



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler



2018–2019
Grade 6

Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction—September 2018

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INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instructional programs aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS). These tools include Academic Standards, Assessment Anchor documents, assessment handbooks, and content-based item and scoring samplers. This Item and Scoring Sampler is a useful tool for Pennsylvania educators in preparing local instructional programs by providing samples of test item types and scored student responses. The Item Sampler is not designed to be used as a pretest, a curriculum, or other benchmark for operational testing.

This Item and Scoring Sampler is available in Braille format. For more information regarding Braille, call (717) 901-2238.

Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)

This sampler contains examples of test questions designed to assess the Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The Mathematics, Reading, and Writing PSSA transitioned to PCS-based operational Mathematics and English Language Arts assessments starting with the spring 2015 PSSA administration.

The 2013 PCS-aligned Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content documents are posted on this portal:

- www.education.pa.gov [Roll over 'DATA AND REPORTING' in the dark blue bar across the top of the page. Select 'ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.' Click on the link that reads 'Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)'. Then click on 'Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content.']

Change in Test Design 2017–2018

Beginning with tests taken in the 2017–2018 school year, the English Language Arts PCS-based PSSA will no longer include a mode-specific writing prompt. This Item and Scoring Sampler contains items representative of the tests administered during the 2017–2018 school year.

What Is Included

This sampler contains stimulus reading passages with test questions, standalone questions, and text-dependent analysis prompts that have been written to align to the Assessment Anchors that are based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The passages represent some of the genres approved by PDE to appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. The test questions provide an idea of the types of items that may appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. Each sample test question has been through a rigorous review process to ensure alignment with the Assessment Anchors.

Purpose and Uses

The items in this sampler may be used¹ as examples for creating assessment items at the classroom level. Classroom teachers may find it beneficial to have students respond to the text-dependent analysis prompt test questions in this sampler. Educators can then use the sampler as a guide to score the responses either independently or together with colleagues within a school or district.

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Item Format and Scoring Guidelines

The 2017–2018 PCS-based PSSA has multiple types of test questions. For grade 4, the types of test questions are Multiple-Choice (MC) questions, Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR) questions, and Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) prompts.

Multiple Choice: Each of this type of test question has four answer choices. Some MC test questions are based on a stimulus reading passage, while other MC test questions are independent of a passage. Each correct response to an MC test question is worth one point.

Evidence-Based Selected Response: Each two-part EBSR question is designed to elicit an evidence-based response from a student who has read either a literature or an informational text passage. In Part One, which is similar to a multiple-choice question, the student analyzes a passage and chooses the best answer from four answer choices. In Part Two, the student utilizes evidence from the passage to select one or more answers based on his or her response to Part One. Part Two is different from a multiple-choice question in that there may be more than four answer options and more than one correct answer. Each EBSR test question is worth either two or three points, and students can receive points for providing a correct response to Part One or for providing one or more correct responses in Part Two.

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt: The TDA prompt is a text-dependent analysis prompt based on a passage or passage set that each student has read during the test event. There are three response pages in the paper-and-pencil format and up to 5,000 characters in the online format. Both literature and informational texts are addressed through this item type. Students must use explicit and implicit evidence to make inferences leading to a conclusion or generalization in response to the task stated in the prompt. Students construct a well-written analytical essay to communicate inferences and connection to the evidence using grade-appropriate writing skills. The TDA response is scored using a holistic scoring guideline on a 1–4-point scale.

Non-Score Considerations: For TDA items, responses can be designated as non-scorable (NS). While every effort is made to score each student response, a response may receive a NS designation if it falls into one of five categories:

Blank – Blank, entirely erased, entirely crossed out, or consists entirely of whitespace

Refusal – Refusal to respond to the task

Non-scorable – In a language other than English, incoherent, illegible, insufficient, unrelated to the passage, or consisting solely or almost solely of text copied from the passage

Off Topic – Makes no reference to the item or passage but is not an intentional refusal

Copied – Consists of text copied from the item and/or test directions

Testing Time and Mode of Testing Delivery for the PCS-Based PSSA

The PSSA is delivered in traditional paper-and-pencil format as well as in an online format. The estimated time to respond to a test question is the same for both methods of test delivery. The following table shows the estimated response time for each item type.

During an official test administration, students are given as much additional time as is necessary to complete the test questions.

English Language Arts Item Type	MC	EBSR	TDA
Estimated Response Time (minutes)	1.5	3 to 5	45

English Language Arts Grade 6

This English Language Arts Sampler is composed of 3 passages, 5 passage-based multiple-choice questions, 1 evidence-based selected-response question, a text-dependent analysis prompt, and 4 standalone multiple-choice questions.

There are 3 passages in this booklet. The first passage is followed by a set of passage-based multiple-choice questions and an evidence-based selected-response question. The second passage is followed by a text-dependent analysis prompt. This booklet also contains 4 standalone multiple-choice questions.

Each question is accompanied by a chart that contains the Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content coding, answer key(s), depth of knowledge, and testing data. Each question is followed by a brief analysis or rationale. The text-dependent analysis prompt is displayed with the item-specific scoring guidelines and examples of student responses with scores and annotations at each scoring level.

The PCS-based PSSA may be administered in paper-and-pencil format or online. As a result, this sampler includes samples of text-dependent analysis prompt responses in both formats. A sample online response is noted by the symbol .

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 redwood trees and the scientists who study them. Then answer questions 1–9.

Skywalking for Science: Aloft in Redwood Space

by Jeanne Miller

When Dr. Stephen Sillett climbed his first giant redwood tree, back in 1987, he didn't know that a new world awaited him up there.

At that time the tops of the ancient trees in old-growth redwood forests were unexplored. Scientists assumed they were biological deserts, containing only tree branches. But when Sillett reached the crown¹ of the 300-foot tree, he found a forest above a forest. At its top was a sunny glade alive with mosses, lichens, and even small trees. Growing from a rotting stump in the middle of the crown were huckleberry bushes, laden with berries. It was a thriving ecosystem in the air.

Sillett started climbing trees when he was a student at Reed College, in Portland, Oregon, in the 1980s. Those experiences led him to become a botanist, a scientist who studies plants. Today he teaches botany and forestry at Humboldt State University in northern California and spends much of his time at the top of tall trees. Coast redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*) are his specialty.

An Aerial World

The coast redwood is one of three surviving species of redwoods (the others are the giant sequoia in the Sierra Nevada in California and the dawn redwoods in China). It grows only in a narrow band along the Pacific coast between central California and southern Oregon, a 450-mile belt where rain and fog provide enough moisture to sustain the giants. They are the tallest trees on Earth and have been around for 10 million years. Some coast redwoods living today may be as old as 2,000 years. The oldest and largest ones survive in old-growth forests, most of which are protected in parks or reserves. These are the trees that Sillett and his colleagues study.

Redwoods are remarkable for their ability to stay alive, whatever happens. If some accident exposes the living tissue under the bark, a sprout grows from the wound. Thus, if a limb breaks off, another limb arises in its place. If the top of the trunk dies and falls off, another trunk shoots up from that spot. And if that trunk breaks off, another trunk will grow. The crown of an old redwood often has many trunks, each with its own set of branches.

This complex structure, trunk upon trunk, limb upon limb, creates pockets where dry redwood needles collect. Fungi grow on the dead needles and decompose them into soil. Into this soil drop airborne seeds and spores. Plants sprout, mature, reproduce, and die, enriching the soil and making it ever deeper. In the redwood canopy², nestled in nooks and crannies and on flat limbs, Sillett and his tree-climbing team have discovered rhododendrons in bloom as well as miniature trees of many species: hemlocks, Douglas firs, and tan oaks among them. They've even found an eight-foot

¹ crown—the upper part of a tree that includes the branches and leaves

² canopy—the uppermost layer in a forest

Sitka spruce rooted on a limb of a redwood. Dense aerial gardens of ferns host a variety of animal life, including slugs, snails, and salamanders. These fern mats store moisture that supports much of the canopy life.

Mapping Redwoods

Sillett and his colleagues want to understand how these trees operate and what their limits are. They've installed sensors in several trees to collect data on light, temperature, humidity, wind, and sap flow. In addition, he and his students measure the diameter and position of all the woody parts of the redwoods. Sillett uses these numbers to construct 3-D diagrams of each tree. He hopes to be able to explain someday how and why the trees are different from one another.

The researchers want to know how water moves through their trunks and branches. It takes water a few weeks to get from the redwood's roots to its top, traveling up through microscopic channels in the trunk. Water molecules have a tendency to cling to one another, so as a water molecule rises it pulls the next molecule with it. When water evaporates from the leaves at the top of the tree, more water rises to replace it. But it's a fight against gravity, and scientists think there's a limit to how high the water can be pulled. And that puts a limit on how high a tree can get. Coast redwoods have an advantage over many trees in that they are bathed in fog on summer mornings. Scientists working with Sillett have discovered that 25 percent to 50 percent of a coast redwood's water comes from summer fog, much of it taken up by the canopy soil.

Taming the Tallest Trees

The very tallest redwoods all grow in a few state parks and a national park along the northernmost coast of California. There are four trees over 370 feet in height and Sillett has climbed them all. Laser range finders, devices that use laser beams to measure distance to an object, can determine the height of a tree within a few feet. However, the only really accurate measurement comes with climbing to the top and dropping a measuring tape to the ground. The tallest tree in the world was discovered in 2006 in Redwood National Park in Humboldt County, California. Sillett measured it at 379.1 feet high. That's the height of a 37-story building.

Canopy researchers face many difficulties, and getting to the top of a tree is just one of them. Hiking through an old-growth redwood forest is the first challenge. These are temperate rainforests, which, like their tropical cousins, have abundant rainfall. The forest floor is thick with lush undergrowth. Fallen redwood trunks, some as much as twelve feet in diameter, often lie in the way. It can take hours of bushwhacking to go just a mile.

Sillett has made an art of climbing the ancient redwoods, but he can't completely eliminate the danger. It requires extreme discipline and focus to stay safe that high off the ground. A moment of inattention can result in a fatal fall. Redwoods drop dead branches without notice.

Just as important to Sillett and his team as their own safety is the safety of the fragile ecosystems in the canopy and of the tree itself. Sillett calls this area "redwood space." The climbers hang in harnesses from ropes when they're in the trees to avoid putting their full weight on the branches they're exploring. These rope systems allow them to move all around the crown, even to the tips of the farthest branches. Traveling over these webs of ropes is known as "skywalking."

The Future of Old-Growth Redwoods

It's not easy to kill a mature redwood. The trees are immune to most diseases. Sometimes a series of fires will hollow out a cavern in a redwood trunk, but the tree keeps growing. Early settlers used to house their poultry in fire caverns at the base of the trees. (These cavities are still known as "goose pens.")

Builders value redwood lumber because the heartwood—the cinnamon-colored wood at the center of the log—is resistant to rot and insects. And that's a big reason why only 4 percent of the country's old-growth redwood forests remain today. Commercial logging of redwoods came in with the California Gold Rush in the 1850s. Redwood trees built old San Francisco. And they built it again after the 1906 earthquake.

In the early 1900s some Americans who were concerned about the disappearing stands of ancient redwood founded the Save the Redwoods League. We have the League to thank for establishing the publicly owned preserves within the northern California state parks that exist today. But logging of old-growth redwoods continues on privately owned land.

Sillett wants to see a better process for selecting which redwoods should be logged in existing forests. He has found that a redwood's yearly rate of growth keeps increasing until it's 1,500 years old. The older the wood, the better the wood, with more decay-resistant heartwood.

The Save the Redwoods League has launched a new initiative to explore how redwoods might react to climate change. Sillett is one of the scientists leading this effort. One thing that we already know is that redwood forests are champions at capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it. That's an important component of slowing climate change. Sillett recommends planting more redwoods in areas where they might thrive, such as the Oregon coast, and letting them become the old forests of the future.

Redwoods were here long before humans and they should be here long after we're gone. We have to make sure we don't get in the way of that.

How to Climb a Giant

Most canopy researchers have adopted the tree-climbing techniques Sillett uses:

- Using a powerful hunting bow, he shoots a soft-tipped arrow toward a sturdy limb. Sometimes the first sturdy limb is 200 feet up.
- The arrow drags a fishing line with it over the limb.
- He ties a cord to the fishing line and then a climbing rope to the cord.
- As he reels in the fishing line, the rope is hauled up into the tree and over the limb. Now two ends of the rope dangle from the limb. He secures one end to a small tree.
- He puts on a helmet and a harness and clips mechanical ascenders to the other end of the rope; these devices slide freely in one direction but grip the rope when pulled in the opposite direction.
- He attaches his harness to one of the ascenders and with the other he pulls himself up the rope, one arm-length at a time, to the limb.
- From that limb he tosses a weighted rope over a higher branch and climbs to that branch, then repeats this until he's where he wants to be in the crown.
- There he uses shorter lengths of rope to anchor himself to other parts of the crown so that he can move around freely.

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. Read the sentence from the passage.

“When Dr. Stephen Sillett climbed his first giant redwood tree, back in 1987, he didn’t know that a new world awaited him up there.”

Which evidence from the passage **best** supports this central idea?

- A. “At its top was a sunny glade alive with mosses, lichens, and even small trees.”
- B. “Growing from a rotting stump in the middle of the crown were huckleberry bushes . . .”
- C. “The crown of an old redwood often has many trunks . . .”
- D. “Water molecules have a tendency to cling to one another, so as a water molecule rises it pulls the next molecule with it.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.2
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	71% (correct answer)
p-value B	10%
p-value C	10%
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the sentence from the passage that best supports the central idea. Option A is the correct answer because the existence of “mosses, lichens, and even small trees” supports the idea that “a new world awaited him up there.” Option B is not correct since it shows how life can spring from decay. Option C is not correct since it shows how resilient the redwood is. Option D is not correct since it shows the scientific reason for why water rises within a tree.

2. Read the third paragraph of the passage.

“Sillett started climbing trees when he was a student at Reed College, in Portland, Oregon, in the 1980s. Those experiences led him to become a botanist, a scientist who studies plants. Today he teaches botany and forestry at Humboldt State University in northern California and spends much of his time at the top of tall trees. Coast redwood trees (*Sequoia sempervirens*) are his specialty.”

How does the paragraph **most** contribute to the development of ideas in the passage?

- A. by describing the places Sillett visits to study redwood trees
- B. by emphasizing Sillett’s research findings on redwood trees
- C. by explaining how Sillett became involved with redwood trees
- D. by focusing on Sillett’s techniques for climbing redwood trees

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.3
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	14%
p-value B	16%
p-value C	62% (correct answer)
p-value D	8%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how the paragraph most contributes to the development of ideas in the passage. Option C is the correct answer because the paragraph provides the reader with background information of how Sillett became interested in redwood trees. Option A is not correct since the paragraph does not specifically tell where Sillett visits to study redwood trees. Option B is not correct since the paragraph does not mention his specific research findings on redwood trees. Option D is not correct since the paragraph does not provide details of how Sillett climbs redwood trees.

3. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Coast redwoods have an advantage over many trees in that they are bathed in fog on summer mornings.”

What does the figurative language in the sentence suggest?

- A. The fog cleans the redwood trees.
- B. The fog makes it cooler for researchers to climb the redwood trees.
- C. The fog makes it difficult to clearly see the redwood trees.
- D. The fog spreads over the redwood trees.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	28%
p-value B	9%
p-value C	15%
p-value D	48% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to interpret the meaning of figurative language used in a sentence from the passage. Option D is the correct answer because “bathed in fog” implies that the fog “spreads over,” or covers, the trees. Option A is not correct because the association of “bathed” with “cleans” does not make sense based on the context of the sentence or passage. Options B and C are not correct since they do not support the context of the provided sentence or of information in the passage.

4. Read the sentence from the passage.

“One thing that we already know is that redwood forests are champions at capturing carbon dioxide from the atmosphere and storing it.”

How does the author use the word “champions” in the sentence?

- A. to reveal that more research is needed on redwood trees
- B. to indicate a way that redwood trees help the environment
- C. to suggest that redwood trees compete against other plants
- D. to emphasize one area in which people can protect redwood trees

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.3
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	7%
p-value B	66% (correct answer)
p-value C	16%
p-value D	11%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how the author uses the word “champions” in the given sentence. Option B is the correct answer because the redwoods remove carbon dioxide, which according to the passage, slows climate change; therefore, the redwoods help the environment. Options A and D are not correct since they are not supported by textual evidence. Option C is not correct since redwoods actually help other plants to grow.

5. How does the information in the text box titled “How to Climb a Giant” **most** contribute to the development of ideas in the passage?
- A. It supports the idea that redwood trees can live a long time.
 - B. It suggests that much equipment is needed to climb redwood trees.
 - C. It supports the idea that climbing redwood trees requires complete attention.
 - D. It suggests that different animals can live within redwood trees.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	11%
p-value B	40%
p-value C	44% (correct answer)
p-value D	5%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how the information in the text box most contributes to the development of ideas in the passage. Option C is the correct answer since the facts listed imply that climbing redwoods can be dangerous and requires focus and discipline in order to stay safe, e.g., stay safe, which are also ideas from the main part of the passage (“it requires extreme discipline and focus”). Options A and D are not correct since they are not supported by textual evidence. Option B is not correct since even though some equipment is used, it is the technique that is most important when climbing the redwoods instead of the gear that is used.

6. Which evidence from the passage **best** supports the author’s claim that redwood trees have a “complex structure”?
- A. “At that time the tops of the ancient trees in old-growth redwood forests were unexplored.”
 - B. “The crown of an old redwood often has many trunks, each with its own set of branches.”
 - C. “They’ve installed sensors in several trees to collect data on light, temperature, humidity, wind, and sap flow.”
 - D. “The climbers hang in harnesses from ropes when they’re in the trees to avoid putting their full weight on the branches they’re exploring.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	58% (correct answer)
p-value C	16%
p-value D	14%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which sentence from the passage best supports the author’s claim that redwood trees have a complex structure. Option B is the correct answer because the fact that redwoods have “many trunks, each with its own set of branches” implies that redwoods have many different parts. Option A is not correct since it does not relate to the complex structure of the trees. Option C is not correct since it solely relates to how the scientists gather data about redwood trees. Option D is not correct since it solely relates to the technique the climbers use to explore the redwoods.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions

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

Part One

Which claim does the author make in the passage?

- A. Redwood trees have few living plants within them.
- B. Redwood trees are known for their ability to stay alive.
- C. Redwood trees mostly grow in foreign countries.
- D. Redwood trees require a lot of water to survive.

Part Two

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

- A. “Scientists assumed they were biological deserts, containing only tree branches.”
- B. “The oldest and largest ones survive in old-growth forests . . .”
- C. “If the top of the trunk dies and falls off, another trunk shoots up . . .”
- D. “The trees are immune to most diseases.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.1
Answer Key: Part One	B
Answer Key: Part Two	C, D
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.9
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to identify a claim that the author makes in the passage and to select evidence from the passage that supports this claim.</p> <p>Part One: Option B is the correct answer because the author states that “redwoods are remarkable for their ability to stay alive, whatever happens.” Option A is not correct since redwood trees have many plants that live within them. Option C is not correct since redwood trees mostly grow in California. Option D is not correct since the passage does not indicate how much water redwood trees need to stay alive, only that they obtain much of their water from fog.</p> <p>Part Two: Options C and D are correct since they provide examples of ways that redwoods subsist. Option A is not correct since it focuses on scientists’ old assumption about the components of the tops of redwood trees. Option B is not correct since it focuses on where the oldest redwoods are located, not on their ability to stay alive.</p>

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

Part One

Which word **best** describes Sillett’s approach to studying redwood trees?

- A. fearful
- B. critical
- C. cautious
- D. reluctant

Part Two

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

- A. “But when Sillett reached the crown of the 300-foot tree, he found a forest above a forest.”
- B. “Sillett uses these numbers to construct 3-D diagrams of each tree.”
- C. “Sillett has made an art of climbing the ancient redwoods, but he can’t completely eliminate the danger.”
- D. “These rope systems allow them to move all around the crown, even to the tips of the farthest branches.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.1
Answer Key: Part One	C
Answer Key: Part Two	C
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.13
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to determine which word best describes Sillett’s approach to studying redwood trees and then to select a sentence from the passage that best supports this inference.</p> <p>Part One: Option C is the correct answer because Sillett’s techniques show that he has implemented safety measures related to his focus, attention to detail, and use of equipment. Options A and B are not correct since Sillett does not indicate that he is fearful or critical in his approach of studying the redwoods. Option D is not correct since Sillett indicates that he is eager to study the redwoods, not reluctant.</p> <p>Part Two: Option C is the correct answer because referring to climbing the redwoods as “an art” implies that Sillett has created a very nuanced system with the goal of eliminating as much danger as possible. Option A is not correct since it is just a fact about what Sillett has discovered. Option B is not correct since it focuses on a way that Sillett studies redwoods. Option D is not correct since it focuses on how Sillett climbs amid the redwoods.</p>

Multiple-Choice Question

9. How is the author's purpose to inform conveyed in the passage?
- A. Scientific details are shared to explain how redwood trees are being studied.
 - B. Historical accounts are given about how redwood trees once looked.
 - C. Professional interviews are shared to describe how redwood trees were once used.
 - D. Practical tips are given about how people can visit redwood trees.

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.1
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	71% (correct answer)
p-value B	9%
p-value C	11%
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine how the author's purpose to inform is conveyed in the passage. Option A is the correct answer because the passage details scientific methods that are used to study the redwoods. Option B is not correct; even though historical information is given about the length of time redwoods have been on Earth, the author's purpose is not to describe how redwoods have evolved over time. Option C is not correct since interviews are not included in the passage. Option D is not correct since the passage does not mention how tourists can visit the redwoods.

PASSAGE 2

Read the following passage based on a Scottish legend. Then answer question 10.

Clever Maggie of Tollishill

by Marilyn Helmer

Over three hundred years ago, in Scotland's wild, wind-swept Lammermuir Hills, bonny¹ Margaret Leystone married Thomas Hardie. They set up house at Midside, part of Tollishill farm owned by John Maitland, Earl of Lauderdale. Maggie and Thomas were a hardworking pair, and Maggie was as frugal as she was clever.

That year, winter seized the land in the icy grip the likes of which had never been seen before. Storms and blizzards swept across the open fields, destroying crops. It was only with the most careful planning that Maggie managed to keep food on the table and save enough money to pay the rent at Midsummer. And the next two winters were no better. Indeed, it seemed that the most plentiful crop the land produced was snow. Down it came in great icy flakes, lingering until there was barely enough time to get the seed sown before the growing season started.

One cloudy spring day, Thomas stared out the window at the fields lying black and barren in the melting snow. He turned to Maggie. "No matter what we do, we won't have enough for the rent this year," he said. "If we can't pay, the earl will turn us out for sure."

Maggie's chin went up. "We'll not give up the farm, Thomas. Not after all the work we've put into it. I'll go and talk to the earl." She glanced at her husband. "I'll promise him that we'll pay as soon as we can."

Thomas shook his head. "You know the man, Maggie. The only thing he cares about is getting his rent on time. He won't listen to you."

"I'm going to try anyway," said Maggie, and in spite of himself, Thomas smiled. When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.

The next day she put on her warmest wool cloak and set off for Thirlestane Castle to see the earl. It was a long, cold journey across the wind-swept moors. When she arrived, a servant led her to the library, where the earl was going over his account books.

"What are you here for?" he asked curtly, for he was not at all pleased at being disturbed.

Maggie spoke up. "I'm Maggie Hardie from Tollishill and I've come to ask if you'll give us a year's grace with our rent." She told the earl about the poor crop. "You know yourself, sir, that the snow was still lying on the fields long after the crops should have been growing."

¹ bonny—appealing

An amused look crossed the earl's face. "So it's a crop of snow you've been raising, is it?" he said. His eyes narrowed. "Then I'll let you pay your rent in snow, Maggie Hardie."

She stared at him.

"Bring me a snowball in June," the earl went on, "and I'll consider your rent paid in full." He threw back his head and laughed.

Maggie didn't join in the laughter, but a smile touched her lips nonetheless. "Thank you, sir," she said. "You shall have your snowball in June." She walked away quickly, leaving the earl staring after her in astonishment.

Deep into the hills Maggie went, to a far-off glen where she had seen snow piled in drifts long after it had melted elsewhere. She scooped up an armful and wrapped it in her apron. Then she hid the snow in a rocky crevice and covered it with moss and leaves.

When she came back in June, the snow was still there, as firm as the day she'd stored it away. She quickly set off for Thirlestane Castle.

Now, the Earl of Lauderdale may have been a stingy man, but he was an honorable one. When he saw that Maggie had kept her part of the bargain, he upheld his. "A clever lass you are, Maggie Hardie," he said. "If snow is the land's favorite crop, then snow is what I'll take in rent this year."

You might think the story ends here, but that isn't so. The weather wasn't the only thing in turmoil at that time. The future of Scotland itself was in chaos.

Not long after Maggie's visit, the Earl of Lauderdale joined the Royalist ranks and went off to fight against Oliver Cromwell and his invading forces. Eventually the earl was captured and imprisoned in the infamous Tower of London.

If it was a time of ill fortune for the earl, it was a time of prosperity for his tenants. The weather was as fair then as it had been bitter in the years before. Winters were mild, and spring came early; the flocks increased, and the crops flourished. With the earl in prison, there was no one to collect the rent. He'd never been a popular landlord, and now his tenants took full advantage of his absence. Not a penny did they pay, except Maggie Hardie. Maggie had not forgotten how the earl had kept his promise to her, and each year while he was away, she faithfully put aside the rent money.

When word of the earl's imprisonment came back to Tollishill, Maggie decided it was her turn to help him. She'd pay him another visit, but she wouldn't come empty-handed. This time, Maggie was going to bring the earl a very special gift. Her rent money had grown to a tidy sum. Maggie changed it into gold coins, for gold, she knew, spoke louder than copper. Then she mixed a batch of bannock dough and shaped it into a large cake. When the bannock was baked, she carefully scooped out the insides and hid the gold coins within. Who would suspect a simple bannock of hiding gold? Then Maggie dressed in her husband's clothes and, with the precious bannock in an old leather pack, set off on the longest journey of her life.

Maggie Hardie walked from the Lammermuir Hills to the great city of London, all four hundred miles. Day after day she walked, across mountains, down valleys, along rough country roads. When she reached London, footsore and weary, she followed the banks of the River Thames until it led her to the Tower.

Now, a person couldn't simply walk into the Tower to visit a prisoner. But clever Maggie was prepared for that. A few gold coins dropped into the hand of a greedy jailer saw her safely past the front door, and a few more unlocked the earl's cell so that Maggie could slip inside.

When the Earl of Lauderdale saw Maggie Hardie standing before him, he let out a gasp of surprise. But she put a finger to her lips and listened for the guard's retreating footsteps.

"I've come to pay the rent," she said in a low voice.

The earl recovered himself. "With another snowball?" he asked.

Maggie smiled and shook her head. "This time I've brought you a bannock." She took it from her pack and held it out to him.

"A bannock to pay the rent?" The earl gave her an incredulous look. "What good is a bannock to me here?" He reached for it. It was dry and stale but surprisingly heavy.

"Break it open, sir," said Maggie. "I think you'll find the inside more pleasing than the outside."

The earl broke the bannock in half, then stared, amazed, as a cascade of gold coins spilled onto the floor.

Just as Maggie had planned, the earl used the gold to buy his freedom. Afterward he fled to France to join the king, who would later return to Scotland to be crowned Charles II.

When Charles was finally on the throne, the earl himself came back to Scotland. The first thing he did was pay a visit to the Midside farm at Tollishill to thank Maggie for saving his life. "A clever mind and a loyal heart should be rewarded," he said to her. "For as long as you live, you and your Thomas can stay here rent-free."

For Maggie herself, the earl had a special gift. He placed a silver belt around her waist. "As befitting a woman who can grow snow in June and turn oats into gold," he said.

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage 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.

Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline

#10 Item Information

Alignment	E.1.1	Depth of Knowledge	3	Mean Score	1.86
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Assessment Anchor:

E06.E.1–Evidence-Based Analysis of Text

Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E06.E.1.1–Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

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
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

Score	Description
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

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STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points



10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

The statement, “When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her,” is factual indeed. The summerization of this short passage is how a woman named Margaret, or Maggie for short, goes on a wonderous adventure. Beginning on how cold the weather is, causing Maggie and her husband, Thomas, to have a little misfortune with their crops. That’s when Maggie heads John, the Earl of Lauderdale. This leads Maggie into an adventurous journey that shows a bit of her wise plans. After briefly introducing the story, concluding that the statement is true, will give some textual evidence why it is true.

One textual event that supports this belief is when she insisted on convincing the Earl by traveling to the Thirlestane Castle. Even after Thomas increduledes her fateful decision, she stuck with her decision like hydrogen and oxygen. This meant even her husband couldn’t convince her. No one couls stop her when she set her mind onto something. Another major piece of evidence from the story is that she surprisingly lasted a snowball from winter to the beginning of summer. This was because the Earl decided that if Maggie and Thomas could not pay their rent, he would get a snowball in return. This, in the Earl’s perspective, was impossible since in their time they had no freezers. However, Maggie accepted his request and lasted a snowball until summer without melting. How she did this was by hiding the sphere-shaped snow in a rocky crevice covered with moss and leaves. This shows that she accepted something that the Earl that was foolish. Proving that nothing can block her way. The last and final reason why Maggie is unstoppable is at the time she saves John, the Earl. After the Earl was captured and imprisoned in the infamous Tower of London, Maggie chooses to save the Earl. Why? Because the Earl kept his word and accepted the snowball that Maggie made. Maggie, again, developes another genius plan to save the Earl. Her plan was to bake a large cake. However, inside the cake, it wasn’t all bannock dough inside this cake. There were actually real golden coins inside the cake that were meant for her rent. This exactly proves that not even her rent money can stop her from doing what she needs to do. After baking her clever cake, she walks all the way from Lammermuir Hills to the marvelous city of London which about four hundred miles! Again, this also shows that not ven distance can separate her goal.

Just explaining some factual evidence from the text proves why this is true. Maggie proved that nothing can stop her by doing the impossible. Her husband could not convince her to stay. The Earl’s request could not prevent her from her goal. Distances like four hundred miles couldn’t stop her from getting where she needed to be. Not even her own money could urge her to not go on! No matter what the cause was, Maggie would set her mind on something and no one could stop her.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong with an effective introduction that introduces the idea that the events in the passage (*a wondrous adventure; a little misfortune with their crops; when Maggie heads John, the Earl of Lauderdale*) show that (*"When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her," is factual indeed*). This controlling idea is developed throughout the student's response with text-based inferences (*This, in the Earl's perspective, was impossible since in their time they had no freezers; she accepted something that the Earl that was foolish*) and thorough analysis (*Proving that nothing can block her way; Maggie chooses to save the Earl. Why? Because the Earl kept his word; not even her rent money can stop her; not ven distance can separate her goal*). Other substantial references to the text (*traveling to the Thirlestane Castle; lasted a snowball until summer without melting; she saves John, the Earl; developes another genius plan . . . bake a large cake . . . inside this cake . . . golden coins; walks all the way . . . about four hundred miles*) are used to build to the conclusion that (*Maggie proved that nothing can stop her by doing the impossible*). The use of precise language (*wondrous adventure, textual evidence, fateful decision, developes another genius plan*) is effective and aids in understanding how the events in the passage prove the statement to be true. Although there are some errors in spelling, usage, and sentence structure, they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points

10. Read the statement from the passage.

"When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her."

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

The events from the passage undoubtedly prove that the statement, "When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her," is true. Maggie's determination is conveyed through many events in the story including confronting the earl about her inability to pay that year's rent, keeping a snowball until June, and taking a risky journey to London.

First, Maggie and her husband discuss the matter of their inability to pay rent due to the year's harsh winters. Maggie then decides to confront the earl about the issue. Confronting the earl, a greedy, rather unkind man, took much determination as well as bravery. The passage clearly states, "Maggie's chin went up. 'We'll not give up the farm, Thomas. Not after all the work we've put "into" it. I'll go and talk to the Earl.'" Maggie's determination was clearly present in the style and tone

GO ON 

of the paragraph. The attitude in which the line is spoken shows the reader that Maggie is eager to protect the farm and give her and Thomas a home.

In addition, when the earl offers an alternative solution for paying rent, Maggie becomes extremely determined. The earl stated, "Bring me a snowball in June, and I'll consider your rent paid in full." Immediately, Maggie formed a ball of melting snow and as stated in the passage, "She scooped up an armful and wrapped it in her apron. Then she hid the snow in a rocky crevice and covered it with moss and leaves." When she came back in June the snow was still there, as firm as the day she'd stored it away. "If the earl had said that to any other person, it would have been thought impossible, but not to Maggie. Because of her determination, she successfully completed the task and her rent was considered "paid full."

GO ON 

Lastly, when the earl had been arrested, Maggie was determined to return the favor that he had done for her.

She baked a bannock, removed the center, and replaced it with many gold coins. According to the text, "Maggie traveled from Lammermur Hills to the great city of London, all four hundred miles." Maggie not only showed determination, but she was kind and forgiving. In the past, the earl was not always nice to her. Despite this, she gave him enough money to buy his release. In return, the earl allowed them to stay in the house for the rest of their lives, rent free.

Therefore, the events from the passage undoubtedly prove that the statement, "When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her, it's true. The evidence to support this statement revolved around Maggie's determination and eagerness.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. There is a strong organizational structure. The introduction establishes the controlling idea that (*Maggie's determination is conveyed through many events in the story*) and includes references to specific events that occur in the passage (*confronting the earl about her inability to pay that year's rent, keeping a snowball until June, and taking a risky journey to London*). The response effectively develops this idea with thorough analysis that explains Maggie's determination (*Confronting the earl, a greedy, rather unkind man, took much determination as well as bravery; Maggie's determination was clearly present; attitude in which the line is spoken shows the reader that Maggie is eager to protect; Maggie becomes extremely determined; Because of her determination, she successfully completed the task; when the earl had been arrested, Maggie was determined to return the favor*). The analysis is combined with substantial text support (*inability to pay rent due to the year's harsh winters; "Maggie's chin went up . . . 'I'll go and talk to the Earl!"; the earl offers an alternative solution; The earl stated, "Bring me a snowball in June . . . rent paid in full"; formed a ball of melting snow . . . "hid the snow" . . . in June the snow was still there; She baked a bannock, removed the center, and replaced it with many gold coins; "Maggie traveled . . . all four hundred miles"; gave him enough money . . . rest of their lives, rent free*). Transitions effectively link ideas (*In addition, In the past, Therefore*). The few errors present do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points



10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

After reading “Clever Maggie of Tollishill” by Marilyn Helmer, the reader learns Maggie is a very determined girl. Maggie does things that no one else did, because they were happy without the Earl. Maggie is also very courageous.

In the passage Helmer states, “When Maggie sets her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.” The reader may make an inference that the earl is very rude, but Maggie sees a different side of the man. The earl has caught some of Maggie’s kindness and thanks her for saving him. “For as long as you live, you and your Thomas can stay here rent-free.” Maggie learns that the earl has two sides, and she’s found both.

Helmer also applies Maggie can be courageous, and determined. She realizes she still needs to repay him, so she set off on a journey. “Day after day she walked, across mountains, down valleys, along rough country roads. When she reached London, footsore and weary, she followed the banks of the River Thames until it led her to the Tower.” Maggie is willing to put all else behind to save the earl. After reading Marilyn Helmer’s “Clever Maggie of Tollishill,” I learned Maggie can be courageous, determined, and kind at the same time. The earl has seemed to have picked up Maggie’s kindness by the end of the passage. Maggie and the earl seem to have a very nice friendship. I wonder if Maggie’s still that determined.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. An adequate introduction provides the controlling idea (*Maggie is a very determined girl*) and the conclusion revisits this idea. A clear analysis addresses how events in the passage prove “*When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her*” (*Maggie does things that no one else did, because they were happy without the Earl. Maggie is also very courageous*) (*Maggie sees a different side of the man; Maggie can be courageous and determined; Maggie is willing to put all else behind to save the earl*) and sufficient, accurate, and direct references to the text are provided to support the writer’s purpose (*thanks her for saving him; “For as long as you live . . . stay here rent-free”; she set off on a journey. “Day after day she walked . . . until it led her to the Tower*). An appropriate use of language helps to explain the topic (*make an inference, caught some of kindness, is willing to put all else behind*). Few errors are present (*courageous*) and they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points

10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

There are many things that can prove that when Maggie sets her mind to something, she can't be stop. Some pieces of evidence that prove this is when Maggie goes to the earl to delay the rent and when she travels to London to save him.

First, when Maggie traveled to the earl to delay the rent, her husband tried to stop her. He constantly tried to convince her not to go, but in reply Maggie said “I'm going to try anyways” This shows how determined Maggie is to save her families farm, and how she won't stop just because her husband says so,

Secondly, when Maggie goes to London to save the earl, she has to face many obstacles. For example, Maggie had to pass mountains and rough roads to reach London, but even then, Maggie moves on. When Maggie says

GO ON 

She is foot-weary, she proves that her motivation will not stop, even for a mountain. Also, when Maggie reached the tower of London, she had to bribe her way in. Even though it would cost her gold to reach her goal, Maggie still pays the price.

In conclusion, Maggie shows that nothing will stop her by passing mountains, heavy tolls, and her husband's bidding just to reach her goal. This proves that Maggie's determination will not stop for anything. These are the reasons that prove that Maggie will not stop for anything when she sets her mind to something.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. An adequate introduction restates the quote from the prompt and cites two ideas from the text that are used to prove that the quote is true (*Maggie goes to the earl to delay the rent, when she travels to London to save him*). These ideas are developed with a clear analysis (*This shows how determined Maggie is to save her familie's farm, and how she won't stop just because her husband says so; When Maggie says she is foot-weary, she proves that her motivation will not stop, even for a mountain; Even though it would cost her gold to reach her goal, Maggie still pays the price*) and sufficient, accurate, and direct references to the text (*when Maggie traveled to the earl to delay the rent, her husband tried to stop her; "I'm going to try anyways"; Maggie had to pass mountains and rough roads to reach London; When Maggie reached the tower of London, she had to bribe her way in*). The analysis and text used to explain Maggie's first visit to the Earl to try to save her familie's farm and her second visit to save the Earl address the relationship between the events in the passage and quote, and they are clearly explained. An appropriate use of language helps to clarify the topic (*face many obstacles, her motivation, her husband's bidding*). There are a few errors in usage (*stop* instead of *stopped*, *are* instead of *is*) but they seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points



10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

The statement, “When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her,” is true. It is because when she went to the earl, she made a deal with him. Her husband didn’t think she could because he wasn’t able to.

Also, when she went to the tower she was able to go right in and see the earl. She was because she was very determined. That’s why the statement, “When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her,” is true.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak and the response has an introduction and conclusion that restate the quote and only add that it is true. A weak analysis (*Her husband didn't think she could because he wasn't able to; She was because she was very determined*) somewhat supports the claim (*The statement “When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her,” is true*) and vague references to the text provide limited details (*when she went to the earl, she made a deal with him; when she went to the tower she was able to go right in and see the earl*). There is an inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas (*Also*). Few errors are present and do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points

10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Maggie is very brave! If she puts her mind to something, no one can stop her. An example is traveling. When Maggie left in her husband's clothes, to go from Laminermuir Hills to London, no one could stop her. This shows bravery because this is her longest adventure yet. Also with this whole rent problem, she knew what she wanted to do and she put her mind to it. She would walk with her head held high, and always try her best to succeed. This shows much bravery and courage. This also shows if Maggie puts her mind to someone, no one could or can stop her.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak and begins with the controlling idea that *Maggie is very brave*, followed by vague text references using few details from the events in the passage (*When Maggie left in her husband's clothes, to go from Laminermuir Hills to London; this whole rent problem*). Additional weak analysis repeats the idea of bravery (*This shows bravery because this is her longest adventure yet; This shows much bravery and courage*) but does not clearly explain how her bravery or the events in the passage prove the statement “*When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her*” is true. Another attempt to analyze (*She would walk with her head held high, and always try her best to succeed*) requires more explanation to clearly connect with the text. Few errors are present and do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point



10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

I think that the statment is true. Maggie used her knowlage to find ways to solve things. for example: maggie covered the snow in moss and leaves to preserve the ice untill June. She also put gold in the center of the bannock, to suprise the Earll. These are the resons that maggie was clever.

This response minimally addresses parts of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. Minimal evidence of an organizational structure is demonstrated, and while the minimal introduction does address the prompt (*I think that the statment is true*), there is little development of why the statment is true. Analysis of the text (*Maggie used her knowlage to find ways to solve things; maggie was clever*) is insufficient as it is undeveloped beyond two listed text examples (*maggie covered the snow in moss and leaves to preserve the ice untill June. She also put gold in the center of the bannock, to surprise the Earll*). Few transitions link ideas (*also*) and errors are present in spelling (*statment, knowlage, resons*) and capitalization (*for*) that sometimes interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point

10. Read the statement from the passage.

“When Maggie set her mind to a thing, no one could stop her.”

Write an essay analyzing how the events in the passage prove the statement is true. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

That's right the statement is true because, as said in the passage she wanted to help and she'd payed him another visit. Even though her rent money had grown to a tidy sum she was gonna buy Earl's alreally special gift.

This response minimally addresses parts of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. Minimal evidence of an organizational structure is demonstrated and there is little sense of an introduction or conclusion. The response does address the prompt (*That's right the statement is true*), but the minimal references to the text (*she wanted to help and she'd payed him another visit; Even though her rent money had grown to a tidy sum she was gonna buy Earl's alreally special gift*) are closely paraphrased and alone provide little explanation as to how the statement is true. There is no analysis of the text to explain why the provided text was chosen. Few transitions are used to link ideas. The few errors present in spelling (*alreally*) and usage do not interfere with meaning.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR LANGUAGE QUESTIONS

Directions:

On the following pages are the Language questions..

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Each question 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.

STANDALONE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

11. Read the paragraph.

(1) Students at Creekview Middle School must have one year of a foreign language class before they go on to attend high school. (2) Many students take more than one year of foreign language because you enjoy the experience of learning a different language. (3) A student last year said that her favorite part of being in a foreign language class was the end-of-year field trip to the annual Festival of Languages. (4) All students agreed that their trip to the festival was a memorable event.

Which change should be made to the paragraph to correct the inappropriate shift in pronoun person?

- A. Change they to you in sentence 1.
- B. Change you to they in sentence 2.
- C. Change her to your in sentence 3.
- D. Change their to our in sentence 4.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.1.3
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	6%
p-value B	85% (correct answer)
p-value C	3%
p-value D	6%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which revision should be made to the given paragraph to correct the inappropriate shift in pronoun person. Option B is the correct answer because “you” should be changed to “they” to show pronoun-person agreement in sentence 2. Option A is not correct since sentence 1 already shows pronoun-person agreement between “students” and “they.” Option C is not correct since sentence 3 already shows pronoun-person agreement between “student” and “her.” Option D is not correct since sentence 4 already shows pronoun-person agreement between “students” and “their.”

12. Read the paragraph.

(1) Big Ben is one of the most famous clock towers in the world, and it is also one of the largest. (2) In fact, it is the third largest clock tower in the world. (3) The name “Big Ben” refers to the bell, which was named after Sir Benjamin Hall, who ordered it. (4) As for the bell itself, it weighs an astonishing thirteen tons.

Which sentence should end with an exclamation point to **most** effectively show excitement?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 4

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.4
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	1
p-value A	10%
p-value B	20%
p-value C	6%
p-value D	64% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which sentence should end with an exclamation point to most effectively show excitement. Option D is the correct answer because the concept of astonishment connotes strong emotion. Options A, B, and C are not correct since they convey facts without strong emotional connotations.

13. Read the paragraph.

(1) The kiwi is a flightless bird that lives in the grasslands of New Zealand. (2) This interesting bird has an excellent sense of smell. (3) Which it uses to find bugs and seeds on the ground. (4) The kiwi is the only bird that has nostrils at the tip of its beak.

Which sentence should be revised to correct the inappropriate sentence fragment?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 4

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.1.6
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	11%
p-value B	15%
p-value C	58% (correct answer)
p-value D	16%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which sentence should be revised to correct the inappropriate sentence fragment. Option C is the correct answer because sentence 2 is a fragment. Options A, B, and D are not correct since they are complete sentences.

14. Read the paragraph from a story.

(1) Upon entering the butterfly garden, Min and Cameron were amazed. (2) Hundreds of butterflies fluttered through the air above them. (3) Min sat down on a large, knobby tree stump. (4) A pretty butterfly landed on her.

Which revision of sentence 4 **best** uses details to describe the event?

- A. A dark butterfly with rare colors set down on Min’s arm after being in the air for quite some time.
- B. An extraordinary butterfly with incredible markings on its wings flew down and found itself on Min’s arm.
- C. A large brown butterfly with pale blue spots hovered and then, with a whisper of its wings, perched gently on Min’s arm.
- D. A large butterfly with some different patterns on its wings just stayed in the air for a while and then was resting on Min’s arm.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.5
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	13%
p-value B	36%
p-value C	43% (correct answer)
p-value D	8%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which revision of the given sentence best uses details to describe the event. Option C is the correct answer because it uses specific details that allow the reader to visualize the appearance and actions of the butterfly. Options A, B, and D are not correct since the words in these choices do not provide the level of specificity that option C does.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—SAMPLE ITEM SUMMARY DATA

MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D
1	B-K.1.1.2	A	2	71%	10%	10%	9%
2	B-K.1.1.3	C	2	14%	16%	62%	8%
3	B-V.4.1.2	D	2	28%	9%	15%	48%
4	B-C.2.1.3	B	2	7%	66%	16%	11%
5	B-C.2.1.2	C	3	11%	40%	44%	5%
6	B-C.3.1.1	B	2	12%	58%	16%	14%
7	B-C.3.1.1	Part One: B Part Two: C, D	3	Mean Score: 1.9			
8	B-K.1.1.1	Part One: C Part Two: C	3	Mean Score: 1.13			
9	B-C.2.1.1	A	3	71%	9%	11%	9%
11	D.1.1.3	B	2	6%	85%	3%	6%
12	D.2.1.4	D	1	10%	20%	6%	64%
13	D.1.1.6	C	2	11%	15%	58%	16%
14	D.2.1.5	C	2	13%	36%	43%	8%

TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
10	E.1.1	4	3	1.86

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PSSA Grade 6 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler

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