

VIRGINIA STANDARDS OF LEARNING

Spring 2010 Released Test

GRADE 8 WRITING

Form W0110, CORE 1

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Directions

Read the passage. Then read each question about the passage and choose the best answer.

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

Dinosaur Diner

Zane’s English teacher asks the students to write a personal narrative about something that happened last summer. Zane decides to write about a surprising event that happened during his visit to California.

1 Which of the following will *most* help Zane organize his writing?

- A** Making a web of words associated with his visit
- B** Charting the differences between this summer and last
- C** Listing all the information he knows about California
- D** Outlining his experiences in California

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

(1) Last summer my twin brother Zack and I visited our aunt and uncle in California. (2) On the first day of our visit, Aunt Wanda went to work. (3) She told Uncle Hank and us to meet her for lunch before she left, and she seemed excited. (4) To be honest, Zack and I had been hoping to visit some of the famous movie studios we had read about before our trip. (5) Okay, so like visiting our aunt for lunch at her job seemed like a total drag. (6) At 11:30 A.M. sharp, however, the three of us left the house.

(7) “How can you tell which building is Aunt Wanda’s?” I asked as we passed block after block of identical warehouses. (8) Uncle Hank agreed that they all looked alike, but he pulled into a parking lot, and we went into a building. (9) We climbed a flight of stairs, walked through a heavy metal door, and found Aunt Wanda. (10) As we were talking, Aunt Wanda introduced Zack and me to her boss, a man she called Bill.

(11) Bill asked us if we would like a tour before lunch. Uncle Hank and Aunt Wanda both smiled as though a warehouse were something special.

(12) Zack just smiled, so I said, “Sure, that would be great,” though I was still thinking about the movie studios.

(13) We walked through a long corridor, down a flight of stairs, and came to a huge garage door, which Bill opened by pushing a button. (14) As the door slid upward, and our eyes adjusted to the light, I was surprised. (15) Glaring down at us was a huge *Tyrannosaurus rex* with its mouth wide open.

(16) “Meet T. J.,” Bill said. (17) “He guards the place. (18) Come on,” he added, waving his arm at Zack and me, “there’s more.”

2 How is sentence 3 *best* revised for clarity?

- F** She seemed excited before she left for lunch and told Uncle Hank and us to meet her.
- G** She told Uncle Hank and us to meet her before she left for lunch and seemed excited.
- H** Before she left, she seemed excited when she told Uncle Hank and us to meet her for lunch.
- J** Telling Uncle Hank and us, she seemed excited to meet her before lunch when she left.

3 How is sentence 5 *best* revised for appropriate tone?

- A** So visiting our aunt for lunch at her job was going to be totally boring.
- B** Visiting our aunt for lunch at her job seemed like it was such a bummer.
- C** Visiting our aunt at her job for lunch did not seem very interesting.
- D** Like visiting our aunt for lunch at her job was not going to be fun.

4 How can Zane *best* rewrite sentence 11?

- F** Bill asked us if we would like a tour before lunch, Uncle Hank and Aunt Wanda were both smiling as though a warehouse were something special.
- G** Uncle Hank and Aunt Wanda were both smiling as though a warehouse were something special, Bill asked us if we would like a tour before lunch.
- H** As though a warehouse were something special, Uncle Hank and Aunt Wanda both smiled Bill asked us if we would like a tour before lunch.
- J** When Bill asked us if we would like a tour before lunch, Uncle Hank and Aunt Wanda both smiled as though a warehouse were something special.

5 Which revision of sentence 14 uses the *most* vivid language?

- A** The door moaned as it gradually slid upward, and as our eyes adjusted to the dim, muted light, my jaw almost hit the floor.
- B** As the door slid open and upward slowly, and our eyes adjusted to the light, and then I was really very shocked by what I saw.
- C** As the door opened upward, and our eyes adjusted to the light, I was dumbfounded.
- D** The door slid upward as our eyes adjusted to the light, and I was amazed.

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page and continue
working.**

Read the next part of Zane’s rough draft and use it to answer questions 6–12. This section has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about these groups of underlined words.

(19)By this time, we were wondering if our tour of this amazing warehouse was just a dream. (20)As we walked under T. J.’s shadow, we came face to face with another *T. rex*. (21)This one’s head was on the floor, and Bill walked right into its open mouth.

(22)“Wow,” I said, following him and reaching out to touch the sharp teeth.

(23)“This looks just like the *T. rex* in *Jurassic Park*.” Zack said.

(24)Bill said, “Actually, this big *T. rex* is from *Jurassic Park II*. (25)The dinosaurs I made for *Jurassic Park* are all packed away in crates.”

(26)“You made the dinosaurs?” Zack and I asked in unison, starring at him. (27)Bill nodded, and then I noticed the stacks and stacks of huge wooden crates against the wall, with fangs, claws, and tails visible through the slats. (28)I suddenly realized who our host was. (29)He was Bill Perry, one of the most greatest special-effects designers in movie history.

(30)After visiting more incredible creatures from our favorite movies, Bill showed us how they were created. (31)First he demonstrated the moves of an alien creature that he was designing with a computer program. (32)Then we watched your regular special-effects team spray layers of plastic onto the aluminum skeleton of a robotic bear. (33)Following that, we toured the model shop where intricate miniature models of spaceships, submarines, and a medieval castle were standing in various stages of completion. (34)Zack and I followed Bill around, speechless with awe.

(35)“Enjoy your lunch,” Bill said cheerful as he ushered us into the conference room. (36)“But don’t feed the animals!” he said with a wink. (37)He switched on the light to reveal a long conference table piled with food. (38)Around the room stood life-size models of every kind of animal that Zack or me could imagine. (39)As we ate our lunch surrounded by movie monsters, I felt very grateful that my Aunt Wanda works in a movie warehouse.

6 In sentence 20, how is shadow, we came face to face correctly written?

- F** shadow we came face to face
- G** shadow we came, face to face
- H** shadow we came, face to face,
- J** As it is

7 In sentence 23, how is Jurassic Park." Zack correctly written?

- A** *Jurassic Park"*, Zack
- B** *Jurassic Park,"* Zack
- C** *Jurassic Park"* Zack
- D** As it is

8 In sentence 26, how is starring correctly written?

- F** staring
- G** stairing
- H** stareing
- J** As it is

9 In sentence 29, how is most greatest correctly written?

- A** more greater
- B** greater
- C** greatest
- D** As it is

10 In sentence 32, how is your correctly written?

- F** our
- G** its
- H** his
- J** As it is

11 In sentence 35, how is said cheerful correctly written?

- A** said cheerfully
- B** saying cheerful
- C** says cheerfully
- D** As it is

12 In sentence 38, how is Zack or me correctly written?

- F** Zack or I
- G** Zack or us
- H** Zack or myself
- J** As it is

The Potato Chip: A Consuming Interest

Fran's home economics teacher asks the students to write a paper about the origins of a popular food. Fran decides to write about potato chips.

13 After Fran researches her topic and makes notes, she should —

- A** arrange her notes in alphabetical order
- B** search the library for information
- C** proofread her final draft
- D** write an outline for her draft

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page and continue
working.**

Here is the first part of Fran’s rough draft. Use it to answer questions 14–17.

(1) Potato chips, which are popular almost everywhere today, had an unusual origin. (2) The crispy snack came about because of a complaint and an argument. (3) An American named George Crum is credited with inventing potato chips.

(4) In 1853, Crum worked in Saratoga Springs, New York, as the chef at the Moon Lake Lodge restaurant. (5) One day a customer sent his serving of fried potatoes back to the chef. (6) The customer complained that the potatoes should have been sliced thinner.

(7) Chef Crum prepared another serving of thinner fried potatoes. (8) The customer again returned them. (9) By this time, Crum was angry. (10) He thinly sliced a large number of potatoes and then salted and fried them until they were crunchy. (11) His aim was to irritate the demanding customer. (12) To Crum’s surprise, the customer loved them. (13) The man even requested more. (14) Afterwards, the customer left the restaurant to tell everyone about the delicious, crunchy new food.

14 Which sentence should be added after sentence 3 to elaborate the main idea of the paragraph?

- F** Potato chips have been popular for many years.
- G** Unfortunately, he often argued with his friends.
- H** Years ago, potato chips had not been invented.
- J** He did not, however, intend to invent anything.

15 How are sentences 5 and 6 *best* combined without changing their meaning?

- A** One day a customer sent his serving of fried potatoes back to the chef who complained that they should have been sliced thinner.
- B** One day a customer sent his serving of fried potatoes back to the chef, complaining that they should have been sliced thinner.
- C** One day a customer sent his serving of fried potatoes back to the chef until he complained that they should have been sliced thinner.
- D** One day a customer sent his serving of fried potatoes back to the chef, yet he complained that they should have been sliced thinner.

16 In sentence 9, which of these is the *most* descriptive replacement for the underlined word?

- F** bothered
- G** upset
- H** furious
- J** moody

17 Which sentence should Fran add after sentence 13 to support the main idea of the paragraph?

- A** Crum, to give the man what he wanted, sliced the potatoes as thin as he could.
- B** Although Crum intended to upset the man, he had given him exactly what he wanted.
- C** Crum knew, however, that the man wanted the potatoes to be sliced very thin.
- D** As a result, Crum was even more intent on serving him exactly what the man had wanted.

Read the second part of Fran’s draft and use it to answer questions 18–23. This part has groups of underlined words. The questions ask about the groups of underlined words.

(15)No one knows exactly how Crum reacted to the experience. (16)What is known is that Crum named his new dish “potato crunches,” although locally they became known as Saratoga Chips. (17)When Crum opened a new restaurant, he put baskets of his chips on all the tables. (18)Some people claimed, however, that potato crunches were not even on the menu. (19)People who are aware of the success of the potato chip industry think it strange that Crum never patented his Saratoga Chips.

(20)For the rest of the 1800s, Saratoga Chips were served mainly in restaurants. (21)In the early 1900s, things changed, and several companies around the United States began making potato chips. (22)They sold them to neighborhood stores. (23)The chips were sold from barrels, boxes, and glass cases.

(24)An important advance in the potato chip industry comes in 1926, when Laura Scudder developed the waxed paper bag at her potato chip factory in California. (25)Scudder had her workers take home sheets of waxed paper to make into small bags. (26)The workers used their clothing irons to iron the sheets of paper. (27)The heat from the irons quickly melted the wax, causing the sheets of paper to stick together. (28)The next day, the workers hand packed potato chips into the bags, but the job was not quite finished. (29)The tops were then sealed with heated irons. (30)The bags kept the chips more fresher than barrels so they could be shipped to customers far away.

(31)Three years later, a new type of fryer allowed further developement in the cooking of potato chips. (32)Until 1929, potato chips were cooked in small kettles. (33)Cooking small batches with preparation time between them made production slow. (34)With the continous fryer, many more chips could be cooked at the same time. (35)Today, people all over the country enjoy the tasty snack. (36)Although the potato chip began as an accident it is now one of America’s most popular snack foods.

18 In sentence 24, how is comes correctly written?

- F** will come
- G** came
- H** had come
- J** As it is

19 In sentence 26, how is irons to iron correctly written?

- A** irons, to iron
- B** irons to iron,
- C** irons to, iron
- D** As it is

20 In sentence 30, how is more fresher correctly written?

- F** most freshest
- G** freshest
- H** fresher
- J** As it is

21 In sentence 31, how is developement correctly written?

- A** development
- B** develepment
- C** develpment
- D** As it is

22 In sentence 34, how is continous correctly written?

- F** continuous
- G** continuos
- H** continueos
- J** As it is

23 Read the sentence.

Although the potato chip began as an accident it is now one of America's most popular snack foods.

In sentence 36, how is accident it is correctly written?

- A** accident it, is
- B** accident, it is
- C** accident it, is,
- D** As it is

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

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

24 Read this sentence.

Of all the subjects in school, I do better in math.

In this sentence, how is better correctly written?

- F** most well
- G** best
- H** more well
- J** As it is