

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

English Language Arts Item Sampler Grade 4



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OVERVIEW

This document contains samples of stimulus passages and test items similar to those on the Wisconsin Forward English Language Arts Exam. Each sample test item has been through a rigorous review process by DRC, Wisconsin educators, and a third party to ensure alignment with the Wisconsin Academic Standards. These items will not be used on the state assessment and may, therefore, be used in Wisconsin for professional development and student practice. The items in this document illustrate a sample of the content and types of items that students will encounter on the Forward Exam. A Summary Data table in the Appendices section identifies the alignment (standard measured), answer key, depth of knowledge, and annotations for each item.

CONNECTION TO THE STANDARDS

Wisconsin Academic Standards for English Language Arts are available on the [DPI webpage](#). Test items require students to prove their knowledge and abilities as stated in the standards.

TEXT COMPLEXITY CONSIDERATIONS

As part of the reading and listening passage development process, a passage's text complexity is analyzed so that an appropriate grade-level placement for each passage can be made. Data Recognition Corporation uses a process that measures (1) the quantitative evaluation of the text and (2) the qualitative evaluation of the text, which is reported out on a passage placemat. Passages along with their respective placemats may be submitted to DPI during initial passage reviews. In addition, a third component, matching reader/listener to text and task, is also taken into consideration during passage evaluation and teacher committee reviews.

HOW DO I USE THIS BOOK?

Professional Development

Sample items are useful as educators engage in conversations about what students are expected to know and be able to do to demonstrate proficiency on the state assessments relative to the Wisconsin Academic Standards. Sample items can inform discussions about state and local standards, curriculum, instruction, and assessment.

Improving Instruction

Teachers may use sample items in classroom activities that help students understand how to

- review key vocabulary;
- solve problems;
- determine which answer choices are correct, which are incorrect, and why;
- approach long and/or multistep tasks;
- use good test-taking strategies.

Student Practice

Students may perform better and with less anxiety if they are familiar with the format of the test and with the types of items they will be required to answer. The Forward Exam is an online assessment; students will benefit from the use of the [Online Tools Training](#) in order to work within the system interface to answer items as they will appear on the assessment, as well as utilize the tools available to them in the online system.

Note: A student's score on the practice test cannot be converted to a scale score, used to predict performance on the Forward Exam, or used to make inferences about the student's learning.

Test Preparation

While using the Item Sampler for test preparation, care should be taken that this is done in a balanced manner and one that helps to enhance student knowledge of subject matter as well as test performance. Please note that test preparation is only useful to the extent that it is also teaching content area knowledge and skills. Therefore, the use of this resource for test preparation is of limited value to students due to the narrow opportunity for content learning. It is very important to ensure that teachers are teaching to the curriculum and not to the test, as teaching to the test narrows the focus of instruction to only that content covered by the test.

CONSIDERATIONS FOR LISTENING PASSAGES

In order to closely mimic the student experience of the online Forward Exam, educators should read the Listening Passage for Session 2 found in Appendix A out loud to students. Educators should NOT read the items out loud, only the passage. Educators may read the passage more than once as needed.

TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS (TDA) WRITING PROMPT SESSION

Please note that the ELA Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) writing prompt (normally in ELA Session 1 of the Forward Exam) is not included in this item sampler. More information about the TDA is provided on page 6.

DEPTH OF KNOWLEDGE

Hess' Cognitive Rigor Matrix & Curricular Examples: Applying Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge Levels to Bloom's Cognitive Process Dimensions - ELA

| Revised Bloom's Taxonomy | Webb's DOK Level 1 Recall & Reproduction | Webb's DOK Level 2 Skills & Concepts | Webb's DOK Level 3 Strategic Thinking/ Reasoning | Webb's DOK Level 4 Extended Thinking |
|--|--|---|--|--|
| Remember Retrieve knowledge from long-term memory, recognize, recall, locate, identify | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Recall, recognize, or locate basic facts, details, events, or ideas explicit in texts Read words orally in connected text with fluency & accuracy | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Specify, explain, show relationships; explain why, cause-effect Give non-examples/examples Summarize results, concepts, ideas Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data or texts Identify main ideas or accurate generalizations of texts Locate information to support explicit-implicit central ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain, generalize, or connect ideas using supporting evidence (quote, example, text reference) Identify/ make inferences about explicit or implicit themes Describe how word choice, point of view, or bias may affect the readers' interpretation of a text Write multi-paragraph composition for specific purpose, focus, voice, tone, & audience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Explain how concepts or ideas specifically relate to <i>other</i> content domains or concepts Develop generalizations of the results obtained or strategies used and apply them to new problem situations |
| Understand Construct meaning, clarify, paraphrase, represent, translate, illustrate, give examples, classify, categorize, summarize, generalize, infer a logical conclusion), predict, compare/contrast, match like ideas, explain, construct models | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify or describe literary elements (characters, setting, sequence, etc.) Select appropriate words when intended meaning/definition is clearly evident Describe/explain who, what, where, when, or how Define/describe facts, details, terms, principles Write simple sentences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use context to identify the meaning of words/phrases Obtain and interpret information using text features Develop a text that may be limited to one paragraph Apply simple organizational structures (paragraph, sentence types) in writing | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Apply a concept in a new context Revise final draft for meaning or progression of ideas Apply internal consistency of text organization and structure to composing a full composition Apply word choice, point of view, style to impact readers' /viewers' interpretation of a text | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Illustrate how multiple themes (historical, geographic, social) may be interrelated Select or devise an approach among many alternatives to research a novel problem |
| Apply Carry out or use a procedure in a given situation; carry out (apply) to a familiar task), or use (apply) to an unfamiliar task | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Use language structure (pre/suffix) or word relationships (synonym/antonym) to determine meaning of words Apply rules or resources to edit spelling, grammar, punctuation, conventions, word use Apply basic formats for documenting sources | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Categorize/compare literary elements, terms, facts/details, events Identify use of literary devices Analyze format, organization, & internal text structure (signal words, transitions, semantic cues) of different texts Distinguish: relevant-irrelevant information; fact/opinion Identify characteristic text features; distinguish between texts, genres | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze interrelationships among concepts, issues, problems Analyze or interpret author's craft (literary devices, viewpoint, or potential bias) to create or critique a text Use reasoning, planning, and evidence to support inferences | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Analyze multiple sources of evidence, or multiple works by the same author, or across genres, time periods, themes Analyze complex/abstract themes, perspectives, concepts Gather, analyze, and organize multiple information sources Analyze discourse styles |
| Analyze Break into constituent parts, determine how parts relate, differentiate between relevant-irrelevant, distinguish, focus, select, organize, outline, find coherence, deconstruct (e.g., for bias or point of view) | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Identify whether specific information is contained in graphic representations (e.g., map, chart, table, graph, T-chart, diagram) or text features (e.g., headings, subheadings, captions) Decide which text structure is appropriate to audience and purpose | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate conjectures or hypotheses based on observations or prior knowledge and experience | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Cite evidence and develop a logical argument for conjectures Describe, compare, and contrast solution methods Verify reasonableness of results Justify or critique conclusions drawn | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Evaluate relevancy, accuracy, & completeness of information from multiple sources Apply understanding in a novel way, provide argument or justification for the application Synthesize information across multiple sources or texts Articulate a new voice, alternate theme, new knowledge or perspective |
| Evaluate Make judgments based on criteria, check, detect inconsistencies or fallacies, judge, critique | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Brainstorm ideas, concepts, problems, or perspectives related to a topic or concept | | | |
| Create Reorganize elements into new patterns/structures, generate, hypothesize, design, plan, produce | | | | |

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For full article, go to www.nctiea.org

ITEM TYPES

The Wisconsin Forward Exam has multiple types of test items. However, because this item sampler is in a format that can be printed, the majority of its items are multiple-choice. In the Forward Exam, there will be a more diverse array of item types, including the ones described below.

Selected-Response (SR) Items

Selected-Response (SR) items are an efficient method for measuring a broad range of content, and can be used to assess a variety of skills. Three types of SR items are used on the online assessments: Multiple-Choice (MC), Enhanced Selected-Response (ESR), and Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR). In all cases, SR items require that a student determines the correct answer(s) to the item posed from a provided list. While it is still possible for a student to perform some work directly related to determining the correct answer, the student is not required to generate the content of the answer when responding to a Selected-Response item. An exception to this requirement is Mathematics Short-Response/Gridded-Response items where students will be required to enter a short alphanumeric response.

Multiple-Choice (MC) Items

Multiple-Choice (MC) items on Wisconsin's assessments have four answer choices, including three distractors and one correct answer. Distractors for Mathematics represent common misconceptions, incorrect logic, incorrect application of an algorithm, computational errors, etc. Distractors for English Language Arts (ELA) are written to represent a common misinterpretation, predisposition, unsound reasoning, casual reading, etc. A correct response to an MC item is worth one raw point. The process skills, directives, and action statements within an MC item also specifically align with the Wisconsin Academic Standards. Multiple-Choice items are present in all grades and are used with all content areas.

Multiple-Choice items can be further defined by being linked to, or independent from, a stimulus source. Items that operate independent of a stimulus are also known as "stand-alone MC." Stand-alone items may still have tables, graphs, or other information used in support of the stem. English Language Arts uses a mixture of MC items linked to a stimulus passage and some that are stand-alone. For Mathematics, all MC items are considered stand-alone.

Enhanced Selected-Response (ESR) Items

The Enhanced Selected-Response (ESR) items are multi-part autoscored items that may consist of varying combinations of Multiple-Choice, Multiple-Response, Gridded-Response, Completion or Short-Answer, and Technology-Enhanced items that explore in greater depth and cognitive complexity the knowledge, skills, and abilities specified by the standards of each content area. Typically, this item type has a common focus and explores authentic problem-solving skills. An example of a Statistics and Probability Mathematics ESR item would utilize a data-table stimulus, with Part A using a Technology-Enhanced (TE) graphing tool to create a bar graph of the data presented and Part B asking students to calculate the mean of the data using a Short-Response item.

Two-Part Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR) Items

The Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR) items have two parts and are designed to elicit a response based on what a student has read from a stimulus passage. EBSR items may be linked to a stimulus passage or to a stimulus passage set. There are several variations of two-part EBSR items, but all two-part EBSR items have an Accuracy piece and an Evidence piece.

The Accuracy piece of the item is Part A. Part A of a typical EBSR item will be similar to a standard MC test item. A student analyzes a passage and chooses a single, best (correct) answer from four answer choices. Part B of a typical EBSR item will elicit evidence from the stimulus passage and will require that the student selects one or more correct answers based on the response the student provided to Part A. Part B is also different from Part A in that it may have five or six answer options rather than just four answer options typical of an MC item and more than one option may be correct.

Technology-Enhanced (TE) Items

Technology-Enhanced (TE) item types share the same functional structure as traditional paper and pencil test items; however, the expansive features and functions of a computer-based medium allow for the incorporation of technical enhancements into traditional elements of a test item, such as the item stem, the stimulus (if any), the response area, or a combination of all three. TE items are used in the content areas of ELA, Mathematics, and Science.

Item types such as drag-and-drop, hot spot, and in-line selection of multiple answers from drop-down menus broaden item presentation with engaging, interactive open-ended items.

A wide variety of TE item types will be present on the Wisconsin Forward Exam, including, but not limited to:

- **Clock Input**, where a student is able to add an hour hand and a minute hand to the clock;
- **Angle Draw Input**, where given a base line, the student can represent an angle;
- **Short Input**, where there are many types of short inputs that can be used (The number of characters is usually limited to a relatively small number in order to facilitate auto-scoring. The types of characters allowed can also be limited to text only, numbers only, or a mix. An equation editor can be utilized to assist the student in creating something as basic as a fraction or something more complex. The available symbols and templates in the equation builder can be customized for a testing program. Certain Short Input items can also be used in a paper-based test (PBT) as a Gridded-Response item.);
- **Bar Graph Input**, where students can produce bar graphs with prepopulated titles, labels, and scales, or the system can allow the student to populate them (The number of bars and the color of the bars is predetermined by the system. A reset feature is available that allows the student to start over from the original configuration.);
- **Number Line Input**, where students can create a graph that might involve plotting points only or points and lines (Both solid and open “dots” are available as well as line segments and rays. Number line graphs can have prepopulated titles, labels, and scales or can allow the student to populate them.);
- **Coordinate Graph Input**, which allows for the graphing and labeling of points and lines (Regions, determined by plotted lines, can be shaded. Solid and open “dots” as well as solid and dashed lines are available to the student. Coordinate graphs can have prepopulated titles, labels, and scales or can allow the student to populate them.);
- **Line Plot Input**, which is used as another way to graphically represent data (The basic structure is provided for the student. Certain labeling on the line plot can be done by the student. A reset feature is available that allows the student to start over from the original configuration.);
- **List Input**, a combination of the short input described earlier that allows the student to add input boxes (For example, it can be used for describing the steps in a process without revealing to the student the number of steps needed. The added input boxes can be rearranged and/or deleted.);
- **Drag-and-Drop Input**, a wide variety of ways are available to utilize a drag-and-drop input (The main difference between it and a drag-and-paste is that each draggable entity can be used only once with a drag-and-drop input. A reset feature is available that allows the student to start over from the original configuration.);

- **Drag-and-Paste Input**, a wide variety of ways are available to utilize drag-and-paste input (The main difference between it and a drag-and-drop is that each draggable entity can be used more than once with a drag-and-paste input. A reset feature is available that allows the student to start over from the original configuration.);
- **Drop-Down List Input**, allows for the creation of a situation where a great deal of information about a student's grasp of a concept can be determined with a single item (Students can be asked to choose from three function types, four number of real zero responses, and two inverse function responses. For one function alone, this provides 24 possible answer combinations. With the three functions, a considerable amount of information can be gained, making this almost an open-ended item type.);
- **Pictograph using Drag-and-Paste**, actually another example of drag-and-paste, but is worth mentioning on its own as it is a type of graphing often used at lower grade levels;
- **Circle Graph**, a graph that allows the student to create and label the "wedges" that represent the data (Circle graphs can have a prepopulated title or can allow the student to populate it. The color of the "wedges" is predetermined by the system.);
- **Matching**, allows for the use of text or graphics as the matching objects (The student clicks on one object and then clicks on a second object to connect them.);
- **Highlighting Text**, allows for designated text to be highlighted in a word, phrase, sentence, or paragraph; and the
- **Graphic Modification Hot Spot**, allows for one image to replace another image when a hot spot is clicked.

Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Items

The English Language Arts (ELA) section of the Forward Exam presents students with a Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) item. A TDA is a text-based analysis based on a single passage or a multiple-passage set that each student has read during the assessment. The passage or passage set will consist of either literary or informational text. In order to successfully answer a TDA, students must analyze and use information from the passage(s) to plan a comprehensive, holistic response. Students will then write their response, including supporting evidence from the passage(s). Students will have up to 5,000 characters to formulate their response. Students' responses are scored using a rubric that takes into account both the composition and the conventions of the student's writing.

The TDA portion of the Forward Exam requires students to read the text and then respond in writing in one of two ways:

- identifying and explaining a theme or central idea, using textual evidence to support the claim about what that theme or central idea is, or
- analyzing the development of an event, character, central ideas, or theme, using textual evidence to support the explanation and analysis.

TDA Item Samplers are available at <https://dpi.wi.gov/assessment/forward/sample-items>.



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Answer the items.

1. Read the journal entry that a student wrote. Then answer the question that follows.

(1) My dad told me that we are going to visit my grandparents, who live in Michigan, next weekend. (2) I love visiting my grandparents. (3) My grandpa loves to bake, which is lucky for us. (4) My grandma likes to tell us stories while we eat the treats grandpa bakes. (5) The last time we were at their house, my grandma showed me pictures of grandpa where he was young. (6) It was amazing to see that grandpa used to look exactly like my dad does now!

Which edit should be made to correct a grammar mistake in the paragraph?

- A. change who to whom in sentence 1
 - B. change which to that in sentence 3
 - C. change where to when in sentence 5
 - D. change that to who in sentence 6
2. Read the paragraph from a research report a student is writing about why some people are left-handed.

Although most people use their right hand to write, some people write with their left hand. Scientists are not sure why so many people favor the right hand. They do know that it is decided in the brain. Newborn babies use both hands but do seem to have a favorite side. The favorite side is the direction the baby usually faces if lying on his or her back. Whether the left or the right, this favorite side usually indicates which hand the baby will use when he or she gets older and starts writing.

Which detail would **best** develop the ideas in the paragraph related to the topic?

- A. Only about one out of every ten people is left-handed.
- B. There is a special day every year to celebrate left-handed people.
- C. Some people claim that left-handed people are more creative than right-handed people.
- D. Very few people are ambidextrous, but these people can use either the left or right hand for the same task.

Go on to the next page.

3. A student took the following notes while gathering information for a report on hummingbirds. Read the notes and then answer the question.

- Hummingbirds are the smallest type of birds.
- Hummingbirds will chase other birds out of their territory.
- Hummingbirds have long wings.
- Hummingbirds have a long, narrow bill.
- Hummingbirds eat nectar from flowers.
- Hummingbirds can fly backwards and change direction quickly.

If the student wants to separate these notes into **two** groups, which categories would **best** describe the information? Choose **two** answers.

- A. Hummingbird Behavior
- B. Hummingbird Speed
- C. Hummingbird Size
- D. Hummingbird Appearance
- E. Hummingbird Safety





Listen to the presentation that your teacher reads to you. Then answer the items.

1. Which statement **best** paraphrases the information about growing apples in Wisconsin?

- A. Apples have been grown in Wisconsin since the 1880s.
- B. The apples that are grown in Wisconsin are used when cooking beans.
- C. Wisconsin grows a large number of several types of apples each year.
- D. Many counties in Wisconsin grow different sizes of apples that people eat.

2. Read the sentence from the presentation.

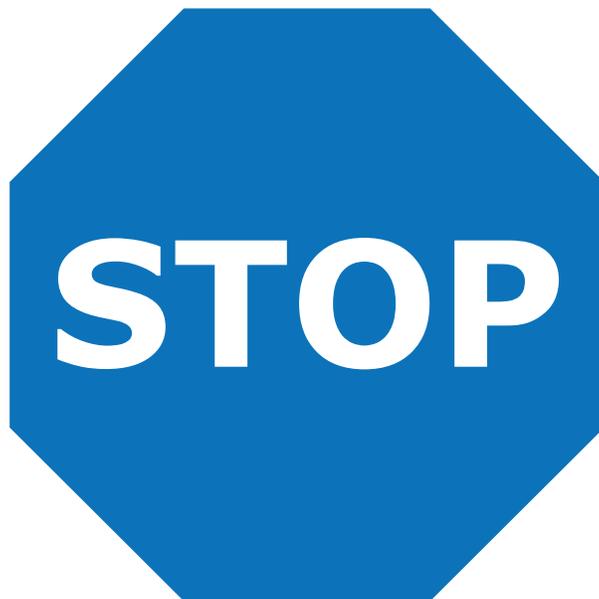
Apples are a key ingredient in the foods sold at the Bayfield Apple Festival.

How does the speaker support this statement?

- A. by describing a meal, a drink, and a dessert that all include apples
- B. by listing the apple-related booths found at the festival
- C. by listing several types of apples that are grown in the area
- D. by describing the taste of some apples as sweet and the taste of others as tart

Go on to the next page.

3. Why does the presentation include information about attractions that have nothing to do with apples?
- A. to explain why people started the festival more than 50 years ago
 - B. to show why businesses like to spend money at the festival
 - C. to prove that people have rated the festival among the ten best
 - D. to support the idea that the festival can be fun for everyone





Read the following passage. Then answer the items. You may look back at the passage to help you answer the items.

Snowshoe Views

“Would you like to go snowshoeing?” Aunt Helen asked Lucy.

The two snowshoes in Aunt Helen’s hands looked like big, webbed rackets. When Aunt Helen strapped one to the bottom of each of her shoes, she could hike across the snow without sinking into it.

“No, thanks,” Lucy replied. She was staying with her aunt for the weekend, in a town far outside the city.

Aunt Helen set the snowshoes in the corner and went to the kitchen.

With a sigh, Lucy plopped down on the couch, eyeing the snowshoes. She liked to play sports like basketball and soccer—sports that allowed her to move quickly. It seemed much more exhilarating to run across a basketball court or a soccer field than to walk slowly across the snow.

Moments later, Aunt Helen joined Lucy, handing her a glass of water. Lucy looked down into her glass. She didn’t see Aunt Helen often. Sometimes it was hard for Lucy to think of things to talk about with her aunt.

“Do you ever watch soccer on television?” Lucy asked her.

“Not usually,” Aunt Helen said, shaking her head.

“Soccer season is over now for me at school,” Lucy mentioned next. “We’re already into basketball season.”

Aunt Helen smiled but didn’t say anything. Sometimes, she could be as quiet as the night moon.

Lucy stood and stretched. It might be nice to get outside for a while.

“May we still go snowshoeing?” Lucy asked. “I think I’d like to try it after all.”

“That would be wonderful,” Aunt Helen answered, her eyes shining.

When Lucy and Aunt Helen walked outside, the sharpness of the cold air stole Lucy’s breath.

Blinking her eyes in the bright sun, Lucy placed her feet onto the snowshoes. With expert hands, Aunt Helen fastened their straps tightly.

Next, Aunt Helen demonstrated how to take a slightly wider step, so that the snowshoes’ edges would not become caught on each other. Then she started out toward the woods.

The snowshoes felt clumsy on Lucy’s feet, and she soon tripped, tumbling down to the ground. Aunt Helen reached her swiftly and offered her a helping hand. She brushed the snow from Lucy’s knees and said, “Don’t worry—you’re doing great.”

“I’m not so sure!” Lucy laughed. She felt like a duck with these enormous, webbed feet.

Go on to the next page.

She and Aunt Helen climbed a long, gentle hill. By the time they reached the top, Lucy’s legs were beginning to ache.

“Look,” Aunt Helen whispered to Lucy. She pointed to a willow bush.

Lucy studied the plain bush. After a few seconds, she spied a white rabbit sitting inside it, as still as a statue.

“Rabbits turn white in the winter,” Aunt Helen explained. “Their coloring allows them to blend into their snowy home.”

Next, Lucy followed Aunt Helen through a long meadow. A white-tailed deer melted through some nearby trees.

“Did you know that a deer waves its tail like a white flag to warn other deer of danger?” Aunt Helen asked.

“Wow!” Lucy said, thinking that maybe Aunt Helen wasn’t so quiet after all.

They continued on their way. Often, Aunt Helen paused to show Lucy hidden treasures, like a frozen waterfall. Its icicles looked like the sharp, pointed teeth of a wolverine.

Finally, they reached an opening in the trees near the edge of a hill. Lucy gasped when she saw the view. Like a toy village, the town below them was nestled in the arms of the wintery trees. Wisps of smoke curled from the chimneys, and tiny cars dotted the winding roads.

“One reason that I love to go snowshoeing,” Aunt Helen explained, “is because it gives me a different view of the world.”

“It’s wonderful,” Lucy agreed.

The sports Lucy practiced at school had never allowed her to explore winter’s hidden secrets this way. Plus, going snowshoeing had given her another view of her aunt. Aunt Helen might not be interested in soccer or basketball, but she had her own talents.

“Do we have time to go snowshoeing again tomorrow?” Lucy asked as they turned toward home.

Aunt Helen smiled. “We’ll make time,” she promised, her soft voice full of joy.

1. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Which sentence **best** describes the change in Aunt Helen once she is outside?

- A. She is more willing to help Lucy.
- B. She wants to have Lucy come to visit more often.
- C. She understands more about why Lucy likes to play sports.
- D. She feels more comfortable sharing part of her life with Lucy.

Part B

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

- A. Next, Aunt Helen demonstrated how to take a slightly wider step, so that the snowshoes' edges would not become caught on each other.
- B. She brushed the snow from Lucy's knees and said, "Don't worry—you're doing great."
- C. "One reason that I love to go snowshoeing," Aunt Helen explained, "is because it gives me a different view of the world."
- D. "We'll make time," she promised, her soft voice full of joy.

Go on to the next page.

2. Read the sentences from the passage.

“I’m not so sure!” Lucy laughed. She felt like a duck with these enormous, webbed feet.

What does the simile “she felt like a duck” mean in the passage?

- A. Lucy feels like she should be in water rather than on land.
 - B. Lucy thinks the snowshoes make her walk funny.
 - C. Lucy feels like her snowshoes are bigger than they need to be.
 - D. Lucy thinks that people would laugh at her if they saw her feet.
3. Read the incomplete summary of the passage.

Lucy is visiting her aunt for the weekend. At first, Lucy is not sure what they will do to pass the time. She decides to go snowshoeing as her aunt has suggested. Once Aunt Helen is outside, she begins to talk more and share what she knows about the outdoors.

Which detail would be most important to include in the summary?

- A. Aunt Helen has to help Lucy when she begins walking on the snowshoes.
- B. Aunt Helen tells Lucy information about a deer.
- C. Lucy feels like she has made a new connection with Aunt Helen.
- D. Lucy gets to see a new view of the city because of Aunt Helen.

Go on to the next page.

Read the passage. Then answer the items. You may look back at the passage to help you answer the items.

Wisconsin's National Parks

In 1872, the United States government wanted to protect a large area of open land. It decided that no homes or stores could be built there. However, anyone who wanted to visit and enjoy the land would be welcomed. The area became our country's first national park. It was named Yellowstone National Park and is located in what later became the states of Wyoming, Montana, and Idaho. Today, the area is as beautiful as ever.

More national parks soon opened. In 1916, the National Park Service (or NPS) was started. Its job is to run and protect all the parks. The NPS also takes care of important historical places called monuments. Today, our country has more than 400 national parks, monuments, and other scenic or historic sites. The state of Wisconsin is home to two national parks and two national trails.

Apostle Islands National Lakeshore

The Apostle Islands are a group of 21 islands in Lake Superior. They are sometimes called "The Jewels of Lake Superior." On a map, these islands look like a necklace draped around part of Wisconsin's north shore. People enjoy visiting the beaches, campgrounds, and hiking trails there.

To reach the park, visitors must travel by boat. There are many sea caves to explore in the cliffs along the shore. During the winter, long icicles form in the caves. Animals, birds, and sea creatures are everywhere. Sunken ships can sometimes be seen beneath the clear, cold water.

St. Croix National Scenic Riverway

The St. Croix River flows over 200 miles along the border between Wisconsin and Minnesota. Most of the area remains natural and wild. This river passes high cliffs and green forests. Along its banks is the famous Old Man of the Dalles. This huge rock looks a lot like a human face.

Visitors can explore this park by land or water. Many people enjoy traveling the river by canoe. Others prefer to take a guided tour. There are many places to hike, bike, fish, and camp near the river. The visitor center in St. Croix Falls is a great place to learn about the park.

Ice Age National Scenic Trail and North Country National Scenic Trail

Long ago, Wisconsin was covered with thick sheets of ice called glaciers. When the ice melted, it left behind giant rocks and rolling hills. A hiking trail called Ice Age National Scenic Trail was created to help visitors see this amazing area.

The trail is 1,200 miles long. It winds through meadows, ponds, and trees. In warm weather, people camp, bird-watch, and fish along the trail. In winter, they practice winter sports in the snow.

North Country National Scenic Trail links areas across seven states. As the name suggests, it offers a variety of scenic and cultural experiences across a region of the northern United States.

Go on to the next page.

Protecting the Parks of Tomorrow

The NPS values young visitors to the national parks. Park rangers and staff love to pass on to children their knowledge about nature. They know it is the children of today who will protect the parks in the future. For this reason, the NPS offers two programs to help children get to know the parks.

The Junior Ranger Program is designed to make learning about the parks fun. Its motto is “Explore, Learn, and Protect!” Special activities for kids are offered at almost every national park. Young people can complete these activities and earn badges.

Additionally, a program called Every Kid in a Park is a program just for fourth graders. The NPS offers a free pass to any fourth grader who participates in the program’s activities on its website. With this pass, fourth graders can visit the parks for free all year long! One of the national parks or trails in the state of Wisconsin would be the perfect place to start.

Go on to the next page.

4. Based on the information in the passage, how did the famous Old Man of the Dalles get its name?
- A. because of the way it looks
 - B. because of the person who first found it
 - C. because of someone in the government
 - D. because of the activities that are offered near it
5. Based on the information in the passage, what is one reason why Wisconsin has hills?
- A. because the area was made into a national park
 - B. because the area was once covered by glaciers
 - C. because of the rivers that flow through the area
 - D. because of the ice that forms in the area in the winter

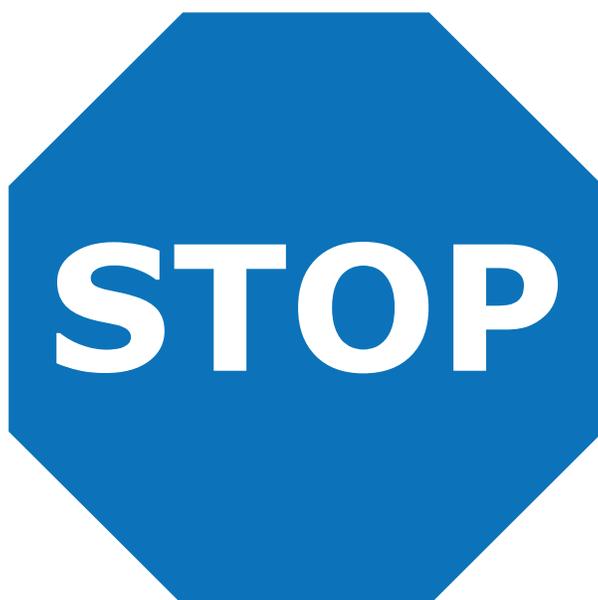
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6. Read the sentence from the passage.

The NPS values young visitors to the national parks.

Which evidence from the passage **best** supports this idea? Choose **two** answers.

- A. The NPS runs and protects all the national parks.
- B. People can explore some national parks by land or water.
- C. The staff of the NPS has a lot of knowledge about nature.
- D. Special activities for kids are offered by the NPS.
- E. Fourth graders can earn a free pass to the national parks.





APPENDIX A—LISTENING PASSAGE: ONE OF THE TEN BEST

Educators should read the following passage out loud to their students. The passage may be read more than once. Educators should NOT read the items out loud to the students. Students should answer items independently.

One of the Ten Best

When a fall festival is named one of the ten best in the nation, it has to be good. In 2015, the newspaper *USA Today* awarded this honor to the Bayfield Apple Festival in Wisconsin. For more than 50 years now, the city of Bayfield has been celebrating apples at this annual event

Apples are an important crop in Wisconsin. In the 1800s, pioneers planted apple seeds. Now there are orchards in more than half of Wisconsin's counties. Wisconsin produces more than 50 million pounds of apples every year. There are many different kinds of apples grown there. Some are sweet and make a perfect snack, while the tart ones are used in pies. The Wolf River apple, which is named for the area where it was first grown, is as big as a large grapefruit!

Apples are a key ingredient in the foods sold at the Bayfield Apple Festival. Visitors enjoy apple baked beans with apple bratwurst, a type of sausage served at the festival. Some visitors top the bratwurst with apple mustard. Then they wash it all down with apple cider! For dessert, they might try a slice of apple pie, an apple dumpling, or a caramel apple.

Activities at the festival include an apple-peeling contest, but there are other fun things to do that don't have anything to do with apples. There are arts-and-craft booths and bands. Orchestras play several types of music. Everyone can enjoy carnival games and rides, and what would a festival be without a parade? On the final day, there is a parade featuring a marching band with over 400 members.

Einar Olsen, owner of a company that makes apple cider, said, "We've been involved in the festival as long as we've been in business. It's just a lot of fun. People come because they're out to have a good time." Visitors agree that the Bayfield Apple Festival is good fun.

APPENDIX B—SUMMARY DATA

Grade 4

| Sample Number | Alignment | Answer Key | Depth of Knowledge | Annotations |
|------------------|----------------|------------|--------------------|---|
| Session 1 | | | | |
| 1 | CCSS-1: 4.L.1a | C | 1 | Students need to correct the grammar mistake in the paragraph. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not correct a mistake. |
| 2 | CCSS-1: 4.W.2b | A | 2 | Students need to develop the ideas in the paragraph with a detail. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not help develop the topic in the paragraph. |
| 3 | CCSS-1: 4.W.8 | A/D | 2 | Students need to categorize information on hummingbirds. Options A and D correctly categorize the information in the notes. Any two other options, if chosen, would not categorize all of the information in the notes. |
| Session 2 | | | | |
| 1 | CCSS-1: 4.SL.2 | C | 2 | After listening to the presentation, students need to paraphrase information about growing apples in Wisconsin. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not correctly paraphrase information about growing apples in Wisconsin. |
| 2 | CCSS-1: 4.SL.3 | A | 2 | After listening to the presentation, students need to provide evidence of how the speaker supports the statement. Option A is the correct answer. The other options are not ways in which the speaker supports the statement. |
| 3 | CCSS-1: 4.SL.3 | D | 2 | After listening to the presentation, students need to identify a reason why some information is included in the presentation. Option D is the correct answer. The other options are not reasons why this information is included in the presentation. |

Grade 4

| Sample Number | Alignment | Answer Key | Depth of Knowledge | Annotations |
|------------------|----------------|------------|--------------------|---|
| Session 3 | | | | |
| 1 | CCSS-1: 4.RL.3 | D/C | 3 | In Part A, students need to describe the change in the character of Aunt Helen in the passage. Option D is the correct answer to Part A. The other options do not describe the change in Aunt Helen. In Part B, students need to support the answer in Part A. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not provide support for the correct answer in Part A. |
| 2 | CCSS-1: 4.L.5a | B | 2 | Students need to demonstrate understanding of the simile in the sentence from the passage. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not provide the meaning of the simile. |
| 3 | CCSS-1: 4.RL.2 | C | 3 | Students need to complete the summary of the passage. Option C is the correct answer. The other options should not be included in the summary of the passage. |
| 4 | CCSS-1: 4.RI.1 | A | 1 | Students must provide a detail from information in the passage on how the Old Man of the Dalles got its name. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not explain how the Old Man of the Dalles got its name. |
| 5 | CCSS-1: 4.RI.3 | B | 1 | Students need to choose the answer that best explains a reason why Wisconsin has hills. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not explain why Wisconsin has hills. |
| 6 | CCSS-1: 4.RI.8 | D/E | 3 | Students need to explain which evidence supports the sentence from the passage. Options D and E are the two correct answers. The other options do not support the idea in the sentence from the passage. |

APPENDIX C—SAMPLE LISTENING STIMULUS COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Informational Stimulus—One of the Ten Best

Grade 4

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative Easy Listening Formula (ELF) indicates that this document is at least suitable for a *reader* at the 5th grade, eighth month of class completed level. Research shows students can *listen* two to three grade levels higher than they can read. The qualitative review supports grade 4 based on the clarity of the topic and simple organization of the concepts presented in the audio stimulus. Based on these sets of measures, this audio stimulus is of medium complexity and is recommended for assessment at grade 4.

PURPOSE

Purpose: Medium Complexity

Audience: Low Complexity

Presentation: Low Complexity

AUDITORY STRUCTURE

Organization of Audio Text: Medium Complexity

Sound Variety: audio not available at this time

ORAL LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Low Complexity

Vocabulary: Medium Complexity

Delivery: audio not available at this time

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

Subject Matter Knowledge: Medium Complexity

Allusions/References: Low Complexity

Use of Images: N/A

Listening Stimulus Rubric

The ELA State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) developed the following qualitative measures rubric for listening stimuli. The rubric examines the following criteria judged as central to students’ successful comprehension of audio stimuli: purpose, auditory structure, oral language features, and knowledge demands. Each of these categories is ranked based on descriptors associated with the following levels: low complexity, medium complexity, and high complexity.

Grade 4

| Qualitative Measures Rubric for Listening Stimuli | | | |
|---|--|---|--|
| Features | Low Complexity | Medium Complexity | High Complexity |
| Purpose | Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus | Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete | Purpose: Subtle, implied, theoretical elements |
| | Audience: Speaker’s approach is straightforward and transparent | Audience: Speaker’s approach is somewhat layered and may include elements intended to persuade or influence audience | Audience: Speaker may include a variety of persuasive techniques; speaker may direct the message to multiple audiences, and the listener must decipher the meaning on more than one level |
| | Presentation: A single speaker presents the information | Presentation: Two or more speakers interact. Their patterns of communication may influence the meaning and flow of information | Presentation: Two or more speakers interact. The juxtaposition of the speakers may reveal a contrast or otherwise influence the meaning |

Grade 4

Qualitative Measures Rubric for Listening Stimuli

| Features | Low Complexity | Medium Complexity | High Complexity |
|-------------------------------|--|--|--|
| Auditory Structure | Organization of Audio Text: Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict. | Organization of Audio Text: Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential | Organization of Audio Text: Connections between a range of ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline; organization may be different from chronological or sequential (i.e., cause/effect, problem/solution, compare/contrast) |
| | Sound Variety: Sound is distinct and approach is direct | Sound Variety: Sound is somewhat layered. Overlapping voices or sounds require listener to integrate sounds for fullest understanding | Sound Variety: Sound is multi-layered. Overlapping voices, music, or sounds provide context that listener needs to process (such as foreground noise, background noise, or music) |
| Oral Language Features | Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand | Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning | Conventionality: Complex; contains some specialized abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language |
| | Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language | Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or academic | Vocabulary: Complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or academic |
| | Delivery: Mainly direct, with simple declarative sentences | Delivery: Somewhat variable—at times, speaker changes pitch and volume to create emphasis | Delivery: Varied. Shifts in tone may be subtle and complex, requiring interpretation |

Grade 4

| Qualitative Measures Rubric for Listening Stimuli | | | |
|---|--|---|---|
| Features | Low Complexity | Medium Complexity | High Complexity |
| Knowledge Demands | Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas | Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas; knowledge of speaker may affect interpretation of content | Subject Matter Knowledge: Discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts; knowledge of speaker or source affects interpretation of content |
| | Allusions/References: No references or allusions to other texts, or outside ideas, theories, etc. | Allusions/References: Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. | Allusions/References: Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. |
| | Use of Images: a range of images that help student understanding | Use of images: minimal use of images that help student understanding | Use of images: no use of images that help student understanding |

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APPENDIX D—SAMPLE LITERARY PASSAGE TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Literary Passage—Snowshoe Views

Grade 4

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 4–5 band. The qualitative review supports grade 4 based on the moderate complexity of the passage. Based on these sets of measures as explained in the Wisconsin Academic Standards Appendix A, this passage is moderately complex and is recommended for assessment at grade 4.

MEANING: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Moderately Complex

Vocabulary: Moderately Complex

Sentence Structure: Moderately Complex

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

Life Experiences: Moderately Complex

Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Slightly Complex

Literary Texts Qualitative Measures Rubric

The ELA State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) developed the following qualitative measures rubric for literary texts. The rubric examines the following criteria judged as central to students’ successful comprehension of text meaning, text structure, language features, and knowledge demands. Each of these categories is ranked based on descriptors associated with the following levels: slightly complex, moderately complex, very complex, and exceedingly complex.

Grade 4

| Features | Exceedingly Complex | Very Complex | Moderately Complex | Slightly Complex |
|-----------------------|---|--|---|--|
| Meaning | Meaning: Several levels and competing elements of meaning that are difficult to identify, separate, and interpret; theme is implicit or subtle, often ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text | Meaning: Several levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; theme is implicit or subtle and may be revealed over the entirety of the text | Meaning: More than one level of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety | Meaning: One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text. |
| Text Structure | Organization: Organization is intricate with regard to elements such as narrative viewpoint, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines, and detail | Organization: Organization may include subplots, time shifts, and more complex characters | Organization: Organization may have two or more storylines and is occasionally difficult to predict | Organization: Organization of text is clear, chronological, or easy to predict |
| | Use of Images: If used, minimal illustrations that support the text | Use of Images: If used, a few illustrations that support the text | Use of Images: If used, a range of illustrations that support selected parts of the text | Use of Images: If used, extensive illustrations that directly support and assist in interpreting the written text |

Grade 4

| Features | Exceedingly Complex | Very Complex | Moderately Complex | Slightly Complex |
|-------------------|--|---|---|--|
| Language Features | Conventionality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language | Conventionality: Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language | Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand, with some occasions for more complex meaning | Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand |
| | Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading | Vocabulary: Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic | Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic | Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language |
| | Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences, often containing multiple concepts | Sentence Structure: Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words | Sentence Structure: Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions | Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences |
| Knowledge Demands | Life Experiences: Explores complex, sophisticated themes; experiences are distinctly different from the common reader | Life Experiences: Explores themes of varying levels of complexity; experiences portrayed are uncommon to most readers | Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are common to many readers | Life Experiences: Explores a single theme; experiences portrayed are everyday and common to most readers |
| | Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements | Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements | Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: A few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements | Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements |

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APPENDIX E—SAMPLE INFORMATIONAL PASSAGE TEXT COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS**Informational Passage—Wisconsin’s National Parks**

Grade 4

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 4–5 band. The qualitative review supports grade 4 based on the clear organization of the passage. Based on these sets of measures as explained in the Wisconsin Academic Standards Appendix A, this passage is moderately complex and is recommended for assessment at grade 4.

PURPOSE: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization of Main Ideas: Moderately Complex

Text Features: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Moderately Complex

Vocabulary: Moderately Complex

Sentence Structure: Moderately Complex

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

Subject Matter Knowledge: Moderately Complex

Intertextuality: Moderately Complex

Informational Texts Qualitative Measures Rubric

The ELA State Collaborative on Assessment and Student Standards (SCASS) developed the following qualitative measures rubric for informational texts. The rubric examines the following criteria judged as central to students’ successful comprehension of text purpose, text structure, language features, and knowledge demands. Each of these categories is ranked based on descriptors associated with the following levels: slightly complex, moderately complex, very complex, and exceedingly complex.

Grade 4

| Features | Exceedingly Complex | Very Complex | Moderately Complex | Slightly Complex |
|-----------------------|--|--|--|--|
| Purpose | Purpose: Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements | Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete | Purpose: Implied, but easy to identify based upon context or source | Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus |
| Text Structure | Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate, and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline | Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an expanded range of ideas, processes, or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline | Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential | Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between ideas, processes, or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict |
| | Text Features: If used, are essential in understanding content | Text Features: If used, greatly enhance the reader’s understanding of content | Text Features: If used, enhance the reader’s understanding of content | Text Features: If used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential |
| | Use of Images: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated images, tables, charts, etc., necessary to understanding the text; also may provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text | Use of Images: If used, essential integrated images, tables, charts, etc., occasionally essential to understanding the text | Use of Images: If used, images mostly supplementary to understanding the text, such as indexes and glossaries; graphs, pictures, tables, and charts directly support the text | Use of Images: If used, simple images unnecessary to understanding the text; directly support and assist in interpreting the text |

Grade 4

| Features | Exceedingly Complex | Very Complex | Moderately Complex | Slightly Complex |
|-------------------|--|---|---|---|
| Language Features | Conventionality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language | Conventionality: Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language | Conventionality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning | Conventionality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand |
| | Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading | Vocabulary: Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic | Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic | Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language |
| | Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences, often containing multiple concepts | Sentence Structure: Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words | Sentence Structure: Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions | Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences |
| Knowledge Demands | Subject Matter Knowledge: Extensive, perhaps specialized or even theoretical discipline-specific content knowledge; range of challenging abstract and theoretical concepts | Subject Matter Knowledge: Moderate levels of discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts | Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas | Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas |
| | Intertextuality: Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. | Intertextuality: Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. | Intertextuality: A few references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. | Intertextuality: No references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. |

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English Language Arts Item Sampler Grade 4

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