

## **REGENTS IN ELA (Common Core)**

The University of the State of New York

**REGENTS HIGH SCHOOL EXAMINATION**

# **REGENTS EXAMINATION**

**IN**

## **ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS**

**(Common Core)**

**Wednesday, June 14, 2017 — 9:15 a.m. to 12:15 p.m., only**

**The possession or use of any communications device is strictly prohibited when taking this examination. If you have or use any communications device, no matter how briefly, your examination will be invalidated and no score will be calculated for you.**

**A separate answer sheet has been provided for you. Follow the instructions for completing the student information on your answer sheet. You must also fill in the heading on each page of your essay booklet that has a space for it, and write your name at the top of each sheet of scrap paper.**

**The examination has three parts. For Part 1, you are to read the texts and answer all 24 multiple-choice questions. For Part 2, you are to read the texts and write one source-based argument. For Part 3, you are to read the text and write a text-analysis response. The source-based argument and text-analysis response should be written in pen. Keep in mind that the language and perspectives in a text may reflect the historical and/or cultural context of the time or place in which it was written.**

**When you have completed the examination, you must sign the statement printed at the bottom of the front of the answer sheet, indicating that you had no unlawful knowledge of the questions or answers prior to the examination and that you have neither given nor received assistance in answering any of the questions during the examination. Your answer sheet cannot be accepted if you fail to sign this declaration.**

**DO NOT OPEN THIS EXAMINATION BOOKLET UNTIL THE SIGNAL IS GIVEN.**

# Part 1

**Directions (1–24):** Closely read each of the three passages below. After each passage, there are several multiple-choice questions. Select the best suggested answer to each question and record your answer on the separate answer sheet provided for you. You may use the margins to take notes as you read.

## Reading Comprehension Passage A

I received one morning a letter, written in pale ink on glassy, blue-lined note-paper, and bearing the postmark of a little Nebraska village. This communication, worn and rubbed, looking as if it had been carried for some days in a coat pocket that was none too clean, was from my uncle Howard, and informed me that his wife had been left a small legacy by a  
5 bachelor relative, and that it would be necessary for her to go to Boston to attend to the settling of the estate. He requested me to meet her at the station and render her whatever services might be necessary. On examining the date indicated as that of her arrival, I found it to be no later than tomorrow. He had characteristically delayed writing until, had I been away from home for a day, I must have missed my aunt altogether. ....

10      Whatever shock Mrs. Springer [the landlady] experienced at my aunt's appearance, she considerably concealed. As for myself, I saw my aunt's battered figure with that feeling of awe and respect with which we behold explorers who have left their ears and fingers north of Franz-Joseph-Land,<sup>1</sup> or their health somewhere along the Upper Congo. My Aunt Georgiana had been a music teacher at the Boston Conservatory, somewhere back in the  
15     latter sixties [1860s]. One summer, while visiting in the little village among the Green Mountains where her ancestors had dwelt for generations, she had kindled the callow<sup>2</sup> fancy of my uncle, Howard Carpenter, then an idle, shiftless boy of twenty-one. When she returned to her duties in Boston, Howard followed her, and the upshot of this infatuation was that she eloped with him, eluding the reproaches of her family and the criticism of her  
20     friends by going with him to the Nebraska frontier. Carpenter, who, of course, had no money, took up a homestead in Red Willow County, fifty miles from the railroad. There they had measured off their land themselves, driving across the prairie in a wagon, to the wheel of which they had tied a red cotton handkerchief, and counting its revolutions. They built a dug-out in the red hillside, one of those cave dwellings whose inmates so often  
25     reverted to primitive conditions. Their water they got from the lagoons where the buffalo drank, and their slender stock of provisions was always at the mercy of bands of roving Indians. For thirty years my aunt had not been farther than fifty miles from the homestead.

30      I owed to this woman most of the good that ever came my way in my boyhood, and had a reverential<sup>3</sup> affection for her. During the years when I was riding herd for my uncle, my aunt, after cooking the three meals — the first of which was ready at six o'clock in the morning — and putting the six children to bed, would often stand until midnight at her ironing-board, with me at the kitchen table beside her, hearing me recite Latin declensions and conjugations, gently shaking me when my drowsy head sank down over a page of irregular verbs. It was to her, at her ironing or mending, that I read my first Shakspere, and her old text-book on mythology was the first that ever came into my empty hands. She taught me my scales and exercises on the little parlour organ which her husband had bought her after fifteen years during which she had not so much as seen a musical

<sup>1</sup>Franz-Joseph-Land — Russian archipelago of 191 islands in the Arctic Ocean

<sup>2</sup>callow — naive

<sup>3</sup>reverential — with great honor and respect

instrument. She would sit beside me by the hour, darning and counting, while I struggled with the "Joyous Farmer." She seldom talked to me about music, and I understood why.

40 Once when I had been doggedly beating out some easy passages from an old score of *Euryanthe* I had found among her music books, she came up to me and, putting her hands over my eyes, gently drew my head back upon her shoulder, saying tremulously, "Don't love it so well, Clark, or it may be taken from you." ...

45 At two o'clock the Symphony Orchestra was to give a Wagner program, and I intended to take my aunt; though, as I conversed with her, I grew doubtful about her enjoyment of it. I suggested our visiting the Conservatory and the Common before lunch, but she seemed altogether too timid to wish to venture out. She questioned me absently about various changes in the city, but she was chiefly concerned that she had forgotten to leave instructions about feeding half-skimmed milk to a certain weakling calf, "old Maggie's calf, you know, Clark," she explained, evidently having forgotten how long I had been away.

50 She was further troubled because she had neglected to tell her daughter about the freshly-opened kit of mackerel<sup>4</sup> in the cellar, which would spoil if it were not used directly. ...

55 The first number [of the concert] was the *Tannhäuser*<sup>5</sup> overture. When the horns drew out the first strain of the Pilgrim's chorus, Aunt Georgiana clutched my coat sleeve. Then it was I first realized that for her this broke a silence of thirty years. With the battle between the two motives,<sup>6</sup> with the frenzy of the Venusberg theme and its ripping of strings, there came to me an overwhelming sense of the waste and wear we are so powerless to combat; and I saw again the tall, naked house on the prairie, black and grim as a wooden fortress; the black pond where I had learned to swim, its margin pitted with sun-dried cattle tracks;

60 the rain gullied clay banks about the naked house, the four dwarf ash seedlings where the dish-cloths were always hung to dry before the kitchen door. The world there was the flat world of the ancients; to the east, a cornfield that stretched to daybreak; to the west, a corral that reached to sunset; between, the conquests of peace, dearer-bought than those of war. ...

65 Her lip quivered and she hastily put her handkerchief up to her mouth. From behind it she murmured, "And you have been hearing this ever since you left me, Clark?" Her question was the gentlest and saddest of reproaches. ...

70 The deluge of sound poured on and on; I never knew what she found in the shining current of it; I never knew how far it bore her, or past what happy islands. From the trembling of her face I could well believe that before the last number she had been carried out where the myriad graves are, into the grey, nameless burying grounds of the sea; or into some world of death vaster yet, where, from the beginning of the world, hope has lain down with hope and dream with dream and, renouncing, slept. ...

I spoke to my aunt. She burst into tears and sobbed pleadingly. "I don't want to go, Clark, I don't want to go!"

75 I understood. For her, just outside the concert hall, lay the black pond with the cattle-tracked bluffs; the tall, unpainted house, with weather-curled boards, naked as a tower; the crook-backed ash seedlings where the dish-cloths hung to dry; the gaunt, moulting turkeys picking up refuse about the kitchen door.

—Willa Cather  
excerpted and adapted from "A Wagner Matinée"  
*Youth and the Bright Medusa*, April 1920

<sup>4</sup>kit of mackerel — container of fish

<sup>5</sup>*Tannhäuser* — an opera by Richard Wagner

<sup>6</sup>motives — recurrent musical phrases

- 1 A primary function of the first paragraph is to
- (1) establish the reason for the meeting
  - (2) create an atmosphere of mystery
  - (3) identify preferences of the narrator's aunt
  - (4) reveal flaws in the narrator's character
- 2 In lines 1 through 9, the commentary about the letter implies that the narrator believes his uncle is
- (1) uncomfortable with changes
  - (2) careless about details
  - (3) angry with his wife
  - (4) disappointed at his decision
- 3 The details in lines 13 through 20 suggest that in her youth Aunt Georgiana was
- (1) courageous yet hesitant
  - (2) compassionate yet critical
  - (3) resourceful yet cautious
  - (4) intelligent yet impulsive
- 4 Line 27, “For thirty years my aunt had not been farther than fifty miles from the homestead” reinforces a sense of
- |                |               |
|----------------|---------------|
| (1) discomfort | (3) isolation |
| (2) happiness  | (4) affection |
- 5 Which statement from the passage best explains the narrator’s “reverential affection” (line 29) for his Aunt Georgiana?
- (1) “It was to her, at her ironing or mending, that I read my first Shakspere” (line 34)
  - (2) “‘Don’t love it so well, Clark, or it may be taken from you’ ” (lines 42 and 43)
  - (3) “Her lip quivered and she hastily put her handkerchief up to her mouth” (line 64)
  - (4) “I never knew how far it bore her, or past what happy islands” (line 68)
- 6 Lines 36 through 38 develop a central theme by
- (1) recalling the husband’s generosity in supporting the narrator’s music lessons
  - (2) suggesting that the narrator resented his music lessons
  - (3) emphasizing the role of discipline in developing Aunt Georgiana’s musical talent
  - (4) implying that Aunt Georgiana missed having music in her life
- 7 In line 39, when the narrator states that he “understood why,” he is implying that his Aunt Georgiana
- (1) knew little about current musical trends
  - (2) avoided talking about his musical skills
  - (3) realized what she has given up
  - (4) needed some recognition of her ability
- 8 Lines 47 through 52 contribute to a central idea by depicting Aunt Georgiana’s
- (1) concern for daily responsibilities
  - (2) desire for cultural experiences
  - (3) fear of future separations
  - (4) fixation on painful memories
- 9 The author’s choice of how to end the story (lines 73 through 78) places emphasis on Aunt Georgiana’s
- (1) bleak future
  - (2) unusual lifestyle
  - (3) domestic skills
  - (4) hostile attitude
- 10 Which quotation best reflects the narrator’s realization resulting from Aunt Georgiana’s visit?
- (1) “He requested me to meet her at the station and render her whatever services might be necessary” (lines 6 and 7)
  - (2) “At two o’clock the Symphony Orchestra was to give a Wagner program, and I intended to take my aunt” (lines 44 and 45)
  - (3) “there came to me an overwhelming sense of the waste and wear we are so powerless to combat” (lines 56 and 57)
  - (4) “sound poured on and on; I never knew what she found in the shining current of it” (lines 67 and 68)

## Reading Comprehension Passage B

### Mi Historia<sup>1</sup>

My red pickup choked on burnt oil  
as I drove down Highway 99.<sup>2</sup>  
In wind-tattered garbage bags  
I had packed my whole life:  
5 two pairs of jeans, a few T-shirts,  
and a pair of work boots.  
My truck needed work, and through  
the blue smoke rising from under the hood,  
I saw almond orchards, plums,  
10 the raisins spread out on paper trays,  
and acres of Mendota cotton my mother picked as a child.

My mother crawled through the furrows  
and plucked cotton balls that filled  
the burlap sack she dragged,  
15 shoulder-slung, through dried-up bolls,  
husks, weevils, dirt clods,  
and dust that filled the air with thirst.  
But when she grew tired,  
she slept on her mother's burlap,  
20 stuffed thick as a mattress,  
and Grandma dragged her over the land  
where time was told by the setting sun....

History cried out to me from the earth,  
in the scream of starling flight,  
25 and pounded at the hulls of seeds to be set free.  
History licked the asphalt with rubber,  
sighed in the windows of abandoned barns,  
slumped in the wind-blasted palms,  
groaned in the heat, and whispered its soft curses.  
30 I wanted my own history—not the earth's,  
nor the history of blood, nor of memory,  
and not the job found for me at Galdini Sausage.  
I sought my own—a new bruise to throb hard  
as the asphalt that pounded the chassis of my truck.

—David Dominguez  
from *Work Done Right*, 2003  
The University of Arizona Press

<sup>1</sup>Mi Historia — Spanish for “my history”

<sup>2</sup>Highway 99 — the highway that runs through California’s fertile Central Valley where generations of farmworkers have settled and been employed

- 11 The poet's purpose in referencing "Highway 99" in line 2 is most likely to establish
- (1) a connection with the narrator's cultural heritage
  - (2) a criticism of the valley's agricultural economy
  - (3) an understanding of the narrator's difficult childhood
  - (4) an emphasis on the region's diverse landscape
- 12 The second stanza reveals that the narrator's overall point of view is influenced by
- (1) his experience working on farms
  - (2) his nostalgia for farm life
  - (3) the labor of his relatives
  - (4) the expectations of his family
- 13 The personification in lines 23 through 29 stresses history's desire to be
- (1) repeated
  - (2) forgotten
  - (3) comforted
  - (4) heard
- 14 The figurative language in lines 33 and 34 implies the narrator
- (1) regrets leaving his past behind
  - (2) understands that his future will have challenges
  - (3) anticipates that his new life will be successful
  - (4) thinks he made a wrong decision
-

## Reading Comprehension Passage C

In 1973, a book claiming that plants were sentient<sup>1</sup> beings that feel emotions, prefer classical music to rock and roll, and can respond to the unspoken thoughts of humans hundreds of miles away landed on the *New York Times* best-seller list for nonfiction. “The Secret Life of Plants,” by Peter Tompkins and Christopher Bird, presented a beguiling 5 mashup of legitimate plant science, quack experiments, and mystical nature worship that captured the public imagination at a time when New Age thinking was seeping into the mainstream. The most memorable passages described the experiments of a former C.I.A. polygraph expert named Cleve Backster, who, in 1966, on a whim, hooked up a galvanometer to the leaf of a dracaena, a houseplant that he kept in his office. To his 10 astonishment, Backster found that simply by imagining the dracaena being set on fire he could make it rouse the needle of the polygraph machine, registering a surge of electrical activity suggesting that the plant felt stress. “Could the plant have been reading his mind?” the authors ask. “Backster felt like running into the street and shouting to the world, ‘Plants can think!’ ” ...

15 In the ensuing years, several legitimate plant scientists tried to reproduce the “Backster effect” without success. Much of the science in “The Secret Life of Plants” has been discredited. But the book had made its mark on the culture. Americans began talking to their plants and playing Mozart for them, and no doubt many still do. This might seem 20 harmless enough; there will probably always be a strain of romanticism running through our thinking about plants. (Luther Burbank and George Washington Carver both reputedly talked to, and listened to, the plants they did such brilliant work with.) But in the view of many plant scientists “The Secret Life of Plants” has done lasting damage to their field. According to Daniel Chamovitz, an Israeli biologist who is the author of the recent book 25 “What a Plant Knows,” Tompkins and Bird “stymied<sup>2</sup> important research on plant behavior as scientists became wary<sup>3</sup> of any studies that hinted at parallels between animal senses and plant senses.” Others contend that “The Secret Life of Plants” led to “self-censorship” among researchers seeking to explore the “possible homologies<sup>4</sup> between neurobiology<sup>5</sup> and phytotherapy<sup>6</sup>”, that is, the possibility that plants are much more intelligent and much more 30 like us than most people think—capable of cognition,<sup>7</sup> communication, information processing, computation, learning and memory. ...

Indeed, many of the most impressive capabilities of plants can be traced to their unique existential<sup>8</sup> predicament as beings rooted to the ground and therefore unable to pick up and move when they need something or when conditions turn unfavorable. The “sessile life style,” as plant biologists term it, calls for an extensive and nuanced understanding of one’s 35 immediate environment, since the plant has to find everything it needs, and has to defend itself, while remaining fixed in place. A highly developed sensory apparatus is required to locate food and identify threats. Plants have evolved between fifteen and twenty distinct senses, including analogues of our five: smell and taste (they sense and respond to chemicals in the air or on their bodies); sight (they react differently to various wavelengths 40 of light as well as to shadow); touch (a vine or a root “knows” when it encounters a solid object); and, it has been discovered, sound. In a recent experiment, Heidi Appel, a chemical ecologist at the University of Missouri, found that, when she played a recording of

<sup>1</sup>sentient — conscious

<sup>2</sup>stymied — prevented

<sup>3</sup>wary — cautious

<sup>4</sup>homologies — similarities

<sup>5</sup>neurobiology — the study of the nervous system

<sup>6</sup>phytotherapy — the study of plants

<sup>7</sup>cognition — understanding

<sup>8</sup>existential — relating to existence

45 a caterpillar chomping a leaf for a plant that hadn't been touched, the sound primed the plant's genetic machinery to produce defense chemicals. Another experiment, done in Mancuso's<sup>9</sup> lab and not yet published, found that plant roots would seek out a buried pipe through which water was flowing even if the exterior of the pipe was dry, which suggested that plants somehow "hear" the sound of flowing water. ...

50 Scientists have since found that the tips of the plant roots, in addition to sensing gravity, moisture, light, pressure, and hardness, can also sense volume, nitrogen, phosphorus, salt, various toxins, microbes, and chemical signals from neighboring plants. Roots about to encounter an impenetrable obstacle or a toxic substance change course before they make contact with it. Roots can tell whether nearby roots are self or other and, if other, kin or stranger. Normally, plants compete for root space with strangers, but, when researchers put four closely related Great Lakes sea-rocket plants (*Cakile edentula*) in the same pot, 55 the plants restrained their usual competitive behaviors and shared resources.

60 Somehow, a plant gathers and integrates all this information about its environment, and then "decides"—some scientists deploy the quotation marks, indicating metaphor at work; others drop them—in precisely what direction to deploy its roots or its leaves. Once the definition of "behavior" expands to include such things as a shift in the trajectory<sup>10</sup> of a root, a reallocation of resources, or the emission of a powerful chemical, plants begin to look like much more active agents, responding to environmental cues in ways more subtle or adaptive than the word "instinct" would suggest. "Plants perceive competitors and grow away from them," Rick Karban, a plant ecologist at U.C. Davis, explained, when I asked him 65 for an example of plant decision-making. "They are more leery of actual vegetation than they are of inanimate objects, and they respond to potential competitors before actually being shaded by them." These are sophisticated behaviors, but, like most plant behaviors, to an animal they're either invisible or really, really slow.

70 The sessile life style also helps account for plants' extraordinary gift for biochemistry, which far exceeds that of animals and, arguably, of human chemists. (Many drugs, from aspirin to opiates, derive from compounds designed by plants.) Unable to run away, plants deploy a complex molecular vocabulary to signal distress, deter or poison enemies, and recruit animals to perform various services for them. A recent study in *Science* found that 75 the caffeine produced by many plants may function not only as a defense chemical, as had previously been thought, but in some cases as a psychoactive drug in their nectar. The caffeine encourages bees to remember a particular plant and return to it, making them more faithful and effective pollinators.

80 One of the most productive areas of plant research in recent years has been plant signalling. Since the early nineteen-eighties, it has been known that when a plant's leaves are infected or chewed by insects they emit volatile chemicals that signal other leaves to mount a defense. Sometimes this warning signal contains information about the identity of the insect, gleaned from the taste of its saliva. Depending on the plant and the attacker, the defense might involve altering the leaf's flavor or texture, or producing toxins or other compounds that render the plant's flesh less digestible to herbivores. When antelopes browse acacia trees, the leaves produce tannins that make them unappetizing and difficult 85 to digest. When food is scarce and acacias are overbrowsed, it has been reported, the trees produce sufficient amounts of toxin to kill the animals. ...

All species face the same existential challenges—obtaining food, defending themselves, reproducing—but under wildly varying circumstances, and so they have evolved wildly

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<sup>9</sup>Mancuso — Stefano Mancuso, Italian plant physiologist

<sup>10</sup>trajectory — a path



## Part 2

### Argument

**Directions:** Closely read each of the **four** texts provided on pages 11 through 17 and write a source-based argument on the topic below. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Write your argument beginning on page 1 of your essay booklet.

**Topic:** Should school recess be structured play?

**Your Task:** Carefully read each of the **four** texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least **three** of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding whether or not school recess should be structured play. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least **three** of the texts to develop your argument. Do *not* simply summarize each text.

#### Guidelines:

##### Be sure to:

- Establish your claim regarding whether or not school recess should be structured play
- Distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims
- Use specific, relevant, and sufficient evidence from at least **three** of the texts to develop your argument
- Identify each source that you reference by text number and line number(s) or graphic (for example: Text 1, line 4 or Text 2, graphic)
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

#### Texts:

Text 1 – The Crucial Role of Recess in School

Text 2 – Why Children Need More Unstructured Play

Text 3 – Study Weighs Benefits of Organizing Recess

Text 4 – Forget Goofing Around: Recess Has a New Boss

## Text 1

### The Crucial Role of Recess in School

...Structured recess is a recess based on structured play, during which games and physical activities are taught and led by a trained adult (teachers, school staff, or volunteers). Proponents<sup>1</sup> for structured recess note that children often need help in developing games and require suggestions and encouragement to participate in physical activities. Recently, policy makers and funding organizations have called for more opportunities for daily activity as a means to address childhood obesity. These statements have strengthened the argument to maintain or reinstate recess as an integral component of the school day. Although this new dimension to the recess debate has increased attention on its role, it also has created tension. Some have promoted recess time as a solution for increasing children's physical activity and combating obesity. If recess assumes such a role, then, like physical education, it will need to be planned and directed to ensure that all children are participating in moderately vigorous physical activity. Pediatric health care providers, parents, and school officials should be cognizant,<sup>2</sup> however, that in designing a structured recess, they will sacrifice the notion of recess as an unstructured but supervised break that belongs to the child; that is, a time for the child to make a personal choice between sedentary, physical, creative, or social options. However, there are many cited benefits of structured recess to consider, including:

- Older elementary children may benefit from game instruction and encouragement for total class inclusion.
- Children can be coached to develop interpersonal skills for appropriate conflict resolution.
- More children can actively participate in regular activity, irrespective of skill level.
- Anecdotally,<sup>3</sup> teachers have reported improved behavior and attention in the classroom after vigorous structured recess.

To be effective, structured recess requires that school personnel (or volunteers) receive adequate training so that they are able to address and encourage the diverse needs of all students. One aspect of supervision should be to facilitate social relationships among children by encouraging inclusiveness in games. A problem arises when the structured activities of recess are promoted as a replacement for the child's physical education requirement. The replacement of physical education by recess threatens students' instruction in and acquisition of new motor skills, exploration of sports and rules, and a concept of lifelong physical fitness.

There are ways to encourage a physically active recess without necessarily adding structured, planned, adult-led games, such as offering attractive, safe playground equipment to stimulate free play; establishing games/boundaries painted on the playground; or instructing children in games, such as four square or hop-scotch. These types of activities can range from fully structured (with the adult directing and requiring participation) to partly unstructured (with adults providing supervision and initial instruction) to fully unstructured (supervision and social guidance). In structured, partly structured, or unstructured environments, activity levels vary widely on the basis of school policy, equipment provided, encouragement, age group, gender, and race. Consequently, the potential benefits of

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<sup>1</sup>proponents — those who support

<sup>2</sup>cognizant — aware

<sup>3</sup>anecdotally — based on casual observation

- 40 mandatory participation of all children in a purely structured recess must be weighed against the potential social and emotional trade-off of limiting acquisition of important developmental skills. Whichever style is chosen, recess should be viewed as a supplement to motor skill acquisition in physical education class. . . .

—Council on School Health  
excerpted from “The Crucial Role of Recess in School,” December 31, 2012  
<http://pediatrics.aapublications.org/>

## Text 2

### Why Children Need More Unstructured Play

The nature of an average child's free time has changed. For the past 25 years kids have been spending decreasing amounts of time outdoors. The time that our kids do spend outdoors is frequently a part of an organized sports activity. Other activities taking up our children's time include indoor lessons and organized events such as music, art and dance lessons. Another big indoor activity, taking up to 7.5 hours a day of our children's time according to a Kaiser Family Foundation study, is electronic entertainment. Of course some of these activities bring joy and fulfillment to our kids, but, in return, time for unstructured play has decreased.

Unstructured play is that set of activities that children create on their own without adult guidance. Children naturally, when left to their own devices, will take initiative and create activities and stories in the world around them. Sometimes, especially with children past the toddler stage, the most creative play takes place outside of direct adult supervision. Unstructured free play can happen in many different environments, however, the outdoors may provide more opportunities for free play due to the many movable parts, such as sticks, dirt, leaves and rocks which lend themselves to exploration and creation.

Some parents find it challenging to provide unstructured play time for their kids. Letting our kids play without constant supervision, especially outside, can be even more difficult. It feels hard to balance reasonable concern, over-vigilance, and the desire to let our kids experience freedom and learn from their own mistakes and experiences. ...

Why might we need to loosen up and get over some of our fears in order to get our kids outdoor unstructured play time? In the January 2005 *Archives of Pediatric and Adolescent Medicine*, Burdette and Whitaker wrote on the importance of free play. They argue that free play promotes intellectual and cognitive growth, emotional intelligence, and benefits social interactions. They describe how play involves problem solving which is one of the highest executive functions. ["]Children plan, organize, sequence, and make decisions," they explain. In addition, play requires attention to the game and, especially in the case of very young children, frequent physical activity. Unstructured play frequently comes from or results in exposure to the outdoors. Surveys of parents and teachers report that children's focus and attention are improved after outdoor physical activity and free play and some small studies suggest that time spent outdoors improves focus in children with ADHD [Attention Deficit Hyperactivity Disorder].

Socialization and emotional intelligence benefit through shared interactions and physical movement that take place during play. Children must work together to decide which game to play, what agreeable rules are, and how to manage scenarios that invariably involve their differing perspectives. This "work" builds the social qualities that we all wish for our children: empathy, self-awareness, self-regulation, and flexibility. Emotional development is promoted along with physical health when people spend time moving. In adults and older children physical activity has been well documented to decrease stress, anxiety, and depression, and to improve overall mood. Though the research is sparse in younger children, it seems likely that our youngest children benefit as well. Free play in toddlers and young children most frequently involves spurts of gross motor activity over a period of time with multiple episodes of rest in between. Most children are smiling and laughing when they engage in play, and it is reasonable to assume that their mood is improved during and after play. ...

—Avril Swan, MD

excerpted and adapted from "Why Children Need More Unstructured Play"

[www.kevinmd.com](http://www.kevinmd.com), July 21, 2011

### Text 3

#### Study Weighs Benefits of Organizing Recess

While an overwhelming number of elementary school principals believe in the power of recess to improve academic achievement and make students more focused in class, most discipline-related problems happen at school when kids cut loose at recess and lunch, according to surveys.

5 One of the solutions, according to a study released this week [2012] by the Robert Wood Johnson Foundation: more, and well-trained, staff on the playground.

The study examines an approach to creating more-structured recess time that is provided by Playworks, based in Oakland, Calif. It finds that the nonprofit organization's program can smooth the transition between recess and class time—giving teachers more time to spend on instruction—and can cut back on bullying in the schoolyard. Teachers in participating schools 10 also reported that their students felt safer and more included at recess, compared with those at schools without the program. . . .

15 The most significant finding shows students who participate in a Playworks-structured recess transition from that to schoolwork more quickly than students in traditional recess, said Susanne James-Burdumy, an associate director of research at Mathematica Policy Research.

“I think it is an exciting set of findings,” Ms. James-Burdumy said. “This is one area where Playworks is aiming to have an impact: specifically trying to improve students’ ability to focus on class activities.”

20 The study found that, on average, teachers at participating schools needed about 2.5 fewer minutes of transition time between recess and learning time—a difference that researchers termed statistically significant. Over the course of a school year, that can add up to about a day of class time.

#### Scaling Up

25 The Robert Wood Johnson Foundation, also based in Princeton, has been funding Playworks since 2005. It helped the program expand from a few schools in Oakland to more than 300 schools in 23 cities, said Nancy Barrand, the foundation’s senior adviser for program development. The goal is to expand into 27 cities and 750 schools.

30 “We’re using a process of scaling where we’ve identified a successful, evidence-based model,” Ms. Barrand said. Playworks “is a pretty common-sense approach. It’s really about the school environment and how you create a healthy school environment for the children,” she continued. “If children are healthy and happy, they learn better.”

Playworks founder and chief executive officer, Jill Vialt, said the idea came from a frustrated principal 15 years ago. The principal had been dealing with the same three students daily because of scuffles and mischief at recess that spilled over into their classes.

35 Ms. Vialt wondered whether creating a little structure at recess could quell some of those ongoing woes. She recalled her own days as a child when a municipal parks and recreation worker named Clarence made sure she—one of the few girls there—was included in the games at a District of Columbia park.

“I wanted to make sure every kid had a Clarence,” she said. . . .

40 The coaches map the area where students spend recess, setting boundaries for different activities, such as kickball. They help children pick teams using random measures, such as students’ birth months, to circumvent emotionally scarring episodes of being chosen based on skill or popularity. If conflicts arise, coaches teach simple ways to settle disputes and preempt some quibbles by teaching games including rock-paper-scissors.

45      Forty percent of the surveyed teachers said students used the rock-paper-scissors game to resolve conflicts or make decisions when they were back in class.

Coaches get involved in the activities, which “makes it possible for kids who don’t see themselves as super-sporty to get into the games themselves,” Ms. Vialet said. “There’s just enough structure for the kids to be successful.”

### Solving Own Problems

50      While adults need to be present and ready to intervene at recess if necessary, said Edward Miller, one of the founding partners of the New York City-based Alliance for Childhood, and Playworks provides that service, children should also have the opportunity for individual and small-group play. . . .

55      The Mathematica study found Playworks has a mixed effect on behaviors related to bullying; Teachers at schools with the program found that there was significantly less bullying and exclusionary behavior during recess than teachers at schools without it, but not a reduction in more general aggressive behavior. Playworks has no formal curriculum that addresses the problem, Ms. Vialet noted.

60      “Our coaches are functioning like the older kids in the play yard used to: teaching kids rules to games, intervening if there is conflict, norming<sup>1</sup> behaviors around inclusion,” she said.

However, researchers also found that teachers’ and students’ perception of aggression and bullying on the playground differed. While teachers observed that there was less name-calling, shoving of classmates, and excluding of some students from games because of Playworks, students didn’t, Mathematica’s Ms. James-Burdumy said. . . .

—Nirvi Shah

excerpted and adapted from “Study Weighs Benefits of Organizing Recess”  
[www.edweek.org](http://www.edweek.org), April 17, 2012

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<sup>1</sup>norming — setting a standard

## Text 4

### Forget Goofing Around: Recess Has a New Boss

Newark — At Broadway Elementary School here, there is no more sitting around after lunch. No more goofing off with friends. No more doing nothing.

Instead there is Brandi Parker, a \$14-an-hour recess coach with a whistle around her neck, corralling children behind bright orange cones to play organized games. There she was 5 the other day, breaking up a renegade game of hopscotch and overruling stragglers' lame excuses.

They were bored. They had tired feet. They were no good at running.

"I don't like to play," protested Esmeilyn Almendarez, 11.

10 "Why do I have to go through this every day with you?" replied Ms. Parker, waving her back in line. "There's no choice."

Broadway Elementary brought in Ms. Parker in January out of exasperation with students who, left to their own devices, used to run into one another, squabble over balls and jump-ropes or monopolize the blacktop while exiling their classmates to the sidelines. Since she started, disciplinary referrals at recess have dropped by three-quarters, to an 15 average of three a week. And injuries are no longer a daily occurrence.

"Before, I was seeing nosebleeds, busted lips, and students being a danger to themselves and others," said Alejandro Echevarria, the principal. "Now, Coach Brandi does miracles with 20 cones and three handballs."

20 The school is one of a growing number across the country that are reining in recess to curb bullying and behavior problems, foster social skills and address concerns over obesity. They also hope to show children that there is good old-fashioned fun to be had without iPods and video games. ...

Although many school officials and parents like the organized activity, its critics say it takes away the only time that children have to unwind. ...

25 Dr. Romina M. Barros, an assistant clinical professor at Albert Einstein College of Medicine in the Bronx who was an author of a widely cited study on the benefits of recess, published last year [2009] in the journal Pediatrics, says that children still benefit most from recess when they are let alone to daydream, solve problems, use their imagination to invent their own games and "be free to do what they choose to do."

30 Structured recess, Dr. Barros said, simply transplants the rules of the classroom to the playground.

"You still have to pay attention," she said. "You still have to follow rules. You don't have that time for your brain to relax." ...

35 Ms. Parker, 28, the coach at Broadway Elementary, had worked as a counselor for troubled teenagers in a group home in Burlington, N.C. Besides her work at recess, she visits each class once a week to play games that teach lessons about cooperation, sportsmanship and respect.

"These are the things that matter in life: who you are as a human being at the core," she said. ...

40 There are three 15-minute recesses, with more than 100 children at a time packed into a fenced-in basketball court equipped with nothing more than a pair of netless hoops.

On a chilly morning, Ms. Parker shoveled snow off the blacktop so that the students could go outside after being cooped up in the cafeteria during recess in the previous week.

She drew squares in blue and green chalk for a game called switch, a fast-paced version of musical chairs — without the chairs. (She goes through a box of chalk a week.)

Ms. Parker, who greets students with hugs and a cheerful “hello-hello,” keeps the rules simple so that they can focus on playing rather than on following directions. “We’re trying to get them to exert energy, to get it all out,” she said. “They can be as loud as they want. I never tell them to be quiet unless I’m telling them something.” ...

—Winnie Hu

excerpted and adapted from “Forget Goofing Around: Recess Has a New Boss”

[www.nytimes.com](http://www.nytimes.com), March 14, 2010

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## Part 3

### Text-Analysis Response

**Your Task:** Closely read the text provided on pages 19 and 20 and write a well-developed, text-based response of two to three paragraphs. In your response, identify a central idea in the text and analyze how the author's use of **one** writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis. Do *not* simply summarize the text. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and scrap paper to plan your response. Write your response in the spaces provided on pages 7 through 9 of your essay booklet.

#### Guidelines:

##### Be sure to:

- Identify a central idea in the text
- Analyze how the author's use of **one** writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Examples include: characterization, conflict, denotation/connotation, metaphor, simile, irony, language use, point-of-view, setting, structure, symbolism, theme, tone, etc.
- Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis
- Organize your ideas in a cohesive and coherent manner
- Maintain a formal style of writing
- Follow the conventions of standard written English

## Text

The following excerpt from the memoir of a South Pole explorer includes quotations from his diary.

...Then came a fateful day — Wednesday, October 27. The position was lat. [latitude] 69° 5' S., long. [longitude] 51° 30' W. The temperature was -8.5° Fahr. [Fahrenheit], a gentle southerly breeze was blowing and the sun shone in a clear sky. "After long months of ceaseless anxiety and strain, after times when hope beat high and times when the outlook  
5 was black indeed, the end of the *Endurance* has come. But though we have been compelled to abandon the ship, which is crushed beyond all hope of ever being righted, we are alive and well, and we have stores and equipment for the task that lies before us. The task is to reach land with all the members of the Expedition. It is hard to write what I feel. To a sailor  
10 his ship is more than a floating home, and in the *Endurance* I had centred ambitions, hopes, and desires. Now, straining and groaning, her timbers cracking and her wounds gaping, she is slowly giving up her sentient<sup>1</sup> life at the very outset of her career. She is crushed and abandoned after drifting more than 570 miles in a north-westerly direction during the 281 days since she became locked in the ice. The distance from the point where she became  
15 beset<sup>2</sup> to the place where she now rests mortally hurt in the grip of the floes<sup>3</sup> is 573 miles, but the total drift through all observed positions has been 1186 miles, and probably we actually covered more than 1500 miles. We are now 346 miles from Paulet Island, the nearest point where there is any possibility of finding food and shelter. A small hut built there by the Swedish expedition in 1902 is filled with stores left by the Argentine relief ship.  
20 I know all about those stores, for I purchased them in London on behalf of the Argentine Government when they asked me to equip the relief expedition. The distance to the nearest barrier west of us is about 180 miles, but a party going there would still be about 360 miles from Paulet Island and there would be no means of sustaining life on the barrier. We could not take from here food enough for the whole journey; the weight would be too great.

"This morning, our last on the ship, the weather was clear, with a gentle south-south-easterly to south-south-westerly breeze. From the crow's-nest there was no sign of land of any sort. The pressure was increasing steadily, and the passing hours brought no relief or respite<sup>4</sup> for the ship. The attack of the ice reached its climax at 4 p.m. The ship was hove<sup>5</sup> stern up by the pressure, and the driving floe, moving laterally across the stern, split the rudder and tore out the rudder-post and stern-post. Then, while we watched,  
30 the ice loosened and the *Endurance* sank a little. The decks were breaking upwards and the water was pouring in below. Again the pressure began, and at 5 p.m. I ordered all hands on to the ice. The twisting, grinding floes were working their will at last on the ship. It was a sickening sensation to feel the decks breaking up under one's feet, the great beams bending and then snapping with a noise like heavy gunfire. The water was overmastering  
35 the pumps, and so to avoid an explosion when it reached the boilers I had to give orders for the fires to be drawn<sup>6</sup> and the steam let down. The plans for abandoning the ship in case of emergency had been made well in advance, and men and dogs descended to the floe and made their way to the comparative safety of an unbroken portion of the floe without a hitch.  
40 Just before leaving, I looked down the engine-room skylight as I stood on the quivering deck, and saw the engines dropping sideways as the stays and bed-plates gave way. I cannot

<sup>1</sup>sentient — conscious

<sup>2</sup>beset — hemmed in

<sup>3</sup>floes — ice sheets

<sup>4</sup>respite — rest

<sup>5</sup>hove — heaved

<sup>6</sup>drawn — closed

describe the impression of relentless destruction that was forced upon me as I looked down and around. The floes, with the force of millions of tons of moving ice behind them, were simply annihilating the ship.” ...

“To-night the temperature has dropped to  $-16^{\circ}$  Fahr., and most of the men are cold and uncomfortable. After the tents had been pitched I mustered all hands and explained the position to them briefly and, I hope, clearly. I have told them the distance to the barrier and the distance to Paulet Island, and have stated that I propose to try to march with equipment across the ice in the direction of Paulet Island. I thanked the men for the steadiness and good *morale* they have shown in these trying circumstances, and told them I had no doubt that, provided they continued to work their utmost and to trust me, we will all reach safety in the end. Then we had supper, which the cook had prepared at the big blubber stove, and after a watch<sup>7</sup> had been set all hands except the watch turned in.” For myself, I could not sleep. The destruction and abandonment of the ship was no sudden shock. The disaster had been looming ahead for many months, and I had studied my plans for all contingencies<sup>8</sup> a hundred times. But the thoughts that came to me as I walked up and down in the darkness were not particularly cheerful. The task now was to secure the safety of the party, and to that I must bend my energies and mental power and apply every bit of knowledge that experience of the Antarctic had given me. The task was likely to be long and strenuous, and an ordered mind and a clear programme were essential if we were to come through without loss of life. A man must shape himself to a new mark directly the old one goes to ground. ...

—Sir Ernest Shackleton  
excepted and adapted from *South*, 1920  
The MacMillan Company

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<sup>7</sup>watch — crewman who stays awake on guard all night

<sup>8</sup>contingencies — possibilities

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