



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction

English Language Arts Item Sampler Grade 3



Safe Slumber

Sleep is one of the most important things people do. It allows our bodies to heal themselves. Sleep also allows our bodies to rest. Without sleep, even simple jobs can be difficult. Other animals need sleep too!

A big problem for animals that live in the wild is staying safe while they sleep. Animals take care of this problem in different ways. Many animals hide themselves. Others have special ways of protecting themselves while they sleep.

A Safe Sleeping Bag

Parrotfish live among coral reefs in oceans. Finding a safe place to sleep at night can be tricky because many predators are active at night, like moray eels. Every night, parrotfish usually sleep close to the rock in sheltered places like cracks. Some parrotfish go one step further to protect themselves by making a slime layer that covers their whole bodies. This covering acts like a sleeping bag and can provide a barrier that helps keep the parrotfish safe.

Set the Alarm

Anolis lizards live in many areas including tropical rain forests. They often sleep on leaves at the end of long branches. A leaf might seem like a strange bed, but it works like an alarm to keep the lizard safe. If a hungry snake wiggles a branch, the lizard wakes up and leaps to safety.

Building a Bed

Chimpanzees take their sleep very seriously. They want a comfortable bed that will allow them to have a good night's sleep. Scientists believe that chimpanzees carefully choose a tree that is strong. In this tree they build a nest. The nest is built using branches and leaves. Each day a chimpanzee builds itself a new, comfortable bed to sleep in.

Sleeping on the Job

Bottle-nosed dolphins have a special problem. They need to sleep, but they have to be on the ocean's surface to breathe. They also need to watch over their young so that nothing will harm them. What do they do? While half of the dolphin's brain sleeps, the other half stays awake. This allows a dolphin to rest while slowly swimming along, breathing at the surface and watching over its young. After a couple of hours, the sleeping half of the dolphin's brain wakes up while the other half snoozes.

The most amazing sleep belongs to a seabird called the sooty tern. Sooty terns nest on islands. When they are not nesting, they live for many years in the sky and on the surface of the sea. When and where can they sleep? Scientists believe that the sooty terns are able to sleep while they are flying. This allows them to rest while staying out of the reach of predators.

Scientists still have a lot to learn about sleep. One thing is sure, though: most animals need sleep to stay healthy. Remember that the next time you want to stay up late.

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Where Do Animals Sleep?

Many people sleep snugly in their beds. But where do the animals that live in the wild sleep? Many wild animals sleep in the same area that they spend their days. Their habitats, or places where the animals live, are where animals are most safe.

Animals That Sleep in Trees

Sleeping in a tree can help to keep an animal safe. High up in the treetop, many animals are able to keep a distance from their enemies. It is not surprising that many birds choose to sleep in trees. Some hide in holes. Others find a branch to rest on.

Other animals sleep in trees too. Many chimpanzees build nests out of branches and vines in the trees. Each night a chimpanzee will build itself a new nest. Some kinds of squirrels also sleep in trees. Their nests are often made of leaves.

Animals That Sleep Upside Down

Some animals sleep upside down. Sloths hold on by their toes or claws and hang upside down from tree branches. Hanging upside down helps the sloth hide from predators.

Bats sleep hanging upside down too. They sleep inside caves, trees, or even barns or attics. By hanging upside down, bats are ready to take flight if they are in danger.

Insects That Sleep on Flowers or Plants

Some animals use their colors to blend in. This way, they cannot be seen while they sleep. Some butterflies sleep on flowers. Some bees sleep inside flowers or under leaves. These two insects blend in with flowers very well.







Animals That Sleep in the Water

Some birds that live in or near water will sleep standing in the water. It is believed that sleeping on their feet allows these birds to take off quickly if they are in any danger. When birds sleep with only their feet in the water, it may help them to look like sticks in the water. This tricks predators into thinking they are sticks and not something the predators would like to eat.

Fishes sleep in many different ways. Some rest on the lake or sea bottom, and some bury themselves in the sand or mud. This way of sleeping also works as a disguise. It can help fishes to hide from their enemies. Fishes sleep with their eyes open because they have no eyelids.

Fishes and mammals, insects and birds—each creature on the planet has its own special place to sleep. Sweet dreams!

How Much Sleep Do Animals Need Each Day?

					
giraffe	bottle-nosed dolphin	chimpanzee	sloth	squirrel	brown bat
about 2 hours	about 10 hours	about 10 hours	about 14 hours	about 15 hours	about 20 hours

Go on to the next page.

TDA Prompt:

Both “Safe Slumber” and “Where Do Animals Sleep?” tell about ways that different animals sleep. Write an essay explaining why animals sleep in different ways. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response in your essay.

Writer’s Checklist

Text Dependent Analysis (TDA)

The Writer’s Checklist is available as an online tool during the TDA. Students may also be provided with a hard copy of the checklist (available on the [Forward Exam Resources webpage](#)) as long as it is then treated as secure testing materials and securely destroyed immediately after the testing session.

PLAN before you write

- Read the entire passage(s) carefully.
- Read the question carefully.
- Think about how the question relates to the passage(s).
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map or outline to plan your essay.
- Plan to include multiple paragraphs in your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze and explain what you think about the information from the passage(s) in your essay.
- Support and develop the ideas in your essay by using text evidence from the passage(s).
- Use correct language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions between paragraphs in your essay.
- Organize your essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- ☐ I re-read the question and my final essay answers the question.
- ☐ I included my own thoughts and ideas in my essay.
- ☐ I included evidence from the passage(s) to support my ideas in my essay.
- ☐ I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.
- ☐ I used correct language, a variety of sentence types, and paragraph transitions in my essay.

STOP.



STOP.

Answer the questions.

1. Read the sentence.

Janell, I am glad we are going to be on the same basketball team, Krista said with a smile.

Which revision correctly adds quotation marks to the sentence?

- A. “Janell, I am glad we are going to be on the same basketball team, Krista said with a smile.”
 - B. “Janell, I am glad we are going to be on the same basketball team,” Krista said with a smile.
 - C. Janell, “I am glad we are going to be on the same basketball team”, Krista said with a smile.
 - D. Janell, “I am glad we are going to be on the same basketball team, Krista said with a smile”.
2. A student is writing a report about the human body. Read the paragraph from the report.

(1) The human body has over 200 bones. (2) Together, the bones of the body are known as the skeleton.

(3) Bones give the body its shape. (4) They help to protect the organs inside the body.

(5) _____ , they allow for some types of movement.

Which word would **best** show how sentence 5 connects with sentences 3 and 4?

- A. Besides
- B. Also
- C. Therefore
- D. Since

Go on to the next page.

3. Read the paragraph from a student's research report about Sonja Henie.

Sonja Henie was only 5 years old when she won her first ice-skating contest. She went to the Olympics when she was 11 but finished in last place. She kept working hard to improve her skills. In the next three Olympic Games—in 1928, 1932, and 1936—she was the skating champion. After she quit skating, she worked as an actress and as a businesswoman.

Which source would most likely give the student more information about the life of Sonja Henie?

- A. a book called *Ice-Skating Stars*
- B. a website about the history of the Olympics
- C. a book called *Learn How to Skate Like a Pro*
- D. a website for a nearby ice-skating rink



STOP.

Listen to the presentation that your teacher reads to you from Appendix A. Then answer the questions.

Life in the Flamingo Flock

1. Which detail supports the idea that flamingo parents have a special bond with their chick?
 - A. They use mud to build a nest and keep the chick in it for a week.
 - B. They take the chick to meet the other chicks in the flock.
 - C. They recognize their chick's voice and come quickly if they hear it.
 - D. They take the chick to the flock to make sure it is safe from predators.

2. According to the presentation, which statement is true?
 - A. The only place to see a flamingo is at a zoo.
 - B. If flamingos ate different foods, they would not be pink.
 - C. Most of a flamingo's day is spent searching for food.
 - D. The reason why flamingos stay in large groups is because they cannot fly.

STOP.



STOP.

Read the following passage. Then answer the questions. You may look back at the passage to help you answer the questions.

Rainy Day Surprise

One rainy day, two merchants named Leah and Pablo opened their shop doors to begin the day's business. They each stood in front of their stores, wishing for customers. Sadly, the chilly, wet weather had chased all the villagers inside. Not one person walked down the cobblestone street.

"Rainy days are bad for business," Leah told Pablo. She often shared her opinion with him.

"But our trees needed water," Pablo responded. He always tried to find a positive side in every situation.

Before Leah could reply, she noticed a dog. The shaggy, wet animal was limping down the street towards them. Its head was hanging low and its tail drooped.

"Shoo," Leah told the dog. She did not want the dog around if a customer came to her store.

Pablo, however, patted the dog's head. "Would you like to come inside and rest?" he asked the furry visitor. Its tail slowly wagged.

"Don't be foolish," Leah warned Pablo. "You should not go looking for trouble. Dogs don't belong inside shops."

"It looks like it is cold and lost, and I have no customers to worry about," Pablo reasoned. He led the animal through the door.

Once they were inside the store, Pablo said to the dog, "I will find a towel to dry your fur."

Pablo hurried toward his supply room. However, a moment later, there was a terrific crashing sound. Pablo sprinted back into the shop. The dog had knocked over a display of pans. It was gobbling down a stale cookie that Pablo had left on the top shelf.

"I guess you were more interested in a meal than dry fur," Pablo smiled. The dog barked and licked its lips.

As Pablo looked for something else to feed the dog, Leah poked her head into the shop. She had heard the crash. With a knowing look, she surveyed the mess.

"You should have listened to my advice," Leah said.

"At least the metal pans cannot break," Pablo chuckled.

"Humph," Leah said. She turned around and left.

The dog happily finished the lunch that Pablo gave him. Then Pablo dried and brushed its fur. Pablo was starting to pick up the pans when a boy named Sam entered his shop. At once, the dog barked with joy.

"Prince!" Sam shouted. He stooped to hug the excited dog. "We've been looking everywhere for you."

Go on to the next page.

Sam ran back to the shop door. He opened it and called out, “I’ve found Prince!”

A moment later, Sam’s entire family was crowding into Pablo’s shop. They had all been searching for the missing pet. Pablo explained to them how he had invited Prince inside and given him lunch.

As Pablo told his story, Sam’s mother, Ida, noticed the pans that were still scattered across the floor. She knew Prince likely caused the disaster.

“We will thank you by cleaning your shop,” Ida said. Before Pablo could refuse, Ida organized her family. She gave them jobs of straightening, sweeping, and polishing.

When the busy crew finished, Pablo could not stop grinning. His pans sparkled and his windows gleamed. The goods on his shelves stood in neat and tidy rows.

After that, Ida and her family filled their arms with Pablo’s wares. They bought soap, pails, pans, dishes, and candles. As Pablo wrapped their purchases in paper, he whistled merrily. His shop had earned record sales.

Finally, the family left Pablo’s shop with Prince. Leah watched the parade of people walk down the street with their packages. At the sight, a dark cloud seemed to settle over her face. She had not had many customers that day.

“No act of kindness is ever wasted,” Pablo told Leah gently. “Let me treat you to dinner so I can share my good fortune with you.”

Leah paused for a moment. Perhaps, she should try listening to Pablo’s advice. His face always wore a content smile. “Yes, I’ll dine with you,” Leah said in a thankful voice. “I’m sure you’ll agree that it is never too late to learn new ways,” she added with her own fresh smile.

Go on to the next page.

1. Read the sentence from the passage.

Sadly, the chilly, wet weather had chased all the villagers inside.

What does the sentence mean?

- A. The weather seemed to follow people.
 - B. People wanted to stay indoors because of the weather.
 - C. The weather caused people to run to a dry place.
 - D. People felt bothered by the type of weather outside.
2. How does the action of Pablo letting the dog into his shop add to the sequence of events?
- A. It leads to good things happening to Pablo.
 - B. It allows Pablo to see that Leah is right.
 - C. It leads to a mess that Pablo cleans up.
 - D. It allows Pablo to teach friends how to work.

Go on to the next page.

3. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Which sentence **best** states the central message of the passage?

- A. Kindness to others will be rewarded.
- B. People do not always get what they want.
- C. Beauty is sometimes hidden.
- D. Animals can help make people happy.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A. They each stood in front of their stores, wishing for customers.
- B. Then Pablo dried and brushed its fur.
- C. At once, the dog barked with joy.
- D. His shop had earned record sales.

Go on to the next page.

Read the following passage. Then answer the questions. You may look back at the passage to help you answer the questions.

Nature's Builders

Some people are builders. They use wood, brick, metal, and other materials to build the things we need, like homes, schools, and roads. Many other living creatures are builders too. They use mud, plants, and more to build homes that are just right for them.

Birds

- 2 Most birds build nests. A kind of bird called a killdeer makes its nest by scraping a shallow hole in sand or gravel. The bird and its chicks then rest inside the hole. Other birds build their nests out of twigs, grass, or their own feathers. Red ovenbirds use mud to build a bowl-shaped nest. This mud bowl rests high in the top branches of a tree. The sun bakes the mud so that it becomes hard, helping to protect the birds.
- 3 Believe it or not, there is a kind of bird that builds something that seems like a bird city. This bird, called the social weaver, lives in Africa. Groups of these birds work together to build hundreds of nests. The nests are made from grass and sticks. They look like a big stack of hay hanging up in a tree.
- 4 Most species of birds make their own style of nest. Cowbirds and cuckoos are different, however. Instead of building their own nests, they lay their eggs in nests that other species of birds have already made!

Insects

There is a type of bug called a termite. Termites build huge structures. In Australia, these ant-like insects chew wood and mix it with mud. Then they pack the mixture into mounds that may be up to 30 feet tall. That's as tall as a three-story building! The mounds have tunnels running through them. These tunnels let air inside, keeping the middle of the tower cool. Underneath the mounds are more tunnels running through the ground. The termites use some tunnels as gardens to grow plants for food.

Some wasps also use mud for building. One type of wasp called a mud dauber makes a round, cup-shaped nest out of mud. Mud daubers may join together several of these mud nests. Another kind of mud dauber builds long, hollow tubes of mud with small holes in them. The holes are usually for storing eggs or food. Meanwhile, the paper wasp chews wood and plant stems and uses them to create a nest. This football-shaped nest hangs from a tree branch. The outside of it looks as if it were covered with layers of rough gray paper.

Go on to the next page.

Other Animals

A muskrat is an animal that lives in wet, swampy areas. It looks a little bit like a squirrel or a groundhog, but it has a long, dark tail. Some muskrats dig caves along the bank of a lake or stream. Others make lodges to live in out of plants. The lodge is round and is partly above the water. The muskrats must swim underwater to reach the entrance. The floor of the lodge is still above the water, allowing the muskrats to breathe air.

Prairie dogs live together in large communities. Hundreds of them may live in the same small area! They dig long passages underground. These passages connect one room to another. Some rooms are for sleeping, while others are for storing food. There are many entrances to these rooms too. Prairie dogs sometimes poke their heads above ground to look around. When they see danger, they can bark a warning to all the others. Like the homes of many other animals, the prairie dog's home can help it to survive.

The living spaces that all of these birds, insects, and other animals create can be truly amazing to see. Each is different, but it is the perfect place for the creatures that live there.

Go on to the next page.

4. Which sentence **best** describes the connection between paragraphs 2, 3, and 4 of the passage?
- A. Paragraphs 2 and 3 describe a problem with bird nests and paragraph 4 tells how the problem is fixed.
 - B. Paragraphs 2 and 3 describe different bird nests and paragraph 4 tells how the nests protect the birds.
 - C. Paragraphs 2 and 3 describe the materials birds use to make nests and paragraph 4 tells the steps for how they build the nests.
 - D. Paragraphs 2 and 3 describe how different birds build nests and paragraph 4 tells how two types of birds use the nests made by other birds.
5. According to the passage, what is the purpose of the tunnels in the mounds of Australian termites? Choose **two** answers.
- A. to make the mound taller
 - B. to help the inside of the mound stay cool
 - C. to store the eggs that the termites lay
 - D. to give the termites a place to grow food
 - E. to protect the termites from other insects

Go on to the next page.

6. What is the author's purpose in this passage?
- A. to explain how building makes animals different from people
 - B. to tell stories about creatures that like to build
 - C. to explain the different types of homes that creatures build
 - D. to compare how bird nests are different than what insects build



STOP.

APPENDIX A—LISTENING PASSAGE: LIFE IN THE FLAMINGO FLOCK

Educators should read the following passage out loud to their students. The passage may be read more than once. Educators should NOT read the items out loud to the students. Students should answer items independently.

Life in the Flamingo Flock

A flock of pink flamingos atop long, graceful legs wades through a lake. There are thousands of them. Suddenly, they begin marching together in one direction, like trained dancers. Then they all turn around and march the other way, stretching their necks and turning their heads.

This performance is more than just a dance show; it helps each flamingo to select a mate. Similar movements draw the birds together. Before long, two birds touch beaks and form a pair.

The pair then uses mud to build a large nest near the shore. The nest looks like a small mountain with a shallow hole on top, where the female soon lays one egg.

When the chick hatches, both parents care for it. After one week, the chick joins other young birds in the flock. The flock works together to guard the chicks from predators. If a chick calls, its parents arrive quickly. Flamingo parents can recognize their chick's voice in the big, noisy flock.

For the first few years, the chick's feathers are white or gray. However, when the growing chick starts eating fishy food, its feathers slowly turn pink, gaining their color from the food.

Flamingos feast on tiny plants called algae, as well as on insects and shellfish. To find a meal, the flamingo first kicks at the muddy lake bottom. It turns its head upside down to dip its beak into the water to scoop up the water and food. Then it uses its tongue to push the water out, while stiff hairs inside the beak work like a net to trap the food. Dinner is served.

Flamingos can be seen at many zoos, but large flocks of these beautiful birds live near lakes in warm places around the world, like Africa and South America. What an amazing sight it must be for the lucky people who view these flamingo flocks in the wild.

APPENDIX B—SUMMARY DATA

Grade 3

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 1				
1	CCSS- 1:3.W.2		3	Students need to use the information from two informational passages to explain a concept.
Session 2				
1	CCSS-1: 3.L.2c	B	2	Students need to choose the revision of the sentence that uses quotation marks correctly. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not use quotation marks correctly.
2	CCSS-1: 3.W.2c	B	2	Students need to identify the correct linking word to connect the ideas in the sentences. Option B is the correct response. The other options do not correctly link the ideas.
3	CCSS-1: 3.W.8	A	2	Students need to identify the source where they could gather more information about the topic. Option A is the correct answer. The other options would not provide much information or relevant information on the topic.
Session 3				
1	CCSS-1: 3.SL.2	C	3	After listening to the presentation, students need to determine the best supporting detail for the idea that flamingo parents have a special bond with their chick. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not provide support for the special bond flamingo parents have with their chick.
2	CCSS-1: 3.SL.3	B	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to identify the statement that is true. Option B is the correct answer. The other statements do not provide true statements.

Grade 3

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 4				
1	CCSS-1: 3.RL.4	B	2	Students need to determine the meaning of the sentence. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not provide the meaning of the sentence.
2	CCSS-1: 3.RL.3	A	3	Students need to describe how Pablo's action contributes to the sequence of events. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not identify how Pablo's action contributes to the sequence of events.
3	CCSS-1: 3.RL.2	A/D	2	Students need to determine the central message of the passage and then find support. In Part A, option A is the correct answer. The other options are not the central message. In Part B, option D is the correct answer. The other options in Part B do not support the central message from Part A.
4	CCSS-1: 3.RI.8	D	2	Students need to describe the relationship between paragraphs. Option D is the correct answer. The other options do not describe the relationship between the paragraphs.
5	CCSS-1: 3.RI.1	B/D	1	Students need to demonstrate an understanding of the text by choosing two correct answers. The correct answers are B and D. The other options do not explain the purpose of the tunnels in the mounds of Australian termites.
6	CCSS-1: 3.RI.6	C	2	Students must distinguish the author's purpose in the text. Option C is the correct answer. The other options are not the author's purpose.

APPENDIX C—SAMPLE LISTENING STIMULUS COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Informational Stimulus—Life in the Flamingo Flock

Grade 3

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative Easy Listening Formula (ELF) indicates that this document is at least suitable for a *reader* at the 4th grade, fifth month of class completed level. Research shows students can *listen* two to three grade levels higher than they can read. The qualitative review supports grade 3 based on the clarity of the topic and simple organization of the concepts presented in the audio stimulus. Based on these sets of measures, this audio stimulus is of medium complexity and is recommended for assessment at grade 3.

PURPOSE

Purpose: Low Complexity

Audience: Low Complexity

Presentation: Low Complexity

AUDITORY STRUCTURE

Organization of Audio Text: Medium Complexity

Sound Variety: audio not available at this time

ORAL LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Medium Complexity

Vocabulary: Medium Complexity

Delivery: audio not available at this time

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

Subject Matter Knowledge: Medium Complexity

Allusions/References: Low Complexity

Use of Images: N/A

Listening Stimulus Rubric

The ELA State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) developed the following qualitative measures rubric for listening stimuli. The rubric examines the following criteria judged as central to students' successful comprehension of audio stimuli: purpose, auditory structure, oral language features, and knowledge demands. Each of these categories is ranked based on descriptors associated with the following levels: low complexity, medium complexity, and high complexity.

Grade 3

Qualitative Measures Rubric for Listening Stimuli			
Features	Low Complexity	Medium Complexity	High Complexity
Purpose	Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus	Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete	Purpose: Subtle, implied, theoretical elements
	Audience: Speaker's approach is straightforward and transparent	Audience: Speaker's approach is somewhat layered and may include elements intended to persuade or influence audience	Audience: Speaker may include a variety of persuasive techniques; speaker may direct the message to multiple audiences, and the listener must decipher the meaning on more than one level
	Presentation: A single speaker presents the information	Presentation: Two or more speakers interact. Their patterns of communication may influence the meaning and flow of information	Presentation: Two or more speakers interact. The juxtaposition of the speakers may reveal a contrast or otherwise influence the meaning

Grade 3

Qualitative Measures Rubric for Listening Stimuli			
Features	Low Complexity	Medium Complexity	High Complexity
Auditory Structure	Organization of Audio Text: Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict.	Organization of Audio Text: Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential	Organization of Audio Text: Connections between a range of ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline; organization may be different from chronological or sequential (i.e., cause/effect, problem/solution, compare/contrast)
	Sound Variety: Sound is distinct and approach is direct	Sound Variety: Sound is somewhat layered. Overlapping voices or sounds require listener to integrate sounds for fullest understanding	Sound Variety: Sound is multi-layered. Overlapping voices, music, or sounds provide context that listener needs to process (such as foreground noise, background noise, or music)
Oral Language Features	Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand	Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning	Conventionality: Complex; contains some specialized abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language
	Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language	Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or academic	Vocabulary: Complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or academic
	Delivery: Mainly direct, with simple declarative sentences	Delivery: Somewhat variable—at times, speaker changes pitch and volume to create emphasis	Delivery: Varied. Shifts in tone may be subtle and complex, requiring interpretation

Grade 3

Qualitative Measures Rubric for Listening Stimuli			
Features	Low Complexity	Medium Complexity	High Complexity
Knowledge Demands	Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas	Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas; knowledge of speaker may affect interpretation of content	Subject Matter Knowledge: Discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts; knowledge of speaker or source affects interpretation of content
	Allusions/References: No references or allusions to other texts, or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Allusions/References: Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Allusions/References: Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.
	Use of Images: a range of images that help student understanding	Use of images: minimal use of images that help student understanding	Use of images: no use of images that help student understanding

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APPENDIX D—SAMPLE LITERARY PASSAGE TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS**Literary Passage—Rainy Day Surprise****Grade 3****Recommended Placement for Assessment**

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 2–3 band. The qualitative review supports grade 3 based on the moderate complexity of the passage. Based on these sets of measures as explained in the Wisconsin Academic Standards Appendix A, this passage is moderately complex and is recommended for assessment at grade 3.

MEANING: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization: Moderately Complex

Text Features: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Moderately Complex

Vocabulary: Moderately Complex

Sentence Structure: Moderately Complex

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

Life Experiences: Moderately Complex

Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Slightly Complex

Literary Texts Qualitative Measures Rubric

The ELA State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) developed the following qualitative measures rubric for literary texts. The rubric examines the following criteria judged as central to students' successful comprehension of text meaning, text structure, language features, and knowledge demands. Each of these categories is ranked based on descriptors associated with the following levels: slightly complex, moderately complex, very complex, and exceedingly complex.

Grade 3

Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
Meaning	Meaning: Several levels and competing elements of meaning that are difficult to identify, separate, and interpret; theme is implicit or subtle, often ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text	Meaning: Several levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; theme is implicit or subtle and may be revealed over the entirety of the text	Meaning: More than one level of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety	Meaning: One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text.
Text Structure	Organization: Organization is intricate with regard to elements such as narrative viewpoint, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines, and detail	Organization: Organization may include subplots, time shifts, and more complex characters	Organization: Organization may have two or more storylines and is occasionally difficult to predict	Organization: Organization of text is clear, chronological, or easy to predict
	Use of Images: If used, minimal illustrations that support the text	Use of Images: If used, a few illustrations that support the text	Use of Images: If used, a range of illustrations that support selected parts of the text	Use of Images: If used, extensive illustrations that directly support and assist in interpreting the written text

Grade 3

Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
Language Features	Conventionality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language	Conventionality: Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language	Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand, with some occasions for more complex meaning	Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand
	Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading	Vocabulary: Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic	Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic	Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language
	Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences, often containing multiple concepts	Sentence Structure: Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words	Sentence Structure: Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions	Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
Knowledge Demands	Life Experiences: Explores complex, sophisticated themes; experiences are distinctly different from the common reader	Life Experiences: Explores themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers	Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are common to many readers	Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are everyday and common to most readers
	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: A few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements	Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements

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APPENDIX E—SAMPLE INFORMATIONAL PASSAGE TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS**Informational Passage—Nature’s Builders****Grade 3****Recommended Placement for Assessment**

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 2–3 band. The qualitative review supports grade 3 based on the moderate complexity of the passage. Based on these sets of measures as explained in the Wisconsin Academic Standards Appendix A, this passage is moderately complex and is recommended for assessment at grade 3.

PURPOSE: Moderately Complex**TEXT STRUCTURE****Organization of Main Ideas:** Slightly Complex**Use of Images:** N/A**LANGUAGE FEATURES****Conventionality:** Moderately Complex**Vocabulary:** Moderately Complex**Sentence Structure:** Moderately Complex**KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS****Subject Matter Knowledge:** Moderately Complex**Intertextuality:** Slightly Complex

Informational Texts Qualitative Measures Rubric

The ELA State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) developed the following qualitative measures rubric for informational texts. The rubric examines the following criteria judged as central to students' successful comprehension of text purpose, text structure, language features, and knowledge demands. Each of these categories is ranked based on descriptors associated with the following levels: slightly complex, moderately complex, very complex, and exceedingly complex.

Grade 3

Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
Purpose	Purpose: Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements	Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete	Purpose: Implied, but easy to identify based upon context or source	Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus
Text Structure	Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate, and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline	Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an expanded range of ideas, processes, or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline	Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential	Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between ideas, processes, or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict
	Text Features: If used, are essential in understanding content	Text Features: If used, greatly enhance the reader's understanding of content	Text Features: If used, enhance the reader's understanding of content	Text Features: If used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential
	Use of Images: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated images, tables, charts, etc., necessary to understanding the text; also may provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text	Use of Images: If used, essential integrated images, tables, charts, etc., occasionally essential to understanding the text	Use of Images: If used, images mostly supplementary to understanding the text, such as indexes and glossaries; graphs, pictures, tables, and charts directly support the text	Use of Images: If used, simple images unnecessary to understanding the text; directly support and assist in interpreting the text

Grade 3

Features	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
Language Features	Conventionality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language	Conventionality: Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language	Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning	Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand
	Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading	Vocabulary: Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic	Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic	Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language
	Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences, often containing multiple concepts	Sentence Structure: Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words	Sentence Structure: Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions	Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
Knowledge Demands	Subject Matter Knowledge: Extensive, perhaps specialized or even theoretical discipline-specific content knowledge; range of challenging abstract and theoretical concepts	Subject Matter Knowledge: Moderate levels of discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts	Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas	Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas
	Intertextuality: Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Intertextuality: Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Intertextuality: A few references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.	Intertextuality: No references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc.

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