

Georgia Milestones

Assessment System



Study/Resource Guide for Students and Parents English Language Arts Grade 8



The Study/Resource Guides are intended to serve as a resource for parents and students. They contain practice questions for English Language Arts. The standards identified in the Study/Resource Guides address a sampling of the state-mandated content standards.

For the purposes of day-to-day classroom instruction, teachers should consult the wide array of resources that can be found at www.georgiastandards.org.

Study/Resource Guide



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INTRODUCTION

Please see the *Study/Resource Guide for Students and Parents: Introduction and Overview* document for valuable information about how to use this guide.

DEPTH OF KNOWLEDGE (DOK) EXAMPLE ITEMS

Example items that represent applicable DOK levels are provided for you on the following pages. The items and explanations of what is expected of you to answer them will help you prepare for the test.

All example and sample items contained in this guide are the property of the Georgia Department of Education.

Example Item 1

Selected-Response

DOK Level 1: This is a DOK level 1 item because it requires students to recognize an infinitive and how it functions in the sentence.

English Language Arts (ELA) Grade 8 Content Domain II: Writing and Language

Standard: ELAGSE8L1a. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- a. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.

How does the underlined phrase function in the sentence?

Because field trips are educational, the class wanted to visit the museum.

- A. verb
- B. subject
- C. direct object
- D. predicate nominative

Correct Answer: C

Explanation of Correct Answer: The correct answer is choice (C) direct object. The words *to visit* are an infinitive, which functions as a noun. In this sentence, they are the direct object of the verb *wanted*. Choice (A) is incorrect because, although *visit* can function as a verb in other sentences, *wanted* is actually the verb in this sentence. Choice (B) is incorrect because *class* is the subject of the sentence. Choice (D) is incorrect because the sentence does not contain a verb of *being*.

Example Items 2–4

This section of the test assesses your skill to comprehend reading passages and use information from the passages to write an informational essay.

Before you begin writing your essay, you will read two passages and answer one multiple-choice question and one short constructed-response question about what you have read.

As you read the passages, think about details you may use in an informational essay about the famous illusionist Harry Houdini.

These are the titles of the passages you will read:

1. Show Me Impossible
2. Houdini

Show Me Impossible

It was barely 5 A.M. when Daniel left his two-room apartment on the Lower East Side of New York City and headed uptown. He had read yesterday's newspaper with excitement. Stories about Houdini had been plastered on the front pages of the papers for weeks—ever since his last show when he was handcuffed, then nailed inside a packing crate, and subsequently thrown into the river. Harry Houdini, the most sensational escape artist of all time, not only survived the incident, but swam to the surface in record time, where he was greeted by a crowd of cheering fans.

Daniel knew he had to see him, and the escape artist's next show was near enough for Daniel to attend. So Daniel got on the train especially early in the morning to make sure he was there before anyone else. He had heard about the crowds that came to Houdini's performances. He was not only determined to be there himself, but he was going to secure a seat in the first row.

"This man," Daniel had read earlier that week in the paper, "is a marvel. Either he has superhuman strength and skill, or he's an exceptionally clever illusionist. Either way, he's the most daring performer the world has ever seen." *Illusionist*—the word grabbed him. He whispered it quietly, forming the syllables with his lips. Then he said it out loud. "Illusionist." He loved the way it rolled off his tongue.

It certainly was not a word that was familiar in Daniel's world. In 1924, you were expected to remain grounded in reality, the polar opposite of illusion. Daniel thought about his former schoolteacher, Mrs. Thorpe, and the lessons she taught stressing that everything was explainable by science. Once he had chosen a fantasy novel from the library to read just for fun, but Mrs. Thorpe discouraged it. "I prefer that you choose a sensible book," she said. "That book is nothing more than nonsense."

She most likely would assert that Houdini was nothing but nonsense, too, Daniel thought. Houdini made the impossible happen—an illusionist can do that. An illusionist allows people to see the impossible—or what they presume to be impossible. Houdini was making believers out of the millions who saw him perform, believers in the impossible.

Daniel had looked up the word in a dictionary. "Illusionist." Houdini created illusions—he was a master at tricks of the eye. This man had been sealed inside a giant football and the carcass of a giant squid. He had been strapped in a straightjacket and hung by his ankles from the tops of tall buildings. The dictionary defined illusionist as "a person who performs tricks that deceive the eye." Mrs. Thorpe had used that term, "deceive the eye," in a science lesson. Daniel just knew that he had to see Houdini so that this daring illusionist could make him a believer, too.

Houdini

In 1918, a man and an elephant stood in the center of the Hippodrome Theater’s stage in the heart of New York City. As a spotlight beamed down upon them, the man raised his arm high in the air, a popping sound was heard, and in a flash, Jennie, the 10,000-pound elephant, suddenly disappeared. All that was left standing on the stage was the man alone. The elephant had vanished into thin air. And the man standing on the stage was Harry Houdini.

Houdini was born Erik Weisz in Budapest, Hungary. Upon immigrating to the United States, he first took up residence in Appleton, Wisconsin. He later became a circus entertainer performing trapeze acts. However, when the circus traveled to New York City, he knew it to be the right place for a performer.

He had a smattering of success in vaudeville, but eventually found his way into escape performances. It seemed that he had a great talent for picking locks, and that led to other feats—escapes from trunks, straightjackets, and even coffins. The phrase “They do it with mirrors” was applied to Houdini many times. Disbelievers felt that he was little more than an illusionist, a trickster. They accused him of deceit, stating that he cheated with trap doors or only appeared to be nailed in a box or locked in chains.

However, the unglamorous truth was that Houdini was a superb physical being with some enormous talents. For instance, he could hold his breath for an extraordinary amount of time. Additionally, he was strong and determined. When being tied up or bound in a straightjacket, he would fill his lungs to capacity and flex his muscles. That way he could gain a few millimeters of free space which would enable his forthcoming escape. He was not afraid to dislocate joints, such as a shoulder, or even rip flesh pulling an arm or a hand free of bindings. He might conceal a piece of metal under his tongue and use it to pick a lock. But free himself he would, and he did it without mirrors or any other kind of magic.

Despite the accusations of deception, Houdini remained popular with the American public. He continued to dream up more and more dangerous stunts, and people flocked to see them. No matter what people believed about him, he always escaped in the most straightforward way. He unlocked the locks, he got free of the chains, he made a tiny space in a lid into a bigger space. He used talent, strength, and resourcefulness, without any trickery.

Example Item 2

Selected-Response

DOK Level 2: This is a DOK level 2 item because the meaning of the phrase is based on the context of the passage.

English Language Arts (ELA) Grade 8 Content Domain I: Reading and Vocabulary

Genre: Literary

Standard: ELAGSE8L4a. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on *grade 8 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

Read the sentences from “Show Me Impossible.”

***Illusionist*—the word grabbed him. He whispered it quietly, forming the syllables with his lips. Then he said it out loud. “Illusionist.” He loved the way it rolled off his tongue.**

What does the phrase *the word grabbed him* express to the reader?

- A. Daniel is confused by the word “illusionist.”
- B. Daniel thinks the word “illusionist” is humorous.
- C. Daniel is fascinated by the word “illusionist.”
- D. Daniel thinks the word “illusionist” is surprising.

Correct Answer: C

Explanation of Correct Answer: The correct answer is choice (C) Daniel is fascinated by the word “illusionist.” The paragraph makes it clear that Daniel is enchanted, or fascinated, by the word. Choices (A), (B), and (D) are incorrect because they do not convey the meaning the author intended. Choice (A) is not the best choice because the sentence “He loved the way it rolled off his tongue” does not indicate confusion. Choices (B) and (D) are incorrect because Daniel’s actions do not indicate that he finds the word “illusionist” to be humorous or especially surprising.

Example Item 3. *Continued.*

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	<p>The exemplar shows a full-credit response. It achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives sufficient evidence of the ability to explain how a paragraph in a text helps to develop and refine a key concept within the text • Includes specific examples/details that make clear reference to the text • Adequately explains the development of a concept with relevant information based on the text
1	<p>The exemplar shows a 1-point response. It achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives limited evidence of the ability to explain how a paragraph in a text develops and refines a key concept within the text • Includes vague/limited examples/details that make reference to the text • Explains the development of a concept with vague/limited information based on the text
0	<p>The exemplar shows a response that would earn no credit. It achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives no evidence of the ability to explain how a paragraph in a text develops and refines a key concept within the text

Exemplar Response

Points Awarded	Sample Response
2	<p>Paragraph 4 explains how Houdini was able to perform these tricks because he was strong and clever. He knew what he was doing and had ways to escape that were planned out in advance and did not rely on magic or illusions. They were real feats of strength. Houdini would fill his lungs with air or hide a metal pick under his tongue. He was not really performing magic. Instead, he had figured out ways to escape from the most difficult physical situations.</p>
1	<p>Paragraph 4 explains that Houdini had figured out how to escape and make it seem like magic or illusions. You learn about this when you read this paragraph. He could hold his breath for a long period of time. He knew what to do.</p>
0	<p>Paragraph 4 talks about Houdini and his magic. He was strong.</p>

Example Item 4

Extended Writing-Response

DOK Level 4: This is a DOK level 4 item because it requires analyzing and synthesizing information from different sources. Students must combine ideas from the two passages and write an essay that builds on what was read and explains something new.

English Language Arts (ELA) Grade 8 Content Domain II: Writing and Language

Genres: Literary and Informational

Standards:

ELAGSE8W2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

ELAGSE8L1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELAGSE8L2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

WRITING TASK

Harry Houdini achieved fame and success in his work as an illusionist.

Think about the ideas in BOTH passages. Then write an **informational essay** in your own words explaining how Houdini achieved success as an illusionist.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your **informational essay**.

Writer’s Checklist

Be sure to:

- Introduce the topic clearly, provide a focus, and organize information in a way that makes sense.
- Use information from the two passages so that your essay includes important details.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to connect ideas and to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- Use clear language and vocabulary.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the information presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Now write your informational essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer’s Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.

The following is an example of a seven-point response. See the seven-point, two-trait rubric for a text-based informational/explanatory response on pages 91 and 92 to see why this example would earn the maximum number of points.

Houdini was a very successful illusionist. The fact that he had so many fans and was able to do such difficult tricks shows just how much he achieved. The passages support the fact that Houdini achieved success in his work using different perspectives.

In "Show Me Impossible," Daniel is a great example of the reasons why Houdini was successful at attracting so many fans that loved him. Daniel makes a big effort to see Houdini perform, even waking up before 5 A.M. to get a front row seat at Houdini's show! Daniel is not sure if Houdini has "superhuman strength and skill" or if he is "an exceptionally clever illusionist," but he is still very impressed and curious. Daniel also knows that Houdini has had an effect on "the millions who saw him perform" and can't wait to become a believer in the illusions himself.

The passage "Houdini" focuses much more on the reasons why Houdini was able to accomplish successful illusions. Houdini used his own cleverness and physical abilities to perform tricks and illusions that intrigued people. Some people did not believe in his illusions, but Houdini still attracted attention. For these reasons, Houdini "remained popular with the American public" and people "flocked" to see him perform illusions.

No matter what the perspective is, both passages support the fact that Houdini was a successful illusionist. People are still inspired by his amazing tricks to this day, and they still wonder how he achieved things that seemed to be impossible.

CONTENT DESCRIPTION AND ADDITIONAL SAMPLE ITEMS

In this section, you will find information about what to study in order to prepare for the Grade 8 English Language Arts EOG assessment. This includes main ideas and important vocabulary words. This section also contains practice questions, with explanations of the correct answers, and activities that you can do on your own or with your classmates or family to prepare for the test.

All example and sample items contained in this guide are the property of the Georgia Department of Education.

Unit 1: Reading Literary Text

READING PASSAGES: LITERARY TEXT

Content Description

The literary passages in the English Language Arts test are used to identify main ideas and details, cite evidence, make inferences, determine themes, and understand vocabulary. You may be asked to write a narrative in response to a prompt based on a literary passage. For more information about narrative writing, please refer to Unit 3.

Key Ideas and Details

- Think about the passage and visualize, or make a mental picture, as you read.
- Look for ideas and details that tell you what the passage is about.
- Use these ideas and details when writing or speaking about the passage.
- Look for a theme and/or central idea as you read. Think about how the author develops and supports this theme or central idea over the course of the passage.
- Think about how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in the passage propel the action, reveal aspects of character, or provoke a decision.
- Summarize the passage in a way that makes it impossible to determine your personal feelings about the passage.

Craft and Structure

- Make sure you understand the words and phrases as you read, including the impact of figurative language (e.g., metaphor, simile, hyperbole, personification, idiom).
- Think about how the author's word choice impacts meaning and tone.
- Look at the structure of two or more passages. Think about how the different structure of each passage (e.g., chronological order, cause and effect, comparison and contrast, problem and solution) contributes to its meaning and style.
- Identify dramatic irony in the passage. Think about how the differences in the points of view of characters and the reader create such effects as suspense or humor.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Generalize concepts of theme, pattern of events, and character types so that specific instances of these may be recognized as having similarities or differences.
- Build background knowledge of major foundational works from which modern literature draws themes (e.g., Homer, Ovid, Shakespeare, mythology from various cultures).

KEY TERMS

Literary texts: Literary texts are passages that are stories, dramas, or poems. (RL)

Inference: To infer means to come to a reasonable conclusion based on evidence found in the text. By contrast, an **explicit** idea or message is fully stated or revealed by the author. The author tells the reader exactly what he or she needs to know. (RL1)

Theme: The theme of a literary passage is its lesson or message. For example, a story could be about two friends who like to do things together and the theme might be the importance of friendship. (RL2)

Central idea: The central idea is the most important point or idea that the author is making in a passage. The central idea is also known as the main idea. (RL2)

Objective summary: An objective summary is an overview of a passage that captures the main points but does not give every detail and does not include opinions. (RL2)

Characterization: Characterization refers to the way an author develops a character over the course of a text. (RL2, RL3, RL9)

Setting: Setting refers to where and when a story takes place, including the time of day, the season, or the location. (RL2)

Plot: The specific order of a series of events that form a story is known as the plot. (RL2, RL3)

Resolution: In most stories, there is a **conflict** or problem. The resolution is the solution to the problem or the end of the main dramatic conflict. (RL3)

Dialogue: Dialogue refers to the exact words the characters are saying. Generally, dialogue is set off from the rest of the text with quotation marks and commas. Each time a new character speaks, a new paragraph begins. Dialogue can reveal new information about characters, propel the action in a story, or provoke a character's decision. (RL3, RL5)

Incident: An incident is something that occurs in a story. Like dialogue, an incident can reveal aspects of characters, advance the plot, or provoke a decision in a story. (RL3)

Propel the action: Propelling the action occurs when particular lines of dialogue or specific incidents in a story cause something to happen. For example, if a character has a change of mind, a change of heart, or makes a decision, the plot can move forward. (RL3)

Figurative language: To understand figurative language, you need to distinguish between literal and figurative meanings of words and phrases. **Literal** refers to the actual meaning of a word or phrase. For example, if someone tells you to *open the door*, you can open a physical door. If someone tells you to *open the door to your heart*, you are not expected to find a door in your chest. Instead, you open up your feelings and emotions. (RL4, L5)

The following are examples of figurative language:

- **Personification:** When a writer describes an object as if it were a person, he or she is using personification; for example, *The trees sighed in the afternoon breeze*. The trees cannot really sigh but seemed to as they moved gently in the breeze. (RL4, L5)
- **Simile:** A simile is a comparison using *like* or *as*; for example, *She is as pretty as a picture*. (RL4, L5)
- **Metaphor:** A metaphor is a direct comparison that states one thing is another. It isn't meant to be literal, but descriptive. For example, if someone describes recess by saying that *it was a zoo*, he or she is using a metaphor. Recess was chaotic, with lots of different people running around; it was not literally a zoo. (RL4, L5)
- **Hyperbole:** Hyperbole is exaggeration beyond belief. *My father can lift two tons* is an example of hyperbole. (RL4, L5)
- **Idiom:** An idiom is a quirky expression or saying that is specific to a language. *I've been on cloud nine all day!* is an expression used in the English language to express that someone is having a great day. (RL4, L5)
- **Alliteration:** Alliteration is the use of the same sound to start several words in a row; for example, *The beautiful butterfly blew by the bay*. Literary devices such as alliteration can have a big impact on poems, stories, and dramas. (RL4)
- **Allusion:** An allusion is an indirect reference to something. When a writer refers to something without mentioning it explicitly, it is an allusion; for example, *He didn't want to give gifts to anyone at Christmas; he was being a scrooge*. In this sentence, the writer is alluding to Ebenezer Scrooge from Charles Dickens's *A Christmas Carol*. (RL4)

Connotative language: Another technique authors use to present precise ideas and set a certain tone is connotative language. The dictionary definition of a word is its **denotation**. The **connotation** of a word is a specific meaning or idea that the word brings to mind. For example, *laugh* and *giggle* have similar denotations. These words refer to sounds you make when you find something funny. However, the word *giggle* has youthful connotations associated with it. You often think of children giggling but rarely think of grandfathers giggling. The word *laugh* has no such connotations associated with it. Therefore, while the denotations of both words are similar, the connotations are different. If a writer decides to describe a grandfather giggling, the writer probably means to hint that he has a youthful spirit or is feeling young at heart. (RL4)

Tone: The tone found in writing is the attitude of an author about a subject or an audience. The author will choose words and language to create a tone and express a viewpoint in a text. (RL4)

Analogy: An analogy is a comparison between two things that helps to express the relationship or connection between the words. For example, *Moon is to night as sun is to day*. (RL4)

Structure: In literary writing, writers use structure to convey meaning. This structure helps break longer pieces of writing into smaller portions that are grouped together because they happened around the same time or because they share a similar meaning. Each sentence, paragraph, or chapter fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of ideas. **Organizational structures** include chronological order, cause and effect, compare and contrast, and problem and solution. (RL5)

- **Chronological order:** Chronological order is the order in which a series of events happened. A text that is arranged in order of time from the beginning to the end is in chronological order. (RL5)
- **Cause and effect:** This is a relationship in which one thing causes another thing to happen. (RL5)
- **Compare and contrast:** The structure of compare and contrast analyzes the relationships between ideas in a text. Comparing analyzes the similarities, while contrasting analyzes the differences. (RL5, RL6, RL9)

Flashback: Flashbacks are shifts in the storyline to give readers important information to help them understand the story better. (RL5)





Foreshadowing: Foreshadowing refers to hints in the narrative of what is to come in the plot in the future. (RL5)

Point of view: The perspective from which a story is told is called the point of view. The point of view depends on who the narrator is and how much he or she knows. The point of view could be first person (*I* went to the store), second person (*You* went to the store), or third person (*He* went to the store). (RL6)

Dramatic irony: Dramatic irony occurs when the reader knows something that the characters do not know. (RL6)

Genre: A genre is the category of a text, such as fiction or nonfiction. Each genre has a particular style, form, and content. The genre of fiction can be divided into more specific categories. For example, a **myth** is a specific type of fiction that tells a traditional story using supernatural characters and events. (RL9)

Important Tips

-  Use supporting ideas and concepts to answer *what* you know and *how* you know it.
-  Try to answer the question before you read the answer choices.
-  Try to read the questions about a literary text before you read the entire text.
-  Reread a literary text as you answer the questions to gain a better understanding.

SAMPLE ITEMS

Read the story and answer questions 1 through 5.

Pony Express

The low morning sun stretched across the hotel dining room as a young cowboy walked toward the lone occupant. Shafts of light shone through the dust, producing golden bands not quite parallel to the floor. Holding his new Stetson hat respectfully at his side, the cowboy walked toward the lone man. The man noted the cowboy's approach, rose, and extended his hand. "Ah, Mr. Sewell, I presume. I'm Derek Bollinger." Caleb Sewell was taken off guard at being addressed as Mister, especially by a man wearing a suit that Caleb couldn't afford with the wages of his last month's work.

"Yep. Howdy." The words were out automatically, and Caleb immediately regretted his lack of formality as he shook the man's hand and sat down. He fidgeted with his hat, not knowing where it should go, but certain that it couldn't go back on his head. Bollinger, sensing Caleb's discomfort, pulled out one of the empty chairs and nodded to it.

"In the interest of saving valuable time, Mr. Sewell, I've ordered for us both." Caleb nodded approval and restrained himself from saying something silly like, "Aw, that's right neighborly of ya." A waitress filled his coffee cup. To avoid embarrassment, he added only about half his usual amount of sugar. He watched the expensively dressed man for clues as to what to do with his stirring spoon, how to hold the delicate cup, and where to put his napkin.

Mercifully, two orders of steak, eggs, beans, and sourdough biscuits arrived before any more pauses set in. Eating made it easier for Caleb to avoid talking, though he continued to watch Bollinger's actions closely. The man began enumerating Caleb's responsibilities as a Pony Express rider. Mail, he said, was a precious commodity. It both connected and fulfilled lives on each end of the route. He must never exhaust the horses; he would ride six or seven each day, and they were the lifeline of the whole enterprise. He should report conditions on the trail—fallen trees, landslides, washed-out bridges—at the nearest transfer station. He was to ride alone except when an escort with the local law was arranged. He would have protection on the Humboldt Pass section, where robberies had become frequent of late.

Caleb had been briefed on most of this when he filled out an application back home in Wheeling, so the best information he took from Bollinger was that it was acceptable to sop his bean juice with a biscuit. Bollinger did all of the talking. To Caleb's great relief, Bollinger did not ask what had brought a man out to the wilds of the frontier when he could have enjoyed the security of working in the family business as part of a comfortably successful family in the quiet state of West Virginia. He didn't know how to explain what a burden it was to have a family that wanted to determine how the rest of your life should proceed. He had no words to explain their disappointment at his wanting to chart his own course, not to mention how effortlessly he'd settled into a life on the plains.

At length, the man stood, shook hands with Caleb a last time, and told him he was to pick up his horse and packet of mail at the livery stable. "Good to have you with us on the Pony Express, Mr. Sewell. We have begun forging a strong tradition throughout the West and the nation. Now, do us and yourself proud." Caleb bent down and retrieved his hat from the chair, and when he stood back up, Bollinger was gone.

The handlers were ready for him at the stable. Two saddlebags straddled a bar outside a box stall that said “Pony Express Only.” In the stall, his own personal saddle was already on a small Appaloosa. The horse shifted and paced nervously, a sign that he’d been given a more than ample breakfast of oats. Caleb led the horse into the street and was tightening the cinch of the saddle when a clerk came up to him with a delivery log. Caleb signed it, secured the saddlebags, and threw his leg up over the saddle. The horse bolted for the open road, but Caleb’s deft touch convinced the horse of the pace they would maintain.

Caleb Sewell’s first day as a Pony Express rider had begun. It would end twelve hours and eighty miles later.

Item 1

Selected-Response

Which detail from the story indicates that Caleb is self-conscious?

- A. The low morning sun stretched across the hotel dining room as a young cowboy walked toward the lone occupant.
- B. Holding his new Stetson hat respectfully at his side, the cowboy walked toward the lone man.
- C. He fidgeted with his hat, not knowing where it should go, but certain that it couldn’t go back on his head.
- D. He was to ride alone except when an escort with the local law was arranged.

Item 2

Selected-Response

Read the sentence from the story.

Mercifully, two orders of steak, eggs, beans, and sourdough biscuits arrived before any more pauses set in.

In what way is the arrival of food a *merciful* event?

- A. Caleb is in need of food because he has not been making much money.
- B. Caleb is less likely to embarrass himself while he is busy eating.
- C. The Pony Express delivers meals to those who are going hungry.
- D. The breakfast is provided free of charge to Pony Express riders.

Item 3

Drag-and-Drop Technology-Enhanced

Complete an objective summary of the passage by moving THREE sentences into the chart in the correct order.

Summary of "Pony Express"

1.	Caleb walks into a hotel dining room and meets Mr. Bollinger to learn more about what will be expected of him as a rider in the Pony Express.
2.	
3.	
4.	

When he observes Mr. Bollinger in the hotel, Caleb notices that Mr. Bollinger is wearing a very expensive suit.

Later, Caleb goes to the stable to meet the horse he will ride and to receive the materials he will deliver.

As the two men eat breakfast, Mr. Bollinger tells Caleb about the responsibilities he will take on during his work.

After signing the delivery log, Caleb mounts the horse and heads out for the open road to begin his first journey.

When a horse has been given a large breakfast of oats, it may shift and pace nervously as it waits to take off on a ride.

Select to Respond

- ➡ Due to the size of the response area, this item has a "Select to Respond" button on the screen. Clicking this button will bring up the response area at full size.

Go on to the next page to finish item 3.

Item 3. Continued.

↶
?

Summary of “Pony Express”

1.	Caleb walks into a hotel dining room and meets Mr. Bollinger to learn more about what will be expected of him as a rider in the Pony Express.
2.	
3.	
4.	

When he observes Mr. Bollinger in the hotel, Caleb notices that Mr. Bollinger is wearing a very expensive suit.

Later, Caleb goes to the stable to meet the horse he will ride and to receive the materials he will deliver.

As the two men eat breakfast, Mr. Bollinger tells Caleb about the responsibilities he will take on during his work.

After signing the delivery log, Caleb mounts the horse and heads out for the open road to begin his first journey.

When a horse has been given a large breakfast of oats, it may shift and pace nervously as it waits to take off on a ride.

➡ Use a mouse, touchpad, or touchscreen to move the sentences below the chart into the boxes in the chart.

Item 4

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Technology-Enhanced

This question has two parts. Answer Part A, and then answer Part B.

Part A

What motivates Caleb to want to become a Pony Express rider?

- A. a desire to be independent from his family
- B. a need for adventure in his life
- C. a desire to make a great deal of money
- D. a need to travel to other places

Part B

Which sentence from the story BEST supports the answer in Part A?

- A. Caleb Sewell was taken off guard at being addressed as Mister, especially by a man wearing a suit that Caleb couldn't afford with the wages of his last month's work.
- B. He must never exhaust the horses; he would ride six or seven each day, and they were the lifeline of the whole enterprise.
- C. He had no words to explain their disappointment at his wanting to chart his own course, not to mention how effortlessly he'd settled into a life on the plains.
- D. The horse bolted for the open road, but Caleb's deft touch convinced the horse of the pace they would maintain.

Item 5

Extended Constructed-Response

Based on the information in the story, write a continuation of the story that reveals Caleb’s inner dialogue, or his thoughts, as he begins riding his first Pony Express route.

Use details from the story to support your answer.

Narrative Writer’s Checklist

Be sure to:

- Write a narrative response that develops a real or imagined experience.
- Establish a context for the experience and a point of view.
- Introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- Organize events in a natural and logical order.
 - Use a variety of transitions to sequence the events, to indicate shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and to show the relationships between the events.
- Use dialogue, description, pacing, and/or reflection to:
 - develop events.
 - develop characters.
 - develop experiences.
- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to communicate the action and to describe the events.
- Include a conclusion that reflects on the experience in your narrative.
- Use ideas and/or details from the passage(s).
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Now write your narrative on your answer document. Refer to the Writer’s Checklist as you write and proofread your narrative.

SAMPLE ITEM KEYS

Item	Standard/ Element/ Genre	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
1	ELAGSE8RL3 Literary	2	C	The correct answer is choice (C) He fidgeted with his hat, not knowing where it should go, but certain that it couldn't go back on his head. This shows he is self-conscious. Choice (A) is incorrect. It describes the setting only. Choice (B) is incorrect, as it illustrates being respectful, not self-conscious. Choice (D) is incorrect, as it does not relate to being self-conscious.
2	ELAGSE8RL4 Literary	2	B	The correct answer is choice (B) Caleb is less likely to embarrass himself while he is busy eating. This explains the connotation of <i>mercifully</i> . Choice (A) is incorrect because this is not supported in the text. Choice (C) is incorrect because, even though delivering some meals might be an act of mercy, this meal is not charity. Choice (D) is incorrect because the meal was paid for by Bollinger.
3	ELAGSE8RL2 Literary	2	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar response on page 27.
4	ELAGSE8RL3 Literary	3	A/C	<p>The correct answers are choice (A) a desire to be independent from his family and choice (C) He had no words to explain their disappointment at his wanting to chart his own course, not to mention how effortlessly he'd settled into a life on the plains.</p> <p>Caleb's family wants him to work in the family business, but he wants to forge his own path. He feels burdened by his family's expectation that he work in the family business. The answer choice for Part B of the item shows text from the story that supports this conclusion.</p> <p>In Part A, choice (B) is incorrect because, while the new job is adventurous, Caleb's motivation stems more from the desire for independence. Choice (C) is incorrect because a desire for money is not stated or implied about Caleb. Choice (D) is incorrect, as there is no expressed desire or need to travel to other places, though the job will require travel. The incorrect options in Part B support incorrect answers in Part A.</p>
5	ELAGSE8W3	4	N/A	See scoring rubric beginning on page 89 and sample responses on page 28.

EXAMPLE SCORING RUBRICS AND EXEMPLAR RESPONSES

Item 3

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	The student correctly fills in all three rows.
1	The student correctly fills in two rows.
0	The student does not correctly fill in at least two rows.

Exemplar Response

The correct response is shown below.

↶
?

Summary of “Pony Express”

1.	Caleb walks into a hotel dining room and meets Mr. Bollinger to learn more about what will be expected of him as a rider in the Pony Express.
2.	As the two men eat breakfast, Mr. Bollinger tells Caleb about the responsibilities he will take on during his work.
3.	Later, Caleb goes to the stable to meet the horse he will ride and to receive the materials he will deliver.
4.	After signing the delivery log, Caleb mounts the horse and heads out for the open road to begin his first journey.

When he observes Mr. Bollinger in the hotel, Caleb notices that Mr. Bollinger is wearing a very expensive suit.

When a horse has been given a large breakfast of oats, it may shift and pace nervously as it waits to take off on a ride.

The correct answers are “As the two men eat breakfast, Mr. Bollinger tells Caleb about the responsibilities he will take on during his work,” “Later, Caleb goes to the stable to meet the horse he will ride and to receive the materials he will deliver,” and “After signing the delivery log, Caleb mounts the horse and heads out for the open road to begin his first journey,” in that order. These responses are correct because they are sequential and provide key details that are relevant to an objective summary without including minor details or supporting details. NOTE: Response order does affect scoring.

Item 5

To view the four-point holistic rubric for a text-based narrative response, see pages 89 and 90.

Exemplar Response

Points Awarded	Sample Response
4	Well, I got the job, and I didn't make too much of a fool of myself. I think Mr. Bollinger knows about my family's business, but he didn't even bring it up. He seems to have high hopes for this mail delivery plan, and he's expressed confidence in me. That means that when I make it, I'll make it on my own. It doesn't look easy, however. I'll be riding all day in all kinds of conditions—like storms and rock slides—and there's even the chance I'll be stopped by roadside bandits. It seems like the only thing that really rests is the horse. But in a way, that makes perfect sense. At any rate, I got the job I wanted. I'm going to succeed. I'll make Mr. Bollinger and my family back in West Virginia proud.
3	I don't suppose I'll get good treatment like that every day that I work for the Pony Express, but it sure was a good way to begin. Mr. Bollinger seemed like a good man, and he explained the job very clearly. It's a big responsibility, delivering people's mail. But I can do it. This is why I came out here to work on my own. It also looks like an interesting job. There had better be more going on than herding cattle.
2	Boy, they had everything set up for me. Mr. Bollinger ordered my breakfast. They had the mail pouch ready and my first horse all saddled up. This should be a good group to work for.
1	Twelve hours is a long day, but I can do it. Mr. Bollinger has confidence that I can do it, so I can.
0	I am riding the pony.

ACTIVITY

The following activity develops skills in Unit 1: Reading Literary Text.

Standards: ELAGSE8RL1, ELAGSE8RL2, ELAGSE8RL3, ELAGSE8RL4, ELAGSE8RL5, ELAGSE8RL6, and ELAGSE8RL9

The Daily Reporter

Get your pad, pen, and press badge and join the staff of *The Daily Reporter* news team! You can do the following activity with friends or family.

Interview with a Friend or Family Member

You will need a reporter and a character from a story, novel, or play to interview.

- Choose a character you have read about and answer all questions as that character.
- The reporter should ask questions that pertain to events that took place in the story, novel, or play that the character comes from.
- You can also ask questions that require the character to reveal thoughts, feelings, and reactions to events and other characters.
- Think about what the character is like and what caused specific events to take place.
- The character may be asked to make a judgment or draw a conclusion about people and events from the text.
- The reporter will ask the character questions and record the responses.

Example: You have just read *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee. The reporter can interview Atticus Finch and ask him how he felt about the trial or its outcome, or the reporter may choose to interview Scout and get her reaction to how the trial affected her father or what she thinks about growing up in Maycomb, Alabama.

After the interview, the questions and answers can be presented in several ways.

- Write a newspaper report. If you have access to a computer, you can design a page that looks like the front page of a newspaper.
- Write the interview as a dialogue between the reporter and the character.
- Present this as a live interview on a TV news show. You can set up two chairs at the front of the class and interview the character, using the questions and answers as the script.

On Your Own

You can do this activity on your own after reading a story, novel, or play. Choose a character who interests you and write the questions and answers yourself. Prepare the questions and answers as either a newspaper report or a dialogue.

Unit 2: Reading Informational Text

READING PASSAGES: INFORMATIONAL TEXT

Content Description

The informational and explanatory passages in the English Language Arts test can be used to determine central ideas, write an objective summary, analyze ideas, and provide supporting text evidence. You may be asked to write a narrative in response to a prompt based on an informational passage. For more information about narrative writing, please refer to Unit 3.

Key Ideas and Details

- Read closely to know exactly what the passage says.
- Look for ideas and details that tell you what the passage is about.
- Use these ideas and details when writing or speaking about the passage.
- Look for the central idea as you read. Think about how the author develops and supports the central idea over the course of the passage.
- Think about the significance of key individuals, events, or ideas in the passage, and analyze how the author makes connections and distinctions between these concepts.
- Summarize the passage without including your personal opinion about the topic.

Craft and Structure

- Make sure you understand the words and phrases as they are used in the passage, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings of words.
- Think about how the author’s use of words creates tone, mood, or focus in the passage.
- Look at the structure of specific paragraphs in the passage. Think about the role common text features or organizational structures play in developing and refining key ideas.
- Think about the author’s point of view, purpose, or argument in the passage.
- Pay attention to how the author addresses counterclaims and opposing viewpoints in informational passages.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

- Think about the argument and specific claims in a passage. Is the author’s reasoning sound? Is the evidence relevant and sufficient?
- Remove extraneous information from the author’s argument, and separate valid and logical evidence from logical fallacies.
- Compare and contrast two or more passages that provide conflicting information on the same topic.

KEY TERMS

Informational texts: Informational texts are passages that explain or inform. (RI)

Inference: To infer means to come to a reasonable conclusion based on evidence found in the passage. By contrast, an **explicit** idea or message is fully stated or revealed by the author. The author tells the reader exactly what he or she needs to know. (RI1)

Central idea: The central idea is the most important point or idea that the author is making in a passage. The central idea is also known as the main idea. (RI2)

Objective summary: An objective summary is an overview of a passage. It captures the main points but does not give every detail and does not include opinions. (RI2)

Fact and opinion: A fact is a statement that can be proven. An opinion is a statement that cannot be proven, as it states an author's belief or judgment about something. Deciding whether a statement is a fact or an opinion often comes down to a single question: "Is it something that can be proven?" If it can be proven, then it is a fact. If not, it is an opinion. (RI2)

Distinction: Distinction refers to the act of noticing differences or contrasts between similar things or people. (RI3)

Analogy: An analogy is a comparison between two things that helps to express the relationship or connection between the things. For example, *Looking for my favorite pencil in my backpack is like searching for a needle in a haystack.* (RI3, RI4)

Figurative meaning: Literal meaning refers to the actual meaning of a word or phrase. By contrast, figurative meaning refers to the symbolic meaning of words or phrases and uses figurative language such as personification (describing an object as if it were a person), simile (a comparison using *like* or *as*), metaphor (a descriptive comparison that states one thing is another), hyperbole (exaggeration beyond belief), and idiom (a quirky expression or saying that is specific to a language). The literal meaning of the phrase *open the door* is to open a physical door; however, the phrase *open the door to your heart* has a figurative meaning because we do not intend for the person to create an opening in his or her chest. Instead, the phrase symbolizes opening up one's feelings and emotions. (RI4)

Connotative meaning: A meaning beyond the explicit meaning of a word is known as connotative meaning. For example, the word *childlike* connotes innocence. Connotations are meanings inferred from certain words. (RI4)

Denotative meaning: The explicit meaning of a word is the denotative meaning. For example, *helpful* has only one meaning and denotation, which is to be of service or assistance. (RI4)

Technical meaning: The meaning of a word as it relates to a specific subject or process is the technical meaning. For example, the term *run-on sentence* in the study of English grammar has a technical meaning that refers to two complete thoughts joined incorrectly. (RI4)

Tone: The tone found in writing is the attitude of an author about a subject or an audience. The author will choose words and language to create a tone and express a viewpoint in a text. (RI4)

Structure: Structure refers to the way in which a passage is organized. Each sentence, paragraph, or chapter fits into the overall structure of a passage and contributes to the development of ideas.

Organizational structures include chronological order, cause and effect, problem and solution, or compare and contrast. (RI5)

- **Chronological order:** Chronological order is the order in which a series of events happened. A passage that is arranged in order of time from the beginning to the end is in chronological order. (RI5)
- **Cause and effect:** This is a relationship in which one thing causes another thing to happen. (RI3, RI5)
- **Comparison and contrast:** The structure of compare and contrast analyzes the relationships between ideas in a passage. Comparing analyzes the similarities, while contrasting analyzes the differences. (RI3, RI5, RI9)
- **Order of importance:** Order of importance organizes text by listing supporting details from most important to least important, or by least important to most important. (RI5)
- **Problem and solution:** Text that is organized by problem and solution identifies a problem and proposes one or more solutions. An author may use problem and solution to try to persuade readers about a certain topic or course of action. (RI5)

Textual features: Within a passage, an author may use features such as a topic sentence, an introduction, body paragraphs, headings, footnotes, or graphics to further organize the text. These features are known as textual features. (RI5)

Author's purpose: The author's purpose is the author's intention for his or her writing. All passages have a purpose, whether it is to persuade, inform, explain, or entertain. (RI6)

Author's point of view: The opinion of the author is known as the author's point of view. Your opinion may differ from the opinion of the author of a passage. (RI6)

Evidence: Something that proves or demonstrates the truth of something else is known as evidence. Informational texts may contain evidence to prove that the information they are providing is correct. Readers should be aware of conflicting evidence within texts, such as **bias**, which can weaken an author's **claim**. An author may also use evidence to disprove a **counterclaim**, or the opposite of his or her original claim. (RI8)

Claim: A claim is the main argument made by the author. A strong claim will be supported by reasons and evidence. (RI6)




Counterclaim: A reasonable argument that opposes or disagrees with another claim is called a counterclaim. A strong counterclaim is supported by evidence and sound reasoning. Sometimes the author of a persuasive text will include a counterclaim and the reasons it is weak or wrong in order to strengthen his or her own claim. (RI8)

Bias: When an author holds a strong opinion or belief about his or her topic, the writing may contain forms of bias. Bias within passages can appear as statements that favor one opinion or idea over another, sometimes creating an unfair or unsound argument by the author. (RI8)

Sound: Sound refers to reasoning that makes sense and follows some sort of logic. Sound reasoning means the same as logical reasoning. (RI8)

Relevant: To be considered relevant, the facts, details, or other information within a text must be related to the topic. Relevant information helps support the author's opinion, claim, and reasoning. (RI8)

Important Tips

-  Try to read the questions about an informational text before you read the text so that you know what to look out for.
-  Use evidence from an informational text to help explain what is being said in the text.
-  Use facts and details to support ideas and answer *what* you know and *how* you know it.

SAMPLE ITEMS

Read the article and answer questions 6 through 8.

Living in the Darkness under the Sea

Marine biologists patrol an undersea world that resembles a rocky landscape more than it does an ocean floor. The scientists cruise through the water in a remote-controlled submarine in complete darkness. If they shine a light, what they see is something totally unexpected: tall rock formations jutting up from the ocean floor and surrounded by black smoke, similar to underwater chimneys. Circling these rocky peaks are worm-like organisms. They resemble red-and-white tubes—like giant peppermint sticks. What is even more amazing is that these odd creatures are not only alive but living in this dark underworld away from light and the sun’s energy. So how is that possible?

Underwater vents somehow create an environment where these striped creatures can exist. Ever since the discovery of the creatures in 1977, scientists have been both baffled and intrigued by the very existence of these strange creatures that grow out of vents on the ocean floor away from sunlight.

What scientists have learned is that there are large cracks, or vents, in the ocean floor where these creatures exist. These deep-sea vents can be compared to the kinds of geysers you see on land. But, instead of shooting up from the ground, they shoot up from the bottom of the ocean floor. According to the National Oceanographic and Atmospheric Administration, the billowing black smoke that exists on the ocean floor is probably the result of hot liquids bursting from the vents and mixing with the extremely cold ocean water.

What is so shocking about this information? Well, scientists always believed that life on Earth could not exist without sunlight. Yet somehow energy is being released below the surface of the water, and all without the benefit of the sun. It’s as if these undersea vents have created a unique ecosystem, deriving energy from Earth itself.

These underwater creatures are known to scientists as *extremophiles*—a fancy name for organisms that live in an extreme environment. Scientists continue to study these extremophiles to determine just how the creatures turn ocean vents into sources of usable energy.

Item 6

Selected-Response

Which detail from the article **BEST** supports the conclusion that the deep-sea organisms described in the article may have changed our understanding of life?

- A. tall rock formations jutting up from the ocean floor and surrounded by black smoke
- B. odd creatures are not only alive but living in this dark underworld away from light
- C. large cracks, or vents, in the ocean floor where these creatures exist
- D. energy is being released below the surface of the water

Item 7

Selected-Response

Which word **BEST** expresses the meaning of *deriving* in the sentence?

It's as if these undersea vents have created a unique ecosystem, deriving energy from Earth itself.

- A. depositing
- B. emptying
- C. extracting
- D. wasting

Item 8

Drag-and-Drop Technology-Enhanced

Complete the chart by moving the central idea of the passage into the first row of the chart. Then, move the detail that BEST develops this central idea into the second row of the chart.

The screenshot shows a digital assessment interface. At the top, there is a header bar with a refresh icon on the left and a help icon on the right. Below the header is a chart with two rows. The first row is labeled "Central Idea" and has a bullet point in the left margin. The second row is labeled "Supporting Detail" and also has a bullet point in the left margin. Below the chart is a list of text options. The first option is labeled "Central Idea" and contains four sentences: "Scientists use remote-controlled submarines to explore the rocky landscape under the ocean.", "Scientists study geysers on land to understand more about the vents on the ocean floor.", "Scientists explore how life can exist at the bottom of the ocean.", and "Scientists classify different categories of ocean floor organisms to learn more about them." The second option is labeled "Supporting Details" and contains three sentences: "Marine biologists patrol an undersea world that resembles a rocky landscape . . .", "If they shine a light, what they see is something totally unexpected . . .", and "Underwater vents somehow create an environment where these striped creatures can exist. These deep-sea vents can be compared to the kinds of geysers you see on land." At the bottom of the interface is a button labeled "Select to Respond".

- ➡ Due to the size of the response area, this item has a “Select to Respond” button on the screen. Clicking this button will bring up the response area at full size.

Go on to the next page to finish item 8.

Item 8. Continued.

Central Idea
•
Supporting Detail
•

Central Idea

Scientists use remote-controlled submarines to explore the rocky landscape under the ocean.

Scientists study geysers on land to understand more about the vents on the ocean floor.

Scientists explore how life can exist at the bottom of the ocean.

Scientists classify different categories of ocean floor organisms to learn more about them.

Supporting Details

Marine biologists patrol an undersea world that resembles a rocky landscape . . .

If they shine a light, what they see is something totally unexpected . . .

Underwater vents somehow create an environment where these striped creatures can exist.

These deep-sea vents can be compared to the kinds of geysers you see on land.

➡ Use a mouse, touchpad, or touchscreen to move the sentences below the chart into the chart beside the bullets.

SAMPLE ITEM KEYS

Item	Standard/ Element/ Genre	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
6	ELAGSE8RI1 Informational/ Explanatory	2	B	The correct answer is choice (B) odd creatures are not only alive but living in this dark underworld away from light. The passage indicates that prior to the discovery, scientists thought life on Earth could not exist without sunlight. Choices (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect because they do not support this conclusion.
7	ELAGSE8RI4 Informational/ Explanatory	2	C	The correct answer is choice (C) extracting. The article contrasts the way these life forms obtain, or get, energy with the way most life forms get energy. The creatures are <i>extracting</i> energy to stay alive. Choices (A), (B), and (D) are incorrect because <i>depositing</i> , <i>emptying</i> , and <i>wasting</i> would change the meaning of the sentence.
8	ELAGSE8RI2 Informational/ Explanatory	3	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar response on page 38.

EXAMPLE SCORING RUBRIC AND EXEMPLAR RESPONSE

Item 8

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	The student correctly fills in both rows.
1	The student correctly fills in the first row.
0	The student correctly fills in the second row or does not correctly fill in either row.

Exemplar Response

The correct response is shown below.

↺
?

Central Idea
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scientists explore how life can exist at the bottom of the ocean.
Supporting Detail
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Underwater vents somehow create an environment where these striped creatures can exist.

Central Idea

Scientists use remote-controlled submarines to explore the rocky landscape under the ocean.

Scientists study geysers on land to understand more about the vents on the ocean floor.

Scientists classify different categories of ocean floor organisms to learn more about them.

Supporting Details

Marine biologists patrol an undersea world that resembles a rocky landscape . . .

If they shine a light, what they see is something totally unexpected . . .

These deep-sea vents can be compared to the kinds of geysers you see on land.

The correct response for the first part of the chart is “Scientists explore how life can exist at the bottom of the ocean.” This is the correct response because in the passage the author presents information about undersea exploration and scientists’ research on how life can exist in the absence of sunlight. The correct response for the second part of the chart is “Underwater vents somehow create an environment where these striped creatures can exist.” This is the correct response because it is a specific finding that explains how marine life can survive at the bottom of the ocean.

Unit 3: Writing

CONTENT DESCRIPTION

In this unit, you will be reading passages that are similar to passages you may read in the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade assessment. You will use the passages as sources of support for argumentative and informational/explanatory essays and as jumping-off points for narrative writing.

Some informational passages will help you develop arguments and support a point of view on a topic in an argumentative essay. In your writing, you will use evidence, examples, quotations, and reasons to develop and support your argument. Other informational passages will help you develop an informational/explanatory essay. In your writing, you will state ideas, summarize research, and use information from more than one source to develop and support your ideas.

You will also write a narrative in response to a prompt based on a literary or informational passage or a paired passage set you have read. A paired passage set may consist of two literary passages, two informational passages, or one of each passage type. Narrative prompts will vary depending on passage type. For example, you may be asked to write a new beginning or ending to a literary story, write an original story based on information from an informational text, or rewrite a scene from a specific character's point of view. In your writing, you will use narrative techniques to develop a real or imagined experience.

There will also be writing standalone items that assess your revision skills and your understanding of argumentative, informational/explanatory, and narrative writing. For example, you may be asked to answer a selected-response question that focuses only on introducing a topic in an informational text. In addition, there will be writing standalone items that assess your planning and research skills.

Writing Types and Purposes

Argumentative Essay

- An argumentative essay presents an argument and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.
- When you state your claims, you need to support them with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic.

Informational/Explanatory Essay

- An informational/explanatory essay examines a topic and conveys ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant information.
- When you develop your topic, use relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, and other information and examples.

Narrative

- A narrative develops a real or imagined experience or event.
- When you develop your narrative, use narrative techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Production and Distribution of Writing

- Use the writing process to develop argumentative essays, informational/explanatory essays, and narratives.
- Produce writing with an organization and style that fit the task, purpose, and audience.
- Strengthen your writing by reviewing and revising, if needed.

Argumentative Essay

- Introduce a claim or claims and acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims.
- Organize your reasons and evidence logically to support your argument.
- Develop your argument by supporting claims with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources, and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- Use words and phrases to create cohesion and to clarify the relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented in the essay.

Informational/Explanatory Essay

- Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow.
- Organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories.
- Develop your topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, and other information and examples.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- Use precise language to inform about or explain the topic.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented in the essay.

Narrative

- Establish a context and point of view and introduce a narrator and/or characters.
- Organize ideas, thoughts, or events in a sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.
- Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and characters.
- Use a variety of transitional words and phrases to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.
- Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.
- Include a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.

Audience, Purpose, and Voice

- As you write, remember who your audience will be.
- Remember, you are writing for a purpose—think about *what* you are writing and *why*.
- As you write argumentative or informational/explanatory essays, reveal your writing voice by using language that matches the content, connects with your intended readers, and reveals your personality and writing style.
- As you write your narrative, reveal your writing voice by choosing a narrator and point of view that allow your readers to experience the story and relate to the characters in a meaningful way.

Research to Build and Present Knowledge

- Conduct a short research project that uses several sources to answer a question (including your own research question). Think of more questions that will allow for more ways to explore the topic.
- Use search terms to help gather relevant information from multiple sources, including print and digital sources. Consider the credibility and accuracy of each source.
- Avoid plagiarism by quoting or paraphrasing the data and conclusions of others. Give credit for work that you use by following a standard format for citation.
- Use evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Range of Writing

- Write routinely over extended time frames (time for research, reflection, and revision) and shorter time frames (a single sitting or a day or two) for a range of tasks, purposes, and audiences.

Scoring Rubrics

- A narrative scoring rubric can be found beginning on page 89. An informational/explanatory scoring rubric can be found beginning on page 91. An argumentative scoring rubric can be found beginning on page 93. You may find it helpful to read and discuss these rubrics with a parent or another adult.
- The rubrics are important to understand because they show you what is needed to produce a strong piece of argumentative, informational/explanatory, or narrative writing.
- Argumentative, informational/explanatory, and narrative writing on the EOG assessment will be scored using these rubrics.

KEY TERMS

Argumentative texts: Argumentative texts are forms of writing in which the writer makes a claim and supports that claim with reasons and evidence. (W1)

Argument: An argument is the main statement of an argumentative text, which usually appears in the introduction. The argument is the main point on which the writer will develop his or her work in order to convince readers. (W1)

Claims: Claims are ideas and opinions set forth by the writer. For example, a writer could make the claim that the school cafeteria food is too expensive. In a well-developed argumentative essay, the writer should also recognize counterclaims. (W1)

Counterclaim: A reasonable argument that opposes or disagrees with another claim is called a counterclaim. A strong counterclaim is supported by evidence and sound reasoning. Sometimes the writer of a persuasive text will include a counterclaim and the reasons it is weak or wrong in order to strengthen his or her own claim. (W1a)

Introduction: An introduction is the beginning of a piece of writing. The introduction should let readers know what they will be reading about, and it should set up the main idea, or thesis, of the writing. (W1a, W2a)

Organization: Organization refers to the way in which a piece of writing is structured. In writing, the organization helps present ideas and information more clearly. Similar ideas and illustrations should be grouped together, and the order of the information should make sense. Writers use transitions to organize information. Also, an entire piece of writing has an organizational structure to it. Writers structure their texts to match their purpose and audience. For example, if you were writing an argumentative text in which you wanted to show the negative effects of something, you might choose cause and effect as an organizational structure. In informational/explanatory writing, organizational structures may include definition, classification, comparison and contrast, or cause and effect. For example, if you were writing an informational essay in which you wanted to show how two animals are similar or different, you might choose comparison and contrast as an organizational structure. (W1a, W2a, W4)

Evidence: Evidence in a text includes reasons given to support a writer's claims. For example, a writer could include information on the price of school lunch or the number of students who do not want to buy it as reasons to support the claim that the school cafeteria is too expensive. Informational texts may include facts, opinions of experts, quotes, statistics, and definitions that can be used as evidence. In literary text, the characters' thoughts, words, or actions may be used as evidence. (W1a, W1b, W9)

Credible: For a claim to be effective, it must be supported with credible evidence and reasoning. Credible evidence and reasoning is supported by facts and is effective in persuading the audience to agree with the writer's claim. (W1b)

Relationships: Relationships are the ways in which ideas are connected. Writing should use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships between claims and reasons. (W1c)

Cohesion: Cohesion refers to the flow of sentences and paragraphs from one to another. Old and new information is tied together using transitions to help the reader understand how the ideas and concepts within the text are related to each other. (W1c, W2c)

Formal style: Formal style is used in formal writing, such as an essay, research paper, or formal letter. When writing in a formal style, the writer chooses language that matches the audience and purpose and avoids informal language. (W1d, W2e)

Concluding statement: The concluding statement is the end of a piece of writing. The concluding statement should sum up the main purpose of the writing and provide an overall takeaway for the reader. (W1e, W2f)

Informational/explanatory texts: Informational/explanatory texts are a form of writing that informs the reader or explains something. (W2)

Topic: The topic is what a piece of writing is about. (W2a)

Formatting: Formatting is the way in which a piece of writing is organized, designed, and arranged. For example, a writer can use headings and subheadings to organize the writing and present the information in a clear way. (W2a)

Multimedia: Multimedia refers to a variety of media. Writing does not include only pen on paper or a typed essay. Other ways of enhancing writing can include media such as art, presentations, photographs, charts, and videos. (W2a)

Transition: A transition is a word, phrase, or clause that links one idea to the next. Writing should not jump from one idea to the next without transitions that guide the reader to the next idea. Examples include words and phrases such as *another*, *for example*, *also*, and *because*. (W2c)

Precise language: Good writers choose their words carefully and use precise language. Specific and vivid words and phrases describe or explain and make meaning clear. The sentence *A bird was on the ground* is very general and does not use precise language. However, that sentence could be rewritten using more specific nouns and verbs: *A robin landed in the grassy field*. (W2d, W3d)

Formal style: A formal style is less personal and is used in such writing as an essay, research paper, or business letter. When writing in a formal style, the author chooses language that matches the audience and purpose and avoids informal language. (W2e)

Narrative: A narrative is a real or imaginary story that may be about a situation, a single moment in time, or a series of related events and experiences. Experiences are what a character senses through his or her five senses or what a character thinks or feels. Narratives may be about a single moment in time but focus on how one character thinks and feels about it. Narratives may be about a single moment in time but focus on how several different characters think and feel about it. Narratives may also be about a series of related events and experiences and how a character feels about them. Good writers order the thoughts, feelings, events, and experiences in a way that makes sense to the reader and communicates the meaning or message writers want the reader to understand. (W3)

Experience: An experience is an event or series of events that happen to or are seen by a character. In a narrative, characters learn, grow, or find meaning by going through an experience. Any experience in a narrative may be described as a single event (*Mary's team won the soccer game*) or as a series of events (*Mary kicked the ball toward the goal. The goalie dived but missed the ball. The ball landed inside the goal. Mary had scored the winning point. Her team won the game!*). A character may have an experience that he or she is part of (*Mary kicked the soccer ball into the goal*). A character may also watch or observe an experience without being part of it (*Mary watched as her two older brothers played against each other on different soccer teams*). A narrative may include more than one experience. (W3)

Event: An event is a single thing that happens to a character or that a character sees. For example, *John caught the soccer ball* is an event. It is a single thing that happened to the character John. (W3)

Orient the reader: Good writers engage or interest readers and pull them into the narrative by sharing important information that will allow readers to understand what follows. Good writers create context, which is the background information about a story's setting, environment, or structure, to help readers

understand what the story means. When orienting a reader and providing context, writers establish one or more points of view, introduce a narrator and/or characters, describe the setting, establish the pace of the story, and set out a problem, situation, or observation that will drive the narrative. This information should be shared in a way that engages the reader and encourages the reader to follow the story and identify with or have opinions about the characters, situation, and meaning. (W3a)

- **Introduction:** Good writers carefully orient the reader by sharing just enough information in the opening paragraphs of the narrative to create interest and help the reader understand where and when the story is happening. There is no one right way to write an introduction. Introductions may include dialogue, a description of the setting, an introduction of the narrator, a description of a character, an explanation of the situation, or any combination of these. Good writers create a unique introduction for each narrative that best fits the characters, events, tone, pacing, and theme. (W3a)
- **Narrator:** The narrator is the person the writer chooses to tell a story. The narrator may be a character in the story. The narrator may also record the characters' actions, words, and thoughts but not be a character in the story. (W3a)
- **Characters:** Characters are persons, things, or beings in stories. The characters may be real or imaginary. The details a writer shares about characters—the way they think, talk, and act—help the reader understand the characters' personalities. (W3a)
- **Point of view:** The perspective a writer chooses to tell a story from is called the point of view. In the first-person point of view, the narrator tells the story of what is happening to him or her. For example, *I entered the dark storeroom and moved my hand against the wall as I searched for the light switch.* In the third-person limited point of view, the narrator tells the story as though it is happening to someone else. The narrator tells us what the character thinks or feels. For example, *As Sasha entered the dark storeroom, he moved his hand against the wall to find the light switch and worried what he would see when he finally found the light.* In third-person omniscient point of view, the narrator knows what every character is thinking, feeling, and doing in the story. For example, *Sasha entered the dark storeroom and moved his hand nervously against the wall to find the light switch. On the other side of the room, Jen hid behind a box and waited for Sasha to walk by so Jen could jump out and surprise him.* Good writers choose a particular point of view to create surprise, suspense, humor, or tension in a story. (W3a)

Sequence: Sequence is the order of events in a narrative. Often, the events in a story are told in the exact order they happened. Sometimes a story is told out of order to create surprise or help readers learn more about the characters and how they think and behave. (W3, W3a)

Narrative techniques: Narrative techniques are the tools writers use to create interesting experiences, events, and characters in a story. (W3, W3b)

- **Dialogue:** Writers use dialogue to show the reader the exact words the characters are saying. Dialogue usually has quotation marks around it. Each time a new character speaks, a new paragraph begins. The reader learns about characters from the way characters speak or respond to a situation. Dialogue can also move the action forward in a story or cause a character to decide something. (W3b)
- **Description:** Good writers use description to help the reader imagine the characters, settings, and events. Description helps make it feel like the reader is living the events of the story, seeing what the character sees, and feeling what the character feels. This sentence does not have good description: *The kids at my new school were friendly.* These sentences use description to help the reader see and feel what the character experiences: *I stepped into the classroom. I worried that I would not make new friends in my class. After the teacher introduced me, she asked me to tell the class where I was from. "I moved to Georgia from India," I said. "This is my first time in the United States." Everyone in the class smiled at me with shining eyes. "Welcome to our class," a girl in the front row said. "Would you like to sit with me at lunch today?"* (W3b)

- **Pacing:** Pacing is the speed at which a story is told. The pace of a story is influenced by the description of characters, settings, and thoughts or reflections; the use of sensory language; the number of telling details related; the length of sentences, paragraphs, and scenes; dialogue and how many words or sentences a character speaks at one time; and the use of precise word choice. Writers may choose to slow the pace in one part of the narrative and speed up the pace in another or to keep a consistent pace throughout the narrative. (W3b)
- **Reflection:** Reflection is a mental process through which a character analyzes the meaning and impact of something heard, seen, or experienced. The character’s thoughts, feelings, and opinions about the event are revealed when the narrator describes what a character is thinking or feeling. Reflection often slows the pace of a narrative but helps the reader understand the significance of the events to the character and the overall meaning of the narrative. (W3b)

Transitional words and phrases: The reader needs clues in a story to help them know how time is passing and how events are ordered. Transitional words and phrases link one idea to the next and help the reader understand how time is passing in the story. Transitional words and phrases also make clear the order in which events happen. Examples of transitional words are *first*, *next*, *before*, *during*, and *finally*. Examples of transitional phrases are *after that*, *in the beginning*, *it started when*, and *the next day*. (W3c)

Sensory language: Sensory language describes concrete words and phrases in a way that allows the reader to experience the way things look, sound, smell, taste, or feel through imagination. Good writers share sensory details to help the reader paint a mental picture of what it would be like to experience the story. For example, the sentence *The hot spring stank* does not help the reader imagine what the hot spring smelled like. The sentence *The hot spring smelled like rotten eggs that had blown up in the microwave* helps the reader better imagine the smell. (W3d)

Conclusion: Every story needs to have an end. The end can be anywhere the writer chooses to stop writing. But the reader needs to feel like the story is over. Good writers create this feeling of ending with a conclusion. In the conclusion, the events of the story stop, and the reader understands one or more of these ideas: what the story meant, what characters learned, how characters felt about the experience, how characters changed, and what the reader can learn from the story. (W3e)

Audience: The people who will be reading the piece of writing are known as the audience. Writers should keep their audience in mind and adjust their ideas and vocabulary so that they can be best understood. (W4)

Purpose: The writer’s intention for his or her piece is the writer’s purpose. All writing has a purpose, whether it is to persuade, inform, explain, or entertain. (W4)

Writing process: Most informational or technical pieces require research and revision before they can be considered to be finished pieces. Even professional writers may struggle with their words. Drafting, revising, editing, and proofreading your writing are all essential parts of an effective writing process. The steps in the writing process are prewriting, drafting, revising and editing, proofreading, and publishing. (W5)

Research: Research refers to the gathering of information in order to learn more about a topic. (W7, W9)

Source: A source refers to a book, article, website, person, or piece of media that contains information. (W7, W8)

Credibility: Credible sources provide evidence and facts that support the writer’s claim. When a writer uses the evidence and facts from the source to support his or her reasoning and persuade the audience to agree with the writer’s claim, the writer gains credibility. (W8)




Paraphrase: To paraphrase means to use someone else’s ideas and to express those ideas in your own words. Paraphrasing is an acceptable way to support your argument as long as you attribute the ideas to the author and cite the source in the text at the end of the sentence. (W8)

Plagiarism: Plagiarism refers to presenting the words, works, or ideas of someone else as though they are one’s own and without providing attribution to the author. (W8)




Citation: Citation is the way the author tells readers that certain details or information included in the text come from another source. The citation gives readers enough information that they could find the original source and the information in it. (W8)

Important Tips



Argumentative and Informational/Explanatory Essays

-  Organize your writing by using an organizational structure in which your ideas are logically grouped together.
-  For argumentative essays, be sure to develop your argument with reasons supported by facts and details. For informational/explanatory essays, be sure to develop your topic with details, such as facts, definitions, quotations, or other information that supports your topic.
-  Make sure your writing has a concluding statement that supports the argument or information presented.

Narrative

-  Organize the ideas, thoughts, or events in a clear and logical order.
-  Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, and pacing, to develop events and characters.
-  Make sure your narrative has a conclusion.

Argumentative, Informational/Explanatory, and Narrative Writing

-  Strengthen your writing by planning, revising, editing, rewriting, or trying a new approach.
-  **Use the writer’s checklist before, during, and after writing to make sure you are meeting the criteria.**

SAMPLE ITEMS

The practice writing items for this unit include an extended writing-response item, an extended constructed-response item, and writing standalone items. There are also sample reading comprehension items connected to the passages you will read in this unit. You will have sample selected-response, evidence-based selected-response, and/or constructed-response items in this section. In the actual assessment, there is often a mix of reading comprehension and extended constructed-response and/or extended writing-response items connected to one passage or passage set.

Sample Items 9–12

Extended Writing-Response (Argumentative or Informational/Explanatory Essay)

In Section 1 of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade assessment, you will be asked to comprehend a pair of informational passages and use information from the passages to write an argumentative or informational/explanatory essay. The structure of the practice items in this unit is similar to how the task will appear in Section 1 of the End-of-Grade assessment:

1. Two selected-response (multiple-choice) questions (three on the actual test)
2. A constructed-response question
3. An extended writing-response question

The instructions for the extended writing prompt are in the same form as those that appear on the Georgia Milestones assessment. In the actual assessment, you will receive either an argumentative or an informational/explanatory writing task. The sample provided in this resource is an example of an argumentative writing task.

This section of the test assesses your skill to comprehend reading passages and use information from the passages to write an argumentative essay.

Before you begin writing your essay, you will read two passages and answer two multiple-choice questions and one constructed-response question about what you have read.

As you read the passages, think about details you may use in an argumentative essay about labeling menu options.

These are the titles of the passages you will read:

1. Label the Meals
2. We Don't Need Labels

Label the Meals

Our city has proposed that establishments selling meals—restaurants and fast-food places—post nutritional information on their menus or menu boards. For the good of our citizens, this measure must pass.

I'll start by making an obvious point, one that both sides should agree on. Healthy people are happier and more productive. One part of the healthy person equation is, of course, fitness, and that is clearly good for the individual. However, eating nutritious food is another part of that same equation. Labeling meals in restaurants is one sure way of helping people take charge of their well-being.

According to studies, the average American eats at home about two-thirds of the time. Over the last 25 years, the packaging of food to be consumed in the home has included nutritional information: calories, fat calories, sodium, calcium, and the like. It's the law to include this information on all packaging, regardless of whether the food is healthful or not. So it makes no sense to deny the consumer the same information when dining out.

Research shows that when such information is available, about one-quarter of customers use it to limit what they decide to eat. Those customers consume an average of 400 fewer calories than they typically did prior to labeling. Another study compared results in a nationwide coffee shop that also sold pastries. In some cities, the shops were required to post the calories for each item; in other cities, there was no such information. The average purchase contained about 100 fewer calories when the information was provided. The U.S. government agrees that restaurant meals should be labeled. It is part of the Affordable Care Act of 2010, which requires that standard menu items include information on nutrition.¹

Eating out is on the rise. In 1977, Americans consumed 18% of their calories away from home. Less than 30 years later, that number had risen to 33%. It nearly doubled. This trend poses increased risks for all of us, not just in terms of calories, but in terms of unhealthful ingredients such as fat and sodium. Armed with relevant information, consumers can address this risk and be better for it.

We know the octane level of the fuel we put in our cars. We should know the relevant information about the fuel we put in our bodies. Please vote for labeling.

¹www.federalregister.gov

We Don't Need Labels

The proposal to require our community's eating establishments to post nutritional information for their meals is misdirected. It will not achieve any of the benefits its supporters claim.

First, the research claiming a reduction in caloric intake is, at times, contradictory. For instance, when researchers interviewed customers, they were told that the information caused them to select a "healthier" meal. However, when the cash register records were analyzed, there was no change from the way those same customers ordered previously. People may like the idea of nutritional labeling, but they still don't seem to be acting on it. I would suggest that those who claim to be reading and following the nutritional information actually need it the least. They are already health conscious. They have a good idea which meals are laden with calories, fats, and other ingredients. The Food and Drug Administration not only requires food be labeled but also provides the % Daily Value so that you can track the nutrients you are consuming.¹

A good number of restaurant patrons are frequently looking for something other than a healthful eating experience. They are there for convenience, for a break in the routine, or for a special occasion. For these people, labeling is irrelevant.

But for the restaurant, it is a nuisance and a potential threat to their business. It means that before a new item goes on the menu, it has to be evaluated. It means that as recipes are modified and improved, more testing is needed. This is government inserting itself into business. Food should look good and taste good.

Foods for home consumption have been labeled for decades, but according to consumer research, that information has had a minimal effect on sales. What food producers have learned is that the overall packaging makes a far greater difference. The words "Lite," "Low fat," and "Heart Smart" do attract buyers. Restaurants are free to group selections according to reasonable health standards. This would probably mean more to the average consumer than trying to sort through the difference between 1,350 calories and 1,375 calories. Let's face it—the tastiest foods are the ones loaded with calories.

While labeling appears to promote healthful dining, its actual impact will most likely be minimal at best and harmful at worst.

¹U.S. Food and Drug Administration (www.fda.gov)

Item 9

Selected-Response

How does the passage “Label the Meals” make a connection between labeling nutritional information in restaurants and people making healthy food choices?

- A. by suggesting that healthy people are happy and lead more productive lives
- B. by supplying statistics on the percentage of calories Americans consume while eating at restaurants
- C. by highlighting the fact that the Affordable Care Act of 2010 mandates restaurant food labeling
- D. by citing research that shows customers now consume an average of 400 fewer calories than prior to labeling

Item 10

Selected-Response

Which evidence does the author of “We Don’t Need Labels” include to contradict the claim that customers order foods with fewer calories when restaurants post nutritional information?

- A. personal stories about eating out with family and friends
- B. an analysis of cash register records for restaurant customers
- C. interviews with restaurant patrons talking about food
- D. explanations and statistics from the Food and Drug Administration

Item 11

Constructed-Response

Analyze how the authors of “Label the Meals” and “We Don’t Need Labels” each present conflicting arguments about requiring restaurants to label their foods.

Use details from BOTH passages to support your analysis. Write your answer on the lines on your answer document.

A large rectangular box containing 18 horizontal lines for writing an answer.

Item 12

Extended Writing-Response

WRITING TASK

There is currently a debate about labeling menu choices with nutritional information.

Think about BOTH sides of the debate. Should restaurants and fast-food establishments be required to publish nutritional information on their menus? Write an **argumentative essay** in your own words supporting either side of the debate.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your **argumentative essay**.

Writer's Checklist

Be sure to:

- Introduce your claim.
- Support your claim with logical reasons and relevant evidence from the passages.
- Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
- Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Use words, phrases, or clauses to connect ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Use clear language and vocabulary.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the argument presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

Now write your argumentative essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer's Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.

Sample Items 13–16

Extended Constructed-Response (Narrative)

On the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade assessment, you will write a narrative in response to a prompt based on a literary or informational passage or a paired passage set you have read. In the actual assessment, you will also respond to reading comprehension questions before writing your narrative. Narrative prompts will vary depending on passage type. The sample provided in this resource is an example of a narrative prompt based on an informational paired passage set.

Read the articles and answer questions 13 through 16.

Play Video Games, Solve Real-World Problems

Video games have been a popular way to spend our free time since the 1970s. But can playing video games be more than a hobby? Today, there are many opportunities for gamers to have fun while also contributing to research projects. The best part is that gamers do not need to be scientists or have degrees in video game design to participate.

Foldit was one of the first games to use this player-scientist model. In this game, players help find cures for diseases. Players do this by “folding” proteins. This process is a lot like putting together a three-dimensional puzzle. According to the *Foldit* website, “Since proteins are part of so many diseases, they can also be part of the cure. Players can design brand-new proteins that could help prevent or treat important diseases.”

Foldit players successfully discovered the shape of certain proteins. Players did this faster than scientists working in a laboratory could have. The University of Michigan held a special *Foldit* competition to identify a protein’s shape. In the competition, gamers beat both college students and professional researchers. “It shows that anybody with a 3-D mentality, including gamers, can do something that previously only scientists did, and in doing so they can help scientific progress,” said James Bardwell, professor at the University of Michigan.

Video game–based projects also exist for players interested in space, animals, or the arts. The website Zooniverse calls itself “the world’s largest and most popular platform for people-powered research.” The site emphasizes that gamers don’t require any special training to participate. For example, one Zooniverse project allows gamers to search for undiscovered planets. Another project seeks the help of gamers to record weather data from old handwritten pages. Gamers can also identify animals in photos from places as varied as New York City in the United States and the Serengeti in east-central Africa.

Alexandra Swanson of the University of Oxford is one of the scientists leading the Snapshot Serengeti project. Her team had more photos than they could catalog. Rather than recruiting the help of other scientists, Swanson asked gamers for help. Volunteers went through 18 months’ worth of photos in three days, classifying over one million animals. “This is the largest data set of its kind and would never have been possible without the help of the general public,” Swanson said.

But having gamers solve real-world problems is controversial. Gamers may spend long hours online, trying to solve a problem. Some people think it is unethical to ask gamers to research for long hours without pay. But many gamers disagree. For example, Eli Fisker is a librarian. He’s also a top-ranked player of EteRNA, a game similar to *Foldit*. Fisker enjoys playing EteRNA because it helps him feel empowered. He said, “We play, fail and succeed. I can do something concrete about a specific problem.”

Careers in Video Games

Have you ever played a video game and thought about how the game could be improved? Have you wished you could help create a video game? If so, a career in the growing video game field may be for you.

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, careers in video game design will continue to skyrocket, placing it among the fastest-growing careers in the United States. The U.S. Bureau of Labor Statistics projects that the demand for game-design jobs will continue to increase each year by over 8 percent. While many job opportunities exist in the video game industry, the two best-known jobs are video game designer and video game developer. The video game designer comes up with the concept and storylines of the game. The video game developer is responsible for the computer programming that makes the game run. Other jobs in the industry include video game artists, sound designers, and product testers.

You will need to study different fields, depending on what role you want in the industry. Designers typically have college degrees or certificates in game design or a related field, such as creative writing. Designers often study game theory, game strategy, creative writing, and project management. Developers usually hold degrees in video game development, computer programming, software engineering, or a similar area. Developers study programming languages. Artists usually have art school degrees. They study traditional art techniques and how to use them in a digital environment. Sound designers may receive music or sound engineering degrees.

If you are interested in a career in video games, you can start preparing now. Think about games you already play. What do you like about these games, and which features of the game would you improve? Start writing down your own ideas. Think about story lines, characters, and environments you would like a game to have. If you are interested in programming a game, you can find free resources about this online.

In high school, take classes that will give you a head start in college. Computer science and programming classes are good choices. Art and design classes are also important. Math is crucial for game development and programming. English and writing classes develop skills essential for any game designer. Even extracurricular activities can help. Student government, sports teams, and clubs can help you develop leadership and teamwork skills. These are qualities you will need no matter what job you have.

Item 13

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Technology-Enhanced

This question has two parts. Answer Part A, and then answer Part B.

Part A

Which statement **BEST** describes a key claim the author makes in “Play Video Games, Solve Real-World Problems”?

- A. Scientists prefer to conduct research projects with the assistance of gamers.
- B. Most gamers prefer to work on research projects that involve identifying animals.
- C. Gamers who make research contributions should be compensated for their work.
- D. Gamers willing to take part in online research can be extremely helpful to scientists.

Part B

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

- A. According to the *Foldit* website, “Since proteins are part of so many diseases, they can also be part of the cure.”
- B. The website Zooniverse calls itself “the world’s largest and most popular platform for people-powered research.”
- C. Volunteers went through 18 months’ worth of photos in three days, classifying over one million animals.
- D. Some people think it is unethical to ask gamers to research for long hours without pay.

Item 14

Selected-Response

Read the sentence from “Careers in Video Games.”

According to the U.S. Department of Labor, careers in video game design will continue to skyrocket, placing it among the fastest-growing careers in the United States.

What is the **MOST LIKELY** reason the author uses the word *skyrocket* in the sentence?

- A. to indicate that experts believe video games are becoming too popular
- B. to acknowledge that many famous video games have a space theme
- C. to emphasize that the opportunities in the video game industry are exciting
- D. to express concern that there are currently not enough video game designers

Item 15**Selected-Response**

Which statement BEST contrasts the authors' points of view in BOTH passages?

- A. The author of "Play Video Games, Solve Real-World Problems" thinks that people should study science, while the author of "Careers in Video Games" thinks it is more important for people to study programming and art.
- B. The author of "Play Video Games, Solve Real-World Problems" believes video games should focus on research, while the author of "Careers in Video Games" believes video games should simply be played for fun.
- C. The author of "Play Video Games, Solve Real-World Problems" claims that there is a decrease in career opportunities because of games that collect data, while the author of "Careers in Video Games" claims that the video game industry is growing.
- D. The author of "Play Video Games, Solve Real-World Problems" believes members of the video game industry can be helpful with no training, while the author of "Careers in Video Games" thinks that people need a great deal of training to succeed in the video game industry.

Sample Items 17–23

Writing Standalone Items

On the Georgia Milestones End-of-Grade assessment, there will be writing standalone items that assess your understanding of argumentative, informational/explanatory, and narrative writing and revision skills. There will also be writing standalone items that assess your writing planning and research skills.

Item 17

Selected-Response

Read the paragraph from a student’s argumentative essay.

¹Over the past few years, our school has not offered a student newspaper program. ²Living in the digital age, it may seem as though the idea of a printed newspaper is outdated and unnecessary, but I think it is important to bring back this tradition. ³School newspapers allow student writers to express their creative ideas and student readers to learn about the people, activities, and trends in their schools. ⁴Students who work on school newspapers gain invaluable experience in writing, researching, and interviewing. ⁵For these reasons, we should consider reestablishing a printed student newspaper at our school.

Which sentence should be added between sentence 4 and sentence 5 to provide credible and relevant support for the student’s argument?

- A. According to Dr. Lyons, a journalism professor at a local university, “The school will need to plan in advance how frequently newspapers are printed and recruit students who are interested in journalism to work on the newspaper staff.”
- B. A study conducted by the High School Journalism Institute found that roughly 20 percent of students who worked on their school newspaper demonstrated better writing and grammar skills in college than students who did not have those journalism experiences.
- C. According to Mr. Johnson, the football coach, “Similar to sports, working on the school newspaper requires teamwork, which is necessary to meet print deadlines.”
- D. In a recent school survey, 70 percent of students felt a school newspaper would help students feel more connected to each other, but an overwhelming number of these students indicated they would be most interested in reading an online newspaper.

Item 18**Selected-Response**

A student is writing an informational essay about the International Space Station (ISS). The student's central idea focuses on how astronauts who live and work on the ISS are learning valuable information that benefits people on Earth. Which information should the student include in her essay to BEST help the reader understand the topic?

- A. a list of specific examples of how research on the ISS has improved life on Earth
- B. a map that highlights the different countries that were involved in building the ISS
- C. a diagram that shows the total distance between the ISS and Earth
- D. a photograph of an astronaut's living quarters on the ISS

Item 19**Selected-Response**

Read the paragraph from a student's narrative.

“Have fun on your field trip, Alma! You may want to pack an umbrella.” My dad's last-minute advice repeated in my head. I wished I had taken his advice, but I never expected to encounter a drenching downpour of rain during the school hiking trip. Yet here I was, soaked to the bone and unable to see more than a few steps in front of me on the nature trail. For only a moment, I lost sight of the trail guide and my group, but it was enough time to make my stomach somersault with worry. Calmly, I stopped and peered intently through the wall of rain, straining to see someone ahead of me. I saw the orange vest of the guide. What a relief! I raced forward, and when I reached Josie in the back of the group, I grabbed her hand and vowed not to let go until the rain stopped.

Which revision of the underlined sentence is the BEST way to add more sensory language to the paragraph?

- A. I noticed something orange, maybe the trail guide's vest, moving ahead of me.
- B. Through the falling rain, I caught a glimpse of bright orange ahead of me.
- C. A little farther down the trail, I thought I recognized the trail guide wearing orange in the distance.
- D. Suddenly a flash appeared, and I realized it was the guide's neon-orange vest glowing through the rain.

Item 20

Selected-Response

Read the paragraph from a student's report.

¹Amateur chefs seeking to create the perfect omelet or bake a delicious cookie often turn to online recipes or cooking shows for tips on food preparation. ²Some, though, are taking their cooking skills to a new level by enrolling in science classes. ³In these classes, people can learn important scientific principles that help them become better chefs. ⁴They learn, for example, how mechanical agitation can cause proteins to denature. ⁵Additionally, they may learn about the chemical changes that occur when heat is applied to eggs, dairy products, and various types of cooking oils.

What should the student do to make the paragraph clearer for the audience while still maintaining the purpose of the report?

- A. Include a recipe for the cookies described in sentence 1.
- B. List other reasons a student may take a chemistry class in sentence 2.
- C. Define and explain the unfamiliar terms included in sentence 4.
- D. Describe where chefs can purchase the ingredients listed in sentence 5.

Item 21

Selected-Response

Genevieve is working on a research paper. She is interested in the topic of plants that have healing properties. She needs to focus her research more specifically.

Which question is BEST for the purpose of focusing her research?

- A. How have plants been used for medicine throughout history?
- B. How has one type of plant been used as medicine?
- C. How can people create recipes that use healthy plants in their diets?
- D. How have the health benefits of plants been used to sell products?

Item 22

Drop-Down Technology-Enhanced

A student wrote a letter to the principal about a potential field trip. Choose the phrase from each drop-down menu that maintains the formal style of the letter.

The movie *The Pursuit of Revolutionary Freedom* will be released in theaters at the end of next month. Each eighth-grade class in our school is currently reading the historical fiction novel upon which the film is based. The book shows during the American Revolution. Giving the eighth graders the opportunity to see the movie would be . Please consider the possibility of an eighth-grade field trip to the movie theater next month.

- ➡ Use a mouse, touchpad, or touchscreen to click the arrow beside each of the two blank boxes. When you click the arrow, a drop-down menu will appear, showing you all the possible options for that blank. Each drop-down menu with its options is shown below.

The movie *The Pursuit of Revolutionary Freedom* will be released in theaters at the end of next month. Each eighth-grade class in our school is currently reading the historical fiction novel upon which the film is based. The book shows during the American Revolution. Giving the eighth graders the opportunity to . Please consider the possibility of an eighth-grade field trip to the movie theater next month.

historical stuff that happened
several perspectives about life
how those guys lived

The movie *The Pursuit of Revolutionary Freedom* will be released in theaters at the end of next month. Each eighth-grade class in our school is currently reading the historical fiction novel upon which the film is based. The book shows during the American Revolution. Giving the eighth graders the opportunity to see the movie would be . Please consider the possibility of an eighth-grade field trip to the movie theater next month.

a really cool thing to do
the movie that should totally be made
a positive educational experience

Item 23

Drag-and-Drop Technology-Enhanced

A student is writing a research report to answer the question “How successful has the United States Women’s Ice Hockey Team been in the Olympics compared to teams from other countries?” Move the TWO relevant sources into the chart.

Relevant Sources
<ul style="list-style-type: none">••


a graphic showing the increase in female hockey players in the United States over the past 20 years

a book titled *Olympic Hockey History: World Teams That Battled on the Ice*

an online article titled “The Hockey Star Who Skated Her Way to Olympic Glory”

an article explaining how the United States selects players for its Olympic hockey teams

a chart listing results of each women’s hockey game in the Olympics since 1998

-  Use a mouse, touchpad, or touchscreen to move the descriptions below the chart into the chart beside the bullets.

SAMPLE ITEM KEYS

Item	Standard/ Element/ Genre	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
9	ELAGSE8RI3 Informational/ Explanatory	2	D	The correct answer is choice (D) by citing research that shows customers now consume an average of 400 fewer calories than prior to labeling. The author of “Label the Meals” makes the connection between labeling information and people making healthy food choices with this evidence. Although choices (A), (B), and (C) also provide passage-based evidence, they do not support the connection between labeling and consuming fewer calories.
10	ELAGSE8RI6 Informational/ Explanatory	2	B	The correct answer is choice (B) an analysis of cash register records for restaurant customers. Choices (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect because this is not the kind of evidence that the author supplies to contradict the claim that customers order foods with fewer calories when nutritional information is posted in restaurants.
11	ELAGSE8RI9 Informational/ Explanatory	3	N/A	See scoring rubric and sample responses on page 68.
12	ELAGSE8W1 ELAGSE8L1 ELAGSE8L2	4	N/A	See scoring rubric beginning on page 93 and sample response on page 69.
13	ELAGSE8RI8 Informational/ Explanatory	3	D/C	<p>The correct answers are choices (D) Gamers willing to take part in online research can be extremely helpful to scientists and (C) Volunteers went through 18 months’ worth of photos in three days, classifying over one million animals.</p> <p>A key claim the author makes in the passage is that everyday video gamers can help collect data for scientists. The answer choice for Part B of the item shows text from the passage that supports this key claim.</p> <p>In Part A, choice (A) is incorrect because it is a misinterpretation of the passage. The author does not claim that scientists prefer to conduct research with the help of gamers. Choice (B) is incorrect because it is an incorrect assumption based on a specific research example provided in the text. Choice (C) is incorrect because the author includes this as a counterargument rather than support for a claim. The incorrect options in Part B support incorrect answers in Part A.</p>

Item	Standard/ Element/ Genre	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
14	ELAGSE8RI4 Informational/ Explanatory	2	C	The correct answer is choice (C) to emphasize that the opportunities in the video game industry are exciting. The article focuses on how the video game industry is continuing to grow. Choices (A), (B), and (D) are incorrect because they reflect misinterpretations of why the author uses the word <i>skyrocket</i> .
15	ELAGSE8RI6 Informational/ Explanatory	3	D	The correct answer is choice (D) The author of “Play Video Games, Solve Real-World Problems” believes members of the video game industry can be helpful with no training, while the author of “Careers in Video Games” thinks that people need a great deal of training to succeed in the video game industry. The first passage focuses on how everyday people can help support research simply by playing video games. The second passage focuses on the steps one must take to become qualified to work in the video game industry. Choice (A) is incorrect because the author of the first passage does not advocate that people should study science. Choice (B) is incorrect because the author of the second passage focuses on careers in video games rather than the fun of the games. Choice (C) is incorrect because the first author does not focus on career opportunities in the video game industry.
16	ELAGSE8W3	4	N/A	See scoring rubric beginning on page 89 and sample responses beginning on page 70.
17	ELAGSE8W1b	2	B	The correct answer is choice (B) A study conducted by the High School Journalism Institute found that roughly 20 percent of students who worked on their school newspaper demonstrated better writing and grammar skills in college than students who did not have those journalism experiences. The student is trying to convince the school to reinstate the newspaper program and is emphasizing potential benefits of this program. This is a credible statistic to support the student’s argument. Choice (A) is incorrect because, while the source seems credible, the focus of the sentence is on the logistics of starting a newspaper program and not the benefits. Choice (C) is incorrect because the football coach is not the most credible source for this particular purpose. Choice (D) is incorrect because, while the source seems credible, the information about online newspapers lacks relevance to the student’s argument.

Item	Standard/ Element/ Genre	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
18	ELAGSE8W2a	2	A	The correct answer is choice (A) a list of specific examples of how research on the ISS has improved life on Earth. This information directly supports the student's central idea. Choice (B) is incorrect because a map showing the countries involved in building the ISS does not support the central idea. Choice (C) is incorrect because the total distance between the ISS and Earth is not relevant to the central idea. Choice (D) is incorrect because, although the central idea mentions living on the ISS, the focus is on the information astronauts are learning.
19	ELAGSE8W3d	2	D	The correct answer is choice (D) Suddenly a flash appeared, and I realized it was the guide's neon-orange vest glowing through the rain. This option contains the best sensory language to replace the underlined sentence in the paragraph. Choice (A) is incorrect because the detail lacks sensory detail. Choice (B) is incorrect because, while "caught a glimpse" seems appealing, the sentence does not reveal that the character saw the orange vest, which is a necessary detail in the story. Choice (C) is incorrect because the detail is repetitive and lacks sensory detail.
20	ELAGSE8W4	3	C	The correct answer is choice (C) Define and explain the unfamiliar terms included in sentence 4. The sentence uses science-specific vocabulary that stands out as needing additional explanation. Choice (A) is incorrect because including a recipe will not reinforce the purpose of the report. Choice (B) is incorrect because adding these reasons is irrelevant to the purpose of the report. Choice (D) is incorrect because describing where these ingredients can be purchased is irrelevant to the purpose of the report.
21	ELAGSE8W7	2	B	The correct answer is choice (B) How has one type of plant been used as medicine? This question will best focus this research paper, as it supports narrowing the topic to one plant with healing properties. Choice (A) is far too broad, and choices (C) and (D) are not closely enough related to the research topic.
22	ELAGSE8W1d	2	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar response on page 72.
23	ELAGSE8W8	2	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar response on page 73.

EXAMPLE SCORING RUBRICS AND EXEMPLAR RESPONSES

Item 11

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	<p>The exemplar shows a full-credit response. It achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives sufficient evidence of the ability to analyze a case in which two texts provide conflicting information on the same topic • Includes specific examples/details that make clear reference to the text • Adequately analyzes conflicting information with clearly relevant details based on the text
1	<p>The exemplar shows a 1-point response. It achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives limited evidence of the ability to analyze a case in which two texts provide conflicting information on the same topic • Includes vague/limited examples/details that make reference to the text • Analyzes conflicting information with vague/limited details based on the text
0	<p>The exemplar shows a response that would earn no credit. It achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives no evidence of the ability to analyze a case in which two texts provide conflicting information on the same topic

Exemplar Response

Points Awarded	Sample Response
2	<p>The authors of both passages present conflicting arguments about requiring restaurants to label their food. The author of “Label the Meals” argues that restaurants should have labels stating nutrition facts. The author develops the argument by referring to research and studies that show nutritional information helps people become healthier. For example, the author states that research shows that when nutritional information is available in restaurants, “about one-quarter of customers use it to limit what they decide to eat” and, in turn, “consume an average of 400 fewer calories than they typically did prior to labeling.” The author of “We Don’t Need Labels” presents the conflicting argument that nutritional labels aren’t necessary in restaurants. This author claims that labels do not have a big effect on making people healthier and references a study that indicates nutritional labeling hasn’t impacted what consumers are buying. The author then proposes alternative suggestions that might influence consumers, such as grouping selections on a menu according to reasonable health standards.</p>
1	<p>Both passages present conflicting arguments about restaurants providing nutritional labels on their menus. The author of “Label the Meals” argues that, according to research, foods with labels can make people healthier. The author of “We Don’t Need Labels” argues that labels don’t necessarily impact whether someone makes a healthier food choice in a restaurant.</p>
0	<p>Nutritional labeling is a topic many people have different opinions about. In fact, the authors of “Label the Meals” and “We Don’t Need Labels” have conflicting arguments about whether food labels should be required in restaurants.</p>

Item 12

The following is an example of a seven-point response. See the seven-point, two-trait rubric for a text-based argumentative response on pages 93 and 94 to see why this example would earn the maximum number of points.

I like being informed. I like to know what will be on a test: not the exact questions, but the material. I watch movie trailers to decide if I'll see a particular movie. And I want to know the nutritional information of the food that I put in my body. Knowing the contents of foods alerts me to ingredients that trigger allergies. In addition, knowing the nutrients and calories helps me balance each meal. Fats, sugars, and carbohydrates are part of many foods, but they can be overdone.

Labeling is not hard for the majority of restaurants because most of them are chains. They already operate in regions with labeling laws, so they already know the contents of each meal. If their hamburger has 560 calories in New York City, it will have 560 calories here. The restaurants unique to our community are small in number and also small in scope. They specialize in seafood or Thai cuisine. The similarity of offerings will make labeling nearly automatic. Whether difficult or easy, presenting the nutritional information of food is critical to the health of the consumer. The author of the passage "Label the Meals" supports this claim by stating that research has shown that when nutritional information is available, "about one-quarter of customers use it to limit what they decide to eat." Those customers in turn eat fewer calories and make healthier choices.

I do have some sympathy for the government argument and also for the fact that fewer than half of consumers will probably care. The author of "We Don't Need Labels" might be onto something when he or she states that forcing restaurants to provide nutritional information is one way government is "inserting itself into business." But sometimes these rules put in place by the government end up having a positive result. For example, there was a time when the government required manufacturers to put seat belts in cars, and later airbags and antilock brakes. At first, people resisted wearing the belts and complained about the increased cost. Yet who would buy a car without those features today? The same will be true for labeling. People will eventually come to realize that they are better off knowing this information to be active participants in promoting their own health.

In the meantime, people can pay attention to the nutritional information provided by restaurants or not. It is their choice. My choice will be to read the contents and eat healthy.

Item 16

To view the four-point holistic rubric for a text-based narrative response, see pages 89 and 90.

Exemplar Response

Points Awarded	Sample Response
4	<p>Ah, it’s the end of the school day which means the start of video game club! Me and my friend Charlie have been going to this club after school all semester long and finally today our teacher Mr. Landy thinks we’ve learned enough to actually make our own video game! I’m so excited! So I ask Charlie, “what type of game do you wanna make?”</p> <p>“Well, Landy says it should be something that helps people. What if we make a game for people to practice foreign languages with? It could be very helpful for people to learn a new language or even people who just want to practice a language they already know. Plus, you and I are in Spanish class together so we can use study ideas from class in our learning program.” Charlie said.</p> <p>“That’s a great idea,” I exclaim, with a smile growing on my face. “Let’s get started right away.” Since we had the basic idea for the design of the game done, it was time to start working on the actual game. We agreed to divide up the work. Charlie had always been a genius at programming so he decided to work on that while I worked on the artwork for the game. I’ve always loved using the computer to create art! And so we each started to work. It took weeks of programming and design work, and a few times we had to run ideas by our Spanish teacher to make sure we were on the right track. But when it was done I felt so proud of everything we had accomplished.</p> <p>The game was finished after what seemed like an eternity. It actually was a lot of fun to play, and very educational. We turned in the project to Mr. Landy, each of us grinning from ear to ear about the work we had done. The next day, Mr. Landy said it was one of the best games anyone has ever made in video game club. He even gave us an A+!</p>
3	<p>One day, Stan and Maria were given the assignment in video game club that they create their own video game. Their teacher said “Make sure your game can make a positive change in the world.” They had just been learning about other games that helped science researchers study proteins. It took awhile but Stan and Maria eventually came up with the idea of a game that help people learn the proper ways to sort recycling. “What better way to help the world than to help the environment, Stan you’re so smart” Maria said. And so they started out designing and programing the game. They asked for information from kids in the school recycling club. The kids gave many recycling facts and tips to include in the game. It was hard work, but they eventually completed the game. To test the game out, Maria and Stan played for high scores with some of their classmates. Stan felt so glad that everybody was having fun with the game and that he hadnt messed up the programing. Maria just hoped that they might learn something and that in some small way the game would help the world.</p>

Go on to the next page to finish item 16.

Item 16

Exemplar Response
(continued)

Points Awarded	Sample Response
2	Today the teacher assigned the video game club to form groups and Jesse and Aimee decided to work together on their game. The game would be about there favorite subject, history. the game would teach you and show you how things really happened and the history background of it and Jesse hoped that if people had a better understanding of history they could use it for modern problems. They were so happy when they finished it they knew people would learn.
1	in video game club, i got to make a new game. you got to run around and solve problems in the world and help people. it was sooo much fun i forget that i had other homework to do too.
0	Today in video game club

Item 22

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
1	The student correctly selects both drop-down menu options.
0	The student does not correctly select both drop-down menu options.

Exemplar Response

The correct response is shown below.

The movie *The Pursuit of Revolutionary Freedom* will be released in theaters at the end of next month. Each eighth-grade class in our school is currently reading the historical fiction novel upon which the film is based. The book shows during the American Revolution. Giving the eighth graders the opportunity to see the movie would be . Please consider the possibility of an eighth-grade field trip to the movie theater next month.

A student writing a persuasive letter to the principal should employ a formal tone; this type of tone establishes the writer’s serious intent and respect for the audience. In the first drop-down menu, the correct response is “several perspectives about life.” This response is correct because it is the most formal choice of language and because it maintains the academic tone used throughout the paragraph. In contrast, the other responses use informal, colloquial language, which is not appropriate for this mode of writing or audience. In the second drop-down menu, the correct response is “a positive educational experience.” This response is the most formal and appropriate word choice for this mode of writing and audience. In contrast, the other options use slang and colloquial language that are inappropriate for this writing task.

Item 23

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	The student correctly fills in both bullets (order within the box does not matter).
1	The student correctly fills in one bullet (order within the box does not matter).
0	The student does not correctly fill in either bullet.

Exemplar Response

The correct response is shown below.

Relevant Sources

- a book titled *Olympic Hockey History: World Teams That Battled on the Ice*
- a chart listing results of each women’s hockey game in the Olympics since 1998

a graphic showing the increase in female hockey players in the United States over the past 20 years

an online article titled “The Hockey Star Who Skated Her Way to Olympic Glory”

an article explaining how the United States selects players for its Olympic hockey teams

The correct responses are “a book titled *Olympic Hockey History: World Teams That Battled on the Ice*” and “a chart listing results of each women’s hockey game in the Olympics since 1998.” Both of these sources are likely to have information about many Olympic ice hockey teams as well as data regarding the success of these teams. NOTE: Response order does not affect scoring.

Unit 4: Language

CONTENT DESCRIPTION

The language portion of the English Language Arts test focuses on the conventions of Standard English, including grammar and usage and the proper use of capitalization, punctuation, and spelling.

Conventions of Standard English

- Show a command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing.
- Show a command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
- Understand the rules of comma, ellipsis, and dash usage, and use the punctuation correctly.
- Understand how to form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive moods.

Knowledge of Language

- Express yourself clearly and in an interesting way.
- Choose words carefully so readers understand what you are writing.
- Use verbs in the active and passive voice and in the conditional and subjunctive mood to achieve particular effects in your writing.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

- Use different strategies (e.g., context, affixes, roots) to help you determine the meaning of unknown or multiple-meaning words.
- Show an understanding of figurative language (i.e., similes, metaphors, personification, hyperbole, idioms, onomatopoeia, alliteration, and assonance) and interpret figures of speech (e.g., verbal irony, puns).
- Use the relationships between particular words to better understand each of the words.
- Think about the connotations of words with similar definitions.
- Use reference materials to determine or clarify a specific word's precise meaning or its part of speech.

KEY TERMS

Grammar: Grammar refers to the set of rules for language. (L1)

Usage: Using the correct word when there is a choice is known as correct usage (e.g., *to*, *too*, and *two*). (L1)

Participle: A participle is a verb form that functions as an adjective within the sentence. Present participles typically end in *-ing* and past participles typically end in *-ed*. (L1a)

Gerund: A gerund is a present participle that is used as a noun. It can be the subject of a verb, the object of a verb, a predicate nominative or complement, or the object of a preposition. (L1a)

Infinitive: An infinitive is a phrase that consists normally of the word “to” followed by a verb. The phrase can act as a noun, adjective, or adverb within the sentence. Examples are *to swim*, *to learn*, and *to look*. (L1a)

Active voice: A sentence uses active voice when the subject of the sentence performs the action expressed in the verb. This is a preferred construction for most writing to present ideas clearly and to avoid unnecessary wordiness. An example is *The girl caught the fish.* (L1b)

Passive voice: A sentence uses passive voice when the subject of the sentence receives the action. An example of passive voice is *The fish was caught by the boy.* (L1b)

Indicative verb: The indicative verb is used to simply state a fact or opinion. (L1c)

Imperative verb: The imperative verb is used to command or tell someone to take action. It is understood that the pronoun *you* is the direct object of the imperative verb. Examples are *eat, sit, and be.* (L1c)

Interrogative verb: An interrogative verb is used when the author or speaker is asking a question. (L1c)

Conditional verb: A conditional verb is used when a situation is dependent on a particular condition. An example is *I would love to see you if you have some time available today.* (L1c)

Subjunctive verb: A subjunctive verb shows something that is contrary to fact. An example is *I wish we would have had dinner earlier.* (L1c)

Punctuation: Punctuation refers to writing marks that help to separate and clarify ideas. Examples of punctuation are the period, comma, colon, dash, ellipsis, exclamation mark, and question mark. (L2)

Context: Context refers to words and phrases that surround another word and help to explain its meaning. Sometimes a word cannot be understood without the context of the words and phrases around it. For example, the word *leaves* is a **multiple-meaning word** because it could mean several things. When a full sentence is included, such as *The leaves of the tree were swaying in the wind* or *She needs to remember to grab her backpack before she leaves for school*, the meaning is clear. (L4, L4a)

Context clues: Context clues are the words, facts, or ideas in a text that explain a difficult or unusual word. For example, *dehydrated* is a difficult word. However, you can use clues included in the context of a piece of writing to figure out the meaning of *dehydrated*. *After running in gym class, I was dehydrated. I felt much better after drinking two glasses of water.* Using the context clues in the sentences, it is clear the meaning of *dehydrated* is *in need of water*. (L4a)

Root: The root of a word is the foundation of a word. Knowing the meaning of the root can help a reader determine the meaning of its variations. For example, if you know that a *school* is a place that provides knowledge, you may be able to guess that a *scholar* is someone who is seeking knowledge. (L4b)

Affix: An affix refers to letters that are added to a root word that change its meaning. For example, when the prefix *dis-* is added to the word *interest*, the word *disinterest* means the opposite of the root word *interest*. (L4b)

Dictionary: A dictionary is a reference book that provides the **precise**, or exact, meanings of words and phrases. (L4c)

Glossary: A glossary is an alphabetical list of words and phrases and their meanings. A glossary is often found at the end of a text. (L4c)

Figurative language: To understand figurative language, you need to distinguish between literal and figurative meanings of words and phrases. Literal refers to the actual meaning of a word or phrase. For example, if someone tells you to *open the door*, you can open a physical door. If someone tells you to *open the door to your heart*, you are not expected to find a door in your chest. Instead, you open up your feelings and emotions. (L5)

The following are examples of figurative language:

- **Personification:** When a writer describes an object as if it were a person, he or she is using personification; for example, *The trees sighed in the afternoon breeze*. The trees cannot really sigh but seemed to as they moved gently in the breeze. (L5)
- **Simile:** A simile is a comparison using *like* or *as*; for example, *She is as pretty as a picture*. (L5)
- **Metaphor:** A metaphor is a direct comparison that states one thing is another. It isn't meant to be literal, but descriptive. For example, if someone describes recess by saying that *it was a zoo*, he or she is using a metaphor. Recess was chaotic, with lots of different people running around; it was not literally a zoo. (L5)
- **Allusion:** An allusion is an indirect reference to something. When a writer refers to something without mentioning it explicitly, it is an allusion; for example, *The new student is a regular Einstein*. In this sentence, the writer is alluding to Albert Einstein, the Nobel Prize–winning scientist and historical figure. (L5)
- **Hyperbole:** Hyperbole is exaggeration beyond belief. *My father can lift two tons* is an example of hyperbole. (L5)
- **Idiom:** Idioms are quirky sayings and expressions specific to a language. If a saying seems unfamiliar or is not understood, it may be an idiom that needs to be researched. (L5)
- **Onomatopoeia:** Onomatopoeia is a word that imitates the natural sound of something. Examples are *meow*, *pop*, *fizz*, and *clop*. (L5)
- **Alliteration:** Alliteration is the use of the same sound to start several words in a row; for example, *The beautiful butterfly blew by the bay*. (L5)
- **Assonance:** Assonance is the use of words that have repetition of similar vowel sounds but are not rhyming words. Examples are *cake* and *lane* or *eat* and *eel*. (L5)



Figure of speech: A figure of speech is a word or phrase that has a meaning beyond the literal meaning of the word. Figures of speech are often used to emphasize an image, situation, or emotion for greater effect. The most common figures of speech are personification, simile, metaphor, hyperbole, idiom, onomatopoeia, and alliteration. (L5a)

The following are examples of figures of speech:

- **Verbal irony:** An expression a person uses that means the opposite of what is said is called verbal irony. (L5a)
- **Dramatic irony:** An event or other literary element of which the reader is aware but that is unknown to the characters is called dramatic irony. (L5a)
- **Situational irony:** An instance in which characters' actions have the opposite effect of what is planned is called situational irony. (L5a)
- **Pun:** A pun is a word or phrase with more than one meaning that is used in a funny way. Here is an example from a fable about fish talking: *The first fish tells the second fish to just drop a line when he is ready to talk*. (L5a)

Denotation and connotation: A connotation is an implied meaning—it is the meaning the writer intends, which may not be the same thing as the literal or dictionary meaning of a word. Denotation is the exact definition of a word. Words can have different connotations depending on how they are used. For example, *polite* and *diplomatic* have similar denotations (respectful, courteous) but can have different connotations (*polite* is more positive, while *diplomatic* connotes that the respectful behavior may be masking other true feelings). (L5c)

Important Tips

-  To study for this part of the EOG assessment, concentrate on the kinds of errors you typically make in your own writing. Then review grammar rules for those specific kinds of errors. Use books or free online resources to find practice items that you can try. You can work with a partner and question each other on grammar rules or try editing sentences together. Focus your review time on strengthening the areas or skills that need it the most.
-  When you are faced with an unknown word, go back to the passage. Start reading two sentences before the word appears and continue reading for two sentences afterward or elsewhere in the passage to understand the context in which the word is being used.

SAMPLE ITEMS

Item 24

Selected-Response

Which sentence is the **BEST** way to revise the underlined sentence so that the paragraph is consistently written in the active voice?

We spent many of our summers on the Georgia Sea Islands. The music played by the residents there was inspiring. I would give anything to play that well.

- A. The music was played by residents, and it was inspiring.
- B. Music was played that was inspired by the residents.
- C. Inspiring music was played by the residents.
- D. The residents played inspiring music.

Item 25

Selected-Response

What is the function of the underlined word in the sentence?

Reading is my favorite way to spend a quiet afternoon.

- A. adjective
- B. noun
- C. preposition
- D. verb

Item 26

Selected-Response

Read the sentence.

The Harlem Renaissance an important period of artistic expression allowed for great cultural expression.

Which revision shows the correct use of commas to indicate a pause?

- A. The Harlem Renaissance, an important period, of artistic expression allowed for great cultural expression.
- B. The Harlem Renaissance an important period of, artistic expression, allowed for great cultural expression.
- C. The Harlem Renaissance an important period of artistic expression, allowed for great, cultural expression.
- D. The Harlem Renaissance, an important period of artistic expression, allowed for great cultural expression.

Item 27

Selected-Response

Which underlined word contains a spelling error?

His facial reaction was quite quizical in nature.

- A. facial
- B. reaction
- C. quizical
- D. nature

Item 28

Selected-Response

Jordan wants to use a quotation from the school principal in an article she is writing for the school newspaper about the sale of food on campus.

“We’ve explored a number of different options, from outside vendors to clubs that want to hold food sales, and we think there are some ways we can make this work.”

—Principal Gonzalez

Jordan has a strict word limit for her article, so she needs to omit a few words from the quotation. Which sentence shows the BEST way to punctuate the omission?

- A. “We’ve explored a number of different options, . . . and we think there are some ways we can make this work.”
- B. “We’ve explored a number of different options. And we think there are some ways we can make this work.”
- C. “We’ve explored a number of different options, and we think there are some ways we can make this work.”
- D. “We’ve explored a number of different options! And we think there are some ways we can make this work.”

Item 29

Selected-Response

Read the sentence.

We _____ to go to the store again if we _____ out of milk.

Which words correctly complete the sentence with the appropriate verb mood?

- A. might have/run
- B. may have/ran
- C. could have/had run
- D. will have/were running

Item 30

Drop-Down Technology-Enhanced

Read the sentences. Select a word or phrase from each drop-down menu to maintain the verb mood in the sentences.

Antarctica is an amazing continent that is covered in a vast sheet of ice. If I to visit it someday, I penguins on the land and whales in the sea.



Use a mouse, touchpad, or touchscreen to click the arrow beside each of the two blank boxes. When you click the arrow, a drop-down menu will appear, showing you all the possible options for that blank. Each drop-down menu with its options is shown below.

Antarctica is an amazing continent that is covered in a vast sheet of ice. If I to visit it someday, I penguins on the land and whales in the sea.

▼
will see
would see
would have seen

▼
was
were
will be

SAMPLE ITEM KEYS

Item	Standard/ Element/ Genre	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
24	ELAGSE8L1b	2	D	The correct answer is choice (D) The residents played inspiring music. <i>Played</i> is an active verb. Choices (A), (B), and (C) are all in the passive voice.
25	ELAGSE8L1a	1	B	The correct answer is choice (B) noun. The word <i>reading</i> is a gerund and functions as a noun in this sentence. Choices (A) and (C) are incorrect because the word does not function as either of those parts of speech. Choice (D) is incorrect, though the word does end in <i>-ing</i> like some verbs. In this case, <i>reading</i> is a noun that is made from a verb.
26	ELAGSE8L2a	1	D	The correct answer is choice (D) The Harlem Renaissance, an important period of artistic expression, allowed for great cultural expression. The phrase <i>an important period of artistic expression</i> requires a pause and, therefore, should be set off with commas. Choices (A), (B), and (C) are incorrect because they use commas to pause at incorrect places.
27	ELAGSE8L2c	1	C	The correct answer is choice (C) quizzical. <i>Quizzical</i> is one of those troublesome words with a double consonant. Choices (A), (B), and (D) are all spelled correctly.
28	ELAGSE8L2b	2	A	The correct answer is choice (A) “We’ve explored a number of different options, . . . and we think there are some ways we can make this work.” This sentence correctly uses an ellipsis to show an omission from the quotation. Choices (B), (C), and (D) do not contain ellipses and are not punctuated correctly to show that text was omitted from the quotation.
29	ELAGSE8L1c	2	A	The correct answer is choice (A) might have/run. This choice is the correct mood for the sentence. Choices (B), (C), and (D) are all incorrect moods and do not make sense in the context of the rest of the sentence.
30	ELAGSE8L1d	1	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar response on page 84.
31	ELAGSE8L1c	2	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar response on page 85.

EXAMPLE SCORING RUBRICS AND EXEMPLAR RESPONSES

Item 30

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
1	The student correctly selects both drop-down menu options.
0	The student does not correctly select both drop-down menu options.

Exemplar Response

The correct response is shown below.

Antarctica is an amazing continent that is covered in a vast sheet of ice. If I to visit it someday, I penguins on the land and whales in the sea.

In the first drop-down menu, the correct response is “were,” and the correct response in the second drop-down menu is “would see.” These responses are correct because the sentences require the conditional verb mood, which is established by the subordinate conjunction “If” in the second sentence.

Item 31

Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	The student correctly fills in all three rows (order within each row does matter).
1	The student correctly fills in two rows (order within each row does matter).
0	The student correctly fills in one row or does not correctly fill in any rows.

Exemplar Response

The correct response is shown below.

Imperative Mood	First, _____ go _____ to my uncle's restaurant and _____ order _____ the famous chicken sandwich.
Subjunctive Mood	If Superman _____ were to go _____ to my uncle's restaurant, he _____ would order _____ a double cheeseburger.
Indicative Mood	Each week my family _____ goes _____ to my uncle's restaurant and _____ orders _____ two family-sized pizzas.

could have gone

is ordering

The correct responses corresponding to “Imperative Mood” are “go” and “order.” Sentences in the imperative mood express commands (“go . . . and order”) and often have an implied subject (you). The correct responses corresponding to “Subjunctive Mood” are “were to go” and “would order.” Sentences in the subjunctive mood express the hypothetical, as in this sentence, where “Superman” is the subject. The correct responses corresponding to “Indicative Mood” are “goes” and “orders.” Sentences in the indicative mood make statements in any verb tense, such as present tense in this sentence, and often focus on matters of fact (“Each week my family goes”). NOTE: Response order does affect scoring.

ACTIVITY

The following activity develops skills in Unit 4: Language.

Standard: ELAGSE8L5

Do You Literally Mean That?

Have you noticed it can be challenging to know when expressions are literal, when they are figurative, or when they might be either? This game is all about trying to figure that out. You can set this up as an informal review between two people or as a game with teams that can win or lose.

Use blank note cards, or fold a blank sheet of paper in half twice and cut along the fold marks.

Write down one of these sentences on each note card/piece of paper:

We are all in the same boat.

He owes me five dollars.

That store has seen better days.

My favorite hobby is drawing.

This cafe is a circus.

I hope we can go to the park later.

You can get help from a teacher and create more sentences on your own.

Before playing, review what makes an expression literal, figurative, or either:

- **Literal:** There is only one level of meaning. What is said is exactly what is meant. A literal expression is a statement of fact. For example, “I like chili cheese dogs.”
- **Figurative:** There is another level of meaning beyond the literal. For example, “A chili cheese dog is the key that unlocks my happiness.”
- **Either Literal or Figurative:** The expression might be literal or figurative. For example, “Don’t judge a book by its cover.” This might literally mean that you should not judge a book by the way its cover looks. It might also figuratively mean that at times we must look deeper into things, such as people, events, or experiences, to see the true meaning behind them.

Have one person read a sentence out loud. Ask the question: “Is this figurative, literal, or either?” The answering student has to explain his/her answer (e.g., “This is only literal because . . .” “This could be either literal or figurative because . . .”).

If playing as an informal review, divide the cards in half and test each other. Consult the key at bottom of this page to see which answers you got correct.

If playing this as a game, each team will get to answer the same number of questions. The team that correctly identifies the most expressions is the winner.

Key

Literal only: *He owes me five dollars. My favorite hobby is drawing. I hope we can go to the park later.*

Figurative only: *That store has seen better days. This cafe is a circus.*

Either: *We are all in the same boat.*

WRITING RUBRICS

Grade 8 items that are not machine-scored—i.e., constructed-response, extended constructed-response, and extended writing-response items—are manually scored using either a holistic rubric or a two-trait rubric.

Four-Point Holistic Rubric

Genre: Narrative

A holistic rubric evaluates one major trait, which is ideas. On the Georgia Milestones EOG assessment, a holistic rubric is scored from zero to four. Each point value represents a qualitative description of the student's work. To score an item on a holistic rubric, the scorer need only choose the criteria and associated point value that best represents the student's work. Increasing point values represent a greater understanding of the content and, thus, a higher score.

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Genre: Argumentative or Informational/Explanatory

A two-trait rubric, on the other hand, evaluates two major traits, which are conventions and ideas. On the Georgia Milestones EOG assessment, a two-trait rubric contains two scales, one for each trait, ranging from zero to four on one scale (ideas) and zero to three on the other (conventions). A score is given for each of the two traits, for a total of seven possible points for the item. To score an item on a two-trait rubric, a scorer must choose for each trait the criteria and associated point value that best represents the student's work. The two scores are added together. Increasing point values represent a greater understanding of the content and, thus, a higher score.

On the following pages are the rubrics that will be used to evaluate writing on the Georgia Milestones Grade 8 English Language Arts EOG assessment.

Four-Point Holistic Rubric

Genre: Narrative

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on a text that has been read.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student's response is a well-developed narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively establishes a situation and a point of view and introduces a narrator and/or characters • Organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically • Effectively uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, pacing, and reflection, to develop rich, interesting experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses a variety of words and phrases consistently and effectively to convey the sequence of events, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events • Uses precise words, phrases, and sensory language to convey experiences and events and capture the action • Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events • Integrates ideas and details from source material effectively • Has very few or no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning*
	3	<p><i>The student's response is a complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Establishes a situation and introduces one or more characters • Organizes events in a clear, logical order • Uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue, description, pacing, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses words and/or phrases to indicate sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events • Uses words, phrases, and details to capture the action and convey experiences and events • Provides an appropriate conclusion • Integrates some ideas and/or details from source material • Has a few minor errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning*

Four-Point Holistic Rubric

Genre: Narrative (continued)

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on a text that has been read.</i></p>	2	<p><i>The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces a vague situation and at least one character • Organizes events in a sequence but with some gaps or ambiguity • Attempts to use a narrative technique, such as dialogue, description, pacing, or reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses occasional signal words inconsistently and ineffectively to indicate sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, or show the relationships among experiences and events • Uses some words or phrases inconsistently and ineffectively to convey experiences, and events, and capture the action • Provides a weak or ambiguous conclusion • Attempts to integrate ideas or details from source material • Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with meaning*
	1	<p><i>The student’s response provides evidence of an attempt to write a narrative based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Response is a summary of the story • Provides a weak or minimal introduction of a situation or character • May be too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events, or signal shifts in one time frame or setting to another, or show relationships among experiences and events • Shows little or no attempt to use dialogue, description, pacing, or reflection to develop experiences, events, and/or characters • Uses words that are inappropriate, overly simple, or unclear • Provides few, if any, words to convey experiences, or events, or capture the action • Provides a minimal or no conclusion • May use few, if any, ideas or details from source material • Has frequent major errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank • Copied • Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Non-English/Foreign Language • Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 1 for Informational/Explanatory Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p>Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence</p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to effectively establish a controlling idea, support the idea with evidence from the text(s) read, and elaborate on the idea with examples, illustrations, facts, and other details. The writer must integrate the information from the text(s) into his/her own words and arrange the ideas and supporting evidence (from the text[s] read) in order to create cohesion for an informative/explanatory essay.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student's response is a well-developed informative/explanatory text that examines a topic in depth and conveys ideas and information clearly based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively introduces a topic • Effectively develops the topic with multiple, relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic • Effectively organizes ideas, concepts, and information using various strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect • Effectively uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts • Uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic • Establishes and maintains a formal style • Provides a strong concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented
	3	<p><i>The student's response is a complete informative/explanatory text that examines a topic and presents information based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Introduces a topic • Develops the topic with a few facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples • Generally organizes ideas, concepts, and information • Uses some transitions to connect and clarify relationships among ideas, but relationships may not always be clear • Uses some precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain the topic • Maintains a formal style, for the most part • Provides a concluding statement or section
	2	<p><i>The student's response is an incomplete or oversimplified informative/explanatory text that cursorily examines a topic based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to introduce a topic • Attempts to develop a topic with too few details • Ineffectively organizes ideas, concepts, and information • Uses few transitions to connect and clarify relationships among ideas • Uses limited language and vocabulary that does not inform or explain the topic • Uses a formal style inconsistently or uses an informal style • Provides a weak concluding statement or section
	1	<p><i>The student's response is a weak attempt to write an informative/explanatory text that examines a topic based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not introduce a topic or topic is unclear • May not develop a topic • May be too brief to group any related ideas together • May not use any linking words to connect ideas • Uses vague, ambiguous, or repetitive language • Uses a very informal style • Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank • Copied • Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Non-English/Foreign Language • Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 2 for Informational/Explanatory Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p>Language Usage and Conventions</p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics as embodied in the grade-level expectations of the language standards.</i></p>	3	<p><i>The student’s response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style Shows command of language and conventions when writing Any errors in usage and conventions do not interfere with meaning*
	2	<p><i>The student’s response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Varies some sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style Shows some knowledge of language and conventions when writing Has minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning*
	1	<p><i>The student’s response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Has fragments, run-ons, and/or other sentence structure errors Shows little knowledge of language and conventions when writing Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Blank Copied Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible Non-English/Foreign Language Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 1 for Argumentative Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p>Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence</p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to effectively establish a claim as well as to address counterclaims, to support the claim with evidence from the text(s) read, and to elaborate on the claim with examples, illustrations, facts, and other details. The writer must integrate the information from the text(s) into his/her own words and arrange the ideas and supporting evidence in order to create cohesion for an argument essay.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student's response is a well-developed argument that effectively relates and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively introduces claim(s) • Uses an organizational strategy to present reasons and relevant evidence logically • Supports claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence using specific, well-chosen facts, details, or other information from credible sources and demonstrates a good understanding of the topic or texts • Acknowledges and counters opposing claim(s), as appropriate • Uses words, phrases, and/or clauses that effectively connect and show direct, strong relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • Establishes and maintains a formal style that is appropriate for the task, purpose, and audience • Provides a strong concluding statement or section that logically follows from the argument presented
	3	<p><i>The student's response is a complete argument that relates and supports claims with some text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clearly introduces claim(s) • Uses an organizational strategy to present some reasons and evidence • Uses specific facts, details, definitions, examples, and/or other information from sources to develop claim(s) • Attempts to acknowledge and/or counter opposing claim(s), as appropriate • Uses words and/or phrases to connect ideas and show relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence • Uses a formal style fairly consistently for task, purpose, and audience • Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented
	2	<p><i>The student's response is an incomplete or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Attempts to introduce claim(s) • Attempts to use an organizational structure which may be formulaic • Develops, sometimes unevenly, reasons, and/or evidence to support claim(s) • Makes little, if any, attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claim(s) • Attempts to support claim(s) with facts, reasons, and other evidence sometimes, but logic and relevancy are often unclear • Uses few words or phrases to connect ideas; connections are not always clear • Uses a formal style inconsistently or an informal style that does not fit task, purpose, or audience • Provides a weak concluding statement or section that may not follow the argument presented
	1	<p><i>The student's response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate text-based evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • May not introduce claim(s)/claims(s) must be inferred • May be too brief to demonstrate an organizational structure, or no structure is evident • Has minimal support for claim(s) • Makes no attempt to acknowledge or counter opposing claim(s) • Uses minimal or no words or phrases to connect ideas • Uses a very informal style that is not appropriate for task, purpose, or audience • Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank • Copied • Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Non-English/Foreign Language • Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

Trait 2 for Argumentative Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p>Language Usage and Conventions</p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics as embodied in the grade-level expectations of the language standards.</i></p>	3	<p>The student’s response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively varies sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style • Shows command of language and conventions when writing • Any errors in usage and conventions do not interfere with meaning*
	2	<p>The student’s response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Varies some sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style • Shows some knowledge of language and conventions when writing • Has minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning*
	1	<p>The student’s response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Has fragments, run-ons, and/or other sentence structure errors • Shows little knowledge of language and conventions when writing • Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*
	0	<p>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Blank • Copied • Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible • Non-English/Foreign Language • Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

APPENDIX: LANGUAGE PROGRESSIVE SKILLS, BY GRADE

The following skills, marked with an asterisk (*) in Language standards 1–3, are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking.

Standard	Grade(s)							
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9–10	11–12
L.3.1f. Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.								
L.3.3a. Choose words and phrases for effect.								
L.4.1f. Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.								
L.4.1g. Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to/too/two; there/their</i>).								
L.4.3a. Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.*								
L.4.3b. Choose punctuation for effect.								
L.5.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.								
L.5.2a. Use punctuation to separate items in a series.†								
L.6.1c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.								
L.6.1d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).								
L.6.1e. Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.								
L.6.2a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.								
L.6.3a. Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.†								
L.6.3b. Maintain consistency in style and tone.								
L.7.1c. Places phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.								
L.7.3a. Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.								
L.8.1d. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.								
L.9-10.1a. Use parallel structure.								

* Subsumed by L.7.3a

† Subsumed by L.9-10.1a

‡ Subsumed by L.11-12.3a

Study/Resource Guide
for Students and Parents
Grade 8
English Language Arts

