



Checkpoint Results Interpretation Guide

English I English Language Arts (ELA)

Tennessee Department of Education | August 2020

The Checkpoint

The Checkpoint can be used at the beginning of the school year to measure retention on **key standard-aligned skills that are most essential** for students to be able to **access, and engage in, on-grade-level content** for the current year. Because of this, the Checkpoints are smaller than a summative TCAP assessment and do not cover all the standards from the previous year. Instead, as recommended by experts¹, they focus on fewer, **prioritized vertically-aligned standards**, with the intent of providing educators more meaningful and actionable information about student needs so you can support your students' ability to access grade-level learning throughout the year.

The English I ELA Checkpoint should be given to incoming tenth grade students to help plan for students learning English II ELA content this year.

To help students in their learning and teachers with their planning, Checkpoints come with fully **annotated questions** that help to understand trends and pinpoint misconceptions that may inhibit student progress. ***Using this Checkpoint Results Interpretation Guide (the Guide) and your student results data found in the Schoolnet platform, you and your students can plan for great academic success this year.***

It is best to use these results to identify any needed pre-requisite learning and incorporate it throughout the year to ensure students can access grade-level content or can build upon their current strengths. After you administer the Checkpoint and use this Guide to better meet student needs at the beginning of the year, **continue monitoring** your students' progress on **grade-appropriate assignments** for the rest of the year to ensure that these core foundations are continually strengthened.

The Checkpoint IS:

- an investigative tool to determine student readiness for work of the current grade
- aligned to the Tennessee State Academic Standards, using TN-educator reviewed questions from previous TCAP exams
- designed to identify student misconceptions and learning needs
- providing actionable next steps for informing instructional decisions

The Checkpoint IS NOT:

- a replacement for the performance level determinations a student would have received on the TCAP assessment
- predictive of, or comparable to, summative TCAP results
- a replacement for RTI² diagnostics or universal screeners
- used to evaluate teacher, school, or district performance
- a tool to change student placement decisions (e.g. retake a course, advance to honors)

¹ https://tntp.org/assets/covid-19-toolkit-resources/TNTP_Learning_Acceleration_Guide.pdf

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“When the COVID-19 pandemic forced prolonged school building closures and canceled spring assessments, it became even more important that districts and schools can reliably gather student data and understand student readiness for the next school year. These free and optional tools are one way the department can support the needs of our district partners in serving all students”

-Commissioner Penny Schwinn

Checkpoint Design

The Checkpoint assessments were designed using **real TCAP questions** from previous summative exams. This ensured each question was aligned to Tennessee state standards and had been reviewed by **Tennessee educators**. The Checkpoint was designed to be quick to access and administer, not requiring complicated adjustments to existing school schedules; with **flexibility for online or paper administration** based on school/district need. ELA Checkpoints:

- contain two subparts (separated with section break in the assessment platform),
- have less than 30 items, and
- aligned to the Tennessee State Academic Standards as well as the instructional shifts embodied by the standards by using TN-educator reviewed questions from previous TCAP exams

Subpart 1	Subpart 2
<ul style="list-style-type: none">• 45 minutes• 2-3 passage sets	<ul style="list-style-type: none">• No time limit• Passage set with constructed response writing prompt

Interpreting and Using Results

Automatic Reporting in Schoolnet

In order to support teachers in using these assessments, students who take the assessment online in the Schoolnet platform will have their Checkpoints scored automatically. Teachers have multiple scoring options for students who take the Checkpoints on paper, and you can find how-to documents and videos at <https://tn.mypearsonsupport.com/schoolnet/>. **Checkpoint assessment scoring in Schoolnet requires all answers to be submitted by the student for results to be produced.** Since the constructed response must be handscored, it will be scored as 0 out of 0 points in the Schoolnet platform, allowing responses on the other questions to produce a score immediately.

For your convenience, the appropriate TCAP Rubric to score the essay can be found in on page 55 of this guide. We recommend reviewing this rubric in advance of scoring your students’ essays, and comparing the trends in results in your student constructed responses with the automatic scores generated in the Schoolnet reporting suite to inform your instructional planning.

The following automated reports can be found in [Schoolnet](#):

- Individual student results
- Classroom level reports
- Standards analysis reports
- Item analysis
- Test comparison reports (e.g., student, class, school, district, and state)
- Shared reporting (e.g., district to school admin, school admin to educators in same content/grade-level)
- Aggregate and disaggregation of demographics

Overall Scores

The score groups on the checkpoint assessment are ***not meant to represent performance levels or the blueprints of the TCAP summative assessments*** (e.g., below, approaching, on track, and mastered). The score groups were designed to **share student preparedness for next grade level content** and provide guidance around the **level of support** students may need to access that content.

Score Group	% Correct	Results	Recommended Next Steps
Orange	0 – 52%	Likely Needs More Targeted Support	It is important to use other sources of data for deeper insight; identified misconceptions in annotations can support yearlong planning with these students so that they can access the core material for the grade.
Yellow	53 – 71%	Likely Able to Engage in Grade Level Content with Some Support	Investigate trends in student responses using the item annotations to effectively include weave needed support throughout the yearlong instructional plans, and continuously monitor student mastery.
Green	72 – 99%	Likely Ready for Grade Level Content	Move directly into grade-level content.
Blue	100%	Ready for Grade Level Content	

Overall scoring is automatically available in the Schoolnet platform. This may help with you use the results of the student and class level reports to develop an overall summary and conclusion about your students' readiness for grade-level content. In responding to the Checkpoint assessments, we recommend addressing the learning needs of students **while engaging with on grade-level content**. For more information and tools for using assessment data to drive instructional decision making, review the [Assessing Learning Toolkit](#) pages 18-21, and the [Learning Loss PLC Guide](#).

While overall scoring is provided and can be helpful in planning for group instruction, the most actionable information in these Checkpoints can be found by analyzing at the question-level results

While overall scoring is provided and can be helpful in planning for group instruction, the most actionable information in these Checkpoints can be found by analyzing at the question-level results.

Assessing Writing

Because the primary purpose of the Checkpoint is to provide important feedback early in the year, the writing component will have to be evaluated locally, since submitting responses to our assessment vendor for grading would dramatically take away from the timeliness of the data. Thus, the Checkpoint reporting is not able to reliably provide scoring to assess writing or the complex ability of students demonstrating knowledge building through writing. To best measure students' writing abilities, the department recommends:

1. Utilizing all the grading resources and TCAP-calibrated anchor papers to inform scoring of writing. Anchor papers for the English I writing prompt are currently unavailable, but you can find similar papers on the [Assessment Development LiveBinder](#) under the Anchor Papers tab.
2. Continually finding opportunities to assess mastery of and through writing within their curricular materials

Actionable Insights: Annotated Questions and Reporting Tools

Each question and passage on the Checkpoint is fully annotated with information that describes the questions and passages as they were used on previous TCAP tests, and automated scoring tools in Schoolnet that make getting that information easier. The passage data also has two quantitative measures of text complexity (Flesch-Kincaid and Lexile) to help understand how the passage and questions interact to give a more complete picture of student needs. However, the most helpful and actionable information is in the **Item Annotations in this Guide** when combined with the **Item Analysis reports in Schoolnet**.

Answer Choice Rationales in each Item Annotation

To help teachers be more efficient in planning for the year, each answer choice is annotated with a **rationale which offers an explanation for each choice**. These annotations are not definitive: we know there may be many reasons for why students might select different answer choices. The answer choice rationales offer more common explanations to support teachers who may see trends in student responses.

ELA Guidelines: Foundational Skills and Knowledge Building

ELA multiple choice questions can offer helpful insights in working with students, but there is important context in making use of the results. The reading passage used is inextricably connected to a student's performance on a question. A student may have missed a question because they could not access the text due to gaps in **foundational skills** or because they have not yet mastered the high-level **knowledge building** competencies outlined by each standard. One multiple-choice question on its own cannot distinguish whether student errors are due to gaps in foundational skills or knowledge-building competencies found in the standards.

Before a student can begin building knowledge, they need to be able access the text, which requires the **foundations of fluency and background knowledge**. If students do not have adequate fluency or enough background knowledge and relevant vocabulary, they will struggle more to build knowledge and make meaning with a passage. **Most multiple-choice questions cannot accurately diagnose gaps in fluency and background knowledge.** In order to support teachers in interpreting student responses, the answer choice

annotations make the imperfect assumption that students can access the text and that student errors are not a result of gaps in fluency or background knowledge.

If students have the requisite **foundations**, they are able to develop various metacognitive tools as they **build knowledge** with a text. The annotations are most helpful for understanding these knowledge-building competencies and metacognitive tools outlined in the standards **that offers some insight into possible underlying concepts and metacognitive skills** for additional instructional support. Each rationale listed provides an explanation for why students may have selected a given answer choice, including what missteps may have caused them to select an incorrect answer. These rationales provide an instructional target to improve student understanding, allowing you to **follow up with targeted instruction based on the most common errors you identify** for your specific group of students.

Sample Set of Rationales

Rationales	
Correct – 1	Students needed to locate information about lob tailing in paragraph 4, which is in the "Special Behaviors" section.
Incorrect – 2	The physical activity of breathing is unrelated to the activity of lob tailing. While humpbacks assume specific postures while breathing, lob tailing is not one of those. Students may benefit from practice skimming and scanning within a text to locate specific details.
Incorrect – 3	While lob tailing includes a visible action where the tail appears above the water, the heading "Appearance" is not related to behaviors but to physical characteristics. Students may have made an incorrect inference that the way lob tailing looks to onlookers would be found in the "Appearance" section. Students may gain skills in locating specific details within text by practicing skimming and scanning text.
Incorrect – 4	Although lob tailing involves part of a humpbacks body, its tail, and flippers are also a distinct body part, the section about flippers is unrelated to the specific behavior of lob tailing. Students may have made an incorrect connection between the tails and flippers of humpbacks to conclude that information about the tail would be found in the section about flippers. Students may profit from practice with finding specific details using the skill of skimming and scanning text.

English I Checkpoint Item Annotations

Subpart 1: Passage Sets with Multiple Choice Questions

Passage Information

Passage Code: TN0000948

Passage Title: Excerpt from “Animals Can Do ‘Almost Math’”

Grade Level: English I

Lexile Level: 890

Flesch-Kincaid: 6.7

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Excerpt from “Animals Can Do ‘Almost Math’”

by Susan Milius

- 1 No one seriously argues that animals . . . have a symbolic numeral system. Your dog doesn’t have words for numbers like one, two, or three. But emerging data are showing that some . . . animals — a lot of them, actually — manage almost-math without a need for true numbers. . . .
- 2 . . . Reports of some quantity-related skills have come from much of the barnyard and parts of the zoo. Chickens, horses, dogs, honeybees, spiders, and salamanders have some number-like skills. So do guppies, chimps, macaques, bears, lions, carrion crows, and many more species. Some of these studies involve animals picking pictures of more dots instead of fewer dots. But other studies suggest that animal number sensing allows much fancier operations. . . .

Dogs treat tricks

- 3 For a sense of the issues, consider the old and the new in dog science. Familiar as dogs are, they’re still mostly wet-nosed puzzles when it comes to their number sense.
- 4 When food is at stake, dogs can tell more from less. That is known from a string of lab studies published throughout more than a decade. And dogs may be able to spot cheating when people count out treats. Dog owners may not be amazed at such food smarts. The interesting question, though, is whether dogs solve the problem by paying attention to the actual number of goodies they see. Perhaps they instead note some other qualities.
- 5 An experiment in England in 2002, for instance, tested 11 pet dogs. These dogs first settled down in front of a barrier. The researchers moved the barrier so the animals could get a peek at a row of bowls. One bowl held a brown strip of Pedigree Chum Trek treat. The barrier went up again. The scientists lowered a second treat into a bowl behind the screen — or sometimes just pretended to. The barrier dropped again. The dogs overall stared a bit longer if only one treat was

Invisible than if there were the expected $1 + 1 = 2$. Five of the dogs got an extra test. And they also stared longer on average after a researcher sneaked an extra treat into a bowl and then lowered the barrier. It now displayed an unexpected $1 + 1 = 3$.

- 6 Dogs could in theory recognize funny business by paying attention to the number of treats. That would be the treats' *numerosity*. Researchers use this term to describe some sense of quantity that can be recognized nonverbally (without words). But the design of a test also matters. Dogs might get the right answers by judging the total *surface area* of treats, not their number. Many other factors might also serve as clues. These include the density of a cluster of crowded objects. Or it might be a cluster's total perimeter or darkness.
- 7 Researchers lump those hints under the term "continuous" qualities. That's because they can change in any amount, big or small, not merely in separate units (such as one treat, two treats, or three).
- 8 Continuous qualities present a real challenge for anyone coming up with a numerosity test. By definition, nonverbal tests don't use symbols such as numbers. That means a researcher has to show something. And those somethings inevitably have qualities that grow or shrink as numerosity does.

Sedona's sense of math

- 9 Krista Macpherson studies dog cognition at Canada's University of Western Ontario in London. To see whether dogs use a continuous quality — total area — to choose more food, she tested her rough collie, Sedona.
- 10 This dog already had taken part in an earlier experiment. In it, Macpherson tested whether dogs would try to get help if their owners were in danger. That's what the collie did on the old TV show *Lassie*. But Sedona didn't. For example, neither she nor any dog in the test ran for help when their owners were trapped under a heavy bookcase.
- 11 Sedona did, however, prove good at lab work — especially when rewarded with bits of cheese.
- 12 To test number sense, Macpherson set up two magnetic boards. Each had different numbers of black triangles, squares, and rectangles stuck to them. Sedona had to select the one that had the greater number. Macpherson varied the dimensions of the shapes. This meant total surface area wasn't a good clue to the right answer.
- 13 The idea came from an experiment with monkeys. They had taken the test on a computer. But "I'm all cardboard and tape," Macpherson explains. Sedona was perfectly happy to look at two magnet boards fastened to cardboard boxes on the ground. She then chose her answer by knocking over that box.

- 14 Sedona in the end triumphed at picking the box with more shapes. She could do this regardless of all the trickery about surface area. The project, though, took considerable effort from both woman and beast. Before it was over, both had worked through more than 700 trials.
- 15 For Sedona to succeed, she had to pick the larger number of shapes more than half of the time. The reason: Just picking randomly, the dog would probably choose correctly half of the time.
- 16 The tests started as simply as zero shapes versus one shape. Eventually Sedona scored better than chance when dealing with bigger magnitudes, such as six versus nine. Eight versus nine finally stumped the collie.
- 17 Macpherson and William A. Roberts reported their findings three years ago in *Learning and Motivation*.
- 18 Earlier this year, another lab highlighted the Sedona research in *Behavioral Processes*. Its researchers called the Sedona data the “only evidence of dogs’ ability to use numerical information.”
- 19 Dogs might have number sense. Outside of a lab, however, they may not use it, says Clive Wynne. He works at Arizona State University in Tempe. There he studies animal behavior. He’s also a coauthor of that *Behavioral Processes* paper earlier this year. To see what dogs do in more natural situations, he designed a test along with Maria Elena Miletto Petrazzini of the University of Padua.
- 20 The pair offered pets at a doggie daycare a choice of two plates of cut-up treat strips. One plate might hold a few big pieces. The other had more pieces, all of them small. And the total of those smaller pieces added up to less of the yummy treat.
- 21 These dogs didn’t have Sedona’s training. Still, they went for the greater total amount of food. The number of pieces didn’t matter. Of course not. It’s food — and more is better.
- 22 This study shows that experiments need to check if animals use something like total amount instead of number. If not, the tests may not measure number sense at all.

Excerpt from “Animals Can Do ‘Almost Math’” by Susan Milius, from *ScienceNewsforStudents.org*, December 12, 2016. Copyright © 2016, Society for Science & the Public. Used by permission of the publisher via Copyright Clearance Center.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0030959 Position No: 1

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RI.KID.2

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "Animals
Can Do 'Almost Math'"

Standard Text: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide an objective or critical summary.

Correct Answer: A,B

The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

What is the central idea of the passage?

- A.** Dogs can recognize differences in number, but how they recognize those differences is not clear.
- B.** Duplicated research studies on dogs have not yielded reliable data.
- C.** Too few research studies have been done on animals to draw valid conclusions about behavior.
- D.** When compared with monkeys, dogs have a more developed number sense.

Part B

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

- A.** "When food is at stake, dogs can tell more from less." (paragraph 4)
- B.** "Dogs might get the right answers by judging the total *surface area* of treats, not their number." (paragraph 6)
- C.** "Continuous qualities present a real challenge for anyone coming up with a numerosity test." (paragraph 8)
- D.** "Its researchers called the Sedona data the 'only evidence of dogs' ability to use numerical information.'" (paragraph 18)

Part A

Rationales	
Correct – 1	This option has two statements that represent the central idea of the passage — (1) Dogs can recognize differences in amount, but how they recognize those differences is not clear. The first statement is supported in paragraphs 4–6, 13–16, and 20–21. Dogs can recognize differences in number, or amount, of food. The second statement represents an idea introduced in paragraphs 3–4 and supported in paragraphs 6 and 18–22.
Incorrect – 2	Paragraphs 4, 6, and 8 indicate that, based on research studies, researchers are not certain why dogs are able to discern differences in amount or number. Readers most likely chose this response as it reflects the uncertain conclusions that have resulted from these studies. This is an important idea in the passage but it does not capture the other key idea — that dogs can recognize differences in number.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as part of the central idea of the passage as a good portion of the text indicates that researchers do not have reliable data regarding the reasons why dogs can recognize differences in number. Option C, however, is a broader conclusion and not supported by the text. Readers may be drawn to this option as the text opens and closes with discussion of studies regarding animals' ability to count.
Incorrect – 4	When compared with monkeys, dogs have a more developed number sense. Although there is mention of "chimps" in paragraph 2 and "monkeys" in paragraph 13, there is no comparison between monkeys and dogs in the passage.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option as it states that dogs have a number sense. Readers who selected answer A in Part A might also have selected this option as it supports the statement that “dogs can recognize differences in number.” It does not, however, support “how they recognize those differences is not clear.”
Correct – 2	This option supports the idea that dogs recognize differences in amount but that researchers are uncertain as to how they do so. The first part of the sentence indicates that dogs do get the right answers as they discern differences in amount. But the dogs may be judging the treats by their continuous quality (surface area) instead of their numerosity (sense of quantity).
Incorrect – 3	Readers who selected options A or B in Part A might have selected this option. This option supports option A in Part A as it indicates the challenges researchers face in making conclusions about numerosity. It does not, however, support the idea that dogs can recognize differences in number.
Incorrect – 4	Readers who selected options B or C in Part A might have chosen this option. If readers selected this option to support option A in Part A, they might have been considering the reference to the Sedona data as being supportive of the statement that dogs can recognize differences in number. This option, however, does not support ambiguity regarding how dogs recognize differences in amount.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0030953 Position No: 2 Grade Level: English I
Standard Code: 9-10.RI.CS.5
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from “Animals
Can Do ‘Almost Math’”

Standard Text: Analyze how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text.

Correct Answer: D

How does paragraph 4 **mainly** contribute to the development of ideas in the passage?

- A.** It presents an idea about dogs as reported by their owners.
- B.** It helps introduce a groundbreaking study about dogs and their number sense.
- C.** It reveals the reliability of dog studies by stating the length of time experiments have been conducted.
- D.** It proposes an alternative view to dogs solving problems through number sense.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option due to the mention of dog owners in the middle of the paragraph — “Dog owners may not be amazed at such food smarts.” This sentence suggests that dog owners may not be surprised that dogs can tell more from less when food is at stake. Although the paragraph does present an idea about dogs, dog owners are not reporting the idea.
Incorrect – 2	Option B is a plausible option for the paragraph’s significance in contributing to the development of ideas in the passage. The paragraph does introduce an idea that the study in paragraph 5 supports. However, the passage does not provide evidence that the study was groundbreaking. More importantly, this item’s difficulty lies in readers’ ability to discern the main contribution of paragraph 4 to developing ideas in the passage. Its main contribution is proposing an alternative to dogs solving problems through number sense rather than introducing a study about dogs and their number sense. Readers should attend to the bold word “mainly” in the item stem. In such cases, there may be more than one plausible answer, but students should discern which answer best captures the contribution of the paragraph.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as sentence 2 in the paragraph indicates that, for over a decade, studies have suggested that dogs can tell more from less when food is at stake. Although this suggests reliability and readers may be drawn to the importance of reliability in supporting conclusions from research, this is not the main contribution of the paragraph to the development of ideas in the passage.
Correct – 4	Readers know from previous paragraphs that researchers are puzzled by dogs’ number sense. Sentences 5 and 6 introduce the idea that dogs may be solving number (or amount) problems by noting qualities other than the actual number of goodies they see. As answer D suggests, this proposes an alternative to dogs solving problems through number sense. This represents the most significant contribution to the development of ideas in the passage.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0030949 Position No: 3 Grade Level: English I
Standard Code: 9-10.RI.CS.6
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from “Animals
Can Do ‘Almost Math’”

Standard Text: Determine an author’s point of view or purpose and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.

Correct Answer: D,A

The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

What is the author’s **main** purpose in the passage?

- A.** to argue that dogs are more intelligent than most people believe
- B.** to show that similarities in behavior exist between dogs and other animals
- C.** to demonstrate that research studies involving numerosity are difficult to design and administer
- D.** to present research that shows dogs and other animals may have an understanding of number sense

Part B

Which detail from the passage **best** helps to develop the author’s purpose identified in Part A?

- A.** “But emerging data are showing that some . . . animals — a lot of them, actually — manage almost-math without a need for true numbers.” (paragraph 1)
- B.** “That is known from a string of lab studies published throughout more than a decade.” (paragraph 4)
- C.** “Researchers use this term to describe some sense of quantity that can be recognized nonverbally (without words).” (paragraph 6)
- D.** “Before it was over, both had worked through more than 700 trials.” (paragraph 14)

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Paragraphs 4–6, 14–16, and 21 all support the idea that dogs are intelligent and are able to discern differences in amount. Readers might have been drawn to this idea as it enhances the interest level of the passage. However, there is nothing in the passage that indicates dogs are more intelligent than most people believe (paragraph 4, in fact, suggests otherwise). This lack of textual support rules out author’s purpose.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option due to the title of the passage — “Animals Can Do ‘Almost Math’” and the introduction of the passage in paragraphs 1 and 2. These paragraphs indicate that dogs, along with a lot of other animals, have a number sense. But the majority of the excerpt does not discuss the similarities in behavior between dogs and other animals. This lack of textual support rules out author’s purpose.
Incorrect – 3	Paragraphs 6–8 clearly demonstrate that research studies involving numerosity are difficult to design and administer. Readers might have selected this option as the ideas presented in these paragraphs provide an important drawback to the research on dogs’ number sense. However, the majority of the excerpt does not discuss the difficulties involved in numerosity research.
Correct – 4	Paragraphs 5 and 9–22 all discuss research that shows dogs may have an understanding of number sense. The phrase “and other animals” is supported indirectly in paragraphs 1–2 and 22. Although the author presents certain difficulties with this research (as represented in option C), the purpose of the excerpt as a whole is to present what research has revealed in regard to dogs’ ability to understand number sense.

Part B

Rationales	
Correct – 1	This sentence in paragraph 1 assists the author’s purpose by introducing the idea that data shows that animals, including dogs, have an understanding of number sense. It also captures the idea that animals are able to discern differences in amount without calculating actual numbers. This lays the foundation for the author to present specific research studies regarding dogs’ number sense and what conclusions we can or cannot draw from the studies.
Incorrect – 2	This sentence supports the first sentence in paragraph 4 — “When food is at stake, dogs can tell more from less.” — which is a key part of the author’s purpose. Readers might have selected this option as it states that a decades’ worth of research supports the idea that dogs have a number sense. But this option is not as strong as answer A as it does not reveal an important conclusion from the research — that animals’ number sense does not necessarily include the ability to calculate numbers.
Incorrect – 3	This sentence in paragraph 6 defines an important term in the article — numerosity. Readers might have been drawn to this option as it is a key term in the research used to describe the dogs’ ability to nonverbally demonstrate a sense of quantity. This option is not as strong as answer A as it merely defines the term rather than referencing research conclusions more broadly.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have been drawn to this option as it describes a lengthy set of trials (700) in a given experiment, which would support the reliability of its conclusions. However, this sentence does not significantly contribute to the development of the author’s purpose as it only pertains to one experiment.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0030955 Position No: 4 Grade Level: English I
Standard Code: 9-10.RI.KID.2
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from “Animals
Can Do ‘Almost Math’”

Standard Text: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide
an objective or critical summary.

Correct Answer: A

What is a central idea of the section “Sedona’s sense of math”?

- A.** A scientist used her dog in a study to determine what dogs know about quantity.
- B.** A collie went through 700 trials of the same study.
- C.** A collie proved to be an adequate test subject when rewarded with food.
- D.** A scientist copied a study first done with monkeys but changed it to test her dog.

Rationales	
Correct – 1	This section describes how the scientist Krista Macpherson used her dog in a study to determine whether dogs use a continuous quality, such as total area, to determine differences in number. Option A best captures this idea.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as it describes a lengthy set of trials (700) in a given experiment, which would support the reliability of its conclusions. However, this sentence does not describe the central idea of the section as a whole, but rather a key detail in the study being discussed.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as it describes the success of the test subject, which implies that the test provided valid data. However, this sentence does not describe the central idea of the section as a whole, but rather a key detail in the study being discussed.
Incorrect – 4	This option describes a key part of this section — that a scientist copied a study previously performed with monkeys and changed it to test her dog. Although this sentence captures more of the central idea than options B and C, it does not mention the purpose of the study — to determine what dogs know about quantity. This is an essential detail of the central idea of this section.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0030961 Position No: 5

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RI.IKI.8

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "Animals
Can Do 'Almost Math'"

Standard Text: Evaluate how reasoning and evidence affects the argument and specific
claims in a text.

Correct Answer: B,A

The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

Which claim does the author make in the passage?

- A.** Researchers disagree about whether animals have number sense.
- B.** Animals have an understanding of quantity.
- C.** Dogs are more skilled than other animals at learning counting tasks.
- D.** Differing study designs make comparison of results unreliable.

Part B

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

- A.** "Some of these studies involve animals picking pictures of more dots instead of fewer dots." (paragraph 2)
- B.** "The interesting question, though, is whether dogs solve the problem by paying attention to the actual number of goodies they see." (paragraph 4)
- C.** "Sedona did, however, prove good at lab work — especially when rewarded with bits of cheese." (paragraph 11)
- D.** "Just picking randomly, the dog would probably choose correctly half of the time." (paragraph 15)

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as paragraphs 2–3 and 6–8 indicate that there is lack of certainty in the research regarding dogs’ number sense. This does not, however, indicate a disagreement among researchers about whether animals have number sense. The passage instead indicates agreement, specifically in paragraphs 1–4.
Correct – 2	This option is supported throughout the passage. Readers might have hesitated to select this option as the passage does discuss uncertainty regarding how animals are able to discern quantity, but there is no disagreement regarding animals’ ability to discern differences in the amount of something.
Incorrect – 3	Although the passage focuses on dogs’ ability to complete number tasks, the author does not claim that dogs are more skilled than other animals in this regard. In the last section of the passage, the author describes how a researcher adapts a study previously performed by monkeys, but there is no comparison of animals in this study.
Incorrect – 4	Paragraphs 6–8 discuss the difficulties involved in studies of dogs’ number sense. Specifically, paragraph 6 notes that the design of a test can impact how dogs are able to discern differences in the amount of food. Although the reader can infer that this could impact the reliability of comparisons of results, this is not a claim that the author makes in this passage.

Part B

Rationales	
Correct – 1	This sentence best supports answer B in Part A as it provides evidence that animals are able to discern greater amounts from lesser amounts. This is the strongest support among the options presented.
Incorrect – 2	Although this sentence supports answer B in Part A, it does so indirectly as the intent of the sentence is to suggest that dogs may be solving number problems in ways other than recognizing the actual number of items in front of them. Answer A provides direct support. Readers might have been drawn to option B if they selected option A in Part A. Readers might have mistaken the uncertainty regarding how dogs solve number problems with disagreement among researchers about whether animals have number sense.
Incorrect – 3	This option does not support any of the options in Part A. Readers might have mistakenly thought it supports answer B in Part A as it provides a specific example of a dog proving “good at lab work.” But Sedona’s ability to perform well in research experiments when provided with food does not support the idea that animals have an understanding of quantity.
Incorrect – 4	This option does not support any of the options in Part A. Readers who selected answer A in Part A might have selected this response as it could be mistakenly interpreted as suggesting that this experiment did not reveal that animals have a number sense.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0030962 Position No: 6 Grade Level: English I
Standard Code: 9-10.RI.CS.4
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from “Animals
Can Do ‘Almost Math’”

Standard Text: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

Correct Answer: B

What is the overall tone of the passage?

- A.** skeptical
- B.** objective
- C.** assertive
- D.** appreciative

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	The author is careful to present the research in a balanced, objective fashion, including the challenges involved with determining how dogs determine quantity. Readers might have been drawn to this option as they may have focused too narrowly on the uncertainty of the conclusions in the research as opposed to the author’s tone in presenting all of the research findings.
Correct – 2	The author is careful to present the research in a balanced, objective fashion, including the challenges involved with determining how dogs determine quantity. The purpose of this text is to inform, not argue, and the author’s tone reflects that purpose.
Incorrect – 3	The purpose of this text is to inform, not argue. Although the author makes a number of descriptive claims throughout the text regarding the research on dogs’ number sense, the author never does so in a forceful or assertive manner. Readers selecting this option might have been confusing a matter-of-fact approach to the subject matter with being assertive.
Incorrect – 4	The author of this text is intending to convey the subject matter in an objective, informative fashion. Although it can be inferred that the author may appreciate the subject matter about which she writes, as she dedicates time and effort to convey the research about it, the author’s words in this text do not explicitly convey an appreciative tone.

Passage Information

Passage Code: TN0030924 Passage Title: What Katy Did Next
Grade Level: English I Lexile Level: 1260 Flesch-Kincaid: 9.2

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Excerpt from What Katy Did Next

by Susan Coolidge

In this excerpt from the 1886 novel What Katy Did Next, young Katy Carr is traveling aboard a ship bound for England with her friend Amy and Amy's mother Mrs. Ashe when the ship encounters rough waters.

- 1 The "Spartacus" began to pitch and toss in a manner which made all her unseasoned passengers glad to betake themselves to their berths¹. Mrs. Ashe and Amy were among the earliest victims of sea-sickness; and Katy, after helping them to settle in their staterooms, found herself too dizzy and ill to sit up a moment longer, and thankfully resorted to her own.
- 2 As the night came on, the wind grew stronger and the motion worse. The "Spartacus" had the reputation of being a dreadful "roller," and seemed bound to justify it on this particular voyage. Down, down, down the great hull would slide till Katy would hold her breath with fear lest it might never right itself again; then slowly, slowly the turn would be made, and up, up, up it would go, till the cant on the other side was equally alarming. On the whole, Katy preferred to have her own side of the ship, the downward one; for it was less difficult to keep herself in the berth, from which she was in continual danger of being thrown. The night seemed endless, for she was too frightened to sleep except in broken stretches; and when day dawned, and she looked through the little round pane of glass in the port-hole, only gray sky and gray weltering waves and flying spray and rain met her view.
- 3 The gale increased as the day wore on, and the vessel pitched dreadfully. Twice Katy was thrown out of her berth on the floor; then the stewardess came and fixed a sort of movable side to the berth, which held her in, but made her feel like a child fastened into a railed crib. At intervals she could still hear Amy crying and scolding her mother, and conjectured that they were having a dreadful time of it in the other stateroom. It was all like a bad dream. "And they call this travelling for pleasure!" thought poor Katy.

¹**berths:** A bed or bunk on a ship

- 4 One droll thing happened in the course of the second night, — at least it seemed droll afterward; at the time Katy was too uncomfortable to enjoy it. Amid the rush of the wind, the creaking of the ship's timbers, and the shrill buzz of the screw, she heard a sound of little footsteps in the entry outside of her open door, hopping and leaping together in an odd irregular way, like a regiment of mice or toy soldiers. Nearer and nearer they came; and Katy opening her eyes saw a procession of boots and shoes of all sizes and shapes, which had evidently been left on the floors or at the doors of various staterooms, and which in obedience to the lurchings of the vessel had collected in the cabin. They now seemed to be acting in concert with one another, and really looked alive as they bumped and trotted side by side, and two by two, in at the door and up close to her bedside. There they remained for several moments executing what looked like a dance; then the leading shoe turned on its heel as if giving a signal to the others, and they all hopped slowly again into the passage-way and disappeared. It was exactly like one of Hans Christian Andersen's fairy-tales, Katy wrote to Clover afterward. She heard them going down the cabin; but how it ended, or whether the owners of the boots and shoes ever got their own particular pairs again, she never knew.
- 5 Toward morning the gale abated, the sea became smoother, and she dropped asleep. When she woke the sun was struggling through the clouds, and she felt better.
- 6 The stewardess opened the port-hole to freshen the air, and helped her to wash her face and smooth her tangled hair; then she produced a little basin of gruel and a triangular bit of toast, and Katy found that her appetite was come again and she could eat.
- 7 "And 'ere's a letter, ma'am, which has come for you by post this morning," said the nice old stewardess, producing an envelope from her pocket, and eyeing her patient with great satisfaction.
- 8 The stewardess beamed at her as she opened it, then saying again, "Yes, 'm, by post, m'm," withdrew, and left Katy to enjoy the little surprise.
- 9 The letter was not long, but it was very like its writer. Rose drew a picture of what Katy would probably be doing at the time it reached her, — a picture so near the truth that Katy felt as if Rose must have the spirit of prophecy, especially as she kindly illustrated the situation with a series of pen-and-ink drawings, in which Katy was depicted as prone in her berth, refusing with horror to go to dinner, looking longingly backward toward the quarter where the United States was supposed to be, and fishing out of her port-hole with a crooked pin in hopes of grappling the submarine cable and sending a message to her family to come out at once and take her home. It ended with this short "poem," over which Katy laughed till Mrs. Ashe called feebly across the entry to ask what was the matter?

10 "Break, break, break
 And mis-behave, O sea,
 And I wish that my tongue could utter
 The hatred I feel for thee!
 "Oh, well for the fisherman's child
 On the sandy beach at his play;
 Oh, well for all sensible folk
 Who are safe at home to-day!
 "But this horrible ship keeps on,
 And is never a moment still,
 And I yearn for the touch of the nice dry land,
 Where I needn't feel so ill!
 "Break! break! break!
 There is no good left in me;
 For the dinner I ate on the shore so late
 Has vanished into the sea!"

11 Laughter is very restorative after the forlornity of sea-sickness; and Katy was so stimulated by her letter that she managed to struggle into her dressing-gown and slippers and across the entry to Mrs. Ashe's stateroom.

Excerpt from *What Katy Did Next* by Susan Coolidge. Copyright © 2003, from Gutenberg.org. In the public domain.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0035688 Position No: 7 Grade Level: English I
Standard Code: 9-10.RL.CS.5
Passage Title 1: What Katy Did Next
Standard Text: Analyze how an author's choices concerning text structure, plot structure, and/or time manipulation create effects such as mystery, tension, or surprise.
Correct Answer: A

Read this sentence from paragraph 2:

Down, down, down the great hull would slide till Katy would hold her breath with fear lest it might never right itself again; then slowly, slowly the turn would be made, and up, up, up it would go, till the cant on the other side was equally alarming.

What effect does this sentence create in the passage?

- A.** It builds tension around the events of the storm by repeating key words.
- B.** It gives insight into Katy's lack of confidence by describing her actions during an important event.
- C.** It creates a sense of adventure by showing the sorts of risks the protagonist is willing to take.
- D.** It imparts a sense of doom by using descriptive language to show the helplessness of the passengers.

Rationales	
Correct – 1	The repetition of the words “down,” “slowly,” and “up” in this sentence helps the reader to feel the anxiety and tension of the events of the storm. The repetition assists the reader in visualizing the tossing of the ship and its occupants as a result of the storm.
Incorrect – 2	Although this sentence describes Katy’s actions during the storm event, her actions do not indicate a general lack of confidence but rather fear in the midst of an event that would evoke fear in most people. This event would also not necessarily be considered an important event in the context of the passage. The descriptive language used in the sentence provides a vivid picture of the scene, so students might associate the drama portrayed with an important event.
Incorrect – 3	The descriptive language used in the sentence provides a vivid picture of the scene and creates a sense of adventure for the reader. Katy’s actions in this sentence, however, do not indicate she is willing to take risks.
Incorrect – 4	The descriptive language used in the sentence conveys a sense of helplessness on Katy’s part, but not necessarily of other passengers. Although the sentence conveys a sense of danger and adventure, there is nothing to indicate that Katy or other passengers are doomed on the ship.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0035686 Position No: 8

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.KID.2

Passage Title 1: What Katy Did Next

Standard Text: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide an objective or critical summary.

Correct Answer: C

Which sentence **best** states a central idea of the passage?

- A.** A strong storm makes everyone aboard a ship feel ill, but the passengers feel better after the storm abates.
- B.** Katy receives a drawing from a friend that illustrates events that have actually happened during her trip.
- C.** Katy travels aboard a ship with her friend Amy through an intense storm.
- D.** Katy is on a ship that is known for unsteady voyages.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	The strong storm does greatly affect the boat and its passengers, making many feel ill. But there is no discussion of passengers other than Katy feeling better once the storm abates. Paragraph 4 describes some passengers having fun in the midst of the storm but not after it had abated. Readers might have been drawn to this option as it references the dramatic event of the storm, but the central idea must reference Katy as she is the main character in the story.
Incorrect – 2	Paragraphs 7–11 describe Katy receiving a letter from her friend, Rose. Readers might have selected this option as Katy says that Rose “must have the spirit of prophecy,” which could be interpreted as predicting “events that have actually happened during her trip.” But the events described capture more of Katy’s attitude and lack of enjoyment on the boat than it does actual events. More importantly, this statement does not encompass the events portrayed in paragraphs 1–6.
Correct – 3	Katy is the main character of this story, and the story portrays her journey with her friend Amy through an intense storm. Although this sentence could be strengthened by containing more details from the passage, it best captures the central idea of the passage among the options available.
Incorrect – 4	Katy is the main character of the story, and she is portrayed as being on a boat known for its unsteady voyages (paragraph 2). But that is not a major detail in the story and the sentence as a whole does not capture enough detail to represent the central idea.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034938 Position No: 9

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.CS.4

Passage Title 1: What Katy Did Next

Standard Text: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, such as how language evokes a sense of time and place, and how it communicates an informal or formal tone.

Correct Answer: C,C

The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

In paragraph 4, what does the phrase “in concert with one another” suggest about the shoes?

- A.** They are directing themselves closer to Katy.
- B.** They are swaying slowly along with the movement of the ship.
- C.** They are moving together in a strangely organized fashion.
- D.** They are traveling far away from their owners.

Part B

What is the impact of the phrase “in concert with one another” on the reader’s understanding of Katy’s experience on the boat?

- A.** It shows her playful attitude about an unexpected event.
- B.** It illustrates her misunderstanding of the normal routine aboard a ship.
- C.** It demonstrates her disorientation in an unfamiliar situation.
- D.** It reveals her dramatic reaction to a strange occurrence.

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Although to Katy the shoes appear to be “in concert with one another,” this phrase is used figuratively, not literally. In order for the shoes to “direct themselves,” they would have to be objects capable of thought and will. The shoes are inanimate objects without the will or means to move independently. They are being moved by the motion of the ship.
Incorrect – 2	Although paragraph 2 describes the ship as rocking slowly, paragraph 4 does not indicate that the shoes were swaying slowly along with the ship. Readers might have been drawn to the phrase “they all hopped slowly again into the passage-way and disappeared.” But this is not the same as swaying slowly with the ship. Elsewhere in the paragraph, the shoes are described as appearing “alive” and as dancing.
Correct – 3	The context around the phrase indicates that the shoes “looked alive as they bumped and trotted side by side, and two by two” and that they executed what “looked like a dance.” “The leading shoe turned on its heel” and signaled to the others to follow. These phrases indicate that the shoes are moving together in an organized fashion. “Strangely” is supported by the phrase “odd irregular way” that appears earlier in the paragraph.
Incorrect – 4	A surface reading of this paragraph may suggest that the shoes that had been “left on the floors or at the doors of various staterooms” were now moving farther away from their owners and approaching Katy. However, this is not the sense of the paragraph and a closer read of this phrase in its context would indicate that the shoes are moving together in a strangely organized fashion.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	While the figurative language used is playful in tone, the language is the author's, not Katy's. The shoes are described this way to give the reader an image of the movement of the shoes. It does not indicate Katy's mood. In paragraph 4, the author states that the incident seemed "droll afterward; at the time Katy was too uncomfortable to enjoy it." Her discomfort and the fact that it seemed amusing only later, not in the moment, show that she is not feeling playful.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as Katy's seasickness has potentially led to her being in a state to where she could misunderstand what is happening around her. But there is nothing in the passage to indicate that this is a "normal routine" aboard the ship.
Correct – 3	Paragraphs 3 and 9 indicate that Katy is not familiar with being on a ship and her short experience has been unpleasant. The storm caused the ship to rock violently and she therefore became seasick and disoriented. Katy's reflection of the shoes being "in concert with one another," "alive" and dancing in paragraph 4 is a reflection of her disorientation in this unfamiliar situation.
Incorrect – 4	The way that Katy reflects on this experience makes it seem strange, surreal, and like a fairytale. But the phrase "in concert with one another" does not indicate that Katy reacted dramatically in this situation.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0035689 Position No: 10

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.KID.3

Passage Title 1: What Katy Did Next

Standard Text: Analyze how complex characters, events, and ideas develop and interact over the course of a text to impact meaning.

Correct Answer: A,B

The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

What conclusion is **best** supported by paragraph 9?

- A.** Rose is a good friend who knows Katy well.
- B.** Mrs. Ashe is tired and has gotten very little sleep.
- C.** Katy is desperate to send a message to her family.
- D.** Rose is upset that Katy is taking a trip without her.

Part B

Which detail from paragraph 9 **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- A.** "The letter was not long, but it was very like its writer."
- B.** ". . . Katy felt as if Rose must have the spirit of prophecy . . ."
- C.** ". . . she kindly illustrated the situation with a series of pen-and-ink drawings . . ."
- D.** ". . . looking longingly backward toward the quarter where the United States was supposed to be . . ."

Part A

Rationales	
Correct – 1	In paragraph 9, Katy receives a letter from Rose that contains a series of drawings Rose has done to illustrate what she imagines Katy to be doing while on the ship. The pictures are “so near the truth” that Katy humorously muses to herself that Rose must surely be prophetic or clairvoyant. In paragraph 9, Rose’s keenly accurate predictions of what Katy is doing while they are separated best support the conclusion that Rose is a good friend who knows Katy well.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option because the final sentence of paragraph 9 states “Mrs. Ashe called feebly across the entry,” and this might lead to the conclusion that Mrs. Ashe is tired. However, most of the narrative details given in paragraph 9 relay the contents of Rose’s letter to Katy. Readers may be drawn to this option if they focus on only one detail in the paragraph as opposed to considering the details in the paragraph as a whole.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option due to Rose’s drawing of Katy “fishing out of her port-hole . . . and sending a message to her family to come out at once and take her home.” While this image supports the simple inference that Katy is desperately homesick, the narrative of paragraph 9 as a whole best supports a broader conclusion about Rose and Katy’s friendship. Readers may be drawn to this option if they focus on only one detail in the paragraph as opposed to considering the details in the paragraph as a whole.
Incorrect – 4	Readers who only return to the first part of the paragraph or who draw conclusions based only on personal experience might select this option. Readers might be using the text in the first sentence “[t]he letter was not long” to claim that its writer was brief due to anger. The conclusion that Rosy would be upset would be refuted after reading that “Katy laughed” at the letter, concluding that, instead of being unhappy with her friend, Rose wished to amuse Katy.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option if they chose option D in part A. The text evidence “[t]he letter was not long, but it was very like its writer” could lead a reader to the conclusion that Rose is upset. However, the ambiguity of this detail is clarified by the rest of the paragraph. Readers who selected this option may have focused on only one detail in the paragraph as opposed to considering the details in the paragraph as a whole.
Correct – 2	Katy’s feeling that Rose must “have the spirit of prophecy” is meant to be figurative and humorous and to show that Katy is surprised at how well Rose knows her to be able to guess exactly how she was reacting to her ship’s journey. Readers might have avoided this option if they did not understand the meaning of “the spirit of prophecy” in this context.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this if they recognized that the illustrations contained Rose’s humorous predictions of how Katy would be responding, including loss of appetite. However, without the comment about prophecy, there is not enough information from the passage to confirm how accurate the illustrations are (even if they were done “kindly”). Therefore, answer B would be the stronger answer as it contains a critical detail that supports answer A in Part A.
Incorrect – 4	The text evidence that Katy was “looking longingly backward” might be used by some readers to support option C in Part A, that Katy misses her family and friends. However, this does not support the conclusion that she wants to send a message (evidence that would have been found in the subsequent telegraph “fishing”), but only supports the claim that Rose thinks that Katy is homesick.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034940 Position No: 11

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.CS.5

Passage Title 1: What Katy Did Next

Standard Text: Analyze how an author's choices concerning text structure, plot structure, and/or time manipulation create effects such as mystery, tension, or surprise.

Correct Answer: D

What is the effect of the poem in paragraph 10?

- A.** It reveals that Katy wishes she had made the trip with Rose instead of with Amy and Mrs. Ashe.
- B.** It provides a different point of view about Katy's trip.
- C.** It illustrates that Katy and Rose share a love for taking trips across the ocean.
- D.** It emphasizes a lighter mood by describing Katy's trip in a comedic way.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Rose composed the poem but it is written from the perspective of Katy. Readers might have selected this option as the poem conveys an obvious displeasure toward the events of the trip. But there is no evidence in the text that Katy wishes she had made the trip with Rose as Katy seems to dislike the events she has experienced on the ship. There is also no evidence in the text that Katy associates these events with Amy and Mrs. Ashe. Paragraph 3 references Katy saying “And they call this traveling for pleasure!”, but there is no indication that Katy believes they are the ones responsible for her not enjoying the trip.
Incorrect – 2	This option might have been attractive to readers as the text shifts from third-person limited narration to first-person narration. Rose pens the poem but it is written from the perspective of Katy. Although the poem may convey Katy’s perspective on the events of the trip in a distinctive fashion, it does not provide an altogether different point of view about Katy’s trip.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as the tone of the story shifts in this section to an amusing take on the unpleasant events of the trip. However, the poem conveys contempt instead of love for taking trips across the ocean. There is also no evidence in the passage that suggests Rose enjoys taking trips across the ocean.
Correct – 4	The tone of the story shifts in this section to an amusing take on the unpleasant events of the trip. The poem is written by Rose from the perspective of Katy, and there is a lightheartedness to the “hatred” of the events of the trip. This is emphasized in such lines as “And mis-behave, O sea,” “Oh, well for all sensible folk / Who are safe at home to-day!” and “For the dinner I ate on the shore so late / Has vanished into the sea!”

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034930 Position No: 12

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.KID.2

Passage Title 1: What Katy Did Next

Standard Text: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide an objective or critical summary.

Correct Answer: C,E

Which **two** statements, when combined, provide the **best** summary of the passage?

- A.** A ship that is poorly made and uncomfortable causes Katy and other passengers to experience an uncomfortable crossing of the Atlantic Ocean.
- B.** Sometimes the seas were so rough during a sea voyage that Katy and her fellow passengers were tossed about the ship and became quite ill.
- C.** Katy was among the many passengers who became seasick when the ship they were on encountered a violent storm.
- D.** Katy is cared for by a kindly stewardess who helps her by rigging her berth to prevent Katy from being thrown out by the storm and by bringing her a mild breakfast after the storm.
- E.** The seas eventually calm, and Katy receives an exciting letter from a friend.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as a large portion of the passage focuses on the discomfort of Katy and the other passengers. Readers might have recalled that paragraph 2 noted that the “Spartacus” had a reputation for being “a dreadful ‘roller’” and that it met that reputation on this voyage. However, the passage does not indicate that the ship is poorly made or uncomfortable in its design. Instead, it is the storm that causes the ship to rock in such a manner that the passengers become uncomfortable.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as the storm caused the sea to be rough and toss Katy and her fellow passengers about the ship in such a fashion that they become ill as a result. This passage, however, focuses on a storm event on the voyage and not a series of events as indicated by the word “sometimes.” It is the storm that is causing the sea to be rough instead of the seas being rough on their own accord.
Correct – 3	Paragraph 1 indicates that Katy is aboard a ship with many passengers. As a result of a violent storm, the ship rocked in such a manner that Katy and the other passengers became seasick. This option accurately summarizes the first half of the excerpt of the story.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as there are no inaccuracies in the statement. Paragraph 3 indicates that Katy was cared for by a stewardess who assisted her in “rigging her berth to prevent Katy from being thrown out by the storm.” Paragraph 6 shows that the stewardess brought her a mild breakfast after the storm. The problem with this option is that it only captures a few minor details in the story and does not capture key details that would be needed in a summary.
Correct – 5	Paragraph 5 indicates that the seas eventually calmed and paragraphs 7–10 provide a description of Katy receiving an exciting letter as well as a description of the letter’s contents. This statement captures the major details that are conveyed in the second half of the story excerpt. It is an appropriate complementary summary statement to option C.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034929 Position No: 13 Grade Level: English I
Standard Code: 9-10.RL.KID.2
Passage Title 1: What Katy Did Next
Standard Text: Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide an objective or critical summary.
Correct Answer: B,D

The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

What is a theme of the passage?

- A.** Some situations are better experienced alone than with companions.
- B.** Humor can help one overcome a difficult situation.
- C.** No amount of planning can overcome the forces of nature.
- D.** Communication is an important tool to express one's thoughts during stressful times.

Part B

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

- A.** "Katy, after helping them to settle in their staterooms, found herself too dizzy and ill to sit up a moment longer, and thankfully resorted to her own." (paragraph 1)
- B.** "On the whole, Katy preferred to have her own side of the ship, the downward one; for it was less difficult to keep herself in the berth, from which she was in continual danger of being thrown." (paragraph 2)
- C.** "'And 'ere's a letter, ma'am, which has come for you by post this morning,' said the nice old stewardess. . . ." (paragraph 7)
- D.** ". . . .Katy laughed till Mrs. Ashe called feebly across the entry to ask what was the matter?" (paragraph 9)

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option due to the sense of loneliness that Katy experiences while being on this journey. Also, according to paragraph 1, Katy parted from her friends to go to her own stateroom to recover from seasickness. Paragraph 2 says that she “preferred to have her own side of the ship” and her experience of the storm was mostly separate from the others on the ship. Through the description of Rose’s letter in Paragraph 9, the reader understands that Katy feels separate from her companions in regard to her experience of being on the ship. But neither Katy’s separation in her own stateroom nor her sense of being alone improved her situation. On the contrary, it was the letter from her friend, Rose, and the assistance she received from the stewardess.
Correct – 2	The story opens with intense moments as the storm rocks violently and its passengers, including Katy, become ill. But the events that follow begin to convey a sense of humor. Paragraph 4 conveys Katy’s humorous interpretation of shoes dancing together outside her door. Paragraphs 9–10 describe the letter that Katy received from Rose and the humorous ways that Rose captured Katy’s discomfort and frustration with being on the sea voyage. Paragraph 11 explicitly states that laughter helped Katy to overcome sea-sickness and move past her discomfort.
Incorrect – 3	The purpose-setting statement indicates that Katy is traveling aboard a ship bound for England with her friend Amy and Amy’s mother. Readers might have assumed that a trip across the ocean would require a significant amount of planning and that their planning did not help them to overcome the rocking of the storm. This, however, is not a theme supported by the text as a whole. More specifically, readers might have noted in paragraph 2 that Katy preferred to have her own side of the ship as she was more able to avoid being tossed out of her bed there. Although this may be considered “planning” to a certain degree, planning is not a theme supported by the text as a whole.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have been drawn to this option as Rose’s letter at the end of the story is an important part of the passage. The letter plays an important role in the story as it indirectly reveals more of Katy’s character and assists Katy in improving her state of discomfort. But the role of this communication in the story is not to convey the idea that communication is an important tool to express one’s thoughts during stressful times. Rose is not directly involved in the events of the story and there is no indication that she is experiencing stress.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option to support option A in Part A. A surface-level reading of the text might have led readers to see this sentence as evidence that Katy improved her situation by being alone. However, neither this sentence nor other portions of the text support the idea that some situations are better experienced alone than with companions.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option to support option C in Part A. A surface-level reading of the text might have led readers to see this sentence as evidence that Katy’s planning was not enough to overcome the forces of nature. However, neither this sentence nor other portions of the text support the idea that no amount of planning can overcome the forces of nature.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option to support option D in Part A. Readers might have noted that the letter plays an important role in the story and this sentence is the first time the letter is mentioned. But neither this sentence nor other portions of the text support the idea that communication is an important tool to express one’s thoughts during stressful times. Readers might also have selected this option to support the correct answer in Part A as the letter is an important catalyst in bringing humor into the story. But although this sentence introduces the letter, it does not mention the effect on Katy and how it helped her situation.
Correct – 4	The majority of the text focuses on Katy and her discomfort and displeasure with being on this journey. The letter plays an important role in bringing humor into the story. Katy’s reaction of laughter after reading the letter indicates that humor has improved her mood and helped her to overcome a difficult situation. Option D is the best of the available options to support answer B in Part A.

Subpart 2: Passage Set with Constructed Response Essay Prompt

Passage Information

Passage Code: TN313394	Passage Title: Research Shows Placebos May Have Place In Everyday Treatments
Grade Level: English I	Lexile Level: 760 Flesch-Kincaid: 6.7

Read the passages and answer the questions that follow. Then write a response to the writing prompt.

Passage 1

Research Shows Placebos May Have Place In Everyday Treatments

by Laura Sullivan and Ted Kaptchuk

This passage is a transcript from a National Public Radio (NPR) program. In this excerpt, NPR host Laura Sullivan interviews Dr. Ted Kaptchuk, a professor of medicine at Harvard Medical School, about his research on how placebo treatments affect the way we feel.

- 1 SULLIVAN: So placebos are essentially fake drugs. These are sugar pills — just something that is not, in any way, supposed to make you better. How do they compare, in your studies, to real drugs?
- 2 KAPTCHUK: For a lot of medications, the placebo effect is a big part of what the effect of the medication is. Placebos don't do anything. That's an oxymoron, to say a placebo does something. But it's what surrounds the placebo that is what's doing things. That's the symbols; the rituals; doctor-patient relationship; and the power of imagination, trust and hope.
- 3 For example, if you give powerful drug-reliever — like morphine — and these experiments have been done — and you give it to the patient surreptitiously, without them knowing, in an IV, it has a very strong analgesic effect. It stops pain. But if you give that same dosage in an injection that the patient sees going into their arm, it has double the effect.
- 4 SULLIVAN: Why does that work? Why are we susceptible to that?
- 5 KAPTCHUK: Well, there are many ways of answering that "why" question. One way is a psychological way. We have expectations; we have previous experience; we have non-conscious awareness. And we're in a medical environment, and we're

used to that environment producing beneficial results. The ritual of medicine activates particular areas in the brain that actually will reduce pain, or at least reduce the sensations that we have in relation to pain.

6 SULLIVAN: Is it that the ritual of medicine — sitting in front of a doctor, telling him or her your pain; or going through the process of an appointment, taking a pill — does it make us think we're feeling better, or are we actually getting better?

7 KAPTCHUK: Well, I don't think it's only thinking. I think there's some evidence that if you expect things to happen, it happens. But I don't think you expect to get better, and that makes you better. I call it the *Romeo and Juliet*¹ effect. We know what's going to happen to Romeo and Juliet. We watch it. But when we watch it for the fourth time, the fifth time, tenth time, we get all excited. We get emotionally involved. When we're sick, we get emotionally involved. Those rituals, even though they may be drama, they affect us more deeply than drama because our real lives are at stake.

8 SULLIVAN: Hmm. You know, I found your asthma study fascinating, because you had this group of people. They were all on placebos, and they were reporting to you that they were feeling better. And you actually went in expecting — when you looked at their lungs — to see that they were getting better. And what you found was that there was really no improvement at all, in their lungs.

9 KAPTCHUK: Yeah. What we found was that the patients reported the same amount of relief with the fake medicine as they did with the active medicine. And it was a really interesting study, showing that objective pathophysiological measures don't seem to be modified by ritual self-appraisal. How we experience ourselves is very much affected by the ritual of medicine.

10 SULLIVAN: Do you think that there's going to be a time where we're going to use placebos on people because they seem to work, in some cases, as well as regular drugs?

11 KAPTCHUK: I think the bottom line is, we're never allowed to deceive people — give people placebos without them being informed of what we're doing. That's the bottom line. Is it possible to give people a placebo, and tell them it's a placebo; meaning, it's an ethical thing to do. Will that unleash changes that will actually improve illness?

¹*Romeo and Juliet*: a tragic play by William Shakespeare

- 12 We've done two experiments like that. They're small; they're pilot studies. We're hopeful that maybe this will pan out in the future; that we can actually, instead of putting people on drugs right away, maybe put them on the ritual of medicine, and see if that's enough. So I see there's a place for it, but it's still in infancy whether this is really an option or not.

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Passage Information

Passage Code: TN016148

Passage Title: Excerpt from "Pushing That Cross-walk Button May Make You Feel Better, but ..."

Grade Level: English I

Lexile Level: 1200

Flesch-Kincaid: 11

Passage 2

Excerpt from "Pushing That Crosswalk Button May Make You Feel Better, but . . ."

by Christopher Mele

The following article from The New York Times discusses placebos in our everyday lives.

13 It is a reflex born of years of habit: You see a button, press it and then something happens.

14 The world is filled with them, such as doorbells, vending machines, calculators and telephones.

15 But some buttons we regularly rely on to get results are mere artifices — placebos that promote an illusion of control but that in reality do not work.

16 No matter how long or how hard you press, it will not change the outcome. Be prepared to be surprised — and disappointed — by some of these examples.

Door-close buttons on elevators

17 Pressing the door-close button on an elevator might make you feel better, but it will do nothing to hasten your trip.

18 Karen W. Penafiel, executive director of National Elevator Industry Inc., a trade group, said the close-door feature faded into obsolescence a few years after the enactment of the Americans With Disabilities Act in 1990.

19 The legislation required that elevator doors remain open long enough for anyone who uses crutches, a cane or wheelchair to get on board, Ms. Penafiel said in an interview on Tuesday. "The riding public would not be able to make those doors close any faster," she said.

20 The buttons can be operated by firefighters and maintenance workers who have the proper keys or codes.

21 No figures were available for the number of elevators still in operation with functioning door-close buttons. Given that the estimated useful life of an elevator is 25 years, it is likely that most elevators in service today have been modernized or refurbished, rendering the door-close buttons a thing of the past for riders, Ms. Penafiel said.

22 Take heart, though: The door-open buttons do work when you press them.

Crosswalk signals

23 New Yorkers (those who don't jaywalk, that is) have for years dutifully followed the instructions on the metal signs affixed to crosswalk poles:

To Cross Street
Push Button
Wait for Walk Signal

24 But as *The New York Times* reported in 2004, the city deactivated most of the pedestrian buttons long ago with the emergence of computer-controlled traffic signals. More than 2,500 of the 3,250 walk buttons that were in place existed as mechanical placebos, according to city figures. . . .

Office thermostats

25 The same problem that confronts couples at home — one person's perception that a room is too cold is another's that it is too warm — faces office workers as well.

26 Depending on where you work, you might find the thermostat in a plastic case under lock and key, but if you're lucky you might have control over one.

27 Well, you might think you have control.

28 The Air Conditioning, Heating and Refrigeration News reported in 2003 that it asked readers in an informal online survey whether they had ever installed "dummy thermostats." Of 70 who responded, 51 said they had.

29 One respondent, David Trimble of Fort Collins, Colo., wrote The News that people "felt better" that they could control the temperature in their work space after a nonfunctioning thermostat was installed. "This cut down the number of service calls by over 75 percent," he wrote.

Sense of control

30 Though these buttons may not function, they do serve a function for our mental health, Ellen J. Langer, a psychology professor at Harvard University who has studied the illusion of control, said in an email.

31 “Perceived control is very important,” she said. “It diminishes stress and promotes well being.”

Excerpt from “Pushing That Crosswalk Button May Make You Feel Better, but . . .” by Christopher Mele, from *The New York Times*, October 27, 2016. Copyright © 2016, The New York Times Company. Used by permission of the publisher via Copyright Clearance Center.

Item Information

Item Code: TN013407 Position No: 14

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RI.CS.4

Passage Title 1: Research Shows
Placebos May Have Place
In Everyday Treatments

Passage Title 2: Excerpt from "Pushing
That Crosswalk Button
May Make You
Feel Better, but ..."

Passage Code 1: TN313394

Passage Code 2: TN016148

Standard Text: Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the cumulative impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.

Reporting Category: 3: Reading: Vocabulary

Correct Answer: D

What does the word artifices mean as it is used in paragraph 15?

- A.** objects
- B.** mistakes
- C.** tools
- D.** tricks

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	The context indicates that the author is saying that the buttons are “mere artifices.” Readers might have quickly chosen this option as a surface conclusion would equate buttons with objects. Readers might have overlooked the adjective “mere,” which indicates a negative connotation to the word, a connotation that the term “objects” does not capture. Readers might also have not noted the usage of the em dash to further expound on the usage of the term “artifices” — “placebos that promote an illusion of control but that in reality do not work.” “Objects” does not capture the intended meaning of the term “artifices” in this context.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as they might associate the act of people taking the placebo and being under its “illusion” as being a mistake. Since placebos do not work, readers may render it a mistake that people use them. But the first part of the sentence indicates that it is the placebos themselves that are the artifices and not the acts of the people. Artifices, therefore, cannot be mistakes as they are not a mistaken act or judgment.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as “tools” are devices that are used to accomplish a given function. In the first passage, placebos were discussed as being, in a certain sense, tools to be used in research. In paragraph 30 of the second passage, it states that the placebo buttons “serve a function for our mental health.” In the immediate context of the usage of the term “artifices” in paragraph 15, however, it is noted that placebos do not intrinsically create any effect but rather create an illusion of an effect. Also, the use of the term “mere” before “artifices” indicates a negative connotation to the word.
Correct – 4	The em dash after the word “artifices” indicates that the author is expounding on the term. They are “placebos that promote an illusion of control but in reality do not work.” Although “tricks” may carry connotations that could distract students, it is the only term among the available options that captures the intent of the use of the term — that it deceives the person using them. The context also supports this meaning as the word “mere” appears before “artifices,” which indicates a negative connotation to the word.

Item Information

Item Code: TN313413 Position No: 15

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RI.IK1.8

Passage Title 1: Research Shows
Placebos May Have
Place In Everyday
Treatments

Passage Title 2: Excerpt from "Pushing
That Crosswalk Button
May Make You Feel
Better, but ..."

Passage Code 1: TN313394

Passage Code 2: TN016148

Standard Text: Evaluate how reasoning and evidence affects the argument and specific claims in a text.

Correct Answer: D

Which detail from passage 2 provides evidence that placebos can have positive effects?

- A.** "You see a button, press it and then something happens." (paragraph 13)
- B.** "The riding public would not be able to make those doors close any faster. . . ." (paragraph 19)
- C.** "New Yorkers (those who don't jaywalk, that is) have for years dutifully followed the instructions on the metal signs. . . ." (paragraph 23)
- D.** "This cut down the number of service calls by over 75 percent....." (paragraph 29)

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as it is the first sentence to appear in the text and a surface-level reading might confuse “something happens” with something having positive effects. Reading the sentence in context indicates that positive effects are not necessarily the outcome of placebo usage.
Incorrect – 2	Paragraph 19 states that “legislation required that elevator doors remain open long enough for anyone who uses crutches, a cane or wheelchair to get on board.” Readers learn that the public will not be able to make the doors close faster since the buttons are placebos. A surface-level reading might have led the reader to conclude that this is a positive effect of placebos, as the public would not be able to discriminate against people who require longer time to enter or exit the elevator. But it is the legislation that has positive effects in this context, not the placebos.
Incorrect – 3	This paragraph describes New Yorkers who obey the law and follow the instructions as displayed on the metal signs affixed to crosswalk poles. Readers might have selected this option as this is a positive action and they may be confusing positive actions with positive effects from the placebos. It is not until paragraph 24 that the placebos in this section — the pedestrian buttons — are discussed. Paragraph 23 discusses the signs that contain instructions regarding the push button, but not the effects of the pedestrian buttons themselves.
Correct – 4	In the section, “Office thermostats,” the author discusses the use of thermostats as placebos and how they create a sense of control for office workers. The majority of workers responded that they feel better. This sentence in paragraph 29 indicates that when workers felt better, the number of service calls declined by over 75 percent. This is a clear positive effect of the use of this placebo in this context.

Item Information

Item Code: TN713404 Position No: 16

Grade Level: English I

Standard Code: 9-10.RI.CS.5

Passage Title 1: Research Shows
Placebos May Have
Place In Everyday
Treatments

Passage Title 2: Excerpt from "Pushing
That Crosswalk Button
May Make You Feel
Better, but ..."

Passage Code 1: TN313394

Passage Code 2: TN016148

Standard Text: Analyze how an author's ideas or claims are developed and refined by
particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text.

Correct Answer: B

How do paragraphs 8 and 9 contribute to the development of the central idea of the passage?

- A.** They provide evidence that placebos can improve people's health.
- B.** They provide proof of the perceived impact of placebos.
- C.** They explain how doctors use placebos to cure patients.
- D.** They note that scientists suggest treating patients with placebos.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as these paragraphs discuss a positive effect of placebos in the asthma study — namely, that all of the patients on the placebos reported that they were feeling better. However, both paragraphs 8 and 9 state that although the placebos tricked the patients into feeling better, the patients did not experience any actual improvement in physical health. Therefore, these paragraphs do not contribute to the passage by providing evidence of placebos improving people’s health.
Correct – 2	Paragraphs 8 and 9 describe the effects of the placebos in the asthma study. The group of patients on placebos were reporting that they were feeling better after taking them. But the patients did not experience any actual improvement in physical health. Therefore, paragraphs 8 and 9 contribute to the passage by providing proof of the perceived impact of placebos.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as paragraphs 8 and 9 describe the usage of placebos in an asthma study. The purpose of the placebos’ usage in the study, however, was not to cure patients but to study their impact on patients’ perceptions and physical health. There was no impact of the placebos on the patients’ physical health. Therefore, these paragraphs do not contribute to the passage by explaining how doctors use placebos to cure patients.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as Dr. Kaptchuk calls this study “interesting” and notes that one conclusion we can draw from it is that “how we experience ourselves is very much affected by the ritual of medicine.” Although the doctor indicates that the study was useful, he does not suggest or recommend in these paragraphs that patients should be treated with placebos. He does suggest possible usages in paragraph 12, but this item is addressing the contribution of paragraphs 8 and 9 to the development of the central idea of the passage.

Item Information

Item Code:	TN713419	Position No:	17	Grade Level:	English I
Standard Code:	9-10.W.TTP.2	Item Accnum:	VH958243		
Passage Title 1:	Research Shows Placebos May Have Place In Everyday Treatments	Passage Title 2:	Pushing That Crosswalk Button May Make You Feel Better, But....		
Passage Code 1:		Passage Code 2:			
Standard Text:	Write informative/explanatory texts to analyze and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection and organization of content.				
Reporting Category:	4: Written Expression				
Correct Answer:		DOK Level:	4	Item Type:	O

Writing Prompt

You have just read two passages about the effects placebos can have on people. Write an informational essay explaining how placebos function in our lives.

Manage your time carefully so that you can plan your essay and do some prewriting.

Be sure to

- use evidence from **both** passages.
- avoid over-relying on one passage.

Your written response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph informational essay.

TNReady Grades 9-12 Informational/Explanatory Rubric

Score	Focus& Organization	Development	Language	Conventions
4	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains an effective and relevant introduction. utilizes effective organizational strategies to create a unified whole and to aid in comprehension. effectively clarifies relationships among ideas and concepts to create cohesion. contains an effective and relevant concluding statement or section. 	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient evidence¹ from the stimuli to thoroughly and insightfully develop the topic. thoroughly and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, demonstrating a clear, insightful understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli. 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates consistent and sophisticated command of precise language, domain-specific vocabulary,² and literary techniques³ appropriate to the task. illustrates sophisticated command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. utilizes sophisticated and varied transitional words and phrases. effectively establishes and maintains a formal style and an objective tone. 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates consistent and sophisticated command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.⁴ may contain a few minor errors that do not interfere with meaning.
3	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains a relevant introduction. Utilizes adequate organizational strategies to create a mostly unified whole and to aid in comprehension. clarifies most relationships among ideas and concepts, but there may be some gaps in cohesion. contains a relevant concluding statement or section. 	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes relevant and sufficient evidence¹ from the stimuli to adequately develop the topic. Adequately and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, demonstrating a sufficient understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli. 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates consistent command of precise language, domain-specific vocabulary,² and literary techniques³ appropriate to the task. illustrates consistent command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest. utilizes appropriate and varied transitional words and phrases. establishes and maintains a formal style and an objective tone. 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates consistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.⁴ contains occasional minor and/or major errors, but the errors do not significantly interfere with meaning.
2	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains a limited introduction. demonstrates an attempt to use organizational strategies to create some unification, but ideas may be hard to follow at times. clarifies some relationships among ideas and concepts, but there are lapses in focus. contains a limited concluding statement or section. 	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes mostly relevant but insufficient evidence¹ from the stimuli to partially develop the topic. Some evidence maybe inaccurate or repetitive. explains some of the evidence provided, demonstrating only a partial understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli. There may be some level of inaccuracy in the explanation. 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates inconsistent command of precise language, domain-specific vocabulary,² and literary techniques.³ illustrates inconsistent command of syntactic variety. utilizes basic or repetitive transitional words and phrases. establishes but inconsistently maintains a formal style and an objective tone. 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.⁴ contains frequent errors that may significantly interfere with meaning.
1	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains no or an irrelevant introduction. demonstrates an unclear organizational structure; ideas are hard to follow most of the time. fails to clarify relationships among ideas 	<p>In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> utilizes mostly irrelevant or no evidence¹ from the stimuli, or mostly/only personal knowledge, to inadequately develop the topic. Evidence is inaccurate or repetitive. inadequately or inaccurately 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> illustrates little to no use of precise language, domain-specific vocabulary,² and literary techniques.³ illustrates little to no syntactic variety. utilizes no or few transitional words and phrases. does not establish or 	<p>The writing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> demonstrates limited command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.⁴ contains numerous and repeated errors that seriously impede meaning.

	and concepts; concepts are unclear and/or there is a lack of focus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains no or an irrelevant concluding statement or section. 	explains the evidence provided, demonstrating little understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli.	maintain a formal style and an objective tone.	
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·Evidence includes facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples as appropriate to the task and the stimuli.

·Domain-specific vocabulary refers to the terminology used in the stimuli and/or associated with the topic.

·Literary techniques, such as metaphor, simile, and analogy, help to manage the complexity of the topic and are expected at grades 11-12.

·Conventions of standard written English include sentence structure, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Additional Resources

- [Information on Tennessee's Assessment Program](#)
- [Tennessee Academic Standards for ELA](#)
- [The Standards for ELA](#)
- [Assessing Student Learning Reopening Toolkit](#)
- [Assessment Development LiveBinder Resource Site](#)
- [Best for All Central](#)

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