



Checkpoint Results Interpretation Guide

English II 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 II ELA Checkpoint should be given to incoming eleventh grade students to help plan for students learning English III 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
- are 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 – 54%	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	55 – 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.

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
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 II Checkpoint Item Annotations

Subpart 1: Passage Sets with Multiple Choice Questions

Passage Information

Passage Code: TN675333

Passage Title: Excerpt from "WANTED: The Limping Lady"

Grade Level: English II

Lexile Level: 1220

Flesch-Kincaid: 11.1

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Excerpt from "WANTED: The Limping Lady"

The intriguing and unexpected true story of America's most heroic — and most dangerous — female spy

by Cate Lineberry

- 1 The Nazi secret police were hunting her. They had distributed "wanted" posters throughout Vichy France, posters with a sketch of a sharp-featured woman with shoulder-length hair and wide-set eyes, details provided by French doubleagents. They were determined to stop her, an unknown "woman with a limp" who had established resistance networks, located drop zones for money and weapons, and helped downed airmen and escaped POWs travel to safety. The Gestapo's orders were clear and merciless: "She is the most dangerous of all Allied spies. We must find and destroy her."
- 2 Virginia Hall, the daughter of a wealthy family in Baltimore, Maryland, wanted to become a United States Foreign Service officer, but was turned down by the State Department. Instead, she became one of World War II's most heroic female spies, saving countless Allied lives while working for both Britain and the United States. Now, more than two decades after her death at age 78, Hall's extraordinary actions are in the spotlight once again. In December, the French and British ambassadors honored her at a ceremony in Washington, D.C., attended by Hall's family. "Virginia Hall is a true hero of the French Resistance," wrote French President Jacques Chirac in a letter read by the French ambassador. The British ambassador presented Hall's family with a certificate to accompany the Order of the British Empire medal Hall received from King George VI in 1943.
- 3 Despite their relentless efforts, the Gestapo never captured Hall, who was then working for the British secret paramilitary force Special Operations Executive (SOE). The SOE had recruited her after she had a chance meeting with an SOE member on a train out of France soon after the country fell to the Nazis in 1940. In joining, she became the SOE's first female operative sent into France. For two

years, she worked in Lyon as a spy, initially under the guise of a stringer for the *New York Post*, then, after the United States entered the war, she was forced to go underground. She knew that as an enemy she would be tortured and killed if she were caught, but she continued her work for another 14 months.

- 4 Hall fled France only after the Allies landed in North Africa and Nazis started flooding the country. To escape, she had to cross the Pyrenees mountains by foot into Spain, a difficult task for a woman who had lost her left leg in a hunting accident years before and used an artificial leg she had nicknamed "Cuthbert." As her guide led her across the frozen landscape in mid-winter, she transmitted a message to SOE headquarters in London saying she was having trouble with her leg. The reply: "If Cuthbert is giving you difficulty, have him eliminated."
- 5 After the grueling trek, Hall arrived in Spain without entry papers. Officials immediately threw her into Figueres Prison, where she remained for six weeks. She was released only after a freed inmate smuggled a letter written by Hall to the American consul in Barcelona, alerting them to her situation.
- 6 She spent the next four months in Madrid working undercover as a correspondent for the *Chicago Times* before asking SOE headquarters for a transfer. "I thought I could help in Spain, but I'm not doing a job," Hall wrote, as noted in Elizabeth P. McIntosh's book *Sisterhood of Spies*. "I am living pleasantly and wasting time. It isn't worthwhile and after all, my neck is my own. If I am willing to get a crick in it, I think that's my prerogative."
- 7 While the SOE trained her as a wireless radio operator in London, she learned of the newly formed Office of Strategic Services (OSS), America's wartime precursor to the Central Intelligence Agency. She quickly joined, and, at her request, the OSS sent her back into occupied France, an incredibly dangerous mission given her high profile. Unable to parachute in because of her artificial leg, she arrived in France by British torpedo boat.
- 8 Her assignment was as a radio operator in the Haute-Loire region of central France. To avoid detection, she disguised herself as an elderly milkmaid, dyeing her hair grey, shuffling her feet to hide her limp and wearing full skirts to add weight to her frame. While undercover, she coordinated parachute drops of arms and supplies for resistance groups and reported German troop movements to London. By staying on the move, camping out in barns and attics, she was able to avoid the Germans who were desperately trying to track her radio signals.
- 9 D-Day loomed. Everyone, including the Germans, knew an Allied landing was imminent, but they didn't know when or where it would take place. Hall armed and trained three battalions of French resistance fighters for sabotage missions against the retreating Germans. As part of the resistance circuit, Hall was ready to put her team into action at any moment. In her final report to headquarters, Hall stated that her team had destroyed four bridges, derailed freight trains, severed a key rail line in multiple places and downed telephone lines. . . .

- 10 Soon after the war ended, President Harry Truman wished to present Hall with the Distinguished Service Cross, the second highest U.S. military award for bravery. Hall, however, requested that Maj. Gen. William J. Donovan, founder of the OSS, give her the medal in a small ceremony in his office, attended only by her mother.

Excerpt from "Wanted: The Limping Lady," by Cate Lineberry, from *Smithsonian Magazine*, February 1, 2007. Copyright © 2007, *Smithsonian Magazine*, www.smithsonianmag.com. Used by permission of the publisher via Copyright Clearance Center.

Item Information

Item Code: TN675705 Position No: 1 Grade Level: English II
Standard Code: 9-10.RI.KID.1
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "WANTED:
The Limping Lady"

Standard Text: Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; cite the
strongest, most compelling textual evidence to support conclusions.
Correct Answer: D,D

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

Part A

In paragraph 4, what did SOE headquarters mistakenly think when advising Hall to have Cuthbert "eliminated"?

- A.** that taking care of Cuthbert would keep Hall out of jail
- B.** that Hall needed to provide evidence of her courage
- C.** that Hall could travel better if she removed her artificial leg
- D.** that Cuthbert was someone who was working for the enemy

Part B

What was the source of the SOE's confusion?

- A.** Hall was leaving France to avoid the Nazis.
- B.** Hall was crossing the Pyrenees by foot.
- C.** Hall was complaining about her guide.
- D.** Hall had nicknamed her leg Cuthbert.

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers discover in paragraph 5 that when Hall arrived without entry papers, she was sent to prison for six weeks. Readers might have assumed that the SOE considered Cuthbert as an enemy and that he should be eliminated to prevent her from going to jail. It is a reasonable inference to think that the SOE mistook Cuthbert for being someone who was an enemy, but there is no textual support to suggest that the SOE thought Cuthbert's elimination would keep Hall out of jail. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Incorrect – 2	Paragraph 4 states that Hall fled France to escape the Nazis and headed toward Spain. A surface-level reading of the text might have led readers to assume that the SOE considered this a cowardly act; as such, readers might have thought that the SOE requested that Hall eliminate Cuthbert to provide evidence of Hall's courage. There is no textual support, however, to suggest that the SOE needed evidence of Hall's courage, or that eliminating Cuthbert would provide evidence of such courage. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Paragraph 4 states that Hall transmitted a message to SOE headquarters saying that she was having trouble with her leg. If the SOE headquarters knew that Hall nicknamed her leg "Cuthbert," they might suggest she remove her leg to eliminate the difficulty. Although Hall was "having trouble" with her leg, removing that leg would not improve her travel; therefore, it seems unreasonable that the SOE would have advised her to remove it for this purpose. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Correct – 4	Paragraph 4 states that Hall transmitted a message to SOE headquarters saying that she was having trouble with her leg. Since the reply from the SOE headquarters suggests that Hall have Cuthbert "eliminated," it is unlikely that the SOE was aware of the nickname as it is odd to suggest eliminating a leg and there is no reason why that would improve her difficulties. Instead, it is far more likely that Hall referred to her leg as "Cuthbert" in her communication to the SOE and failed to inform them she was referring to her leg. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.

Part B

Incorrect – 1	Readers who selected option B in Part A might have selected this option. As a result of a surface-level reading, readers might have thought the SOE wanted Hall to provide evidence of her courage as she was fleeing France to avoid the Nazis. There is no indication in the text that the SOE was confused as a result of Hall leaving France to avoid the Nazis. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Incorrect – 2	Readers who selected option C in Part A might have selected this option. As a result of a surface-level reading, readers might have thought that the SOE wanted Hall to remove her leg so she could travel better. The SOE knew that Hall had an artificial leg so they might have been confused to discover that Hall was travelling by foot across the Pyrenees. However, there is no indication in the text that Hall's travelling by foot across the Pyrenees was the source of the SOE's confusion. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Readers who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option as they may have interpreted the SOE's reply as indicating that the SOE mistook Hall's message as a complaint about her guide and therefore Cuthbert could be someone who was working for the enemy. Although the text does support that the SOE thought Hall was complaining about her guide, her complaint would not be the source of the confusion but rather their misunderstanding of who she is referring to when she complains of Cuthbert. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Correct – 4	The most likely source of the SOE's confusion is that they did not know who Hall was complaining about when she said she was having trouble with Cuthbert. Although the text just says she complained of "having trouble with her leg," the reply from SOE indicates that she had said "Cuthbert" instead of "her leg" as it does not make sense for the SOE to recommend that she "eliminate" her leg to avoid difficulty while travelling through the Pyrenees. It is far more likely that the SOE's unawareness of the nickname was the source of the confusion. This question assesses students' ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.

Item Information

Item Code: TN575672 Position No: 2

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "WANTED:
The Limping Lady"

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

Correct Answer: A

How is the description of Virginia Hall's escape from France into Spain important to the development of the central idea?

- A.** It illustrates Hall's toughness, which made her a good agent.
- B.** It gives an example of the work Hall did for the French Resistance.
- C.** It provides insight into how difficult it was for the Allied forces to contain the Germans.
- D.** It explains how Virginia Hall communicated with the SOE.

Rationales	
Correct – 1	Paragraph 4 indicates that Hall's escape from France to Spain involved her crossing the Pyrenees mountains by foot, "a difficult task for a woman who had lost her left leg" years prior. The paragraph also mentions her complaint of her difficulties with her leg in her travel. Her journey would have required a lot of grit and resilience, qualities that would be beneficial as an agent. This question assesses students' ability to determine how an event in this text supports its central idea.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as paragraph 2 describes Hall being honored at an awards ceremony for being a "true hero of the French Resistance." Paragraphs 7–9 also detail Hall's work in supporting the French Resistance. But the description of her fleeing France once the Nazis increased in presence is not an example of the work Hall did for the French Resistance. This question assesses students' ability to determine how an event in this text supports its central idea.
Incorrect – 3	Paragraph 4 indicates that Hall fled France after the Allies landed in North Africa and the Nazis increased their presence in France. Readers might have selected this option as they might have inferred that the Allied forces were struggling to contain the Germans who were flooding into France. The description of Hall's escape from France into Spain, however, does not provide insight into the Allies' difficulty in containing the Germans. This question assesses students' ability to determine how an event in this text supports its central idea.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as paragraph 4 indicates that while Hall was travelling through the Pyrenees, she transmitted a message to SOE headquarters in London. This is not, however, a major detail in the description of her escape and it does not contribute to the development of the central idea. This question assesses students' ability to determine how an event in this text supports its central idea.

Item Information

Item Code: TN175646 Position No: 3 Grade Level: English II
Standard Code: 9-10.L.VAU.4a
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "WANTED:
The Limping Lady"
Standard Text: Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.
Correct Answer: B,A

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

Part A

What is the meaning of imminent in paragraph 9?

- A.** very important
- B.** about to happen
- C.** extremely risky
- D.** guaranteed to succeed

Part B

Which phrase from paragraph 9 gives a clue to the meaning of imminent?

- A.** "D-Day loomed"
- B.** "including the Germans"
- C.** "didn't know when or where"
- D.** "armed and trained"

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as they might have associated the Allied landing as an important historical event. However, in the phrase, “knew an Allied landing was imminent, but. . .,” the use of the word “but” indicates that whatever follows “but” is a contrast to the meaning of the word imminent. The phrase “didn’t know when or where it would take place” is not a contrast to “very important” and therefore does not capture the meaning of “imminent” in paragraph 9. This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.
Correct – 2	In the phrase, “knew an Allied landing was imminent, but. . .,” the use of the word “but” indicates that whatever follows “but” is a contrast to the meaning of the word imminent. The phrase “didn’t know when or where it would take place” is clearly in contrast to “about to happen.” Therefore, among the options available, this best captures the meaning of “imminent.” This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as they might have associated the extremely risky nature of battles with the Allied landing. However, in the phrase, “knew an Allied landing was imminent, but. . .,” the use of the word “but” indicates that whatever follows “but” is a contrast to the meaning of the word imminent. The phrase “didn’t know when or where it would take place” is not a contrast to “extremely risky” and therefore does not capture the meaning of “imminent” in paragraph 9. This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as they might be familiar with the Allied landing and know that it led to an Allied victory. However, in the phrase, “knew an Allied landing was imminent, but. . .,” the use of the word “but” indicates that whatever follows “but” is a contrast to the meaning of the word imminent. The phrase “didn’t know when or where it would take place” is not a contrast to “guaranteed to succeed” and therefore does not capture the meaning of “imminent” in paragraph 9. This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.

Part B

Rationales	
Correct – 1	The Allied Landing in Normandy, France, is also known as D-Day. The first sentence in paragraph 9 says that D-Day “loomed,” or would happen soon. The phrase “D-Day loomed” parallels “an Allied landing was about to happen” and is therefore a clue to the meaning of the word “imminent.” This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option if they selected option B in Part A. Students may have chosen it due to its proximity to “imminent,” or simply because it works with the correct meaning of “imminent” — “about to happen.” But the phrase “including the Germans” does not provide any information to assist a reader in determining the meaning of “imminent.” This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option if they selected options B or C in Part A. Students may have chosen it due to its proximity to “imminent,” or simply because it works with the correct meaning of “imminent” — “about to happen.” But the phrase “didn't know when or where,” without including the prior two words, “but they,” does not provide enough information to assist a reader in determining the meaning of “imminent,” as students would not know the phrase is in contrast to the meaning of “imminent.” This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option if they selected option A in Part A. Students may have chosen it as the battle is likely to be very important if Hall is arming and training three battalions of French resistance fighters to participate. But the phrase “armed and trained” does not provide any information to assist a reader in determining the meaning of “imminent.” This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.

Item Information

Item Code: TN175740 Position No: 4

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "WANTED:
The Limping Lady"

Standard Text: Analyze how an author presents and develops key ideas and events to
impact meaning.

Correct Answer: D

What does the last paragraph suggest about Hall's character?

- A.** She was paranoid that someone might find out her real identity.
- B.** She respected Major Donovan more than any other soldier.
- C.** She used her own record to get recognition for others.
- D.** She did not crave attention for her heroic actions.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as Hall requested that the award ceremony take place in Major General Donovan’s office and not in a more public setting. Students may consider that she has spent her life as a spy and that she may still have enemies that want to know her identity and whereabouts. Paragraph 10 and its context, however, do not support this inference as there is no indication that Hall was concerned about her identity being discovered at this point in her life. This question assesses students’ ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as Hall requested that the award ceremony take place in Major General Donovan’s office and not in a more public setting. Students may assume that this request was based on Hall's immense respect for Major General Donovan. Paragraph 10 and its context, however, do not support this inference as there is no indication that her request was based on her respect for Major General Donovan or that she respected him more than any other soldier. This question assesses students’ ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option as Hall requested that the award ceremony take place in Major General Donovan’s office and not in a more public setting. Students may confuse this act of humility with an attempt to keep the spotlight on other heroes and give them the recognition. Paragraph 10 and its context, however, do not support this inference as there is no indication that Hall used her own record to get recognition for others. This question assesses students’ ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.
Correct – 4	Hall turned down President Harry Truman’s offer to present her with the award, and instead requested that Major General Donovan present it to her in a small ceremony in his office. It is reasonable to infer from these actions that Hall did not want to attract attention to her heroic deeds. This question assesses students’ ability to make inferences from the information provided in this text.

Item Information

Item Code: TN475745 Position No: 5

Grade Level: English II

Standard Code: 9-10.RI.CS.6

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "WANTED:
The Limping Lady"

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: A,C

Select **two** statements that describe rhetorical strategies the author uses to advance her purpose in the passage.

- A.** She writes an attention-getting introduction to create reader interest.
- B.** She repeats words and phrases to emphasize important points.
- C.** She includes quotations from contemporary sources to support her claims.
- D.** She uses sensory imagery to produce sympathetic reactions from the reader.
- E.** She addresses the reader directly to make the story more personal.

Rationales	
Correct – 1	Paragraph 1 begins with “The Nazi secret police were hunting her” and proceeds to describe in vivid detail their pursuit of Hall, what she looked like, and why the Nazis were pursuing her. The use of vivid detail assists the reader in visualizing Hall and her mission and thereby creates reader interest in reading further. This question assesses students’ ability to analyze how the author crafts this text to meet its purpose.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as this is a common strategy for authors to use to emphasize important points. Although there are certain words that reappear throughout the passage, there is no indication that the author was using repetition of words and phrases as a strategy to emphasize important points. This question assesses students’ ability to analyze how the author crafts this text to meet its purpose.
Correct – 3	Paragraph 2 contains a quotation from French President Jacques Chirac and paragraph 6 contains quotations from Hall in a modern book called <i>Sisterhood of Spies</i> . These quotations support the author’s purpose in conveying the historical importance of Virginia Hall. This question assesses students’ ability to analyze how the author crafts this text to meet its purpose.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as the author uses vivid detail throughout the passage to describe Hall’s experiences as an Allied spy. The author does not, however, use sensory imagery to produce sympathetic reactions from the reader. The author is attempting to evoke admiration, not sympathy. This question assesses students’ ability to analyze how the author crafts this text to meet its purpose.
Incorrect – 5	Readers might have selected this option as this is a common strategy for authors to use to make stories more personal. The author does not, however, address the reader directly nor make an attempt to convey this story in a “personal” manner. This question assesses students’ ability to analyze how the author crafts this text to meet its purpose.

Item Information

Item Code: TN275659 Position No: 6 Grade Level: English II
Standard Code: 9-10.RI.KID.2
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "WANTED:
The Limping Lady"

Standard Text: Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development; provide
an objective or critical summary.
Correct Answer: C,D,E

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

Part A

What is the central idea of this passage?

- A.** Virginia Hall came from a wealthy family in Baltimore, Maryland.
- B.** The Nazi secret police tried very hard to catch Virginia Hall.
- C.** Virginia Hall was a courageous and heroic spy in World War II.
- D.** Both the British and the Americans worked with Virginia Hall.

Part B

Select **two** sentences from the passage that support the central idea from Part A.

- A.** "Virginia Hall, the daughter of a wealthy family in Baltimore, Maryland, wanted to become a United States Foreign Service officer, . . ." (paragraph 2)
- B.** "The SOE had recruited her after she had a chance meeting with an SOE member on a train out of France soon after the country fell to the Nazis in 1940." (paragraph 3)
- C.** "While the SOE trained her as a wireless radio operator in London, she learned of the newly formed Office of Strategic Services . . ." (paragraph 7)
- D.** "While undercover, she coordinated parachute drops of arms and supplies for resistance groups and reported German troop movements to London." (paragraph 8)
- E.** "Hall armed and trained three battalions of French resistance fighters for sabotage missions against the retreating Germans." (paragraph 9)

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as a result of a surface-level reading of the text that led them to the first detail of paragraph 2. Readers might assume that coming from a wealthy family opened more opportunities for her to pursue her goals of service. This detail, however, is a minor detail in the passage and does not contribute to or represent the central idea. This question assesses students' ability to determine the central idea of this text.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as paragraphs 1 and 3 explicitly mention the Gestapo's failed efforts in pursuing Hall. Paragraph 8 mentions that the Germans were "desperately trying to track her radio signals." Hall's ability to escape such pursuits is an important detail in the passage, but it does not represent the central idea as it does not capture the overall message of the text. This question assesses students' ability to determine the central idea of this text.
Correct – 3	Paragraph 2 describes Hall as "one of World War II's most heroic female spies, saving countless Allied lives. . ." French President Chirac praises her as "a true hero" and she was honored by French and British ambassadors for her heroism. Paragraphs 3–4 and 7–9 all describe her courageous acts as a spy and paragraph 10 details how she received the second highest U.S. military award for bravery. Option C best captures the overall message of the text and represents the central idea. This question assesses students' ability to determine the central idea of this text.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as Hall spent her career as a spy risking her life working for and with the British and the Americans, two important groups in the Allied forces. Although this is an important detail in understanding Hall's courageous and heroic efforts as a spy, it does not represent the central idea as it does not capture the overall message of the text. This question assesses students' ability to determine the central idea of this text.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers who selected option A in Part A might have selected this option as it contains the detail of Virginia Hall coming from a wealthy family in Baltimore, MD. This detail, however, is a minor detail in the passage and does not support the central idea. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence from this passage that supports its central idea.
Incorrect – 2	Readers who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option as it contains the detail of the SOE, a British secret paramilitary force, recruiting her to work with them. This detail, however, is a minor detail in the passage and does not support the central idea. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence from this passage that supports its central idea.
Incorrect – 3	Readers who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option as it contains the detail of Hall working with both the SOE, a British secret paramilitary force, and the OSS, an American agency that was a precursor to the CIA. Although this detail assists the reader in tracking who Hall was working for, it does not support the central idea. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence from this passage that supports its central idea.
Correct – 4	Coordinating parachute drops of arms and supplies for resistance groups and reporting German troop movements is a strong example of Hall's courage and heroism as a spy in World War II. As such, this detail supports the central idea represented in option C in Part A. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence from this passage that supports its central idea.
Correct – 5	Arming and training three battalions of French resistance fighters for sabotage missions against the Germans is a strong example of Hall's courage and heroism as a spy in World War II. As such, this detail supports the central idea represented in option C in Part A. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence from this passage that supports its central idea.

Passage Information

Passage Code: TN0031565 Passage Title: Excerpt from *The Lizard God*
Grade Level: English II Lexile Level: 810 Flesch-Kincaid: 5.8

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Excerpt from *The Lizard God*

by Charles J. Finger

- 1 It is not pleasant to have one's convictions disturbed, and that is why I wish I had never seen that man Rounds. He seems to have crossed my path only to shake my self-confidence. The little conversation we had has left me dissatisfied. I look upon my collection with less interest than I did. I am not as pleased with the result of my investigations as they appear in my monograph on "The Saurian Family of Equatorial America." Doubtless the mood that now possesses me will pass away, and I shall recover my equanimity. His story would have upset most men. Worse still was his unpleasant habit of interjecting strange opinions. Judge for yourself.
- 2 It was when passing through the Reptile room on my way to the study that I first saw him. I took him to be a mere common working man passing away an idle hour; one of the ordinary Museum visitors. Two hours later, I noticed that he was closely examining the lizard cases. Then later, he seemed interested in my collection of prints illustrating the living world of the ante-diluvian period. It was then that I approached him, and, finding him apparently intelligent, with, as it seemed, a bent towards lizards, and further, discovering that he had traveled in Peru and Colombia, took him to the study.
- 3 The man had some unusual habits. He was absolutely lacking in that sense of respect, as I may term it, usually accorded to one in my position. One who is a professor and curator becomes accustomed to a certain amount of, well, diffidence in laymen. The attitude is entirely natural. It is a tribute. But Rounds was not that way. He was perfectly at ease. He had an air of quiet self-possession. He refused the chair I indicated, the chair set for visitors and students, and instead, walked to the window and threw up the lower sash, taking a seat on the sill, with one foot resting on the floor and the other swinging. Thus, he looked as though he were prepared to leap, or to jump or run. He gave me the impression of being on the alert.
- 4 "What I was looking for," he said, "is a kind of lizard. Yet it is not a lizard. It is too hard and thin in the body to be that. It runs on its hind legs. It is white. Its bite is poisonous. It lives in the equatorial districts of Colombia."

5 "Have you seen one?" I asked.

6 "No," was the reply. Then after a moment he asked, "Why?"

7 "Because there is no such living creature," I said.

8 "How do you know?" he said abruptly.

9 "The lizard group is thoroughly classified," I said. "There is nothing answering to that description. In the first place — "

10 "Does that make it non-existent? Your classification of what you know?" he interrupted.

11 "I have made a study of the Saurians," I said.

12 "No you haven't," he said. "You have read what other men have written and that is not the same thing."

13 "Really," I began, but he broke in.

14 "I mean to say that you have never been in any new equatorial country," he said. "Your manner shows that. You are too quiet. Too easy. Too sedentary."

15 That is, as nearly as I can repeat and remember, the opening of the conversation. There was an air of challenge about the man that I found unpleasant. Of course I admitted the fact that I was not an explorer myself, and that mine was the humbler if more tedious task of collecting and arranging data. At that he said that in his opinion, organized expeditions were little more than pleasure jaunts taken at the public expense. His viewpoint was most extraordinary.

16 "Such an expedition," he said, "must fail in its main purpose because its very unwieldiness destroys or disperses the very things it was organized to study. It cannot penetrate the wilds; it cannot get into the dry lands. The very needs of the men and horses and dogs prevent that. It must keep to beaten tracks and in touch with the edge of civilization. Humbug! That's the only word to describe that kind of thing. Staged effects they have. Then they come back here to pose as heroes before a crowd of gaping city clerks."

17 I mentioned the remarkable results obtained by the Peary and Roosevelt expeditions and pointed to the fact that the specimens brought back and properly set up by efficient taxidermists, did, in fact, give the common people some notion of the wonders of animal life.

18 "Nothing of the kind," he said. "Look at that boa-constrictor you have out there. It is stuffed and in a glass case. Don't you know that in its natural surroundings you yourself would come mighty near stepping on one without

seeing it? You would. If you had that thing set up as it should be, these museum visitors of yours would pass the case believing it was a mere collection of foliage. They wouldn't see the snake itself. See what I mean? Set up as they are in real life they'd come near being invisible."

19 The man walked up and down the study floor for half a minute or so, then paused at the desk and said:

20 "Don't let us get to entertaining one another though. But remember this, you only get knowledge at a cost. I mean to say that the man that would know something, can only get the knowledge at first hand. The people who wander around this junk shop that you call a museum, go out as empty headed as they came in. Consider. Say a Fiji islander came here and took back with him from the United States an electric light bulb, a stuffed possum, an old hat, a stalactite from the Mammoth cave, a sackful of pecan nuts, a pair of handcuffs, half a dozen photographs and a dozen packing cases full of things gathered from here and there, and then set the whole junk pile up under a roof in the Fiji Islands, what would his fellow Fijians know from that of the social life of this country. Eh? Tell me that?"

21 "You exaggerate," I protested. "You take an extreme point of view."

22 "I don't," he said.

23 His contradictions would have made me angry, perhaps, were they not made in such a quiet tone of voice.

24 "Take anything from its natural surroundings," he went on, "and it is meaningless. The dull-eyed men and women that wander through this Museum of yours are just killing time. There's no education in that kind of thing."

Excerpt from *The Lizard God*, by Charles J. Finger, June 28, 2006 [EBook #18709]. Copyright © 2006, from Gutenberg.org. In the public domain.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034998 Position No: 7

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

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: C

How does the first sentence of paragraph 1 contribute to the plot of the passage?

- A.** It foreshadows the solution to the conflict of the passage.
- B.** It conveys the motives of a main character in the passage.
- C.** It introduces the problem that is described in the passage.
- D.** It provides a flashback to initiate the events of the passage.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option as it is the first sentence in the passage and would therefore be a good candidate for foreshadowing. Although the sentence does introduce the conflict in the passage, it does not foreshadow the solution to the conflict. This question assesses students' ability to identify how a sentence of this passage contributes to its plot.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as the first sentence mentions the "convictions" of the main character and readers may have incorrectly confused convictions with motives. Although the sentence represents the perspective of the main character and introduces a conflict in the story, it does not convey the motives of the main character. This question assesses students' ability to identify how a sentence of this passage contributes to its plot.
Correct – 3	The passage is written in 1 st -person point of view from the main character's perspective. This character states that it is unpleasant to have one's convictions disturbed, and that is why he wishes he had not met the man Rounds. The first sentence contributes to the plot of the passage by introducing the problem, or the conflict, between these characters and their viewpoints. This question assesses students' ability to identify how a sentence of this passage contributes to its plot.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as it is the first sentence of the passage and it initiates the events of the passage. Also, readers might have misinterpreted the phrase "that is why I wish I had never seen that man Rounds" as being a type of flashback. The narrator is speaking in retrospect in this sentence, but the events are not flashbacks. This question assesses students' ability to identify how a sentence of this passage contributes to its plot.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034987 Position No: 8

Grade Level: English II

Standard Code: 9-10.L.VAU.4a

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

Standard Text: Use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or a phrase.

Correct Answer: D,A,B

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

Part A

What is the meaning of the word equanimity as it is used in paragraph 1?

- A.** scientific curiosity
- B.** careful attention to details
- C.** passion and enthusiasm
- D.** composure and calmness

Part B

Which **two** phrases from paragraph 1 help the reader understand the meaning of equanimity?

- A.** "shake my self-confidence"
- B.** "left me dissatisfied"
- C.** "result of my investigations"
- D.** "his unpleasant habit"
- E.** "Judge for yourself"

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	This paragraph discusses how the narrator’s conversation with Rounds had left the narrator “dissatisfied.” The narrator states that he has confidence the “mood will pass away” and that he will recover equanimity. Students might have selected this option if they connected the narrator's losses in regard to his work with recovering his scientific curiosity. But scientific curiosity is not something one recovers after a certain mood but is rather something one develops and nurtures over time. This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of unknown words in this passage by using context clues.
Incorrect – 2	The narrator mentions that, as a result of his conversation with Rounds, he was not as pleased with the result of his investigations as outlined in his monograph. Readers might have selected this option if they connected the narrator’s displeasure with his investigation results with recovering his careful attention to details. But there is no indication in the text that he had lost attention to detail. In addition, attention to detail is not something one recovers after a certain mood. This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of unknown words in this passage by using context clues.
Incorrect – 3	As a result of his conversation with Rounds, the narrator has lost self-confidence, satisfaction, interest, and pleasure in his work. Readers might have selected this option as passion and enthusiasm are feelings/emotions that can be recovered after a certain mood passes away. But the text does not provide evidence that he was passionate or enthusiastic about his work but rather that he approached it with confidence and satisfaction. He is instead seeking to be restored to his normal mindset in regard to his work. This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of unknown words in this passage by using context clues.
Correct – 4	This paragraph discusses how the narrator’s conversation with Rounds had left the narrator “dissatisfied.” The narrator states that he has confidence the “mood will pass away” and that he will recover equanimity. After experiencing a mood that left him in an unsteady emotional state, the narrator believes he will recover equanimity, or a sense of calmness and composure that will bring him back to his “normal” state of mind in regard to his work. This question assesses students’ ability to determine the meaning of unknown words in this passage by using context clues.

Part B

Rationales	
Correct – 1	The phrase “shake my self-confidence” indicates that, prior to his conversation with Rounds, the narrator approached his work with a steady state of confidence. Since confidence is one of the things the narrator seeks to recover once his mood passes away, it is a fair inference to define equanimity in this context as “composure and calmness.” This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.
Correct – 2	The phrase “left me dissatisfied” indicates that, prior to his conversation with Rounds, the narrator approached his work in a state of satisfaction. Since satisfaction is one of the things the narrator seeks to recover once his mood passes away, it is a fair inference to define equanimity in this context as “composure and calmness.” This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Readers who selected option A in Part A might have selected this option if they connected the narrator's losses in regard to his work with recovering his scientific curiosity. In this paragraph, however, the narrator is describing his emotional state after his discussion with Rounds. His loss of confidence in the result of his investigations is a key detail to assist the reader in understanding what he needs to “recover.” But the phrase “result of my investigations” in itself does not provide helpful clues to determine the meaning of equanimity. This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.
Incorrect – 4	Readers who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option as they may consider that recovering from an unpleasant habit might restore someone to composure and calmness. But the narrator is suggesting that it is Rounds that has the unpleasant habit, not the narrator himself. Since it is the narrator’s equanimity that is being recovered, the reference to Rounds’ unpleasant habit is not relevant to determining the meaning of the term. Readers may have read too quickly and misunderstood that the antecedent of the pronoun “his” in the last two sentences is Rounds, not the narrator. This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.
Incorrect – 5	Readers who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option as they may consider that the narrator is asking the reader to sympathize with him and understand his frustrated, emotional state. But the phrase “judge for yourself” is intended to ask the reader to listen to his story as a whole to determine whether the reader agrees with his assessment of Rounds. This is a detail that is separate from his frustrated, emotional state at the beginning of the paragraph and it does not assist the reader in determining the meaning of equanimity. This question assesses students’ ability to identify phrases that provide clues to the meaning of unknown words in this text.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034994 Position No: 9

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

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 theme is supported by the situation presented by Rounds in paragraph 20?

- A.** Someone from a foreign country cannot understand which knowledge is important to another culture.
- B.** The best way to learn about another culture is to analyze how knowledge is shared.
- C.** Simply observing a collection of objects does not provide an understanding of a culture.
- D.** A collection of objects from a particular culture can best be appreciated by people who are not familiar with the culture.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Although Rounds makes the point that someone from a foreign country cannot understand a culture by simple observation of its objects, he does not suggest that person cannot understand another culture. Readers might have selected this option if they focused too much on the sentence, “The people who wander around this junk shop. . . go out as empty headed as they came in,” and did not comprehend Rounds’ message that simply observing a collection of objects does not provide knowledge of a culture. This question assesses students’ ability to determine a theme in this text.
Incorrect – 2	Rounds makes the point that if a person wants to learn about a different culture, he/she must not only focus on cultural objects but must instead get the knowledge firsthand. Rounds does not suggest, however, that the best way to learn another culture is to analyze how knowledge is shared. Readers might have selected this option if they incorrectly connected Rounds’ ideas regarding the best way to learn about another culture. This question assesses students’ ability to determine a theme in this text.
Correct – 3	Rounds states that if a person wants to know something about a culture, that person must get the knowledge firsthand. He criticizes the museum for claiming to share knowledge of a culture merely by displaying its objects. Once the reader connects these ideas, he/she can determine that the theme in Rounds’ message is that observing a collection of objects does not provide an understanding of that culture. This question assesses students’ ability to determine a theme in this text.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option if they misinterpreted Rounds’ message in the hypothetical Fijian story to say that people who are not familiar with the culture can best appreciate that culture’s objects. Instead, Rounds is suggesting that those not familiar with a culture must experience that culture firsthand in order to appreciate it. This question assesses students’ ability to determine a theme in this text.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0035731 Position No: 10

Grade Level: English II

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.CS.6

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

Standard Text: Analyze how point of view and/or author purpose shapes the content
and style of diverse texts.

Correct Answer: B,B,D

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

Part A

What does the point of view **best** reveal in the passage?

- A.** an accurate description of the museum exhibit
- B.** the biased beliefs of the narrator
- C.** the careers of each character
- D.** an explanation for why a character visits the museum

Part B

Which **two** details from the passage **best** support the correct answer to Part A?

- A.** "It was when passing through the Reptile room on my way to the study that I first saw him." (paragraph 2)
- B.** "He was absolutely lacking in that sense of respect, as I may term it, usually accorded to one in my position." (paragraph 3)
- C.** "'The lizard group is thoroughly classified,' I said. 'There is nothing answering to that description. In the first place —'" (paragraph 9)
- D.** "Of course I admitted the fact that I was not an explorer myself, and that mine was the humbler if more tedious task of collecting and arranging data." (paragraph 15)
- E.** "The man walked up and down the study floor for half a minute or so, then paused at the desk and said: 'Don't let us get to entertaining one another though.'" (paragraphs 19–20)

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this response as the narrator would have the most in-depth knowledge of the museum as paragraphs 2–3 indicate that this is where the narrator works. However, there is no detailed description of the museum exhibit in the passage, and an accurate description of the exhibit by the narrator would not contribute much to the passage. This question assesses students' ability to determine an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.
Correct – 2	Paragraphs 1, 3, and 15 all provide insight into the point of view of the narrator and how he viewed his work and Rounds' character. The narrator's first-person point of view conveys his biased beliefs and this contributes to the conflict of the story. This question assesses students' ability to determine an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Although readers know the career of the narrator (professor and curator), readers do not know Rounds' profession. Regardless, knowledge of each character's profession would not be a major contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view. Readers might have selected this option as the narrator, being a professor and curator, looks down on Rounds as a layperson and this disdain contributes to the conflict. This question assesses students' ability to determine an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as Rounds' visit to the museum to find a lizard-like creature from Colombia is an important detail in the passage — it sets the stage for the conversation between the narrator and Rounds. But this detail is not a contribution of the point of view being told in first-person but is rather just a detail shared in the storytelling. This question assesses students' ability to determine an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers who selected option A in Part A might have selected this option as it provides a brief glimpse into the museum exhibit. This detail does not provide a unique contribution from the narrator's first-person point of view. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence that supports an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.
Correct – 2	This detail supports option B in Part A by showing that he considered Rounds to be disrespectful to people in his position. The bias exhibited in this detail contributes to the conflict in the passage. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence that supports an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Readers who selected option B in Part A might have selected this option as it represents the narrator's rebuke of Rounds' skepticism of the narrator's knowledge of this creature. Readers may have mistaken his rebuke as a bias. But this detail does not represent a biased belief as the narrator is conveying his knowledge in a non-prejudicial fashion. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence that supports an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.
Correct – 4	This detail supports option B in Part A in showing the narrator's bias in his own self-perception. Specifically, the narrator sees his work as being "humbler" and more "tedious" than that of an explorer. This bias contributes to the conflict as it hinders the narrator from understanding Rounds' perspective. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence that supports an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.
Incorrect – 5	Readers who selected option D for Part A might have selected this option if they read the passage too quickly and determined that Rounds was visiting the museum for entertainment. This detail does not provide a unique contribution from the narrator's first-person point of view. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence that supports an important contribution provided by the narrator's first-person point of view in this text.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034991 Position No: 11

Grade Level: English II

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.KID.1

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

Standard Text: Analyze what a text says explicitly and draw inferences; cite the
strongest, most compelling textual evidence to support conclusions.

Correct Answer: C,D

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

Part A

Based on details in the passage, how does Rounds **most likely** feel in the narrator's presence?

- A.** He is unsure if he should continue viewing the remaining exhibits in the museum.
- B.** He wishes that he could be the curator of the museum because he knows he could do a much better job.
- C.** He finds fault with the organized and controlled surroundings.
- D.** He longs to go on another expedition that will allow him to experience wild places and exotic creatures.

Part B

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

- A.** "Worse still was his unpleasant habit of interjecting strange opinions. Judge for yourself." (paragraph 1)
- B.** "I took him to be a mere common working man passing away an idle hour; one of the ordinary Museum visitors. Two hours later, I noticed that he was closely examining the lizard cases." (paragraph 2)
- C.** "That is, as nearly as I can repeat and remember, the opening of the conversation. There was an air of challenge about the man that I found unpleasant." (paragraph 15)
- D.** "'Look at that boa-constrictor you have out there. It is stuffed and in a glass case. Don't you know that in its natural surroundings you yourself would come mighty near stepping on one without seeing it?'" (paragraph 18)

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	As the conversation between Rounds and the narrator proceeds, the reader learns that Rounds questions the museum’s ability to provide valuable knowledge about other societies and cultures. Readers might have selected this option as they may have concluded that Rounds no longer wanted to view the remaining exhibits in the museum. But there is no evidence in the text to support this conclusion. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze the details of this passage and draw inferences from them.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option as they know that Roundshas disdain for the way that the museum attempts to provide knowledge about other societies and cultures. Readers might assume that someone who holds this opinion would think he/she could do a better job as curator. But there is no evidence in the text to suggest Rounds wanted to become curator. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze the details of this passage and draw inferences fromthem.
Correct – 3	Paragraphs 16, 18, 20, and 24 all reveal that Rounds finds fault with the process of acquiring items of cultural interest for museums and displaying them in the museum. The museum’s organized and controlled surroundings do not represent the natural habitats in which they were found and therefore cannot provide accurate knowledge of their origins. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze the details of this passage and draw inferences from them.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option as they know that part of Rounds’ argument is that authentic expeditions do not attempt only to find items of cultural interest; instead, they attempt to provide authentic experiences of those things in their natural habitat. Readers might assume that someone who holds this opinion would long to go on another expedition that would provide this experience. But there is no evidence in the text to suggest Rounds wanted to go on another expedition. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze the details of this passage and draw inferences from them.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers who selected option C in Part A might have selected this option if they did not read the text closely and simply connected the idea of Rounds having “strange opinions” with his opinions regarding the museum’s structure and presentation. But this detail represents the narrator’s perspective, not Rounds’ perspective, and therefore does not give the reader insight into how Rounds feels in the narrator’s presence. This question assesses students’ ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports an inference.
Incorrect – 2	Readers who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option if they associated Rounds’ great interest in the lizard cases with wanting to go on other expeditions that would allow him to experience these creatures in person. But this detail represents the narrator’s perspective, not Rounds’ perspective, and therefore does not give the reader insight into how Rounds feels in the narrator’s presence. This question assesses students’ ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports an inference.
Incorrect – 3	Readers who selected option B in Part A might have selected this option if they concluded from the narrator’s perception of Rounds as being challenging or competitive that Rounds thought he would do a better job as curator of the museum. But this detail represents the narrator’s perspective, not Rounds’ perspective, and therefore does not give the reader insight into how Rounds feels in the narrator’s presence. This question assesses students’ ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports an inference.
Correct – 4	This detail shows that Rounds does not consider the controlled environment in the museum to be suitable for the boa-constrictor. Rounds’ question within the context of the passage suggests that he believes the structure and presentation of the museum does not provide the proper environment for people to learn about the items of cultural interest, such as native animals. This question assesses students’ ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports an inference.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034993 Position No: 12

Grade Level: English II

Standard Code: 9-10.RL.CS.6

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

Standard Text: Analyze how point of view and/or author purpose shapes the content
and style of diverse texts.

Correct Answer: B,D

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

Part A

What is Rounds' perspective regarding museums?

- A.** He appreciates the academic knowledge that museums convey in their exhibits.
- B.** He believes that museums misrepresent reality in their exhibits.
- C.** He thinks that museums should collect more data before finalizing their exhibits.
- D.** He thinks that museums need to modernize their existing exhibits.

Part B

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

- A.** "Two hours later, I noticed that he was closely examining the lizard cases." (paragraph 2)
- B.** "Then later, he seemed interested in my collection of prints illustrating the living world of the ante-diluvian period." (paragraph 2)
- C.** "At that he said that in his opinion, organized expeditions were little more than pleasure jaunts taken at the public expense." (paragraph 15)
- D.** "'Take anything from its natural surroundings,' he went on, 'and it is meaningless.'" (paragraph 24)

Part A

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option if they confused Rounds' interest in the proper way for people to learn about other societies and cultures with being interested in the knowledge that museums convey in their exhibits. Paragraphs 16, 18, 20, and 24 all indicate that he does not appreciate the way that museums convey knowledge about items of cultural interest. This question assesses students' ability to identify a character's perspective in this text.
Correct – 2	Paragraphs 16, 18, 20, and 24 all indicate that Rounds believes that museums convey incomplete knowledge about items of cultural interest as they are removed from their natural surroundings. As such, they misrepresent reality in museum exhibits. This question assesses students' ability to identify a character's perspective in this text.
Incorrect – 3	In paragraph 16, Rounds criticizes expeditions and their methods of collecting items of interest for display at museums. Readers might have confused this criticism with the idea that museums should collect more data before finalizing their exhibits. Rounds' criticism of museums, however, is that they cannot properly convey knowledge of these items, not that they need more data to be finalized or improved. This question assesses students' ability to identify a character's perspective in this text.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option if they misunderstood Rounds' critique of the museums to suggest that they need to be improved and updated to properly convey knowledge of the items they display. But Rounds' critique is that museums cannot be improved as the items on display are removed from their natural surroundings. This question assesses students' ability to identify a character's perspective in this text.

Part B

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Students who selected option D in Part A might have selected this option as they might have thought that Rounds was closely examining the lizard cases to determine ways that they could be improved, or modernized. But this detail only suggests his interest in the lizards and not his perspective regarding museums. This question assesses students' ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports the students' identification of a character's perspective.
Incorrect – 2	Students who selected option A in Part A might have selected this option as it shows Rounds being interested in some of the narrator's academic work at the museum. The reader discovers in paragraph 4, however, that Rounds' interest is in the lizard-like creature and not the academic knowledge that museums generally convey in their exhibits. This question assesses students' ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports the students' identification of a character's perspective.
Incorrect – 3	Students who selected option C in Part A might have selected this option as it represents Rounds' critique of the method by which museums acquire their items. But Rounds' criticism of the expeditions and the museums is that they remove items from their natural habitat and are therefore meaningless. This question assesses students' ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports the students' identification of a character's perspective.
Correct – 4	This detail is a brief summation of Rounds' perspective that museums misrepresent reality in their exhibits. His fundamental critique is that the items of cultural interest lose their value for education when they are removed from their natural surroundings. This detail best supports that perspective. This question assesses students' ability to identify and evaluate evidence in this text that best supports the students' identification of a character's perspective.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034989 Position No: 13

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

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

Correct Answer: A

Which sentence states a central idea of the passage?

- A.** Museum displays are not equivalent to the firsthand experience of animals in their natural environment.
- B.** Museums offer visitors accurate replicas of the native habitats of animals.
- C.** Museum curators and educational professionals devote their lives to teaching others specialized knowledge.
- D.** Visitors are not equipped to appreciate museum exhibits without the guidance of trained professionals.

Rationales	
Correct – 1	Although the passage is written from the narrator’s point of view, the central idea of the passage is conveyed through Rounds’ perspective, as conveyed in the argument between Rounds and the narrator. Paragraphs 16, 18, 20, and 24 all indicate that Rounds believes that museums convey incomplete knowledge about items of cultural interest as they are removed from their natural surroundings. He states in paragraph 24 that once the items are removed from their natural surroundings, they are “meaningless.” This question assesses the students’ ability to determine the central idea of this passage.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option if they gave more weight to the narrator’s point of view than to Rounds’ point of view. But the narrator struggles in his argument with Rounds and the text clearly favors Rounds’ perspective as he conveys several vivid, poignant points to support his argument that museums cannot properly convey knowledge of these items when removed from their natural habitat. This question assesses the students’ ability to determine the central idea of this passage.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option if they gave too much weight to the importance of the narrator’s life and work when determining the central idea of the passage. Although readers experience this story through the eyes of the narrator, and the narrator clearly has devoted his life to teaching others specialized knowledge, it is Rounds’ perspective (as conveyed through his argument with the narrator) that is more compelling over the course of the text. This question assesses the students’ ability to determine the central idea of this passage.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option if they gave too much weight to the importance of the narrator’s view of Rounds and his argument. The narrator shows disdain for Rounds and considers his views to be “strange” and his demeanor to be disrespectful. But there is no textual evidence to support the idea that visitors are not equipped to appreciate museum exhibits without professional guidance. This question assesses the students’ ability to determine the central idea of this passage.

Item Information

Item Code: TN0034992 Position No: 14

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from The Lizard
God

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

Correct Answer: D

Which statement **best** describes the relationship between the two characters in this passage?

- A.** They immediately dislike each other, but at first they are not sure why.
- B.** They have chosen different careers, but they show a mutual respect for each other's work.
- C.** They feel as if they are both experts because of their shared interest in reptiles.
- D.** They challenge each other's ideas about how people acquire knowledge and contradict each other's points of view.

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option if they were too quickly drawn to the word “dislike.” Over the course of the argument, it becomes apparent that the narrator and Rounds dislike each other, but neither seems to be confused as to why. More importantly, the characters’ relative dislike of each other is not the most important characteristic of their relationship. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze and describe the relationship between characters in this passage.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option if they confused mutual respect with mutual interest. Although the narrator and Rounds are both interested in the subject matter at hand — how to best convey knowledge of items of cultural interest — paragraph 3 indicates that he viewed Rounds’ behavior as disrespectful. More importantly, the characters’ relative level of respect for each other’s work is not the most important characteristic of their relationship. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze and describe the relationship between characters in this passage.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option if they did not read the text closely and concluded that the narrator’s and Rounds’ shared interest in reptiles indicates they are both experts in their work. But only the narrator seems to consider himself an expert and both the narrator and Rounds fundamentally disagree on how best to approach the work. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze and describe the relationship between characters in this passage.
Correct – 4	At the heart of this passage lies the argument between the narrator and Rounds about the best way to convey knowledge about cultural items of interest. They contradict each other’s view throughout the argument. This option best describes the relationship between the two characters as it best summarizes the nature and content of their interaction. This question assesses the students’ ability to analyze and describe the relationship between characters in this passage.

Subpart 2: Passage Set with Constructed Response Essay Prompt

Passage Information

Passage Code: TNI243780 Passage Title: Excerpt from “The Chicago Cubs, the Goat Curse and the Psychological Roots of Superstition”

Grade Level: English II Lexile Level: 1400 Flesch-Kincaid: 13.3

Read the passages and answer the questions that follow. Then respond to the writing prompt.

Passage 1

Excerpt from “The Chicago Cubs, the Goat Curse and the Psychological Roots of Superstition”

by David Noonan

When this passage was written, the Chicago Cubs were potential contenders for the 2016 World Series. While that season is long over, the point that the author makes about superstition is timeless.

- 1 It is, of course, scientifically impossible for the legendary Curse of the Billy Goat — which dictates that the Chicago Cubs will never win the World Series — to affect the outcome of games in the 2016 postseason. To give credence to the curse (laid on the team in October 1945 by an angry bar owner whose smelly mascot goat was evicted from Wrigley Field) is irrational and the very definition of magical thinking. And yet, as the Cubs once again seek to end their 108-year World Series Championship drought, lifelong fans like Michael Pardys struggle — and fail — to remain rational. “Intellectually, I know this is a really good baseball team,” says Pardys, 66, an attorney and Wrigley Field season-ticket holder. “They won 103 games in the regular season and there’s no reason at all that they shouldn’t win. But there’s a feeling of doom that hangs over me. Something always intervenes.” To fend off his sense of dread, and to try to help his team overcome decades of ill fortune, Pardys is wearing the same Cubs hat and sweatshirt to every game he attends this fall and performing a ritual handshake with his wife Sandy and a third fan before the first pitch. “I feel really silly saying this,” he admits, “but I somehow feel that the whole thing is really delicately balanced, that anything can change it.”
- 2 Pardys may be sheepish about it, but when he gives in to his superstitious impulses he is acting on common psychological tendencies that are shared by a lot of other intelligent, emotionally stable adults. Indeed, the intuitive thinking that prompts many superstitious behaviors may actually carry an evolutionary

advantage. "You would never want to undo the processes that give rise to superstitious thinking," says Jane Risen, an associate professor of behavioral science at the University of Chicago Booth School of Business who studies judgment and intuitive belief formation.

- 3 Those processes, Risen says, involve what's known as "System 1 thinking," from the dual process model of thinking as developed and popularized by psychologist Daniel Kahneman. In that model System 1 offers quick, intuitive answers to judgment problems that are sometimes essential for survival, and System 2 analyzes and may correct what System 1 proposes. While an otherwise rational person's embrace of superstition might seem like a failure of System 2, Risen suggests in her work that people like Pardys "recognize that their belief is irrational, but choose to acquiesce to a powerful intuition." To put it another way, System 2 does its job and points out that wearing a certain sweatshirt cannot possibly affect the play on the field, and the fan simply rejects it.
- 4 The length of the Cubs' ordeal — more than a century — and the number of people who have shared the pain are also factors in fans' propensity for superstitious rituals. "The intuitive properties of a long-held superstition are likely to be much stronger," Risen says. "And the fact that other people believe it means that it's entertained as a possibility. With the Cubs, you pay attention to this lore because everybody else is paying attention to it."
- 5 And because, well, there has to be a reason the Cubs have not won the World Series since 1908 — doesn't there? Research shows that in our desire to understand why things happen and to deal with the uncertainties of life, people often resort to what is called causal reasoning, which can lead us to see patterns and connections that don't exist. If, for example, the Cubs had won the 1946 World Series (or any World Series in the 1950s or 1960s), the Curse of the Billy Goat would be long forgotten. But they didn't — and though there are thousands of baseball-related reasons for the drought, evoking the curse is, in its way, the most appealing. Chicago native and lifelong Cubs fan Darian Martyniuk, 49, who has his own elaborate set of game-day rituals, understands the simple pull of superstition. "It's very tempting and it's very comforting," he says.
- 6 Along with the anxiety relief that can come from superstitious behaviors, another psychological tendency at work in Wrigley Field is confirmation bias. "The way we think about things," Risen says, "is we start with a hypothesis and we move forward with that. We look for confirmatory evidence. We don't try to disconfirm." So when Martyniuk, who says he is "slightly OCD (obsessive-compulsive disorder)" as well as superstitious, catches the same train to the game and enters through the same gate and wears the same hat and the Cubs win, it confirms his feeling that he is doing his part to help the team.

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Passage Information

Passage Code: TNI876783 Passage Title: Excerpt from "Why Rituals Work"
Grade Level: English II Lexile Level: 1210 Flesch-Kincaid: 12.6

Passage 2

Excerpt from "Why Rituals Work"

by Francesca Gino & Michael I. Norton

- 7 Think about the last time you were about to interview for a job, speak in front of an audience, or go on a first date. To quell your nerves, chances are you spent time preparing — reading up on the company, reviewing your slides, practicing your charming patter. People facing situations that induce anxiety typically take comfort in engaging in preparatory activities, inducing a feeling of being back in control and reducing uncertainty.
- 8 While a little extra preparation seems perfectly reasonable, people also engage in seemingly less logical behaviors in such situations. Here's one person's description from our research:
- I pound my feet strongly on the ground several times, I take several deep breaths, and I "shake" my body to remove any negative energies. I do this often before going to work, going into meetings, and at the front door before entering my house after a long day.**
- 9 While we wonder what this person's co-workers and neighbors think of their shaky acquaintance, such rituals — the symbolic behaviors we perform before, during, and after meaningful events — are surprisingly ubiquitous, across culture and time. Rituals take an extraordinary array of shapes and forms. At times performed in communal or religious settings, at times performed in solitude; at times involving fixed, repeated sequences of actions, at other times not. People engage in rituals with the intention of achieving a wide set of desired outcomes, from reducing their anxiety to boosting their confidence, alleviating their grief to performing well in a competition — or even making it rain.
- 10 Recent research suggests that rituals may be more rational than they appear. Why? Because even simple rituals can be extremely effective. Rituals performed after experiencing losses — from loved ones to lotteries — do alleviate grief, and rituals performed before high pressure tasks — like singing in public — do in fact reduce anxiety and increase people's confidence. What's more, rituals appear to benefit even people who claim not to believe that rituals work. While anthropologists have documented rituals across cultures, this earlier research has

been primarily observational. Recently, a series of investigations by psychologists has revealed intriguing new results demonstrating that rituals can have a causal impact on people's thoughts, feelings, and behaviors.

- 11 Basketball superstar Michael Jordan wore his North Carolina shorts underneath his Chicago Bulls shorts in every game; Curtis Martin of the New York Jets reads Psalm 91 before every game. And Wade Boggs, former third baseman for the Boston Red Sox, woke up at the same time each day, ate chicken before each game, took exactly 117 ground balls in practice, took batting practice at 5:17, and ran sprints at 7:17. (Boggs also wrote the Hebrew word Chai ("living") in the dirt before each at-bat. Boggs was not Jewish.) Do rituals like these actually improve performance? In one recent experiment, people received either a "lucky golf ball" or an ordinary golf ball, and then performed a golf task; in another, people performed a motor dexterity task and were either asked to simply start the game or heard the researcher say "I'll cross fingers for you" before starting the game. The superstitious rituals enhanced people's confidence in their abilities, motivated greater effort — and improved subsequent performance. These findings are consistent with research in sport psychology demonstrating the performance benefits of pre-performance routines, from improving attention and execution to increasing emotional stability and confidence.

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Item Information

Item Code: TN026979 Position No: 15

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "The
Chicago Cubs, the Goat
Curse and the Psycho-
logical Roots of Super-
stition"

Passage Title 2: Excerpt from "Why
Rituals Work"

Passage Code 1: TNI243780

Passage Code 2: TNI876783

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

Correct Answer: A,D

What are **two** central ideas in passage 1?

- A.** A belief in superstitions is the result of acting on common mental tendencies.
- B.** Michael Pardys, a season-ticket holder and lifelong Cubs fan, believes in the curse.
- C.** Jane Risen, an associate professor of behavioral science, studies the process of forming beliefs.
- D.** The desire to understand why things happen may result in seeing causes and effects that are not real.
- E.** There are many baseball-related reasons for not winning a championship in over a hundred years.

Rationales	
Correct – 1	Paragraphs 7–11 all outline common mental tendencies that often result in belief in superstitions: System 1/System 2 thinking, the impact of the length of time and the number of believers of the superstition, causal reasoning, and confirmation bias. This option accurately captures the broadest and most important central idea of the text. This question assesses students’ ability to determine multiple central ideas in this text.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option along with option C if they focused on the people included in the text to support the main ideas rather than the main ideas themselves. Pardys’ thoughts at the beginning of the text make the passage engaging and relatable to the reader but his belief in the curse does not capture an important message in the passage. This question assesses students’ ability to determine multiple central ideas in this text.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option along with option B if they focused on the people included in the text to support the main ideas rather than the main ideas themselves. Jane Risen’s studies in the process of forming beliefs is a detail that supports her contributions to the passage but it does not capture an important message in the passage. This question assesses students’ ability to determine multiple central ideas in this text.
Correct – 4	Although this idea is more specific than option A, it captures an important message in the article and supports the author’s purpose in explaining one of the reasons why people believe in superstitions. This idea is most strongly supported in paragraph 5, where the author explains the concept of causal reasoning. This question assesses students’ ability to determine multiple central ideas in this text.
Incorrect – 5	Paragraph 5 notes that “there are thousands of baseball-related reasons” for the Cubs’ long drought of not winning a championship, but it is more appealing to believe the superstition. Readers might have selected this option if they selected a detail that supports an idea (superstitions are irrational) rather than a central idea that explains why people are drawn to superstitions. This question assesses students’ ability to determine multiple central ideas in this text.

Item Information

Item Code: TN926983 Position No: 16

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "The
Chicago Cubs, the Goat
Curse and the Psycho-
logical Roots of Super-
stition"

Passage Title 2: Excerpt from "Why
Rituals Work"

Passage Code 1: TNI243780

Passage Code 2: TNI876783

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: A

What does the word quell mean as it is used in paragraph 7?

- A.** calm
- B.** ignore
- C.** question
- D.** acknowledge

Rationales	
Correct – 1	There are a number of context clues to support students selecting this option. The first sentence discusses several situations that would create anxiety and negatively affect one's nerves. The paragraph discusses how preparation would "quell" one's nerves, reduce anxiety, provide a feeling of control, and reduce uncertainty. Preparation would, therefore, calm one's nerves. This question assesses students' ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option if they concluded that preparation is designed to help someone be distracted from or ignore their nerves. Students might not have attended to the nuanced difference between calming and ignoring. Preparation may result in someone ignoring their nerves, but the purpose of preparation in these circumstances is for someone to calm their nerves. This question assesses students' ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option if they concluded that questioning is a type of challenge and that preparation is designed to challenge one's nerves. That is an unnatural use of the term, however, and challenging one's nerves does not result in a positive outcome. This question assesses students' ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.
Incorrect – 4	Readers might have selected this option if they concluded that preparation helps someone to acknowledge his/her nerves. But acknowledging one's nerves does not help someone to reduce their anxiety in anticipating and preparing for important situations. This question assesses students' ability to determine the meaning of a word in this text using context clues.

Item Information

Item Code: TN326987 Position No: 17

Grade Level: English II

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

Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "The
Chicago Cubs, the Goat
Curse and the Psycho-
logical Roots of Super-
stition"

Passage Title 2: Excerpt from "Why
Rituals Work"

Passage Code 1: TNI243780

Passage Code 2: TNI876783

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

Correct Answer: D

Which sentence from passage 2 identifies the central idea introduced by paragraphs 7 through 10?

- A.** "Think about the last time you were about to interview for a job, speak in front of an audience, or go on a first date." (paragraph 7)
- B.** "People facing situations that induce anxiety typically take comfort in engaging in preparatory activities, inducing a feeling of being back in control and reducing uncertainty." (paragraph 7)
- C.** "While a little extra preparation seems perfectly reasonable, people also engage in seemingly less logical behaviors in such situations." (paragraph 8)
- D.** "People engage in rituals with the intention of achieving a wide set of desired outcomes, from reducing their anxiety to boosting their confidence, alleviating their grief to performing well in a competition — or even making it rain." (paragraph 9)

Rationales	
Incorrect – 1	Readers might have selected this option if they were too attracted to the personal appeal at the beginning of the passage or if they misidentified the introduction as the central idea. This sentence is intended to engage readers into the content of the passage, but it does not capture the central idea. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence in this passage that represents its central idea.
Incorrect – 2	Readers might have selected this option if they misidentified preparatory activities as being the main topic of the article. Although preparatory activities can be a type of ritual, this sentence is not broad enough to capture the central idea the author intends to convey. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence in this passage that represents its central idea.
Incorrect – 3	Readers might have selected this option if they misidentified the central idea as being the transition sentence that assists the reader in moving from discussion of preparatory activities to more unusual activities that reduce anxiety. The purpose of this sentence is to transition ideas and not represent a central idea the author intends to convey. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence in this passage that represents its central idea.
Correct – 4	The author begins the article by explaining various ways people attempt to reduce anxiety. As the passage progresses, the reader learns that these behaviors are types of rituals and that rituals can be used to achieve a wide variety of desired outcomes. Among the options, this sentence best captures the central message as it identifies why people are drawn to rituals and provides examples of what outcomes they might desire. This question assesses students' ability to identify evidence in this passage that represents its central idea.

Item Information

Item Code: TN627041 Position No: 18 Grade Level: English II
Standard Code: 9-10.W.TTP.2 Item Accnum: VH957072
Passage Title 1: Excerpt from "The Chicago Cubs, the Goat Curse and the Psychological Roots of Superstition" Passage Title 2: Excerpt from "Why Rituals Work"

Passage Code 1: TNI243780 Passage Code 2: TNI876783

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 superstitions and rituals. Write an informational essay explaining why people believe in the power of superstitions and rituals.

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 and concepts; concepts are 	<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 explains the 	<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 maintain a formal style and 	<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.

	unclear and/or there is a lack of focus. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> contains no or an irrelevant concluding statement or section. 	evidence provided, demonstrating little understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli.	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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