

# Massachusetts MCAS Grade 3 English Language Arts Practice

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PRACTICE TEST

English Language Arts

Grade 3

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Student Name

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School Name

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District Name

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# **Grade 3 English Language Arts**

## **PRACTICE TEST**

This practice test contains 17 questions.

### **Directions**

Read each passage and question carefully. Then answer each question as well as you can. You must record all answers in this Practice Test Booklet.

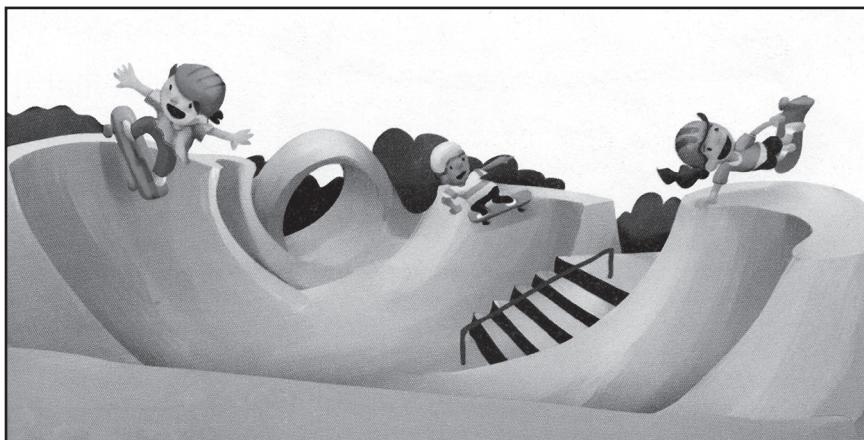
For most questions, you will mark your answers by filling in the circles in your Practice Test Booklet. Make sure you darken the circles completely. Do not make any marks outside of the circles. If you need to change an answer, be sure to erase your first answer completely.

Some questions will ask you to write a response. Write your response in the space provided. Only responses written within the provided space will be scored.

Read the passage about a snake named Willy Wiggler and then answer the questions that follow.

## Willy Wiggler's Wheels

by Kathleen M. Muldoon



- 1 Willy Wiggler wanted wheels. He was tired of slithering around City Park on his belly.
- 2 Every day Willy watched people whiz by on wheels—boys and girls on scooters and skateboards, babies in strollers, messengers on bicycles, gardeners riding lawn mowers, children on roller skates . . .
- 3 It seemed as if everyone except Willy had wheels.
- 4 "I'll visit Roy D. Rat," Willy said. "He'll help me get wheels."
- 5 Roy D. Rat lived in a hollow log across from Willy Wiggler's rock. He didn't have wheels, but he could run fast on his four legs. He didn't have to wriggle like Willy.
- 6 Willy slithered along while Roy skipped beside him. They passed trucks and cars. They passed wheelchairs and carriages and motorcycles. They passed skaters and cyclists.
- 7 The park was filled with wheels—wheels that were attached to someone or something. There were no loose wheels for Willy.
- 8 Roy and Willy reached the far corner of the park where workers had recently built new skateboard ramps.
- 9 *Whiz! Whoosh! WHAM!*

- 10 Skateboarders raced up and down the concrete slopes. Each wore a brightly colored helmet. Pink helmets and red helmets. Blue helmets and gold helmets. Green helmets and purple helmets.
- 11 Their heads bobbed like brightly colored balloons as they leaped and dipped on their skateboards.
- 12 From beneath a nearby bench, Willy and Roy watched the skateboarders until the park closed.
- 13 Willy sighed.
- 14 "Just once I'd like to ride a skateboard," he said. "They're the perfect size and shape for me, long and flat."
- 15 As Willy and Roy D. Rat headed home, the moon peeked out suddenly from behind a cloud and shined on four silver wheels lying by the side of the path. Willy slithered over. Upside down in the grass lay a discarded skateboard.
- 16 "Wheels!" he exclaimed.
- 17 Roy D. Rat scurried over to examine the board.
- 18 "It's cracked," he said. "But it's perfect for you, Willy. Come on. Let's try it out."
- 19 Roy pushed the skateboard to the top of the concrete ramp. Willy wriggled behind him.
- 20 "Get on!" Roy ordered.
- 21 "Wait," Willy said. He searched in the grass until he found what he needed, an acorn cap just his size. It made a perfect helmet. Now he was ready.
- 22 Carefully, he slithered aboard the skateboard. The crack cradled his body and held it securely in a straight line down the center of the board.
- 23 "Launch me to the moon!" he cried to Roy.
- 24 With a gentle push, Roy started Willy rushing down the ramp on his wheels.
- 25 "COWABUNGA!" Willy shouted to the heavens.
- 26 *WHOOSH!* He held his breath as he zoomed to the bottom of the ramp.

- 27 *WHIZZZZZ!* Willy shrieked in delight as his board climbed to the top of the opposite ramp, which sat just beneath the moon.
- 28 "ALLEY OOOOOOOOOOP!" he shouted as the board went backward down one ramp and up another. Immediately the board headed back down. Up and down, backward and forward. Willy wriggled happily as he flew on his wheels.
- 29 At last he came to a stop in the gully between the ramps. Roy D. Rat scampered down to greet him.
- 30 "How was it?" he asked.
- 31 "Awesome," Willy said. "I've been to the moon and back, all in one night."
- 32 Roy pushed Willy and his wheels back up the ramp. Then together Roy and Willy hid Willy's wheels under a nearby shrub to await his next ride.
- 33 If you're ever in City Park on a moonlit night, you may get a glimpse of Willy Wriggler whooshing and whamming, leaping and dipping on his very own wheels. Just look for his acorn helmet and his able assistant, Roy D. Rat.



"Willy Wriggler's Wheels" by Kathleen M. Muldoon, from *Spider Magazine* (April 2009). Illustrated by Barry Gott. Text and illustrations copyright © 2009 by Carus Publishing Company d/b/a Cricket Media. Reprinted by permission of Cricket Media, Inc.

- 1** The picture under the title is helpful because it shows
- (A) where the main characters live.
  - (B) where the skateboard was found.
  - (C) what the skateboard ramps look like.
  - (D) when the main characters found the ramps.
- 2** Where does most of the story take place?
- (A) the park
  - (B) the moon
  - (C) Roy's log
  - (D) Willy's rock
- 3** Based on the passage, what is Willy looking for when he first arrives at the park with Roy D. Rat?
- (A) scooters
  - (B) bicycles
  - (C) loose wheels
  - (D) lawn mowers

- 4 Based on the passage, why are skateboards good for Willy?
- (A) They have the fastest wheels.  
(B) They have the biggest wheels.  
(C) They are the right size and shape.  
(D) They are the right color and style.
- 5 Reread paragraph 15. Based on the paragraph, what does **discarded** mean?
- (A) beautiful  
(B) enormous  
(C) brand new  
(D) left behind
- 6 Which event from the passage happens **first**?
- (A) Willy returns to the park on moonlit nights.  
(B) Willy and Roy find a skateboard upside down.  
(C) Willy and Roy watch skateboarders at the park.  
(D) Willy finds an acorn cap he can use as a helmet.

**7****Part A**

Based on the passage, what will Willy and Roy **most likely** do the next evening?

- (A) find the skateboard and go for a ride
- (B) race to see who can move faster
- (C) watch skateboarders in the park
- (D) search for wheels that they lost

**Part B**

Which paragraph from the passage gives the **best** evidence for the answer to Part A?

- (A) paragraph 4
- (B) paragraph 14
- (C) paragraph 20
- (D) paragraph 32

- 8 Determine whether **each** sentence is a main idea or a supporting detail from the passage.

Willy sees a cracked skateboard in the grass.

- (A) main idea
- (B) supporting detail

Willy and Roy watch skateboards whiz by.

- (A) main idea
- (B) supporting detail

Willy wants to move quickly so he tries to find wheels.

- (A) main idea
- (B) supporting detail

**For this question, you will write a story based on the passage. Write your story in the space provided on the next page. Your writing should:**

- **Use characters, settings, events, and other details from the passage.**
- **Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.**

- 9** Pretend you are Roy D. Rat. Write a story about helping Willy that tells events from Roy's point of view. Use what you know about the characters, settings, and events to write your story.

**Write your answer on the next page.**

*You have a total of one page on which to write your response.*

9

**Read the article and poem about penguins. Then answer the questions that follow.**

Read the article about penguins.

## Penguins

by Melvin and Gilda Berger



- 1 Penguins live on the ice of the Antarctic. They have wings—yet they can't fly! But the penguins are terrific swimmers and divers. They plunge into the icy ocean to catch their meals of fish, squid, and krill. Some can stay underwater for up to six minutes.
- 2 After a long dive, penguins shoot up out of the water. They look like rockets being launched. The birds gulp a quick breath of air. Then they splash back down into the water.
- 3 Sometimes the penguins leap onto the ice. Once there, penguins are slow and clumsy walkers. But they have a way to move quickly. They drop onto their bellies and push themselves forward with feet and flippers. *ZOOM!* Away they go, sliding across the ice!
- 4 The biggest penguins of all are the emperor penguins. They are about as tall and heavy as third graders! Like other penguins, they spend most of their time diving for food. When it is time to nest, they jump out of the water and plop on the ice.

- 5 Each female lays a single egg on the ice. Then she heads back to the water. Her mate rolls the egg onto his feet and covers it with a flap of skin. Then he joins other males in a large circle. They huddle together to keep warm.
- 6 The males keep the eggs on their feet for a couple of months. During that time they do not eat. They lose about half their weight. Finally, the eggs hatch and the chicks are born.
- 7 By now, the females are back. They take over the care of the chicks. The males march off to the ocean. There, they fill their empty stomachs with food.
- 8 In a few weeks, the males return with food. Now both parents feed and protect their chicks. Six months later, the offspring are fully grown. Off they go. They're big enough to care for themselves.

"Penguins" by Melvin and Gilda Berger, from *Brrr! A Book About Polar Animals*. Text copyright © 2000, 2006 by Melvin and Gilda Berger. Reprinted by permission of Scholastic Inc. Photograph copyright © iStockphoto/flammulated.

Read the poem about penguins.

## My Father's Feet

by Judy Sierra



To keep myself up off the ice,  
I find my father's feet are nice.  
I snuggle in his belly fluff,  
And that's how I stay warm enough.

- 5     But when my father takes a walk,  
         My cozy world begins to rock.  
         He shuffles left, I hold on tight.

Oh no! He's wobbling to the right.  
Not left again! Oops, here he goes.

- 10    Do you suppose my father knows  
         I'm hanging on to his warm toes?

"My Father's Feet" by Judy Sierra, from *Antarctic Antics: A Book of Penguin Poems*. Text copyright © 1998 by Judy Sierra. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Photograph copyright © iStockphoto/KeithSzafranski.

10 Based on the article, which would be the **best** heading for paragraphs 1–3?

- (A) Big Birds
- (B) On the Move
- (C) On Their Own
- (D) A Meal Fit for a King

11 Based on the article and the poem, why do male penguins put their eggs and chicks on their feet?

- (A) The ice is very cold.
- (B) The sun is very bright.
- (C) The young penguins are shy.
- (D) The other penguins are dangerous.

12 Read the sentence from paragraph 1 of the article in the box.

They plunge into the icy ocean to catch their meals of fish, squid, and krill.

Based on the article, which word could be used instead of **plunge**?

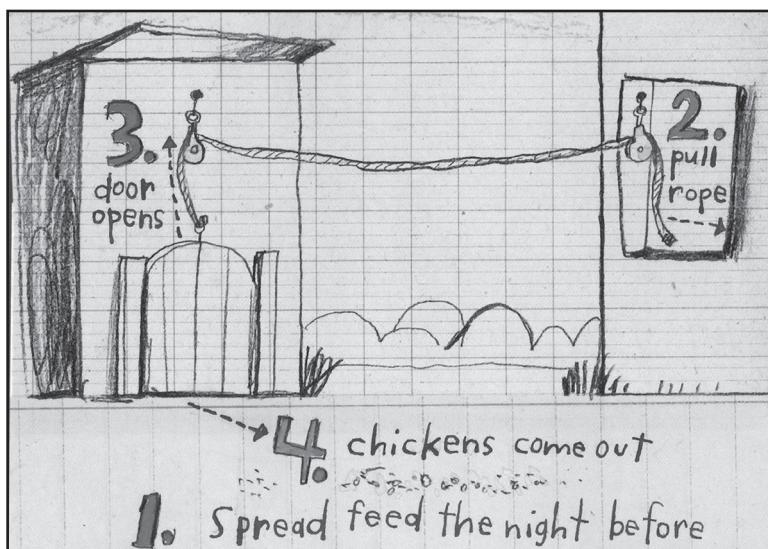
- (A) fly
- (B) turn
- (C) dive
- (D) look

- 13** Based on “My Father’s Feet,” write a paragraph to explain how the young penguin’s feelings change throughout the poem. Support your response with important details from the poem.

Tony Sarg was a puppet maker who worked with marionettes, small wooden puppets that are moved by strings. Read the passage *Balloons over Broadway* about Tony Sarg, and then answer the questions that follow.

## BALLOONS OVER BROADWAY

by Melissa Sweet



- 1 From the time he was a little boy, Tony Sarg loved to figure out how to make things move. He once said he became a marionette man when he was only six years old.
- 2 His father had asked him to feed their chickens at six-thirty in the morning—every day. Tony had an idea—what if he could feed the chickens without leaving his bed?
- 3 He rigged up some pulleys and ran rope from the chicken coop door to his bedroom window. That night, he spread chicken feed outside the chicken coop door.
- 4 The next morning . . . Tony pulled on the rope, and the door to the chicken coop opened! The chickens ate their breakfast, Tony stayed snug in his bed, and his dad, so impressed, never made Tony do another chore.
- 5 When Tony grew up he moved to London, where he discovered that no one was making marionettes for kids anymore. So out of wood, cloth, and strings, Tony began to make puppets. He figured out ways to make his

marionettes' movement so lifelike that they performed as if they were real actors. Word soon spread about Tony's amazing marionettes. When Tony moved to New York City, the Tony Sarg Marionettes began performing on Broadway.

- 6 In the heart of New York City, in Herald Square, was "the biggest store on earth": R. H. Macy's department store. Macy's had heard about Tony's puppets and asked him to design a "puppet parade" for the store's holiday windows. So Tony made new puppets based on storybook characters, then attached them to gears and pulleys to make them move.
- 7 In Macy's "Wondertown" windows, Tony's mechanical marionettes danced across the stage as if by magic. All day long they performed to shoppers jostling for a better look.
- 8 But Macy's had an even bigger job in store for Tony.
- 9 Many of the people working at Macy's were immigrants, and as the holidays approached, they missed their own holiday traditions. . . . Macy's agreed to put on a parade for their employees, and they hired Tony to help.
- 10 Tony too was an immigrant. . . . He loved the idea of creating a parade based on street carnivals from all over the world. He made costumes and built horse-drawn floats, and Macy's even arranged to bring in bears, elephants, and camels from the Central Park Zoo.
- 11 The animals joined hundreds of Macy's employees on Thanksgiving Day, 1924, winding their way from Harlem to Herald Square. It was a dazzling parade!
- 12 In fact, Macy's first parade was such a success that they decided to have one every year on Thanksgiving Day—to celebrate America's own holiday.
- 13 Each year the parade grew. But when Macy's brought in lions and tigers—in addition to the bears, elephants, and camels—the animals roared and growled and frightened the children.
- 14 Macy's asked Tony to replace the animals.
- 15 Tony hoped to replace the animals with some kind of puppets, but his marionettes were less than three feet tall. He would have to make much larger puppets in order for them to be seen in the parade. And how could he make them strong enough to hold up in bad weather yet light enough to move up and down the streets?
- 16 Tony knew of a company in Ohio that made blimps\* out of rubber—the perfect material for any weather. When he called the company and showed them his sketches, they agreed to make what Tony wanted.

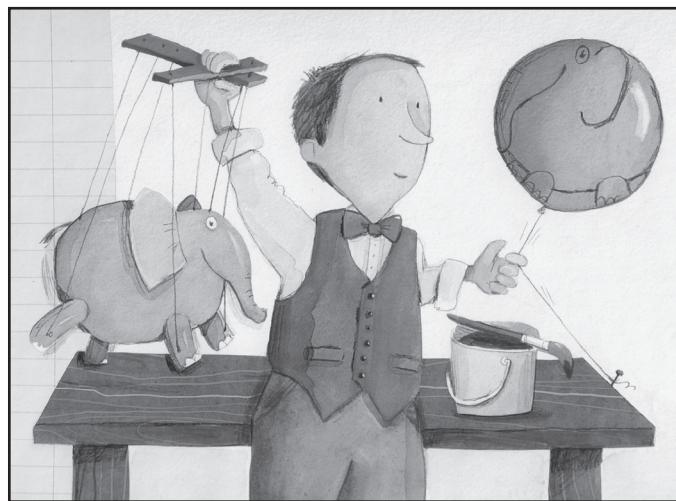
\*blimps—large, balloon-like aircraft

- 17 Still, how would Tony make his big puppets *move*?
- 18 Then Tony had an idea—from an Indonesian rod puppet in his toy collection.



an Indonesian rod puppet

- 19 On Thanksgiving Day, Tony's creatures, some as high as sixteen feet, spilled into the streets, and the crowds cheered wildly.
- 20 Part puppet, part balloon, the air-filled rubber bags wobbled down the avenues, propped up by wooden sticks.
- 21 But now the sidewalks were so packed with people that only those in the first few rows could really see the parade. Tony realized his puppets would have to be even bigger and higher off the ground. And though the sticks helped to steer the puppets, they were stiff and heavy. Tony wanted his balloons to *articulate*—to move and gesture—more like puppets. But how?



- 22 With a marionette, the controls are above and the puppet hangs down . . .
- 23 But what if the controls were below and the puppet could rise up?
- 24 During the next year, Tony set his new idea into motion.
- 25 This time, he asked the company in Ohio to make balloons out of rubberized silk—as strong as rubber but lighter than rubber alone.
- 26 Most important, Tony ordered the balloons to be filled not just with air but with helium too. Since helium is lighter than air, it would make the balloons rise.
- 27 Once the puppets were completed, they were deflated and shipped back to Tony in New York.
- 28 Tony did not know if everything would go as planned . . .
- 29 It was still dark on Thanksgiving morning when Tony filled the balloons with helium, tethering them down with sandbags.
- 30 By one p.m. the sidewalks were packed with people ready for the parade. Then, one by one, Tony cut the lines to the sandbags . . .
- 31 **LET'S have a PARADE!**



*Balloons over Broadway* by Melissa Sweet. Text and illustrations copyright © 2011 by Melissa Sweet. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

**14** Based on the passage, why was Tony interested in marionettes?

- (A) He liked to watch big parades.
- (B) He wanted to take care of animals.
- (C) He was curious about how things moved.
- (D) He was interested in writing puppet shows.

**15** Based on paragraphs 2–4, what does the diagram **mainly** show?

- (A) how the invention was like a puppet
- (B) why feeding chickens was a hard chore
- (C) how the invention was supposed to work
- (D) why feeding chickens was done in the morning

- 16 Read the sentence from paragraph 5 in the box.

Word soon spread about Tony's amazing marionettes.

What does the sentence suggest about Tony's marionettes?

- (A) They became very popular.
- (B) They became very expensive.
- (C) They were changed over the years.
- (D) They were copied by other people.

**For this question, you will write an essay based on the passage(s). Write your essay in the space provided on the next page. Your writing should:**

- **Present and develop a central idea.**
- **Provide evidence and/or details from the passage(s).**
- **Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.**

- 17 Based on the passage, write an essay to explain how the author shows that Tony was a clever person. Be sure to use information from the passage to develop your essay.

**Write your answer on the next page.**

*You have a total of one page on which to write your response.*

17



### **Grade 3 English Language Arts Paper-Based Practice Test Answer Key**

The following pages include the answer key for all machine-scored items, followed by the rubrics for the hand-scored items.

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Answer Key</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Reporting Category</b>	<b>Standard</b>
1	C	1	Reading	7
2	A	1	Reading	1
3	C	1	Reading	3
4	C	1	Reading	1
5	D	1	Language	4
6	C	1	Reading	5
7	Part A: A Part B: D	2*	Reading	3
8	B, B, A	2*	Reading	2
9	<i>See Rubric</i>	7	Writing Language	3,4 1,2,3
10	B	1	Reading	5
11	A	1	Reading	3
12	C	1	Reading	4
13	<i>See Rubric</i>	3	Reading	3
14	C	1	Reading	3
15	C	1	Reading	7
16	A	1	Reading	2
17	<i>See Rubric</i>	7	Writing Language	2,4 1,2,3

\*For two-point items, partial credit may be given.

**Scoring rubric for Grade 3 Practice Test Items #9 and #17: Essay**

<b>Idea Development</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRAL IDEA *</b></li> <li>• <b>SELECTION AND EXPLANATION OF EVIDENCE AND/OR DETAILS *</b></li> <li>• <b>ORGANIZATION</b></li> <li>• <b>EXPRESSION OF IDEAS</b></li> <li>• <b>AWARENESS OF PURPOSE FOR WRITING</b></li> </ul>	
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is clear and fully developed</li> <li>• Effective selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Effective organization</li> <li>• Clear expression of ideas</li> <li>• Full awareness of the purpose for writing</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is general and moderately developed</li> <li>• Appropriate selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Moderate organization</li> <li>• Adequate expression of ideas</li> <li>• Sufficient awareness of the purpose for writing</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea may be present and is somewhat developed</li> <li>• Limited selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Limited organization</li> <li>• Basic expression of ideas</li> <li>• Partial awareness of the purpose for writing</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is not present and/or not developed</li> <li>• Insufficient evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Minimal or no organization</li> <li>• Poor expression of ideas</li> <li>• Minimal awareness of the purpose for writing</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response shows evidence the student has read the text, but does not address the question or incorrectly responds to the question.</li> </ul>

\*For narrative writing (Standard 3), the quality and development of narrative elements will be assessed in place of a central idea. Narrative elements should include, but are not limited to: plot, character, setting, dialogue, action, and/or description. Students should use evidence/details to demonstrate understanding of text.

<b>Standard English Conventions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SENTENCE STRUCTURE</b></li> <li>• <b>GRAMMAR, USAGE, AND MECHANICS</b></li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent control of a variety of sentence structures relative to length of essay</li> <li>• Consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly consistent control of sentence structures relative to length of essay</li> <li>• Mostly consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little control and/or no variety in sentence structure and/or</li> <li>• Little control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or insufficient length</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences are formed incorrectly with no control of grammar, usage, and mechanics and/or insufficient length.</li> </ul>

**Scoring rubric for Grade 3 Practice Test Item #13: Constructed Response**

Score Point	Description
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates full understanding of the reading material</li><li>• Includes important and specific evidence/details for support</li></ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates partial understanding of the reading material</li><li>• Includes some important evidence/details for support</li></ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates minimal understanding of the reading material</li><li>• Includes little or no evidence/details for support</li></ul>
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• Demonstrates no understanding of the reading material</li><li>• Includes insufficient evidence/details for support</li></ul>