



Our Students. Their Moment.

**New York State Testing Program  
Grade 7 Common Core  
English Language Arts Test**

**Released Questions**

**July 2015**

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

## **New York State Testing Program**

### **Grade 7 Common Core**

### **English Language Arts Test**

### **Released Questions**

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

New York State administered the ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Common Core tests in April 2015 and is now making a portion of the questions from those tests available for review and use. These released questions will help students, families, educators, and the public better understand how tests have changed to assess the instructional shifts demanded by the Common Core and to assess the rigor required to ensure that all students are on track to college and career readiness.

#### ***Released Questions Are Teaching Tools***

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

#### ***Understanding ELA Questions***

##### **Multiple Choice**

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

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

## Short Response

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

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

The rubric used for evaluating short-response questions can be found both in the grade-level annotations and in the Educator Guide to the 2015 Grade 7 Common Core English Language Arts Test at <http://www.engageny.org/resource/test-guides-for-english-language-arts-and-mathematics>.

## Extended Response

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

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

The rubric used for evaluating extended-response questions can be found both in the grade-level annotations and in the Educator Guide to the 2015 Grade 7 Common Core English Language Arts Test at <http://www.engageny.org/resource/test-guides-for-english-language-arts-and-mathematics>.

## CCLS Alignment

The alignment(s) to the Common Core Learning Standards for English Language Arts are intended to identify the primary analytic skills necessary to successfully answer each question. However, some questions measure proficiencies described in multiple standards, including writing and additional reading and language standards. For example, two point and four point constructed-response questions require students to first conduct the analyses described in the mapped standard and then produce written responses that are rated based on Writing standards. To gain greater insight into the measurement focus for constructed-response questions please refer to the rubrics shown at the end of this document.

## ***These Released Questions Do Not Comprise a Mini Test***

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

The released questions do not represent the full spectrum of standards assessed on the State tests, nor do they represent the full spectrum of how the Common Core should be taught and assessed in the classroom. It should not be assumed that a particular standard will be measured with an identical question in future assessments. Specific criteria for writing test questions as well as additional assessment information is available at <http://www.engageny.org/common-core-assessments>.

One full-credit student response is provided with each released constructed-response question. The example is provided to illustrate one of many ways students can achieve full credit in answering the test question. The sample response is not intended to represent a best response nor does it illustrate the only way a student could earn full credit.

# The Great Pumpkin

*by Brendan Borrell*

## The Patch

Quinn Werner's backyard pumpkin patch overlooks a wooded creek. In the winter, when the maples and oaks stand like toothpicks and snow coats the western Pennsylvania valley, Werner gazes out his kitchen window and caresses his prizewinning seeds. The topsoil is frozen solid, and his orange tractor sits unused in the garage. He is not a big talker, but every Thursday his buddy Dave Stelts phones him, and their conversation always comes back to springtime—to the pumpkin patch and the weigh-off.

In April, Werner germinates his seeds, each one as long as a quarter, by soaking them in a mix of hydrogen peroxide and water. He pots them and incubates them in a cooler with heating pads.

He then places the seedlings under fluorescent lights upstairs in what he calls his pumpkin room. On nice days, he takes the little pots outside for an hour or two for fresh air and natural sunlight. In May, every seedling is planted in the patch under its own clear plastic tent fitted with incandescent bulbs that are switched on during chilly nights.

Within weeks, the vines stretch out from underneath the plastic like octopus arms. In June, when the first golden trumpets of female flowers begin to open, Werner pollinates them by brushing them with pollen-covered stamens from select male flowers. Then he covers them with plastic cups to prevent honeybees from meddling.

When I visited Werner's property on a sweltering summer afternoon, he was checking his patch for the third time that day. Werner straddled the orange mesh fence that surrounds his garden and waded through a sea of stiff, broad leaves toward a thigh-high dome covered by an old bedsheet.

His 12 pumpkins had been growing for less than a month, so I had expected that one would be small enough to hoist into the back seat of a car. Werner whipped off the sheet, and there sat a shiny pale pumpkin (they turn orange later in the year) that seemed to sag on one side like a mound of Silly Putty left out in the sun. Based on its circumference, he guessed it was pushing 400 pounds (180 kilograms). And the season had just begun.

Werner beamed. "It's real long and real wide," he said. "It's in really good shape."

But as he leaned in closer, running his hand along a smooth ridge, his face grew taut. "Oh, man, as a matter of fact, it's split."

30 Tucked into the blossom end of the pumpkin was a tiny crack. Even if the crack wasn't  
enough to disqualify the fruit from competition (and it was), it could widen and let in  
bacteria that would quickly rot the pumpkin from the inside. "That makes me sick," he  
said. "This is the reason why I grow so many."

35 Werner and his pal Dave Stelts are competitive gardeners who vie for bragging rights  
and prize money ranging from a few hundred to thousands of dollars. Their crop of  
choice is the Atlantic Giant Pumpkin, a freak of nature and intensive breeding. During  
peak growing season, these pumpkins can gain 50 pounds (23 kg) per day—which is  
sometimes too much. The cracked pumpkin Werner showed me had swollen too quickly  
after a hard rain.

40 In general he has kept about two-thirds of his colossal gourds intact. In 2008, he  
earned the title of "grower of the year" after trucking pumpkins to six weigh-offs and  
winning five. His pumpkins had an average weight of nearly 1,500 pounds (680 kg). "I lost  
by two pounds in the sixth," he says.

45 Since the 1980s, giant pumpkins have tripled in size, thanks to strategic breeding and  
hardcore growers with time on their hands and dirt under their fingernails. (From April to  
October, Werner spends six to eight hours per day tending his garden.) Thomas Andres, a  
squash expert who works at the New York Botanical Garden, has predicted that the first  
pumpkin weighing one ton (2,000 pounds, or 900 kg) will appear in 2014.

50 The Ohio Valley contest, Werner's local weigh-off, is one of the more than 80  
competitions in the "Great Pumpkin Belt," an area that stretches across North America  
from Washington State to Nova Scotia. This is prime pumpkin territory. The region has  
90 to 120 frost-free summer days, but is cold enough in winter to keep plant diseases and  
pests in check. The weigh-offs are friendly competitions, but they're also  
55 a form of at-home science. Growers meticulously graph their pumpkins'  
growth curves and share successes and failures—and seeds—with their  
peers.

60 "By God, if we can get a  
pumpkin up to a ton, imagine what  
we can do with somebody's vegetable  
crop," says Stelts, president of the  
Great Pumpkin Commonwealth.  
65 "What we are doing will be reflected  
on the dinner table of America."



At a pumpkin contest in Rhode Island, a pumpkin is transported for weighing.

14207033\_1

**1**

Which idea is introduced in lines 1 through 6?

- A** Werner is focused on his hobby throughout the year.
- B** Werner believes that cooperation is the key to success.
- C** Werner's seeds are sought after by other growers.
- D** Werner's location has contributed to his success.

**Key: A**

**CCLS: RI.7.1:**

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 73%**

14207031\_2

**2**

Read this sentence from lines 16 and 17.

**Then he covers them with plastic cups to prevent honeybees from meddling.**

The author uses the word “meddling” in line 17 to suggest that honeybees

- A** are sensitive to cooler temperatures
- B** will cause problems in the garden
- C** will leave the garden quickly
- D** are attracted to light sources

**Key: B**

**CCLS: RI.7.4**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 87%**

14207035\_4

**3** The photograph in the article is **most** closely related to

- A** lines 27 through 29
- B** lines 30 through 33
- C** lines 34 through 39
- D** lines 40 through 43

**Key: D**

**CCLS: RI.7.7:**

Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 63%**

14207027\_3

**4** How do lines 44 through 48 reflect a central idea of the article?

- A** by explaining some of the challenges faced by pumpkin growers
- B** by explaining why pumpkin growers have the time to breed pumpkins
- C** by connecting the efforts of pumpkin growers to the size of giant pumpkins
- D** by showing the recognition that successful pumpkin growers get for their efforts

**Key: C**

**CCLS: RI.7.2:**

Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 59%**

14207026\_4

**5** Which evidence from the article suggests that Werner's hobby is popular?

- A** Giant pumpkins have tripled in size since the 1980s.
- B** Competitions can earn gardeners thousands of dollars.
- C** Experts predict that a one-ton pumpkin will be grown soon.
- D** There are more than 80 competitions held in a particular area.

**Key: D**

**CCLS: RI.7.1:**

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 67%**

14207034\_4

**6**

Lines 53 through 66 generate interest in the topic of great pumpkin growing by

- A** providing detailed descriptions of the weigh-offs
- B** describing challenges that growers must overcome
- C** mentioning that people can achieve similar results themselves
- D** suggesting that consumers can benefit from these friendly competitions

**Key: D**

**CCLS: RI.7.5:**

Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 40%**

14207028\_1

**7**

Which statement would be **most** important to include in a summary of the article?

- A** Growing giant pumpkins requires a combination of time and skill.
- B** Giant pumpkins grow best in regions that have changing seasons.
- C** Giant pumpkin weigh-offs generally take place in the spring.
- D** Growing giant pumpkins requires a background in science.

**Key: A**

**CCLS: RI.7.2:**

Determine two or more central ideas in a text and analyze their development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 79%**

# Directions

207059P

Read this story. Then answer questions 8 through 14.

*Allegra Shapiro is twelve years old and lives in Portland, Oregon. She is waiting for her turn to compete in the Bloch Competition where she will be playing music by Wolfgang Amadeus Mozart (1756–1791), a famous classical composer. In order to play well and to focus both before and during her performance, Allegra pictures images in her mind. Often she imagines her beloved great-grandmother, Elter Bubbe Leah.*

## Excerpt from *The Mozart Season*

by Virginia Euwer Wolff

As I looked at the keyboard of the piano, my mind tried to empty itself; it tried to pour all my thoughts down a chute of some kind. I could feel them sliding away. Like a big balloon deflating, like a tank of something emptying. I felt my eyes bug out with the shock of it, and I saw my arms reach out to catch what was emptying out of me. I stood  
5 there looking at the space between my arms, and tried to find Mozart. I closed my eyes and looked for the first movement first; there it was, with its cadenza.<sup>1</sup> Second movement. Third. They were there, with their notes in order, with Mr. Kaplan's blue markings on the pages.

Very strange, my mind doing that. I picked up my violin and played the third-  
10 movement cadenza. It was there, solid, it hadn't gone off anywhere. I wrapped Elter Bubbe Leah's purse in its tissue paper and put it back in my violin case. I went down the hallway to the bathroom. I looked at myself in the mirror. I was just a person in a blue dress standing in dim light in a public bathroom next to a towel machine. I turned around and went back to room 104 and sat down with my violin and bow in my hand.

15 The envelope woman came and got me, and we walked down the hall and then down the stairs and then through a heavy door. Suddenly the lights were very bright and the floor was very polished and there was a line of screens on my right. Several screens were lined up so the jury couldn't see any part of me, even my feet. The woman pointed to  
20 where I was supposed to stand. I went to the spot and stood. It was the place Steve Landauer, Number Three, had just walked away from. I suddenly remembered Alice in Wonderland getting smaller and smaller. I propped myself firmly on my feet, looked down at them; they were the same size they'd been five minutes before, and I knew I wasn't shrinking.

I decided to look at the vertical line down one of the screens.

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<sup>1</sup> **cadenza:** a solo inserted into a movement (or section of music), typically near the end

25 A man's voice came from the other side of the screens: "Number Four, you may begin when you're ready."

I thumbed my strings and heard the D string a shade flat. While I was tuning it I closed my eyes and saw Elter Bubbe Leah's photograph with the purse and the goose and the broom, and into my vision came a teenage hand with a quill pen in it, just at the edge  
30 of the photograph. Music being written. I listened in my mind for the rhythm and I took a medium-size breath and started.

The start was a good one; notes came up out of the violin on time, in time, things weren't blurred, it was fun. Through the notes, I saw Elter Bubbe Leah shooing her geese up a slope with her broom in Poland; the notes went scooting along. It was strange: I was  
35 able to hear every note clearly, every group of sixteenth-notes, every little sforzando,<sup>2</sup> and at the same time I was seeing a movie of pastures and the little house in Suprasl.

The second movement. How many times Heavenly and I'd gone to sleep listening to it, with our arms around each other. I reached inside my body for the key change and the rhythm change and I felt for the gentleness of it. I saw Leah, a little girl in a long white  
40 nightgown, climbing into her bed by candlelight, and I took a medium-size breath and played. The notes sounded like little flickerings of flame from the candle, little bright lights floating in a dark room. I played it for her to drop off to sleep in her feather bed with her braids spread out on the pillow.

The third movement, the Rondeau.<sup>3</sup> If you turn on the radio just in time to hear this  
45 movement, you think it's such a happy thing, those alternating sections, dances. And yet, when you pay close attention, there's a kind of fragile sound—as if something's going to break somewhere but you don't know where. And little silences come up between the sections. I looked into what was going on in my mind and I saw the early morning waking Leah up with the sun coming in, a blessing. I took a medium-size breath and began. She  
50 woke up in the sunshine and she was a real girl in a real house, and I could see the grass and flowers growing as she walked outside, and I could feel the solid ground under her feet, and during the cadenza she was scampering along, very happy. And I got so carried away with the little girl in the story in my mind that I played an E-sharp a little bit askew, my finger came down on it too sideways. But I was happy. I was happy with the sounds of  
55 Mozart coming up out of the wood, and as I moved toward the ending it felt right. The last three notes came out just the way I liked them, balanced, even, each one of them getting softer until the last one just skips away into the air.

I took my violin down off my shoulder. I was in Portland, Oregon, and I'd just finished doing what I'd promised and feared to do. I was twelve years old, standing with  
60 my two feet on the floor and my arms hanging down. I might never even tell anybody

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<sup>2</sup> **sforzando:** a strong, sudden accent on a note or chord

<sup>3</sup> **Rondeau:** a medieval French song

about Leah and her goose and her feather bed in my mind. A whole story of her had happened inside the music. I looked down at the scroll<sup>4</sup> of my violin. It's like a seashell, as if there's such a story inside that you could never find out all of it.

A man's voice came from the other side of the screen. "Thank you, Number Four."

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<sup>4</sup> **scroll:** the wooden handle of a violin appears rolled up like a paper scroll

14207082\_1

**8**

Lines 1 through 8 contribute to the reader's understanding of the story by

- A** allowing the reader to immediately understand Allegra's state of mind
- B** sharing with the reader the frustration Allegra feels before the performance
- C** emphasizing how important it is for Allegra to empty her mind of all thoughts
- D** suggesting that Allegra's surroundings are less important than her feelings

**Key: A**

**CCLS: RL.7.5:**

Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 50%**

14207074\_2

**9**

Why does Allegra think of Alice in Wonderland in lines 20 through 23?

- A** The size of the room makes her feel extremely small.
- B** She is so nervous that she feels as if she might be shrinking.
- C** She feels uncomfortable with the jury behind the line of screens.
- D** The boy before her makes her feel unsure because of his skillful playing.

**Key: B**

**CCLS: RL.7.1:**

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 71%**

14207073\_1

**10**

Based on lines 27 through 31, which statement **best** explains how the photograph helps Allegra?

- A** It inspires a vision that prepares her for performing the music.
- B** It reminds her that her great-grandmother was a teenage musician like her.
- C** It provides a memory that creates a mood of disappointment.
- D** It prompts her to recall a pleasant time composing music with her great-grandmother.

**Key: A**

**CCLS: RL.7.3:**

Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 69%**

14207080\_2

**11**

In line 41, the narrator compares the musical notes to “flickerings of flame from the candle” to show that the sounds are

- A** strong and powerful
- B** gentle and delicate
- C** quick and changeable
- D** sad and brief

**Key: B**

**CCLS: L.7.4.a:**

Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 60%**

14207076\_3

**12**

The author’s repetition of Allegra taking “a medium-size breath” in lines 30 through 31, 40, and 49 helps to create a feeling of

- A** agitation before performing
- B** release in finally performing
- C** controlled focus during her performance
- D** patience in persisting through her performance

**Key: C**

**CCLS: RL.7.4:**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 57%**

14207079\_1

**13**

Read these sentences from lines 62 and 63.

**I looked down at the scroll of my violin. It's like a seashell, as if there's such a story inside that you could never find out all of it.**

The simile suggests that Allegra

- A** appreciates her violin as full of possibility for the music she creates with it
- B** wishes she could unleash the secrets her violin hides from her
- C** relies on her violin for inspiration during performances
- D** respects her violin's beauty and craftsmanship

**Key: A**

**CCLS: RL.7.4:**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 45%**

14207075\_3

**14**

Which statement **best** expresses a theme of the story?

- A** Possessions can awaken pleasant memories.
- B** Focus and determination are essential for success.
- C** Imagination can inspire the emotion behind music.
- D** Family bonds require regular effort to remain strong.

**Key: C**

**CCLS: RL.7.2:**

Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 58%**

## Telling Plastic to ‘Bag It’

by Patricia Smith

with reporting by William Yardley of The New York Times

Two years ago, a dead gray whale washed ashore in Seattle’s Puget Sound. When scientists examined the contents of the whale’s stomach, they found more than 20 plastic bags.

5 “It was a gut-wrenching experience for me,” says Robb Krehbiel, 23, of Seattle, “Nothing that we use for a few minutes should ever end up in the belly of a whale. That’s just so wrong.”

For the last seven months, Krehbiel has been working on a campaign to ban plastic grocery bags in Seattle. The ban passed in December and will go into effect July 1.

10 Seattle will join cities like San Francisco; San Jose, California; Portland, Oregon; Brownsville, Texas; and Westport, Connecticut, as well as the Outer Banks of North Carolina and several counties in Hawaii, that have already banned plastic grocery bags. And Washington, D.C., has begun charging a five-cent tax on plastic bags to discourage customers from using them.

15 Since 2009, 12 states have considered a variety of plastic-bag bans, according to The National Conference of State Legislatures. No statewide bans have passed. But the list of cities and counties with bag bans is growing.

Americans use between 70 billion and 100 billion plastic bags annually, with families taking home an average of 1,500 a year.

### Paper Vs. Plastic

20 Environmental groups say plastic bags, which are made from petroleum products, increase America’s dependence on oil and are a chief cause of litter. It takes about 12 million barrels of oil to make the plastic bags used in the U.S. annually. Most plastic bags eventually end up in landfills, where it can take hundreds of years for them to decompose. But first, or instead, many become litter.

25 “They’re hanging from trees and littering our beaches,” says Eric Goldstein of the National Resources Defense Council, an environmental group.

Plastic bags are also a major source of pollution in the ocean, where they can harm sea turtles and other ocean creatures that mistake the bags for food and eat them.

But Mark Daniels of Hilex Poly, a plastics maker based in South Carolina, calls the bans “badly misguided efforts.”

30 He says 90 percent of Americans already reuse plastic grocery bags—as garbage bags, to pack school lunches, and to store household items.

“Moving consumers away from plastic bags only pushes people to less environmentally friendly options, such as paper bags, which require more energy to produce and transport, and reusable bags, which are not recyclable,” Daniels says.

35 The plastic-bag manufacturing industry employs 10,000 Americans, and bans jeopardize those jobs, the industry says.

The U.S. is not the only place where bans have been instituted. Plastic bags are now banned in several nations including China, Italy, France, Bangladesh, Brazil, and Rwanda. Other countries tax plastic bags to discourage their use. In Ireland, for example, a  
40 15-cent-per-bag tax introduced in 2002 has reduced their use by more than 90 percent.

### **Plastic Bottle Bans**

Environmentalists in recent years have also targeted disposable plastic bottles for many of the same reasons they’ve set their sights on bags. The town of Concord, Massachusetts; several national parks, including the Grand Canyon; and a growing list of universities now ban the sale of disposable water bottles. A handful of big cities, like San Francisco and  
45 Seattle, ban the sale of plastic water bottles in government offices.

The plastic-bag bans already in effect have had a dramatic effect on litter, some officials say. In Brownsville, Texas, a plastic-bag ban in place for more than a year has eliminated more than 350,000 bags per day, according to former Mayor Pat Ahumada. He says the ban “transformed our city from littered and dirty to a much cleaner city.”

50 Under the Seattle ban, plastic bags will still be available for produce and bulk grocery items. The new law also imposes a five-cent fee on paper bags.

Three years ago, Seattle city officials approved a 20-cent-per-bag fee on paper and plastic bags. The idea was to create a financial incentive to reduce pollution; the fee was supposed to prompt people to bring reusable bags with them to shop.

55 But before the 2008 fee could take effect, the plastic-bag industry led a petition drive that forced the issue onto a citywide ballot. In August 2009, in the midst of the recession and after the industry spent \$1.4 million on the campaign, Seattle voters rejected the fee. It’s not yet clear if the plastic bag industry will mount a similar campaign this time.

If there’s a fight, Krehbiel, the Seattle activist, will be one of those arguing to keep the  
60 ban.

“It’s not going to be a silver bullet that solves all our environmental problems,” he says. “But my thinking is you do what you can, when you can, where you can.”

## Plastic Bags: By the Numbers

**1,500**

Average number of plastic shopping bags American families take home annually.

**12 million**

Barrels of oil it takes each year to make the plastic bags used in the U.S.

**10,000**

Number of U.S. jobs in the plastic-bag manufacturing industry.



132070077\_2

**43**

The Seattle activist's use of the phrase "gut-wrenching" in line 4 suggests that learning about the plastic bags in the whale's belly was

- A** physically demanding
- B** emotionally painful
- C** very informative
- D** extremely tense

**Key: B**

**CCLS: RI.7.4**

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 73%**

132070080\_4

**44**

Why does the author include the information about plastic bottles in lines 41 through 45?

- A** to show where the idea for the plastic-bag ban originated
- B** to illustrate the conflict between environmentalists and businesses
- C** to show how the government is concerned with litter in public places
- D** to illustrate a widespread concern with plastic waste in the environment

**Key: D**

**CCLS: RI.7.5:**

Analyze the structure an author uses to organize a text, including how the major sections contribute to the whole and to the development of the ideas.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 69%**

132070075\_2

**45**

In lines 52 through 58 of the article, the author explains events surrounding a citywide vote. Based on this information, readers can infer that

- A** Seattle voters were familiar with high fees
- B** economic concerns overrode concern for the environment
- C** Seattle city officials knew what the people really wanted
- D** leaders in the plastics industry were helpful in explaining a complex issue

**Key: B**

**CCLS: RI.7.1:**

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 58%**

132070073\_1

**46**

Which evidence from the article suggests that plastic-bag bans are effective?

- A** A city in Texas has eliminated thousands of bags per day.
- B** Officials in Seattle have passed a ban on bags.
- C** Many cities now ban the use of plastic bags.
- D** Many people reuse their plastic bags.

**Key: A**

**CCLS: RI.7.1:**

Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 50%**

132070081\_2

**47**

The author of the article balances different points of view on the issue of banning plastic bags by including

- A** information about plastic-bag bans in Europe and Asia
- B** arguments from environmentalists and businesses on plastic-bag bans
- C** data from scientists concerned with plastic bags in the environment
- D** quotes from people living in American cities where plastic bags are banned

**Key: B**

**CCLS: RI.7.6:**

Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author distinguishes his or her position from that of others.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 62%**

132070084\_3

**48**

Which statement is supported by sufficient evidence from the article?

- A** The petroleum industry is fighting plastic-bottle bans.
- B** A statewide ban on plastic bags is unlikely to happen.
- C** Paying a fee on plastic bags is unappealing to some people.
- D** Many Americans prefer paper or reusable bags to plastic bags.

**Key: C**

**CCLS: RI.7.8:**

Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient to support the claims.

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 51%**

**49**

The author **most likely** includes “Plastic Bags: By the Numbers” at the end of the article to

- A** introduce new facts about plastic bags into the argument
- B** compare figures about plastic-bag use across the country
- C** emphasize the figures about plastic bags mentioned in the article
- D** show that plastic-bag bans can cause factory closures and large-scale job loss

**Key: C**

**CCLS: RI.7.7:**

Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium’s portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).

**Percentage of Students Statewide Who Answered Correctly: 46%**

# Directions

307044P

Read this story. Then answer questions 54 and 55.

*In this adventure story set in 1751, the narrator, David Balfour, has survived a shipwreck and finds himself stranded on a small islet. In this excerpt, he makes several attempts to cross a body of water to reach the main island, which appears to be deserted.*

## Excerpt from *Kidnapped*

*by Robert Louis Stevenson*

As soon as the day began to break I put on my shoes and climbed a hill—the ruggedest scramble I ever undertook—falling, the whole way, between big blocks of granite, or leaping from one to another. When I got to the top the dawn was come. There was no sign of the brig, which must have lifted from the reef and sunk. The boat, too, was  
5 nowhere to be seen. There was never a sail upon the ocean; and in what I could see of the land was neither house nor man.

I was afraid to think what had befallen my shipmates, and afraid to look longer at so empty a scene. What with my wet clothes and weariness, and my belly that now began to ache with hunger, I had enough to trouble me without that. So I set off eastward along  
10 the south coast, hoping to find a house where I might warm myself, and perhaps get news of those I had lost. And at the worst, I considered the sun would soon rise and dry my clothes.

After a little, my way was stopped by a creek or inlet of the sea, which seemed to run pretty deep into the land; and as I had no means to get across, I must needs change my  
15 direction to go about the end of it. It was still the roughest kind of walking; indeed the whole, not only of Earraid, but of the neighbouring part of Mull (which they call the Ross) is nothing but a jumble of granite rocks with heather in among. At first the creek kept narrowing as I had looked to see; but presently to my surprise it began to widen out again. At this I scratched my head, but had still no notion of the truth: until at last I came to a  
20 rising ground, and it burst upon me all in a moment that I was cast upon a little barren isle, and cut off on every side by the salt seas.

Instead of the sun rising to dry me, it came on to rain, with a thick mist; so that my case was lamentable.

I stood in the rain, and shivered, and wondered what to do, till it occurred to me that  
25 perhaps the creek was fordable. Back I went to the narrowest point and waded in. But not three yards from shore, I plumped in head over ears; and if ever I was heard of more, it

was rather by God's grace than my own prudence.<sup>1</sup> I was no wetter (for that could hardly be), but I was all the colder for this mishap; and having lost another hope was the more unhappy.

30 And now, all at once, the yard<sup>2</sup> came in my head. What had carried me through the roost would surely serve me to cross this little quiet creek in safety. With that I set off, undaunted, across the top of the isle, to fetch and carry it back. It was a weary tramp in all ways, and if hope had not buoyed me up, I must have cast myself down and given up. Whether with the sea salt, or because I was growing fevered, I was distressed with thirst,  
35 and had to stop, as I went, and drink the peaty water out of the hags.<sup>3</sup>

I came to the bay at last, more dead than alive; and at the first glance, I thought the yard was something farther out than when I left it. In I went, for the third time, into the sea. The sand was smooth and firm, and shelved gradually down, so that I could wade out till the water was almost to my neck and the little waves splashed into my face. But at that  
40 depth my feet began to leave me, and I durst venture in no farther. As for the yard, I saw it bobbing very quietly some twenty feet beyond.

I had borne up well until this last disappointment; but at that I came ashore, and flung myself down upon the sands and wept.

The time I spent upon the island is still so horrible a thought to me, that I must pass  
45 it lightly over. In all the books I have read of people cast away, they had either their pockets full of tools, or a chest of things would be thrown upon the beach along with them, as if on purpose. My case was very different. I had nothing in my pockets but money and Alan's silver button; and being inland bred, I was as much short of knowledge as of means.

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<sup>1</sup> **prudence:** being wise in handling practical matters

<sup>2</sup> **yard:** a wooden pole used to support a square sail on a boat

<sup>3</sup> **hags:** a peat bog



In lines 1 through 21 of "Excerpt from *Kidnapped*," how does the setting contribute to the mood? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

In lines 1 through 21 of "Excerpt from *Kidnapped*", the setting contributes to the mood because the setting is mysterious which makes the mood more serious. For example, "There was never a sail upon the ocean; and of what I could see of the land there was neither house nor man" (5+6). The mood in that quote is mysterious but the setting of being abandoned adds to that feeling. In addition, to add to the mysterious and suspenseful feel, the author wrote, "I was afraid to think what had befallen my ship mates and afraid to look longer at so empty scene" (7+8). Therefore, the setting contributed to the mood.

### Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain how the setting contributes to the mood in lines 1 through 21 (*the setting is mysterious which makes the mood more serious*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*There was never a sail upon the ocean; and of what I could see of the land there was neither house nor man and I was afraid to think what had befallen my ship mates and afraid to look longer at so empty scene*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.



What do lines 22 through 29 in "Excerpt from *Kidnapped*" reveal about the narrator's character? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

lines 22 through 29 in "Excerpt from Kidnapped" divulge that the narrator is desperate. The narrator is desperate for various reasons. In the article it said "I stood there in the rain, and shivered, and wondered what to do." This quote shows the narrator is desperate because he has no notion of what he should do but just stand there waiting for something to happen. Another quote from the article to support why the narrator was desperate is "having lost another hope was the more unhappy!" This quote proves the narrator is desperate because all that happens to him is just bad luck nothing comes good to him.

**Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)**

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what lines 22 through 29 reveal about the narrator's character (*The narrator is desperate*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*I stood there in the rain, and shivered, and wondered what to do and having lost another hope was the more unhappy*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

## A Sticky Problem for Farmers

by Nathan Aaseng

5 Tired of wrestling with the rocky, stump-cluttered soil of New England, farmers in the early 19th century often followed rumors of better land to the midwestern United States. There, in states such as Illinois and Iowa, they found just what they were looking for: prairies full of rich, black dirt that promised to pump life into seeds as fast as they were planted.

Unfortunately, many settlers soon felt like thirsty sailors in the middle of the ocean—water everywhere but not a drop to drink. Rich soil surrounded them, but their equipment could not plow it. That was the problem a blacksmith named John Deere faced when he arrived in Grand Detour, Illinois, in 1836.

10 His Illinois neighbors had been desperate for a blacksmith ever since they had settled in Grand Detour. No sooner did Deere set foot in town than he found a line of farmers eager to offer him business. Two days after his arrival in Grand Detour, he was hard at work fixing broken equipment.

15 While working at his shop, Deere frequently heard complaints from farmers about the soil. Their early excitement about the richness of the soil and the ease with which a plow could break the sod had turned to frustration. The soil was too rich. Instead of falling away from the plow like sandy New England soil, it stuck. Farmers had to stop every few seconds to scrape the clumped dirt off their iron plowshares with large wooden paddles. They might as well have been plowing through a rocky field for all the progress they were  
20 making. Some farmers were so discouraged by the sticky soil that they left in search of new land; others were ready to join them.

Deere decided to look into the problem. From his previous work on plows, he knew that dirt was less likely to stick to highly polished metal. That thought was in the back of his mind when he visited a sawmill in 1837 and noticed a broken circular saw made of  
25 steel, a polished metal that was too expensive to be widely used for implements. Steel had never been used to make a plowshare.<sup>1</sup>

Deere took the broken saw blade home with him and began working on a better plow. He knew that polished steel was not the whole answer; the shape of the plow's bottom was also important.

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<sup>1</sup> Historians now believe that the first steel plowshare was made by John Lane in 1833. However, John Deere was the first to make steel plowshares commercially successful.

30 The plow Deere wanted to make would have to cut deeply into the soil at a sharp angle so that dirt would fall off, yet it could not put too much burden on the horses pulling it. After some experiments, Deere found the curved shape he needed and pounded the steel saw blade into that shape. He then built a plow, complete with oak handles, and brought it to the farm of his neighbor, Lewis Crandall.

35 While an anxious crowd of Grand Detour farmers watched, Crandall tried the new plow. He pronounced it a success. Not only did dirt fall away cleanly from the blade, but the plow also turned the soil more quickly than the old cast-iron plows.

Other farmers wanted one of Deere's "self-scouring" plows. The blacksmith could not meet the instant demand, however. For one thing, polished steel was hard to find. Deere  
40 could not count on a steady supply of broken saw blades to use as raw material. Steel was only available from England, and it was expensive to import. There was no such thing as mass production in the blacksmithing business; plows were made one at a time according to each customer's needs. Deere and his new partner in the business, Leonard Andrus, manufactured only 2 "self-scouring" plows in 1838 and 10 the following year.

45 Production gradually increased, however, as Deere imported greater quantities of expensive English steel. Forty handmade plows left his shop in 1840 and, after expanding his workshop to include a foundry in 1843, Deere's production rose to 400 plows a year.

Until then, Deere still considered himself a blacksmith—his plow was just one part of his craft. But after seeing that he could easily sell as many plows as he could make, even  
50 using costly English steel, the blacksmith decided to devote his time to manufacturing plows. In 1846 he found a Pittsburgh steel firm that could supply him with all the steel he needed for a lower price than what the English steel cost. The following year, he moved his business to Moline, Illinois, where the Mississippi River provided water power and transportation.

55 During the early years, Deere's sales strategy consisted of loading a wagon with plows and visiting farms until all his merchandise was sold. He rarely had to travel far. Producing plows before they were ordered was an innovative approach to sales. By 1857 the company, which he had reorganized with new partners under the name John Deere & Company, was making and selling 10,000 plows a year—nearly seven times as many as he  
60 had sold just seven years earlier.

A relentless perfectionist, Deere kept tinkering with his plows, trying to make them better. He came out with 10 new versions of his plow in a single year. While this slowed down his production ability, it ensured Deere a solid reputation among his customers. Deere plows became world famous in the 1870s when they outshone the competition in a  
65 demonstration in France. That same decade, the company built its first riding plow and designed the leaping deer as its trademark.



56

In "A Sticky Problem for Farmers," how do lines 14 through 21 contribute to the rest of the article? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

Lines 14 through 21 contribute to the rest of the article because they mainly talk about what the problem was for farmers and the problem was that the soil was stuck which made farmers stop and clean the dirt off. This problem also made farmers go in search for the new land. So ~~that~~ these lines do contribute to the passage because it presents the main problem in the story.

**Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)**

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain what lines 14 through 21 contribute to the rest of the article (*presents the main problem in the story*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*the soil was stuck which made farmers stop and clean the dirt off and made farmers go in search for the new land*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

## Lewis Latimer

*by Stephen Currie*

Though electric light was slow to catch on among the public, it was evident to scientists and inventors across America that a new age was dawning. Electricity, they realized, was the wave of the future.

### **Lewis Latimer**

5 One of the first Americans to recognize the potential of electricity was a black man named Lewis Latimer. Born in Massachusetts in 1848, Latimer served in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War. When the war was over, Latimer returned to Massachusetts and got a job with a law firm that specialized in patents and inventions. At first he worked as an office boy, delivering messages and doing other simple tasks that involved little responsibility. Assignments like these made some sense, given his youth and relative  
10 inexperience. It is also likely, however, that Latimer’s race kept him from being considered for positions that carried more authority—and a larger paycheck.

Latimer did not wish to remain an office assistant for long, though. He soon became intrigued by the work of the company’s draftsmen. To apply for a patent, inventors had to provide careful pictures that showed every detail of their inventions. Because most  
15 inventors did not have the skill to execute these pictures on their own, patent lawyers typically had expert draftsmen on staff to create the diagrams. Latimer resolved to learn everything he could about drafting. He studied drawing techniques at home and practiced them whenever he could. Before long, his bosses recognized his talent and promoted him to the post of draftsman. By 1875 he was the head draftsman for the firm.  
20 As a later newspaper report put it, Latimer had been “thrust upward by his singular talent and drive.”

Latimer’s drawing work brought him into contact with many inventors. The most famous of these was Alexander Graham Bell, best known as the inventor of the telephone. Latimer made several drawings which helped Bell claim the patents he sought. To draw  
25 these designs as accurately as possible, it was necessary for Latimer to learn as much as he could about Bell’s work. In the process Latimer became interested in the principles of electricity, principles which underlay much of what Bell was doing. As Latimer read more and more about electric power, he became convinced that this form of energy could help Americans in new and important ways.

## Patents

30 In the late 1870s Latimer began looking for a job that would allow him time to pursue  
his new interests in technology. He was eventually offered a position at a company called  
the United States Electric Lighting Corporation. The head of the company, Hiram Maxim,  
was already well known among scientists for his work with electric power. Though  
35 Thomas Edison had already patented the first truly effective electric light bulb, Maxim  
believed he could improve on Edison's design. In particular, Maxim thought he could  
increase the life span of the bulb. Toward that end, he hired the most intelligent and hard-  
working people he could find—including Latimer.

Latimer spent his first few months in Maxim's employ trying to improve the bulb's  
filament—the wirelike assembly inside the bulb that gives off the actual light. In 1881, just  
40 a year after joining Maxim's firm, Latimer and a colleague patented a new and more  
efficient way of making filaments, using what their application called “a continuous strip  
of carbon secured to metallic wires.” The new procedure resulted in better, cheaper light  
bulbs even than Edison had been able to produce. In the next months Latimer went on to  
patent several more inventions, each of which made light bulbs longer lasting and easier to  
45 manufacture—and each of which brought more money to the corporation. Maxim's  
confidence in Latimer had paid off.

Latimer did not spend all his time inventing. His work had made him an authority on  
electric lighting, and Maxim consequently gave him more and more responsibility. Maxim  
sent him to Philadelphia and other U.S. cities to oversee factory operations. Later, Latimer  
50 traveled to England to set up a new factory and to Montreal, Canada, to guide workers in  
installing electric lights in train stations. In Montreal he even learned some French to  
communicate with employees who spoke little or no English. “This was my mighty lesson,”  
he wrote years later. “My day was spent climbing telegraph poles and locating arc lamps  
on them with the assistance of my laborers who seemed much impressed with my effort to  
55 speak their native language.”



57

How did Lewis Latimer's decision in lines 16 and 17 lead to partnerships with other inventors? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

In lines 16 and 17 it states how Latimer wanted to learn more about drafting, and so he did. This caused others to look at him as a higher experienced worker. "Before long, his bosses recognized his talent and promoted him to the post of draftsman," line 18 and 19. "As a later newspaper report put it, Latimer had been "thrust upward by his singular talent and drive," line 20 and 21.

**Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)**

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain how Latimer's decision in lines 16 and 17 led to partnerships with other inventors (*caused others to look at him as a higher experienced worker*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*Before long, his bosses recognized his talent and promoted him to the post of draftsman and thrust upward by his singular talent and drive*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.



What impression of Lewis Latimer did the people who worked with him have? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

People that worked with Lewis Latimer got an impression that he wasn't as good as whites. Latimer was underestimated because of his race. He started as an office boy, delivering messages and doing other simple tasks. Later on, his bosses finally recognized him by his work and got promoted. When Hiram Maxim was looking for a team to improve Edison's lightbulb, he hired the most intelligent and hard-working people he could find, including Latimer. Latimer worked super hard improving Edison's lightbulb in so many ways. He is greatly recognized by his work but not by his race.

**Score Point 2 (out of 2 points)**

This response makes a valid inference from the text to explain an impression that the people who worked with Lewis Latimer had of him (*He is greatly recognized by his work but not by his race*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*He started as an office boy, delivering messages and doing other simple tasks and he hired the most intelligent and hard-working people he could find — including Latimer*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.



**Primary CCLS: RI.7.9:**

Analyze how two or more authors writing about the same topic shape their presentations of key information by emphasizing different evidence or advancing different interpretations of facts.

**Secondary CCLS: W.7.2, W.7.9, L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.3 and L.7.4**

**Statewide Average Points Earned: 2.25 out of 4**

**See Extended-Response (4-point) Holistic Rubric and the full-credit sample student response.**

59

Both Lewis Latimer and John Deere were determined to succeed. How were their paths to success similar? How were their paths to success different? Use details from **both** articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their paths to success were similar
- explain how their paths to success were different
- use details from **both** articles to support your response

Lewis Latimer and John Deere were both determined to succeed. John Deere was a blacksmith, who innovated the steel plow to fix the problem with Illinois soil. Lewis Latimer served in the U.S. Navy during the Civil War, and came to find the purpose of electricity. Their paths leading to success were both similar and different.

Lewis Latimer and John Deere both show similarities on their path to success. Both men innovated an idea. John Deere made the plow with finely polished metal and gave the bottom of it a sharp angle to grind through the soil. Lewis Latimer taught himself how to draw the diagrams of

inventions wanting to be patented. Both men worked very hard, and pleased many people.

John Deere and Lewis Latimer also show differences in their paths to success. John Deere had many years of Blacksmith experience prior to fixing the plow for Illinois farmers. He knew how to alter the plow so it would be more affective. On the other hand, Lewis had no background experience as being a draftsman. As being an office boy, Latimer taught himself how to draw the diagrams of inventions. John Deere knew what he was doing, not as Lewis Latimer taught himself. Both mens' success paths differ, but are also similar to one another. John Deere had blacksmith experience, while Lewis taught himself craftsmen skills. However, both men were innovative, determined, and set examples for other inventions and innovations.

#### Score Point 4 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose (*Lewis Latimer and John Deere were both determined to succeed and Their paths leading to success were both similar and different*). The response demonstrates insightful analysis of the texts (*Both men innovated an idea and John Deere knew what he was doing, not as Lewis Latimer taught himself*). The topic is developed with the sustained use of relevant, well-chosen details from the texts (*John Deere made the plow with finely polished metal and gave the bottom of it a sharp angle to grind through the soil; Latimer taught himself how to draw the diagrams of inventions wanting to be patented; had many years of Blacksmith experience prior to fixing the plow; being an office boy, Latimer taught himself how to draw the diagrams*). Clear organization is exhibited by the skillful use of appropriate and varied transitions (*Both, On the other hand, As being an office boy, However*). A formal style is established and maintained through the use of grade-appropriate language and domain-specific vocabulary (*it would be more affective, experience as being a craftsmen, innovative*). The concluding statement follows clearly from the topic and information presented (*both men were innovative, determined, and set examples for other inventions and innovations*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors.

## 2-Point Rubric—Short Response

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

- If the prompt requires two texts and the student only references one text, the response can be scored no higher than a 1.

\* Condition Code A is applied whenever a student who is present for a test session leaves an entire constructed-response question in that session completely blank (no response attempted).

**New York State Grade 6-8 Expository Writing Evaluation Rubric**

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

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