Wisconsin Forward Exam

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
Public Instruction

English Language Arts Item Sampler Grade 5

Into the Volcano

by Charnan Simon

"You're taking us where?" Heidi looked at her parents in disbelief. In the week they'd been in Hawaii, they'd seen rain forests and waterfalls and beautiful sandy beaches. But this couldn't be right. "Volcanoes are dangerous! Parents don't take their children to volcanoes!"

Heidi's brother David grabbed her from behind and started shaking. "Look out! The volcano is erupting, with fiery hot lava and earth-shattering quakes!"

Heidi's dad caught her chair before David toppled her. "Enough already, David," he said mildly.

David shrugged and let go. "Anyhow, you've already been to a volcano. This whole island is volcanoes."

Heidi looked doubtfully at David. "He's kidding, right?"

Dad shook his head. "Afraid he's right this time. All the Hawaiian Islands were formed by volcanoes built up from the ocean floor."

Heidi looked out the window of their condominium, at the wide sandy beach and glittery blue ocean. It was hard to believe she was on a volcano. "But they don't erupt any more, right?" she asked.

Mom gave Heidi a hug. "We're plenty safe here, honey. But Kilauea, the volcano we're going to see, IS still erupting."

"Come on," Dad said. "It'll be fun. Now grab your hiking boots and let's go."

Once they were in the car, David said, "Look, Hawaii really was made by volcanoes, but it happened millions of years ago. The lava flowed out of vents in the earth, and as it cooled it gradually built up into mountains."

Pretty soon they were slowing down to turn. "Here we are," said Dad, "Volcanoes National Park. This road will take us all around Kilauea Crater."

Heidi looked out the window nervously. "The one that's still going off?" she asked.

"Yep." Now David was reading from his guidebook. "It says here Kilauea is the world's most active volcano."

Heidi kept looking, but all she saw was a wide, treeless plain. "Hey!" she said. "The ground's steaming!"

"Awesome," David said. He kept reading as Mom got out her camera. "The ground just a few feet down is so hot that tree roots can't survive. Only shallow-rooted grasses and plants grow here. Groundwater seeps down to the hot volcanic rock and returns to the surface as steam."

Gradually the landscape changed. There were deep, dry gullies on either side of the road, and old, cold lava flows everywhere. Mom's camera clicked and clicked. "Older lava flows are reddish," read David, "because the iron in them has turned to rust. Newer lava flows are black. Hey— remember those black sand beaches we saw? Those are lava beaches!"

Dad pulled the car over to a lookout point. "Everybody out," he said. "We're at Halema'uma'u, home of Pele, Goddess of Hawaiian Volcanoes."

After just a short walk they found themselves looking across a gigantic hole in the ground. "Wow!" said David. "That's one big crater!"

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Dad agreed. “Less than a hundred years ago, this was a lake of molten lava.” Heidi held her nose. “What smells like rotten eggs?”

“Sulphur dioxide,” Mom answered, snapping a picture of the crater. “It’s a gas. Volcanoes throw out a lot of gases with all that lava. It does stink, doesn’t it?”

“Too much,” Heidi said. “Let’s go back to the car!”

They hadn’t driven far before Mom was focusing her camera again. “Look!” she called from the front seat. “Off to the left. There’s Mauna Loa volcano. It’s the biggest mountain in the world!”

Heidi looked. “That can’t be the biggest!” she protested. “I’ve seen lots bigger mountains in Colorado.”

Dad grinned. “Sure you have. But the trick here is, you can’t SEE most of Mauna Loa! Only about a third of the mountain is above sea level. The rest is hidden under the ocean. It’s gigantic—the biggest mountain on the planet!” Now the landscape was changing again. Forests of trees and ferns made everything look lush and green. “The next part of the road is pretty twisty,” Dad warned. “We’re heading back down to the ocean.”

Heidi dozed as they drove. She was dreaming of ice-cream sundaes running with rivers of hot molten fudge when David’s yelp woke her up.

“The road’s covered with dried lava!” he said.

It was. Just like that, the road ended in a flooding of black glassy-looking lava. “In 1990, lava flows blocked the highway,” David read. “Hawaiians have had to rebuild lots of roads because of lava flows.”

“Here’s where hiking boots come in handy,” Dad said, as they left the car and picked their way carefully across the rough, sharp field. “You can’t walk on lava with sandals.”

“Look!” Mom was really excited now. “Look at the ocean!”

Heidi looked. This wasn’t the sparkly blue ocean outside her condominium window. This was a boiling cauldron! Huge clouds of steam rose into the sky at the coastline. Below the steam, Heidi could see glowing red lava.

“It’s coming out of an underground lava tube,” Dad said. “This is how Hawaii is still being built, even today!

The lava flows into the ocean, and more lava lands on top of it, and then more and more, until new solid land is built. And when the hot lava hits the ocean, the water turns to steam. Incredible!”

Mom was snapping pictures as fast as she could, and David was using binoculars to get a closer look. Heidi just stood and stared. Volcanoes were awesome and huge and beautiful. They were also scary. She wasn’t exactly sorry when they hiked back to the car.

And later even David was pleased with the hot lava sundae Heidi made for their afternoon snack. A mountain of macadamia nut ice cream with hot fudge sauce and cherries flowing down its sides might not make the guidebooks, but it sure tasted good!

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TDA Prompt:

The character of David has a function in the story "Into the Volcano." Write an essay analyzing the important role David plays as a character throughout the passage. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

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.

When my brother and I get together with our two favorite cousins we have so much fun.

What is the correct way to write the sentence?

A. When my brother and I, get together with our two favorite cousins we have so much fun.

B. When my brother and I, get together with our two favorite cousins, we have so much fun.

C. When my brother and I get together with our two favorite cousins, we have so much fun.

D. When my brother and I get, together with our two favorite cousins, we have so much fun.

2. Read the paragraph.

The Brooklyn Bridge is one of the most famous bridges in the United States. It stretches across the East River, linking the cities of New York and Brooklyn. The bridge took 600 workers more than 14 years to build; it was completed in the year 1883. About 150,000 people usually go over the Brooklyn Bridge.

How should the last sentence of the paragraph be rewritten to use the most precise language?

A. About 150,000 people use the bridge daily to cross to the other side of the river.

B. About 150,000 people walk, bike, or drive across the Brooklyn Bridge each day.

C. About 150,000 people use the bridge each day to cross the river.

D. About 150,000 people go across the river daily on the Brooklyn Bridge.

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3. A student is writing an essay about happiness. Read the student's draft and answer the question that follows.

Did you know that there are scientists who study happiness? Daniel Gilbert, who is a professor at Harvard University, has spent years learning about what makes people happy. He has even written a popular book on the topic. His book *Stumbling on Happiness* discusses how challenging it is for people to know today what will make them happy in the future. He notes, though, that people are usually able to adapt to change much better than they think they can.

According to Gilbert, "We're not supposed to be happy all the time." It's both normal and important to feel other types of emotions. We can appreciate happiness more if we don't always have it. As Gilbert says, "Happiness is a place to visit, not a place to live." The next time you're feeling sad or even angry, remember that it is not really possible to always feel happy.

Which source would most likely offer the student the **best** additional information to include in the report?

A. an interview with Gilbert in which he answers questions about happiness

B. a short article that explains how Gilbert got a job teaching at Harvard University

C. an article written by one of Gilbert's students about how happy the student was having Gilbert as a teacher

D. a bookstore website that has a short review of Gilbert's book

STOP.

STOP.

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

A Very Unique Animal

1. Which detail does the speaker use to show that the aye-aye sees well at night?

A. The aye-aye is able to recognize faint rays of moonlight.

B. The aye-aye has eyes that are especially large and glowing.

C. The aye-aye searches for snacks that are inside tree branches.

D. The aye-aye has eyes that look like those of an owl.

2. Which details from the presentation support the speaker's claim that each of the aye-aye's unique features serves a purpose? Choose **two** answers.

A. The front teeth of the aye-aye never stop growing.

B. The aye-aye sleeps during the daytime and hunts at night.

C. The aye-aye uses its long finger to grab food.

D. The aye-aye likes to live in the rain forest.

E. The large ears of the aye-aye help it sense larvae.

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3. Which sentence **best** summarizes the presentation?

A. The aye-aye spends a lot of time looking for food to eat.

B. The aye-aye has unusual body parts that help it to survive.

C. The aye-aye is a challenging animal for scientists to study.

D. The aye-aye lives in only one place on Earth.

STOP.

STOP.

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

The Speedy Twin

Just as Troy was putting on his running shoes, his twin brother woke up. Leo sat up in bed, looked at the clock, and groaned.

"Morning, Leo," Troy said. "Want to join me for a morning run?"

Leo mumbled "no" and stumbled out of the room, most likely in search of a bowl of cereal. Troy shook his head. He and Leo may share the same birthday and the same red hair, but that is where the similarities seemed to end.

"You do remember that we're running a race this weekend, right?" Troy asked as he walked through the kitchen.

Leo looked up from his cereal with a big grin on his face, and nodded. "Yep, and I've been getting lots of running practice this week!"

"I don't think that running for the bus because you slept too late counts as practice," Troy replied with a frown. He had lost track of the times he had seen his brother sprinting down the sidewalk, just barely stepping inside the bus doors as they closed.

Shaking his head again, Troy headed out for his morning run. As his feet pounded the pavement, he thought about the upcoming race being held this weekend. It was a school-wide race, and he and Leo were entered in the long distance run.

Even though they would be next to each other at the starting line, Troy knew they would not be able to run side by side for long. The brothers' running styles were as different as their personalities. Troy started out slow and steady, saving his burst of energy for the last part of the race. Meanwhile, Leo tended to take off as hard as he could and push himself until he had no choice but to slow down. At the end, though, Leo would always get a burst of power that would carry him through. He was often one of the first people to cross the finish line.

The morning of the race was beautiful. The sky was bright blue, with only an occasional white cloud. The area around the start of the race was so crowded that it seemed as if every person from school was either running the race or watching it from the sidelines.

"Good luck in the race, Troy," Leo said as the two brothers approached the starting line. "I know you've worked hard to get ready for it." He paused for a moment and grinned. "Be prepared, though, to be left in the dust by your speedy twin."

The sound of the starting pistol cut off any reply Troy could have made. The runners were off! As usual, Troy tried to keep a steady pace. Soon, Leo was far ahead, then disappeared from sight.

Running the race did not take long. The quickest runners were done in 15 minutes, while others took almost thirty minutes to complete the full mile and a half. After Troy had crossed the finish line, he looked around for Leo. Where was he? Just then, Troy heard his name being shouted.

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“Hey, Troy, can you give me some help here?” Leo called.

To Troy’s surprise, Leo was just now crossing the finish line and was limping. Troy put his arm around his brother’s shoulder and helped him over to the side of the school track.

Leo sat down on the grass and carefully pulled off his right shoe. The heel of his foot was extremely red, and a huge blister was already forming. Troy winced.

“What happened to your foot?” he asked Leo. “That must really hurt!”

Leo sighed. “When I left home this morning, I didn’t realize that I had the wrong pair of shoes,” he explained. “Instead of my running shoes, I had my friend Mark’s shoes. We accidentally got our shoes mixed up after gym class the other day, and we forgot to switch them back.”

“Are you serious?” Troy asked in disbelief. “That’s awful, Leo!”

“I know—I really messed up,” Leo admitted. “Mark’s shoes are a whole size smaller than mine. Only a couple of minutes into the race, I could feel the heel of the shoes rubbing. By the end of the first mile, I knew I was in big trouble.”

Troy almost asked his brother why he had made such a silly mistake, but Leo was in so much pain he withheld his question. Instead Troy said, “I’m really sorry, Leo. Let’s go home and take care of your foot.”

“Sounds good,” Leo agreed. “Also, could you remind me to reset my alarm clock when we get home?”

“Sure, but what for?” Troy asked as they began the slow walk home.

“I have to start getting up earlier,” Leo explained. “With this blister, I won’t be able to run to catch the bus any time soon!”

Go on to the next page.

1. How do paragraphs 1–6 of the passage **most** contribute to the development of the plot?

A. by showing how Leo and Troy prepare for the race differently

B. by explaining Leo's and Troy's reasons for participating in the race

C. by determining whether Leo or Troy is the better runner

D. by contrasting Leo's and Troy's usual running styles during a race

2. Read the sentence from the passage.

"Be prepared, though, to be left in the dust by your speedy twin."

What does Leo mean when he uses the phrase "left in the dust" in the sentence?

A. He thinks he practiced harder than Troy.

B. He thinks he will easily beat Troy.

C. He thinks Troy is going to be late for the race.

D. He thinks Troy will be forced to run in the dirt.

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** describes the lesson Leo learns in the passage?

A. Family members have more in common than they may realize.

B. Difficult times help us to better appreciate the happy times.

C. Good preparation today can make life easier in the future.

D. A sense of humor is one of the most important qualities to have.

Part B

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

A. “Yep, and I’ve been getting lots of running practice this week!”

B. “I know you’ve worked hard to get ready for it.”

C. “Hey, Troy, can you give me some help here?”

D. “Also, could you remind me to reset my alarm clock when we get home?”

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.

Wormy Solutions to Trash

Pollution is a global problem. Mountains of plastic bags clog landfills around the world. In fact, most people use as many as 200 plastic bags a year. Unfortunately, plastic does not break down easily the way plant and animal matter does. After a plastic bag is thrown away, it can take hundreds of years to break down. A recent discovery about worms, however, may offer a promising solution.

A Happy Accident

A scientist with the Spanish National Research Council, Federica Bertocchini, is also an amateur beekeeper. One day, she was cleaning her beehives. They had been invaded by a type of worm called wax worms, which grow up to become moths. Wax worms are often used as bait for fishing. They are also used as food for pet lizards and birds, but they are not wanted in beehives. In fact, wax worms are named for their habit of eating the wax inside honeycombs, where bees store their honey. Beekeepers want to get rid of them.

Bertocchini scooped the mass of wax worms into a plastic bag. She intended to dispose of them later and went on with her chores. She says, “After finishing, I went back to the room where I had left the worms. I found they were everywhere. They had escaped from the bag, even though it had been closed. When I checked, I saw the bag was full of holes. There was only one explanation: the worms had made the holes and had escaped.”

Had Bertocchini discovered worms that actually eat plastic? She had to find out.

Searching for Answers

Working with two other scientists, Bertocchini experimented. She and her team kept careful records of what happened. They put 100 worms on a sheet of plastic. In an hour, the worms had made an average of two holes per worm. In one day, they chewed through 92 milligrams of plastic. The scientists calculated that it would take a month for 100 worms to consume one average-sized plastic bag.

The next experiment tried to answer another question. What was causing the plastic to break down? Were the worms actually chewing, or was something else causing the holes in the plastic? To find out more, the scientists placed worms that were no longer alive onto a piece of plastic. Again, the plastic became full of holes. The scientists then understood that the worms may not have to chew the plastic to break it down. There had to be something inside the worms or on the worms’ bodies that was causing the plastic to disintegrate. Is it possible that the worms chew the holes and then a chemical inside the worms breaks down the plastic? If it is a chemical, could this chemical be on the outside of the worms as well? More tests are needed, of course, before millions of wax worms can be added to landfills.

Go on to the next page.

Not Everyone Agrees

Bertocchini's research is promising. However, other scientists are doubtful. Ramani Narayan, a scientist from the University of Michigan, is one of them. He thinks that, if wax worms eat plastic, tiny pieces of plastic could work their way into the food chain. This plastic might then be harmful to other living things. He does not think that the worms are the answer to the problem of pollution.

Susan Selke, director of Michigan State University School of Packaging, says that a lack of oxygen in a landfill could be a problem for the worms. If the worms can't breathe well enough, they won't be able to survive. She also wonders whether the worms chew on plastic because they want to escape or whether they are eating the plastic as food. This question needs to be answered before worms can be placed in landfills.

More Ideas to Explore

Scientists agree that Bertocchini may have come across an important finding. Other types of worms are being examined too. For example, a study in China showed that a type of worm called the meal worm ate and thrived on a type of lightweight plastic called Styrofoam.

Some scientists also wonder whether a similar solution might exist for plastic waste in the ocean. This waste can be dangerous to seabirds, turtles, fish, and other ocean animals that accidentally eat or get caught in it. Are there other plastic-eating creatures out there that might be able to help? Only time and research will tell.

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4. Which idea helped Bertocchini and her team to think that the worms may have something on their bodies that breaks down the plastic?

A. the speed at which the worms were able to make holes in the plastic

B. the number of holes each worm made in the plastic in one hour

C. the fact that holes appeared in the plastic even if the worms were not alive

D. the idea that other types of worms may make holes in other types of plastic

5. Read the paragraph from the passage.

Bertocchini's research is promising. However, other scientists are doubtful. Ramani Narayan, a scientist from the University of Michigan, is one of them. He thinks that, if wax worms eat plastic, tiny pieces of plastic could work their way into the food chain. This plastic might then be harmful to other living things. He does not think that the worms are the answer to the problem of pollution.

Which sentences in the paragraph **best** support the idea that using worms to break down trash may be a bad idea? Choose **two** answers.

A. Bertocchini's research is promising.

B. However, other scientists are doubtful.

C. Ramani Narayan, a scientist from the University of Michigan, is one of them.

D. He thinks that, if wax worms eat plastic, tiny pieces of plastic could work their way into the food chain.

E. This plastic might then be harmful to other living things.

F. He does not think that the worms are the answer to the problem of pollution.

Go on to the next page.

6. Which sentence from the passage **best** explains how the research about one topic may encourage research about other topics?

A. She and her team kept careful records of what happened.

B. More tests are needed, of course, before millions of wax worms can be added to landfills.

C. Scientists agree that Bertocchini may have come across an important finding.

D. Some scientists also wonder whether a similar solution might exist for plastic waste in the ocean.

STOP.

STOP.

APPENDIX A—LISTENING PASSAGE: A VERY UNIQUE ANIMAL

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.

A Very Unique Animal

One of the strangest animals on Earth is the aye-aye. It weighs a little more than five pounds and has large, glowing eyes like an owl and enormous ears like a bat. One of the five fingers on each of its hands is extremely long and thin. All these unique features serve a common purpose: to help the aye-aye survive.

Aye-ayes prefer to reside in the rain forest. They construct leafy, ball-shaped nests high in the towering trees. During the daytime, aye-ayes sleep safely inside their homes, but when the sun sets, they venture out to hunt.

In the fading light, the aye-aye still has excellent vision. Its large eyes can detect faint rays of moonlight. Carefully, the aye-aye walks along a tree branch, tapping the branch with its long, thin finger. It is searching for a snack, and insect larvae are crawling through tunnels inside the branch. When the aye-aye taps on a hollow tunnel, the wood makes an echo that the aye-aye's large, finely tuned ears are able to sense.

Next, the aye-aye puts its pointed teeth to work, gnawing a hole in the branch and into the tunnel that contains the delicious larvae. All this chewing never wears down the aye-aye's teeth, though, because its front teeth continue growing throughout its entire life.

Swiftly, the aye-aye jabs its long finger into the chewed up branch. The finger is thin, and it can twist in every direction, even backward. This unique tool enables the aye-aye to easily grasp the larvae inside.

All night long, the aye-aye travels through the trees, scouring the branches for food. When there are few larvae, the aye-aye feasts on fruit, seeds, or sweet nectar.

Today, scientists continue to study the aye-aye, but doing so is a challenging task because the aye-aye's natural habitat is the island of Madagascar, which is located in the Indian Ocean near Africa. This fascinating and remarkable animal cannot be found in the wild anywhere else on Earth.

APPENDIX B—SUMMARY DATA

Grade 5

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 1				
1	CCSS-1: 5.W.2		3	Students need to analyze the character's role throughout the passage.
Session 2				
1	CCSS-1: 5.L.2b	C	1	Students need to use a comma correctly to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not correctly separate an introductory element from the complete sentence.
2	CCSS-1: 5.W.2d	B	3	Students need to revise the last sentence in the paragraph so that the most precise language is used related to the topic of the paragraph. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not use the most precise language for describing how many people cross the bridge.
3	CCSS-1: 5.W.8	A	3	Students need to identify which source would provide the best additional information to include in the report. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not provide additional relevant information related to the topic.
Session 3				
1	CCSS-1: 5.SL.3	A	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to identify the detail that supports the claim that aye-aye see well at night. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not support the claim.
2	CCSS-1: 5.SL.3	C/E	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to identify the two details that support the claim that each of the aye-aye's unique features serves a purpose. Options C and E are the correct answers. The other options do not support the claim.
3	CCSS-1: 5.SL.2	B	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to identify the best summary of the presentation. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not summarize the presentation completely.

Grade 5

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 4				
1	CCSS-1: 5.RL.5	A	3	Students need to explain how paragraphs 1–6 contribute to the development of the plot. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not provide for the development of the plot.
2	CCSS-1: 5.RL.4	B	2	Students need to determine the meaning of the phrase. Option B is the correct answer. The other options are not correct meanings of the phrase as it is used in the sentence.
3	CCSS-1: 5.RL.2	C/D	2	Students need to determine the lesson Leo learns in the passage and then find support. In Part A, option C is the correct answer. The other options are not lessons Leo learns in the passage. In Part B, option D is the correct answer. The other options in Part B do not support the lesson from Part A.
4	CCSS-1: 5.RI.3	C	2	Students need to explain the idea that helped Bertocchini and her team think that the worms may have something on their bodies that breaks down the plastic. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not explain the idea.
5	CCSS-1: 5.RI.8	D/E	2	Students need to select the two sentences that support the point that using worms to break down trash may be a bad idea. The correct answers are D and E. The other options do not support the idea.
6	CCSS-1: 5.RI.3	D	3	Students need to explain the relationship between how the research about one topic may encourage research about other topics. Option D is the correct answer. The other options do not explain a relationship between two topics.

APPENDIX C—SAMPLE LISTENING STIMULUS COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Informational Stimulus—A Very Unique Animal

Grade 5

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative Easy Listening Formula (ELF) indicates that this document is at least suitable for a *reader* at the 6th grade, seventh 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 5 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 5.

PURPOSE

Purpose: Medium 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: Medium 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 5

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 5

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 5

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

APPENDIX D—SAMPLE LITERARY PASSAGE TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Literary Passage—The Speedy Twin

Grade 5

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 4–5 band. The qualitative review supports grade 5 based on the subject matter of the passage. Based on these sets of measures as explained in the Wisconsin Academic Standards Appendix A, this passage is slightly complex and is recommended for assessment at grade 5.

MEANING: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Moderately Complex

Vocabulary: Slightly 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 5

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 5

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

APPENDIX E—SAMPLE INFORMATIONAL PASSAGE TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Informational Passage—Wormy Solutions to Trash

Grade 5

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 4–5 band. The qualitative review supports placement at grade 5 based on the clear organization 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 5.

PURPOSE: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization of Main Ideas: Moderately Complex

Text Features: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Slightly Complex

Vocabulary: Moderately Complex

Sentence Structure: Moderately Complex

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

Subject Matter Knowledge: Moderately Complex

Intertextuality: Moderately 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 5

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 5

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.