

Pennsylvania PSSA 2023 Grade 4 English Language Arts

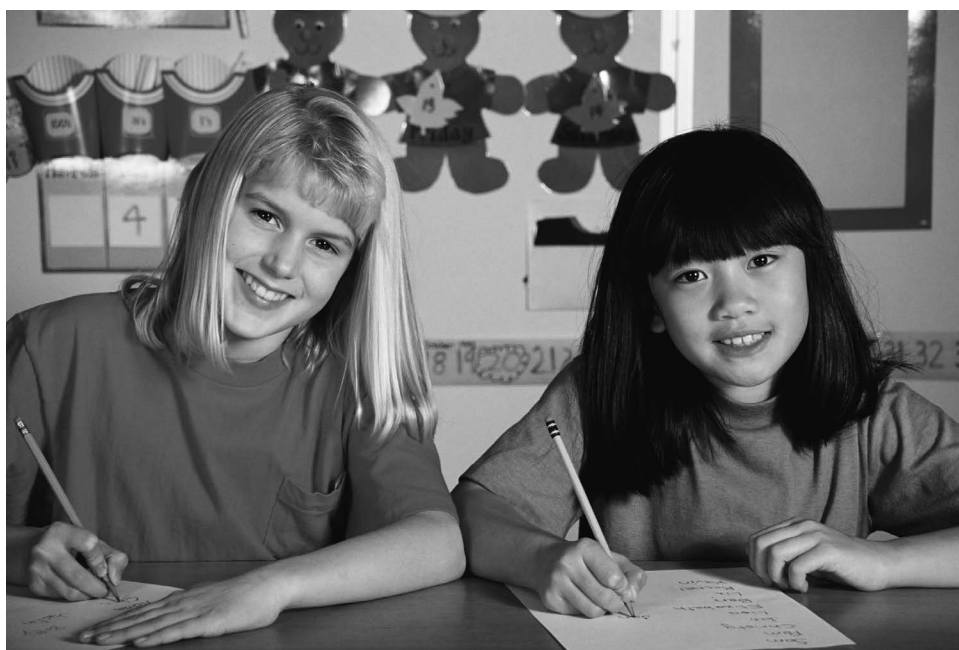
Exam & Answer Key Materials
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pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler



**2023–2024
Grade 4**

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR READING PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS**Directions:**

On the following pages are the Reading passages and questions.

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- First, read the passage carefully.
- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

Directions for Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions:

Some questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

- Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.
- Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.
- Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.
- Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.
- Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.

Directions for Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompts:

The English Language Arts TDA prompt will ask you to analyze the passage and use evidence from the passage to write an essay.

For the TDA Essay:

- Be sure to read the passage and the TDA prompt carefully.
- Review the Writer's Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.
- You may look back at the passage to help you write your essay.
- Write your essay in the appropriate space in the answer booklet. If you use scratch paper to write a rough-draft essay, be sure to transfer your final essay to the answer booklet.
- Be sure to check that your essay contains evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Be sure to check your essay for errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage about growing pistachios. Then answer questions 1–7 in your answer booklet.

It's Raining Pistachios!

by Gretchen Maurer

With rubber mallets, we whacked at the trunks of the young trees until pistachio nuts dropped down around us, thumping the tarp beneath our feet. I plucked one off the ground, peeled off the hull, and pried the shell open. The raw nut tasted like fresh air and sun-warmed earth. It was worth the eight-year wait.

Before I was born, my parents lived in Turkey. They ate a lot of Turkish pistachios and loved the rich flavor. My dad dreamed of owning a pistachio farm. Later, he and a friend bought 11 acres near the Russian River in northern California. The climate and soil conditions there were perfect for growing pistachios.

Getting Started

On a spring morning when I was 12, my family and I piled out of our truck with picks and shovels, ready to plant the first of 1,500 pistachio trees. As I tamped the earth around one particularly spindly tree, I thought, no way are these dead-looking sticks going to grow anything!

Pistachio trees take 7 to 10 years to produce nuts. For the first 3 years, we watered our trees by hand, using buckets we filled from a 300-gallon water tank hauled around on the back of a truck. Later, we dug a pond and installed a water-saving sprinkler system. During the dry season, it sprays hairlike streams of water between the trees.

Our First Harvest

After eight years, our trees produced our first pistachio harvest. Because young trees are fragile, we couldn't use a machine to shake the nuts from the trees. Instead, we whacked the trunks with rubber-tipped harvesting mallets that looked like giant cotton swabs. A few hundred pounds of pistachios fell onto tarps under the trees during that first harvest.

Going Organic

A few years later, we decided to grow our pistachios organically. Growing organic pistachios means that we do not use pesticides, herbicides, or human-made fertilizers. This requires a lot of work and creative thinking.

To produce healthy nuts, pistachio trees need nitrogen, so we add it to the soil with organic fertilizers. We add a ground-up fish solution to the sprinkler system, and we mix shovelfuls of composted chicken feathers or manure into the soil.

We also plant red clover around the trees; it takes nitrogen from the air and stores it in its roots. Over time, the nitrogen in the roots leaches into the soil and fertilizes the trees.

To control weeds that would steal nutrients from our trees, we hoe around each tree by hand and plow between rows.

We've even had to weed the pond! When weeds threatened to choke our water source, we paddled out in a canoe and pulled the tangly plants into the boat. Sometimes we've drained the water to let goats chomp on the intruding plants.

Crows would devour our pistachios if we let them. So we frighten them away with scarecrows and with screeching sounds made by noise machines. The screeches mimic the calls of hawks, which prey on crows.

10,000 Pounds of Pistachios

Pistachio trees produce a heavy crop of nuts one year and a light crop the next. A good harvest for us these days is 500 times what it was that first year—roughly the weight of a full-grown elephant!

Now that our trees are mature, we can collect the pistachios with a mechanical shaker. Its padded arm clamps onto the trunk of the tree and vibrates it. For about 30 seconds, the branches become a wild blur. Nuts rain down onto a tarp, which rolls up and dumps them onto a conveyor belt. The belt carries them to a large bin. Later, another machine removes the pistachios' rosy outer hulls and dries the nuts.

We haul the hulled nuts to a large processing plant where they're sorted, roasted, and salted. The sorting machine has an electric eye that detects any dark-stained shells and, with a jet of air, blows them into a separate bin. Finally, bagged, labeled, and ready to munch, our pistachios are sold at farmers' markets and in stores.

Today, our hearty trees look nothing like those dead-looking sticks we planted over 30 years ago. As I watch my 12-year-old daughter and her brothers collect stray nuts in buckets, I think of how I underestimated these trees when I was her age. With their branches loaded with clumps of rosy nuts, they couldn't look more beautiful.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Read the sentence from the passage.

“The raw nut tasted like fresh air and sun-warmed earth.”

What is the meaning of the simile used in the sentence?

- A. The nut did not taste right.
- B. The nut needed to be roasted.
- C. The nut had an enjoyable taste.
- D. The nut was different than expected.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	7%
p-value C	70% (correct answer)
p-value D	11%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the meaning of the simile “tasted like fresh air and sun-warmed earth.” Option C is the correct answer since the simile is showing that the raw nut tasted good by comparing it to fresh air and sun-warmed earth—enjoyable things. Options A, B, and D do not make sense in the context of the passage.

2. According to information in the passage, why did the author have to wait to try the pistachios?
- A. Pistachio trees can be found only in Turkey.
 - B. Pistachio trees are difficult to grow to full size.
 - C. Pistachio trees produce a heavy crop every year.
 - D. Pistachio trees take seven to ten years to produce nuts.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.3
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	9%
p-value B	13%
p-value C	10%
p-value D	69% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	<p>The student is being asked to identify why the author had to wait to sample the pistachios. Option D is the correct answer since the passage states that “Pistachio trees take 7 to 10 years to produce nuts.” Option A is incorrect since pistachios are not grown only in Turkey and this is not related to the reason the author had to wait to try the pistachios. Option B is incorrect; although it takes a lot of work to grow pistachio trees, this is not why the author had to wait to try the pistachios. Option C is incorrect since the yield of the crop is not related to the reason the author had to wait to try the pistachios.</p>

3. How do the headings support the passage?
- A. They provide the main topic of each section.
 - B. They explain the arguments in each section.
 - C. They ask a question that is answered in each section.
 - D. They summarize the author's opinion in each section.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.3
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	68% (correct answer)
p-value B	9%
p-value C	10%
p-value D	13%
Option Annotations	The student is being asked to determine how the headings support the passage. Option A is the correct answer since the headings do state the main topic of each section. Option B is incorrect since there are no arguments in the passage. Option C is incorrect since the headings are not questions. Option D is incorrect since the headings do not summarize the opinions of the author.

4. Why does the author at first use a mallet to gather pistachios?
- A. The pistachio trees were too young for a machine.
 - B. Using a machine meant the pistachios would not be organic.
 - C. The farm could not afford to buy a machine.
 - D. Using a machine to gather pistachios was not the traditional method.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.1
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	59% (correct answer)
p-value B	14%
p-value C	13%
p-value D	14%
Option Annotations	The student is being asked to determine why the author first uses a mallet to gather the pistachios. Option A is the correct answer since the passage states that “Because young trees are fragile, we couldn’t use a machine to shake the nuts from the trees.” Option B is incorrect since the use of a machine is not related to determining if something is organic. Option C is incorrect since the passage does not indicate that they could not afford to buy the machine. Option D is incorrect since the passage indicates that using the machine is a common way to gather pistachios.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question

5. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

Which point does the author make about organic farming?

- A. New methods need to be explored.
- B. More equipment needs to be bought.
- C. New trees need to be planted.
- D. More land needs to be used.

Part Two

Which evidence from the passage **best** supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

- A. “Later, we dug a pond and installed a water-saving sprinkler system.”
- B. “Instead, we whacked the trunks with rubber-tipped harvesting mallets that looked like giant cotton swabs.”
- C. “We add a ground-up fish solution to the sprinkler system, and we mix shovelfuls of composted chicken feathers or manure into the soil.”
- D. “Now that our trees are mature, we can collect the pistachios with a mechanical shaker.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.1
Answer Key: Part One	A
Answer Key: Part Two	C
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	0.86
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to identify a point the author makes about organic farming and select one sentence from the passage that supports this answer.</p> <p>Part One: Option A is the correct answer since the passage states that organic farming “requires a lot of work and creative thinking.” Option B is incorrect since the equipment that is used is not related to organic farming practices. Option C is incorrect since new trees are not required for organic farming. Option D is incorrect since organic farming does not require additional land.</p> <p>Part Two: Option C is the correct answer since this sentence describes some of the new methods the farm used when they started using organic farming methods. Option A is incorrect since the watering methods used are not related to organic farming practices. Option B is incorrect since the use of mallets for harvesting was due to the age of the trees and not related to organic farming methods. Option D is incorrect since the use of machinery is not related to organic farming practices.</p>

Multiple-Choice Question

6. Read the sentences from the passage.

“So we frighten them away with scarecrows and with screeching sounds made by noise machines. The screeches mimic the calls of hawks, which prey on crows.”

What does the word mimic mean as used in the sentence?

- A. alter
- B. copy
- C. invite
- D. organize

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	73% (correct answer)
p-value C	8%
p-value D	7%
Option Annotations	The student is being asked to use context clues to determine the meaning of the word “mimic.” Option B is the correct answer since the word “mimic” means “copy.” Option A is incorrect since the sound machine sounds similar to a hawk and is not altering the sound of a hawk. Options C and D are incorrect since they do not make sense in the context of the sentence.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question

7. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

What is the main idea of the passage?

- A. Organic farming is better than nonorganic farming.
- B. Pistachio farming takes a lot of time and hard work.
- C. California has the best soil and climate for a pistachio farm.
- D. Farmers want their children to continue running their farms.

Part Two

Which evidence from the passage supports the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “I plucked one off the ground, peeled off the hull, and pried the shell open.”
- B. “After eight years, our trees produced our first pistachio harvest.”
- C. “When weeds threatened to choke our water source, we paddled out in a canoe and pulled the tangly plants into the boat.”
- D. “With their branches loaded with clumps of rosy nuts, they couldn’t look more beautiful.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.2
Answer Key: Part One	B
Answer Key: Part Two	B, C
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.84
Option Annotations	<p>The student is being asked to identify the main idea of the passage and select two pieces of evidence from the passage that support this main idea.</p> <p>Part One: Option B is the correct answer since the passage mainly describes all the time and effort that goes into farming pistachios. Option A is incorrect since there is only one section in the passage that talks about organic farming methods and it does not state this opinion. Option C is incorrect since this is a detail that is in the passage and not a main idea. Option D is incorrect since this is not an opinion that is developed in the passage.</p> <p>Part Two: Options B and C are the correct answers; option B supports the idea that pistachio farming takes a great deal of “time,” and option C supports the idea that pistachio farming takes a lot of “hard work.” Options A and D are incorrect since they are simply descriptions that are included in the passage and they do not support the main idea identified in Part One.</p>

PASSAGES 2 AND 3

Read the following passages about the Everglades in Florida. Then answer question 8 in your answer booklet.

A Day in the Everglades

by Sage Levin and Leslie Reed

“Keep your eyes open,” my dad said.

“For what?” I asked.

“Birds and alligators and . . .” he pointed, “panthers.”

As we drove through the Everglades, I looked out the car window. I realized we were surrounded by the “River of Grass” we’d read about. Next to the road was a sign that said “Panther Crossing.” The Florida panther is an endangered species. There are fewer than 80 panthers left in the Everglades. I kept my eyes open. And was I ever amazed by what I saw that day in the Everglades!

First Stop: Swamp walk

The boardwalk wandered through a forest of cypress and palm trees. In one tree, two baby barred owls were being fed by their parents. They turned their huge round eyes to look at us. We stayed quiet, and they didn’t seem afraid. It seemed to me that nothing in the Everglades feared us.

Those barred owl babies were just a preview of what awaited us at the swamp where the boardwalk ended. Cypress forests are the perfect habitat for water-loving animals. Here’s why: These trees grow in water! Sticking up from the water around the base of the trees are “knees,” which are actually part of the roots. And they’re “home sweet home” for water creatures that like to hide. Higher up, wading birds nest in the branches.

All around us were giant birds in beautiful colors—snowy egrets, ibis, herons, and . . .

“What’s that?” I asked as an enormous white bird swooped down.

“Wow! A wood stork,” my mom said.

Wood storks are also endangered, and yet here one was, sweeping its big bill through the water, looking for food.

What I really wanted to see was alligators, which turned out to be pretty easy—my nickname isn’t “reptile eye” for nothing! In the water below us was a huge mother alligator with, yes, nine babies crawling on and around her. They were about the size of my feet and really cute! I also spotted a water snake swimming under a cypress tree. And this was just our first stop!

Second Stop: Boat ride

Some of the water that flows through the Everglades ends up in the Gulf of Mexico. Our tour boat drove slowly—and for good reason. The water is shallow (“if you fall out, you can just walk home,” the tour guide told us), and there are manatees in it.

These mammals are huge (they're sometimes called "sea cows"). They hang out close to the water's surface, where they are often hit by speeding boats. Many manatees die from these accidents; many others bear huge scars from propellers. I kept my eyes open but didn't see any manatees: the water was too brown to see anything in it.

The water isn't brown because it's polluted—it's naturally brown. Here's why: The 10,000 islands are covered with mangrove trees, whose roots reach into the brackish (a mixture of salty and fresh) water. These trees—and their roots—are a great habitat for many animals, both in and out of the water. When the leaves fall into the water, they break down, turning the water brown and becoming food for tiny organisms. Those organisms are eaten by bigger animals like crabs and fish, which are eaten by even bigger animals like birds and . . .

"Dolphins!" Mom yelled. An Atlantic bottle-nosed dolphin leaped out of the water, then another. One even jumped right next to the boat!

Last Stop: Park ranger talk

"The Everglades is in trouble," Ranger Brian Ettling told the crowd. He told us that much of the water we had followed from the River of Grass through the swamps and to the ocean is being drained. People are drying out the land to build houses and farms. Sometimes water is allowed to rush back into drained areas. When this happens, alligator eggs are often washed from their nests. Many animals that depend on the Everglades are losing their homes.

"Not only is this a bad situation for the wildlife, but it's a bad situation for you and me," Ranger Ettling said. Fortunately, the park has a plan to improve the situation in the Everglades.

Ranger Ettling picked up a ball that looked like Earth.

"Restoring the Everglades is a test to see if people can restore the balance of other natural places," he said. Then he threw the ball to me. When I caught it, he said, "If we pass the test, we get to keep the planet." That seemed like a hard test—but definitely worth it.

Hope for the Everglades

by Andrea DelBanco

The Florida Everglades is one of the world's most complex ecosystems. It provides drinking water for millions of people and is home to many threatened animals. It's in trouble. Can it be saved?

The Everglades is the only place where alligators and crocodiles live together in the wild. It is home to many of the world's remaining Florida panthers, whose population is estimated to be between 100 and 200. At least 67 endangered species live there. It's like no place else on Earth. And it's in trouble.

"The Everglades is actually a huge slow-moving river of grass that is fed by rainfall," says Richard Gibbs of the Everglades Foundation. "It needs to have its plumbing system fixed. It was broken when parts of it were drained to make way for houses, businesses, and farming."

In 2000, the government put into action a \$7.8 billion plan to save the Everglades. But 10 years later, the Everglades is still dying. None of the 68 parts of the rescue project is complete. Can the marsh find a way out of this mess?

Get the Water Right

People began draining water from the Everglades in the late 1800s. In 1947, President Harry Truman set aside the area as Everglades National Park. A year later, the government began to build canals to carry the fresh water to the Atlantic Ocean. This dried up much of the Everglades' land.

Today, the water doesn't flow properly and it isn't clean. "It's all about getting enough clean water to the right place at the right time," says Eric Bush, deputy chief for the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' Everglades Division.

A Not-So-Fast Fix

"It's like trying to put a broken vase back together," says Tom Van Lent, a scientist with the Everglades Foundation. "It's going to take a long time," he added. "There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things."

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

Writer’s Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the prompt carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the prompt relates to the passage.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- ☐ I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.
- ☐ I stayed focused on responding to the prompt.
- ☐ I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- ☐ I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent's statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

This image shows a single sheet of white paper with horizontal ruling lines. The lines are evenly spaced and run across the width of the page. There are no margins, text, or other markings on the paper.

GO ON 

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GO ON 

[illegible]

After you have checked your work, close your answer booklet and test booklet so your teacher will know you are finished.



Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline

#8 Item Information

Alignment	B-K.1.1.1	Depth of Knowledge	3	Mean Score	1.89
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Assessment Anchor:

E04.B-K.1 — Key Ideas and Details

Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E04.B-K.1.1.1 — Refer to details and examples in a text when explaining what the text says explicitly and when drawing inferences from the text.

Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s) Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Skillful use of transitions to link ideas Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning

Score	Description
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s) Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s) Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s) Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s) Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion Minimal evidence of an organizational structure Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s) Few, if any, transitions to link ideas Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points



8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

In the passages; “Hope for the Everglades.” and, “A Day in the Everglades.” the authors use key details to support Van Lent’s statement. They do this by saying that we will have to clean up the Everglades so that the other generations can see all the beautiful wildlife in the Everglades.

The author of, “Hope for the Everglades” show this by telling the readers the amazing animals that live in the Everglades. The author states, “The Everglades is the only place where alligators and crocodiles live together, in the wild. It is home to many of the world’s remaining Florida panthers, whose population is estimated to be between 100 and 200. At least 67 endangered species live there.” This means if we do not save the Everglades the future generations will be unable to see all these beautiful creatures in their habitat. It also means that many endangered species will die out if we don’t save the Everglades.

The author of, “A Day in the Everglades” also shows this by telling the readers all the beautiful things she is seeing in the Everglades. The author states, “In one tree, two baby barred owls were being fed by their parents.” and, “All around us were giant birds in beautiful colors—snowy egrets, ibis, herons, ...” she also says, “In the water below us was a huge alligator with, yes, nine babies crawling on and around her.” These quotes show all the amazing wildlife in the Everglades that will soon be gone if we don’t save the Everglades. They also show all the animals that will be affected unless we act quickly to save them. If we do that the next generation will thank us for helping all these endangered species survive into the future.

To conclude, in the passages the authors use details to support Van Lent’s statement.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong and effectively supports the focus (the author's use of key details) and ideas. The effective introduction provides a strong, analytic controlling idea (*the authors use key details to support Van Lent's statement . . . by saying that we will have to clean up the Everglades so that the other generations can see all the beautiful wildlife*) that sharpens the focus of the response and connects directly to both texts. In the first body paragraph, the student focuses on the animals showcased in "Hope for the Everglades" (*The author . . . show this by telling the readers the amazing animals that live in the Everglades*). Substantial and relevant references to the text ("*The Everglades is the only place where alligators and crocodiles live together;*" "*It is home to many of the world's remaining Florida panthers;*" and "*At least 67 endangered species live there.*") are followed by thorough analysis (*This means if we do not save the Everglades the future generations will be unable to see all these beautiful creatures in their habitat. It also means that many endangered speices will die out . . .*), all of which supports the controlling idea. The second body paragraph focuses on "A Day in the Everglades," stating that information in this text also supports the quote (*. . . by telling the readers all the beautiful things she is seeing in the Everglades*). Substantial, well-chosen text references ("*two baby barred owls;*" "*giant birds in beautiful colors;*" "*alligator with, yes, nine babies*") support the concise analysis that follows (*These quotes show all the amazing wildlife in the Everglades that will soon be gone if we don't save the Everglades. They also show all the animals that will be effected unless we act quickly to save them. If we do that the next generation will thank us for helping all these endangered speices survive into the future.*). There is a skillful use of transitions (*In the passages; The author states; This means; It also means; These quotes show; If we do that; To conclude*) to link ideas within categories, as well as an effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (*beautiful; wildlife; amazing; creatures; habitat; endangered; speices; soon be gone; effected; survive*) drawn from the text. The few errors present in usage (*effected* versus *affected*) and spelling (*speices*) do not interfere with meaning. The somewhat abrupt conclusion does not significantly diminish the overall effectiveness of the response nor its holistic score.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points

8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of "Hope for the Everglades."

"There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things."

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent's statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

This statement means keeping the next generation alive means keeping the Everglades alive. In "A Day in the Everglades", I know the Everglades are important because the text says, "Many animals that depend on the Everglades are losing their homes," which means losing the Everglades will make some animals go extinct which will mess up the food chain and ecosystem, hurting the next generation. In "Hope for the Everglades" the text says, "It provides drinking water for millions of people and is home to many threatened animals. That piece tells me that the Everglades is home to lots and lots of different plants and animals and that the Everglades provide water for us. The Everglades are getting hurt and we have to do something about it. The Everglades do a lot for us, like providing humans drinking water, and now we have to do something for this beloved habitat, by protecting it.

GO ON

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong and effectively supports the student's focus on the importance of preserving the Everglades and the wide-ranging benefits of doing so. The student begins with an awkwardly worded, but nonetheless effective, controlling idea (*This statement means keeping the next generation alive means keeping the Everglades alive.*), which is supported with specific, relevant text from "A Day in the Everglades" (*"Many animals that depend on the Everglades are losing their homes,"*). This idea/text combination is extended further by means of thorough analysis (*which means losing the Everglades will make some animals go extinct which will mess up the food chain and ecosystem; hurting the next generation.*) that insightfully connects an idea from the passage (the food chain) with the controlling idea. All this development demonstrates in-depth analytic understanding of the text. Next, the student draws on "Hope for the Everglades" to provide a relevant text reference (*"It provides drinking water for millions of people and is home to many threatened animals."*) that connects to more strong analysis (*. . . tells me that the Everglades is home to lots and lots of diffent plants and animals and that the Everglades provide water for us. The Everglades are getting hurt and we have to do something about it.*), effectively building on the ideas contained in the text reference. The conclusion refocuses the reader's attention on the importance of preserving and protecting the Everglades, this time offering a moral argument (*The Everglades do a lot for us, like providing humans drinking water, and now we have to do something for this beloved habitat, by protecting it.*), which concludes the essay. The response demonstrates the higher-level thinking indicative of effective analysis and well-chosen text to support the student's claim. There is a skillful use of transitions throughout the response (*This statement means; In; I know; the text says; which means*) as well as an effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (*food chain; ecosystem; generation; extinct; beloved habitat; protecting*) drawn from the text. The few errors present do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points

8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

A Day in the Everglades by Saged Levin and Leslie Reed and Hope For the Everglades by Andrea delbanco are two passages that are mainly about the complex problems in the everglades and how complex they are to fix and how it is important for next Generations that we fix it now.

When the food chain Gets smaller we fall lower on Food chain Till eventually there won't be anything left whitch is why we have to Save the everglades to Keep our food chain balanced here are Some examels of how our Food chain is Shrinking when the authors of a day in The Everglades state “there are Fewer than 80 panthers left” and “wood storks are also endangerd.” Finnaly when when the Ranger says “this is a bad Situation For the wildlife” These 3 pieces of text evidence show that it is important to Keep our animals alive because we never know when our Food chain will plunge that is why we need to have the ever glades Fixed For Future generations.

GO ON 

If the water in the everglades doesn't Stay Clean we Could loose a lot oF the earths Water Supply miss Delbanco States that "the everglades provides drinking water For millions of people She also States "to day the water doesn't flow property and it isn't Clean" these two pieces of Text evidence Show that we need to Fix the everglades for future generations because we will loose to much water when trying to keep our ecosystems balanced.

in cunclusion we need to Keep the everglades Strong So in the future people will not Struggle.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is appropriate and supports the essay's general focus on the Everglades' problems and ideas about how to solve them. The clear introduction establishes a controlling idea (. . . *two passages that are Mainly about the complex problems in the everglades and how complex they are to fix and how it is important for next Generations that we fix it now*) that clearly outlines the writer's purpose. The first body paragraph addresses the complex issue of the food chain of the Everglades with a combination of clear analysis of implicit meanings from the texts (*When the food chain Gets smaller we fall lower on Food chain . . . we have to Save the everglades to Keep our food chain balanced . . .*) and relevant text ("*there are Fewer than 80 panthers left*"; "*wood storks are also endangered*"; and "*this is a bad Situation For the wildlife*"). This is followed by more clear analysis (*These 3 pieces of text evidence show that it is important to Keep our animals alive because we never know when our Food chain will plunge that is why we need to have the ever glades Fixed For Future generations.*). Though the analysis is clearly stated, it falls short of being effective due to an underlying lack of precision in how the student relates the original ideas to the selected food chain examples and details. In the second body paragraph, the student addresses another complex issue (the Everglades' water supply) by means of clear analysis (*If the water in the everglades doesn't Stay Clean we Could loose a lot oF the earths Water Supply*), which is supported with sufficient, accurate, and direct references to "Hope for the Everglades" ("*the everglades provides drinking water For Millions of people* and "*to day the water doesn't flow property [properly] and it isn't Clean*"). The response extends this development with more clear analysis (*these two pieces of Text evidence Show that we need to Fix the everglades for future generations because we will loose to much water when trying to keep our ecosystems balanced.*). The clear conclusion (*we need to Keep the everglades Strong So in the future people Will not Struggle*) refocuses the reader back to the ideas outlined in the controlling idea to provide a sense of closure to the response. There is an appropriate use of transitions to link ideas (*here are Some examels; when the authors . . . state; Finnaly; when the Ranger says; miss Delbanco states; She also States; in cunclusion; because*) and an appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (*complex; food chain; ecosystems; balanced; plunge*) drawn from the text. Minor errors in sentence formation (run-ons, fragments), usage (*loose* for *lose*, *property* for *properly*, *to* for *too*, duplicate words), spelling (*whitch*, *exampels*, *Finnaly*, *cunclusion*, *to day* for *today*, *ever glades* for *Everglades*), capitalization (random and/or missing), and punctuation, seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points



8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

Tithe story “A Day in the Everglades by Sage Levin and Leslie Reed and the story Hope for the Everglades by Andrea Del banco are both about the Everglades being in danger. Scientist Tom Van Lent says “There are somethings you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.” This means it is going to take a long time to fix the Everglades and that we should start now.

In paragraph 7 of Hope for Everglades it says “It’s like trying to put a broken vase back together.” This means that it is going to take a long time to fix the Everglades. If we want the next generation to have the Everglades we better start fixing them now.

In paragraph 16 of a Day in the Everglades it says “People are drying out the land to build houses and farms. So metimes water is allowed to rush back into dry areas. When this happens, alligator eggs are washed from there nest.” This means that many animals that depend on the Everglades are losing there homes. The next generation will not have these amazing animals if we keep destroying them. We must start fixing the Everglades.

Obviously, the Everglades are being destroyed. and if we want the next generation to have them, we must start fixing them now!

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is appropriate and supports the broad focus (dangers to the Everglades) by means of a clear controlling idea (*are both about the Everglades being in danger . . . it is going to take a long time to fix the Everglades and that we should start now*). The first body paragraph begins with a relevant quote from “Hope for the Everglades” (*“It’s like trying to put a broken vase back together.”*), which is clarified and extended with clear analysis (*This means that it is going to take a long time to fix the Everglades. If we want the next generation to have the Everglades we better start fixing them now.*). The second body paragraph follows the same pattern, starting with a relevant text pull, this time from “A Day in the Everglades” (*“People are drying out the land to build houses and farms. So metimes water is allowed to rush back into dry areas. When this happens, alligator eggs are washed from there nest.”*), which is supported by clarifying analysis (*This means that many animals that depend on the Everglades are losing there homes. The next generation will not have these amazing animals if we keep destroying them. We must start fixing the Everglades.*). The clear conclusion (*Obviously, the Everglades are being destroyed. and if we want the next generation to have them, we must start fixing them now!*) ties back to the controlling idea and provides an adequate sense of completion. There is an appropriate use of transitions to link ideas (*This means that; In paragraph . . . it says; Obviously*) and precise language is used appropriately (*danger; depend; amazing; destroying; Obviously*) throughout the response. There are a few errors present in usage (*there* for *their*) and punctuation, but they seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points

8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

Information in both passages supports Van Lent’s statement, “There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.” is, restoring the Everglades and it’s going to take a while. I know this because the author states in “A Day in the Everglades,” “Restoring the Everglades is a test to see if people can restore the balance of other natural places,” he said.”

As you can see from this citation, this passage wants you to restore the Everglades, just as I said. I can infer this because the text states in “Hope for the Everglades,” “It’s going to take a longtime,” he added.” As you can see, it’s going to take a while, so that’s why he wants you to start now so you can prepare for the next generation

This is the reasons why I believe Van Lent’s statement is for restoring the Everglades, and it will take awhile.



This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak; the weak introduction restates portions of the task and quote (*Information in both passages . . . “ ‘This is one of those things,’ ”*) and adds limited inferences (*. . . restoring the Everglades and it’s going to take a while*). Next, the student draws on “A Day in the Everglades” to provide a limited text reference (*I know this because the author states in “A Day in the Everglades,” “Restoring the Everglades is atest to see if people can restore the balance of other natural places,”*). The student then extends that idea with a weak inference (*As you can see from this citation, this passage wants you to restore the Everglades, just as I said.*). The student then shifts focus to “Hope for the Everglades” by including two weak inferences (*I can infer this because the text states in “Hope for the Everglades,” “It’s going to take a longtime,” and As you can see, it’s going to take a while, so that’s why he wants you to start now so you can prepare for the next generation*). These inferences, while falling short of true analysis, move the response beyond a strictly literal interpretation of the text. The brief conclusion (*This is the reasons why I believe Van Lent’s statement is for restoring the Everglades, and it will take awhile.*) simply reaffirms the response’s previously stated ideas. There is limited use of transitions (*I know this because; As you can see; I can infer this because*) and precise language (*infer; prepare; believe*) in the response. The few errors present in sentence formation and usage seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points



8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

Tom Van Lent made a statement at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.!” In both passages the saying basicly means that some thing that you do are for the future. In “A Day in the Everglades” it shows that the work or improvements that will be fixed eventually, will be used not only when changes happen, but in the future. In “Hope for the Everglades” it tells us that the Everglades have yet to be fixed, but when they do get fixed, it, will last. That’s how both passages go along with Tom Van Lent’s statement, “There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak and somewhat disjointed. The response begins with a weak inference that ineffectively connects to both the quote and the passages (*In both passages the saying basicly means that some thing that you do are for the future.*). Next, the student references the passages and provides a weak inference based on each (*In “A Day in the Everglades” it shows that the work or improvements that will be fixed eventually, will be used not only when changes happen, but in the future. In “Hope for the Everglades” it tells us that the Everglades have yet to be fixed, but when they do get fixed, it, will last.*). Holistically, the references to the texts and the weak inferences are enough to move the response beyond a literal interpretation of the text and demonstrate some understanding of how the quote is supported by information in the texts. The conclusion (*That’s how both passages go along with Tom Van Lent’s statement, “There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”*) simply reiterates the task. Some transitions are used to link ideas (*In both passages; it shows that; it tells us that; That’s how*), and an inconsistent use of precise language (*eventually; future*) is evident in the response. The errors present do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point



8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

There are animals some are not healthy but some are people began draining water from Everglands today the water dos’nt flow write it is not clean they say it’s like trying to put a broken vase back together

This response minimally addresses part of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. There is minimal evidence of an organizational structure; most of the phrases could be reordered without negatively affecting the quality of the response as a whole. The response consists of a few ideas that loosely connect with information from the texts (*There are animals some are not healthy but some are; people began draining water from Everglands; the water dos’nt flow write it is not clean; and they say it’s like trying to put a broken vase back together*). There is a very minimal use of transitions (*but*) and precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text (*draining; broken vase*) in the response. The many errors present in sentence formation, usage, spelling, and punctuation interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point

8. Read the statement by scientist Tom Van Lent that appears at the end of “Hope for the Everglades.”

“There are some things you do for the next generation. This is one of those things.”

Write an essay analyzing how the information in **both** passages supports Van Lent’s statement. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your response.

its hard to find the animals food because they
dont have water and the water through the gulf
of mexico goes fast and they are losing water

This response minimally addresses part of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. There is minimal evidence of an organizational structure. The response consists of a grouping of ideas (*its hard to find the animals food because they dont have water and the water through the gulf of mexico goes fast and they are losing water*) that connect very loosely with the water issues addressed in the passages. The possible attempt at an inference (*its hard to find the animals food because they dont have water*) is poorly conveyed to the point that it is unclear what the student is attempting to say. The idea that *the water through the gulf of mexico goes fast* is similarly confused and, overall, does not help the response. There is a minimal use of transitions (*because; and*) and a very minimal use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text (*gulf of mexico*). The many errors present in sentence formation and punctuation interfere with meaning.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR CONVENTIONS OF STANDARD ENGLISH QUESTIONS

Directions:

On the following pages are the Conventions of Standard English questions.

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

CONVENTIONS OF STANDARD ENGLISH MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

9. Read the paragraph.

(1) The bobcat belongs to the feline family other members of that family include lions, tigers, and cheetahs. (2) Bobcats live in North America, and there are 12 different species. (3) Bobcats hunt for rabbis, birds, squirrels, mice, and other small game. (4) However, they can kill animals larger than themselves.

Which revision corrects the error in the paragraph?

- A. In sentence 1, place a period after feline family and capitalize other.
- B. In sentence 2, place a period after America and change and to “but.”
- C. In sentence 3, add the word “and” after rabbis.
- D. In sentence 4, remove the comma after However.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.1.6
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	54% (correct answer)
p-value B	19%
p-value C	8%
p-value D	19%
Option Annotations	The student is being asked to identify a conventions error in the paragraph. Option A is the correct answer since sentence 1 is actually two complete sentences. Options B, C, and D are incorrect since they do not identify errors in the paragraph.

10. Read the sentence.

Nancy hurt herself when she fell on the rainy walkway.

Which phrase **best** replaces the underlined words to make the sentence more precise?

- A. injured her body
- B. twisted her ankle
- C. messed up her foot
- D. damaged something

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	39%
p-value B	41% (correct answer)
p-value C	5%
p-value D	15%
Option Annotations	The student is being asked to select more precise language to replace a detail in the sentence. Option B is correct since “twisted her ankle” is more precise than “hurt herself,” and it fits the context of the sentence. Options A, C, and D are incorrect since they are not more precise than “hurt herself.”

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—SAMPLE ITEM SUMMARY DATA

Multiple-Choice and Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D
1	B-V.4.1.2	C	2	12%	7%	70%	11%
2	B-K.1.1.3	D	2	9%	13%	10%	69%
3	B-C.3.1.3	A	3	68%	9%	10%	13%
4	B-C.3.1.1	A	2	59%	14%	13%	14%
5	B-C.3.1.1	Part One: A Part Two: C	3	Mean Score: 0.86			
6	B-V.4.1.1	B	2	12%	73%	8%	7%
7	B-K.1.1.2	Part One: B Part Two: B, C	3	Mean Score: 1.84			
9	D.1.1.6	A	2	54%	19%	8%	19%
10	D.2.1.1	B	2	39%	41%	5%	15%

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
8	B-K.1.1.1	4	3	1.89