VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING

Test Item Set

GRADE 8 WRITING

2010 English Standards of Learning

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General Information

- 1. The images of the passages and questions in this document reflect how they appear in the online version of the test.
- 2. Presentation of the passages and questions:

In the online version of the test-

- the passage is presented first on the left side of the screen. On subsequent screens, the
 passage remains on the left while questions associated with the passage are presented
 on the right.
- students may navigate through the passage while answering the questions associated with the passage.

In this document-

• the passage is presented on the left side of the page. On subsequent pages, the questions associated with the passage are presented on the right, but there is not a static image of any part of the passage on the left; there is text that reads: In the online version of the test, the passage appears on the left side of the screen.

Lipizzaner Horses

Antonio's teacher asks students to write a report about an unusual animal. Antonio writes about Lipizzaner horses.

SAMPLE A

The best source for more information about the characteristics of Lipizzaner horses would probably be a —

- A timeline showing important dates in the development of Lipizzaners
- B book titled Lipizzaners: A History in Photographs
- C documentary titled The Elegant and Intelligent Lipizzaner
- D chart picturing the specialized dance moves performed by Lipizzaners

(1) Among horse breeds, the Lipizzaner is unique in its ability to thrill audiences with acrobatic jumps and dances. (2) Research indicates that this beautiful grayish-white breed most likely originated hundreds of years ago in the Andalucía Region of Spain. (3)During the 16th century, Austrian noblemen began breeding Spanish horses in the town of Lipizza. (4) The Spanish Riding School a specialized training program for these talented horses was created in 1572. (5)In 1735 the Austrians built a permanent structure in Vienna for this purpose. (6) Throughout World War II, combat threatened the safety of both the school and the horses. (7) Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue. (8) He saved the Lipizzaners. (9) Today, centuries of breeding and training are on display as these horses perform around the world.

Read Antonio's rough draft, and use it to answer the questions.

(1)Among horse breeds, the Lipizzaner is unique in its ability to thrill audiences with acrobatic jumps and dances. (2) Research indicates that this beautiful grayish-white breed most likely originated hundreds of years ago in the Andalucía Region of Spain. (3)During the 16th century, Austrian noblemen began breeding Spanish horses in the town of Lipizza. (4) The Spanish Riding School a specialized training program for these talented horses was created in 1572. (5)In 1735 the Austrians built a permanent structure in Vienna for this purpose. (6) Throughout World War II, combat threatened the safety of both the school and the horses. (7) Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue. (8) He saved the Lipizzaners. (9) Today, centuries of breeding and training are on display as these horses perform around the world.

SAMPLE B

Read sentence 2.

Research indicates that this beautiful grayish-white breed most likely originated hundreds of years ago in the Andalucía Region of Spain.

Which correction should be made to this sentence?

- A Change indicates to indicated.
- B Add a comma after <u>breed</u>.
- C Add a comma after ago.
- D Change Region to region.

(1) Among horse breeds, the Lipizzaner is unique in its ability to thrill audiences with acrobatic jumps and dances. (2) Research indicates that this beautiful grayish-white breed most likely originated hundreds of years ago in the Andalucía Region of Spain. (3) During the 16th century, Austrian noblemen began breeding Spanish horses in the town of Lipizza. (4) The Spanish Riding School a specialized training program for these talented horses was created in 1572. (5)In 1735 the Austrians built a permanent structure in Vienna for this purpose. (6) Throughout World War II, combat threatened the safety of both the school and the horses. (7) Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue. (8) He saved the Lipizzaners. (9) Today, centuries of breeding and training are on display as these horses perform around the world.

Directions: Click and drag the comma into the correct location within the sentence. There may be one or more correct locations.

SAMPLE C

Punctuate sentence 4 correctly.

The Spanish Riding School a specialized training program for these talented horses was created in 1572.



(1) Among horse breeds, the Lipizzaner is unique in its ability to thrill audiences with acrobatic jumps and dances. (2) Research indicates that this beautiful grayish-white breed most likely originated hundreds of years ago in the Andalucía Region of Spain. (3) During the 16th century, Austrian noblemen began breeding Spanish horses in the town of Lipizza. (4) The Spanish Riding School a specialized training program for these talented horses was created in 1572. (5)In 1735 the Austrians built a permanent structure in Vienna for this purpose. (6) Throughout World War II, combat threatened the safety of both the school and the horses. (7) Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue. (8) He saved the Lipizzaners. (9) Today, centuries of breeding and training are on display as these horses perform around the world.

SAMPLE D

Read sentences 7 and 8.

(7)Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue. (8)He saved the Lipizzaners.

How are these sentences best combined without changing the meaning?

- A Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue because he saved the Lipizzaners.
- B Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue and saved the Lipizzaners.
- C Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue until he saved the Lipizzaners.
- D Consequently, American General George S. Patton led a daring rescue but saved the Lipizzaners.

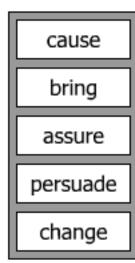
Directions: You do not need to read a passage to answer the question. Read and answer the question. Click on the correct answer.

SAMPLE E

Read this sentence.

Her cheerful smile and positive attitude help get people to agree with her ideas.

In this sentence, which word should replace <u>get</u> to be most specific?



Count Your Steps

Cora writes a letter to encourage participation in the Count-Your-Steps walking program at her school. Her letter will appear in the school's monthly newsletter, Star Rocket News and Notes.

Which key words should Cora use for an Internet search about walking programs for middle school students?

- A students, middle school, exercise
- B walking, middle school, students
- C exercise, middle school, programs
- D walking, programs, middle school

23 Sunset Boulevard Troy, VA 22974 January 12, 2014

Editor, Star Rocket News and Notes 1224 Sail Drive Troy, VA 22974

Dear Students of Star Middle School:

(1)As your student council president, I am writing to ask for your support. (2)Beginning February 16, 2014 our school will join the Count-Your-Steps walking program. (3)Mr. Stewart Thomas, a parent of two students at Star Middle School and a local radio announcer, initially proposed the idea. (4)Mr. Thomas is a fan of walking and wants to encourage others to appreciate the activity. (5)He shared his Count-Your-Steps plan with our principal, Ms. Howser, who immediately agreed that we should try it. (6)Besides, the story does not end there.



(7)Ms. Howser contacted the other middle schools in the area, and all the faculty and staff eagerly adopted the program. (8)Now a team of Count-Your-Steps <u>organizers made up of representatives from the middle schools, has established</u> the program's goal: to increase awareness of the benefits of walking. (9)Organizers want middle school students to accept this challenge and vary their daily routines to include walking.

enjoyable for everyone. (11)Interested participation painless and enjoyable for everyone. (11)Interested participants will learn that the main requirement of the program is simple, and they must only commit to recording the number of steps taken daily. (12)Ms. Earley, the assistant principal, will give each of us a log for recording our steps and a pedometer, which is a small, digital tool that automatically counts the steps of the person wearing it. (13)All participants need to do each day is wear the pedometer, walk as much as possible, and then record the number of steps in your logs. (14)Clearly, the process is simple and convenient.



(15)Mr. Thomas plans to involve the community as well. (16)On his radio show, he will explain the program and invite the residents of the city to join. (17)Each week until the end of March, he will announce the updated number of steps for each middle school. (18)By then he hopes that walking will become an important part of daily routines.

(19)Researchers have confirmed that walking can make us feel better in many ways. (20)First of all, studies have shown that walking regularly can improve a person's overall mood. (21)Walking provides a positive outlet for our pent-up energies, thereby reducing daily stress and promoting a sense of relaxation. (22)After each workout, participants will notice that they not only sleep better at night but also have more energy the next day. (23)In addition, joining the program involves setting and achieving a goal, which boosts self-confidence.



(24) While the benefits of walking are numerous, this challenge offers all who participate the opportunity to work together, achieve success, and make positive changes. (25) Remember that the other middle schools in the district are doing the Count-Your-Steps thing too, and you know they will try to show us how it is done. (26) I hope many will agree to this challenge and show everyone the Star Middle School Cougar spirit.

(27)Please take into careful consideration this valuable and well-planned program, and then sign up today! (28)In the words of Mr. Thomas, "Together we can enjoy the advantages of walking."

Sincerely,

Cora Jeffries

Cora Jeffries

Read sentence 2.

Beginning February 16, 2014 our school will join the Count-Your-Steps walking program.

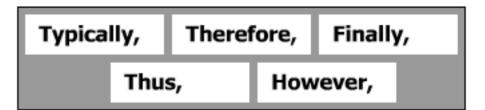
In this sentence, how is February 16, 2014 our school correctly written?

- A February 16, 2014, our school
- B February 16, 2014 our school,
- C February 16, 2014, our school,
- D As it is

Directions: Click and drag the correct answer to the shaded area.

In sentence 6, which word would best replace Besides,?

Besides, the story does not end there.



Read sentence 8.

Now a team of Count-Your-Steps organizers made up of representatives from the middle schools, has established the program's goal: to increase awareness of the benefits of walking.

In this sentence, how is <u>organizers made up of</u> representatives from the middle schools, has established correctly written?

- A organizers, made up of representatives from the middle schools has established
- B organizers, made up of representatives from the middle schools, has established
- C organizers made up of representatives, from the middle schools, has established
- O D As it is

Read sentence 10.

The program's clear guideline's make participation painless and enjoyable for everyone.

Which correction should be made to this sentence?

- A Change guideline's to guidelines.
- O B Change make to makes.
- C Change and to but.
- O D Change for to by.

Read sentence 13.

All participants need to do each day is wear the pedometer, walk as much as possible, and then record the number of steps in your logs.

In this sentence, how is your correctly written?

- O A its
- O B our
- O C their
- O D As it is

Read sentence 25.

Remember that the other middle schools in the district are doing the Count-Your-Steps thing too, and you know they will try to show us how it is done.

How can Cora best revise this sentence for appropriate tone?

- A Remember that the other kids from all the area schools are doing this Count-Your-Steps challenge, too, and we want to take more steps than all those guys.
- B Keep in mind that the middle schools from our district are competing in the Count-Your-Steps contest, so, think about how they will try to outdo us.
- C Do not forget that everybody from the other middle schools around us are doing the Count-Your-Steps deal, too, and they are really going to try to put us to shame.
- D Remember that the other middle schools in the district are signed up for the Count-Your-Steps program too, and each one will endeavor to take more steps than our school.
 7 of 23

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

Read this sentence.

Amanda looked in many places for her keys, but, she never found them.

In this sentence, how is keys, but, she correctly written?

- A keys but she
- B keys but, she
- C keys, but she
- O D As it is

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

Read this sentence.

Melvin gave the free concert tickets to him, her, and me.

In the sentence, how is to him, her, and me correctly written?

- A to him, her, and I
- **B** to he, she, and I
- C to he, she, and me
- D As it is

The Tree House

Eli's teacher asks the students to write about a time they had to work hard to accomplish something. Eli decides to write about building a tree house. Directions: Click on the correct shaded answer.

Which website would be most helpful for learning how to build a tree house?

Search: Tree houses

Results: 1–5 of 600

Tree House Outfitters

Customize your **tree house** with rope swings, trap doors, zip lines, and . . .

Tree House Images

Stunning images of **tree houses** around the country by local photographer. Now on display at the children's museum of . . .

Tree House Ideas

Free easy-to-follow plans for **tree house** designs. Ideas for using recycled materials as well as . . .

Tree House Prices

Best prices for **tree house** materials. Choose from our huge inventory to find everything you need . . .

Tree House Contest

Tree houses from around the world will be judged in four separate categories including construction, style . . .

- (1)Last summer, I decided to build a tree house in my backyard.
- (2) With the hard work, money, and time required, I knew this would be my most challenging undertaking ever! (3) Nonetheless, I was determined to find a way to make it happen. (4) Although I had wanted my own tree house for years, I had never thought of building it myself. (5) I was finally old enough to handle the strenuous work this project required.
- (6) The first task was to make sure the old oak tree in my backyard was sturdy enough to accommodate the structure I planned to build.
 (7) My father assured me the tree was the perfect size to bare the weight of my tree house. (8) Furthermore, he said he would be happy to help me with sawing the wood and nailing the boards.
 (9) We decided I would be responsible for all the measuring, sanding,

Read Eli's rough draft, and use it to answer the questions that follow.

and painting.



(10)Next, I checked out a few library books about building tree houses. (11)The books showed some incredible designs people had drawn. (12)I collected ideas from several books, then drew a sketch of what I thought would be the perfect tree house for me. (13)The structure would include wooden floors, side rails covered with wire mesh, and a tin roof. (14)After looking carefully at my sketch, my father helped me finalize measurements. (15)We also made a list of materials we would need.

(16)At Barney's, the local lumberyard, we were pleasantly surprised to learn that the supplies were less expensive than we had expected. (17)The earnings I saved from summer jobs mowing lawns, pet sitting, and delivering newspapers provided enough money to buy everything on the list. (18)Using a trailer we borrowed from a neighbor, we were able to transport all the materials in one trip.



(19)At last it was time to construct the tree house. (20)Before cutting the boards, my father showed me how to measure and mark them. (21)On the following day Dad sawed and I nailed the boards to the big oak tree. (22)Once we finished the floor, putting the railing and the roof in place seemed easy. (23)In less than two weeks, we had completed our project, and I told my father how much I appreciated all his help. (24)He smiled and said, Eli, I'm proud of you, Son!

(25)To celebrate, my father planned a weekend campout in the backyard for some friends and me, and, of course, we spent most of our time in the tree house. (26)Without a doubt, I am certain that building a tree house was worth every bit of planning, hard work, and money I put into it.



Directions: Click on the shaded word that is NOT correct.

Which word is used incorrectly in sentence 7?

My father assured me the tree was the perfect size to bare the weight of my tree house.

Read sentence 21.

On the following day Dad sawed and I nailed the boards to the big oak tree.

In this sentence, how is following day Dad sawed and I nailed the boards to correctly written?

- A following day Dad sawed, and I nailed, the boards to
- B following day, Dad sawed and I nailed the boards to
- C following day, Dad sawed and I nailed, the boards to
- O D As it is

Directions: Click and drag the quotation marks into the correct locations within the sentence.

How is sentence 24 correctly punctuated?

He smiled and said, Eli, I'm proud of you, Son !



Read sentence 26.

Without a doubt, I am certain that building a tree house was worth every bit of planning, hard work, and money I put into it.

How is this sentence best rewritten to eliminate needlessly repeated information?

- A Without a doubt, I am sure building a tree house was worth every bit of planning, hard work, and money I put into it.
- B Without a doubt, building a tree house was worth every bit of planning, hard work, and money I put into it.
- C Without a doubt, building a tree house was unquestionably worth every bit of planning and hard work I put into it.
- D Without a doubt, building a tree house definitely was worth every bit of planning, hard work, and money I put into it.

History of Broadway

Lewis is the president of the drama club. He prepares an article for the school newspaper about the history of Broadway theater.

(1)When people think of Broadway, they may think of that segment of the world-famous road in New York City that runs between 42nd and 53rd Streets. (2)However, Broadway is much more than a geographical location. (3)It is a billion-dollar industry that includes theatrical shows in New York and live theater entertainment throughout the world. (4)In fact, the shows produced on Broadway have brought them fame throughout the world. (5)New York's Theater District has only 39 official Broadway houses. (6)On the other hand, not all Broadway theaters are located on Broadway. (7)A playhouse must have 500 or more seats to be considered a Broadway theater. (8) In the late 1700s and early 1800s, buildings on Wall Street and places such as City Hall may have served as smaller theaters, and other locations in downtown New York City also did.



(9) The Broadway that people know today started when influential families contributed money toward the development of larger theaters away from the downtown area. (10) There were some who may have doubted that the theaters would be successful because they were located so far from the center of the city. (11) In 1880 the Mallory family built one of the first successful playhouses in the area and named it Madison Square Theater. (12) With the rise of the new theater district, downtown changed forever as people happily traveled to the outskirts of the city to see the best in live entertainment.

(13)When these theaters began, many actors came from European countries. (14)Plays and operettas followed a popular style that encouraged exaggerated characters and plots. (15)These shows consisted of character portrayals of cheerful, young maidens, despised villains, and clever, energetic heroes.





(16)In 1857 actor Edwin Booth helped transform the Broadway theater by popularizing a type of acting called realism. (17)Unlike actors from the generation that preceded him, Booth did not stand still on the stage and simply deliver his lines. (18)Instead, he liked moving around and showing great emotion while acting. (19)Booth's style had a notable affect on the theater, and many considered him to be the greatest actor of his time.

(20)As this new style grew in popularity, the content of Broadway shows began to change. (21)Comedies and dramas often centered on then-current events such as Prohibition, women's right to vote, the Harlem Renaissance, the Labor Movement, and war.



(22)Broadway evolved again in 1866, when William Wheatley, a theatrical manager, created the American art form known as the Broadway musical. (23)Wheatley changed the drama into a musical extravaganza. (24)For the first time, actors entertained their audiences by singing and dancing while being accompanied by an orchestra.

(25)Broadway has offered enjoyment and cultural enrichment for decades. (26)Known throughout the world, Broadway is a showcase for elaborate theater productions and moving performances.





Read sentence 4.

In fact, the shows produced on Broadway have brought them fame throughout the world.

In this sentence, how is <u>them</u> correctly written?

- A it
- B this
- C our
- D As it is

Which sentence should be added after sentence 7 to provide the best supporting details?

- A Theaters that hold between 100 and 499 people are designated Off-Broadway theaters.
- B Today theater performances may occur in buildings or even in Central Park.
- C Theaters with over 1,000 seats are sometimes known as auditoriums.
- D Today City Hall is used primarily for government work.

Read sentence 8.

In the late 1700s and early 1800s, buildings on Wall Street and places such as City Hall may have served as smaller theaters, and other locations in downtown New York City also did.

Which is the best way to revise this sentence for clarity?

- A Buildings on Wall Street may have served as smaller theaters in the late 1700s and early 1800s, and also places such as City Hall and other locations in downtown New York City.
- B In the late 1700s and early 1800s, buildings on Wall Street, including City Hall and other locations in downtown New York City, may have served as smaller theaters.
- C In the late 1700s and early 1800s, buildings on Wall Street may have served as smaller theaters, and also places such as City Hall and other locations in downtown New York City.
- D Buildings on Wall Street and other locations in downtown New York City may have served as smaller theaters in the late 1700s and early 1800s, and also places such as City Hall.

Read sentence 11.

In 1880 the Mallory family built one of the first successful playhouses in the area and named it Madison Square Theater.

In this sentence, how is Mallory family built one of the first successful playhouses in the area and named it Madison Square Theater correctly written?

- A Mallory Family built one of the first successful playhouses in the area and named it Madison Square Theater
- B Mallory Family built one of the first successful playhouses in the area and named it Madison Square theater
- C Mallory family built one of the first successful playhouses in the area and named it Madison Square theater
- O D As it is

Read sentence 19.

Booth's style had a notable affect on the theater, and many considered him to be the greatest actor of his time.

Which correction should be made to this sentence?

- A Change Booth's to Booths.
- O B Change <u>had</u> to <u>has</u>.
- C Change affect to effect.
- O D Change his to their.

Directions: Click and drag the correct answer to the shaded area.

Which transition should Lewis insert at the beginning of sentence 21?

comedies and dramas often

centered on then-current events such as

Prohibition, women's right to vote, the Harlem

Renaissance, the Labor Movement, and war.

Additionally,

Specifically,

For this reason,

Similarly,

Otherwise,

Gourds

(1) Gourds, which are the hollowed-out shells of certain dried fruits, come in a variety of shapes, sizes, and colors. (2) For thousands of years people have used gourds. (3)People have used them in many different ways. (4)Ancient Africans discovered that large gourds made fine containers and served well as floats for their fishnets. (5) They also used gourds as spoons, plates, canteens, and ornaments. (6)Creek Indians in America prized kettle-shaped gourds as birdhouses. (7) These cozy homes attracted birds that devoured insects, therefore protecting the crops. (8) Many cultures have appreciated gourds for their natural musical properties. (9)A unique orchestra has even recorded compact discs of music played most exclusively on gourds.

This is a section from a draft of a student's report. Use it to answer the questions that follow.

Read sentences 2 and 3.

(2)For thousands of years people have used gourds. (3)People have used them in many different ways.

How are these sentences best combined?

- A Even though they can be used in many different ways, people have used gourds for thousands of years.
- B For thousands of years people have used gourds in many different ways.
- C Using them in many different ways, for thousands of years, people have used gourds.
- D The gourds, which people have used for thousands of years, can be used in many different ways.

In sentence 8, how is <u>have appreciated</u> correctly written?

- A will be appreciating
- B will appreciate
- C have been appreciating
- D As it is

Read sentence 9.

A unique orchestra has even recorded compact discs of music played most exclusively on gourds.

In this sentence, how is most exclusively correctly written?

- A exclusively
- B more exclusively
- C much more exclusively
- D As it is