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**New York State Testing Program
Grade 8 Common Core
English Language Arts Test**

Released Questions with Annotations

August 2014

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THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK /
ALBANY, NY 12234

New York State Testing Program Grade 8 Common Core English Language Arts Test

Released Questions with Annotations

With the adoption of the New York P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, the Board of Regents signaled a shift in both instruction and assessment. Starting in Spring 2013, New York State began administering tests designed to assess student performance in accordance with the instructional shifts and the rigor demanded by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To aid in the transition to new assessments, New York State has released a number of resources, including test blueprints and specifications, sample questions, and criteria for writing assessment questions. These resources can be found at <http://www.engageny.org/common-core-assessments>.

New York State administered the first ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Common Core tests in April 2014 and is now making a portion of the questions from those tests available for review and use. These released questions will help students, families, educators, and the public better understand how tests have changed to assess the instructional shifts demanded by the Common Core and to assess the rigor required to ensure that all students are on track to college and career readiness.

Annotated Questions Are Teaching Tools

The released questions are intended to help students, families, educators, and the public understand how the Common Core is different. The annotated questions will demonstrate the way the Common Core should drive instruction and how tests have changed to better assess student performance in accordance with the instructional shifts demanded by the Common Core. They are also intended to help educators identify how the rigor of the State tests can inform classroom instruction and local assessment. To this end, these annotated questions will include instructional suggestions for mastery of the Common Core Learning Standards.

The annotated questions will include both multiple-choice and constructed-response questions. With each multiple-choice question released, a rationale will be available to demonstrate why the question measures the intended standards; why the correct answer is correct; and why each wrong answer is plausible but incorrect. Additionally, for each constructed-response question, there will be an explanation for why the question measures the intended standards and sample student responses that would obtain each score on the rubric.

Understanding ELA Annotated Questions

Multiple Choice

Multiple-choice questions are designed to assess Common Core Reading and Language Standards. They will ask students to analyze different aspects of a given text, including central idea, style elements, character and plot development, and vocabulary. Almost all questions, including vocabulary questions, will only be answered correctly if the student comprehends and makes use of the whole passage. For multiple-choice questions, students will select the correct response from four answer choices.

Multiple-choice questions will assess Reading Standards in a range of ways. Some will ask students to analyze aspects of text or vocabulary. Many questions will require students to combine skills. For example, questions may ask students to identify a segment of text that best supports the central idea. To answer correctly, a student must first comprehend the central idea and then show understanding of how that idea is supported. Questions will require more than rote recall or identification. Students will also be required to negotiate plausible, text-based distractors¹. Each distractor will require students to comprehend the whole passage.

The rationales describe why the distractors are plausible but incorrect and are based in common misconceptions regarding the text. While these rationales will speak to a possible and likely reason for selection of the incorrect option by the student, these rationales do not contain definitive statements as to why the student chose the incorrect option or what we can infer about knowledge and skills of the student based on their selection of an incorrect response. These multiple-choice questions were designed to assess student proficiency, not to diagnose specific misconceptions/errors with each and every incorrect option.

The annotations accompanying the multiple-choice questions will also include instructional suggestions for mastery of the CCLS measured.

Short Response

Short-response questions are designed to assess Common Core Reading and Language Standards. These are single questions in which students use textual evidence to support their own answer to an inferential question. These questions ask the student to make an inference (a claim, position, or conclusion) based on his or her analysis of the passage, and then provide two pieces of text-based evidence to support his or her answer.

The purpose of the short-response questions is to assess a student's ability to comprehend and analyze text. In responding to these questions, students will be expected to write in complete sentences. Responses should require no more than three complete sentences.

The rubric used for evaluating Short -response questions can be found both in the grade-level annotations and in the Educator Guide to the 2014 Grade 8 Common Core English Language Arts Test at www.engageny.org/resource/test-guides-for-english-language-arts-and-mathematics.

Extended Response

Extended-response questions are designed to measure a student's ability to **Write from Sources**. Questions that measure Writing from Sources prompt students to communicate a clear and coherent analysis of one or two texts. The comprehension and analysis required by each extended response is directly related to grade specific reading standards.

Student responses are evaluated on the degree to which they meet grade-level writing and language expectations. This evaluation is made using a rubric that incorporates the demands of grade specific Common Core Writing, Reading, and Language standards. The integrated nature of the CCLS for ELA and Literacy require that students are evaluated across the strands (Reading, Writing, and Language) with longer piece of writing such as those prompted by the extended-response questions.

The information in the annotated extended-response questions focuses on the demands of the questions and as such will show how the question measures the Common Core Reading standards.

The rubric used for evaluating extended responses can be found at Educator Guide to the 2014 Grade 8 Common Core English Language Arts Test at www.engageny.org/resource/test-guides-for-english-language-arts-and-mathematics.

¹ A distractor is an incorrect response that may appear to be a plausible correct response to a student who has not mastered the skill or concept being tested.

These Released Questions Do Not Comprise a Mini Test

This document is NOT intended to show how operational tests look or to provide information about how teachers should administer the test; rather, its purpose is to provide an overview of how the new test reflects the demand of the CCSS.

The released questions do not represent the full spectrum of standards assessed on the State tests, nor do they represent the full spectrum of how the Common Core should be taught and assessed in the classroom. Specific criteria for writing test questions as well as additional test information is available at www.engageny.org/common-core-assessments.

Directions

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Read this passage. Then answer questions XX through XX.

Cowgirl Morning

by Bryn Fleming

Caring for the cows on a ranch is a hard job for Pa and his two daughters. In this excerpt, Pa awakens his daughters, Fran and Cassie, to help round up his neighbor's buffaloes. In the end, one daughter must also confront Cyrus, a fierce and dangerous bull.

BANG! BANG! BANG! I jerked awake to Pa pounding on our door.

"Daly's buffaloes broke the fence. We have to get them out of the alfalfa!" he shouted.

Fran was on her feet in an instant. Pulling her jeans on under her nightgown, she stepped into the hall. "Can't we do it, just us, Pa? Cassie will only be in the way."

5 "Both of you," Pa said as he hurried for the back door. "We need all hands."

Me, I've never liked being yanked out of a hard sleep and a good dream. I heard *buffaloes* through my sleep-haze and scrunched lower under the covers, remembering Cyrus's chuffing breath on my neck and the creaking whine of fence planks. I grumped and groaned when Fran pulled the quilt off me and slapped my feet.

10 "Let's go, Cassie. Pa needs us quick." Fran jerked on her boots and slapped my feet again as she raced out of the room.

I pulled yesterday's jeans from the pile of clothes by my bed, shrugged into a T-shirt, and grabbed my hat off the bedpost. Pa had a pan of cold biscuits and a dish of butter on the table. I gobbled one as I ran for the barn.

15 Fran was drawing up Pet's cinch¹ in the stable yard. Stars were fading in the east as the sky lightened over the Blue Mountains. The autumn air smelled of sage and juniper scrub. My lungs sucked it in like cold water.

20 Rowdy, my paint pony, stamped in his stall and nickered² after Pet. The early morning darkness and close scent of musky buffaloes set him on edge, but I talked him into standing quiet and slipped the bit in his mouth. He pranced and high-stepped as I led him out of his stall to saddle him.

Up ahead Pa was edging his mare around the wide gate to the open pasture. Fran and Pet followed. I leaned out and hooked the gate closed behind us, something Rowdy and I

¹**cinch:** a band or strap used to tighten the saddle on a horse

²**nickered:** the soft neighing sound a horse makes

25 had been working on. I patted his neck. "Atta boy, let's go get those buffs." There was a shakiness in my voice, but I squeezed Rowdy into a lope³ to catch up.

"Looks like half the herd is in here," Pa shouted. "Big piece of the north fence is down." We stood a minute on the rise between the hayfield and the house. Thirty or forty buffaloes spread out in the tall grass.

30 "There's Cyrus. Watch him." Pa pointed to a huge, dark shape shifting like a hill in an earthquake. "I'll pick him up and head him back through," Pa said. "Some of the cows should follow. Fran, take the right." He ran his gaze over the herd again. "Cassie, hang back. Move any stragglers up toward Fran. And stay away from Cyrus." He didn't need to tell me twice.

35 Fran loped off, whooping and chasing the cow buffs toward the hole in the far fence. Rowdy and I crisscrossed the field after strays. "Hut! Hut! Hut!" I called as I swung the end of my rope at a cow's flank. Fran shot me a look. "Get after those buffs, Cassie. You're not inviting them to a party!" I hollered louder and swung my rope harder. On the other side of the field, Pa had Cyrus headed back toward the broken fence.

40 Seems like I looked away toward a hawk screech for only a second when I heard Pa's mare whinny sharply. I snapped my head around quick. She was rearing up in high alarm and stepping backward. Pa wasn't in the saddle.

45 Cyrus pawed the dirt in front of the mare, swinging his big woolly head from side to side, his horns low to the ground. The mare spun off and stood stiff-legged. Pa sat in the dirt with one leg stretched out in front of him. Cyrus flared his nostrils, sucking in Pa's scent.

In my mind I heard a plank fence splinter and smelled Cyrus's angry stink. I shivered, but there really was no choice. I kicked Rowdy and laid the reins across his neck. 50 Rowdy jumped to it as Cyrus scraped the dirt powerfully with his sharp hooves and charged.

55 For such cumbersome-looking beasts, buffs can move real fast. I leaned forward in the saddle, racing Rowdy across the field toward Pa, hoping we'd be in time to head off the enraged bull. As Cyrus closed in, I shouted and waved my hat frantically. Cyrus jerked his head toward us and turned as Pa 60 rolled out of his way.



³lope: relaxed stride of a horse

Rowdy stopped on a dime, like he faced a mad buffalo bull every day. We dodged in close, and I leaned out and slapped Cyrus's rump with my hat while Rowdy danced out of reach of his horns. Cyrus left Pa in a whirl of dust and pounded after us.

65 My hat flew off as Rowdy sprinted
over the field. We cut a sharp right at
the broken fence, and Cyrus plunged
through the gap. A dozen cows
streamed after him with Fran at their
70 rear. She let out a whoop and flashed
me a grin. We'd done it!

As I rode back, Pa was trying to
get his feet under him. His jaw was
clenched tight, and his eyes were
narrowed. "Good work, Cass," he said.
75 His voice shook, and he held his leg
with both hands. I swung down next
to him.



He stood crooked on one leg, leaning hard on my shoulder. I stood about a foot shorter than Pa, but I felt strong and tall with him leaning on me like that.

What does the simile in line 17 help the reader understand about the setting of the passage?

- A** It is hard to breathe in the stable yard.
- B** The morning air is crisp.
- C** It indicates the time of day.
- D** The season is changing.

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.4:

This question measures RL.8.4 because it asks students to interpret a simile and apply that understanding to an element of the story, in this case, the setting. Students who select the correct response demonstrate an ability to understand the meaning of a simile and use that meaning to have a deeper understanding of the setting.

WHY CHOICE "B" IS CORRECT:

Students who choose "B" show an understanding of the simile in line 17, "My lungs sucked it [the autumn air] in like cold water." The simile sets up a comparison in which breathing in the autumn air is compared to experiencing cold water, such as drinking or swimming in it. The qualities the simile is pointing to in the comparison are feelings that the air is fresh, cool, refreshing, and possibly startling or shocking in its coolness and freshness. Only "B," which describes the "morning air" as "crisp," summarizes these ideas with regard to the setting.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student who chooses "A" shows a literal interpretation of the simile, understanding the comparison as describing a situation in which one is having difficulty breathing, like when breathing in water. The simile's meaning and context, however, do not suggest that Cassie has any difficulty breathing in the autumn air.

Choice C: A student who chooses "C" shows an understanding that the coolness of the autumn air likely goes hand in hand with the early hour, and time is an aspect of setting; however, the simile is more directly focused on describing a quality of the air itself.

Choice D: A student who chooses "D" may be demonstrating an understanding of the simile but has taken the interpretation beyond the scope of the comparison. The season could be changing, but the comparison alone does not indicate any change without more information.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.4:

Mastering RL.8.4 involves attending closely to the figurative meanings of words and phrases within their specific textual context. Choices "A," "C," and "D" are attractive for describing plausible aspects of what the simile is describing. A morning characterized by cool, fresh autumn air may be hard to breathe in or indicate the early hour or that the season is changing; however, none of these understandings is as specific and focused and as fully supported as the interpretation that the air is fresh and cool. To help students master RL.8.4, instruction might engage them in isolating what two elements are being compared in similes,

brainstorming the qualities uniting the two elements, and then eliminating those qualities that seem unintended by the author or that are not supported in the context of the text.

Read the sentence from lines 23 and 24.

I leaned out and hooked the gate closed behind us, something Rowdy and I had been working on.

What does this sentence reveal about Cassie?

- A** She gets distracted during stressful situations.
- B** She is frightened and is stalling for time.
- C** She takes time to improve her skills around the ranch.
- D** She thinks closing the gate will impress her sister.

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.3

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.3:

This question measures RL.8.3 by asking students to determine what particular lines of text in a passage reveal about a character. Students selecting the correct response show an understanding of characterization.

WHY CHOICE "C" IS CORRECT:

Students who choose "C" show an ability to interpret actions and information in a passage to understand a character. These lines reveal that Cassie has been practicing something with her horse, Rowdy, with the goal of improving. This detail shows that she "takes time to improve her skills around the ranch," which in turn counters some of the information the reader already has that suggests Cassie may be inexperienced in other areas. That Cassie follows a routine she has established, even in a time of crisis, shows her dedication to the goal of improving.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student who chooses "A" demonstrates an understanding of the stressfulness of the situation with the escaped bulls. The phrase "had been working on" does not suggest that Cassie is distracted. Rather, she pauses to close the gate to maintain consistency, despite the crisis situation, not because she is distracted and off course.

Choice B: A student who chooses "B" shows a general understanding of Cassie's fear as she approaches this difficult situation. The text suggests, however, that Cassie is not pausing because she is frightened and stalling for time, rather she is being consistent about continuing a routine she has begun with her horse.

Choice D: A student who chooses "D" demonstrates an understanding that Cassie is aware of her sister's estimation of her fitness for the job at hand. The text, however, suggests that Cassie is closing the gate to continue working on a routine she has established, not because she is trying to impress her sister.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL8.3:

Mastering RL8.3 involves determining what actions and dialogue reveal about characters. Choices "A," "B," and "D" are appealing because they are plausible reasons for stopping to close a gate in a crisis situation; however, Cassie's real motivation points to her wanting to continue practicing something she deems important to Rowdy's training. These lines reveal that Cassie works on improving herself, not that she gets distracted in

stressful situations, is frightened and stalling for time, or is hoping to impress her sister. To help students master RL.8.3, instruction might focus on building students' capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts and discussing the motivations of characters at different times in stories, paying close attention to those that can be supported by information given in a text. Students can also discuss what might happen when motivations change.

In lines 39 and 40, what mood is created by the use of words and phrases such as “screech,” “snapped,” “rearing up,” and “high alarm”?

- A** anger
- B** disappointment
- C** panic
- D** concern

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.4:

This question measures RL.8.4 because it asks students to determine what mood-specific words and phrases in a literary text create. Students selecting a correct response demonstrate the ability to synthesize aspects of a word or phrase, such as its meaning, connotation, and use in context, and then connect this nuanced understanding of meaning with the mood of a passage. They understand the impact of specific words and phrases on a text. They also understand the types of words used to describe a mood and can distinguish differences amongst them.

WHY CHOICE “C” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “C” show an understanding of the meaning and connotation of the selected words and phrases and the mood they create. “Screech” connotes a negative, unappealing sound that is harsh and shrill and may be emitted in fear and/or surprise. In the context of this passage, “snapped” suggests a sudden movement. “Rearing up” describes a horse’s fearful or stressed response, and “high alarm” describes strong fear. Taken together, these word choices point to “panic” as the best response.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student who chooses “A” shows an ability to understand the negative connotations of the words and phrases but may not have distinguished their relationships with the event described in the passage. The cause of the situation described by the selected words is Cyrus’s anger, but the mood caused by the anger is “panic,” not anger itself.

Choice B: A student who chooses “B” demonstrates an ability to appreciate the negative connotations of the words and phrases but may not have distinguished the particular nature of the negative mood. Disappointment is a negative feeling, but not the negative feeling imparted by the selected words.

Choice D: A student who chooses “D” demonstrates an ability to appreciate the potential danger connoted by the selected words and phrases, but “concern” is too weak to fully describe the mood created by “screech” and “high alarm.” “Snapped” and “rearing up” also suggest a quickness of activity that would lead to panic, not the more measured emotion of “concern.”

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.4:

Choices “A,” “B,” and “D” are attractive because they describe an aspect of the mood created by the selected words and phrases, but only “C” pinpoints the feeling and works with all the words and phrases selected. To help students master questions testing RL.8.4, discussing the connotation of words and giving students

practice describing the mood of various texts on their own may help. Discussion of how appropriate texts make a student “feel,” along with having students isolate the words and phrases that create this feeling for them may also prove fruitful. Practice in describing differences among words that are frequently used to describe moods may be helpful as well.

Which excerpt confirms the theme of Cassie as a reluctant hero?

- A** “I jerked awake to Pa pounding on our door.” (line 1)
- B** “In my mind I heard a plank fence splinter and smelled Cyrus’s angry stink. I shivered, but there really was no choice.” (lines 46 through 48)
- C** “I pulled yesterday’s jeans from the pile of clothes by my bed, shrugged into a T-shirt, and grabbed my hat off the bedpost.” (lines 12 and 13)
- D** “I leaned out and hooked the gate closed behind us, something Rowdy and I had been working on.” (lines 23 and 24)

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.2:

This question measures RL.8.2 in that it asks students to identify textual details that support a particular theme. Students selecting a correct answer are able to demonstrate an understanding of the connection between a theme and the details in the text that are particular instances and illustrations of that theme.

WHY CHOICE “B” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “B” can see a correspondence between specific textual details and a specific theme. In this quotation, the danger posed by Cyrus is apparent in the description of hearing a “plank fence splinter” and smelling “Cyrus’s angry stink.” These jarring sensory details give readers a sense of the urgency and danger of Cassie’s situation. Cassie’s words “I shivered, but there really was no choice” show her reluctance and understanding of what is at stake if she doesn’t act. Cassie knows what she needs to do and is doing it, but she is not eager to do so, making her a reluctant hero.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student who chooses “A” may see Cassie jerking awake as reluctance rather than an indication of surprise and urgency. Pa pounding on the door underscores the urgency and potential danger of the situation, but at this point in the passage, Cassie is merely becoming aware of a situation that may require her bravery. She has yet to choose bravery and confirm herself as a reluctant hero.

Choice C: A student who chooses “C” shows an understanding that Cassie has decided to participate in a dangerous activity; however, her reluctance is not indicated in these lines. Rather than illustrating a theme, these details depict the realistic and mundane actions of preparing for possible danger. Her activities act as a prelude to the crisis Cassie will face when she gets outside. “B” describes a more dangerous situation and Cassie’s reluctance more clearly.

Choice D: A student who chooses “D” is choosing a part of the passage where Cassie is moving toward participating in a dangerous event, but the line itself does not point to danger or heroic behavior but rather to a measured action. Stopping to close the gate is not showing reluctance as much as consistency.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.2:

Questions like these require students to analyze how themes are developed through the details in a story. Choices “A,” “C,” and “D” are appealing for touching upon some aspect of danger or reluctance, but only “B”

shows both the danger and hesitation that make Cassie a reluctant hero. “A” suggests danger and urgency, “C” suggests preparation and participation, and “D” suggests slowness that could be misinterpreted as reluctance. To help students with RL.8.2, teachers should first ensure their students can comprehend the grade-level complex text. Following this, teachers might have students choose sentences in a text that lead them to a particular theme. Students might also benefit from discussions in which details that are included for purposes of realism and credibility, but don’t seem to have thematic resonance, are contrasted with those that can be seen as illustrating the theme of a work.

Which incident **most** helps develop the theme that even a frightened person can be brave when necessary?

- A** Cassie sees Cyrus pawing the dirt in front of the mare.
- B** Cassie slaps Cyrus on the rump to get his attention.
- C** Cassie helps Pa by letting him lean on her.
- D** Cassie's hat flies off when Rowdy sprints over the field.

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.2:

This question measures RL.8.2 in that it asks students to select an event that helps develop a theme. Students selecting the correct response demonstrate an understanding of the way theme is developed in a story and ways plot, theme, and character interact.

WHY CHOICE "B" IS CORRECT:

Students who choose "B" show the capacity to evaluate the significance of events in a plot for developing a specific theme. "B" most directly indicates Cassie's bravery. The threat of Cyrus is elaborated earlier in the passage, along with Cassie's fear of the bull. Though Cassie is young and inexperienced, she risks an action that would challenge the courage of older, seasoned buffalo handlers. She acts because she knows she has to do something to give her father a chance to escape. That she overcomes her fear underscores the theme that even a fearful person can be brave when necessary.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: A student who chooses "A" shows an appreciation of the details that help establish Cyrus as dangerous and threatening, and the event described shows Cassie's bravery in that she is in the vicinity and dealing with the situation; however, this detail primarily establishes the danger of the situation and does not show Cassie's bravery in the face of a threat as well as the event described in "B."

Choice C: A student who chooses "C" shows a comprehension of the aftermath of being brave and facing fears; however, choice "B" directly shows Cassie's bravery. The action described in "C" shows care and compassion rather than bravery.

Choice D: A student who chooses "D" has chosen an event in which Cassie must be brave, but not as brave as in the event described in "B." At this point in the passage, Cassie is purposely leading Cyrus away from Pa and endangering herself in the process; however, the event posing the greatest danger and most significant bravery in the face of fear is the event described in "B."

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.2:

Questions like these require students to analyze how themes are developed through the interaction of events and details in a story. Choices "A," "C," and "D" are attractive for describing events associated with Cassie's bravery. "A" and "D" describe parts of the passage where danger is present and Cassie must draw on her courage. "C" shows the result of Cassie's bravery. "B," however, most strongly shows Cassie overcoming fear. To help students master RL.8.2, instruction might focus on building students' capacity to comprehend grade-

level texts, discussing various themes in stories and analyzing the way authors develop them through the interaction of characterization and plot.

The author **mainly** increases tension in the passage by

- A** revealing Cassie’s inexperience and emphasizing Cyrus’s power
- B** emphasizing the number of escaped animals and Cyrus’s ability to lead the pack
- C** emphasizing Pa’s fall from the horse and Cassie’s difficulty handling her own horse
- D** revealing Fran’s belief that Cassie is unskilled and emphasizing the early hour of the day

Key: A

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.2

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.2:

This question measures RL.8.2 because it asks students to analyze the development of two prominent ideas of the plot and the way these ideas interact to provide a source of energy and movement to the story. A student selecting the correct response understands how a central aspect of the story, tension, is created and developed.

WHY CHOICE “A” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “A” demonstrate an understanding of which factors in a story create the most tension. In this passage, Cassie’s inexperience in the face of having to handle a dangerous animal creates the most tension.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice B: A student who chooses “B” demonstrates an understanding that the escaped buffalo herd instigates the events that eventually cause tension; however, the escape of the herd into the alfalfa field is not the main source of tension, nor is the fact that by changing Cyrus’s course, the herd will follow. Tension is ratcheted up by focusing the problem of the escaped herd on the danger of Cyrus and the inexperience of Cassie. That the herd will follow Cyrus serves only to increase the need to redirect his course away from Pa.

Choice C: A student who chooses “C” shows an understanding that Pa’s fall from the horse creates tension; however, the story does not indicate that Cassie has difficulty handling her horse. Although the passage suggests that Rowdy may also be inexperienced and unpredictable, in the end, Rowdy’s responsiveness to Cassie’s direction decreases tension because the horse helps her succeed.

Choice D: A student who chooses “D” has chosen events that increase tension but only in a limited way and not as much as Cassie’s inexperience and Cyrus’s power. Fran’s belief that Cassie is unskilled contributes to the reader’s understanding that Cassie is inexperienced. The early hour of the day helps identify the problem as urgent and one not everyone is prepared for; however, these elements contribute less to the tension of the entire passage than the two elements described in “A.”

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.2:

Mastering RL.8.2 involves determining central themes in stories and analyzing how the textual details work together to express and develop those themes. In this instance, students are asked to relate how two central characters (Cassie and the bull Cyrus) are developed and how that development builds tension in the plot. To help students master RL.8.2, instruction might focus on building students’ capacity to comprehend grade-level

complex texts, paying particular attention to the various ways characters are developed in stories and how that characterization builds central themes in the story. Teachers might develop activities where students examine specific textual details in order to analyze the relationships among characterization, themes, and plot.

Fran's behavior toward Cassie adds suspense to the passage by

- A** causing the reader to question Cassie's ability to help complete the job
- B** influencing Pa to keep Cassie out of the way
- C** encouraging Cassie to behave recklessly in order to impress Pa
- D** persuading the reader that her family treats Cassie unfairly

Key: A

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.6

Analyze how difference in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.6:

This question measures RL.8.6 because it asks students to explain how authors create suspense, particularly through the use of differing points of view among characters.

WHY CHOICE "A" IS CORRECT:

Students who choose "A" show an understanding of how different points of view among characters create unresolved conflict and suspense. In this passage, Fran's estimation of Cassie's ability to successfully handle the buffalo sets up tension between the two girls by challenging Cassie to prove herself. Whether Cassie will prove herself capable creates suspense.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice B: A student who chooses "B" demonstrates an understanding of Fran's underestimation of Cassie. The option, however, inaccurately indicates that the author creates tension by having Fran persuade her father that Cassie should be left behind. Although Fran attempts to convince Pa to leave Cassie at home, Pa is not persuaded, and Fran wakes Cassie up. Although Fran's attempt underscores her opinion of Cassie, Pa's support of Cassie minimizes Fran's estimation and so does not create suspense to the degree that the situation described in "A" does.

Choice C: A student who chooses "C" has chosen a possibility that would cause suspense; however, the statement shows a misinterpretation of Fran's command that Cassie be more forceful in herding the buffalo. Fran is not encouraging Cassie to be reckless since being forceful with the buffalo is necessary in order to herd them out of the alfalfa. In addition, although Cassie likely wants to impress Pa, she knows that behaving recklessly will not accomplish this. Pa will be impressed if they all work together to complete the task.

Choice D: A student who chooses "D" has chosen an interpretation that could cause suspense due to differing points of view; however, the statement mischaracterizes how Cassie's family treats her and Fran's attempts at persuading their father. Fran's request that Cassie be left out of the buffalo wrangling may or may not be an unfair request, depending on how Cassie performs. The reader does not have enough information at this point in the passage to make this determination. That Pa still asks Cassie to help even with the possibility that she may not be able to also does not, as of yet, indicate unfairness toward Cassie. For these reasons, describing Fran's behavior as an attempt to persuade the reader that the family treats Cassie unfairly is inaccurate.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.6:

Questions like these ask students to analyze the impact of point of view on meaning in texts. To help students master RL.8.6, teachers might have them practice articulating the different points of view of each character at

different points in a passage. Students might also benefit from exposure to and discussion of ways authors create suspense in different stories. Students might also benefit from activities that focus attention on indirect characterization and ways in which characterization can shape plot and theme.

Directions

208025P

Read this article. Then answer questions XX through XX.

A Bigfoot by Any Other Name . . .

by Kelly Milner Halls, Rick Spears, and Roxyanne Young

Bigfoot. Sasquatch. Yeti. Yeren. Yowie. The names and the details may differ from place to place, but from North America to China to New Zealand, one thing is certain: Something is out there. Chocolate brown or white as snow, these hair-covered, upright-standing creatures have been talked about for more than six hundred years. And whether we read about the ancient legends or the modern-day sightings, the stories make us wonder.

Bigfoot = Sasquatch

Bigfoot is a creature of many names. According to naturalist Dr. Robert Michael Pyle, Native American legends call it by several exotic names, including Sasquatch, Sokqueatl, or Sesquac (from a language spoken by several tribes of Pacific Northwestern Native Americans). No matter how it's pronounced, the name means "wild man."

That certainly describes the creature Roger Patterson and Bob Gimlin claimed they saw wandering along the rural Northern California timberline in October 1967. The creature was enormous—at least seven feet tall—and walked upright like a man. But it wasn't a man. In fact, it was like nothing the outdoorsmen had seen before.

Patterson carefully reached into his saddlebag and pulled out his 16-millimeter movie camera to capture the moment on film. And for decades, Bigfoot believers have been thankful he did.

Was Sasquatch the last thing Patterson expected to see along Bluff Creek as he let his horse rest and sip cool water? Not necessarily. He and Gimlin were known Bigfoot/Sasquatch hunters and longed to prove the legends were true. The film they shot became one of the most famous pieces of footage in Bigfoot history.

Even the experts can't agree on the film's authenticity. Some say it's an elaborate hoax, a fake Bigfoot, a prank. But others see the film as proof-positive that the elusive primate is more than a North American myth.

Keeping Track

Dr. Jeffrey Meldrum, Idaho State University Professor of Anatomy, Primatology, and Paleontology

Raised in the heart of Bigfoot country—the Pacific Northwest—Dr. Jeffrey Meldrum grew up in the shadow of the legend. So it's not surprising that he'd have an interest in the

hair-covered beast. What makes him different from most Bigfoot-enthusiasts is the careful and scientific approach he's taken to analyze dozens of Sasquatch tracks.

30 About Dr. Meldrum's research, professor and Cambridge University Press author/editor Walter Hartwig says, "[Meldrum] has executed the model approach. He's weeded out what he believes might be hoaxes or misidentifications. . . . It's beautiful and well-controlled, inductive science. You may think it's far-out, but methodologically speaking, he has toed the line very strictly."

35 His conclusion? There is sound, scientific reason to believe North America has its own giant ape. But, as he admits in the *Denver Post*, convincing the world and his professional peers hasn't been easy. Meldrum says, "If someone takes the time to visit the lab, they are almost uniformly overwhelmed by the amount of data. Usually they have no concept of the amount of evidence that's been collected."

Body of Evidence: The Skookum Cast

40 Using apples and melons as bait, members of the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization claim to have captured the first partial body cast of a Washington State Sasquatch. Positioned at the center of a mud puddle in the Skookum Meadows of Gifford Pinchot National Forest, not far from Mount Saint Helens, the tasty snack allegedly convinced a full-grown creature to lie at the puddle's edge and feast. Deep impressions of a hair-covered hip, elbow, heel, wrist, and even buttocks were left in the mud. Mere hours
45 after the mystery creature left the scene, the team captured the impressions in a plaster cast.

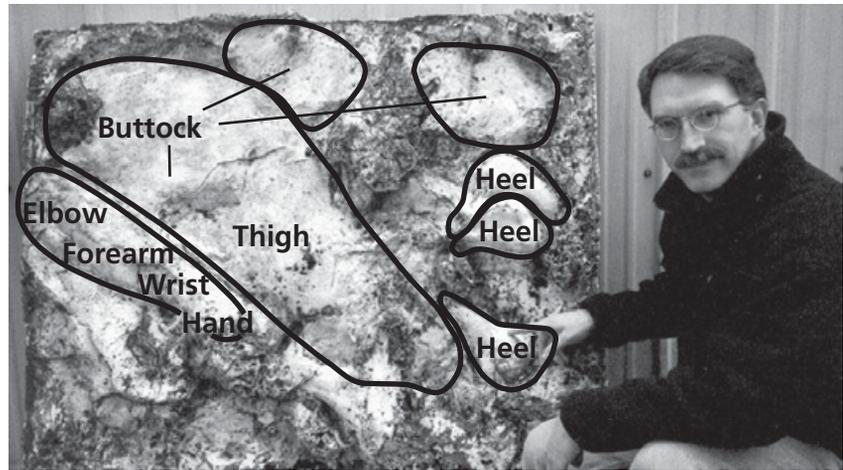
Idaho professor Dr. Jeffrey Meldrum, the late Dr. Grover Krantz (a physical anthropologist from the Washington State University), and journalist John Green carefully studied the plaster cast to try to determine what kind of animal actually visited the scene.
50 In a press release circulated by the Idaho State University, the men stated that the impressions could not have been made by any "known" animals living in the region and that an unknown primate was the most likely candidate.

Others have said an elk kneeling to gobble the fruit made the impressions in the mud, not a mysterious cryptid. Dr. Meldrum disagrees.

55 "While not definitively proving the existence of a species of North American ape," Dr. Meldrum said in the release, "the cast constitutes significant and compelling new evidence that will hopefully stimulate further serious research and investigation."

60 More than 200 pounds of plaster was used to make the Skookum Cast, which is 3½ feet wide and 5 feet tall. Measurements of the imprints indicated that whatever creature made this impression was 40 to 50 percent larger than a 6-foot-tall human being. When the cast was cleaned, hair samples were

65 70 extracted. All of them turned out to belong to deer, elk, coyote, and bear—all but one. One hair had unique primate (ape) characteristics. Dr. Henner Fahrenback, a biomedical research scientist from Beaverton, Oregon, has labeled it “Sasquatch.”



How do lines 1 through 3 help to develop a key concept of the article?

- A** It emphasizes that many different creatures have been confused with Bigfoot.
- B** It illustrates that people all over the world have believed Bigfoot exists.
- C** It shows that Bigfoot has traveled all over the world.
- D** It confirms that Bigfoot has remained unidentified.

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RI.8.5:

Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.8.5:

This question measures RI.8.5 because it asks students to analyze how particular lines from an article relate to the structure of a key concept. To answer correctly, students must determine how the cited lines relate to a key concept and contribute to the structure of the article.

WHY CHOICE "B" IS CORRECT:

Students who choose "B" demonstrate the ability to analyze the role particular lines play in developing a key concept. The cited lines mention North America, China, and New Zealand as places where the Bigfoot-like creature is discussed, thus showing the extent of the belief in it. This sets up a discussion on whether there is any evidence of its actual existence.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen "A" because the cited lines mention five different names for the Bigfoot creature. The various names, however, represent what Bigfoot is called in different places, and there's no indication of confusion among several creatures.

Choice C: Students may have chosen "C" because North America, China, and New Zealand are spread across the world; however, the text does not indicate that there is a Bigfoot who has traveled across the world. The article, on the other hand, supports the idea that there is disagreement as to whether the existence of Bigfoot has been proven.

Choice D: Students may have chosen "D" because evidence of Bigfoot's sighting and identification has not been generally accepted; however this listing of the names does not relate to its identification through an actual sighting.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.8.5:

While all of the choices for this question refer to lines 1 through 3, only "B" helps to develop a key concept. To help students succeed with questions measuring RI.8.5, instruction can focus on building their capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts and analyzing how authors structure the texts to communicate specific ideas. To practice this skill, students can determine a key idea and then analyze how the author structures the other information that contributes to it.

What does the phrase “elaborate hoax” mean as it is used in line 22?

- A** a well-planned trick
- B** a well-known tale
- C** an unusual story
- D** an odd event

Key: A

MEASURES CCLS: RI.8.4:

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.8.4:

This question measures RI.8.4 because students must use context to determine the meaning of the phrase. To answer correctly, students must recognize that clues to the phrase’s meaning are found in the words that follow it in the text.

WHY CHOICE “A” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “A” demonstrate the ability to determine the meaning of a phrase from clues that surround it in a text. The words that follow it are “a fake Bigfoot, a prank,” which provide a way to understand its meaning. The next sentence shows the opposite meaning of an “elaborate hoax” as “more than a North American myth,” thus giving an additional way to determine the meaning.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice B: Students may have chosen “B” because the article says that the film is “well-known;” however the phrase is used in the context of the film’s authenticity (line 22) not its fame.

Choice C: Students may have chosen “C” because the report of finding and filming “Bigfoot” is an unusual story; however, this meaning is inconsistent with the words that follow it as synonyms.

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because the report of seeing Bigfoot and capturing it on film is an odd event; however, this meaning is inconsistent with the comparison of the two conflicting views that follow the use of the phrase.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.8.4:

While all of the choices for this question refer to meanings that could apply to the claim of filming Bigfoot, only “A” is consistent with the context of the words that follow its use. To help students succeed with questions measuring RI.8.4, instruction can focus on recognizing the ways in which context can provide clues to the meaning of a phrase. Students can practice this skill by determining how an author has provided alternative words as clues to the meaning of a phrase in a grade-level complex text.

Which quotation expresses the central idea of the section, “Keeping Track”?

- A** “Raised in the heart of Bigfoot country—the Pacific Northwest—Dr. Jeffrey Meldrum grew up in the shadow of the legend.” (lines 25 and 26)
- B** “He’s weeded out what he believes might be hoaxes or misidentifications. . . . It’s beautiful and well-controlled, inductive science.” (lines 30 through 32)
- C** “But, as he admits in the *Denver Post*, convincing the world and his professional peers hasn’t been easy.” (lines 35 and 36)
- D** “Meldrum says, ‘If someone takes the time to visit the lab, they are almost uniformly overwhelmed by the amount of data.’ ” (lines 36 and 37)

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RI.8.2:

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.8.2:

This question measures RI.8.2 because it requires students to identify a sentence that accurately reflects a central idea of a section of the article. To answer correctly, students must recognize the scientific approach taken in Dr. Meldrum’s studies and its significance in the article.

WHY CHOICE “B” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “B” demonstrate the ability to analyze an article and recognize a central idea of a section of an article. “Keeping Track” discusses the work found in the laboratory of Dr. Jeffrey Meldrum, its adherence to scientific principles, and the attempt to avoid unreliable reports.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen “A” because the cited sentence gives a reason for Dr. Meldrum’s work. The cause of his interest, however, is used to provide background for the main focus of the section.

Choice C: Students may have chosen “C” because Meldrum himself admits that convincing others is not easy. Although this is an important point, the section titled “Keeping Track” is more focused on what Dr. Meldrum has done than the general reaction to it.

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because it mentions the large amount of data contained in the lab; however the quantity of data is a detail which supports a central idea of the methodology used by Dr. Meldrum.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.8.2:

While all of the choices for this question are quoted lines from “Keeping Track,” only “B” accurately reflects a central idea of the section. To help students succeed with questions measuring RI.8.2, instruction can focus on building their capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts and comparing a central idea of an article to the wording of a sentence from it. Students can practice this skill by identifying a central idea and identifying a specific sentence that paraphrases it.

Read this sentence from lines 39 through 41 of the article.

Using apples and melons as bait, members of the Bigfoot Field Researchers Organization claim to have captured the first partial body cast of a Washington State Sasquatch.

The authors' use of the phrase "claim to have captured" reveals a central idea of the article by suggesting that

- A** the creature's need for food has lured it to many places
- B** proof of the creature's existence continues to be questioned
- C** the creature has avoided traps that should have restrained it
- D** physical evidence will eventually prove that the creature is real

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RI.8.2:

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.8.2:

This question measures RI.8.2 because it requires students to determine a relationship between a supporting phrase and a central idea of the article. To answer correctly, students must recognize that the phrase indicates doubt and a central idea of the article is that there is doubt about the proof that the creature exists.

WHY CHOICE "B" IS CORRECT:

Students who choose "B" demonstrate the ability to analyze an article and recognize the relationship between a central idea and a detail in the text. Throughout the article, the notion that proof of the creature's existence has not been fully proven is reinforced. For example, in line 22, the text states that, "even the experts can't agree on the film's authenticity." Another way this is done is through the use of phrases like "claim to have captured." The phrase emphasizes the uncertainty by presenting the findings as the unproven statements of the researchers.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen "A" because the cited sentence refers to the food used to lure in the creature. Food, however, is presented as a technique of the researchers rather than a central idea about the questioned existence of the creature.

Choice C: Students may have chosen "C" because the researchers "captured" the cast, but not the creature itself; however, there is no reference in the article about people who have tried to trap or restrain the creature.

Choice D: Students may have chosen "D" because the article relies on reported physical evidence to examine whether or not the creature is real; however from beginning to end, the article's writers are clearly neutral on the existence of a Bigfoot-like creature.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.8.2:

While all of the choices for this question refer in some way to information in lines 39 through 41, only "B" accurately connects the cited phrase to a central idea. To help students succeed with questions measuring RI.8.2, instruction can focus on building their capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts and relating

details to a central idea of an article. Students can practice this skill by identifying a central idea and describing how specific information in an article relates to it.

Read this sentence from lines 55 through 57.

“While not definitively proving the existence of a species of North American ape,” Dr. Meldrum said in the release, “the cast constitutes significant and compelling new evidence that will hopefully stimulate further serious research and investigation.”

Which of these is closest to the meaning of “stimulate” as used in this sentence?

- A** increase the quality of
- B** prevent mistakes in
- C** promote interest in
- D** provide funding for

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: L.8.4A:

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.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES L.8.4A:

This question measures L.8.4A because students must use context to determine a word’s meaning. To answer correctly, students must use the overall intent of the person speaking to determine the definition of a single word.

WHY CHOICE “C” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “C” demonstrate the ability to determine a word’s meaning from its use or context. Dr. Meldrum says that the findings will “hopefully” stimulate new research and investigation. As the context and quote describe the success of the cast, the phrase “promote interest in” fits the intent of Dr. Meldrum’s words.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen “A” because high-quality scientific research is certainly desirable. The context, however, shows that Dr. Meldrum is hoping for additional quantity (“further”), not quality of research.

Choice B: Students may have chosen “B” because of the questionable nature of the research; however, Dr. Meldrum is not concerned with mistakes in his work or the work he hopes to “stimulate.”

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because funding for the research can be important; however the context doesn’t support a meaning that relates to financial support.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER L.8.4A:

While all of the choices for this question refer to meanings that would fit into the structure of the sentence, only “C” is consistent with its context and the meaning of the article. To help students succeed with questions measuring L.8.4A, instruction can focus on recognizing the ways in which context can provide clues to the meaning of an unfamiliar or multiple-meaning word. Students can practice this skill by identifying clues to the meaning of a particular word in a grade-level complex text.

Which detail from the article **best** supports the claim that Bigfoot exists?

- A** “The creature was enormous—at least seven feet tall—and walked upright like a man.” (lines 12 and 13)
- B** “Deep impressions of a hair-covered hip, elbow, heel, wrist, and even buttocks were left in the mud.” (lines 43 and 44)
- C** “*One hair had unique primate (ape) characteristics.*” (lines 70 and 71)
- D** “*Dr. Henner Fahrenback, a biomedical research scientist from Beaverton, Oregon, has labeled it ‘Sasquatch.’*” (lines 71 and 72)

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: RI.8.8:

Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.8.8:

This question measures RI.8.8 because students must analyze a claim and determine which lines support it. To answer correctly, students must identify the information that is strong, relevant, and sufficient to provide support for the claim.

WHY CHOICE “C” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “C” demonstrate the ability to analyze a claim and determine what constitutes the best evidence to support it. Scientific evidence that a creature had hair with characteristics consistent with an ape-like creature is the best evidence that a Bigfoot creature exists.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen “A” because the cited lines describe an unusual creature of enormous size. The source of the information, however, is non-scientific, and thus is not the best evidence that Bigfoot exists.

Choice B: Students may have chosen “B” because the impressions that made up the Skookum Cast are an interesting addition to the study; however, the cited lines do not represent evidence of anything unique because “a hair-covered hip, elbow, heel, wrist, and even buttocks” are not unusual animal features.

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because the credentials of the person mentioned are impressive; however this sentence only indicates the naming of a material and does not provide evidence of the Bigfoot creature’s existence.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.8.8:

While all of the choices for this question refer to creatures which could be Bigfoot, only “C” provides evidence that could be deemed “sound, sufficient, and relevant.” To help students succeed with questions measuring RI.8.8, instruction can focus on building their capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts and recognizing which specific details and evidence adequately support a claim in an article. Students can practice this skill by identifying a claim and evaluating its support.

The authors develop the central idea in the article by

- A** analyzing investigative data to show that evidence of Bigfoot’s existence is uncertain
- B** debating conflicting views of Bigfoot to show that both sides are partly correct
- C** providing historical sightings of the creature to show that most experts believe in Bigfoot’s existence
- D** summarizing scientific opinions to show that Bigfoot is a mythical creature

Key: A

MEASURES CCLS: RI.8.2

Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RI.8.2:

This question measures RI.8.2 because it requires students to analyze how the authors develop a central idea. To answer correctly, students must recognize a central idea and then trace its development.

WHY CHOICE “A” IS CORRECT:

Students who choose “A” demonstrate an understanding of a central idea (the evidence of Bigfoot’s existence is uncertain) and how the authors’ analysis of data develops that idea. The authors present evidence of Bigfoot’s existence and then discuss the questioning of that evidence. Lines 18 through 22, lines 34 through 38, and lines 53 through 57 are examples of questioning that follows stated evidence.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice B: Students may have chosen “B” because the authors provide conflicting viewpoints in the article. The viewpoints, however, are explained with no attempt by the authors to propose the partial correctness of both sides.

Choice C: Students may have chosen “C” because the article refers to reported sightings of Bigfoot; however, the information in the article clearly contradicts any idea that “most experts believe in Bigfoot’s existence.” These contradictions can be found in lines 22, 53, and 55.

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because the article does present the opinions of scientists; however the idea that the creature is definitely mythical is contradicted by the final sentence which says, “ ‘While not definitively proving the existence of a species of North American ape,’ Dr. Meldrum said in the release, ‘the cast constitutes significant and compelling new evidence that will hopefully stimulate further serious research and investigation.’ ”

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RI.8.2:

While all of the choices for this question refer in some way to information in the article, only “A” accurately explains the development of a central idea. To help students succeed with questions measuring RI.8.2, instruction can focus on building their capacity to comprehend grade-level complex texts and connecting the development of a central idea to the details in an article. Students can practice this skill by identifying a central idea and describing how specific information in an article develops the idea.

Cleaning Up

by Mark David Whitehead

I stood in the restaurant kitchen, my eyes wide, arms hanging awkwardly, ready to work but unsure of what to do. I had the feeling that a bright neon sign on my forehead was flashing the message “New Employee.” The scent of warm rising dough, fresh tomato sauce, and melted cheese clashed with the odor of dish soap and disinfectant as Aaron, my
5 manager, guided me to the dishwashers’ domain.

“Jim will train you,” Aaron said simply and walked away.

A first-year college student smiled, tossed me a dish brush, and said, “Let’s get started.”

Jim showed me the basics of washing pizza dishes—not that washing dishes is extremely technical, until you come to that annoying melted cheese stuck on the plates.

10 “If you want to get past just washing dishes, you’ve gotta let the bosses know,” Jim told me as he sprayed a stray leaf of iceberg lettuce off a plate. “Work hard and show results.”

Friday night, three weekends later, Aaron stepped quickly into the kitchen, carrying two menus. “Who just bused the back right table?” he shouted.

15 I fumbled the salad bowl I was washing in the lukewarm water. I knew I was guilty, but Aaron’s cold stare didn’t promise a happy reward for the guy who confessed. A mix of fear and my own conscience pushed the response out of my mouth.

“I did, Aaron.”

He whipped around to face me. “What were you thinking? Get back out here and look at what you missed!”

20 Grabbing a bus tub and rag, I followed Aaron out to table twenty-two. As we made our way through the restaurant, Aaron said something about rags, but I didn’t hear over the din of seventeen other conversations going on around us.

We arrived at table twenty-two. It was still clean. Completely.

“Look,” Aaron said, pointing.

25 *Look.* That one syllable crushed whatever confidence I had as I saw and understood. Sure, the table was clean; it was the lake beneath that was the problem. A nearly full cup of Mug Root Beer® had tipped over on the brick floor. Aaron stood at my shoulder,

Mug Root Beer® is the registered trademark of New Century Beverage Company.

apologizing to the elderly couple waiting for their table. Another wave of guilt—bigger than the first—slammed into me. I had so messed up.

30 Aaron glared.

“I’ll take care of it,” I muttered.

“Yes, you will,” he agreed.

With that motivating statement, Aaron turned, apologized once more to the couple, and stormed off to the front of the restaurant. Avoiding the older couple’s gaze, I dropped
35 down to clean up the root beer.

That’s when another problem presented itself. I had brought only one rag. One already damp rag. The lake of root beer mocked me as I leaned over and attempted to wipe up the mess. My wet rag did nothing but smear the puddle and increase its size.

Increase. Increase the number of rags, I thought.

40 I apologized to the couple, who were proving patient, and rushed off to find some dry rags. As I hurried to the kitchen, I hoped Aaron wouldn’t notice my absence for a few seconds.

Frantically, I scanned the kitchen shelves for the stack of rags I had seen days before. Another busboy was leaning against the sink, arms folded.

45 “Whatcha lookin’ for?” he asked.

“Rags. Where are they?”

“To your left, bottom shelf.”

I saw a stack of white cotton rags with a green stripe through the middle. Grabbing five, I rushed out of the kitchen to conquer the lake of soda.

50 I was just passing the oven as Aaron came around the corner of the salad bar. With two deliberate steps, he blocked my way and stood still. Despite the heat pouring from the oven, I froze.

“What are you doing here?” Aaron growled.

55 Fear washed over me. There was no way he would understand. I just needed to get the job done, the job he asked me to do, without interference. Did he think I was trying to slack off?

I attempted, “I needed dry rags . . . to . . . clean . . .”

60 “What?” Aaron seemed ready to rip out tufts of his goatee—an unsanitary practice, at least in a restaurant. “Those customers are waiting right now! I told you to grab four dry rags as you came out! Didn’t you hear me?”

Dinner conversations faded around us. Some teenagers on a double date turned from their pepperoni pizza, nudging each other and pointing. Coworkers glanced at one another, smirking. I could feel the blood rushing to my face, my ears catching on fire.

I mumbled, “I thought. . .”

65 “No, you didn’t. Just go. Get that cleaned up.”

Nostrils flaring, he rushed away. I could almost see drops of irritation flying off him. (Did he want me to clean those up, too?) Avoiding the gaze of coworkers and customers, I walked to table twenty-two and knelt down again on the brick floor. Distracted only by the sound of other dinner conversations and the restaurant radio—playing “Carry On
70 Wayward Son” by Kansas—I introduced the root beer lake to my new rags, cleaning up the mess in a matter of seconds.

I stood, looked at the waiting couple, and said simply, “There you go. I’m sorry about that.” The man, his eyes almost laughing behind his bifocals, stated that he didn’t mind the wait. He guided his wife to her seat and sat down beside her. I wadded up the rags and
75 walked back toward the kitchen, angry with myself, with Aaron, with the maker of Mug Root Beer.

Aaron glanced at me from across the restaurant, as if checking to see whether I had finished the job. Of course I did, I thought, I know how to work. I knew what needed to be done to take care of that mess, once I saw it. I’m sorry I didn’t see it at first. But it’s not
80 going to ever happen again. You can trust me.

I joined the rest of the busboys in the kitchen, washing the Melmac® dishes, replacing them throughout the restaurant as they dried, and busing tables (very carefully) as groups left. Water saturated my shirt as I plowed through the continuous stacks of dishes.

Holding the brush with a vise grip, I scrubbed the plates, maintaining a determined
85 look on my face anytime Aaron was near. I wanted to prove to him, to myself, that my mistake was simply that—a one-time mistake. I clung to the hope that Aaron would notice my effort, understand, and be willing to forgive my blunder.

The lake of root beer weighed on my mind as I rinsed a final stack of bowls. Only as I placed the last bowl on the plastic rack to dry did I realize that my mistake was exactly
90 that—my own. It was my own to dwell on, or my own to let go. Sure, I would still think about it. Who doesn’t remember moments of failure? But remembrance brings a choice: motivation or misery.

Months have passed since that Friday night, and the determined look still comes to my face when I pick up a plastic bus tub. A pang of guilt tries to worm its way into me
95 every time I wring out a fresh rag. But I smile as I glance underneath every table I clean.

Melmac® is the registered trademark of American Cyanamid Company.

Read lines 2 and 3 from the story.

I had the feeling that a bright neon sign on my forehead was flashing the message “New Employee.”

These words **best** demonstrate the narrator’s feelings of

- A** anticipation of having greater responsibilities
- B** anxiety about revealing a lack of experience
- C** excitement at the thought of beginning a job
- D** concern about meeting high expectations

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.1:

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.1:

This question measures RL.8.1 by asking students to make an inference based on textual evidence. Students selecting a correct response demonstrate an ability to interpret an author’s word choice in order to understand a character’s feelings.

WHY CHOICE “B” IS CORRECT:

Students selecting “B” demonstrate an understanding that the narrator’s expression is figurative and not literal. In lines 1 and 2, the narrator admits he is “ready but unsure of what to do,” hinting at his feeling of inexperience. When he says he feels like he has a sign on his forehead broadcasting to everyone at the restaurant that he is new, he means that he worries his lack of experience is obvious to everyone. Lines 1 through 3 underscore his anxiety and fear of being noticed as inexperienced, an interpretation supported by other details in the story.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen “A” because the narrator takes on new responsibilities working in the restaurant; however, according to the text, the narrator does not fear increased responsibility but being seen as inexperienced.

Choice C: Students may have chosen “C” because the narrator describes the “rising dough, fresh tomato sauce, and melted cheese,” which may lead to a feeling of excitement. According to the text, however, the narrator expresses anxiety because he feels inexperienced and does not know what to do.

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because the narrator’s coworker says to move up in the restaurant, one has to “work hard and show results,” implying that there are high expectations. However, the narrator does not express anxiety over high expectations, but over his lack of experience.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.1:

While all the choices for this question indicate feelings a new employee might experience on the first day on the job, only “B” describes the anxiety that the narrator feels throughout the story. To help students master questions assessing RL.8.1, instruction that allows for and encourages close-reading of grade-appropriate complex texts is recommended. Having students read, re-read, notate and then discuss their thoughts and

interpretations as they read may prove helpful. Following the changing feelings of a single character may also be beneficial.

Read this sentence from line 26 of the story.

Sure, the table was clean; it was the lake beneath that was the problem.

The author refers to the puddle as a lake to

- A** show how concerned the narrator is about the puddle
- B** suggest that the manager is exaggerating the situation
- C** show that the narrator is confused about the size of the puddle
- D** emphasize how unhappy the customers are about the situation

Key: A

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.4:

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.4:

This question measures RL.8.4 by asking students to explain the meaning of an author's choice of words. Students selecting a correct response demonstrate an ability to interpret the full meaning of a word choice in the context of the events of a story and the implications of its use.

WHY CHOICE "A" IS CORRECT:

Students selecting "A" understand that by using hyperbole and exaggerating the "puddle" underneath the table as a "lake," the narrator acknowledges the problem is of greater concern than expected. This heightened concern is supported by his behavior and feelings in the rest of the story.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice B: Students may have chosen "B" because describing the puddle as a "lake" is an exaggeration. It is the narrator, however, making this assessment, not the manager, and the purpose is to show the narrator's concern.

Choice C: Students may have chosen "C" because the difference between a puddle and a lake could show a misunderstanding of the size of the mess beneath the table. Even though the narrator is surprised at the size of the spill, he describes it in this way to show concern, not because he is confused as to its size.

Choice D: Students may have chosen "D" because Aaron apologizes to the elderly couple waiting for the table (lines 27 and 28); however, there is no evidence in the story to support a customer expressing unhappiness about this situation; in fact, lines 73 and 74 suggest a minimal degree of concern.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.4:

While all the choices for this question indicate that the purpose of the phrase is to emphasize the importance of the puddle to someone in the story, only "A" indicates that the narrator is quite concerned about the puddle. To help students master questions assessing RL.8.4, instruction can focus on interpreting figurative language in grade-appropriate complex texts. Students may practice supporting these interpretations with textual details.

Read lines 20 through 22 from the story.

Grabbing a bus tub and rag, I followed Aaron out to table twenty-two. As we made our way through the restaurant, Aaron said something about rags, but I didn't hear over the din of seventeen other conversations going on around us.

Which statement **best** explains how these lines affect the plot of the story?

- A** The incident builds on the advice in lines 10 and 11.
- B** The thoughts are a resolution to the question in line 13.
- C** The words foreshadow the situation in lines 36 and 37.
- D** The actions contrast with the description in line 43.

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.3:

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.3:

This question measures RL.8.3 by asking students to identify how one event in a story propels another and to understand the reason for details included by the author. Students selecting a correct response demonstrate an understanding of how a plot develops over the course of a text.

WHY CHOICE "C" IS CORRECT:

Students selecting "C" understand the connection between not hearing "something about rags" in lines 20 through 22, and the narrator's realization that he only had one rag in lines 36 and 37. In lines 36 and 37, the narrator understands that he is about to disappoint his boss by having only brought a single rag to mop up a spill requiring several rags. Lines 20 through 22 foreshadow this problem by letting the reader know that the narrator is arriving on the scene holding a single rag and that he has missed what his boss has told him to do due to the noise in the restaurant. That the narrator failed to hear his manager and inadvertently fails to do as he was told further escalates the conflict between the narrator and his boss.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen "A" because in lines 10 and 11, a seasoned worker delivers the advice to "work hard and show results" and to "let the bosses know" about any career aspirations. These lines relate to lines 20 through 22 in that the narrator follows Aaron to help clean up the spill. However, the narrator does not work extra hard by doing so, but merely cooperates and does his job. Since the narrator fails to hear his boss's instructions to bring more rags, though, the narrator will soon fail his boss, rather than do work that leads to a promotion.

Choice B: Students may have chosen "B" because they understand the connection between someone bussing the table with the spill; the narrator feels guilty and grabs a towel to help clean his table. However, the question in line 13 is answered in line 17 ("I did, Aaron"), so it does not lead to the escalation of the conflict introduced in lines 20-22.

Choice D: Students may have chosen "D" as an explanation for why the narrator only brought one towel to clean the table since the lines suggest the towels have been moved and cannot be found; however, the narrator is able to find towels and this is not the reason why he only brought one towel to the table.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.3:

While all choices for this question focus on lines that have some connection to lines 20 through 22, only "C" shows how lines 20 through 22 affect the plot of the story. To help students master questions assessing RL.8.3, instruction can focus on identifying the major events that create the plotline of a grade-appropriate complex text. Students might benefit from diagramming the elements of a plot, identifying how one or multiple events lead to other events, creating escalation, climax, and resolution.

Read lines 66 and 67 from the story.

I could almost see drops of irritation flying off him. (Did he want me to clean those up, too?)

These lines reveal the narrator's

- A** refusal to comply with the manager's instructions
- B** attempt to anticipate the manager's wishes
- C** misunderstanding of the manager's words
- D** frustration with the manager's demands

Key: D

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.1:

Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.1:

This question measures RL.8.1 by asking students to use textual evidence to make a valid inference. Students selecting the correct response demonstrate the ability to make valid inferences about the meaning of specific lines in a text, which in this case, has to do with understanding the full meaning of a character's thoughts, including their tone and how they function in the storyline.

WHY CHOICE "D" IS CORRECT:

Students selecting "D" demonstrate an ability to determine a valid inference about the character's experience by interpreting the statement and question. The statement describes the manager in an unappealing light: "drops of irritation flying off him." The sarcastic tone of the question shows frustration with the manager's demands by suggesting something that the narrator does not literally expect the manager to request of him.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen "A" by inferring from the tone of the question that the narrator would not wipe his manager's brow even if asked; however, the narrator does not believe his manager would actually make this request. His hypothetical statement is meant to imply only that his manager can be unreasonable.

Choice B: Students may have chosen "B" because the lines express a possible instruction from the manager; however, this interpretation does not account for the tone of sarcasm, or the unreasonableness of the instruction. The lines are not meant to be a literal command, but a hypothetical one showing the narrator's frustration.

Choice C: Students may have chosen "C" because the lines show the narrator questioning what could be read as an instruction, "(Did he want me to clean those up, too?)," as though the narrator were wondering if he had understood his manager correctly. These lines, however, are meant hypothetically and are expressed sarcastically, indicating the narrator's frustration.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.1:

While all the choices for this question describe possible reactions to the manager, only "D" describes the frustration the narrator feels as revealed in his sarcastic rhetorical question. Students can increase mastery of questions assessing this standard by practicing close-reading of grade-appropriate complex texts. Opportunities to discuss subtext and implied meaning should also prove beneficial.

Read this sentence from lines 73 and 74 of the story.

The man, his eyes almost laughing behind his bifocals, stated that he didn't mind the wait.

These lines **most** impact the narrator's point of view by

- A** describing the appearance of the elderly man
- B** emphasizing the patience of the couple in the restaurant
- C** showing a conversation between the narrator and a customer
- D** demonstrating that the situation was less serious than imagined

Key: D

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.6:

Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.6:

This question measures RL.8.6 by asking students to analyze the effects created by differences in the points of view of the characters in a story. Students selecting a correct response demonstrate an ability to understand the points of view of various characters and how they impact the narrator's point of view specifically.

WHY CHOICE "D" IS CORRECT:

Students selecting "D" show an understanding of how the elderly man's comment impacts the narrator's point of view. At this point in the story, the man is waiting for the table to be cleaned up so he can be seated (lines 40 through 42). The narrator shows that he is deeply concerned about the spill by expressing guilt (lines 28–29) and apologizing to the elderly couple (lines 72 through 73); however, the elderly man, who witnesses the negative interaction between the manager and the narrator in lines 53 through 65, says, "almost laughingly," that he does not mind the wait. Later, in lines 88–92, the narrator realizes that one cannot think too much about such accidents. The elderly man's words stress how the incidence is not as serious as the narrator imagines.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen "A" because these lines describe the man wearing bifocals; however, the purpose of the lines is to provide another point of view on the situation and his appearance is incidental.

Choice B Students may have chosen "B" because these lines show the patience of the man while the narrator cleans up the mess; however, the full implication of the lines is to indicate not just what the man's point of view is, but that the situation is less serious than the narrator imagines it to be.

Choice C: Students may have chosen "C" because the lines acknowledge the interaction between narrator and elderly man, but they do not describe the effect on the narrator's point of view.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.6:

While all the choices include elements from the text, only "D" accurately describes how the lines affect the narrator's own point of view. Students can increase success on questions measuring RL.8.6 by considering the points of view of characters during the course of a story and discussing how they develop and evolve due to interactions.

Lines 84 through 87 reveal

- A** Aaron’s role in fixing an issue
- B** the narrator’s intense resolve to improve
- C** Aaron’s inability to forgive a mistake
- D** the narrator’s strong sense of responsibility

Key: B

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.3:

Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.3:

This question measures RL.8.3 by asking students to explain the meaning of a character’s thoughts and desires in the context of a story. Students selecting the correct response demonstrate an understanding of a character within the context of the events in a text and the development of a character.

WHY CHOICE “B” IS CORRECT:

Students selecting “B” demonstrate an accurate understanding of the role of these lines in illustrating the narrator’s personality. Lines 84 through 87 describe the narrator’s response to his own mistake: he is more determined than ever to do a good job regardless of the nature of the events of that evening.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen “A” because the narrator mentions that Aaron is near and he hopes Aaron will forgive his mistake and offer him the chance to prove himself. However, the focus of the lines is the narrator’s resolve, not what Aaron might do.

Choice C: Students may have chosen “C” because these lines state the narrator’s hope that Aaron will forgive the narrator’s mistake; however, they do not indicate that Aaron has already forgiven him or has the ability or desire to do so.

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because the narrator shows an overall strong sense of responsibility in the way he works to solve the problem at hand and takes responsibility for his mistake; however, these lines more accurately focus on the narrator’s resolve and determination, not his feelings of responsibility.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.3:

While all the choices for this question show connections between the narrator’s thoughts about his situation and how it affects the impression he may be making on Aaron, only “B” shows what the lines reveal about the narrator as a character. To help students master questions assessing standard RL.8.3, instruction on methods of characterization and the close reading techniques associated with analyzing characters in grade-appropriate complex texts may prove helpful. Providing students with opportunities to analyze and support their assertions about characters may also be beneficial.

Read lines 93 through 95 of the story. In the context of this paragraph, which phrase is closest in meaning to “worm”?

- A** start over
- B** take notice
- C** sneak up on
- D** look back at

Key: C

MEASURES CCLS: L.8.4a:

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. 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.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES L.8.4a:

This question measures L.8.4a by asking students to use context to determine the meaning of a multiple-meaning word. Students selecting the correct response demonstrate an ability to use context and other strategies to determine word meaning.

WHY CHOICE “C” IS CORRECT:

Students selecting “C” demonstrate an ability to select an accurate meaning for a multiple-meaning word, “worm,” by using the context of the text near the word. In saying that he can “smile” as he keeps working, the narrator describes how he is able to avoid feeling guilt. This suggests that the feelings attempt to “sneak up on” him. “Sneak up on” also suggests something negative, in this case, guilty feelings.

WHY THE OTHER CHOICES ARE INCORRECT:

Choice A: Students may have chosen “A” because it may seem the “pang of guilt” starts over, but this suggests either a recurring loop or a new feeling and fails to take into account that the feeling is unexpected and unwanted.

Choice B: Students may have chosen “B” because the narrator does “take notice” of the “pang of guilt” he experiences from time to time; however, this understanding of “worm” suggests something harmless and does not express the negative connotation of “worm.”

Choice D: Students may have chosen “D” because the “pang of guilt” the narrator experiences comes from memories, which suggests looking back at something. Although the guilt causes the narrator to look back, “worm” refers to how the memories appear and how the narrator deals with them.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER L.8.4a:

While all the choices for this question suggest a possible metaphorical sense of the word “worm,” only “C” identifies the meaning that fits the context in which the word occurs. To help students master L.8.4a, instruction discussing the multiple meanings of words and their connotations may prove helpful. Opportunities to connect the context of grade-appropriate complex texts to understandings of multiple-meaning words may also prove beneficial.

The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?

by Dauna Coulter

August 3, 2012: This past June more than 170 all-time U.S. heat records were tied or broken—many of them originally set in the historically hotter months of July and August. And with a drought plaguing much of the country, the ground is as dry and crispy as a saltine cracker.

5 By early July, 56% of the contiguous U.S. was experiencing drought. That's the largest percentage in the 12-year record of the U.S. Drought Monitor. Fires scorched over 1.3 million acres across the U.S. in June, reducing hundreds of homes to ashes in the West.

Just imagining prospects for the rest of the summer is enough to bring sweat to your brow. And last winter is partly to blame.

10 "799 daytime heat records were broken in the first five days of January in the U.S.," says Jake Crouch, a climate scientist from the NOAA National Climatic Data Center. "Last year's was the fourth warmest winter since 1895. And it was dry, with a dearth of snowfall in many places. During most of this past winter and spring, a positive North Atlantic Oscillation pressure pattern kept the jet stream further north and the U.S. warmer and
15 drier than normal."

With little moisture in the soil to evaporate and dissipate some of the sun's energy, more solar radiation is converted to sensible heat, he says.

Of course global warming is on the tips of many tongues.

20 "CO₂ is up from 280 parts per million in the 19th century atmosphere to 400 parts per million now—a 43% increase," says NASA climatologist Bill Patzert. "We're emitting six times more carbon from fossil fuel use now than we did 50 years ago. Atmospheric CO₂ hasn't been this high in 400,000 years."

Greenhouse gasses like CO₂ and methane have higher heat capacities than many other gasses, causing the atmosphere to retain more heat.

25 "The atmosphere becomes a heat source itself, radiating heat back onto the Earth. 85 to 90% of that heat is absorbed by the oceans, because water has a high heat capacity. So the oceans expand and rise. Global sea levels have risen 8 inches over the past 130 years, and the average surface temperature of the entire earth (land surface temperatures plus ocean temperatures) has increased 1.6°F. These facts," he asserts, "are
30 unequivocal proof of global warming."

But is the record-setting summer 2012 evidence of climate change?

35 “Not necessarily,” says Patzert. “We’ve always had extreme weather. U.S. history is written in great natural calamities—tornadoes, hurricanes, heat waves, droughts, floods. Global warming is happening, but it would be irresponsible to say that this heat wave and all these broken records are due to global warming from human causes. It’s just not that simple.”

John Christy, a scientist from the University of Alabama in Huntsville, agrees: “Heat waves are a natural part of the climate system, and while the recent heat wave was remarkable, it was not as intense as others in the past.”

40 He offers a few examples of past heat waves and droughts.

“The central U.S. suffered several heat waves in the 1930s—the dust bowl years—when more statewide, all-time record high temperatures were set than in any other decade. And the western U.S. experienced decades-long droughts in the 12th century. So dry were mountain areas that we can still see near-hundred-year-old trees standing upright in the bottom of alpine lakes where they grew on dry ground 900 years ago. This shows that in the 12th century it was so dry and hot that the lakes dried up and allowed trees to grow over a significant period before moisture finally returned.”

50 Patzert and Christy are on opposite sides of the global warming debate. Patzert firmly believes that Earth is warming up and humans are the main reason why. Christy, on the other hand, argues that natural climate variations are almost solely to blame. Yet they both agree that the summer 2012 weather might be just that—weather. They also both believe that improvement is needed in models indicating effects of human and other factors on weather and climate.

55 “Today’s climate models are extremely sophisticated, constantly improving, and will be crucial to charting our future—but they aren’t perfect,” says Patzert.

One component that needs improvement: clouds.

60 “Clouds play a key role in climate because they affect the amount of sunlight reflected and absorbed,” says Christy. “We need higher resolution models to portray them more accurately. The distance between grid measurement points in current models is too great to capture meter to meter variations in clouds, land cover, and other variables that affect climate.”

One more point of agreement: the summer of 2012 *is* too hot to handle.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER STANDARD RI.8.1:

To help students succeed with questions like this, instruction can focus on helping students understand cause-and-effect relationships. Students can practice using textual details to support inferences based on cause-and-effect relationships in grade-appropriate complex texts.

[See Short-Response \(2-point\) Holistic Rubric](#), suggested sample student responses, and scoring: two 2-pt responses, two 1-pt responses, and one 0-pt response.

According to information in “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” what is the effect of increased CO₂ emissions? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

In the article "The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?" it says that the amount of CO₂ or carbon dioxide increased and effected the weather in 2012. In line 23-24, it says, "Greenhouse gasses like CO₂ and methane have higher heat capacities than many other gases, causing the atmosphere to retain more heat." This explains that when the amount of CO₂ increases, the more heat there will be because CO₂ has a higher heat capacity. Along with the atmosphere's heat^{also} producing, and combined with the increased CO₂, it's effect is, "Global sea levels have risen 8 inches over the past 130 years, and the average surface temperature of the entire earth has increased 1.6°F."

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain the effect of increased CO₂ emissions (carbon dioxide increased and effected the weather in 2012). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (Greenhouse gasses like CO₂ and methane have higher heat capacities than many other gases, causing the atmosphere to retain more heat and Global sea levels have risen 8 inches over the past 130 years, and the average surface temperature of the entire earth has increased 1.6°F). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

According to information in “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” what is the effect of increased CO₂ emissions? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

In the article "The Summer of 2012-Too hot to handle?" The effect of increased CO₂ emissions is that the atmosphere becomes a heat source itself. 85 to 90% of the heat that is radiated back to Earth is absorbed by oceans. Also the average surface temperature of the entire Earth increases.

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain the effect of increased CO₂ emissions (*that the atmosphere becomes a heat source itself*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*85 to 90% of the heat that is radiated back to Earth is absorbed by oceans and the average surface temperature of the entire Earth increases*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

According to information in “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” what is the effect of increased CO₂ emissions? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

The effect of increased CO₂ is the oceans absorb 85 to 90% of the heat and that cause the oceans to increased 8 in. Also the average surface temperature increased by 1.6°F.

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain the effect of increased CO₂ emissions (*the oceans absorb 85 to 90% of the heat*); however, the response provides only one detail from the text for support (*cause the oceans to increased 8 in*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

According to information in “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” what is the effect of increased CO₂ emissions? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

The gas retains more heat making the atmosphere hotter. It causes the oceans to absorb the heat and rise.

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain the effect of increased CO₂ emissions (*making the atmosphere hotter and causes the oceans to absorb the heat and rise*); however, the response does not provide two details from the text for support as required by the prompt.

According to information in “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” what is the effect of increased CO₂ emissions? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

The effect of increase in CO₂ emissions are six times more fossil fuel and if people have Green houses the heat will go up in there too, causing plants to die.

Score Point 0 (out of 2 points)

This response does not address any of the requirements of the prompt (*if people have Green houses the heat will go up in there too, causing plants to die*).

accuracy, and sufficiency of conclusions, inferences, and supporting details. Responses should be organized in a logical manner and composed in complete sentences. Where errors are present, they should not impact readability.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER STANDARD RI.8.6:

To help students succeed with questions like this, instruction can focus on helping students understand how points of view are developed in a text and how they can affect a reader’s understanding of a text and topic. Students can practice identifying different points of view found in grade-appropriate complex texts.

[See Short-Response \(2-point\) Holistic Rubric](#), suggested sample student responses, and scoring: two 2-pt responses, two 1-pt responses, and one 0-pt response.

Why does the author of “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” include information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

The author of “The Summer of 2012- Too Hot to Handle?” includes information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy. This might have been done to show the reader two sides of an argument. Patzert believes that the main reason behind global warming are humans. Christy on the other hand, says it's the fault of natural climate variations. However, the author does point out an agreement “they both believe that improvement is needed in models indicating effects of humans and other factors on weather and climate.”

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain why the author included information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy (*to show the reader two sides of an argument*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*Patzert believes that the main reason behind global warming are humans and Christy on the other hand, says it's the fault of natural climate variations*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

Why does the author of “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” include information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

The author wants to show two different opinions of global warming. "Patzert firmly believes that Earth is warming up, and humans are the reason why." Christy says that natural climate variations are almost solely to blame."

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain why the author included information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy (*wants to show two different opinions of global warming*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*Patzert firmly believes that Earth is warming up, and humans are the reason why and Christy says that natural climate variations are almost solely to blame*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

Why does the author of “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” include information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

The author of "The Summer of 2012 - Too Hot to Handle?" includes information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy because they both study weathering on the climate and the author was probably looking to get more information on the heat. Also the author was probably trying to get information on the debate between both Bill Patzert and John Christy on heat waves and global warming.

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes valid inferences from the text to explain why the author included information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy (*because they both study weathering on the climate and the author was probably looking to get more information on the heat and the author was probably trying to get information on the debate*); however, the response does not provide two details from the text for support as required by the prompt.

Why does the author of “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” include information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

He includes both because then you get to hear both sides. In the passage he tells us that Patzert and John are on opposite sides

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain why the author included information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy (*then you get to hear both sides*); however, the response provides only one detail from the text for support (*Patzert and John are on opposite sides*).

Why does the author of “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” include information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

The author of “The Summer of 2012—Too Hot to Handle?” included information from both Bill Patzert and John Christy. He did this to add the facts and have it be more interesting.

Score Point 0 (out of 2 points)

This response does not address any of the requirements of the prompt (*to add the facts and have it be more interesting*).

Directions

308037P

Read this passage. Then answer questions XX through XX.

In this nonfiction essay, a father reflects on his heritage.

The Inheritance of Tools

by Scott Russell Sanders

The hammer had belonged to him, and to his father before him. The three of us have used it to build houses and barns and chicken coops, to upholster chairs and crack walnuts, to make doll furniture and book shelves and jewelry boxes. The head is scratched and pockmarked, like an old plowshare that has been working rocky fields, and it gives off
5 the sort of dull sheen you see on fast creek water in the shade. It is a finishing hammer, about the weight of a bread loaf, too light, really, for framing walls, too heavy for cabinetwork, with a curved claw for pulling nails, a rounded head for pounding, a fluted neck for looks, and a hickory handle for strength.

The present handle is my third one, bought from a lumberyard in Tennessee down the
10 road from where my brother and I were helping my father build his retirement house. I broke the previous one by trying to pull sixteen-penny nails out of floor joists—a foolish thing to do with a finishing hammer, as my father pointed out. “You ever hear of a crowbar?” he said. No telling how many handles he and my grandfather had gone through
15 before me. My grandfather used to cut down hickory trees on his farm, saw them into slabs, cure the planks in his hayloft, and carve handles with a drawknife. The grain in hickory is crooked and knotty, and therefore rough, hard to split, like the grain in the two men who owned this hammer before me.

After proposing marriage to a neighbor girl, my grandfather used this hammer to
20 build a house for his bride on a stretch of river bottom in northern Mississippi. The lumber for the place, like the hickory for the handle, was cut on his own land. By the day of the wedding he had not quite finished the house, and so right after the ceremony he took his wife home and put her to work. My grandmother had worn her Sunday dress for the wedding, with a fringe of lace tacked on around the hem in honor of the occasion. She
25 removed this lace and folded it away before going out to help my grandfather nail siding on the house. “There she was in her good dress,” he told me some fifty-odd years after that wedding day, “holding up them long pieces of clapboard while I hammered, and together we got the place covered up before dark.” As the family grew to four, six, eight, and eventually thirteen, my grandfather used this hammer to enlarge his house room by room, like a chambered nautilus expanding his shell.

30 By and by the hammer was passed along to my father. One day he was up on the roof
of our pony barn nailing shingles with it, when I stepped out the kitchen door to call him
for supper. Before I could yell, something about the sight of him straddling the spine of
that roof and swinging the hammer caught my eye and made me hold my tongue. I was
35 five or six years old, and the world's commonplaces were still news to me. He would pull a
nail from the pouch at his waist, bring the hammer down, and a moment later the *thunk*
of the blow would reach my ears. And that is what had stopped me in my tracks and
stilled my tongue, that momentary gap between seeing and hearing the blow. Instead of
yelling from the kitchen door, I ran to the barn and climbed two rungs up the ladder—as
40 far as I was allowed to go—and spoke quietly to my father. On our walk to the house he
explained that sound takes time to make its way through air. Suddenly the world seemed
larger, the air more dense, if sound could be held back like any ordinary traveler.

By the time I started using this hammer, at about the age when I discovered the speed
of sound, it already contained houses and mysteries for me. The smooth handle was one
my grandfather had made. In those days I needed both hands to swing it. My father would
45 start a nail in a scrap of wood, and I would pound away until I bent it over.

“Looks like you got ahold of some of those rubber nails,” he would tell me. “Here, let
me see if I can find you some stiff ones.” And he would rummage in a drawer until he
came up with a fistful of more cooperative nails. “Look at the head,” he would tell me.
“Don’t look at your hands, don’t look at the hammer. Just look at the head of that nail and
50 pretty soon you’ll learn to hit it square.”

Pretty soon I did learn. While he worked in the garage cutting dovetail joints for a
drawer or skinning a deer or tuning an engine, I would hammer nails. I made innocent
blocks of wood look like porcupines. He did not talk much in the midst of his tools, but
he kept up a nearly ceaseless humming, slipping in and out of a dozen tunes in an
55 afternoon, often running back over the same stretch of melody again and again, as if
searching for a way out. When the humming did cease, I knew he was faced with a task
requiring great delicacy or concentration, and I took care not to distract him.

There is no single “correct” response, but rather responses that are defensible based on the Short-Response (2-point) Holistic Rubric, and responses that are not. Student responses are evaluated on the relevance, accuracy, and sufficiency of conclusions, inferences, and supporting details. Responses should be organized in a logical manner and composed in complete sentences. Where errors are present, they should not impact readability.

[See Short-Response \(2-point\) Holistic Rubric](#), suggested sample student responses, and scoring: two 2-pt responses, two 1-pt responses, and one 0-pt response.

What character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

In this passage, character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer. These character traits are that he was tough and hardworking. The grandfather always used his hammer to build anything ^{he} needed. The house he built had to keep expanding to suit the needs of the growing family. As said in the passage, "The grain in hickory is cracked and knotty, and therefore rough, like the grain in the two men who owned it before me." This explained and compared the relationship of the hammer and the grandfather. In conclusion, the grandfather is seen as tough and hardworking.

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer (*he was tough and hardworking*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*The house he built had to keep expanding to suit the needs of the growing family and The grain in hickory is cracked and knotty, and therefore rough, like the grain in the two men who owned it before me*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

- In this story it shows that the author's grandfather was a very hardworker and enjoyed fixid things. As described in the article, after his wedding ceremony was over, the grandfather took his wife and fixed up there new house, eventually he continued reconstructing the house, making room for the thirteen children they had, this also showed that he was self efficient.

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer (*a very hard worker and enjoyed fixid things*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*the grandfather took his wife and fixed up there new, house and making room for the thirteen children they had*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

His grandfather is a determined guy when it comes to build things. For example, "By the day of the wedding he had not quite finished the house, and so right after the ceremony he took his wife home and put her to work."

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer (*a determined guy when it comes to build things*); however, the response provides only one detail from the text for support (*By the day of the wedding he had not quite finished the house, and so right after the ceremony he took his wife home and put her to work*).

What character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The character traits that the grandfather revealed when using the hammer were hard worker and determined.

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer (*hardworker and determined*); however, the response does not provide two details from the text for support as required by the prompt.

What character traits of the grandfather are revealed through his use of the hammer? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The character traits about the grandfather is that he always used that hammer like when, The grandfather proposed to his neighbor girl he built a house for his bride. When he used the hammer to make handles.

Score Point 0 (out of 2 points)

This response does not address any of the requirements of the prompt (*he always used that hammer*).

Directions

308038P

Read this passage. Then answer questions XX through XX.

In this fictional account, a biographer named Margaret talks about her father's bookstore.

Margaret's Story

by Dianne Setterfield

Rising from the stairs, I stepped into the darkness of the shop. I didn't need the light switch to find my way. I know the shop the way you know the places of your childhood. Instantly the smell of leather and old paper was soothing. I ran my fingertips along the spines, like a pianist along his keyboard. Each book has its own individual note: the
5 grainy, linen-covered spine of Daniels's *History of Map Making*, the cracked leather of Lakunin's minutes from the meetings of the St. Petersburg Cartographic Academy; a well-worn folder that contains his maps, hand-drawn, hand-colored. You could blindfold me and position me anywhere on the three floors of this shop, and I could tell you from the books under my fingertips where I was.

10 We see few customers in Lea's Antiquarian Booksellers, a scant half-dozen a day on average. There is a flurry of activity in September when the students come to buy copies of the new year's set texts; another in May when they bring them back after the exams. These books my father calls migratory. At other times of the year we can go days without seeing a client. Every summer brings the odd tourist who, having wandered off the beaten track,
15 is prompted by curiosity to step out of the sunshine and into the shop, where he pauses for an instant, blinking as his eyes adjust. Depending on how weary he is of eating ice cream and watching the punts¹ on the river, he might stay for a bit of shade and tranquillity or he might not. More commonly visitors to the shop are people who, having heard about us from a friend of a friend, and finding themselves near Cambridge, have
20 made a special detour. They have anticipation on their faces as they step into the shop, and not infrequently apologize for disturbing us. They are nice people, as quiet and as amiable as the books themselves. But mostly it is just Father, me and the books.

25 How do they make ends meet? you might think, if you saw how few customers come and go. But you see, the shop is, in financial terms, just a sideline. The proper business takes place elsewhere. We make our living on the basis of perhaps half a dozen transactions a year. This is how it works: Father knows all the world's great collectors, and he knows the world's great collections. If you were to watch him at the auctions or book fairs that he attends frequently, you would notice how often he is approached by quietly

¹punts: a type of boat

spoken, quietly dressed individuals, who draw him aside for a quiet word. Their eyes are
30 anything but quiet. *Does he know of . . .* they ask him, and *Has he ever heard whether . . .*
A book will be mentioned. Father answers vaguely. It doesn't do to build up hope. These
things usually lead nowhere. But on the other hand, if he were to hear anything . . . And if
he doesn't already have it, he makes a note of the person's address in a little green
notebook. Then nothing happens for quite some time. But later—a few months or many
35 months, there is no knowing—at another auction or book fair, seeing a certain other
person, he will inquire, very tentatively, whether . . . and again the book is mentioned.
More often than not, it ends there. But sometimes, following the conversations, there may
be an exchange of letters. Father spends a great deal of time composing letters. In French,
German, Italian, even occasionally Latin. Nine times out of ten the answer is a courteous
40 two-line refusal. But sometimes—half a dozen times a year—the reply is the prelude to a
journey. A journey in which Father collects a book here, and delivers it there. He is rarely
gone for more than forty-eight hours. Six times a year. *This* is our livelihood.

The shop itself makes next to no money. It is a place to write and receive letters. A
place to while away the hours waiting for the next international bookfair. In the opinion of
45 our bank manager, it is an indulgence, one that my father's success entitles him to. Yet in
reality—my father's reality and mine; I don't pretend reality is the same for everyone—the
shop is the very heart of the affair. It is a repository of books, a place of safety for all the
volumes, once so lovingly written, that at present no one seems to want.

And it is a place to read.

50 A is for Austen, B is for Brontë, C is for Charles and D is for Dickens. I learned my
alphabet in this shop. My father walking along the shelves, me in his arms, explaining
alphabetization at the same time as he taught me to spell. I learned to write there, too:
copying out names and titles onto index cards that are still there in our filing box, thirty
years later. The shop was both my home and my job. It was a better school for me than
55 school ever was, and afterward it was my own private university. It was my life.

My father never put a book into my hands and never forbade a book. Instead, he let
me roam and graze, making my own more and less appropriate selections. I read gory
tales of historic heroism that nineteenth-century parents thought were suitable for
children, and gothic ghost stories that were surely not; I read accounts of arduous travel
60 through treacherous lands undertaken by spinsters in crinolines, and I read handbooks on
decorum and etiquette intended for young ladies of good family; I read books with
pictures and books without; books in English, books in French, books in languages I didn't
understand, where I could make up stories in my head on the basis of a handful of
guessed-at words. Books. Books. And books.

Students might also cite the descriptions of the traffic the bookstore experiences. The store is in part pleasant because of its quiet and predictable level of activity. “Few customers” or none are the rule except for the “flurry of activity” in the fall and spring when students exchange books. Even the summer tourists are described as “nice people, as quiet and as amiable as the books themselves,” who enter the shop “for a bit of shade and tranquility” having “heard about us from a friend of a friend.” The shop is characterized as a leisurely, relaxing, sanctuary, an out of the way place of rest where time seems suspended for the enjoyable indulgence of intellectual curiosity.

There is no single “correct” response, but rather responses that are defensible based on the Short-Response (2-point) Holistic Rubric, and responses that are not. Student responses are evaluated on the relevance, accuracy, and sufficiency of conclusions, inferences, and supporting details. Responses should be organized in a logical manner and composed in complete sentences. Where errors are present, they should not impact readability.

See [Short-Response \(2-point\) Holistic Rubric](#), suggested sample student responses, and scoring: two 2-pt responses, two 1-pt responses, and one 0-pt response.

What effect does the author create through the description of the bookstore? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The author creates a sort of a lonely and quiet effect through the story. She describes the book store as a safe place for the volumes and former books that are not popular anymore. She also talks about how people rarely come to the bookstore anymore. In one of the paragraphs she mentions how only half a dozen people may come into the store during the day.

All of these descriptions make a reader imagine the book store as a serene place where the forgotten treasures are kept. These descriptions also give the story a meta: sad, but enjoyable effect.

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what effect the author creates through the description of the bookstore (*a sort of a lonely and quiet effect*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*a safe place for the volumes and only half a dozen people may come into the store during the day*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What effect does the author create through the description of the bookstore? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The author creates a boring effect through the description of the bookstore. In the passage, the author says the shop gets on average half a dozen customers. Also, the author says they wait months for auctions to make the real money and until then, they work the shop. Those two details create a boring effect through the description of the bookstore.

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what effect the author creates through the description of the bookstore (*a boring effect*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*the shop gets on average half a dozen customers and they wait months for auctions to make the real money*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What effect does the author create through the description of the bookstore? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

She creates a sense of tranquility and peacefulness. She says that most of the time, it is just her, her father, and the books. She also says that that book store is where she learned to read and write.

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what effect the author creates through the description of the bookstore (*a sense of tranquility and peacefulness*); however, the response provides only one detail from the text for support (*most of the time, it is just her, her father, and the books*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What effect does the author create through the description of the bookstore? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The effect that the author creates through the bookstore is that she can find out where she is even if you blindfold her. She says she knows like knowing a childhood.

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response is a mostly literal recounting of details from the text (*she can find out where she is even if you blindfold her* and *She says she knows like knowing a childhood*). While the response provides two details from the text, no valid inference and/or claim is present.

What effect does the author create through the description of the bookstore? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

Depending on how weary here is of eating ice cream and watching the punts on the river he might stay for a bit of shade and tranquillity or he might not.

Score Point 0 (out of 2 points)

This response does not address any of the requirements of the prompt (*Depending on how weary he is of eating ice cream and watching the punts on the river*).

Student responses should include relevant inferences and conclusions. Responses should be in complete sentences where errors, if present, do not impact readability.

HOW TO HELP STUDENTS MASTER RL.8.4:

To help students succeed with questions measuring RL.8.4, instruction can focus on providing a variety of grade-level complex texts and building their capacity to recognize the impact of figurative language. Students can practice this skill by identifying examples of figurative language and explaining what it shows about characters in a story.

See [Short-Response \(2-point\) Holistic Rubric](#), suggested sample student responses, and scoring: two 2-pt responses, two 1-pt responses, and one 0-pt response.

What does the phrase “private university” (line 55) reveal about the narrator and her father? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The phrase "private university" reveals that the narrator's father allowed her to become what she is today / allowed his daughter to have a "private university" which to me means an atmosphere that only revolves around her, the narrator or an environment which she can be free and express herself throughout the world of books. For example, "The store was both my home and my job. And, "... My father never forbade a book." These two lines tell me that the narrator was brought up to do her own thing and read.

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what the phrase “private university” reveals about the narrator and her father (*the narrator’s father allowed her to become what she is today*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*the store was both my home and my job* and *My father never forbade a book*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What does the phrase “private university” (line 55) reveal about the narrator and her father? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The phrase "private university" reveals much about the narrator and her father. The shop was her sanctuary and her life. The narrator said, "afterward it was my own private university. It was my life." It was just her (narrator) and her father mostly, not many disturbances they were a family. The narrator said, "... not infrequently apologize for disturbing us." But mostly it is just father, me and the books. "In conclusion it reveals they are always together and she loves the shop as much as he does.

Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what the phrase “private university” reveals about the narrator and her father (*The shop was her sanctuary and her life*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*afterward it was my own private university. It was my life* and *But mostly it is just Father, me and the books*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What does the phrase “private university” (line 55) reveal about the narrator and her father?
Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The phrase "private university" reveals that they might be a quite family and that their buisness is their home and her "school." "I learned my alphabet in this shop and "I learned how to write there too..." can tell you this

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what the phrase “private university” reveals about the narrator and her father (*their buisness is their home and her “school”*); however, the response provides only one concrete detail from the text for support (*I learned how to write there too*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

What does the phrase “private university” (line 55) reveal about the narrator and her father?
Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

It meant because she was so interested in books & read so many she learned alot new things & learned at her own pace.

Score Point 1 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what the phrase “private university” reveals about the narrator and her father (*she learned alot new things & learned at her own pace*); however, the response does not provide two details from the text for support as required by the prompt.

What does the phrase “private university” (line 55) reveal about the narrator and her father? Use **two** details from the passage to support your response.

The Phrase "Private University" reveal about the narrator and her Father that they were home school, meaning if she goes to a Public school might know no one because she was home schooled.

Score Point 0 (out of 2 points)

This response does not address any of the requirements of the prompt (*that they were home school*).

MEASURES CCLS: RL.8.2:

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary.

HOW THIS QUESTION MEASURES RL.8.2:

This question measures RL.8.2 by asking students to express a theme that two passages have in common and explain how that theme is developed in each passage. Students successfully responding to this question demonstrate the ability to express a theme statement, as well as isolate and explain the aspects of a story an author uses to develop a theme.

CHARACTERISTICS OF RESPONSES RECEIVING FULL CREDIT:

Responses receiving full credit will include a coherent expression of a theme shared by both passages and will be supported by a discussion of how the theme is developed in each passage. Theme statements might focus on what ideas the authors express about objects, memories, informal education, relationships, or families. Some of the themes that the two passages share are how objects hold meaning, how objects can elicit memories, how objects become endowed with meaning that connects them to specific people, how children recall their fathers, what or how children learn from their fathers, or how relationships are developed through objects and experiences.

Key to receiving full credit is the student's discussion of how each author develops the stated theme. In "The Inheritance of Tools," the author develops the theme of the story by explaining the meaning held by a specific object—a hammer—in the author's family. A student might discuss how long the hammer has been in the family, how the hammer has acquired meaning for its owners through its role in important events (building the house for the grandfather's bride and future family; the author's own father repairing his roof), and the author's own experiences with the hammer as a child (hearing its use and understanding the speed of sound or his participation in various projects overseen by his dad, for example). A student might also discuss the symbolism of the hammer connecting the men in the author's family and how the author develops the meaning behind the replaced handle of the hammer.

In "Margaret's Story," discussion of how the author develops the theme might include how the author creates meaning by interweaving memories of the narrator's father with the meaning of books to both of them. A student might also focus on the way the bookshop connects the daughter to her father and what the bookshop reveals about them. The bookshop comes to represent the father, who he is and what he values, and by association, what the daughter learns and values about the father. Books are central to what connects the two. Students might discuss the value the father places on books and his dedication to safe guarding them. For the daughter, books and her father's shop become her primer for many aspects of her life, from teaching her the alphabet to opening up a world far beyond the confines of a book or a dusty bookshop.

However simple the objects in the two stories might be, for the author of "The Inheritance of Tools" and the narrator of "Margaret's Story," the objects represent their relationship with their fathers and connection to aspects of the world beyond.

There is no single "correct" response, but rather responses that sufficiently and clearly develop the topic based on the four criteria in the Extended-Response (4-point) Holistic Rubric, and responses that do not. Student responses are evaluated on the relevance, accuracy, and sufficiency of conclusions and inferences made about the text and the selection, discussion, relevance, and organization of supporting details. Student responses should include an introductory and concluding comment and be logically organized. Responses should be in complete sentences where errors, if present, do not impact readability.

[See Extended-Response \(4-point\) Holistic Rubric](#), suggested sample student responses, and scoring: two 4-pt responses, two 3-pt responses, two 2-pt responses, two 1-pt responses, and one 0-pt response.

Identify a theme shared by "The Inheritance of Tools" and "Margaret's Story." Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

"The Inheritance of Tools" by Scott Russell Sanders and "Margaret's Story" by Dianne Setterfield share a common theme. Both discuss how memories have been cherished in something they grew up with. It is obvious the stories share a common theme, which is memories.

In the passage "The Inheritance of Tools" by Scott Russell, the theme of memories shows through when the narrator discusses the passing down of the hammer from one generation to the other. According to the narrator, the hammer was not just a tool from a toolbox. Because the hammer has been used to build homes and start their family, it is considered a family treasure. The narrator remembers building chairs, their house, chicken coops, and doll house furniture with the hammer. With the hammer, stories of the previous generation is able to be passed down and get appreciation. The hammer also holds memories of the narrator and his dad nailing into wood when he was young. The hammer created a bond and a common interest, making those moments memorable.

Margaret, from "Margaret's Story" by Dianne Setterfield, has her memories cherished by her dad's shop. Although the shop was not making a lot of money, Margaret loved it because it was her life and home. She remembers learning to read, write and spell in the shop. She also remembers her dad writing letters in the shop. The shop was the place that carried her memories with her dad and books. The shop created memories as well as a bond between Margaret and her dad. Learning to appreciate the shop helped Margaret appreciate books and her dad's indulgence.

In both passages, the narrators have memories cherished in something that seems useless to others.

Score Point 4 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that is compelling and follows logically from the task and purpose (*the stories share a common theme, which is memories*). The response demonstrates insightful analysis of the texts (*Both discuss how memories have been cherished in something they grew up with*). The topic is developed with the sustained use of relevant, well-chosen facts from the texts that is varied (*the hammer was not just a tool from a toolbox. Because the hammer has been used to build homes and start their family, it is considered a family treasure and Margaret loved it because it was her life and home. She remembers learning to read, write and spell in the shop. She also remembers her dad writing letters in the shop*). Clear organization is exhibited by the skillful use of appropriate and varied transitions (*According to the narrator, Because the hammer, also, Although the shop, She also*). A formal style is established and maintained through the use of grade-appropriate and domain-specific vocabulary (*created a bond and a common interest, making those moments memorable and appreciate books and her dad's indulgence*). The concluding statement follows clearly from the topic and information presented (*the narrators have memories cherished in something that seems useless to others*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors.

Identify a theme shared by "The Inheritance of Tools" and "Margaret's Story." Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

In "The Inheritance of Tools" and "Margaret's Story", a theme is shared and developed. This theme is about relics, passing down a family heirloom. And both these stories follow this theme.

In "The Inheritance of Tools", the narrator talks about how his father had used the hammer, and his father before him. "The hammer, which had been made by his grandfather, had been passed down from father to son not once, but twice. The hammer, which is a family heirloom, was used by the narrator's grandfather to build his and his soon-to-be wife's house. And then, when the narrator was five or six, he heard the thunk of the hammer against the nail". His father was using the hammer to hammer shingles in. And then, the hammer was passed down to the narrator. This is how the theme, the passing down of a family heirloom is developed in this story.

In "Margaret's Story", an object isn't passed down, but a business. The narrator's

father first opened the business, a bookstore, "Lea's Antiquarian Booksellers", and instantly, the narrator was hooked. She would read anything, "gory tales of historic heroism." The store was practically her father's life. And then, when the narrator would be the right age, she would help run the business alongside her father. Even though the store had little business, the two still ran it out of a love and appreciation for the store and books. And that is how the same theme is developed in this story.

In conclusion, both these stories follow the same theme. And all in all, everyone has something from a past generation that they cherish. Whether it be a bookstore or a hammer, it could be anything. But it all follows the same theme.

Score Point 4 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that is compelling and follows logically from the task and purpose. (*This theme is about relics, passing down a family heirloom*). The response demonstrates insightful analysis of the texts (*passed down from father to son not once, but twice. The hammer, which is a family heirloom and help run the business alongside her father*). The topic is developed with the sustained use of relevant, well-chosen facts from the texts (*used by the narrator's grandfather to build his and his soon-to-become wife's house; His father was using the hammer to hammer shingles in; the hammer was passed down to the narrator; would read anything, "...gory tales of historic heroism..."; Even though the store had little business, the two still ran it*). Clear organization is exhibited by the use of appropriate transitions (*And then, This is how, Even though, In conclusion*) to create a unified whole. A formal style is established and maintained through the use of grade-appropriate and domain-specific vocabulary (*relics, heirloom, narrator was hooked, a love and appreciation*). The concluding statement follows clearly from the topic and information presented (*everyone has something from a past generation that they cherish...it could be anything*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors.

Identify a theme shared by "The Inheritance of Tools" and "Margaret's Story." Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

"The Inheritance of Tools" and "Margaret's Story" share a special characteristic. This characteristic is the theme of the stories. The theme is a similarity that can bring the meanings of the stories together.

The theme that is shared by both of the passages is the importance of things to people. This theme forms the central idea and meaning of each passage.

"The Inheritance of Tools" develops this theme by how the narrator tells the story of how the hammer got passed down from his grandfather, to his father. The narrator tells of how he learned how to hammer properly from his father. He also learned by watching his father about

the speed of sound. The narrator took good care in learning how to use it, and did not bother his father whenever his father used the hammer.

"Margaret's Story" develop this theme by how the author explains the importance of the bookstore to her. She claims that she knows the bookstore "like the places of your childhood." The author tells of how she learned more there than she did in school. The bookstore was like a second home to her.

In conclusion, two different passages can share the same theme and meaning.

Score Point 3 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows from the task and purpose (*The theme is a similarity that can bring the meanings of the stories together*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate analysis of the texts (*The theme that is shared by both of the passages is the importance of things to people*). The topic is developed with relevant examples from the texts (*tells the story of how the hammer got passed down from his grandfather to his father, tells of how he learned how to hammer properly from his father, she learned more there than she did in school, was like a second home to her*). The response exhibits clear organization with the use of appropriate transitions to create a unified whole (*He also, and, In conclusion*). A formal style is established by using precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (*forms the central idea and meaning and develops this theme*). The concluding statement follows from the topic and information presented (*two different passages can share the same theme and meaning*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors (*develop this theme*).

Identify a theme shared by "The Inheritance of Tools" and "Margaret's Story." Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

A theme shared by "The Inheritance of Tools" and "Margaret's Story" is both stories show how the author had something to share with their family. In "The Inheritance of Tools" the passage tells of how a hammer is passed down from generation to generation. This hammer is something every man in the family used and passed down to their son. In "Margaret's Story" the passage tells about a father and daughter both love to read and have a book shelf. Not many people visit the store so there is not much profit in it, but the store had much of an effect on the little girl. In "The Inheritance of Tools" the author state "The hammer had belonged to him, and to his father before him." This supports this theme of sharing something with a family member. Also, "The shop was both my home and my job" from "Margaret's Story" shows how much of an effect the book shop had on her and her life.

Score Point 3 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows from the task and purpose (*both stories show how the author had something to share with their family*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate analysis of the texts (*tells of how a hammer is passed down from generation to generation and tells about a father and daughter both love to read*). The topic is developed with relevant examples from the texts (*Not many people visit the store so their is not much profit in it, but the store had much of an effect on the little girl; The hammer had belonged to him, and to his father before him; The shop was both my home and my job*). Some attempt at organization is exhibited by the inconsistent use of transitions (*In "The, In "Margaret's, but, This supports, Also*). A formal style is established by using precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (*passed down from generation to generation and supports this theme of sharing*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors (*every man...their, about a father and daughter both, their is*) that do not hinder comprehension.

Identify a theme shared by “The Inheritance of Tools” and “Margaret’s Story.” Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

in both passages of "the inheritance of tools" and "margaret's story" they both have a theme that is shared. the theme that is shared is that in both stories, they use something that is important to them to teach their children something. in the passage of "the inherited tools" the father gives his son a hammer that has been passed on so he can teach him how to nail and build. in the passage of margarets story, margaret is taught how to read, write, and how to understand the alphabet using the library. "I learned my alphabet in the shop"

Score Point 2 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic that follows generally from the task and purpose (*the theme that is shared is that in both stories, they use something that is important to them*). The response demonstrates a literal understanding of the texts (*to teach their children something*). The topic is partially developed with the use of some textual evidence (*The father gives his son a hammer that has been passed on and is taught how to read, write, and how to understand the alphabet*). This response exhibits some attempt at organization, with inconsistent use of transitions (*in the passag and in the passage*). The response establishes but fails to maintain a formal style, with inconsistent use of language and domain-specific vocabulary (*in both, they both, in both stories, use something, children something*). No concluding statement is present. The response demonstrates an emerging command of conventions, with some errors (*in, passeges, margarets, shared. the, important, something. in, build. in, taught, wright*) that may hinder comprehension.

Identify a theme shared by “The Inheritance of Tools” and “Margaret’s Story.” Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

I think the theme of these two passages is that the main topic or idea of a story may not be all that much in terms of the big picture, or in a broader sense.

I think both the hammer in “The Inheritance of Tools” and the book shop in “Margaret’s Story” both play the same role, more or less. I think they are both portrayed as something special that helps the main character along throughout life, and has a positive influence and a huge effect on them. However, the fact that these things may leave a lasting effect on one person doesn’t necessarily mean they are a huge influence to everyone.

The fact that both the hammer and the shop both have big influences on the main characters doesn’t mean they are very big parts of their worlds in a broader sense.

Score Point 2 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic that follows generally from the task and purpose (*both the hammer... and the book shop...both play the same role, more or less*). The response demonstrates a literal understanding of the texts (*they are both portrayed as something special*). This response demonstrates an attempt to use evidence, but ideas are only developed with minimal evidence (*helps the main character along throughout life, and has a positive influence and a huge effect on them*). This response exhibits some attempt at organization, with inconsistent use of transitions (*and, However, The fact that*). The response establishes but fails to maintain a formal style, with inconsistent use of language and domain-specific vocabulary (*the main topic or idea...may not be all that much in terms of the big picture*). The concluding statement follows generally from the topic and information presented (*both have big influences on the main characters doesn’t mean they are very big parts of their worlds in a broader sense*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors (*lasting affect and necessarily*) that do not hinder comprehension.

Identify a theme shared by “The Inheritance of Tools” and “Margaret’s Story.” Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

In both passages they talk about a special thing or place like a bookstore that belongs to a old man, or a hammer that is passed down father to son.

Score Point 1 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic that follows generally from the task (*In both passages they talk about a special thing or Place*). The response demonstrates a literal understanding of the texts and a minimal attempt to use evidence (*a bookstore that belongs to a old man and a hammer That is passed down father to Son*). This response exhibits little attempt at organization and does not provide a concluding statement. The response lacks a formal style, using language that is imprecise (*thing or Place*). The response demonstrates an emerging command of conventions, with some errors (*or, a old man, hammer That*) that may hinder comprehension.

Identify a theme shared by “The Inheritance of Tools” and “Margaret’s Story.” Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

Both passages “The Inheritance of tools” and “Margaret’s Story” share the theme that sometimes its good to use things that are passed down to you

Score Point 1 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic that follows generally from the task (*share the theme that sometimes its good to use things that are passed down to you*). The response provides no evidence. No evidence of organization is provided and the response does not provide a concluding statement. The response is minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable.

Identify a theme shared by “The Inheritance of Tools” and “Margaret’s Story.” Explain how each passage develops this theme. Use details from **both** passages to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by both passages
- explain how each passage develops this theme
- use details from **both** passages to support your response

A theme shared in the both stories is help others ~~and so~~ Here is why.
Cause in the both stories they give help to others. That makes them feel good about themselves. It also makes them look good. Also other people can look up to them. So its basically do good and get good

Score Point 0 (out of 4 points)

This response demonstrates a lack of comprehension of the texts and task (*shared in both stories is help others*). The response provides no evidence from the texts. There is no evidence of organization. The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors (*A theme, why. cause, them. so*) that hinder comprehension.

2-Point Rubric—Short Response

Score	Response Features
2 Point	<p>The features of a 2-point response are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Valid inferences and/or claims from the text where required by the prompt • Evidence of analysis of the text where required by the prompt • Relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and/or other information from the text to develop response according to the requirements of the prompt • Sufficient number of facts, definitions, concrete details, and/or other information from the text as required by the prompt • Complete sentences where errors do not impact readability
1 Point	<p>The features of a 1-point response are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A mostly literal recounting of events or details from the text as required by the prompt • Some relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, and/or other information from the text to develop response according to the requirements of the prompt • Incomplete sentences or bullets
0 Point*	<p>The features of a 0-point response are</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A response that does not address any of the requirements of the prompt or is totally inaccurate • A response that is not written in English • A response that is unintelligible or indecipherable

- If the prompt requires two texts and the student only references one text, the response can be scored no higher than a 1.
- * Condition Code A is applied whenever a student who is present for a test session leaves an entire constructed-response question in that session completely blank (no response attempted).

New York State Grade 6-8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric

CRITERIA	CCLS	SCORE				0*
		4	3	2	1	
CONTENT AND ANALYSIS: the extent to which the essay conveys complex ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to support claims in an analysis of topics or texts	W.2 R.1-9	Essays at this level: —clearly introduce a topic in a manner that is compelling and follows logically from the task and purpose —demonstrate insightful analysis of the text(s)	Essays at this level: —introduce a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task and purpose —demonstrate a literal comprehension of the text(s)	Essays at this level: —introduce a topic in a manner that does not logically follow from the task and purpose —demonstrate little understanding of the text(s)	Essays at this level: —demonstrate a lack of comprehension of the text(s) or task	
		—develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples from the text(s) —sustain the use of varied, relevant evidence	—partially develop the topic of the essay with the use of some textual evidence, some of which may be irrelevant —use relevant evidence with inconsistency	—demonstrate grade-appropriate analysis of the text(s) —develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples from the text(s) —sustain the use of relevant evidence, with some lack of variety	—demonstrate an attempt to use evidence, but only develop ideas with minimal, occasional evidence which is generally invalid or irrelevant	—provide no evidence or provide evidence that is completely irrelevant
COMMAND OF EVIDENCE: the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided texts to support analysis and reflection	W.9 R.1-9	—exhibit clear organization, with the skillful use of appropriate and varied transitions to create a unified whole and enhance meaning —establish and maintain a formal style, using grade-appropriate, stylistically sophisticated language and domain-specific vocabulary with a notable sense of voice —provide a concluding statement or section that is compelling and follows clearly from the topic and information presented	—exhibit some attempt at organization, with inconsistent use of transitions —establish but fail to maintain a formal style, with inconsistent use of language and domain-specific vocabulary	—exhibit little attempt at organization, or attempts to organize are irrelevant to the task —lack a formal style, using language that is imprecise or inappropriate for the text(s) and task	—exhibit no evidence of organization —use language that is predominantly incoherent or copied directly from the text(s)	
		—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—provide a concluding statement or section that follows generally from the topic and information presented —demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—do not provide a concluding statement or section —are minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable	
COHERENCE, ORGANIZATION, AND STYLE: the extent to which the essay logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language	W.2 L.3 L.6	—provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the topic and information presented —demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—provide a concluding statement or section that follows generally from the topic and information presented —demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—provide a concluding statement or section that is illogical or unrelated to the topic and information presented	—do not provide a concluding statement or section	
		—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—provide a concluding statement or section that follows generally from the topic and information presented —demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—do not provide a concluding statement or section	
CONTROL OF CONVENTIONS: the extent to which the essay demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling	W.2 L.1 L.2	—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—provide a concluding statement or section that follows generally from the topic and information presented —demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—do not provide a concluding statement or section	
		—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—provide a concluding statement or section that follows generally from the topic and information presented —demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—do not provide a concluding statement or section	

- If the prompt requires two texts and the student only references one text, the response can be scored no higher than a 2.
- If the student writes only a personal response and makes no reference to the text(s), the response can be scored no higher than a 1.
- Responses totally unrelated to the topic, illegible, or incoherent should be given a 0.
- A response totally copied from the text(s) with no original student writing should be scored a 0.
- * Condition Code A is applied whenever a student who is present for a test session leaves an entire constructed-response question in that session completely blank (no response attempted).