

VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING

Spring 2008 Released Test

GRADE 8 WRITING

Form W0118, CORE 1

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Directions

Read the passage. Then read each question about the passage and choose the best answer. Fill in the circle on your answer document for the answer you have chosen.

SAMPLE A

A Special Person

In English class, Sarah has been asked to write a description of someone special to her. Sarah wants to write about her older brother.

Which of these would *best* help Sarah write her description of her older brother?

- A** Calling his friends and telling them about him
- B** Thinking about all the things she likes about him
- C** Making a list of things she wants him to do for her
- D** Asking him to take her to the library

SAMPLE B

Here is the first part of Sarah's rough draft.

(1)A special person in my life is my big brother. (2)His name is Ben. (3)He is tall and thin.

How can sentences 1 and 2 *best* be combined?

- F** A special person in my life is Ben, my big brother.
- G** A special person in my life is my big brother and Ben is who he is.
- H** In my life a special person is my big brother and he is Ben.
- J** My big brother Ben is a special person, he is in my life.

SAMPLE C

Here is the next part of Sarah's rough draft.

(4)He helps me with my homework. (5)He is a good student.

In sentence 4, He helps should be written —

- A** He were helping
- B** He have helped
- C** He help
- D** As it is

Directions

You do not need to read a passage to answer the following question. Read and answer the question.

SAMPLE D

Read this sentence.

The race proved that Lee was a more fast runner than Bob.

In this sentence, more fast should be written —

- F** faster
- G** fastest
- H** more faster
- J** As it is

The Interview

Mei's English teacher asks the class to write a realistic short story. Mei decides to write about an experience her friend Amy had in middle school.

Mei makes this story map. Use it to answer question 1.

Title:	The Interview
Characters:	Amy, a reporter for the school newspaper Mr. Warren, her science teacher Susanna Leigh, an author
Problem:	Amy cannot find the right person to interview for her article.
Events:	Amy must choose someone to interview. Amy schedules an interview with Susanna Leigh. Susanna Leigh does not show up. Amy decides to interview Mr. Warren.
Resolution:	Amy interviews Mr. Warren and finds that he is interesting after all.

1 Which of these is missing from Mei's story map?

- A** What happens in the story?
- B** Who is the main character in the story?
- C** Where does the story take place?
- D** How is the problem solved?

Here is the first part of Mei’s rough draft. Use it to answer questions 2–5.

(1) Amy was excited! **(2)** As a reporter for her middle school newspaper, *The Blaze*, she had been asked to interview someone and write an article about that person. **(3)** Once a month, with an interesting adult from the community, *The Blaze* publishes an interview. **(4)** Last month a student had interviewed a local figure skater who had just made the United States Olympic Team. **(5)** The only problem bothering Amy was that she had no idea whom to interview.

(6) Amy didn’t want to interview just anyone. **(7)** Mr. Warren, her science teacher, was always telling the reporters that they should interview him. **(8)** “Why not me? **(9)** I’m an interesting guy!” he would say, his brown eyes twinkling under his bushy eyebrows. **(10)** Unfortunately, Amy didn’t think her fellow students would agree. **(11)** She had no intention of writing about Mr. Warren.

(12) Amy searched for the perfect idea all afternoon. **(13)** Finally, it came to her. **(14)** However, Amy wasn’t worried about meeting her deadline. **(15)** Her next-door neighbor’s cousin was Susanna Leigh, a published author. **(16)** Who could be more interesting than she? **(17)** With her neighbor’s help, Amy set up an interview with Susanna. **(18)** Unfortunately, the only time Susanna could meet with Amy was two days before Amy’s article was due. **(19)** She always wrote her articles quickly.

(20) Amy arranged to meet Susanna on a Wednesday afternoon. **(21)** They were meeting at a restaurant called Billy’s Burgers. **(22)** At 3:30 p.m., the time they had agreed on, Amy was sitting in a booth with her list of questions in front of her. **(23)** Twenty-five minutes crawled by. **(24)** *Where was Susanna?* **(25)** Feeling dread in the pit of her stomach, she was not coming.

2 How can Mei *best* rewrite sentence 3 to make it clearer?

- F** Once a month *The Blaze* publishes an interview with an interesting adult from the community.
- G** From the community once a month, *The Blaze* publishes an interview with an interesting adult.
- H** *The Blaze* once a month, with an interesting adult from the community, publishes an interview.
- J** Once a month *The Blaze* publishes, with an interesting adult from the community, an interview.

3 Mei decides to add this sentence to her rough draft.

After all, how interesting could a fifty-year-old science teacher be?

The *best* place for her to insert this sentence is after —

- A** sentence 6
- B** sentence 7
- C** sentence 11
- D** sentence 13

4 Mei notices that sentence 14 is in the wrong place. She should add it after —

- F** sentence 15
- G** sentence 16
- H** sentence 17
- J** sentence 18

5 How can Mei *best* rewrite sentence 25 for clarity?

- A** Feeling dread in the pit of her stomach, because Susanna was going to miss the interview.
- B** As she was feeling dread in the pit of her stomach, Susanna was going to miss the interview.
- C** Amy knew Susanna, feeling dread in the pit of her stomach, was going to miss the interview.
- D** Feeling dread in the pit of her stomach, Amy knew Susanna was going to miss the interview.

**Go to the next
page and continue
working.**

Read the next part of Mei’s rough draft and use it to answer questions 6–11. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these groups of underlined words.

(26)“Is there an Amy Jones here?” called a big man wearing the greasiest apron Amy had ever seen. (27)“She has a phone call.”

(28)Amy knew what they would hear even before she picked up the phone.

(29)Sure enough, it was her neighbor on the line. (30)“I’m sorry, Amy, but Susanna won’t be able to meet with you today after all. (31)She had an important meeting with the editor of her new book.

(32)After she hung up, Amy sat glumly in the booth for another few minutes.

(33)Her interview was due in two days, and she didn’t have anyone to write about.

(34)A desperate voice in her head said, *How about Mr. Warren?*

(35)The next day Amy asked Mr. Warren if she could interview him after school.

(36)He happily agreed. (37)Amy had expected him to have many boring stories about how he became a teacher, but to their surprise, she found herself laughing several times. (38)It turned out that the stories Mr. Warren told was interesting after all. (39)After he graduated from high school, he spent time working on a fish farm in Alaska. (40)He had also been in the United States Air Force for a time and knew how to fly a plane. (41)On weekends he sometimes performed stand-up comedy at a family restaurant in a neighboring town.

(42)Amy found herself smiling as her pen flew over the paper. (43)She did her best to keep up with her teacher’s enthusiastic recollections. (44)Neither she nor her fellow students had known the real Mr. Warren at all. (45)Now, she would have the privilege of introducing him to her school.

6 In sentence 28, how is they correctly written?

- F** her
- G** she
- H** we
- J** As it is

7 Read sentences 30 and 31 from Mei's rough draft.

"I'm sorry, Amy, but Susanna won't be able to meet with you today after all. She had an important meeting with the editor of her new book.

How is her new book. correctly written?

- A** her new book".
- B** her "new book."
- C** her new book."
- D** As it is

8 In sentence 37, how is their surprise correctly written?

- F** there surprise
- G** her surprise
- H** his surprise
- J** As it is

9 In sentence 38, how is was interesting correctly written?

- A** were interesting
- B** is interesting
- C** being interesting
- D** As it is

10 In sentence 40, how is United States Air Force correctly written?

- F** United States air force
- G** united states air force
- H** United States Air force
- J** As it is

11 In sentence 41, how is neighboring correctly written?

- A** nieghboring
- B** neighboring
- C** neighborhing
- D** As it is

Help Our Book Drive

Abigail belongs to a school service club and is responsible for recruiting volunteers for the annual book drive. She decides to write a letter to the students to persuade them to become involved.

- 12 It would be appropriate for Abigail to cover all the following topics in her letter EXCEPT —**
- F** how to get more information
 - G** the purpose of the book drive
 - H** which books she read last year
 - J** what tasks volunteers will have to do
- 13 Abigail would like to include a quotation in her letter to persuade people to help. Which of these would most likely be the *best* source for such a quotation?**
- A** *Why Are People So Lazy?*
 - B** *The Pleasures of Volunteering*
 - C** *Helping Kids With Conflict*
 - D** *The Best Books of the Year*

Here is the first part of Abigail’s draft of her letter. Use it to answer questions 14–16.

(1)Dear Fellow Students,

(2)It is time again for the service club’s annual book drive. **(3)**The service club sponsors many wonderful community projects and has great parties. **(4)**In past years you may have seen the large book-collection boxes in the halls and walked right by.

(5)This year, I am writing to ask you to please consider helping! **(6)**There are so many reasons to donate a few hours of your time.

(7)The book drive is a worthy cause. **(8)**The books are gathered for children at the Sunshine Childcare Center and will be given to these children. **(9)**The Sunshine Center serves children in kindergarten through fifth grade. **(10)**Many of these children are not fortunate enough to have their own books. **(11)**Your used books will help solve this problem.

(12)We urgently need your contributions of reading material at the lower reading levels. **(13)**Donate books you have outgrown or already read. **(14)**Please take a little time to look through your bookshelves and select a few books you no longer need.

(15)If you have a younger brother or sister, you could also ask him or her to donate a couple of books. **(16)**As a result, one person’s unwanted items can be another person’s treasure.

14 Which sentence in paragraph 1 should Abigail delete because it does *not* belong?

- F** Sentence 2
- G** Sentence 3
- H** Sentence 4
- J** Sentence 5

15 How can Abigail *best* combine sentences 9 and 10 without changing their meaning?

- A** The Sunshine Center serves children and they are in kindergarten through fifth grade, and many of these children are not fortunate enough to have their own books.
- B** Unfortunately, the Sunshine Center serves children in kindergarten through fifth grade and they are not enough to have their own books.
- C** The Sunshine Center serves children in kindergarten through fifth grade, many of whom are not fortunate enough to have their own books.
- D** The Sunshine Center serves unfortunate children who do not have their own books who are in kindergarten through fifth grade.

16 In sentence 16, As a result does *not* correctly link ideas. Which of these transitional words should Abigail use instead?

- F** Remember
- G** Unfortunately
- H** Recently
- J** Currently

Read the next part of Abigail’s draft and use it to answer questions 17–24. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these underlined words.

(17)You will, believe me, feel glad you helped. (18)This is the best way I knew to share your love of reading with others. (19)We know that the children treasure the books that are donated. (20)Even if you don’t have any used books to donate, there are other ways to help. (21)Our group needs people to set up collection boxes pick up the books at the end of the week, and deliver the books to the Sunshine Center. (22)We will located the boxes at the front entrance, outside the library, and in the hall beside Ms. Longstrom’s classroom. (23)To make room for new donations, these boxes will be emptied twice a week.

(24)Last year our club did not have enough help for this drive and only a few people did all the work. (25)Though these students felt that their service was rewarding, this year they lack the time to do it all themselves. (26)If, after this letter, there is still not enough volunteers, we may have to cancel the drive. (27)Neither the service club or the Sunshine Center wants that to happen! (28)Please consider generously giving a few hours of your time this year. (29)More information about the book drive’s dates and collection procedures will be sent home soon. (30)In the meantime, if you would like to volunteer, contact Ms. Longstrom or me.

Sincerely,

Abigail Lucas
Abigail Lucas

17 In sentence 18, how is knew correctly written?

- A** will know
- B** have known
- C** know
- D** As it is

18 In sentence 21, how is set up collection boxes pick up the books correctly written?

- F** set up collection boxes, pick up the books
- G** set up collection boxes, pick up, the books
- H** set up collection, boxes, pick up the books
- J** As it is

19 In sentence 22, how is will located correctly written?

- A** have located
- B** will locate
- C** is located
- D** As it is

20 In sentence 23, how is emptied correctly written?

- F** empty
- G** emptied
- H** emptyey
- J** As it is

21 In sentence 24, how is drive and only correctly written?

- A** drive, and only
- B** drive and only,
- C** drive, and only,
- D** As it is

22 In sentence 25, how is themselves correctly written?

- F** ourselves
- G** themselves
- H** themselfs
- J** As it is

23 In sentence 26, how is there is correctly written?

- A** there are
- B** there isn't
- C** there were
- D** As it is

24 In sentence 27, how is Neither the service club or the Sunshine Center correctly written?

- F** Neither the service club nor the Sunshine Center
- G** Both the service club and the Sunshine Center
- H** The service club and the Sunshine Center neither
- J** As it is

