

WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

English Language Arts Item Sampler Grade 5



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TABLE OF CONTENTS

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ITEM SAMPLER OVERVIEW	1
Overview	1
Connection to the Standards	1
Text Complexity Considerations	1
How Do I Use This Book?	1
Professional Development	1
Improving Instruction	1
Student Practice	2
Test Preparation	2
Considerations for Listening Passages	2
Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Writing Prompt Session	2
Depth of Knowledge	3
Item Types	4
Selected-Response (SR) Items	4
Technology-Enhanced (TE) Items	5
Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Items	6
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ITEMS—SESSION 1 WRITING/LANGUAGE	8
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ITEMS—SESSION 2 LISTENING	12
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS ITEMS—SESSION 3 READING	16
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—APPENDICES	26
Appendix A—Listening Passage: A Very Unique Animal	26
Appendix B—Summary Data	27
Appendix C—Sample Listening Stimulus Complexity Analysis	29
Listening Stimulus Rubric	30
Appendix D—Sample Literary Passage Text Complexity Analysis	33
Literary Texts Qualitative Measures Rubric	34
Appendix E—Sample Informational Passage Text Complexity Analysis	36
Informational Texts Qualitative Measures Rubric	37



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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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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 sentence.

When my brother and I get together with our two favorite cousins we have so much fun.

What is the correct way to write the sentence?

- A. When my brother and I, get together with our two favorite cousins we have so much fun.
- B. When my brother and I, get together with our two favorite cousins, we have so much fun.
- C. When my brother and I get together with our two favorite cousins, we have so much fun.
- D. When my brother and I get, together with our two favorite cousins, we have so much fun.

2. Read the paragraph.

The Brooklyn Bridge is one of the most famous bridges in the United States. It stretches across the East River, linking the cities of New York and Brooklyn. The bridge took 600 workers more than 14 years to build; it was completed in the year 1883. About 150,000 people usually go over the Brooklyn Bridge.

How should the last sentence of the paragraph be rewritten to use the most precise language?

- A. About 150,000 people use the bridge daily to cross to the other side of the river.
- B. About 150,000 people walk, bike, or drive across the Brooklyn Bridge each day.
- C. About 150,000 people use the bridge each day to cross the river.
- D. About 150,000 people go across the river daily on the Brooklyn Bridge.

Go on to the next page.

3. A student is writing an essay about happiness. Read the student’s draft and answer the question that follows.

Did you know that there are scientists who study happiness? Daniel Gilbert, who is a professor at Harvard University, has spent years learning about what makes people happy. He has even written a popular book on the topic. His book *Stumbling on Happiness* discusses how challenging it is for people to know today what will make them happy in the future. He notes, though, that people are usually able to adapt to change much better than they think they can.

According to Gilbert, “We’re not supposed to be happy all the time.” It’s both normal and important to feel other types of emotions. We can appreciate happiness more if we don’t always have it. As Gilbert says, “Happiness is a place to visit, not a place to live.” The next time you’re feeling sad or even angry, remember that it is not really possible to always feel happy.

Which source would most likely offer the student the **best** additional information to include in the report?

- A. an interview with Gilbert in which he answers questions about happiness
- B. a short article that explains how Gilbert got a job teaching at Harvard University
- C. an article written by one of Gilbert’s students about how happy the student was having Gilbert as a teacher
- D. a bookstore website that has a short review of Gilbert’s book





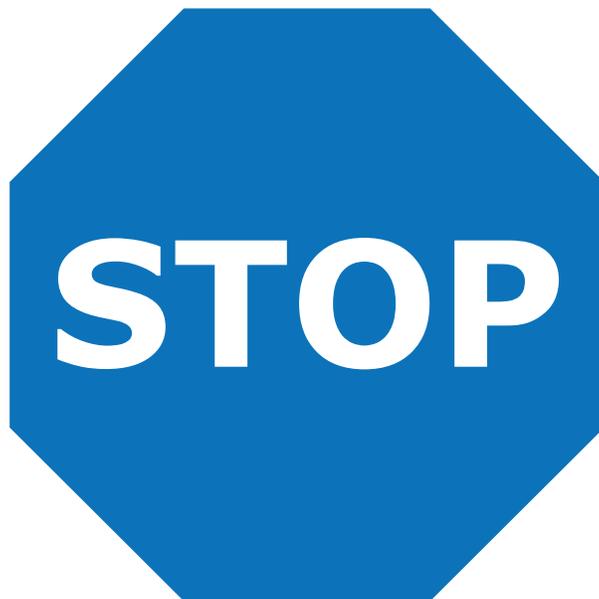
Listen to the presentation that your teacher reads to you. Then answer the items.

1. Which detail does the speaker use to show that the aye-aye sees well at night?
 - A. The aye-aye is able to recognize faint rays of moonlight.
 - B. The aye-aye has eyes that are especially large and glowing.
 - C. The aye-aye searches for snacks that are inside tree branches.
 - D. The aye-aye has eyes that look like those of an owl.

2. Which details from the presentation support the speaker's claim that each of the aye-aye's unique features serves a purpose? Choose **two** answers.
 - A. The front teeth of the aye-aye never stop growing.
 - B. The aye-aye sleeps during the daytime and hunts at night.
 - C. The aye-aye uses its long finger to grab food.
 - D. The aye-aye likes to live in the rain forest.
 - E. The large ears of the aye-aye help it sense larvae.

Go on to the next page.

3. Which sentence **best** summarizes the presentation?
- A. The aye-aye spends a lot of time looking for food to eat.
 - B. The aye-aye has unusual body parts that help it to survive.
 - C. The aye-aye is a challenging animal for scientists to study.
 - D. The aye-aye lives in only one place on Earth.





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

The Speedy Twin

Just as Troy was putting on his running shoes, his twin brother woke up. Leo sat up in bed, looked at the clock, and groaned.

“Morning, Leo,” Troy said. “Want to join me for a morning run?”

Leo mumbled “no” and stumbled out of the room, most likely in search of a bowl of cereal. Troy shook his head. He and Leo may share the same birthday and the same red hair, but that is where the similarities seemed to end.

“You do remember that we’re running a race this weekend, right?” Troy asked as he walked through the kitchen.

Leo looked up from his cereal with a big grin on his face, and nodded. “Yep, and I’ve been getting lots of running practice this week!”

“I don’t think that running for the bus because you slept too late counts as practice,” Troy replied with a frown. He had lost track of the times he had seen his brother sprinting down the sidewalk, just barely stepping inside the bus doors as they closed.

Shaking his head again, Troy headed out for his morning run. As his feet pounded the pavement, he thought about the upcoming race being held this weekend. It was a school-wide race, and he and Leo were entered in the long distance run.

Even though they would be next to each other at the starting line, Troy knew they would not be able to run side by side for long. The brothers’ running styles were as different as their personalities. Troy started out slow and steady, saving his burst of energy for the last part of the race. Meanwhile, Leo tended to take off as hard as he could and push himself until he had no choice but to slow down. At the end, though, Leo would always get a burst of power that would carry him through. He was often one of the first people to cross the finish line.

The morning of the race was beautiful. The sky was bright blue, with only an occasional white cloud. The area around the start of the race was so crowded that it seemed as if every person from school was either running the race or watching it from the sidelines.

“Good luck in the race, Troy,” Leo said as the two brothers approached the starting line. “I know you’ve worked hard to get ready for it.” He paused for a moment and grinned. “Be prepared, though, to be left in the dust by your speedy twin.”

The sound of the starting pistol cut off any reply Troy could have made. The runners were off! As usual, Troy tried to keep a steady pace. Soon, Leo was far ahead, then disappeared from sight.

Running the race did not take long. The quickest runners were done in 15 minutes, while others took almost thirty minutes to complete the full mile and a half. After Troy had crossed the finish line, he looked around for Leo. Where was he? Just then, Troy heard his name being shouted.

Go on to the next page.

“Hey, Troy, can you give me some help here?” Leo called.

To Troy’s surprise, Leo was just now crossing the finish line and was limping. Troy put his arm around his brother’s shoulder and helped him over to the side of the school track.

Leo sat down on the grass and carefully pulled off his right shoe. The heel of his foot was extremely red, and a huge blister was already forming. Troy winced.

“What happened to your foot?” he asked Leo. “That must really hurt!”

Leo sighed. “When I left home this morning, I didn’t realize that I had the wrong pair of shoes,” he explained. “Instead of my running shoes, I had my friend Mark’s shoes. We accidentally got our shoes mixed up after gym class the other day, and we forgot to switch them back.”

“Are you serious?” Troy asked in disbelief. “That’s awful, Leo!”

“I know—I really messed up,” Leo admitted. “Mark’s shoes are a whole size smaller than mine. Only a couple of minutes into the race, I could feel the heel of the shoes rubbing. By the end of the first mile, I knew I was in big trouble.”

Troy almost asked his brother why he had made such a silly mistake, but Leo was in so much pain he withheld his question. Instead Troy said, “I’m really sorry, Leo. Let’s go home and take care of your foot.”

“Sounds good,” Leo agreed. “Also, could you remind me to reset my alarm clock when we get home?”

“Sure, but what for?” Troy asked as they began the slow walk home.

“I have to start getting up earlier,” Leo explained. “With this blister, I won’t be able to run to catch the bus any time soon!”

Go on to the next page.

1. How do paragraphs 1–6 of the passage **most** contribute to the development of the plot?
 - A. by showing how Leo and Troy prepare for the race differently
 - B. by explaining Leo’s and Troy’s reasons for participating in the race
 - C. by determining whether Leo or Troy is the better runner
 - D. by contrasting Leo’s and Troy’s usual running styles during a race

2. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Be prepared, though, to be left in the dust by your speedy twin.”

What does Leo mean when he uses the phrase “left in the dust” in the sentence?

- A. He thinks he practiced harder than Troy.
- B. He thinks he will easily beat Troy.
- C. He thinks Troy is going to be late for the race.
- D. He thinks Troy will be forced to run in the dirt.

Go on to the next page.

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

Part A

Which sentence **best** describes the lesson Leo learns in the passage?

- A. Family members have more in common than they may realize.
- B. Difficult times help us to better appreciate the happy times.
- C. Good preparation today can make life easier in the future.
- D. A sense of humor is one of the most important qualities to have.

Part B

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

- A. “Yep, and I’ve been getting lots of running practice this week!”
- B. “I know you’ve worked hard to get ready for it.”
- C. “Hey, Troy, can you give me some help here?”
- D. “Also, could you remind me to reset my alarm clock when we get home?”

Go on to the next page.

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

Wormy Solutions to Trash

Pollution is a global problem. Mountains of plastic bags clog landfills around the world. In fact, most people use as many as 200 plastic bags a year. Unfortunately, plastic does not break down easily the way plant and animal matter does. After a plastic bag is thrown away, it can take hundreds of years to break down. A recent discovery about worms, however, may offer a promising solution.

A Happy Accident

A scientist with the Spanish National Research Council, Federica Bertocchini, is also an amateur beekeeper. One day, she was cleaning her beehives. They had been invaded by a type of worm called wax worms, which grow up to become moths. Wax worms are often used as bait for fishing. They are also used as food for pet lizards and birds, but they are not wanted in beehives. In fact, wax worms are named for their habit of eating the wax inside honeycombs, where bees store their honey. Beekeepers want to get rid of them.

Bertocchini scooped the mass of wax worms into a plastic bag. She intended to dispose of them later and went on with her chores. She says, “After finishing, I went back to the room where I had left the worms. I found they were everywhere. They had escaped from the bag, even though it had been closed. When I checked, I saw the bag was full of holes. There was only one explanation: the worms had made the holes and had escaped.”

Had Bertocchini discovered worms that actually eat plastic? She had to find out.

Searching for Answers

Working with two other scientists, Bertocchini experimented. She and her team kept careful records of what happened. They put 100 worms on a sheet of plastic. In an hour, the worms had made an average of two holes per worm. In one day, they chewed through 92 milligrams of plastic. The scientists calculated that it would take a month for 100 worms to consume one average-sized plastic bag.

The next experiment tried to answer another question. What was causing the plastic to break down? Were the worms actually chewing, or was something else causing the holes in the plastic? To find out more, the scientists placed worms that were no longer alive onto a piece of plastic. Again, the plastic became full of holes. The scientists then understood that the worms may not have to chew the plastic to break it down. There had to be something inside the worms or on the worms’ bodies that was causing the plastic to disintegrate. Is it possible that the worms chew the holes and then a chemical inside the worms breaks down the plastic? If it is a chemical, could this chemical be on the outside of the worms as well? More tests are needed, of course, before millions of wax worms can be added to landfills.

Go on to the next page.

Not Everyone Agrees

Bertocchini's research is promising. However, other scientists are doubtful. Ramani Narayan, a scientist from the University of Michigan, is one of them. He thinks that, if wax worms eat plastic, tiny pieces of plastic could work their way into the food chain. This plastic might then be harmful to other living things. He does not think that the worms are the answer to the problem of pollution.

Susan Selke, director of Michigan State University School of Packaging, says that a lack of oxygen in a landfill could be a problem for the worms. If the worms can't breathe well enough, they won't be able to survive. She also wonders whether the worms chew on plastic because they want to escape or whether they are eating the plastic as food. This question needs to be answered before worms can be placed in landfills.

More Ideas to Explore

Scientists agree that Bertocchini may have come across an important finding. Other types of worms are being examined too. For example, a study in China showed that a type of worm called the meal worm ate and thrived on a type of lightweight plastic called Styrofoam.

Some scientists also wonder whether a similar solution might exist for plastic waste in the ocean. This waste can be dangerous to seabirds, turtles, fish, and other ocean animals that accidentally eat or get caught in it. Are there other plastic-eating creatures out there that might be able to help? Only time and research will tell.

Go on to the next page.

4. Which idea helped Bertocchini and her team to think that the worms may have something on their bodies that breaks down the plastic?
- A. the speed at which the worms were able to make holes in the plastic
 - B. the number of holes each worm made in the plastic in one hour
 - C. the fact that holes appeared in the plastic even if the worms were not alive
 - D. the idea that other types of worms may make holes in other types of plastic

5. Read the paragraph from the passage.

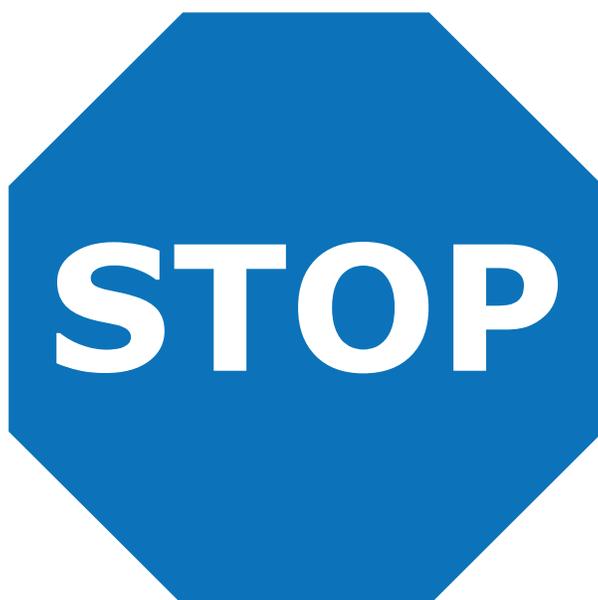
Bertocchini's research is promising. However, other scientists are doubtful. Ramani Narayan, a scientist from the University of Michigan, is one of them. He thinks that, if wax worms eat plastic, tiny pieces of plastic could work their way into the food chain. This plastic might then be harmful to other living things. He does not think that the worms are the answer to the problem of pollution.

Which sentences in the paragraph **best** support the idea that using worms to break down trash may be a bad idea? Choose **two** answers.

- A. Bertocchini's research is promising.
- B. However, other scientists are doubtful.
- C. Ramani Narayan, a scientist from the University of Michigan, is one of them.
- D. He thinks that, if wax worms eat plastic, tiny pieces of plastic could work their way into the food chain.
- E. This plastic might then be harmful to other living things.
- F. He does not think that the worms are the answer to the problem of pollution.

Go on to the next page.

6. Which sentence from the passage **best** explains how the research about one topic may encourage research about other topics?
- A. She and her team kept careful records of what happened.
 - B. More tests are needed, of course, before millions of wax worms can be added to landfills.
 - C. Scientists agree that Bertocchini may have come across an important finding.
 - D. Some scientists also wonder whether a similar solution might exist for plastic waste in the ocean.





APPENDIX A—LISTENING PASSAGE: A VERY UNIQUE ANIMAL

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.

A Very Unique Animal

One of the strangest animals on Earth is the aye-aye. It weighs a little more than five pounds and has large, glowing eyes like an owl and enormous ears like a bat. One of the five fingers on each of its hands is extremely long and thin. All these unique features serve a common purpose: to help the aye-aye survive.

Aye-ayes prefer to reside in the rain forest. They construct leafy, ball-shaped nests high in the towering trees. During the daytime, aye-ayes sleep safely inside their homes, but when the sun sets, they venture out to hunt.

In the fading light, the aye-aye still has excellent vision. Its large eyes can detect faint rays of moonlight. Carefully, the aye-aye walks along a tree branch, tapping the branch with its long, thin finger. It is searching for a snack, and insect larvae are crawling through tunnels inside the branch. When the aye-aye taps on a hollow tunnel, the wood makes an echo that the aye-aye's large, finely tuned ears are able to sense.

Next, the aye-aye puts its pointed teeth to work, gnawing a hole in the branch and into the tunnel that contains the delicious larvae. All this chewing never wears down the aye-aye's teeth, though, because its front teeth continue growing throughout its entire life.

Swiftly, the aye-aye jabs its long finger into the chewed up branch. The finger is thin, and it can twist in every direction, even backward. This unique tool enables the aye-aye to easily grasp the larvae inside.

All night long, the aye-aye travels through the trees, scouring the branches for food. When there are few larvae, the aye-aye feasts on fruit, seeds, or sweet nectar.

Today, scientists continue to study the aye-aye, but doing so is a challenging task because the aye-aye's natural habitat is the island of Madagascar, which is located in the Indian Ocean near Africa. This fascinating and remarkable animal cannot be found in the wild anywhere else on Earth.

APPENDIX B—SUMMARY DATA

Grade 5

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 1				
1	CCSS-1: 5.L.2b	C	1	Students need to use a comma correctly to separate an introductory element from the rest of the sentence. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not correctly separate an introductory element from the complete sentence.
2	CCSS-1: 5.W.2d	B	3	Students need to revise the last sentence in the paragraph so that the most precise language is used related to the topic of the paragraph. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not use the most precise language for describing how many people cross the bridge.
3	CCSS-1: 5.W.8	A	3	Students need to identify which source would provide the best additional information to include in the report. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not provide additional relevant information related to the topic.
Session 2				
1	CCSS-1: 5.SL.3	A	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to identify the detail that supports the claim that aye-aye see well at night. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not support the claim.
2	CCSS-1: 5.SL.3	C/E	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to identify the two details that support the claim that each of the aye-aye’s unique features serves a purpose. Options C and E are the correct answers. The other options do not support the claim.
3	CCSS-1: 5.SL.2	B	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to identify the best summary of the presentation. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not summarize the presentation completely.

Grade 5

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 3				
1	CCSS-1: 5.RL.5	A	3	Students need to explain how paragraphs 1–6 contribute to the development of the plot. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not provide for the development of the plot.
2	CCSS-1: 5.RL.4	B	2	Students need to determine the meaning of the phrase. Option B is the correct answer. The other options are not correct meanings of the phrase as it is used in the sentence.
3	CCSS-1: 5.RL.2	C/D	2	Students need to determine the lesson Leo learns in the passage and then find support. In Part A, option C is the correct answer. The other options are not lessons Leo learns in the passage. In Part B, option D is the correct answer. The other options in Part B do not support the lesson from Part A.
4	CCSS-1: 5.RI.3	C	2	Students need to explain the idea that helped Bertocchini and her team think that the worms may have something on their bodies that breaks down the plastic. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not explain the idea.
5	CCSS-1: 5.RI.8	D/E	2	Students need to select the two sentences that support the point that using worms to break down trash may be a bad idea. The correct answers are D and E. The other options do not support the idea.
6	CCSS-1: 5.RI.3	D	3	Students need to explain the relationship between how the research about one topic may encourage research about other topics. Option D is the correct answer. The other options do not explain a relationship between two topics.

APPENDIX C—SAMPLE LISTENING STIMULUS COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Informational Stimulus—A Very Unique Animal

Grade 5

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative Easy Listening Formula (ELF) indicates that this document is at least suitable for a *reader* at the 6th grade, seventh 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 5 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 5.

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: Medium Complexity

Vocabulary: Medium Complexity

Delivery: audio not available at this time

KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS

Subject Matter Knowledge: Medium Complexity

Allusions/References: Medium 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 5

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 5

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 5

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—The Speedy Twin

Grade 5

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 5 based on the subject matter of the passage. Based on these sets of measures as explained in the Wisconsin Academic Standards Appendix A, this passage is slightly complex and is recommended for assessment at grade 5.

MEANING: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Moderately Complex

Vocabulary: Slightly 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 5

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 5

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—Wormy Solutions to Trash****Grade 5****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 placement at grade 5 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 5.

PURPOSE: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization of Main Ideas: Moderately Complex

Text Features: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Slightly 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 5

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 5

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 5

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