New York State Testing Program

EXCELSIOR

Educator Guide to the 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test

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THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK

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Foreword

Beginning with the 2012–13 school year, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) redesigned its assessment program to measure what students know and can do relative to the grade-level Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for English Language Arts. The CCLS for English Language Arts make up a broad set of literacy expectations for students. The CCLS English Language Arts Standards define literacy as integrated comprehension, analysis, and communication of information gleaned from reading, regardless of the text type.

The Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test is designed to measure student literacy as defined by the CCLS.

Many of the questions on the 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test are more advanced and complex than those found on prior assessments that measured prior grade-level standards. Answer choices will not jump out; rather, students will need to make hard choices between "fully correct" and "plausible but incorrect" answers that are designed specifically to determine whether students have comprehended the entire passage and are proficient with the deep analyses specified by the standards.

To answer ELA questions correctly, students will need to read and analyze each passage completely and closely, and be prepared to carefully consider responses to multiple-choice questions. In many cases, if the student has not read and comprehended the entire passage, the answer choices may not make sense. For constructed response items, students will need to make inferences that can be defended with evidence gathered from rigorous literary and informational passages. Some passages will express an author's point of view with which not all readers will agree.

This guide details many of the changes involved with both instruction and the newly designed tests that measure the Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts. While reading about each of the changes will help to understand how to prepare students for the upcoming test, it is important to remember that research has consistently demonstrated that students perform best on local, regional, statewide, or national tests when they have a great teacher delivering high-quality instruction aligned to rigorous standards.[1] Rote test prep practices are incompatible with highly effective teaching and lead to lower student performance.[2]

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[1]See, for example, http://ccsr.uchicago.edu/publications/authentic-intellectual-work-and-standardized-tests-conflict-or-coexistence.

[2] See, for example, http://metproject.org/downloads/MET_Gathering_Feedback_Research_Paper.pdf.

2015 Common Core English Language Arts Tests

As part of the New York State Board of Regents Reform Agenda, NYSED has embarked on a comprehensive initiative to ensure that schools prepare students with the knowledge and skills they need to succeed in college and in their careers. To realize the goals of this agenda, changes have occurred in standards, curricula, and assessments. These changes will impact pedagogy and, ultimately, student learning.

The New York State P–12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) for English Language Arts & Literacy call for changes in what is expected from a teacher's instructional approach. In English Language Arts, these shifts will be characterized by an intense focus on complex, grade-appropriate nonfiction and fiction texts that require rigorous textual analysis, the application of academic language, and other key college- and career-readiness skills.

More specifically, the changes around which teachers should expect to focus their instruction will involve six key shifts each in English Language Arts & Literacy. (A more detailed description of these shifts can be found at http://engageny.org/resource/common-core-shifts/).

Shifts in English Language Arts & Literacy		
Shift 1	Balancing Informational & Literary Text	Students read a true balance of informational and literary texts.
Shift 2	Knowledge in the Disciplines	Students build knowledge about the world (domains / content areas) primarily through *text* rather than through the teacher or other activities.
Shift 3	Staircase of Complexity	Students read the central, grade-appropriate text around which instruction is centered. Teachers are patient, and create more time, space, and support in the curriculum for close reading.
Shift 4	Text-based Answers	Students engage in rich and rigorous evidence-based conversations about text.
Shift 5	Writing from Sources	Writing emphasizes use of evidence from sources to inform or make an argument.
Shift 6	Academic Vocabulary	Students continuously build the transferable vocabulary they need to access grade-level complex texts. This can be done effectively by spiraling like content in increasingly complex texts.

The Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics New York State Testing Program (NYSTP) has been redesigned to measure student learning aligned with the instructional shifts necessitated by the CCLS. This document provides specific details about the 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test and the standards that it measures.

Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts

The New York State P–12 Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students (Standards) and characteristics of CCLS instruction ("Note on range and content"). The standards are organized into four overlapping strands: Reading, Writing, Language, and Speaking/Listening. In each of these strands the shifts are borne out in the specific fluency, comprehension, analytic, and communication expectations stated in the standards. The CCLS present an integrated model of literacy in which standards mutually inform one another and progress fluidly across grades. A successful integration of the standards will provide students with the fluency, comprehension, analytic, and communication skills necessary to be on track for college and career readiness.

As detailed in the "Note on range and content," (found alongside the Grade K–5 Anchor Standards) Common Core teaching and learning have certain distinct characteristics. The characteristics, detailed below by strand, further articulate what New York means by the instructional "Shifts" demanded by these standards. The information below is meant to provide the context and expectations to enable student success and inform teacher practice.

Reading

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students:

- must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading of stories, dramas, poems, and myths from diverse cultures and different time periods, students gain literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with various text structures and elements (Shift 1: Balancing Informational & Literary Text; Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 3: Staircase of Complexity).

By reading texts in history/social studies, science, and other disciplines, students:

- build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas. Students can only gain this foundation when the curriculum is intentionally and coherently structured to develop rich content knowledge within and across grades. Students also acquire the habits of reading independently and closely, which are essential to their future success (Shift 1: Balancing Informational & Literary Text; Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary).

Writing

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to:

- learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating an understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events (Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 5: Writing from Sources);

- learn to appreciate that a key purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to an external, sometimes unfamiliar audience, and begin to adapt the form and content of their writing to accomplish a particular task and purpose (Shift 4: Text-based Answers; Shift 5: Writing from Sources); and

- develop the capacity to build knowledge on a subject through research projects and to respond analytically to literary and informational sources (Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 5: Writing from Sources).

To meet these goals students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year.

Language

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students:

- must gain control over many conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics, as well as learn other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively;

- must also be able to determine or clarify the meaning of grade-appropriate words encountered through listening, reading, and media use (Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary); and

- come to appreciate that words have non-literal meanings, shadings of meaning, and relationships to other words, and expand their vocabulary in the course of studying content (Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary).

Placing Language Standards in their own strand should not be taken as an indication that skills related to conventions, effective language use, and vocabulary are unimportant to reading, writing, speaking, and listening; indeed, they are inseparable from such contexts.

Speaking and Listening

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students:

- must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations— as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. To be productive members of these conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information (Shift 4: Text-based Answers);

- respond to and develop what others have said; and

- make comparisons and contrasts, analyzing and synthesizing a multitude of ideas in various domains (Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines).

The complete CCLS for English Language Arts & Literacy are available at
http://engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-p-12-common-core-learning-standards/.

Assessing the CCLS for English Language Arts

The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test will focus entirely on the Grade 5 CCLS for English Language Arts & Literacy. As such, the assessments will approach reading, writing, and language differently from past assessments.

Reading, Writing, and Language

The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test will assess Reading, Writing, and Language Standards using multiple-choice, short-response, and extended-response questions. All questions will be based on close reading of informational, literary, or paired texts. All texts will be drawn from authentic, grade-level works that are worthwhile to read. Texts on the 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test will typically be 700–800 words in length. Please see pages 5–7 for further information about authentic texts and text selection.

Reading and Language Standards will be assessed using multiple-choice questions. Short-response (2-point) questions will primarily assess reading, but will also require writing and command of language. Extended-response (4-point) questions will assess Writing from Sources, whereby student responses will be rated on the degree to which they can communicate a clear and coherent analysis of one or two texts.

Speaking and Listening

While Speaking and Listening Standards will **NOT** be assessed on the state test, they remain two of the most important components of college and career readiness and critical building blocks in students' ability to read and write at grade level. Speaking and Listening Standards provide the dialogic building blocks that directly support students in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to *Read to Learn*. In Grades 3–5, Speaking and Listening Standards (practiced daily in evidence-based conversations about text) create habits, models, and developmental supports for students so that they are prepared to write from sources, strategically and correctly citing evidence from text to make strong arguments. Only through rigorous, structured classroom discourse will students gain valuable experiences interrogating texts they need in order to meet the rigors of what is required in writing. It is imperative that teachers continue to instruct and assess the Speaking and Listening Standards in the classroom. Instructional resources and examples of formative assessments for the Speaking and Listening Standards can be found in the Grade 5 curriculum materials located on EngageNY.org.

For more information about Curriculum Materials, please refer to EngageNY at
http://engageny.org/common-core-curriculum/.

What It Means to Use Authentic Texts

State testing programs use either commissioned or authentic texts, or a combination thereof, as passages for questions. Commissioned texts are authored by test developers or writers and are developed specifically for use in standardized tests. In contrast, authentic texts are published works that are typically encountered by students in daily life, such as in magazines, books or newspapers. The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test will use only authentic texts.

The transition to authentic texts and the CCLS for English Language Arts means that Common Core English Language Arts Tests will be experienced differently than past state tests. Many of the Common Core *Reading for Information* Standards require students to recognize how authors support their opinions, to understand the author's point of view and purpose, and to be able to discern well-supported arguments from those that are not. In order to assess these standards on the test, we must include text passages that express opinions and theories with which not all readers may agree. Students must demonstrate their ability to determine point of view, purpose, and success of argumentation with supporting evidence in subjects that they will encounter both in other academic classes and in their daily lives.

The move to using authentic texts allows for the inclusion of works of literature that are worthy of reading outside an assessment context. The use of authentic, meaningful texts may mean that some texts are more emotionally charged or may use language outside of a student's particular cultural experience, including intentional and unintentional use of incorrect grammar and spelling. While all assessments will include appropriate texts, please be aware that authentic texts will likely prompt real responses—perhaps even strong disagreement—among our students. Students need to be prepared to respond accordingly while engaging with the test. The alternative would be to exclude many authors and texts that are capable of supporting the rigorous analysis called for by the Common Core.

For example, selections from Roald Dahl's *The BFG* or Robert Coles' *The Story of Ruby Bridges* may appear on Common Core tests even though the complete works from which they would be drawn include controversial ideas and language that some may find provocative. Additionally, selections from these authors may include writing that contains incorrect grammar and spelling. Both Dahl and Coles intentionally use incorrect grammar and spelling to develop characters, themes and settings. However, both of these texts are foundational texts for the grade-band. While passages from these examples do not appear on this year's test, passages drawn from similarly great works will be read in classrooms across the state, and some of them may end up on future tests.

The use of authentic, meaningful texts may also mean that some students have read texts included on the 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test prior to administration. For the very reasons that texts were selected for use on the assessment, it is possible that teachers have selected the same texts for use in their classrooms and students may have read the books that passages were drawn from for their personal reading.

Additionally, the use of authentic passages also means that students may encounter passages drawn from works commonly taught at higher grades. Oftentimes, parts of larger, more complex works are perfectly suited for younger readers.

Rigorous Texts

Selecting high-quality, grade-appropriate texts requires both objective text complexity metrics and expert judgment. For the 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test, both qualitative and quantitative measures are used to determine the complexity of the texts. Based on research and the guidance of nationally-recognized literacy experts,[3] the following ranges for quantitative measures were used to guide text selection:

Common Scale for Grade Band Level Text Difficulty Ranges[4]

Common Core Band	Text Analyzer Tool					
	ATOS	**DRP**	**FK**	**LEXILE**	**SR**	**RM**
2nd–3rd	2.75–5.14	42–54	1.98–5.34	420–820	0.05–2.48	3.53–6.13
4th–5th	4.97–7.03	52–60	4.51–7.73	740–1010	0.84–5.75	5.42–7.92
6th–8th	7.00–9.98	57–67	6.51–10.34	925–1185	4.11–10.66	7.04–9.57
9th–10th	9.67–12.01	62–72	8.32–12.12	1050–1335	9.02–13.93	8.41–10.81
11th–12th	11.20–14.10	67–74	10.34–14.20	1185–1385	12.30–14.50	9.57–12.00

Key	
ATOS	ATOS® (Renaissance Learning)
DRP	Degrees of Reading Power® (Questar)
FK	Flesch-Kincaid®
LEXILE	Lexile Framework® (MetaMetrics)
SR	Source Rater© (Educational Testing Service)
RM	Pearson Reading Maturity Metric© (Pearson Education)

For more information about passage selection, please refer to Passage Selection Resources and Appendix B of the CCLS for English Language Arts at

http://engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-passage-selection-resources-for-grade-3-8-assessments

and

http://engageny.org/resource/appendix-b-common-core-standards-for-elaliteracy-text-exemplars-and-sample-performance/.

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[3] Nelson, Jessica; Perfetti, Charles; Liben, David; and Liben, Meredith, "Measures of Text Difficulty: Testing Their Predictive Value for Grade Levels and Student Performance," 2012.
[4] Ibid

Range of Informational Texts

One of the major shifts of the CCLS is an emphasis on developing skills for comprehending and analyzing informational texts. The CCLS for English Language Arts calls for a balance of literary and informational texts. This balance is reflected in the standards, instruction, and in the texts selected for the Grade 5 test.

Increased exposure to informational texts better prepares students for what they will encounter in college and the workplace. The array of passages selected for the 2015 tests will assess whether students can comprehend and analyze a range of informational texts.

The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test will have questions on a variety of informational texts. Each of these has unique characteristics and can be grouped by general similarities in structure and purpose. The chart below categorizes common informational texts according to their structure. Please note that the chart below is not specific to Grade 5, rather it is meant to help teachers understand the range of informational texts that students may encounter by the end of Grade 8.

EXPOSITORY	ARGUMENTATIVE	INSTRUCTIONAL	NARRATIVE
Textbooks (science)	Opinion/Editorial Pieces	Training Manuals	(Auto)Biographies
Textbooks (humanities)	Speeches (including those from seated politicians)	Contracts	Histories
Reports	Advertisements	User Guides/Manuals	Correspondence
Tourism Guides	Political Propaganda	Legal Documents	Curriculum Vitae
Product Specifications	Journal Articles	Recipes	Memoirs
Product/Service Descriptions	Government Documents	Product/Service Descriptions	News Articles
Magazine Articles	Legal Documents		Essays
Company Profiles	Tourism Guides		Interviews
Legal Documents	Correspondence		Agendas
Agendas	Essays		
Correspondence	Reviews		
Essays	Memoirs		
Interviews			
Government Documents			
News Articles			

For more information about informational texts, please refer to Appendix B of the CCLS for English Language Arts at
http://engageny.org/resource/appendix-b-common-core-standards-for-elaliteracy-text-exemplars-and-sample-performance/.

The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test

Testing Sessions and Times

The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test will consist of **three books** that are administered over **three days**. **Day 1 will consist of Book 1. Day 2 will consist of Book 2. Day 3 will consist of Book 3**. The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test is designed so that most students will complete Day 1 testing in about 70 minutes, Day 2 testing in about 60 minutes, and Day 3 testing in about 50 minutes. While it is likely that most students will complete testing within these times, students will be permitted 90 minutes to complete the test each day. This design provides ample time for students who work at different paces. For more information regarding what students may do once they have completed their work, please refer to the section, "When Students Have Completed Their Tests."

Grade 5 Estimated Time on Task

Book	Day Administered	Estimated Time on Task
1	1	70*
2	2	60*
3	3	50*
Total Estimated Time on Task		180

* Each Testing Day will be scheduled to allow 90 minutes for completion.

The tests must be administered under standard conditions and the directions must be followed carefully. The same test administration procedures must be used with all students so that valid inferences can be drawn from the test results.

NYSED devotes great attention to the security and integrity of the NYSTP. School administrators and teachers involved in the administration of State Assessments are responsible for understanding and adhering to the instructions set forth in the *School Administrator's Manual* and the *Teacher's Directions*. These resources will be found at

http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ei/eigen.html.

When Students Have Completed Their Tests

Students who finish their assessment before the allotted time expires should be encouraged to go back and check their work. Once the student checks his or her work, or chooses not to, examination materials should be collected by the proctor. After a student's assessment materials are collected, that student may be permitted to read silently.* This privilege is granted at the discretion of each school. No talking is permitted and no other schoolwork is permitted.

*For more detailed information about test administration, including proper procedures for talking to students during testing and handling reading materials, please refer to the *School Administrator's Manual* and the *Teacher's Directions*.

Test Design

The chart below illustrates the test design for the 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test. This chart details the number of passages and the type(s) of questions in each book. Book 1 consists of passages with multiple-choice questions only. Book 2 consists of one passage with multiple-choice questions and two passages followed by short- and/or extended-response questions. Book 3 consists of passages with short- and extended-response questions only.

Also noted is the approximate number of informational and literary passages present on the 2015 test. Please note that embedded field test questions and passages are included in the design. It will not be apparent to students whether a question is an embedded field test question that does not count towards their score or an operational test question that does count towards their score.

2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test Design					
	Day 1	Day 2		Day 3	
	Book 1	Book 2		Book 3	Total
	Reading	Reading	Writing	Writing	
Passages	6	1	2	3	**12**
Multiple-Choice Questions	42	7			**49**
Short-Response Questions			3	5	**8**
Extended-Response Questions			1	1	**2**
	Total Number of Literary Passages				**4-8**
	Total Number of Informational Passages				**4-8**

Test Blueprint

The chart below shows the percentage of points that relate to Reading, Language, and Writing Standards. When reading these charts, it is essential to remember that most questions assess many standards simultaneously. Additionally, Reading Standards are divided by focus (Key Ideas, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge) to help guide instruction.

Area of Focus	Approximate Percentage of Points
Reading Standards (RL and RI)	100% of points require close reading
Language and Writing Standards	Up to 45% of points require writing and command of language
Approximate Percent of Reading Points	
Key Ideas and Details	Craft and Structure	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
Up to 65%	Up to 35%	Up to 30%

It should be noted that Standards RL5.1 and RI5.1 are a foundation for all questions on the tests, as all will require text-based responses. Likewise, Standards RL5.10 and RI5.10 form the heart of all text-based CCLS instruction. While not assessed directly in questions, Standards RL5.10 and RI5.10 are present on the test in the form of rigorous, worthwhile texts.

Question Formats

Multiple-Choice Questions

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 distractors.[5] Each distractor will require students to comprehend the whole passage.

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[5] 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.

Short-Response Questions

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 answers 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.

> **Sample Two-Credit Question:**
>
> *What is the main purpose of the 2015 Test Guide? Provide two text-based details to support your answer.*
>
> *Sample Response: The guide is designed to help teachers prepare students to be assessed on their mastery of the CCLS for ELA. The guide provides an overview of the CCLS for ELA and specific information about how the CCLS for ELA will be assessed, including Test Blueprint and Question Formats.*

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 to evaluate these types of responses is provided on page 12. It is important to note that students who answer the question only using details from the text will NOT receive full credit. A full-credit response is characterized by both an inference and textual support.

Extended-Response Questions

Extended-response questions are designed to assess ***Writing from Sources***. They will focus primarily on Common Core Writing Standards. Extended-response questions will require comprehension and analysis of either an individual text or paired texts. Paired texts require students to read and analyze two related texts. Paired texts are related by theme, genre, tone, time period, or other characteristics. Many extended-response questions will ask students to express a position and support it with text-based evidence. For paired texts, students will be expected to synthesize ideas between and draw evidence from both texts. Extended-response questions allow students to demonstrate their ability to write a coherent essay using textual evidence to support their ideas.

Student responses will be evaluated based on Common Core Writing Standards and a student's command of evidence to defend his or her point.

Sample Questions

Sample Questions for the Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Tests are available at

http://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-common-core-sample-questions

English Language Arts Rubrics

The 2015 Grade 5 Common Core English Language Arts Test will be scored using 2014 rubrics. Both the English Language Arts 2-Point and 4-Point Rubrics reflect the new demands called for by the CCLS.

Short-Response (2-Point) Holistic Rubric

Short-response questions will ask students to make a claim, take a position, or draw a conclusion, and then support it with details. This structure forms the foundation of the CCLS. As such, the 2-point rubric focuses on both the inference and evidence a student provides. This structure allows students to have wide latitude in responding to each prompt so long as their response is supported by the text.

Additionally, the expectation for all short responses will be complete, coherent sentences. By weaving these elements together, the questions, responses, and scores remain firmly focused on student reading ability.

2-Point Rubric—Short Response

Score	Response Features
2 Point	The features of a 2-point response are • 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	The features of a 1-point response are • 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*	The features of a 0-point response are • 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).

Extended-Response (4-Point) Holistic Rubric

Within the Common Core, writing does not take place in a vacuum. To be college and career ready, one must be able to write for a purpose using information from textual sources. Extended-response questions on the 2015 Common Core English Language Arts Tests will ask students to analyze texts and address meaningful questions using strategic, textual details. Scores for extended responses will be based on four overarching criteria:

- **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

- **Command of Evidence**—the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided texts to support analysis and reflection

- **Coherence, Organization, and Style**—the extent to which the essay logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language

- **Control of Conventions**—the extent to which the essay demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

These four characteristics combined make up the focus of the 4-point, extended-response tasks, *Writing from Sources*. Whether in response to an individual text or a paired selection, a student will be asked to synthesize, evaluate, and evidence his or her thinking in a coherent and legible manner. Please note the holistic 4-point rubric for Writing in Grades 4-5 on page 14.

New York State Grades 4-5 Writing Evaluation Rubric

CRITERIA	CCLS	SCORE				
		4 Essays at this level:	**3** Essays at this level:	**2** Essays at this level:	**1** Essays at this level	**0*** Essays at this level:
CONTENT AND ANALYSIS: the extent to which the essay conveys ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to support an analysis of topics or texts	W.2 R.1–9	— clearly introduce a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose —demonstrate insightful comprehension and analysis of the text(s)	— clearly introduce a topic in a manner that follows from the task and purpose —demonstrate grade-appropriate comprehension and analysis of the text(s)	—introduce a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task and purpose —demonstrate a literal comprehension of the text(s)	—introduce a topic in a manner that does not logically follow from the task and purpose —demonstrate little understanding of the text(s)	—demonstrate a lack of comprehension of the text(s) or task
COMMAND OF EVIDENCE: the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided texts to support analysis and reflection	W.2 W.9 R.1–9	—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	—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	—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 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
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	—exhibit clear, purposeful organization —skillfully link ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases —use grade-appropriate, stylistically sophisticated language and domain-specific vocabulary —provide a concluding statement that follows clearly from the topic and information presented	—exhibit clear organization —link ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases —use grade-appropriate precise language and domain-specific vocabulary —provide a concluding statement that follows from the topic and information presented	—exhibit some attempt at organization —inconsistently link ideas using words and phrases —inconsistently use appropriate language and domain-specific vocabulary —provide a concluding statement that follows generally from the topic and information presented	—exhibit little attempt at organization, or attempts to organize are irrelevant to the task —lack the use of linking words and phrases —use language that is imprecise or inappropriate for the text(s) and task —provide a concluding statement that is illogical or unrelated to the topic and information presented	—exhibit no evidence of organization —exhibit no use of linking words and phrases —use language that is predominantly incoherent or copied directly from the text(s) —do not provide a concluding statement
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 grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—are minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable

- 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).