



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler



2024–2025
Grade 4

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INFORMATION ABOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

Introduction

General Introduction

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) 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 Anchors and Eligible Content (AAEC) 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 by providing samples of test item types and scored student responses. The Item and Scoring Sampler is not designed to be used as a pretest, a curriculum, or any other benchmark for operational testing.

This Item and Scoring Sampler is available in Braille format. For more information regarding Braille, call (717) 901-2238.

Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)

This Item and Scoring Sampler contains examples of test questions designed to assess the Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content aligned to the PCS. 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 PCS-aligned Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content documents are posted on this portal:

- www.education.pa.gov [Hover over “Data and Reporting,” select “Assessment and Accountability,” and select “PSSA - PA System of School Assessment.” Then select “Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content” on the right side of the screen.]

What Is Included

This Item and Scoring Sampler contains stimulus reading passages with test questions or test “items,” Conventions of Standard English questions, and a text-dependent analysis (TDA) prompt that have been written to align to the Assessment Anchors, which are based on the PCS. The sample test questions model the types of items that may appear on an operational PSSA. Each sample test question has been through a rigorous review process to ensure alignment with the Assessment Anchors prior to being piloted in an embedded field test within a PSSA assessment and then used operationally on a PSSA assessment. Answer keys, scoring guidelines, and any related stimulus material are also included. Additionally, sample student responses are provided with each open-ended item to demonstrate the range of responses that students provided in response to these items.

Purpose and Uses

The items in this Item and Scoring Sampler may be used¹ as examples for creating assessment items at the classroom level. Classroom teachers may find it beneficial to have students respond to the TDA prompt in this Item and Scoring Sampler. Educators may then use the Item and Scoring Sampler as a guide to score the responses either independently or together with colleagues within a school or district.

Item Format and Scoring Guidelines

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 Conventions of Standard English 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 an informational text passage. In Part One, which is similar to an MC 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 the response to Part One. Part Two is different from an MC question in that there may be more than one correct answer. Each EBSR test question is worth either two or three points, and students can receive points for providing a correct response to Part One and/or for providing one or more correct responses in Part Two.

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt: The TDA prompt is a text-dependent analysis prompt 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 text passages are addressed through this item type. Students use explicit and implicit evidence to make inferences leading to a conclusion or generalization in response to the task stated in the prompt. Students construct a well-written analytical essay to communicate inferences and connections to the evidence using grade-appropriate writing skills. The TDA response is scored using a holistic scoring guideline on a 1–4-point scale.

Non-score Considerations: For TDA items, responses can be designated as non-scorable (NS). While every effort is made to score each student response, a response may receive an NS designation if it falls into one of five categories:

Blank – Blank, entirely erased, entirely crossed out, or consists entirely of whitespace

Refusal – Refusal to respond to the task

Non-scorable – In a language other than English, incoherent, illegible, insufficient, unrelated to the passage, or consisting solely or almost solely of text copied from the passage

Off Topic – Makes no reference to the item or passage but is not an intentional refusal

Copied – Consists of text copied from the item and/or test directions

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

The PSSA is delivered in a 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 estimated response time for each item type is listed below.


- **Multiple Choice:** 1.5 minutes
- **Evidenced-Based Selected-Response:** 3 to 5 minutes
- **Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt:** 45 minutes

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

English Language Arts

This English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler is composed of 2 passages, 6 passage-based MC questions, 1 EBSR question, 1 TDA prompt, and 3 Conventions of Standard English MC questions.

Each question is accompanied by a table 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 TDA prompt is displayed with the item-specific scoring guideline 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 Item and Scoring Sampler includes samples of TDA prompt responses in both formats. A sample online response is noted by the symbol .

Item and Scoring Sampler Format

This Item and Scoring Sampler includes the test directions and scoring guidelines that appeared in previous PSSA English Language Arts assessments. Each MC item is followed by a table that includes the item alignment, the answer key, the depth of knowledge (DOK) level, the percentage² of students who chose each answer option, and a brief answer-option analysis or rationale. The EBSR item is followed by a table that includes the item alignment, the answer key to Part One of the item, the answer key to Part Two of the item, the DOK level, the mean student score, and a brief answer-option analysis for each part of the item. The TDA prompt is followed by a table that includes the item alignment, the DOK level, and the mean student score. Additionally, the *Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline* is combined with sample student responses representing two examples of each score point to form a practical item-specific scoring guideline. The student responses in this Item and Scoring Sampler are actual student responses; however, the handwriting has been changed to protect the students' identities and to make the Item and Scoring Sampler accessible to as many people as possible.

Example Multiple-Choice Item Information Table

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	Assigned AAEC
Answer Key	Correct Answer
Depth of Knowledge	Assigned DOK
p-value A	Percentage of students who selected option A
p-value B	Percentage of students who selected option B
p-value C	Percentage of students who selected option C
p-value D	Percentage of students who selected option D
Option Annotations	Brief answer-option analysis or rationale

Example Evidence-Based Selected-Response Item Information Table

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	Assigned AAEC
Answer Key: Part One	Correct Answer
Answer Key: Part Two	Correct Answer
Depth of Knowledge	Assigned DOK
Mean Score	Average Score
Option Annotations	Brief answer-option analysis or rationale

² All p-value percentages listed in the item information tables have been rounded.

Example Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt Information Table

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	Assigned AAEC
Depth of Knowledge	Assigned DOK
Mean Score	Average Score

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English Language Arts Test Directions for Reading Passages and Items

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) Prompts:

The English Language Arts TDA prompt 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 the TDA prompt carefully.
- Review the Writer's Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.
- 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 science-fiction passage about lost socks. Then answer questions 1–7 in your answer booklet.

The Exodermis Protection Suit

by Michael Sismondo

Bobby wasn't very good at making up things, but he wasn't sure the truth would work on his mom either. He tried the truth anyway, offering in his most sincere voice, "I swear, Mom. I *did* finish my report, but then Oscar got hold of it and chewed it up. I think he buried it outside."

Mom turned the laundry basket upside down, emptying Bobby's clean clothes onto the couch. The expression on her face meant that she wasn't buying it.

"It sounds a little hard to believe," she said, shaking her head. "I mean, Oscar's a Chihuahua. Your notebook is bigger than he is."

"Really, Mom. I was playing with Oscar up in my room, and he grabbed the report right out of my hand."

"I'm sorry, but if Oscar chewed up your report, you'll just have to do it over."

Bobby sighed as he grabbed a shirt from the pile and began to fold it.

"I have to run to the store now, hon," Mom said. "Finish folding your clothes. The whites are in the dryer." She wagged a finger. "Then get to work on that report!"

The screen door slammed shut, and Mom was gone. Bobby grumpily folded his shirts, saving the socks for last. He was irked that he would have to write his report again. He had better things to do on a Saturday afternoon.

After matching up his socks in pairs, he found one sock left over with no match. How does that happen? He was always losing socks. He could swear he put two blue socks in the hamper. He remembered taking them off, then rolling them into little basketballs and shooting them into the hamper from the three-point line. It was Tuesday when he wore his blue pants to school—blue pants, blue socks.

He walked into the kitchen for a drink and with relief immediately discovered the missing blue sock on the floor. Mom must have dropped it carrying the clothes out to the living room. He opened the fridge and was reaching for a bottle of juice when he realized the dryer was much louder than usual. What was that clunking noise? Had Mom put his sneakers in there? Where was Oscar?

Bobby raced over to the dryer and twisted the dial to Off. As the cylinder slowed to a stop, there was another clunk, followed by the sound of movement. He swung open the dryer door.

A faint blue light shimmered from the opening. Five or six skinny arms, several elbows on each, reached slowly outward and then bent back upon themselves to the edge of the circular opening. Dozens of slender fingers gripped the edges of the dryer door. Then a round, blue head with a doglike snout popped out. It wasn't Oscar.

Bobby stumbled back and stood frozen in his sneakers as a slit in the side of the thing's snout opened.

“Sorry to trouble you,” the thing said in a friendly tone, “but could you kindly restart the cycloteleporter?”

“Restart the what?” Bobby muttered.

“I was afraid of this,” it said. “I don’t want to miss my window, you know. If that happens, I may have to wait another millennium to continue my journey.”

Bobby didn’t know whether to scream or laugh.

“My apologies,” the thing explained, making pleading gestures with several of its hands. “I cannot impress upon you enough the gravity of the situation. I can see by your puzzled expression you may not be aware that *your* cycloteleporter happens to be in at least four of the same dimensions as mine. When you happen to be using yours at precisely the same moment as I’m using mine, well, sometimes I end up in your dimension instead of in D-9. Worse, the leap vaporizes my exodermis protection suit. As you know, one leap, one suit. I confess, it has happened several times now. But thanks to the plentiful supply of exodermis protection suits you keep available in your cylinder, for which I am eternally grateful,” here it held up one of Bobby’s white tube socks, “I have always been able to continue my journey.”

“You mean our dryer is a teleporter,” Bobby blurted, “and you need one of my socks to transport out of here?”

“Precisely. Of course, one cannot expect to travel without an exodermis protection suit. Your exodermis protection suits are much more comfortable than the ones we have in D-9.” Here it rubbed the tube sock along the side of its snout. “Ours are designed more for utility than for comfort.” It rotated its head and eyed the dryer from top to bottom. “What did you call this model? Dryer? Interesting. But I must be on my way.”

Bobby watched in amazement as the thing spread the sock opening wide with two of its hands and quickly stuffed in its body down to the toe. Only its snout protruded from the top as it backed into the dryer cylinder.

“I promise to repay you for the exodermis protection suits I have been, um, borrowing. Now, if you’ll be so kind as to close the hatch and restart the cycloteleporter, I’ll be on my way.”

Bobby closed the door and pushed the button. The dryer whirred to action. He heard a loud *clunk*, then a second *clunk*. Then just the usual whirring sound.

Mom was never going to believe this, either.

Multiple-Choice Items

1. Read the sentences from the passage.

“He opened the fridge and was reaching for a bottle of juice when he realized the dryer was much louder than usual. What was that clunking noise?”

How do the sentences help develop the plot?

- A. They show Bobby is glad his mom left laundry in the dryer.
- B. They describe Bobby solving the mystery of the socks.
- C. They provide a reason for Bobby to go to the dryer.
- D. They explain how Bobby puts off rewriting his report.

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-K.1.1.3
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	9%
p-value B	24%
p-value C	58% (correct answer)
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how the given sentences help to develop the plot. Option C is the correct answer since it is the dryer making an unusual noise that causes Bobby to open the door to investigate. Option A is incorrect; Bobby’s mother did leave laundry in the dryer, but these sentences do not relate to Bobby’s feelings about laundry being in the dryer. Option B is incorrect; Bobby does not solve the mystery of the socks until he speaks to the creature. Option D is incorrect since these sentences are not related to Bobby rewriting his report.

2. Read the sentence from the passage.

“ I cannot impress upon you enough the gravity of the situation.’ ”

What does the word gravity mean as used in the passage?

- A. order
- B. weakness
- C. excuse
- D. seriousness

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	16%
p-value B	16%
p-value C	21%
p-value D	47% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to use context clues to determine the meaning of the word “gravity.” Option D is the correct answer since the word “gravity” in this context means “seriousness.” The words “I cannot impress upon you enough” provide context for the correct answer. The creature is insistent on needing to continue on his journey. Options A, B, and C do not make sense in the context of the passage.

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3. Why does Bobby’s mom think that Oscar did not chew up Bobby’s report?
- A. She knows that Oscar has never chewed anything before.
 - B. She knows Bobby has made up similar stories in the past.
 - C. She knows that Oscar is smaller than Bobby’s notebook.
 - D. She knows Bobby sometimes avoids doing his homework.

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-K.1.1.1
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	10%
p-value B	17%
p-value C	60% (correct answer)
p-value D	13%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to make an inference about why Bobby’s mom thinks that Oscar did not chew up Bobby’s report. Option C is the correct answer since Bobby’s mom says, “Your notebook is bigger than he is.” Option A is incorrect since there is no evidence that Oscar has or has not ever chewed anything before. Option B is incorrect since there is no evidence that Bobby has made up stories in the past. Option D is incorrect since there is no evidence that Bobby tends to avoid doing his homework.

4. Why does the thing talk to Bobby?
- A. It wants to learn how to use Bobby’s teleporter.
 - B. It wants to stay in Bobby’s frequency.
 - C. It needs Bobby to start the dryer so it can go back to D-9.
 - D. It needs Bobby’s help to make an exodermis protection suit.

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-K.1.1.1
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	10%
p-value B	6%
p-value C	67% (correct answer)
p-value D	17%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to make an inference about why the thing talks to Bobby. Option C is the correct answer since the creature needs the dryer to start again to return to his own dimension. Option A is incorrect; the creature does not want to learn how to use the teleporter. Instead, the creature asks Bobby, “Could you kindly restart the cycloteleporter?” Option B is incorrect since the thing wants to return to D-9. Option D is incorrect; the creature has found a sock that will serve as an exodermis protection suit. Therefore, it does not need Bobby’s help in making one.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Item

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

Part One

Which sentence **best** states a theme of the passage?

- A. Finish work before having fun.
- B. Accept the consequences of mistakes.
- C. Sometimes the truth may seem unreal.
- D. Follow the directions that are given.

Part Two

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

- A. “The expression on her face meant that she wasn’t buying it.”
- B. “Bobby sighed as he grabbed a shirt from the pile and began to fold it.”
- C. “As the cylinder slowed to a stop, there was another clunk, followed by the sound of movement.”
- D. “Mom was never going to believe this, either.”

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-K.1.1.2
Answer Key: Part One	C
Answer Key: Part Two	A, D
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.66
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine the theme of the passage and to select two pieces of evidence from the passage that support this theme.</p> <p>Part One: Option C is the correct answer since Oscar eating Bobby’s report and the creature using socks in the dryer relate both to the truth seeming unreal. Option A is incorrect; although Bobby’s mom tells him to rewrite his report and put away the laundry, this option does not best state the overall theme of the passage. Option B is incorrect; although Bobby may have made a mistake when he let Oscar grab his report, this option does not reflect the overall theme of the passage. Option D is incorrect; Bobby follows his mom’s directions of checking on the laundry and does follow the creature’s directions of restarting the dryer. However, following directions does not relate to the overall theme of the passage.</p> <p>Part Two: Options A and D are the correct answers since they support the theme that “sometimes the truth may seem unreal.” Option A refers to Oscar, who ate Bobby’s report, and option D refers to the creature who has been taking socks in the dryer. Options B and C do not support the theme identified in Part One.</p>

Multiple-Choice Items

6. Which point of view does the author use in the passage?
- A. first-person point of view through Oscar’s experiences
 - B. third-person point of view through Bobby’s experiences
 - C. first-person point of view through the thing’s experiences
 - D. third-person point of view through Mom’s experiences

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-C.2.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	13%
p-value B	67% (correct answer)
p-value C	12%
p-value D	8%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the point of view used in the passage. Option B is the correct answer since the passage tells Bobby’s inner thoughts and feelings. Option A is incorrect; even though Oscar, the dog, is mentioned, he is not telling the story. Option C is incorrect; the thing is not relaying the story through its perspective since the word “I” is not used. Option D is incorrect since Mom’s inner thoughts and feelings are not revealed.

7. Which description provides the **best** summary of the passage?
- A. Bobby’s dog chews up his report. He has to rewrite it. He also has to finish his chores. When he is folding the laundry, he finds a missing sock. Bobby also finds the thing in the dryer.
 - B. Bobby’s mom does not believe the dog ate his report. He will have to rewrite his report after he finishes folding the laundry. He hears clunks from the dryer. He finds the thing in it. The thing uses Bobby’s white sock to return home.
 - C. Bobby’s dog has chewed his homework, but his mom does not believe him. So he will have to rewrite it. Bobby is folding the laundry when the dryer makes a clunking noise. Bobby finds the thing in the dryer. He helps the thing return home. Bobby knows his mom will not believe him.
 - D. Bobby has to rewrite the report that his dog, Oscar, ate. Bobby has to finish folding laundry before he can write his report. The dryer makes a loud noise. Bobby finds the thing in it. The thing explains that the dryer is a teleporter. The thing wants to go home immediately.

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-K.1.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	16%
p-value B	25%
p-value C	41% (correct answer)
p-value D	18%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the best summary of the passage. Option C is the correct answer since it contains the important major events of the narrative. Option A is incorrect since it does not include the major events of the middle and end of the narrative. Option B is incorrect since it provides minor details, is missing important events from the middle of the narrative, and states an incomplete interpretation of how the sock returns home. Option D is incorrect since it includes some minor details, and is missing main events from the middle and end of the narrative.

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Passage 2

Read the following passage about a young person running a race. Then answer question 8 in your answer booklet.

Climbing the Hill

by Rich Wallace

Leaves crunched underfoot as Devin jogged down the long, grassy hill. The air was dry and cool, and the blister on his big toe seemed completely healed.

Devin felt great: strong and loose and ready to spring. But he was nervous, too. In just a little while he'd be sprinting up this hill.

Or trying to, he thought.

Devin could see his coach and teammates gathering in the starting area. The forest behind them was brilliant with autumn colors. But this was no time for sightseeing. He took a deep breath, rolled his shoulders to try to relax, and headed toward his team.

The regional cross-country championship was up for grabs today. Twenty-eight teams. Nearly 200 runners in Devin's race. A mile and a half.

You can win this, Devin told himself.

They rushed from the starting line, a rainbow sea of bright uniforms and swinging arms. Devin wanted a quick start to set himself up in the lead pack, but he knew that starting too fast could ruin his race.

You can win, he thought again, even though he hadn't won a race all season.

Devin had been close to winning several times. That kid in the purple jersey—the one from Kennedy Middle School—had outsprinted Devin for a victory two weeks earlier. The twins from Mount Prospect—who were more efficient than Devin and stronger up the hills—had passed him on the final climb the week before that.

A cheer now came from the side of the trail. Devin glanced at his friends Jordan, Bryan, and Tara. "Stay with 'em, Devin!" called Tara, who'd placed seventh in the girls' race earlier.

The course wound along a wooded path, then broke into the open above the lake. Devin loosened his arms and lengthened his stride as they stormed down the hill. A tall runner in a yellow jersey led the tight pack of front-runners. Devin had never raced against him.

Devin was in fourth place, with the Kennedy runner and one of the twins an arm's length ahead. The other twin and a cluster of runners were so close behind that Devin could hear their steady breaths.

They turned directly into the breeze, which cooled the sweat on Devin's neck. As they came off the downhill onto flat ground, he veered to avoid a puddle and bumped shoulders with a runner in an orange Central jersey.

The midpoint of the race was just ahead. The pace was fast, but no one had made a move to pull from the pack.

Devin leaned slightly forward up a short hill, pumping his arms and moving into third place, ahead of the Kennedy runner. That kid had followed Devin like a shadow two weeks back, bursting past him in the final 100 meters.

Devin liked running hills, despite how hard it was. He had run up many of them in workouts over the past two weeks, building strength after those earlier losses. Coach kept saying that Devin had plenty of speed. The key was to slow down less than the others in those final steps before the finish line—to be strong enough to have something left in the tank after all those ups and downs.

The Central runner stayed alongside Devin, then floated past him as they reached the end of the lake. They'd covered a full mile.

The tall runner in yellow was struggling now. Devin and several others powered by him on the next hill.

All that remained was a short flat stretch, the long and grinding hill, and a final sprint along the straightaway. Devin drew even with the twin, then moved slightly ahead of him.

You can win this, Devin thought.

He glanced quickly around as they began the final climb. The Central runner was a stride ahead, the Kennedy runner was a step behind Devin, and both twins were pushing closer. There was a big gap before the sixth-place runner.

Five racers were in contention to win. At least three of them were better than Devin was at sprinting at the end. He needed to build a lead. Now.

"You got it!" Tara shouted.

"Pass him, Devin!" yelled Jordan.

They were halfway up the hill. Devin's chest was pounding and his breaths came quickly in a *huh-huh-huh*.

The Central runner was already in a full sprint. Devin drove his arms and legs to stay with him. In the side of his vision, he sensed purple, waiting to pounce. Would the twins come sprinting past again, too?

The leader faltered just before the crest of the hill, and Devin saw daylight ahead. The Kennedy kid drew closer, and the twins struggled to pull even.

No one quite reached Devin. Every stride hurt, but he was stronger than he'd ever been. His final strides were a burst of speed as the spectators hollered and jumped.

Devin didn't raise his arms in triumph until he was safely across the finish line. The Central kid bolted into him as Devin slowed to a walk, and the Kennedy runner came crashing between them, falling to the grass.

"Great kick," puffed the Central runner.

"You, too," Devin gasped. They each took the Kennedy runner by an arm and hauled him up. The kid nodded thanks.

Devin left the finish chute and slapped hands with Tara. "Way to go, champ," she said. "Gold medal!"

Devin turned and cheered for two of his teammates, who were sprinting toward the finish line in a pack of runners. He pulled on his sweats, then gulped some water and jogged toward the hill.

As the stragglers raced by, Devin imagined his final steps again. *This was where I took the lead. Here was where I started to kick.*

Devin stopped jogging. He took a deep breath and stretched his arms overhead. From here he could see the finish line and the forest and the edge of the lake below. This time he really noticed the sharp colors of the leaves, the cool breeze, and the sunlight. *What a beautiful autumn day, he thought. And I did win it. Just like I said I could.*

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Writer’s Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the prompt carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the prompt 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 responding to the prompt.
- I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

A rectangular box with the text "GO ON" inside, followed by a right-pointing arrow.



Text-Dependent Scoring Guidelines

#8 Item Information

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	A-K.1.1.3
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	2.02

Assessment Anchor:

E04.A-K.1—Key Ideas and Details

Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E04.A-K.1.1.3—Describe in depth a character, setting, or event in a story, drama, or poem, drawing on specific details in the text (e.g., a character’s thoughts, words, or actions).

Item-Specific Scoring Guideline

Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s) • Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) • Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas • Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Skillful use of transitions to link ideas • Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning

Score	Description
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s) • Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) • Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas • Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas • Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s) • Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s) • Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas • Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas • Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s) • Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion • Minimal evidence of an organizational structure • Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s) • Few, if any, transitions to link ideas • Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) • Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the story "Climbing the Hill" by Rich Wallace a determined young boy named Devon wins the regional cross country championship. He can accomplish this through many traits that helped him along the way. His personality is shown throughout the passage.

For example Devon says to himself that he can win even though he hadent won a single race all season. This shows that he is able to belive in himself dispite his past failures. If he didn't belive in himself he could have ended up not competing at all. This also shows that he will never give up on his dreams. Another example of one of his traits are grit and determination. This is showed by this exerpt from text: "dispite how hard It was he had run up many Of them in workout over the past two, weeks building up strength after those earlier losses."

GO ON 

This also shows how strong minded he is because he was stopping at nothing to achive his goal. shown when he helps someone who has just fall en up. He does this for no other reason other than someone elses benafi

In conclusion he won the race because he has grit and determination and will never give up on his dreams he is also kind and passionate about what he loves. I think Devon is a role model for who we should aspire to be not because he likes running but because he has the traits of a leader and hey if you do like running then then that's just another reason to be like Devon.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong and effectively supports the focus (Devin's accomplishment of a goal by means of personality traits) and ideas (that the events described in the passage reveal Devin's personality). The effective introduction establishes a trait while referencing both the passage and prompt (*a determined young boy named Devon wins the regional cross country championship. He can accomplish this through many traits*). The first body paragraph begins with an appropriate text example followed by thorough analysis (*Devon says to himself that he can win even though he hadent won a single race all season. This shows that he is able to belive in himself dispite his past failures. If he didn't belive in himself he could have ended up not competing at all. This also shows that he will never give up on his dreams*). The student continues to develop the idea of Devin's traits (*Another example of one of his traits are grit and determination*) providing relevant text support (*"dispite how hard It was he had run up many Of them in workout over the past, two weeks building up strength after those earlier losses."*) and thorough analysis (*This also shows how strong minded he is because he was stopping at nothing to achive his goal.*) The student continues the development by weaving another trait (kindness) together with key text support and an inferential evaluative statement (*When he helps someone Who has just fall en up. He does this for no other reason other than someone elses benafi*). The effective conclusion includes additional thorough analysis (*he won the race because he has grit and determination and Will never give up on his dreams he is also Kind and passionate about what he loves*), which is expanded into an insightful generalization (*I think Devon is a role model for Who We should aspire to be not because he likes running but because he has the traits of a leader . . . that's just another reason to be like Devon*). The response utilizes transitions skillfully to link ideas (*In the story, For example, This shows that, This also shows, This is showed by, In conclusion, because, and, not because . . . but because*), and there is an effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text throughout (*determined, belive, failures, grit, determination, strong minded, achive, passionate, someone elses benafi, aspire, traits of a leader*). Minor errors present in sentence formation, usage (*showed* for "shown"), spelling (*Devon, hadent, belive, dispite, achive, benafi*), and punctuation (missing hyphens, commas, and apostrophes), though at times distracting, seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

**Computer Response Score: 4 points**

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In “climbing the hill” the author describes how even if Devin doesn’t like doing things he works hard to accomplish his goals. In “climbing the hill” Devin’s character traits lead him to succeeding in the contest. Have you ever been so determined to succeed in a contest before?

Devin’s character traits lead him to succeeding in the contest. The text says “you can win even though he had’t won a race all season.” This quote shows how even though Devin lost and still has hope and is determined to win. Devin’s character traits show him having a determined mindset that helps him to succeed. Devin’s character traits lead him to succeeding. The text says “Every stride hurt, but he was stronger than ever” This quote shows even though Devin is hurting he is still pushing to complete his goal. Devin’s mindset and character traits show how he pushes to reach his goals of succeeding.’

Devin’s character traits lead him to succeeding. In the text it says “Devin liked running hills despite how hard it was.” This quote shows how it is hard to climb a hill but Devin still pushes and does it.

Devin’s character traits lead him to succeed in the race. Now you see how determined Devin is. Devin’s character traits show how he pushes to succeed even when he doesn’t like doing it.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong and effectively supports the student's focus on Devin's determination allowing him to succeed. In the effective introduction, the student alludes to a relevant character trait (*the author describes how even if deven doesn't like doing thing he works hard to accomplish his goals. In "climbing the hill" Devens character traits lead him to succeeding in the contest*). The introduction ends with a rhetorical question that specifies the trait and engages the reader (*Have you ever been so determined to succeed a contest before?*). The first body paragraph begins with an inference (*Devens character traits lead him to succeeding in the contest*) followed by relevant text (*The text says "you can win he thoughteven though he had't won a race all season"*) that is extended with thorough analysis to support the student's initial inference (*This quote shows how even though deven lost and still has hope and is determined to win. Devens charecter traits show him having a determined mindset that helps him to succeed*). The paragraph continues its focus on the task (*Devens character traits lead him to succeeding*) with additional well-chosen text support (*"Every stride hert, but he was strong er than ever"*) extended with thorough analysis (*This quote shows even though deven is hurting he is still pushing to complete his goal. Devens mind set and character traits show how he Pushes to reach his goals of succeeding*). The next body paragraph maintains focus on the task (*Devins character traits lead him to succeeding*), with the student selecting a relevant quote (*In the text it says "Deven liked running hills despite how hard it was"*) that is supported with thorough analysis (*This quote shows how it is hard to hill climb but deven still Pushes and does it. Deven s character traits show how he Pushes to succeed even when he doesn't like doing it*). The conclusion effectively ties back to the introduction and engages the reader (*Devens character traits lead him to succed in the race. Now you see how detmined Deven is*). Throughout the response, there is skillful use of transitions to link ideas (*In, The text says, This quote shows, and, even though, but, even, when, Now you see*) and an effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text (*accomplish, determined, mindset, hurting, pushing*). Sporadic errors in sentence formation, spelling (*deven, charecter, had't, hert, succeding*), usage (*mind set* for "mindset" the second time, missing words), punctuation, and capitalization do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the story climbing The Hill, Devin is in a severe race.

In the beginning of the story, Devin is starting a race up a hill and thinks it is very tough but Powers through and wins.

The author purpose fully did this because, I + lets the reader understand that Devin is Strong. This is important because, I + lets the reader understand the theme. Without this, Devin would have lost.

In the middle of the story, Devin is in 4th place but slowly moves up until he is in first place.

The author purpose fully did this because, I + S hows that Devin does not give up. This is important because, that is what made Devin win. Without this, Devin would have stayed in 4th place.



In the end of the story, Devin ends up winning by powering through and not giving up. The author purposefull did this because, I t shows that Devin is Strong. This is important because, it makes him a good team player. Without this, Devin would have lost the race.

In conclusion, Devin worked very hard and got what he deserved.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is appropriate and adequately supports the student's focus on how the author shows the reader that Devin's personality traits allowed him to win the race. There is a brief but clear introduction (*In the story climbing The Hill, Devin is in a severe race*). While the characterization of the race as "severe"—may not indicate the most precise choice of words, it functions as an implication of both the drama and importance of the race. The first body paragraph consists of text references embedded with clear analysis of implicit meanings from the text (*In the beggining of the story, Devin is starting a race up a hill and thinks it i s very though but Powers through and winS*). The phrase "powers through" implies the traits of determination and perseverance. The response extends the analysis of Devin's traits by addressing the writer's intent behind the passage (*The author purpose fully did this because, I t lets the reader understand that Devin is Strong. This is important because, I t le ts the reader under stand the theme. Without this, Devin would have lost*). Next, the student provides a direct reference to the text (*In the middle of the story, Devin is in 4th place but slowly moves up until he is in first place*) followed by clear analysis (*The author pur pose fully did this because, I t S hows that Devin d oes not give up. This is important because, that is what made Devin win. Without this, Devin would have stayed in 4th place*) that conveys the author's intent. This is a higher level of analysis for a fourth grader. The clear analysis in the next paragraph again shows the student's understanding of implicit meanings from the text (*In the end of the story, Devin ends up winning by powering through and not giving up*). Additional analysis (*The author purposefull did this because, I t shows that Devin is Strong. This is important because, it makes him a good team player. Without this, Devin would have lost the race*) identifies another trait (*good team player*) that implies that Devin understands the importance of being part of a team. The conclusion provides more clear analysis (*Devin worked very hard and got what he deserved*). There is an appropriate use of transitions (*In the story, I n the beggining, but, and, because, Without this, In the middle, I n the end, In conclusion*) as well as an appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (*though* [for *tough*], *purposefully*, *lets the reader under stand*, *Strong*, *powering through*, *team player*, *got what he deserved*) throughout the response. Errors present in spelling (*beggining*), usage (*purpose fully* for "purposefully," *under stand* for "understand"), and capitalization (primarily the letter *I* in words in the middle of a sentence) seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE**Computer Response Score: 3 points**

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the story "Climbing the Hill" a boy Devin is in a race and is wanting to win.

In the story "Climbing the Hill" the boy Devin is trying to win the race and is kind of doubting that he will win. Without this he would be cocky about himself and he would keep saying he will win but he might not if he was to cocky. If Devin Started running as fast as he could he would not have enough energy to win the race. This would change the whole story. Page one paragraph four.

Devin's compitition was the guy in purple, the twins and the tall boy. The author included this because if there was no challenge for Devin he wouldn't have pushed himself so hard. The author also included 28 more teams so that it would be harder for Devin to win the race.

Devin's friends were cheering him on in the side lines, because Of this it's pushing Devin on to try harder and win. If his friends were not there he would not have pushed as hard. Because of his friends that gave him more motovation.

Devin has come a long way from doubting himself to winning a race. He has pushed himself to beat everyone in a race. Without Devin winning it would be a very different ending.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is appropriate and supports the student's focus of showing how Devin's traits set him up for success. There is a brief introduction (*In the story "Climbing the Hill" a boy Devin is in a race*) that includes a basic inference (*and is wanting to win*). The first body paragraph begins with clear analysis (*the boy Devin is trying to win the race and is kind of doubting that he will win. Without this he would be cocky about himself and he would keep saying he will win but he might not if he was to cocky*) that is extended with analysis showing what might have happened if Devin lacked the trait of healthy self-doubt (*If Devin Started running as fast as he could he would not have enough energy to win the race. This would change the whole story*). The student begins the next paragraph with relevant text (*Devin's competition was the guy in purple, the twins and the tall boy*) followed by clear analysis (*The author included this because if there was no challenge for Devin he wouldn't have pushed himself so hard. The author also included 28 more teams so that it would be harder for Devin to win the race*) of explicit and implicit meanings from the text. The student's analysis of the author's purpose demonstrates higher-level understanding of the text. Additionally, the traits of determination and perseverance can be inferred from the analysis though the student does not identify them as such. The next paragraph comprises clear analysis interwoven with text (*Devin's friends were cheering him on in the side lines, because Of this it's pushing Devin on to try harder and win. If his friends were not there he would not have pushed as hard. Because of his friends that gave him more motovation*). While the focus on Devin's traits is weaker in this paragraph, analysis of explicit and implicit meanings of the text is clearly demonstrated. In the final paragraph, the student summarizes how Devin's traits result in success (*Devin has come a long way from doubting himself to winning a race. He has pushed himself to beat everyone in a race. Without Devin winning it would be a very different ending*) to conclude the response. There is an appropriate use of transitions (*In the story, and, Without this, but, because, also, so*) to link ideas as well as an appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (*doubting, cocky, energy, competition, challenge, pushed, motovation*) to convey the experiences/events. The few errors present in spelling (*compitition, motovation*), usage (*to* for "too"), and missing punctuation do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the Story "Climbing the Hill" how Devin Succeeded the race is he encouraged himself to win the race.

First, he said "you can win this, you can win he thought again?" "pumping his arms and moving in third place."

First, he said "you can win this you can win he thought again" this tells me that he is telling not to give up and not to stop.

"Pumping his arms and moving to third place"

this tells me that he is running fast trying really hard not to give up he is nervous at first because they are running 1 1/2 miles nearly 200 people competing but he kept encouraging himself no matter what and he ended up winning.



This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak. The weak introduction (*In the Story "Climbing the Hill" how Devin Succeeded the race is he encouraged himself to win the race*) does not identify a character trait. However, the student does posit a reason for Devin's success (*he encouraged himself*), which could be interpreted as a stand-in for the character trait of self-motivation. The student supports this idea with vague text references (*First, he said "you can win this, you can win he thought again?", "pumping his arms and moving in third place"*). The next body paragraph begins with a text quote (*First, he said "you can win this you can win he thought again"*) followed by weak analysis (*this tells me that he is telling not to give up and not to stop*) to extend the controlling idea of Devin being self-motivated. The final body paragraph extends the text quote from the second paragraph (*"Pumping his arms and moving in third place"*) with more weak analysis (*this tells me that he is running fast trying really hard not to give up he is nearvus at first because they are running 1 1/2 miles nearly 200 people competing but he Kept encouraging himself no matter what and he ended up winning*). The weak analysis completing the response references the controlling idea of Devin "encouraging himself" to win the race. While this development goes beyond a literal interpretation of the text, the weak analysis does not rise to the level of clear. There are an inconsistent use of transitions (*In the Story, First, this tells me that, and, because, but, no matter what*) and an inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text (*encouraged, not to give up, not to stop, trying really hard, nearvus, 1 1/2 miles, 200 people competing, ended up*). The errors present in sentence formation (run-ons, missing words), usage, spelling (*nearvus*), capitalization, and punctuation sometimes interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

**Computer Response Score: 2 points**

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Devin succeeded by beliving in himself. Sentences like “He told him self he could Win,” would help.

He still belived in him self even when he never one. He only thaught about wining. Only thinking about winning helped him win the race. Only good things help people sucseede at hard thing. So It could help you too!

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak, with only a vague attempt at grouping ideas. The response begins with a weak inference (*Devin succeeded by beliving in himself*) followed by vague support (“*He told him self he could Win*”). The next paragraph begins with weak analysis (*He still belived in him self even when he never one*) which is extended with a weak inference (*He only thaught about wining*). Then, the student attempts to build on the previous sentences with additional weak analysis (*Only thinking about winning helped him win the race*). The response concludes with a vague generalization (*Only good things help people sucseede at hard thing. So It could help you too!*) that only weakly references the main idea of the text. There is an inconsistent use of weak transitions to link ideas (*like, even when, So*) as well as an inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text (*succeeded, beliving, belived, wining, sucseede, win*). The errors present in sentence formation (fragments), usage (*him self* for “himself,” *one* for “won,” *thing* for “things”), spelling (*beliving, belived, thaught, winning, sucseede*), punctuation, and capitalization interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the "Climbing the Hill" Dein is ran a uphill, and the race starting he thouhot at he can won even he don't won all season and was in fourth place with the Kennedy and one of twins and they are close that Devin can their steady breaths. Tara and Jordan creed for Devin as he run up the hill and no one can even quite reached him top of the hill and can the sun light.

This response minimally addresses part of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. There is minimal evidence of an organizational structure and no controlling idea. The response consists of a retelling of the story events, using insufficient reference to the text (*the race starting he thouhot at he can won even he don't won all season and was in fourth place*). The response includes a very minimal inference (*Tara and Jordan creed for Devin*). There is minimal use of transitions (*and*) as well as minimal use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text (*creed* for "cheered"). The errors present, particularly in usage and spelling, often interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

 **Computer Response Score: 1 point**

8. In the passage, Devin is competing in the regional cross-country championship. Write an essay analyzing the character traits that help Devin succeed. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the story, the Devin won the race. He is going to country to do another race. And then at the end of the story he was breathe and said it was just like I said I could.

This response minimally addresses part of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. There is minimal evidence of an organizational structure. The response is a very brief summary of the passage with minimal references to the text (*In the story, the Devin won the race . . . said it was just like I said I could*). There are few transitions (*In the story, And then, and said*), and there is little use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text. The errors present in sentence formation and usage often interfere with meaning.

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English Language Arts Test Directions for Conventions of Standard English Items

Directions:

On the following pages are the Conventions of Standard English questions.

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Some questions 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.

Conventions of Standard English Multiple-Choice Items

9. Read the sentences.

Our town's big red fire truck came down the street for the parade. When the truck turned its siren on, the siren let out _____. I had to cover my ears!

Choose the **most** descriptive phrase to complete the sentences.

- A. a great noise
- B. a loud signal
- C. a piercing blast
- D. a surprising sound

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	D.2.1.3
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	44%
p-value C	36% (correct answer)
p-value D	8%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the most descriptive phrase to complete the given sentences. Option C is the correct answer since it provides the most specific auditory imagery. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since they are vague and not as descriptive as "a piercing blast."

10. Which sentence uses the underlined word incorrectly?

- A. I think they're going to meet us at the park.
- B. I helped my neighbors carry their groceries.
- C. The trail over there leads to the top of the hill.
- D. The students got to invite they're families to the show.

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	D.1.1.7
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	16%
p-value B	15%
p-value C	13%
p-value D	56% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which sentence uses a frequently confused word incorrectly. Option D is the correct answer since the word “they’re” should be “their” to show possession. Options A, B, and C are incorrect since the underlined words in the sentences are used correctly.

11. Which sentence shows an incorrect use of adjectives?
- A. Yellowstone was made the world’s first national park in 1872.
 - B. Stone objects made from rock, black, and shiny were used.
 - C. People lived in the rocky, wooded area many years ago.
 - D. People turned the stone objects into weapon parts.

Category	Item-Specific Information
Alignment	D.1.1.4
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	20%
p-value B	48% (correct answer)
p-value C	19%
p-value D	13%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the sentence that shows an incorrect use of adjectives. Option B is the correct answer since the order “rock, black, and shiny” should be “shiny black rock” since convention dictates that opinion and color must come before material in adjective order (DOSCA-SCOMP). Options A, C, and D are incorrect since the adjectives in these options are in the correct order.

English Language Arts—Sample Item Summary Data

Multiple-Choice and Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions

An asterisk (*) indicates the key.

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D
1	A-K.1.1.3	C	3	9%	24%	58%*	9%
2	A-V.4.1.1	D	2	16%	16%	21%	47%*
3	A-K.1.1.1	C	2	10%	17%	60%*	13%
4	A-K.1.1.1	C	2	10%	6%	67%*	17%
5	A-K.1.1.2	Part One: C Part Two: A, D	3	Mean Score: 1.66			
6	A-C.2.1.1	B	3	13%	67%*	12%	8%
7	A-K.1.1.2	C	2	16%	25%	41%*	18%
9	D.2.1.3	C	2	12%	44%	36%*	8%
10	D.1.1.7	D	2	16%	15%	13%	56%*
11	D.1.1.4	B	2	20%	48%*	19%	13%

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
8	A-K.1.1.3	4	3	2.02

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PSSA Grade 4 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler

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