strip of land called the pomerium was marked off. It represented the boundary of the city.

The city planners indicated those facilities which served all the residents. They designed a new and larger forum which was to become the governmental and religious center of the city. They located public water fountains, the aqueduct that would bring the water, a central food market, public baths and toilets, and an entertainment center made up of a theater and amphitheater. They also set aside spaces for future buildings.

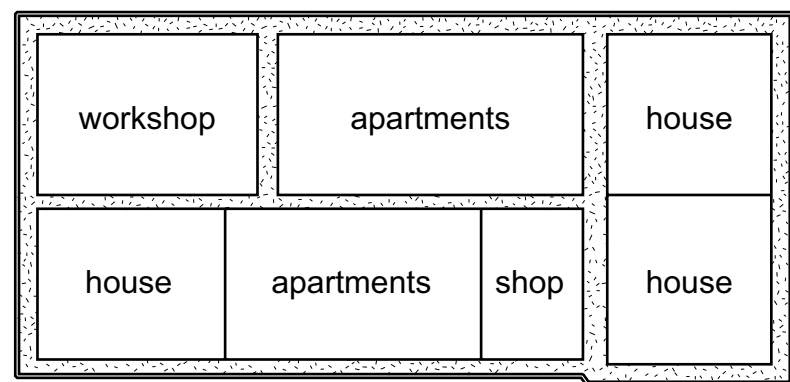
No privately owned building, they decreed, could be higher than twice the width of the street on which it stood. This ensured that sunlight always reached the streets. They also required all persons whose buildings faced one of the main streets to build, at their own expense, shelter over the sidewalk for the comfort and protection of all pedestrians.

The master plan allowed much freedom for the residents to determine the appearance and character of the city through the buildings they would construct for themselves. Each insula, left deliberately empty on the plan, would eventually be filled with buildings of all sizes and be crossed by narrow back roads and alleys.

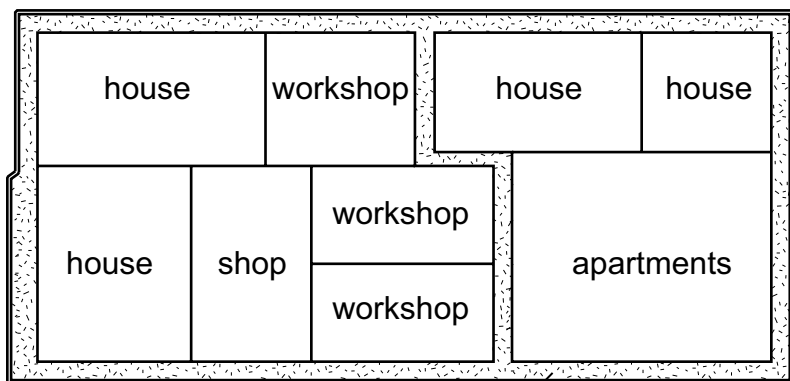
Some of the insulae designated for private ownership were divided up among the soldiers, traders, and farmers. The names of the owners and the sizes of their holdings were inscribed on the plan and sent to the land office in Rome. A copy of the plan was carved on marble and stood in the forum for everyone to see. Even though land was given to Verbonia's first settlers, each person had to pay for the construction of his own house.

³castrum—a Roman fortress

Typical Insula



back street



fountain

sidewalk

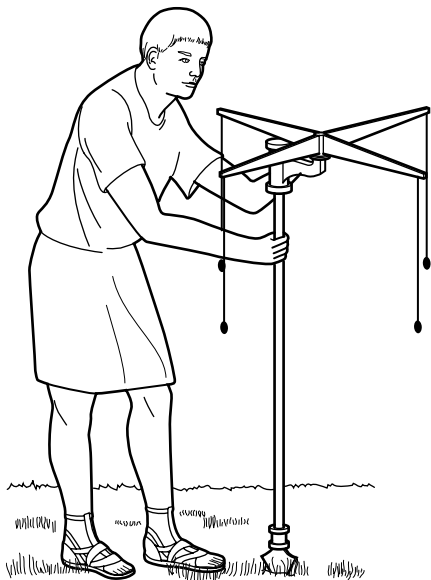
In the early summer of 25 B.C. a plow drawn by a white cow and a white bull guided by a leader of the community cut a furrow around the site. This solemn ceremony marked the location of the city wall. The plow was lifted only where gates were to be built.

Following the ceremony the surveyors marked off the roads using an instrument called a groma to make certain that all roads intersected at right angles. The groma was a pole about four feet high on top of which a cross was laid flat. When weighted strings hanging from each end of the cross hung parallel to the center pole, the groma was known to be perpendicular to the ground. The streets could be accurately marked off by sighting down the intersecting arms of the cross.

The same method was used to mark off roads and farmland outside the city.

The materials used most in the construction of Verbonia were stone, clay, mortar, and wood. The stone came from a limestone quarry owned by the government. Besides many work sheds, the quarry contained a forge for making and repairing tools and a carpenter's shop in which cranes and pulleys were built.

Groma



The skilled laborers cut, polished, or carved inscriptions in the stone. The unskilled workers separated and lifted the huge blocks from the earth. The stone was usually cut with a saw. When the stone was very hard, the blade used in the saw had no teeth; sand and steel filings were placed under the blade and the back-and-forth motion of the saw ground away the stone.

When the stone could not be sawed, a row of holes was drilled where it was to be divided. Wooden stakes were then jammed into the holes. When water was poured over the stakes, they swelled, splitting the stone along the line of holes.

The clay was made into bricks and tiles in factories near Arretium. The clay, dug out of large pits in the ground, was formed into standard shapes and sizes using wooden molds. The mold was then removed and the wet clay placed in an oven to dry and harden. All bricks and tiles were stamped with the name of the factory owner and the name of the emperor.

The mortar used between bricks and stones and in concrete was a mixture of sand, lime (a powder obtained by burning limestone), and water. When mortar was used in construction underwater, a gravelly substance called pozzolana was added, which made the mortar become extremely hard when it set.

The wood used for scaffolding and roof framework came from a forest at the foot of the Apennine Mountains to the south.

Text-Dependent Analysis Question

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Writer's Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis QuestionPLAN 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 2.02

Assessment Anchor

E08.E.1–Evidence-Based Analysis of Text

Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E08.E.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**Handwritten Response Score: 4 points**

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Imagine a city, expertly planned to form the perfect utopia. Due to the unfortunate lack of strong workers to transport and handle the heavy rock and clay supplies, the city lay unfinished, never to be used. Now, I would like you to imagine a different city. This city is built with the best supplies and hardest materials, yet it too is uninhabited due to the poor planning and lack of thought that went in to the design. This scenario demonstrates perfectly that intelligence and physical strength are both needed in the building of a city. Evidence to support this claim can be found when discussing the methods of splitting stone, the use of a groma, and the mixture of mortar.

The various ways to split stone demonstrate the necessary relationship between strength and ingenuity. Evidence to back this up can be found in the passage, “When the stone was very hard, the blade used in the saw had no tech; sand and steel fillings were placed under the blade and the back-and-forth portion of the saw ground away the stone.” In other words, the use of stone, which was the main supply used in building Verbonia, needed both a great deal of strength to act as well as a strong understanding of the physics behind cutting it. When dealing with harder stones especially, a capable mind was needed to figure out a way to cut it. An intelligent individual had to comprehend why the blades of the saw would break with the strain of more fortified stone. They also had to have a basic understanding of physics in order to use friction to their advantage. However, all of this would be useless if there were not strong laborers capable of handling such back-breaking labor. Intelligence is useless without strength, and vice-versa. Similar evidence can be found when examining the use of a groma.

In the text it states, “. . . the surveyors marked off the road using an instrument called a groma to make certain that all roads intersected at right angles.” This means that a groma was needed to create working roads. That shows how strength and smarts contributed equally to the building of Verbonia. Before the physically strenuous process of road construction could begin, a groma was needed. Without a groma, which accurately marked off roads in right angles, the roads of the city would be sloppy and difficult to use. The roads of a city were perhaps one of its most needed components, since they were necessary for both transportation and trade. These roads are one of many aspects of a city that benefit from the essential relationship between genius and muscle.

Finally, evidence to support my statement can be found also in the making of mortar. How many times have you thought about mortar? Odds are, very little, despite the fact it is constantly surrounding you and fortifying buildings. Houses and public buildings alike benefitted from the bond between intelligence and brawn in Verbonia by way of mortar. The author writes, “The mortar used between bricks and stones and in concrete was a mixture of sand, lime, . . . and water. When . . . used in construction underwater, a . . . substance called pozzolana was added, which made the mortar . . . extremely hard.” Before bricklayers could put in the hard work using a mortar in construction, a chemist had to figure out the mixture that would work best. Such a relationship was needed for essentially everything constructed in Verbona

In conclusion, evidence of the equal contribution in the building of Verbona can be found in the method of splitting stone, the construction of roads, and the making of mortar. Never again will you have to imagine such cities as in the beginning; all thanks to the special relationship between brain and brawn.

In this response, the student effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. There is thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from the text (*“the various ways to split stone demonstrate the necessary relationship between strength and ingenuity,” “When dealing with harder stones especially, a capable mind was needed to figure out a way to cut it,” “they also had to have a basic understanding of physics in order to use friction to their advantage,” “before the physically strenuous process of road construction could begin, a groma was needed,” “Without a groma . . . the roads of the city would be sloppy and difficult to use,” “roads . . . were perhaps one of its most needed components, since they were necessary for both transportation and trade,”* and *“Before bricklayers could put in the hard work using a mortar in construction, a chemist had to figure out the mixture that would work best”).* The analysis is effectively supported by substantial and direct reference to the relevant details of the text (*“the blade used in the saw had no teeth; sand and steel fillings were placed under the blade . . . ,” “surveyors marked off the road using an instrument called a groma to make certain that all roads intersected at right angles,”* and *“the mortar . . . was a mixture of sand, lime . . . and water . . . a . . . substance called pozzolana was added, which made the mortar . . . extremely hard’*”). A strong organizational structure includes an effective introduction and strong development of ideas to support the writer’s purpose.

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

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

While designing and building the Roman city of Verbonia, intelligence and physical strength played major roles. Both of these traits were equally applied throughout the construction of the city. Intelligence flourished during the planning time period. On the other hand, mostly physical strength got the job done when it came to the actual building of Verbonia.

The designing of the Roman city took a lot of time and brain power. In the passage it states, "The engineers worked throughout the winter measuring, designing, and drawing". Therefore, each engineer was working hard to make an almost, if not, perfect city. When it finally came to the construction of Verbonia, they had to surmount several obstacles. For example, if the stone was too difficult to saw through wooden stakes were place in holes that were drilled into the stone. Then water was poured onto the stakes causing them to swell and split the rock. Also, the engineers had to invent and instrument called the groma using their intelligent brains. The groma helped make sure the streets were at right angles. The engineers of Verbonia took their time to deliberately plan and design the city, invent instruments for their convience, and avoid obstacles using all of their intelligence.

After designing came building and with that also came strength. The physical strength was well needed when the workers discovered what materials were being used. As it says in the passage, "The materials used most in the construction of Verbonia were stone, clay, mortar, and wood," these were very heavy. As a result of man-power needed for construction, most residents were responsible for building construction themselves. When heavy materials and big city mix everyone has to contribute. "The skilled workers cut, polished, or carved inscriptions in the stone. The unskilled workers separated and lifted the huge blocks from the earth" is how it was mentioned in the passage. Even with the very cumbersome and heavy materials used to build the city, all residents used their physical strength and were able to get the job completed.

The Roman city of Verbonia was only able to be built due to the amount of intelligence and physical strength put into it. Although most of the intelligence is thought to be just in the designing of the city, that is quite the contrary. Intelligence had as much to do with construction as physical strength had to do with the designing. With that the city of Verbonia was beautifully planned and built for the many residents who contributed and lived there.

In this response, the student effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from the text (“*each engineer was working hard to make an almost, if not, perfect city,*” “*they had to surmount several obstacles . . . ,*” “*took their time to deliberately plan and design the city, invent instruments for their convenience and avoid obstacles,*” “*When heavy materials and big city mix everyone has to contribute,*” and “*Although most of the intelligence is thought to be just in the designing of the city, that is quite the contrary*”) effectively supports the writer’s claims, ideas, and inferences. Substantial and accurate reference is made to the text using relevant details and key ideas (“*engineers worked throughout the winter measuring, designing, and drawing,*” “*if the stone was too difficult to saw through wooden stakes were placed in holes . . . ,*” “*the engineers had to invent an instrument called the groma using their intelligent brains,*” “*materials used . . . were stone, clay, mortar, and wood’ these were very heavy,*” “*skilled workers cut, polished, or carved inscriptions,*” and “*. . . lifted the huge blocks from the earth’*”), all of which support the writer’s purpose. The response has effective organizational structure, transitions, and development of ideas.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Handwritten Response Score: 3 points

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Both intelligence and physical strength are key needs when building anything, let alone an entire city. Without both of these aspects working together no construction would be accomplished. For example, the passage states, “The skilled laborers cut, polished, or carved inscriptions in the stone. The unskilled workers separated and lifted the huge blocks from the earth.” This is a perfect example of how intelligence and physical strength work together. Without each other, none of the workers would have been able to accomplish their final task. Also, throughout the entire passage, David Macaulay explains all the things that must be done in order to construct a city. For example, in the first few paragraphs, Macaulay writes about all the careful planning that went into the construction of a city like Verbonia. Even something as simple as the heights of the buildings on every street had to be taken into consideration! Later on, the writer tells us how much physical labor is necessary for such a large construction project. We learn that the workers with physical strength needed to carry blocks of stone and other materials in order to finish their job! They also as carpenters and black smiths who repaired tools, built cranes, etc. Overall this passage makes it quite clear that all workers, no matter what their talents are, were useful and a necessity to the construction of Verbonia. “Building a Roman City” helps us remember that without everyone using their gifts and working together, we would not be able to accomplish the goal.

In this response, the student adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. There is clear organization to support the student’s controlling idea that *“without both of these aspects working together no construction would be accomplished.”* Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from the text (*“the writer tells us how much physical labor is necessary,” “this passage makes it quite clear that all workers, no matter what their talents are, were useful and a necessity,” “helps us remember that without everyone using their gifts and working together, we would not be able to accomplish the goal”*) supports the writer’s ideas, opinions, and inferences. There is sufficient reference to the main idea of the text (*“skilled laborers cut, polished, or carved inscriptions in the stone,” “unskilled workers separated and lifted the huge blocks from the earth,” “David Macaulay explains all the things that must be done in order to construct a city,” “the heights of the buildings on every street had to be taken into consideration,” “the writer tells us how much physical labor is necessary,” “workers with physical strength needed to carry blocks of stone,” and “carpenters and black smiths who repaired tools, built cranes, etc.”*), including relevant key details and examples.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Online Response Score: 3 points

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In ancient times, many skills are needed to create a city, especially since the technology then is not nearly as good, or as efficient, as it is nowadays. That being said, the most effective skills need were intelligence to plan out the city and explain to the builders how, for example, the aqueducts are supposed to be built so they can run as smoothly as possible. The other skill that needs to go hand in hand with intelligence is strength. You need both to actually be able to create such a complex creation. The combination of the two of them is highly important. For, you can have a perfect city on paper, but have no means of making it, or have the skill to build the city, but have a terrible outcome. Without the two working hand in hand, the outcome would be disappointing at the least.

Strength is just one piece of the puzzle but it is necessary. Otherwise without the strength, who would be there to lift the heavy stone out of its home or crack the large limestone bricks to make it easier to build? Who would be there to chop down the hundreds of trees needed to make the roofing and framework for homes, let alone be able to lift it into place? Strength is needed in building a city, it is a necessity. On the other hand, so is intelligence. Without intelligence, who would be able to tell which road to take without the creation of the Groma? Who would have created the aqueducts complicated path's and usage for their water supply? Who would have created a city that ran efficiently and safely? Without intelligence, their would be no efficient or safe. This is why the use of both intelligence and strength is key to the creation of a city.

Strength and intelligence, you cannot have one without the other. They must work together, to cooperate to do what is in the people's best interest. Strength and intelligence need to work in perfect harmony if the people are to be satisfied. Strength and intelligence are the foundation of architecture and construction now, and then.

In this response, the student adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. There is clear analysis of the text (*“especially since the technology then is not nearly as good, or as efficient, as it is nowadays,” “You need both to actually be able to create such a complex creation,” “you can have a perfect city on paper, but have no means of making it . . . Without the two working hand in hand, the outcome would be disappointing,”* and *“Strength and intelligence are the foundation of architecture and construction”*). Sufficient reference to the relevant details of the text (*“without strength, who would be there to lift the heavy stone . . . or crack the limestone bricks . . . chop down the hundreds of trees”* and *“without the creation of the Groma”*) supports the writer's focus. Some errors are present in punctuation and spelling (*“efficient”* for *“efficient”*); however, they seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Online Response Score: 2 points

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. To design and build the Verbonia, you need intelligence to now where its going to go and what its going to look like. You need strength to build the Verbonia.

One example of needing intelligence from the story is, “The engineers worked through out the winter measuring, designing, and drawing.” Which means the worked hard on planning out the Verbonia which takes intelligence

Also you need physical strength. In the story it says “The unskilled workers separated and lifted the huge blocks from the earth.” That would take alot of strength

So you see to design and build the verbonia you need intellegence and physical strength to now were it goes and to build it.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The analysis of how intelligence and physical strength contributed to the building of a city (“*you need intelligence to [k]now where its going to go and what its going to look like*”) is weak. There is some reference to the main ideas and relevant details of the text through quotes. Weak development of ideas somewhat supports the writer’s purpose. Errors present include spelling (“*intellegence*” for “intelligence”) and usage (“*its*” for “it’s,” “*now*” for “know,” “*the*” for “they,” “*were*” for “where”), which can interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Handwritten Response Score: 2 points

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Intelligence and physical strength was need to build the city of Verbonia. Many men would work for many hours drawing models of the city. The drawing would be carved into a giant piece of Marble and later used as a reference. The Groma needed a lot of knowledge to use it since the person who measured with it to mark the border needed to know where it was and how to line up the marks. Physical strength was needed to pick up and carry rocks to build the city. The workers would use pulleys and cranes. The more supplies the workers used meant it was more expensive. The city wanted it to be a giant and make it look like a checker board. The end result would be an Insula.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The attempt at analysis (“*since the person who measured with it to mark the border needed to know where it was and how to line up the marks*”) is weak. Vague reference to the text, using some examples, only inconsistently references the main ideas and relevant details from the text (“*the drawing would be carved into a giant piece of marble,*” “*the workers would use pulleys and cranes*”). There is also information drawn from the text which appears to be confused (“*The city wanted it to be a giant and make it look like a checker board. The end result would be an Insula*”). The response has a weak introduction, no conclusion, and weak overall organizational structure, all of which inconsistently support the writer’s focus. Errors are present in usage (“*need*” for “*needed*”), and there is some awkward sentence formation that sometimes interferes with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Online Response Score: 1 point

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Verbonia Is an old city. They spent a long time planning for this city, through winter measuring, designing, and drawing Ideas for the city. This city needed alot of physicle strength and intelligence to build! the person that designed the city needed to have a very creative mind, and had to know alot about engineering for when it was build. This city needed alot of physicle strength because, the building dont Just build themselves! they need someone to build them, and back then it would have been harder due to less technology to help them build the stuff. It also takes a lot of determination to build that city. Its alot of hard work to build that city. They need intelegence also because they needed to know How to use the tools right. Probably took them a long time to build it to!

This response minimally addresses part of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. The student’s attempt at analysis is simplistic (“*the person that designed the city needed to have a very creative mind, and had to know alot about engineering*”). An additional attempt at analysis is vague (“*it would have been harder due to less technol[o]gy*”). There is insufficient reference to relevant details from the text: the only information from the text is found in the opening sentence (“*planning for this city, through winter measuring, designing, and drawing*”), which is a nearly verbatim paraphrasing of the first line of the passage. Minimal evidence of an organizational structure is present. Errors are present in usage (“*to*” for “*too*”), spelling (“*alot*” for “*a lot*”, “*physicle*” for “*physical*”), punctuation, and capitalization.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Handwritten Response Score: 1 point

17. The design and building of Verbonia required both intelligence and physical strength. Write an essay analyzing how intelligence and physical strength equally contributed to the building of a city. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

The design and of Verbonia required intelligence because with out knowing what to do you can't probably build anything. An example is when they describe what kind of material they need such as clay because they tell you what it takes to make and how strong it is so incase of anything happening.

The building of Verbonia required physical strength because without it Verbiona would crash to the ground. An example is when trucks can take hits from major storms.

This response minimally addresses part of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. There are insufficient and confusing attempts at analysis (“*with out knowing what to do you can't probably build anything*” and “*without it Verbonia would crash to the ground*”). Insufficient reference to the text is made (“*material they need such as clay because they tell you what it takes to make . . .*”), and there is minimal reference to the main ideas and relevant details of the text. Minimal evidence of an organizational structure is present; the response lacks transitions, an introduction, and a conclusion. The many errors presented in sentence formation often interfere with meaning.

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) What do the Egyptian pyramids look like when they were first built? (2) Today, they have an attractive shape, but the stonework's appearance is rather dull. (3) When the pyramids were first built, they had siding of white limestone and sometimes capstones of glittering gold. (4) Just imagine what they must have looked like back then!

Which sentence in the paragraph contains an error in verb usage?

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

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.1.3
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	48% (correct answer)
p-value B	19%
p-value C	21%
p-value D	12%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to evaluate the sentences in the paragraph to determine which sentence contains an error in verb usage. Option A is the correct answer since the verb "do" should be "did." Options B, C, and D are not the correct answers since these sentences use verbs correctly.

19. Read the sentences.

“Located on the Volga River, Kazan is known as the third capital of Russia,” the professor told his students. “In 2005, Kazan turned let me check my notes 1,000 years old.”

Which is the correct way to write the underlined part of the sentence to indicate a break?

- A. turned. Let me check my notes. 1,000 years old
- B. turned—let me check my notes—1,000 years old
- C. turned let me check my notes, 1,000 years old
- D. turned, let me check my notes 1,000 years old

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.2.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	6%
p-value B	57% (correct answer)
p-value C	11%
p-value D	26%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the correct way to punctuate the underlined part of the sentence to indicate a break. Option B is the correct answer since it correctly uses em dashes to indicate the break in thought caused by “let me check my notes.” Options A, C, and D are not the correct answers since they do not correctly use punctuation to indicate the break caused by “let me check my notes.”

20. Read the paragraph.

(1) Every school should have a good citizen award for actions that improve the school, show leadership, or demonstrate thoughtfulness toward others. (2) Our teacher asked our class to decide on the best, fairest, and clearest, standards for choosing candidates for the award. (3) Some of us discussed it in large groups some of us worked in pairs, and a few students worked alone. (4) Eventually the student council considered our ideas, rejected a few, and used the rest, to write the rules for a good citizen award.

Which sentence uses commas correctly?

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

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.2.5
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	63% (correct answer)
p-value B	20%
p-value C	10%
p-value D	7%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to evaluate the sentences in the paragraph to determine which sentence correctly punctuates items in a series. Option A is the correct answer since it correctly uses commas to separate a series of three predicates of a dependent clause (“improve the school, show leadership, or demonstrate thoughtfulness . . .”). Options B, C, and D are not the correct answers since they do not use commas correctly to separate items in a series.

21. Read the sentence.

Opening the door to the shed, I felt great surprise when I found a raccoon that was in a box filled with rags.

Which revision of the sentence uses the **most** descriptive language?

A. Opening the shed door, I was surprised to find a raccoon that was nestled in a box of rags.

B. When I pulled the door to the shed open, my heart raced because I discovered a raccoon nestled in a box of rags.

C. When I opened the shed door, my heart raced as I came face-to-face with a beady-eyed raccoon nestled in a box of rags.

D. Pulling the door to the shed open, I was really, really surprised at the discovery of a beady-eyed raccoon in a box with a lot of rags.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.6
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	9%
p-value B	8%
p-value C	71% (correct answer)
p-value D	12%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which revision of a sentence uses the most descriptive language. Option C is the correct answer since it uses the most descriptive language with such words and phrases as “heart raced,” “beady-eyed,” and “nestled.” While containing some descriptive language, Options A, B, and D are not the correct answers because they do not use the most descriptive language.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST AND INFORMATIVE/EXPLANATORY WRITING PROMPT

- 22.** Think about a change you would like to see in the future. It could be a change in your school, your community, or any other place. Consider what this change might be and why you would like it to happen.

Write an essay for your teacher that describes a change you would like to see in the future and explains why. Be sure to use details and examples to support your ideas.

Writer's Checklist for the Informative/Explanatory Writing PromptPLAN 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 topic and what you want to write about it.

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

FOCUS while you write

Stay focused on the topic.

Support your ideas with specific details and examples.

Use a variety of sentence types.

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

Use transitions to connect your ideas.

PROOFREAD after you write

I stayed focused on the topic.

I used specific details to support my ideas.

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

Directions: On the following pages is the Informative/Explanatory Prompt.

- 22.** Think about a change you would like to see in the future. It could be a change in your school, your community, or any other place. Consider what this change might be and why you would like it to happen.

Write an essay for your teacher that describes a change you would like to see in the future and explains why. Be sure to use details and examples to support your ideas.

Turn the page to begin writing your response.

Informative/Explanatory Scoring Guideline

#22 Item Information

Alignment	C.1.2
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	2.7

Assessment Anchor:

E08.C.1–Text Types and Purposes

Specific Eligible Content addressed by this prompt:

E08.C.1.2–Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

Score	Description
4	<p>Sharp, distinct topic introduced, developed, and concluded with evident awareness of task, purpose, and audience</p> <p>Effective organizational strategies and structures that develop a topic</p> <p>Substantive, specific, and relevant content that demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose</p> <p>Thorough elaboration with clearly presented information that is consistently supported with well-chosen facts, examples, and concrete details</p> <p>Effective transitions that connect and clarify ideas and concepts</p> <p>Established and consistently maintained formal style with effective control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety</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>Clear topic introduced, developed, and concluded with general awareness of task, purpose, and audience</p> <p>Adequate organizational strategies and structures that develop a topic</p> <p>Adequate and relevant content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose</p> <p>Sufficient elaboration with clearly presented information that is supported with well-chosen facts, examples, and concrete details</p> <p>Appropriate transitions that connect and clarify ideas and concepts</p> <p>Established and maintained formal style with appropriate control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety</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>Incomplete topic introduced, developed, and concluded with limited awareness of task, purpose, and audience</p> <p>Inadequate organizational strategies and structures that somewhat develop a topic</p> <p>Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose</p> <p>Underdeveloped and/or repetitive elaboration that is inconsistently supported with facts, examples, and details</p> <p>Inconsistent/limited transitions that somewhat connect ideas and concepts</p> <p>Inconsistently maintained formal style with limited control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety</p> <p>Inconsistent 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>Minimal topic introduced, developed, and concluded with little awareness of task, purpose, and audience</p> <p>Minimal organizational strategies and structures</p> <p>Minimal content that demonstrates little or no understanding of the purpose</p> <p>Undeveloped writing with little support; may be a bare list</p> <p>Minimal transitions that may or may not connect ideas and concepts</p> <p>Ineffective formal style with little control of language</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 a change you would like to see in the future. It could be a change in your school, your community, or any other place. Consider what this change might be and why you would like it to happen.

Write an essay for your teacher that describes a change you would like to see in the future and explains why. Be sure to use details and examples to support your ideas.

A change I would like to see in the world is for humans to be more eco-friendly. If we don't change our ways and we continue to pollute at the same pace as now then at some point Earth is going to be uninhabitable. We will have polluted the water table so bad that nothing can drink the water. Not plants nor animals or even us. We will have polluted the soil so badly that plants cant grow. Animals and wildlife will have even less of a chance at survival than humans. At some point in the future we will have polluted the air so much that it's no longer clear. The air would turn into a dirty fog of toxins. There are many ways to prevent such things from happening. Humans just need to take the steps and do them.

One way humans could become more eco-friendly is to switch gasoline cars over to electric so there are no more exhaust fumes. We could covert gas stations over to charging stations and have it cost money to charge your car. It could be the same as gas, just with electric. This would prevent a good amount of air pollution.

Another way humans could lower their pollution is to change the way we mine resources. We could research and develop new alternative green ways to mine. We could give back to the environment. We mine coal and such by blowing up the side of a mountain. After the site is done being mined we could go back and return all the dirt and rock that got blown off then plant grass and trees so that in 100 years you won't be able to tell that the mountain was wined. If we take from the environment then we should give back the same amount plus some.

Every day people could be more ecofriendly by doing simple things such as turning off the water while your brushing your teeth to recycling your soda cans. We could continue to develop and research how to make more things recyclable so that we minimize the amount of waste we produce. It may not be a big difference if one person becomes eco-friendly but if millions of people do then it can make a big impact.

I chose the topic of pollution and being eco-friendly because I believe it's a huge problem in the world that desperatly needs to be improved.

In this response, the student introduces a sharp, distinct topic (*"A change I would like to see in the world is for humans to be more eco-friendly"*) that is well developed. Substantive, specific, and relevant content demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose, task, and audience. An effective organizational structure aids development of the topic. Elaboration is thorough with clearly presented information that is supported with facts, examples, and concrete details (*"switch gasoline cars over to electric," "alternative green ways to mine," "recycling your soda cans"*). The writer establishes and maintains a formal style with effective control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, and sentence variety. Transitions effectively connect ideas. The errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Online Response Score: 3 points

22. Think about a change you would like to see in the future. It could be a change in your school, your community, or any other place. Consider what this change might be and why you would like it to happen.

Write an essay for your teacher that describes a change you would like to see in the future and explains why. Be sure to use details and examples to support your ideas.

I would like to see a change in my community. What you can do is build a waterpark or amusement park. I think a lot of people would go, make more money for the community and it would be a fun place to go in the summer time.

I think a lot of people would go because the nearest waterpark is about an hour to two away. Also the nearest amusement park is the same. If you build a water park you can have it opened in the summer and spring. If you have an amusement park you can have it opened in the summer, spring, and even some of fall. You would need food venders like hot dogs, hamburgers, and candy. Also it would make money for the community.

It would make a lot of money for the community. If it was a good park people from all around the world would want to visit this park. You can go with friends, and family. Postings signs, websites, and TV ads would be a good way to get your water or amusement park out there. Now won't this be a fun place to go.

It would be a fun place to go because you can spend time with family and friends. You can go on rides of all ages. Also if you have a little kid, there can be rides for them. Also, this would be a good idea because who doesn't like spending time with family and friends.

If someone ever put this change in the community I would love to go. Also just think how many people would go, how much money the community would make, and how it would be so much fun to go.

A clear topic (“I would like to see a change in my community . . . a waterpark or amusement park”) is introduced with general awareness of the task, purpose, and audience. Content is relevant and demonstrates an understanding of the purpose (“It would make a lot of money for the community. If it was a good park people from all around the world would want to visit”). The organizational structure is adequate overall. The response includes sufficient elaboration with clearly presented information that is supported with facts, examples, and concrete details (“The nearest waterpark is about an hour to two away”). Adequate control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety is demonstrated. There are some errors present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation, but they seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE**Handwritten Response Score: 2 points**

22. Think about a change you would like to see in the future. It could be a change in your school, your community, or any other place. Consider what this change might be and why you would like it to happen.

Write an essay for your teacher that describes a change you would like to see in the future and explains why. Be sure to use details and examples to support your ideas.

I would like to see the electronics rule change so students can text in emergencies and so they can do research. First, the electronics rule should change because if a student needed to text their parents in case of an emergency. If a student would need to stay after school for math help they could just text their parents to let them know. Also the rule should be changed so a student could do research. If a student had to do a research project, they could do it in their classroom instead of going to the library or computer lab. In conclusion, students should be able to use electronics at school to text and to do research.

This response introduces an incomplete topic (“*I would like to see the electronics rule change*”) and demonstrates a limited awareness of task, purpose, and audience. The content is inadequate and vague (“*Also the rule should be changed so a student could do research*”), demonstrating a weak understanding of the purpose. There is an organizational plan present, but the elaboration is underdeveloped (“*If a student had to do a research project, they could do it in their classroom instead of going to the library or computer lab*”). The conclusion is weak and only restates the introduction. Transitions are limited. The response demonstrates limited control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety. The response also demonstrates an inconsistent control of sentence formation. There are errors present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Handwritten Response Score: 1 point

22. Think about a change you would like to see in the future. It could be a change in your school, your community, or any other place. Consider what this change might be and why you would like it to happen.

Write an essay for your teacher that describes a change you would like to see in the future and explains why. Be sure to use details and examples to support your ideas.

I would like to see o change in our school. I would like for the school to be able to get more technology. I would also like to see a change in the lunches. It would be nice to have more options at lunch. Another good change would be for more rewards. These changes would be fore the better.

This response introduces a minimal topic (*"I would like to see a change in our school"*) that is developed and concluded with little awareness of task, purpose, and audience. The response demonstrates minimal order, organizational strategies, and structure. Content is minimal and demonstrates little understanding of the purpose (*"I would like," "I would also like"*). There are minimal transitions to connect ideas (*"Another"*). The style is ineffective with little control of language. There is minimal control of sentence formation (*"I would like to see . . . I would like for . . . I would also like . . ."*). Few errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation are present.

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	A-V.4.1.1	A	2	74% (correct answer)	7%	9%	9%	N/A
2	A-C.2.1.1	D	3	3%	14%	4%	80% (correct answer)	N/A
3	A-K.1.1.1	C	2	8%	7%	77% (correct answer)	8%	N/A
4	A-V.4.1.2	C	2	27%	6%	64% (correct answer)	3%	N/A
5	A-C.2.1.3	A	2	85% (correct answer)	4%	6%	5%	N/A
6	A-C.3.1.1	B	2	12%	79% (correct answer)	3%	5%	N/A
7	A-K.1.1.3	B	2	35%	42% (correct answer)	16%	6%	N/A
8	A-C.2.1.3	Part One: D Part Two: B	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.36
9	A-K.1.1.2	Part One: C Part Two: A, B	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	2.15
10	B-V.4.1.2	A	2	57% (correct answer)	20%	8%	15%	N/A
11	B-C.2.1.2	B	2	11%	67% (correct answer)	12%	11%	N/A
12	B-V.4.1.1	C	2	15%	4%	55% (correct answer)	25%	N/A
13	B-K.1.1.3	D	2	29%	11%	24%	36% (correct answer)	N/A
14	B-K.1.1.2	D	2	14%	15%	16%	54% (correct answer)	N/A

PSSA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE 8

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D	Mean Score
15	B-C.2.1.3	A	3	33% (correct answer)	29%	14%	24%	N/A
16	B-K.1.1.1	Part One: B Part Two: C	2	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.53
18	D.1.1.3	A	3	48% (correct answer)	19%	21%	12%	N/A
19	D.1.2.1	B	2	6%	57% (correct answer)	11%	26%	N/A
20	D.1.2.5	A	2	63% (correct answer)	20%	10%	7%	N/A
21	D.2.1.6	C	2	9%	8%	71% (correct answer)	12%	N/A

TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS AND WRITING PROMPT

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
17	E.1.1	4	3	2.02
22	C.1.2	4	3	2.7

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

“The Necklace” from CLASSIC SHORT STORIES: Original play adaptations by Mack Lewis. Copyright © 2011 by Mack Lewis. Reprinted by permission of Scholastic Inc.

“Mark Twain Reveals Stage Fright” from LEND ME YOUR EARS: GREAT SPEECHES IN HISTORY, REVISED EDITION by William Safire, editor. Copyright © 1992, 1997 by The Cobbett Corporation. Used by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

“Building a Roman City” excerpt from *CITY: A Story of Roman Planning and Construction* by David Macaulay. Copyright © 1974, renewed 2002 by David Macaulay. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

PSSA Grade 8 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler

Copyright 2016 by the Pennsylvania Department of Education. The materials contained in this publication may be duplicated by Pennsylvania educators for local classroom use. This permission does not extend to the duplication of materials for commercial use.