



WISCONSIN DEPARTMENT OF
PUBLIC INSTRUCTION

English Language Arts Item Sampler Grade 7



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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 3 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.

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 			
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"> 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
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"> 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
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"> 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 information within data sets or texts 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
Evaluate Make judgments based on criteria, check, detect inconsistencies or fallacies, judge, critique			<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
Create Reorganize elements into new patterns/structures, generate, hypothesize, design, plan, produce	Brainstorm ideas, concepts, problems, or perspectives related to a topic or concept	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generate conjectures or hypotheses based on observations or prior knowledge and experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize information within one source or text Develop a complex model for a given situation Develop an alternative solution 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Synthesize information across multiple sources or texts Articulate a new voice, alternate theme, new knowledge or perspective

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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Letter to Her Daughter from the New White House

By Abigail Adams

John and Abigail Adams were the first presidential couple to live in the White House. In the letter, First Lady Adams describes the White House as unfinished and the city of Washington, D.C., as still in development.

Washington, 21 November 1800

My Dear Child:

I arrived here on Sunday last, and without meeting with any accident worth noticing, except losing ourselves when we left Baltimore and going eight or nine miles on the Frederick road, by which means we were obliged to go the other eight through woods, where we wandered two hours without finding a guide or the path. Fortunately, a straggling man came up with us, and we engaged him as a guide to extricate us out of our difficulty; but woods are all you can see from Baltimore until you reach the city, which is only so in name. Here and there is a small cot, without a glass window, interspersed amongst the forests, through which you travel miles without seeing any human being. In the city there are buildings enough, if they were compact and finished, to accommodate Congress and those attached to it; but as they are, and scattered as they are, I see no great comfort for them. The river, which runs up to Alexandria¹, is in full view of my window, and I see the vessels as they pass and repass. The house is upon a grand and superb scale, requiring about thirty servants to attend and keep the apartments in proper order, and perform the ordinary business of the house and stables; an establishment very well proportioned to the President's salary. The lighting of the apartments, from the kitchen to parlors and chambers, is a tax indeed; and the fires we are obliged to keep to secure us from daily agues² is another very cheering comfort. To assist us in this great castle, and render less attendance necessary, bells are wholly wanting, not one single one being hung through the whole house, and promises are all you can obtain. This is so great an inconvenience that I know not what to do, or how to do. The ladies from Georgetown and in the city have many of them visited me. Yesterday I returned fifteen visits—but such a place as Georgetown appears—why, our Milton is beautiful. But no comparisons—if they will put me up some bells and let me have wood enough to keep fires, I design to be pleased. I could content myself almost anywhere three months; but surrounded with forests, can you believe that wood is not to be had because people cannot be found to cut and cart it? Briesler entered into a contract with a man to supply him with wood. A small part, a few cords only, has he been able to get. Most of that was expended to dry the walls of the house before we came in, and yesterday the man told him it was impossible for him to procure it to be cut and carted. He has had recourse to coals; but we cannot get grates made and set. We have, indeed, come into a new country.

You must keep all this to yourself, and, when asked how I like it, say that I write you the situation is beautiful, which is true. The house is made habitable, but there is not a single apartment finished, and all within side, except the plastering, has been done since Briesler came. We have not the least fence, yard, or other convenience, without, and the great unfinished audience room I made a drying room of, to hang up the clothes in. The principal stairs are not up, and will not be this winter. Six chambers are made comfortable; two are occupied by the President and Mr. Shaw; two lower rooms, one for a common parlor, and one for a levee room. Upstairs there is the oval room, which is designed for the drawing room, and has the crimson furniture in it. It is a very handsome room now; but, when completed, it will be beautiful. If the twelve years, in which this place has been considered as the future seat of government, had been improved, as they would have been if in New England, very many of the present inconveniences would have been removed. It is a beautiful spot, capable of every improvement, and the more I view it, the more I am delighted with it.

¹ Alexandria—a city in northern Virginia

² agues—chills or shivering

Go on to the next page.

Since I sat down to write, I have been called down to a servant from Mount Vernon³, with a billet⁴ from Major Custis, and a haunch of venison, and a kind, congratulatory letter from Mrs. Lewis, upon my arrival in the city, with Mrs. Washington's love, inviting me to Mount Vernon, where, health permitting, I will go before I leave this place.

Affectionately, your mother

³ Mount Vernon—George Washington's Home

⁴ billet—note

TDA Prompt:

In the letter Adams informs her daughter about the experience of moving to a new city and living in a new home. Write an essay analyzing how Adams responds to her new surroundings. Use evidence from the letter to support your response.

Go on to the next page.

Writer's Checklist

Text Dependent Analysis (TDA)

The Writer's Checklist is available as an online tool during the TDA. Students may also be provided with a hard copy of the checklist (available on the [Forward Exam Resources webpage](#)) as long as it is then treated as secure testing materials and securely destroyed immediately after the testing session.

PLAN before you write

- Read the entire passage(s) carefully.
- Read the question carefully.
- Think about how the question relates to the passage(s).
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map or outline to plan your essay.
- Plan to include multiple paragraphs in your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze and explain what you think about the information from the passage(s) in your essay.
- Support and develop the ideas in your essay by using text evidence from the passage(s).
- Use correct language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions between paragraphs in your essay.
- Organize your essay with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- I re-read the question and my final essay answers the question.
- I included my own thoughts and ideas in my essay.
- I included evidence from the passage(s) to support my ideas in my essay.
- I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.
- I used correct language, a variety of sentence types, and paragraph transitions in my essay.

STOP.



Answer the questions.

1. A student is writing a research paper about the Panama Canal. Read the paragraph from the research paper and answer the question that follows.

The Panama Canal cuts through the country of Panama to connect the Atlantic and Pacific Oceans. Before the canal was built, ships going from one ocean to another had to sail around the southernmost point of South America. This route added thousands of extra miles to the journey. The French began building the canal in the 1800s, and it was completed by the United States in 1914.

Which sentence would provide the **best** conclusion for the paragraph?

- A. Building the Panama Canal proved to be a very difficult project.
- B. The southern tip of South America is known as Cape Horn.
- C. The finished canal was hailed as an engineering marvel.
- D. Ships that use the Panama Canal carry different types of cargo.

2. Read the sentence.

Two weeks after Kelsey applied for a summer job bagging groceries, she received a call at the supermarket from the store's hiring manager.

What is the **best** way to rewrite this sentence for clarity?

- A. Two weeks at the supermarket after Kelsey applied for a summer job bagging groceries, she received a call from the store's hiring manager.
- B. Two weeks after Kelsey applied for a summer job bagging groceries, she received a call at the supermarket from the store's hiring manager at the supermarket.
- C. Two weeks after Kelsey applied for a summer job bagging groceries at the supermarket, she received a call from the store's hiring manager.
- D. Two weeks after Kelsey at the supermarket applied for a summer job bagging groceries, she received a call from the store's hiring manager.

Go on to the next page.

3. Which website would be most helpful to a student writing a report about plants that have adapted to thrive in a dry desert environment?

Search: Desert Plants

Results: 1–4 of 200

A. **Desert Plants Varieties**

Many people think of cacti when they hear the words “desert plants.” However, the desert is also home to beautiful flowers . . .

B. **Desert Plants Watering**

One of the best things about desert plants is that they do not need a lot of attention. Experts recommend . . .

C. **Desert Plants Landscaping**

Use desert plants to turn your yard into a one-of-a-kind showplace. Get the most popular ideas and designs for free . . .

D. **Desert Plants Abilities**

The desert is a harsh environment. Many desert plants have developed ways to cope with the lack of water . . .





Listen to the presentation that your teacher reads to you from Appendix A. Then answer the questions.

The Animals of World War I

1. According to the presentation, what are **two** tasks performed by horses and mules in World War I? Choose **two** answers.
 - A. standing guard
 - B. transporting people and supplies
 - C. carrying messages
 - D. finding soldiers who needed help
 - E. pulling artillery

2. How does the speaker support the claim that dogs “proved to be some of the best animal soldiers of all”?
 - A. by listing several different ways that dogs successfully assisted soldiers
 - B. by giving examples of specific dogs and the soldiers they were assigned to
 - C. by providing an expert’s opinion about the usefulness of dogs in the war
 - D. by emphasizing that dogs were a soldier’s first choice for carrying messages

Go on to the next page.

3. Which sentence from the presentation **best** expresses the main idea?
- A. When you think about soldiers in World War I, chances are you imagine fighters with two legs, not four—and certainly no wings!
 - B. More than 16 million animals played key roles in World War I.
 - C. Horses, mules, and even camels were put to work on all types of battlefields during this time.
 - D. It may be difficult to imagine dogs being involved in the war, but they proved to be some of the best animal soldiers of all.





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

A Vacation Unlike Any Other

Margot loved everything about summer. The sun on her face, the feeling of grass beneath her feet on a warm day, outdoor picnics, and homemade lemonade were just a few things that she looked forward to at the end of each school year. Although she often counted down the days until she could enjoy these moments, there was one thing that always topped her list of favorite summertime activities. Every June, she and her family would make the long drive to visit her aunt and uncle in a town many miles away. Although being stuck in a car with four other people may not sound appealing, she often enjoyed this time she was able to spend with her family, even though she rarely admitted it. She and her sisters would pile into the car with her parents as they all made their way to her aunt and uncle's home to spend a week there.

Margot was looking forward to another vacation, but there was something that did not seem quite right about the events leading up to this trip. Unlike previous years, her parents had not mentioned anything about going to visit her relatives, which was odd. By the first week in May, her parents usually had a plan in place. This year, though, the beginning of May had come and gone, and it was already the first week of June. Margot suspected that something was amiss.

After a conversation with her dad one Saturday morning, Margot had confirmed her theory. Her dad informed her that her mother would be teaching summer courses at the local community college, and her aunt and uncle would be going on a vacation of their own to visit another relative in Washington, D.C. The timing did not quite work out for a trip this year. Margot was dumbfounded.

Margot went to her room and sat on her bed, upset that the summer would slip by without an opportunity to go anywhere. She mindlessly began to flip through old school papers that were strewn across her bedroom floor. Suddenly, she came across an old project that unexpectedly sparked an idea.

"This is perfect!" Margot exclaimed to herself as she grabbed the old assignment and ran to find her sisters, Abbie and Sarah.

"Hey!" Margot said as she ran over to her sisters, who were enjoying the warm weather outside. "Dad just told me that we aren't going to visit Aunt Lucille and Uncle Carl this summer."

"Yeah, Dad just told us too," Abbie mumbled.

"It's OK, though," Margot said, hoping that she could make the situation better. "I have something that may be just as fun. Look at this," she said as she showed her sisters the project she held in her hands. Seeing their furrowed brows caused Margot to elaborate. "Do you remember when I had to get brochures from museums, parks, and historical sites around the city?"

"I think so," Sarah said reluctantly.

"Well, for one of my school assignments last year, I had to create a fictional advertisement for the city," Margot said. "I used ideas from the brochures and flyers to make a collage of different things to do here in our city."

Go on to the next page.

“I remember now,” Abbie said, “but how is that going to help us with our summer vacation?”

Margot smiled. “What if we have a stay-cation instead of a va-cation?” Margot looked at the confused expressions on her sisters’ faces. “Instead of going somewhere else, we can stay here and see our city through the eyes of a tourist,” Margot explained. “Every year, hundreds of people visit our city for their vacations. Why can’t we stay here for ours?”

Margot saw a flicker of interest in her sisters’ eyes. “This might be our only opportunity to go on a vacation this summer,” Margot stated. “Plus, there are so many things here in the city that we’ve never done.” Margot’s sisters looked at each other and nodded, seeming to surrender to Margot’s idea and beginning to find the merits of this proposition.

A few minutes later, the three sisters were presenting their ideas to their parents. Of course, Margot held up the fake advertisement for everyone to see, smiling at the fact that there wasn’t anything fake about it anymore. She was truly using this assignment to advertise the many attractions their city had to offer. Her parents nodded in agreement and were quickly able to identify a few days in late June that would work with everyone’s schedule. It was not going to be the summer that Margot had originally hoped for, but she was looking forward to seeing what this new twist on a summer vacation would bring.

Go on to the next page.

1. In paragraph 8, what does the phrase “furrowed brows” suggest about Margot’s sisters?
 - A. They feel puzzled.
 - B. They feel amused.
 - C. They feel surprised.
 - D. They feel annoyed.

2. How does the author contrast Margot’s point of view with her sisters’ initial point of view about a stay-cation?
 - A. by explaining how the sisters’ summer plans will conflict with Margot’s idea for a stay-cation
 - B. by describing how the sisters react to Margot’s attempt to convince them to have a stay-cation
 - C. by explaining how the sisters’ school assignment makes them want to include their aunt in a stay-cation
 - D. by describing how the sisters oppose their parents’ suggestion to turn their family trip into a stay-cation

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** expresses the theme of the passage?

- A. People should always put work before play.
- B. The best thing about summer is doing nothing.
- C. A disappointment can lead to a fresh opportunity.
- D. Doing things you have done before can still be fun.

Part B

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

- A. The sun on her face, the feeling of grass beneath her feet on a warm day, outdoor picnics, and homemade lemonade were just a few things that she looked forward to at the end of each school year.
- B. This year, though, the beginning of May had come and gone, and it was already the first week of June.
- C. Her dad informed her that her mother would be teaching summer courses at the local community college, and her aunt and uncle would be going on a vacation of their own to visit another relative in Washington, D.C.
- D. It was not going to be the summer that Margot had originally hoped for, but she was looking forward to seeing what this new twist on a summer vacation would bring.

Go on to the next page.

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

Sailing Stones

Deep in Death Valley National Park in California and Nevada, stones appeared to sail across the desert on their own, leaving paths behind them in the sand. For many years, people tried to explain the mystery of the stones. Hypotheses about the stones' movement varied, but it was not until someone captured the stones on film that the real, scientific explanation was discovered.

The first report of the sailing stones came in 1915. Joseph Crook, a prospector looking for gold, visited a place known as the Racetrack Playa lake bed in Death Valley. He saw that some stones had long trails of disturbed dirt behind them. The trails were about a half an inch deep and as long as 820 feet. They often made sharp turns after traveling in a straight line for some time.

The first explanation was that whirlwinds of sand had picked up the rocks and moved them. Others thought that algae had spread across the lake bed, making it slick enough for the stones to slide around. Another common belief was that magnetic fields of Earth had moved the stones across the land.

It wasn't until 1948 that the first scientific report about the stones was published. Geologists Jim McAllister and Allen Agnew theorized that high winds moved stones that were resting on wet, slick mud. Unfortunately, the scientists were never able to catch the stones in motion, so they could not prove their theory.

In 1955 George M. Stanley determined that the stones were far too heavy to be moved by wind. He suggested that low temperatures would cause water that flooded the lake bed to freeze. The rocks would then be trapped in a large sheet of ice and move with the ice as it began to melt.

Researchers Bob Sharp and Dwight Carey finally tested that theory in 1972. Over seven years, they observed the stones' movement. Twenty-eight of the thirty stones they had marked had moved. The smallest stone had moved the farthest; the heaviest stone (700 pounds) had not moved at all. (Shortly after the experiment ended, the large stone disappeared. Twenty years later it was found a half mile from its original spot.) Sharp and Carey concluded that the ice wasn't in full sheets as Stanley had suggested. They believed there were only small slabs of ice surrounding the stones. Therefore, something else had to be happening.

Professor John Reid found in 1955 that some of the stones were moving parallel to one another. He said that George Stanley was right and that these stones were, in fact, frozen into the same large sheet of ice. That did not explain the movement of all the stones, though, as some stones were clearly moving individually.

It was thought that Ralph Lorenz, a scientist with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, had finally found the answer in 2006 when he did an experiment in a lab. He put a small rock in a plastic container and filled the container with just enough water that part of the stone was sticking out. He then placed the container in the freezer. Soon, he had a piece of ice with a rock embedded in it. He then filled a tray with sand and added just enough water to cover the sand. Finally, he placed the ice with the rock in it on the tray and blew air across it. The air sent the stone sailing across the tray. It left behind a trail in the sand. He concluded that the moving stones were frozen in a slab of ice that floated across the rain-soaked, windy desert.

Go on to the next page.

Lorenz's theory was widely accepted, but some scientists were not convinced because no one had actually seen the rocks move. Enter a team from the University of California, San Diego, led by cousins Richard and Jim Norris. In December 2013, the team of scientists absolutely solved the mystery of how the stones were moving. No one could doubt them because it all was captured on film.

Using cameras from a weather station and GPS tracking software, they discovered that the movement was not due to heavy winds or thick plots of ice. It wasn't mud, algae, magnets, or whirlwinds of sand. The stones sailed across the desert due to a combination of events that must take place in a specific order.

The first thing that happens is that the lake bed fills with water just deep enough that ice can form on top of the water, but leaving some liquid water below it. It can't be too deep. When the temperature in the desert drops enough to form the sheet of ice, the rocks are trapped inside. Then, the next day, the sun warms the desert. The ice begins to melt and break into pieces. When a light wind hits, the stones slide—or sail—away, leaving their tracks in the wet dirt below. The film even showed how a change in direction of the wind created the sharp turns of the stones.

People love to try to solve a good mystery. Sometimes experiments are enough to solve the mysteries of our world, but nothing beats a good video camera to prove when theories about mysteries are correct. It seems that for every mystery that is solved, there are many others waiting for an answer.

Go on to the next page.

4. How does the next-to-last paragraph most contribute to the development of an idea in the passage?
- A. It describes the steps in the process of how the stones move.
 - B. It explains how scientists once viewed the reason for why the stones move.
 - C. It describes the features of the national park that contains the moving stones.
 - D. It explains how technology has been used to study the moving stones.
5. Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the inference that advanced technology helped scientists solve the mystery of the moving stones?
- A. Another common belief was that magnetic fields of Earth had moved the stones across the land.
 - B. Unfortunately, the scientists were never able to catch the stones in motion, so they could not prove their theory.
 - C. It was thought that Ralph Lorenz, a scientist with the National Aeronautics and Space Administration, had finally found the answer in 2006 when he did an experiment in a lab.
 - D. Using cameras from a weather station and GPS tracking software, they discovered that the movement was not due to heavy winds or thick plots of ice.

Go on to the next page.

6. Using information from the passage, which steps are in the correct order to explain how the stones actually move across the desert?
- A. Rocks get trapped in a sheet of ice. Ice forms on top of water. The rocks begin to slide. The wind blows. The sun warms up the ice.
 - B. Rocks get trapped in a sheet of ice. The sun warms up the ice. The wind blows. The rocks begin to slide. Ice forms on top of water.
 - C. Ice forms on top of water. Rocks get trapped in a sheet of ice. The sun warms up the ice. The wind blows. The rocks begin to slide.
 - D. The wind blows. The sun warms up the ice. The rocks begin to slide. Ice forms on top of water. Rocks get trapped in a sheet of ice.





STOP.

APPENDIX A—LISTENING PASSAGE: THE ANIMALS OF WORLD WAR I

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.

The Animals of World War I

When you think about soldiers in World War I, chances are you imagine fighters with two legs, not four—and certainly no wings! However, some of the bravest fighters of that era possessed those very characteristics.

More than 16 million animals played key roles in World War I. Many of them were used to transport supplies, ammunition, and people from one place to another. Horses, mules, and even camels were put to work on all types of battlefields during this time. They pulled heavy pieces of artillery and carried food, water, and other materials that were essential to troops.

It may be difficult to imagine dogs being involved in the war, but they proved to be some of the best animal soldiers of all. They could easily scamper across fields and through trenches and could carry simple items on their backs, including important messages to be shared between groups of soldiers. Some dogs were specially trained to find soldiers who needed assistance and to bark until help arrived, and others stood guard at night to watch for any kind of movement. Still others used their sensitive noses to catch the scent of anything unusual. If the dogs caught the slightest whiff of something out of the ordinary, they began barking a loud warning to let the soldiers know that something wasn't quite right.

Another type of animal soldier during World War I was one with wings: the pigeon. More than 100,000 of these speedy, reliable birds were used to send messages back and forth during the war. Even lightning bugs played a part during the war. Soldiers would collect dozens of these bright bugs and put them in glass jars, using the light from the insects to read maps and other important papers at nighttime.

There are many heroes in a war. Now you know that some of the heroes even had four legs or a set of wings!

APPENDIX B—SUMMARY DATA

Grade 7

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 1				
1	CCSS-1:7.W.2		3	Students need to analyze how the author responds to her new surroundings.
Session 2				
1	CCSS-1: 7.W.2f	C	3	Students need to provide a concluding statement that follows from the information in the paragraph. Option C is the correct answer. The other options are not good concluding statements.
2	CCSS-1: 7.L.1c	C	2	Students need to correct the misplaced modifier. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not correct the modifier.
3	CCSS-1: 7.W.8	D	3	Students need to choose the best source from which to gather relevant information on plants that have adapted to thrive in a dry desert environment. Option D is the correct answer. The other options would not provide the best information for the report.
Session 3				
1	CCSS-1: 7.SL.2	B, E	1	After listening to the presentation, students need to choose two details that support a main idea. Options B and E are the correct answers. The other options do not support the idea in question.
2	CCSS-1: 7.SL.3	A	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to provide sufficient evidence for the speaker’s claim. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not completely support the specific claim.
3	CCSS-1: 7.SL.2	B	2	After listening to the presentation, students need to provide the main idea. Option B is the correct answer. The other options do not provide the main idea of the presentation.

Grade 7

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	Annotations
Session 4				
1	CCSS-1: 7.RL.4	A	2	Students need to determine how the phrase “furrowed brows” is used in the passage and how it applies to Margot’s sisters. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not make the correct assumptions about Margot’s sisters.
2	CCSS-1: 7.RL.6	B	2	Students need to analyze how the author contrasts the points of view of Margot and her sisters. Option B is the correct choice. The other options do not correctly contrast the points of view.
3	CCSS-1: 7.RL.2	C, D	3	In Part A, students need to determine the theme of the passage. Option C is the correct answer in Part A. The other options in Part A do not express the theme. In Part B, students need to provide the evidence to support the answer to Part A. Option D is the correct answer in Part B. The other options in Part B do not support the correct answer to Part A.
4	CCSS-1: 7.RI.5	A	2	Students need to analyze how the next-to-last paragraph contributes to the development of an idea in the passage. Option A is the correct answer. The other options do not provide support for how the next-to-last paragraph contributes to the ideas in the passage.
5	CCSS-1: 7.RI.1	D	3	Students need to provide textual support for the inference that advanced technology helped scientists solve the mystery of the moving stones. Option D is the correct answer. The other options do not provide textual support for the inference.
6	CCSS-1: 7.RI.1	C	1	Students need to use information from the passage to demonstrate how the stones move across the desert. Option C is the correct answer. The other options do not demonstrate the correct order of events for the stones to move.

APPENDIX C—SAMPLE LISTENING STIMULUS COMPLEXITY ANALYSIS

Informational Stimulus—The Animals of World War I

Grade 7

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative Easy Listening Formula (ELF) indicates that this document is at least suitable for a *reader* at the 8th grade, sixth 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 7 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 7.

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: 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 7

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 7

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 7

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—A Vacation Unlike Any Other**

Grade 7

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 6–8 band. The qualitative review supports grade 7 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 7.

MEANING: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization: Slightly Complex

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Moderately Complex

Vocabulary: Slightly Complex

Sentence Structure: Very 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 7

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 7

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—Sailing Stones**

Grade 7

Recommended Placement for Assessment

The quantitative measures of several readability programs suggest an appropriate placement at the grade 6–8 band. The qualitative review supports grade 7 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 7.

PURPOSE: Moderately Complex

TEXT STRUCTURE

Organization of Main Ideas: Moderately Complex

Text Features: N/A

Use of Images: N/A

LANGUAGE FEATURES

Conventionality: Slightly Complex

Vocabulary: Slightly 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 7

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 7

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 7

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