



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

**The Pennsylvania System of School  
Assessment  
English Language Arts  
Item and Scoring Sampler  
2016–2017  
Grade 3**

**INFORMATION ABOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

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## INTRODUCTION

### General Introduction

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

### Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)

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

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

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

### What Is Included

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

### Purpose and Uses

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

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

## Item Format and Scoring Guidelines

The PCS-based PSSA has multiple types of test questions. For grade 3, the types of test questions are Multiple-Choice questions (MC), Evidence-Based Selected-Response questions (EBSR), Short-Answer questions (SA), 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.

**Short Answer:** Each of this type of test question includes a short response space in which the student composes an answer based on the passage the student has read. An SA test question may include multiple tasks, and the student may be asked to provide a brief explanation. Each SA test question is scored using an item-specific scoring guideline based on a 0–3-point scoring guideline. In this sampler, every item-specific scoring guideline is combined with examples of student responses representing each score point to form a practical, item-specific scoring guide. This sampler also includes the General Description of Scoring Guidelines for Short-Answer Questions used to develop the item-specific guidelines. The general description of scoring guidelines should be used if any additional item-specific scoring guidelines are created for use within local instructional programs.

**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 opinion 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

SA: Estimated Response Time (minutes) 5

WP Estimated Response Time (minutes) 30

### **English Language Arts Grade 3**

This English Language Arts Sampler is composed of 2 passages, 10 passage-based multiple-choice questions, 2 evidence-based selected-response questions, a short-answer question, 4 standalone multiple-choice questions, and a mode-specific writing prompt.

There are two passages in this booklet. The first passage is followed by a set of passage-based multiple-choice questions and an evidence-based selected-response question. The second passage is followed by a set of passage-based multiple-choice questions, an evidence-based selected-response question, and a short-answer 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 short-answer question and prompt are displayed with an item-specific scoring guideline or mode-specific scoring guideline and examples of student responses with 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 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 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 booklet.

**PASSAGE 1**

Read the following passage about two friends. Then answer questions 1–7.

Joe and the Carpenter

an American Tale  
by Pleasant DeSpain

Joe lived way out in the countryside all by himself. His best friend was also his closest neighbor. It seemed that they had grown old together. Their wives had passed on. Now that their children were raised and living lives of their own, all they had left were their farms...and each other.

For the first time in their long friendship they'd had a serious disagreement. It was a silly argument over a stray calf that neither one of them really needed. The calf was found on the neighbor's land, so he claimed it as his own.

But Joe said, "No, no. Now that calf has the same markings as one of my cows. It belongs to me!"

They were stubborn men. Neither would give in. They stopped talking, stomped off to their respective doors, and slammed them shut! And that was that. Two weeks went by without a word between them. Joe was feeling poorly.

Come Saturday morning, Joe heard a knock on his front door. He wasn't expecting anyone and was surprised to find a young man who called himself a "traveling carpenter" standing on his porch. There was a wooden toolbox at his feet and kindness in his eyes.

"I'm looking for work," he explained. "I'm good with my hands, and if you have a project or two, I'd like to help out."

Joe replied, "Yes, as a matter of fact, I do have a job for you. See that house way over yonder? That's my neighbor's house. You see that creek running along our property line? That creek wasn't there last week. He did that to spite me! He hitched a plow to his tractor and dug that creek-bed from the upper pond right down the property line. Then he flooded it! Now we got this creek to separate us.

"I'm so darn mad at him! I've got lumber in my barn, boards, posts, everything you'll need to build me a fence—a tall fence—all along that creek. Then I won't have to see his place no more. That'll teach him!"

The carpenter smiled. "I'll do a good job for you, Joe."

Joe had to go to town for supplies. He hitched up his wagon and left for the day.

The young carpenter carried the lumber from the barn to creek side and started to work. He worked hard and he worked fast. He measured, sawed, and nailed those boards into place all day long without stopping for lunch. As the sun began to set, he put his tools away. The project was complete.

Joe pulled up, his wagon filled with supplies. When he saw what the carpenter had built, he couldn't speak. It wasn't a fence. Instead, a beautiful footbridge with handrails and all reached from one side

of the creek to the other.

Just then, Joe's neighbor crossed the bridge, his hand stuck out. "I'm right sorry about our misunderstanding, Joe. The calf is yours. I want us to go on being good friends."

"You keep the calf," said Joe. "I want us to be friends, too. The bridge was this young fellow's idea. I'm glad he did it."

The carpenter hoisted his toolbox onto his shoulder and started to leave.

"Wait," said Joe. "You're a good man. My neighbor and I know everyone in the valley. We can keep you busy for weeks."

The carpenter smiled and said, "I'd like to stay, Joe, but I can't. I have more bridges to build."

Which detail from the passage explains why Joe wants to build a fence?



### Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Which detail from the passage explains why Joe wants to build a fence?
  - A. Joe hires a traveling carpenter.
  - B. Joe goes into town to get some supplies.
  - C. Joe’s neighbor builds a bridge over the creek.
  - D. Joe’s neighbor makes a creek to separate their land.

Item Information	
Alignment:	A-K.1.1.1
Answer Key:	D
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	11%
p-value B	8%
p-value C	13%
p-value D	68% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	Students are asked to identify a detail from the passage that supports an action from the passage. Option D is the correct answer because Joe wants to build a fence to spite his neighbor for digging a creek to separate their land. Option A is incorrect because it explains that Joe hired a carpenter to build the fence. Option B is incorrect because it explains what Joe did after speaking with the carpenter. Option C is incorrect because it does not explain why Joe wanted to build the fence.

2. Which question can be answered after reading the first paragraph?
- A. Why does Joe hire the carpenter?
  - B. Why does Joe want to build a fence?
  - C. Why are Joe and his neighbor alone?
  - D. Why do Joe and his neighbor both want the calf?

Item Information	
Alignment:	A-K.1.1.1
Answer Key:	D
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-values A	9%
p-values B	14%
p-values C	46% (correct answer)
p-values D	31%
Option Annotations	Students are asked to determine which question can be answered from reading the first paragraph of the passage. Option C is the correct answer because the first paragraph provides several details that explain why Joe and his neighbor are alone (“Their wives had passed on,” “their children were raised and living lives of their own,” and “all they had left were their farms . . . and each other”). Options A, B, and D are incorrect because the questions are explained by details that occur later in the text, not in the first paragraph.

3. The meaning of the prefix “dis-” helps the reader know that the word “disagreement” means
- A. full of agreement.
  - B. not in agreement.
  - C. two in agreement.
  - D. between an agreement.

Item Information	
Alignment:	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key:	B
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	7%
p-value B	80% (correct answer)
p-value C	4%
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to use the prefix “dis-” to determine the meaning of “disagreement.” Option B is the correct answer because “dis-” means “not.” Options A, C, and D do not present the correct meaning of the given prefix.

4. Read the sentence from the passage.

The carpenter hoisted his toolbox onto his shoulder and started to leave.

What does the word hoisted mean as it is used in the passage?

- A. lifted
- B. studied
- C. closed
- D. locked

Item Information	
Alignment:	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key:	A
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	83% (correct answer)
p-value B	4%
p-value C	7%
p-value D	5%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the meaning of “hoisted” by using context clues. Option A is the correct answer because “lifted” is the correct meaning of “hoisted.” Options B, C, and D do not present the correct meaning of “hoisted.”

5. Which word from the passage suggests that a person is upset?
- A. claimed
  - B. stomped
  - C. hitched
  - D. worked

Item Information	
Alignment:	A-V.4.1.2
Answer Key:	B
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	10%
p-value B	74% (correct answer)
p-value C	11%
p-value D	5%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the word that suggests a person is upset. The word “stomped” is an action that would indicate a person is upset, making option B the correct answer. Options A, C, and D are not words associated with being upset.

6. From whose point of view is the passage told?
- A. Joe, who shares information about his family
  - B. a narrator who shares thoughts about family members
  - C. Joe’s neighbor, who describes his friendship with Joe
  - D. a narrator who tells about the actions of the characters

Item Information	
Alignment:	A-C.2.1.1
Answer Key:	D
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	9%
p-value B	8%
p-value C	29%
p-value D	54% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the point of view in the passage. Option D is the correct answer because the passage is told from a third person point of view by a narrator who tells about the actions of the characters. Options A and C are not correct because the story is not told from the perspective of one character. Option B is not correct because the narrator does not share the characters’ thoughts about family members.

**Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question**

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

**Part One**

What is a central message of the passage?

- A. People should get plenty of exercise.
- B. People should work hard at their jobs.
- C. It is important for people to overcome their differences.
- D. It is important for people to take care of family members.

**Part Two**

Which details from the passage support the answer in Part One? Choose two answers.

- A. “ ‘He hitched a plow to his tractor and dug that creek-bed from the upper pond right down the property line.’ ”
- B. “ ‘I’ve got lumber in my barn, boards, posts, everything you’ll need to build me a fence—a tall fence—all along that creek.’ ”
- C. “ ‘I’m right sorry about our misunderstanding, Joe.’ ”
- D. “ ‘I’d like to stay, Joe, but I can’t. I have more bridges to build.’ ”

Item Information	
Alignment:	A-K.1.1.2
Answer Key Part One:	C
Answer Key Part Two:	D
Depth of Knowledge:	3
Mean Score	1.61
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine the central message of the passage and select details from the passage to support this message.</p> <p><b>Part One:</b> Option C is the correct answer because the characters in the passage learn to overcome their differences. Options A, B, and D are not supported by information in the passage.</p> <p><b>Part Two:</b> Options C and D are the correct answers because “sorry about our misunderstanding” and “more bridges to build” indicate that the neighbor is sorry for what has happened and the carpenter needs to leave to help others overcome their differences. Options A and B do not relate to overcoming differences.</p>

**PASSAGE 2**

Read the following passage about Beverly Sills. Then answer questions 8–13.

Beverly Sills America's Own Opera Star

by Mona Kerby

Ten-year-old Beverly sat beside Mama in the opera theater. She was excited. Slowly the lights dimmed. She watched as the conductor walked toward the orchestra and bowed to the audience. He turned and lifted his hands. Music filled the air. The curtain rose. Actors and actresses in lovely costumes began to sing. The story was told by the music.

When it was over, Beverly jumped to her feet and shouted "Bravo!" for the men opera stars. For the women opera stars, she shouted "Brava!"

By the age of ten, Beverly knew what she wanted to be—an opera star, "not an opera singer, but a star."

Beverly knew that singing an opera was very hard work. First of all, the opera singer must have a wonderful voice and must have years of musical training. The singer must be able to sing in English, Italian, French, and German because operas are written in many languages. Also, an opera singer must be able to act and to dance.

With Miss Liebling as a teacher, Beverly began to train. She took piano lessons. She took French and Italian lessons. She read operas that were written in those languages, and then rewrote them in English.

On Saturdays, Beverly had her singing lessons. From Brooklyn, it was a four-hour trip to Miss Liebling's studio. To get there, Mama and Beverly had to take a bus, a trolley, and two subways. When Beverly grew older, she made the trip alone.

On Sundays, she performed on the radio. Beverly won a contest and became a regular member of "Major Bowes Capitol Family Hour." This program was heard by millions of people all over the United States.

Once when Major Bowes stated that Beverly was holding a small glass elephant for luck, she received hundreds more in the mail. Another time, Beverly wished that she might have a sled since it was snowing. Twenty-two listeners sent sleds. (She was allowed to keep one; the rest were sent to orphans.) "From then on," Beverly said later, "anytime I wanted anything I just mentioned it over the air."

Beverly performed in other shows. For 36 weeks, she acted and sang in a soap opera called "Our Gal Sunday." She sang a commercial for soap and made it famous: "Rinso White, Rinso White, happy little wash day song." She was even on a TV program called "Stars of the Future."

Miss Liebling invited Beverly and Mrs. Silverman to dinner parties with famous singers. After dinner, Beverly would sing for the guests. And because Miss Liebling gave them tickets, Mama and Beverly often went to the opera.



Beverly had many lessons and spent much of her time with adults. Years later, her brother Stanley said that Beverly “never had a childhood.” Although Beverly was busy, sometimes she did things just for fun. She went to the movies. She loved to read. And she went with her brothers to Ebbets Field to watch the Brooklyn Dodgers play baseball. But even then her dream was not forgotten. Her brothers would tell her, “Stop shouting, Bubbly. You’ll hurt your voice.”

One of Beverly’s favorite things to do was to talk. Papa was always telling her, “Lower your voice, cutie, lower your voice. It bothers me.”

Beverly’s high voice was perfect for singing soprano. But because Beverly loved to talk so much, she learned to speak in a low voice. When she grew up, people were always surprised that her speaking voice was low and her singing voice was high.

Papa Silverman did not want his little girl to be in show business. He wanted his children to be educated. When Beverly was 12, she stopped performing. Papa wanted her to, and she agreed. Beverly continued her singing lessons, but now more than anything, she just wanted to be a teenager. She was an editor of her school newspaper. She chatted for hours with her friends.

In 1942, Beverly graduated from P.S. 91. She made her graduation dress. It was the first and last dress she ever made. She was voted Prettiest Girl, Most Likely to Succeed, Fashion Plate, Most Talented, and Most Personality.

While Beverly was in school, the Silvermans lived in Brooklyn. Their house had three rooms on the first floor and three bedrooms upstairs. Beverly helped with the “victory garden” in the backyard.

During World War II, Americans and their allies fought Germany and Japan. U.S. children helped with gardens as a way of saving food for the soldiers. Both of Beverly’s brothers were soldiers. By working in the garden, Beverly felt she was helping them win the war.

After Beverly graduated from the eighth grade, she entered Erasmus High School. But by the time she was fifteen, she was tired of being just a teenager. She was ready to perform again.

Mama and Papa and Beverly spent hours talking about Beverly’s future. In almost every discussion, Papa had the last word.

But Beverly’s career was an entirely different matter. She had to make Papa understand. During supper one evening, Beverly pleaded with her mother to explain it all to her father. “Listen, Morris,” Mama said, “the child wants to be an opera star.” Papa never looked up from his soup. “The child will go to college and be smart.”

“No, Morris, the two boys will go to college... this one will be an opera singer.”

### Multiple-Choice Questions

8. The meaning of the suffix “-or” helps the reader know that the word “conductor” means
- A. one who conducts.
  - B. able to conduct.
  - C. conducts first.
  - D. conducts again.

Item Information	
Alignment:	B-V.4.1.1
Answer Key:	A
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	71% (correct answer)
p-value B	14%
p-value C	7%
p-value D	7%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the meaning of a given word with a given suffix. Option A is the correct answer because “conductor” means “one who conducts.” Options B, C, and D give meanings for the suffix “-or” that are not correct.

9. Read the sentence from the passage.

Music filled the air.

What is the meaning of this sentence?

- A. The musicians blew very hard to play their instruments.
- B. The music was soft and hard to hear.
- C. The musicians ran out of breath while playing their instruments.
- D. The music could be heard in the theater.

Item Information	
Alignment:	B-V.4.1.2
Answer Key:	D
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	14%
p-value B	10%
p-value C	5%
p-value D	70% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the meaning of the sentence “Music filled the air.” Option D is the correct answer because it makes sense in the context of attending an opera in a theater. Options A, B, and C do not make sense in the context of the passage.

10. Which sentence from the passage gives an example of one way Beverly’s brothers supported her in pursuing her goal?
- A. “Years later, her brother Stanley said that Beverly ‘never had a childhood.’ ”
  - B. “Although Beverly was busy, sometimes she did things just for fun.”
  - C. “By working in the garden, Beverly felt she was helping them win the voice.’ ”
  - D. “Her brothers would tell her, ‘Stop shouting, Bubbly. You’ll hurt your voice.’ ”

Item Information	
Alignment:	B-K.1.1.1
Answer Key:	D
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	20% (correct answer)
p-value B	12%
p-value C	16%
p-value D	16%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify a sentence from the passage that gives an example of how Beverly’s brothers supported her. Option D is the correct answer because it shows how Beverly’s brothers supported her goal of singing. Options A, B, and C are not examples of how Beverly’s brothers supported her goal.

11. Which point of view is used in the passage?

- A. first person, through Mrs. Silverman, who shares her experience of meeting Beverly Sills
- B. first person, through Miss Liebling, who was the teacher of Beverly Sills
- C. third person, through a narrator, who describes some events in the life of Beverly Sills
- D. third person, through a narrator, who tries to convince others to sing like Beverly Sills

Item Information	
Alignment:	B-C.2.1.1
Answer Key:	C
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	14%
p-value B	18%
p-value C	57% (correct answer)
p-value D	11%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the point of view used in the passage. Option C is the correct answer because a third-person narrator describes events in the life of Beverly Sills. Options A and B are incorrect because the passage does not include ideas from Mrs. Silverman or Miss Leibling. Option D is incorrect because the narrator is not trying to convince the reader to sing like Beverly Sills.

**Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question**

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

**Part One**

Based on information in the passage, which word best describes Beverly’s mother?

- A. helpful
- B. shy
- C. carefree
- D. polite

**Part Two**

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

- A. Her mom talked to Papa about Beverly’s future.
- B. Her mom sat next to Beverly in the theater.
- C. Her mom took Beverly to dinner.
- D. Her mom allowed Beverly to work in the garden.

Item Information	
Alignment:	B-K.1.1.1
Answer Key Part One:	A
Answer Key Part Two:	A
Depth of Knowledge:	3
Mean Score	1.22
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine a word that describes Beverly’s mother and identify a key detail from the passage that supports this word.</p> <p><b>Part One:</b> Option A is the correct answer because details support that Beverly’s mother was helpful. Options B, C, and D are not supported by information in the passage.</p> <p><b>Part Two:</b> Option A is the correct answer because talking to Papa about Beverly’s future as an opera singer supports the idea that Beverly’s mother was helpful. Options B, C, and D do not support the idea that Beverly’s mother was helpful.</p>

**Short-Answer Question**

13. How did the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child prepare her to become an opera star? Use information from the passage to support your answer.

**After you have finished your work, close this booklet so your teacher will know you are finished.**

**Stop**

## Short-Answer Scoring Guideline

### #13 Item Information

Alignment B-K.1.1.3

Depth of Knowledge 3

Mean Score 1.44

### Assessment Anchor this item will be reported under:

E03.B-K.1—Key Ideas and Details

### Specific Eligible Content addressed by this item:

E03.B-K.1.1.3—Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.



Rubric Score Points and Description

Score	Description
3	The response is a clear, complete, and accurate answer of how the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child helped her to become an opera star. The response includes relevant and specific information from the passage to support the explanation.
2	The response is a partial answer of how the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child helped her to become an opera star. The response includes limited information from the passage to support the explanation and may include inaccuracies.
1	The response is a minimal answer of how the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child helped her to become an opera star. The response includes little or no information from the passage to support the explanation and may include inaccuracies.  OR  The response relates minimally to the task.
0	The response is totally incorrect or irrelevant or contains insufficient information to demonstrate comprehension.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 3 points

13. How did the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child prepare her to become an opera star? Use information from the passage to support your answer.

Beverly Sills wanted to be an opera star after she saw an opera. She worked very hard in order to become one. Here's how she did it. First, Beverly started taking music lesson every Saturday. Next, since some opera's were in different languages she took German, French, and Italian lessons. Then, after a lot of hard work she was finally in opera's and tv specials. Beverly Sills worked very hard to become an opera star. I think a lot of people should be like her.

This response is a clear, concise, and accurate answer to how the experiences of Beverly Sills had as a child prepared her to become an opera star (*"Sills wanted to be an opera star after she saw an opera. She worked very hard in order to become one"*). The response includes relevant and specific information from the passage (*"since some opera's were in different languages she took German, French, and Italian lessons"* and *"after a lot of hard work she was finally in opera's and tv specials"*).

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 2 points

13. How did the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child prepare her to become an opera star? Use information from the passage to support your answer.

As a chld, Beverly Sills went to an opera theater and then decided she wanted to sing opera. She learned many languages including Italian, French, and German. Beverly also had to learn how to play the piano and act. That is how Beverly Sills had to prepare to be an opera star.

**After you have finished your work, close this booklet so your teacher will know you are finished.**

**Stop**

This response is a partial answer to how the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child prepared her to become an opera star. The response includes limited information from the passage (*“went to an opera theater and then decided she wanted to sing opera,” “She learned many languages including Italian, French, and German,”* and *“how to play the piano and act”*). Overall, the response lacks completeness because it is a list of things Beverly Sills did without explaining how these experiences may have helped her.

**STUDENT RESPONSE****Online Response Score: 1 point**

13. How did the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child prepare her to become an opera star? Use information from the passage to support your answer.

Beverly's childhood started out with opera because she went to opera concerts.

The response is a minimal answer to how the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child prepared her to become an opera star. The response includes little relevant information from the passage.

**STUDENT RESPONSE****Handwritten Response Score: 0 points**

13. How did the experiences Beverly Sills had as a child prepare her to become an opera star? Use information from the passage to support your answer.

She told her child some stories about back in the day that people can do this and do that. So they did a lot of things.

**After you have finished your work, close this booklet so your teacher will know you are finished.**

**Stop**

The response is considered insufficient because the information provided is irrelevant to the task.

**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 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 booklet.

## STANDALONE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

14. Which sentence has a mistake?’

- A. We saw two airplanes in the sky.
- B. The sheeps walked across the field.
- C. Becky will eat lunch with her cousins.
- D. Please turn off the lights before you leave.

Item Information	
Alignment:	D.1.1.2
Answer Key:	B
Depth of Knowledge:	3
p-value A	12%
p-value B	54% (correct answer)
p-value C	20%
p-value D	14%
Option Annotations	Students are asked to identify the sentence that contains a mistake. Students must have an understanding of regular and irregular plural nouns. Option B is the correct answer because the plural form of the noun sheep is sheep, not “sheeps.” Options A, C, and D are incorrect since they contain no mistakes in the plural form of the nouns “airplanes,” “cousins,” and “lights.”

15. Read the paragraph.

(1) Our teacher said, “Today I am going to tell you about a rock called a garnet.” (2) Ms. Hall went on to say, “Some garnets are dark red.” (3) “She explained how garnets can be used to make pretty rings.” (4) “You can find garnets in many parts of the country,” she said.

Which sentence has a mistake in punctuation?

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

Item Information	
Alignment:	D.1.2.3
Answer Key:	C
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	17%
p-value B	19%
p-value C	41% (correct answer)
p-value D	22%
Option Annotations	Students are asked to identify the sentence that has a mistake in punctuation. Option C is the correct answer. Sentence 2 does not contain dialogue and therefore does not need quotation marks. Options A, B, and D are incorrect options; sentences 1, 2, and 4 use commas and quotation marks correctly in dialogue. Students may select these incorrect options if they do not have an understanding of how to use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.



16. Read the sentence.

A cheetah’s speed, a squid’s ink, and a bear’s roar allow these animals’ to stay safe.

Which part of the sentence has an apostrophe mistake?

- A. A cheetah’s speed,
- B. a squid’s ink,
- C. and a bear’s roar allow
- D. these animals’ to stay safe.

Item Information	
Alignment:	D.1.2.4
Answer Key:	D
Depth of Knowledge:	2
p-value A	9%
p-value B	13%
p-value C	19%
p-value D	59% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	Students must know how to form possessives using apostrophes. Option D is the correct answer because “animals” is not possessive and does not require an apostrophe. Options A, B, and C are not correct because they correctly use an apostrophe to show possession.

17. Read the paragraph.

(1) Mr. Long bought some carrots at the market. (2) The carrots cost fourty cents. (3) He used five carrots to make soup. (4) The rest of the carrots he saved to eat later.

Which change would correct the spelling mistake in the paragraph?

- A. A Change bought to boght in sentence 1.
- B. Change market to markit in sentence 1.
- C. Change fourty to forty in sentence 2.
- D. Change rest to wrest in sentence 4.

Item Information	
Alignment:	D.1.2.6
Answer Key:	C
Depth of Knowledge:	1
p-value A	8%
p-value B	9%
p-value C	57% (correct answer)
p-value D	26%
Option Annotations	Students are asked to correct the spelling mistake in the paragraph. Option C is the correct answer because “fourty” is an incorrect spelling of forty. Options A, B, and D are not correct because “bought,” “market,” and “rest” are spelled correctly.

## WRITER'S CHECKLIST AND NARRATIVE WRITING PROMPT

### PLAN before you write

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

Think about your task and your audience.

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

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

### FOCUS while you write

Stay with the same point of view.

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

Use a variety of sentence types.

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

### PROOFREAD after you write

I stayed with the same tone and point of view.

I used descriptive details in my story.

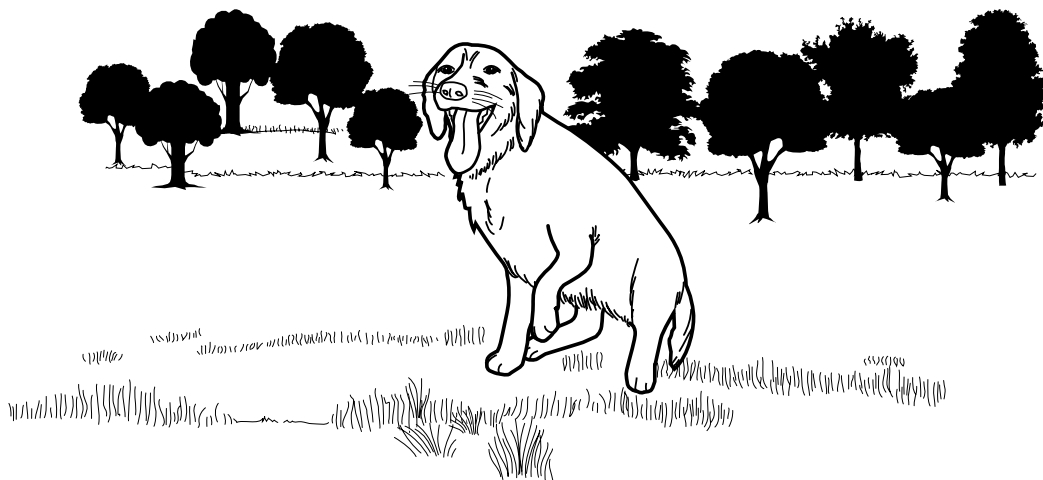
I corrected any errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

**Narrative Writing Prompt**

You will have at least 30 minutes to plan, write, and proofread your response to this prompt:

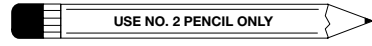
18. Look at the picture of the dog. Imagine an adventure this dog could have in a park. Think about what could happen on the dog's adventure.

Write a story for your teacher about the dog's adventure in a park. Make sure your story has a beginning, middle, and end.



18. Narrative Writing Prompt Final Copy

18. Narrative Writing Prompt  
Final Copy



Lined writing area consisting of 20 horizontal lines.

If you need additional space, please continue on the next page.





## Narrative Scoring Guideline

### Number 18 Item Information

Alignment	C.1.3
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	2.17

### Assessment Anchor:

E03.C.1–Text Types and Purposes

### Specific Eligible Content addressed by this item:

E03.C.1.3–Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Score	Description
4	<p>Distinctly established situation/theme that orients the reader and introduces the narrator and/or characters</p> <p>Effective narrative pattern that sequences events and provides a conclusion</p> <p>Thorough elaboration that effectively supports the storyline</p> <p>Effective use of narrative techniques to develop experiences and events</p> <p>Effective use of transitions</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>
3	<p>Clearly established situation/theme that orients the reader and introduces the narrator and/or characters</p> <p>Narrative pattern that generally sequences events and provides a conclusion; interruptions to the sequence may occur</p> <p>Sufficient elaboration that supports the storyline</p> <p>Adequate use of narrative techniques to develop experiences and events</p> <p>Clear use of transitions</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>

Score	Description
2	<p>Vague situation/theme that inconsistently orients the reader and introduces the narrator and/or characters</p> <p>Weak narrative pattern that inconsistently sequences events and may or may not provide a conclusion</p> <p>Weak elaboration that somewhat supports the storyline</p> <p>Limited use of narrative techniques to somewhat develop experiences and events</p> <p>Inconsistent/limited use of transitions</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>
1	<p>Minimal evidence of a situation/theme</p> <p>Minimal sequencing of events that may or may not establish a narrative pattern</p> <p>Minimal elaboration that may or may not support the storyline</p> <p>Minimal use of narrative techniques</p> <p>Minimal use of transitions</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

18. Look at the picture of the dog. Imagine an adventure this dog could have in a park. Think about what could happen on the dog's adventure.

Write a story for your teacher about the dog's adventure in a park. Make sure your story has a beginning, middle, and end.



A dog was in the park enjoying the sunlight when he saw a thief steal a woman's purse. He chased after the thief to get the woman's purse back. The thief saw the dog chasing him so he kept on running until they were very far from the park. The dog tripped on a stick but he kept running. He ran until he caught up with the thief. The dog bit the thief on the leg. The thief yelled in pain and let go of the purse he had in his hand. The dog ran back to the park. He gave the woman her purse and ran to the police's station. The dog barked and barked until the police officer agreed to follow the dog. The dog led them to where the thief was. When the police officer saw the thief they quickly put the thief in jail. The woman noticed the dog's leg was red. She told the officers, "Can they take the dog to the vet so they can take care of his leg?" The police officers agreed, but the dog wouldn't budge. He whined. The woman asked, "Do you want to stay with me?" The dog nodded. "Okay then," said the woman. "Then I will take you to the nurse," said the woman happily. The dog barked. He was happy too.

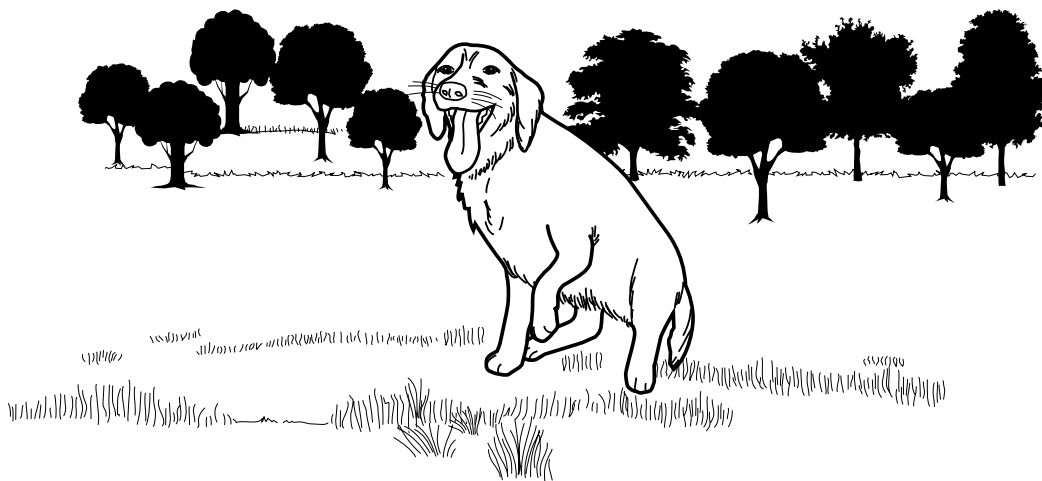
The response provides a distinctly established situation that orients the reader and introduces the characters ("A dog was in the park enjoying the sunlight when he saw a thief steal a woman's purse"). An effective narrative pattern is used. Events are sequenced from the dog observing the thief steal a woman's purse to obtaining the purse and returning it to the woman and leading the police to apprehend the thief. Dialogue between the woman and dog is used effectively to creatively conclude the response. Description and details are used to effectively elaborate the events and support the storyline ("The dog bit the thief on the leg. The thief yelled in pain and let go of the purse he had in his hand"). Some minor errors ("theif") are present but do not interfere with meaning.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 3 points

18. Look at the picture of the dog. Imagine an adventure this dog could have in a park. Think about what could happen on the dog's adventure.

Write a story for your teacher about the dog's adventure in a park. Make sure your story has a beginning, middle, and end.



One day, a little dog was running through the park. While the dog was playing fetch, he saw a car stopped and the dog ran back to the park. A little girl came up and petted the dog. Then, the little girl left. A few minutes later it started to rain. The dog was all alone. He tried to find shelter, but there was no place that was dry. The little dog was soaking wet, but then the rain stopped and a little girl came up and took him home. The girl dried him off and said, "I'm going to name you Buddy." He was happy that he lived at a real house with someone who would take good care of him.

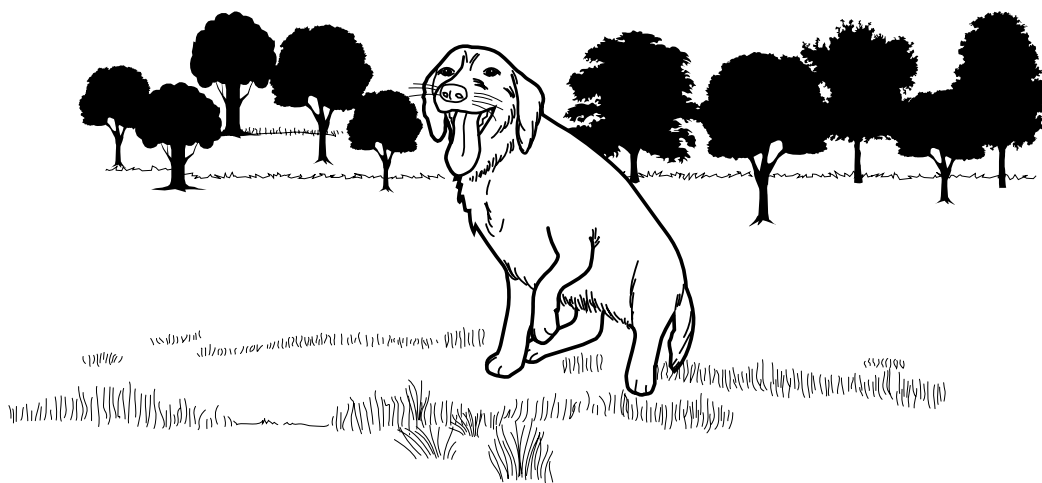
The response provides a clearly established situation that orients the reader and introduces the characters Buddy and the little girl. A narrative pattern generally sequences events from the dog chasing a car to the little girl providing shelter. There is an adequate use of narrative techniques (description and detail) to develop experiences and events (*"the little dog was soaking wet"*). Dialogue is used to adequately conclude the response (*"I'm going to name you Buddy"*). There is adequate control of sentence formation. Errors in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation do not interfere with meaning.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Online Response Score: 2 points

18. Look at the picture of the dog. Imagine an adventure this dog could have in a park. Think about what could happen on the dog's adventure.

Write a story for your teacher about the dog's adventure in a park. Make sure your story has a beginning, middle, and end.



One day, there was a lost dog. Then he found his way to the park. He stayed there for weeks, and weeks, and weeks until he got old. He got so old his tongue grew longer, his ears got flappier, and he even had a deeper bark. A couple weeks later his family found him! How? They always used to take him over there when he wanted to have fun. And like there normal family they lived happily ever after.

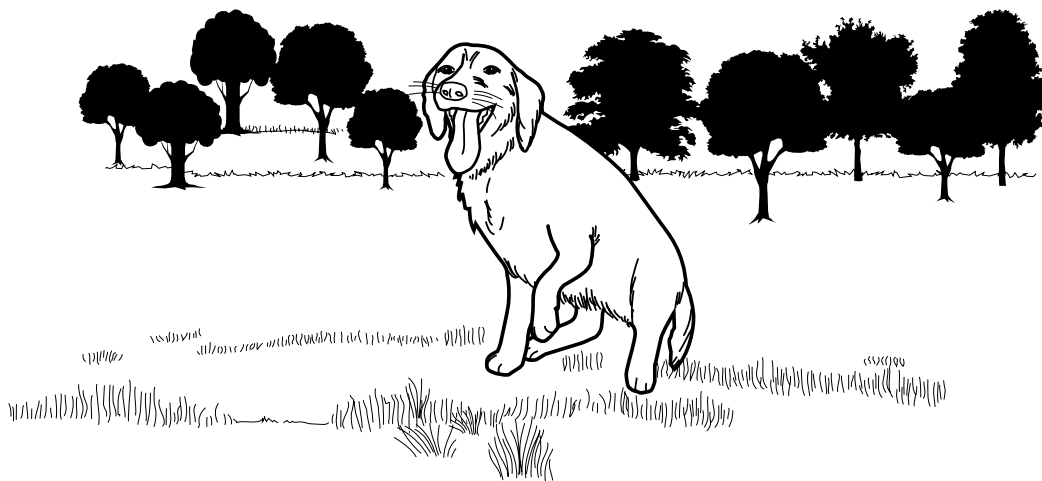
The response provides a situation (“*One day, there was a lost dog. Then he found his way to the park*”) that weakly orients the reader and introduces the character, the lost dog. There is a weak narrative pattern that sequences unelaborated events. The response provides a limited conclusion when the lost dog’s family finds him (“*And like there normal family they lived happily ever after*”). Few details are present that help explain, support, or develop the narrative (“*. . . his ears get flappier, and he even had a deeper bark*”). There is control of sentence formation. Some errors are present in usage.

## STUDENT RESPONSE

## Handwritten Response Score: 1 point

18. Look at the picture of the dog. Imagine an adventure this dog could have in a park. Think about what could happen on the dog's adventure.

Write a story for your teacher about the dog's adventure in a park. Make sure your story has a beginning, middle, and end.



One day a dog went to a park and found a friend and got lost and then had to figure out how to get and same person found them and took them back to the park.

The student has given a response to the task that contains insufficient information to demonstrate comprehension. The response provides minimal evidence of a situation and/or theme. There is minimal sequencing of events to establish a narrative pattern (“a dog went to the park,” “found a friend,” and “got lost . . . and some person . . . took them back to the park”). There is minimal use of narrative techniques and minimal use of transitions (repetitive use of the word “and”). There is minimal control of sentence formation and the run-on sentences contribute to the lack of punctuation.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—SAMPLE ITEM SUMMARY DATA

MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-values A	p-values B	p-values C	p-values D	Mean Score
1	A-K.1.1.1	D	2	11%	8%	13%	68% (correct answer)	
2	A-K.1.1.1	C	2	9%	14%	46% (correct answer)	31%	
3	A-V.4.1.1	B	2	7%	80% (correct answer)	4%	9%	
4	A-V.4.1.1	A	2	83% (correct answer)	4%	7%	5%	
5	A-V.4.1.2	B	2	10%	74% (correct answer)	11%	5%	
6	A-C.2.1.1	D	2	9%	8%	29%	54% (correct answer)	
7	A-K.1.1.2	Part One: C Part Two: C, D	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.61
8	B-V.4.1.1	A	2	71% (correct answer)	14%	7%	7%	2.44
9	B-V.4.1.2	D	2	14%	10%	5%	70% (correct answer)	
10	B-K.1.1.1	D	2	20%	12%	16%	52% (correct answer)	
11	B-C.2.1.1	C	2	14%	18%	57% (correct answer)	11%	
12	B-K.1.1.1	Part One: A Part Two: A	3	N/A	N/A	N/A	N/A	1.22
14	D.1.1.2	B	3	12%	54% (correct answer)	20%	14%	
15	D.1.2.3	C	2	17%	19%	41% (correct answer)	22%	1.42

**PSSA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE 3**

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-values A	p-values B	p-values C	p-values D	Mean Score
16	D.1.2.4	D	2	9%	13%	19%	59% (correct answer)	
17	D.1.2.6	C	1	8%	9%	57% (correct answer)	26%	

**TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS AND WRITING PROMPT**

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
13	B-K.1.1.3	3	3	1.44
18	C.1.3	4	3	2.17

## ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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Beverly Sills photo: Soprano Beverly Sills I © Corbis

# **PSSA Grade 3 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler**

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