



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler



2017–2018
Grade 6

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INFORMATION ABOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	1
Introduction	1
General Introduction	1
Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)	1
Change in Test Design	1
What Is Included	1
Purpose and Uses	1
Item Format and Scoring Guidelines	2
English Language Arts Grade 6	3
PSSA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE 6	4
English Language Arts Test Directions for Reading Passages and Questions	4
Passage 1	6
Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question	8
Multiple-Choice Questions	10
Passage 2	12
Multiple-Choice Questions	13
Passage 3	16
Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt	20
Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline	24
English Language Arts Test Directions for Language Questions and Writing Prompt	38
Standalone Multiple-Choice Questions	39
Writer’s Checklist and Opinion Writing Prompt	43
Argumentative Scoring Guideline	47
English Language Arts—Sample Item Summary Data	57
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	59

INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

The Pennsylvania Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instructional programs aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS). These tools include Academic Standards, Assessment Anchor documents, assessment handbooks, and content-based item and scoring samplers. This Item and Scoring Sampler is a useful tool for Pennsylvania educators in preparing local instructional programs. It can also be useful in preparing students for the statewide assessment.

This Item and Scoring Sampler is available in Braille format. For more information regarding Braille, call (717) 901-2238.

Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)

This sampler contains examples of test questions designed to assess the Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The Mathematics, Reading, and Writing PSSA transitioned to PCS-based operational Mathematics and English Language Arts assessments starting with the spring 2015 PSSA administration.

The 2013 PCS-aligned Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content documents are posted on this portal:

- www.education.pa.gov [Hover over “K–12,” select “Assessment and Accountability,” and select “Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA).” Then select “Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content” on the right side of the screen.]

Change in Test Design

Beginning with tests taken in the 2017–2018 school year, the English Language Arts PCS-based PSSA will no longer include a mode-specific writing prompt. This Item and Scoring Sampler contains items representative of the tests administered during the 2016–2017 school year. The writing prompt in this sampler is provided as an instructional resource. The writing prompt and all resources for the writing prompt in this item sampler are for instructional purposes. The 2018 ELA PSSA test will not include a mode-specific writing prompt.

What Is Included

This sampler contains stimulus reading passages with test questions, standalone questions, and mode-specific writing prompts that have been written to align to the Assessment Anchors that are based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The passages represent some of the genres approved by PDE to appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. The test questions provide an idea of the types of items that may appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. Each sample test question has been through a rigorous review process to ensure alignment with the Assessment Anchors.

Purpose and Uses

The items in this sampler may be used as examples for creating assessment items at the classroom level, and they may also be copied and used as part of a local instructional program.¹ Classroom teachers may find it beneficial to have students respond to the test questions in this sampler. Educators can then use the sampler as a guide to score the responses either independently or together with colleagues within a school or district.

¹ The permission to copy and/or use these materials does not extend to commercial purposes.

Item Format and Scoring Guidelines

The 2016–2017 PCS-based PSSA has multiple types of test questions. For grade 6, the types of test questions are Multiple-Choice (MC) questions, Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR) questions, Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) prompts, and mode-specific Writing Prompts (WP).

Multiple Choice: Each of this type of test question has four answer choices. Some MC test questions are based on a stimulus reading passage, while other MC test questions are independent of a passage. Each correct response to a MC test question is worth one point.

Evidence-Based Selected Response: Each two-part EBSR question is designed to elicit an evidence-based response from a student who has read either a Literature or an Informational Text passage. In Part One, which is similar to a multiple-choice question, the student analyzes a passage and chooses the best answer from four answer choices. In Part Two, the student utilizes evidence from the passage to select one or more answers based on his or her response to Part One. Part Two is different from a multiple-choice question in that there may be more than four answer options and more than one correct answer. Each EBSR test question is worth either two or three points, and students can receive partial credit for providing a correct response to Part One or for providing one or more correct responses in Part Two.

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt: Unlike a writing prompt, the TDA prompt is a text-dependent analysis prompt based on a passage or passage set that each student has read during the test event. There are three response pages in the paper-and-pencil format and up to 5,000 characters in the online format. Both Literature and Informational Texts are addressed through this item type. Students must draw on basic writing skills while inferring and synthesizing information from the passage in order to develop a comprehensive, holistic essay response. The demand required of a student’s reading and writing skills in response to a TDA prompt coincides with the similar demands required for a student to be college and career ready. The TDA response is scored using a holistic scoring guideline on a 1–4-point scale.

Writing Prompt: Each of this type of test question includes an extended response space in which the student composes an answer based on a provided prompt. There are two response pages in the paper-and-pencil format and up to 3,000 characters in the online format. A writing prompt is based on a specific mode of writing and may ask the student to write an argumentative essay, an informative/explanatory essay, or a narrative essay. Each writing prompt is scored on a 1–4-point scale using a holistic, mode-specific scoring guideline. In this sampler, examples of student responses representing each score point can be combined with the mode-specific scoring guideline to form a practical scoring guide.

Non-Score Considerations: For TDA and WP items, responses can be designated as non-scorable (NS). While every effort is made to score each student response, a response may receive a NS designation if it falls into one of five categories:

Blank – Blank, entirely erased, entirely crossed out, or consists entirely of whitespace

Refusal – Refusal to respond to the task

Non-scorable – In a language other than English, incoherent, illegible, insufficient, unrelated to the passage (for TDAs), or consisting solely or almost solely of text copied from the passage (for TDAs)

Off Topic – Makes no reference to the item or passage but is not an intentional refusal

Copied – Consists of text copied from the item and/or test directions

Testing Time and Mode of Testing Delivery for the PCS-Based PSSA

The PSSA is delivered in traditional paper-and-pencil format as well as in an online format. The estimated time to respond to a test question is the same for both methods of test delivery. The following table shows the estimated response time for each item type.

During an official test administration, students are given as much additional time as is necessary to complete the test questions.


English Language Arts Item Type	MC	EBSR	TDA
Estimated Response Time (minutes)	1.5	3 to 5	45

English Language Arts Grade 6

This English Language Arts Sampler is composed of 3 passages, 5 passage-based multiple-choice questions, 1 evidence-based selected-response question, a text-dependent analysis prompt, 4 standalone multiple-choice questions, and a mode-specific writing prompt.

There are 3 passages in this booklet. The first passage is followed by a set of passage-based multiple-choice questions and an evidence-based selected-response question. The second passage is followed by a text-dependent analysis prompt. This booklet also contains 4 standalone multiple-choice questions and a mode-specific writing prompt.

Each question is accompanied by a chart that contains the Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content coding, answer key(s), depth of knowledge, and testing data. Each question is followed by a brief analysis or rationale. The text-dependent analysis prompt and the writing prompt are displayed with the item-specific scoring guidelines and examples of student responses with scores and annotations at each scoring level.

The PCS-based PSSA may be administered in paper-and-pencil format or online. As a result, this sampler includes samples of text-dependent analysis prompt responses and mode-specific writing prompt responses in both formats. A sample online response is noted by the symbol .

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR READING PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS**Directions:**

On the following pages are the Reading passages and questions.

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- First, read the passage carefully.
- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

Directions for Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions:

Some questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

- Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.
- Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.
- Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.
- Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.
- Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.

Directions for Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompts:

The English Language Arts TDA prompt will ask you to analyze the passage and use evidence from the passage to write an essay.

For the TDA Essay:

- Be sure to read the passage and the TDA prompt carefully.
- Review the Writer’s Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.
- You may look back at the passage to help you write your essay.
- Write your essay in the appropriate space in the answer booklet. If you use scratch paper to write a rough-draft essay, be sure to transfer your final essay to the answer booklet.
- Be sure to check that your essay contains evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Be sure to check your essay for errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

PASSAGE 1

The following passages feature Abraham Lincoln. Read the first passage and answer questions 1–3. Then, read the second passage and answer questions 4–6.

Frontier Boy

by Edison McIntyre

Abraham Lincoln’s rise to the national political stage and the presidency did not come easily. He lost his first election, finishing eighth among 13 candidates. While Lincoln was no stranger to setbacks, he possessed a determination to succeed that was born in the rugged country where he grew up.

Abraham’s parents, Thomas Lincoln and Nancy Hanks, married in 1806. The couple settled near Elizabethtown, Kentucky, where their daughter, Sarah, was born in 1807. The Lincolns owned a series of farms, but Thomas grew barely enough food to feed his family. He made additional money as a skilled carpenter. He built a one-room log cabin near Hodgenville, where a son, Abraham, was born on February 12, 1809.

In later years, Abe remembered little about Kentucky. He was just seven years old when his family decided to leave and move farther west, across the Ohio River to Indiana. The Lincolns settled in what is now Spencer County, a few miles north of the river. Although Indiana became a state that year, 1816, the land along the Ohio was still dense forest, with few trails or settlements. The Lincolns spent their first winter there in a rough lean-to shelter while Thomas built a cabin.

Tall and strong for his age, Abe took up an ax to cut down the trees surrounding their new home and hitched up a team to plow the fields he had helped clear. He hauled water to the house from the nearest spring, a mile away.

The farm began to yield good crops, and as other settlers came to the area, Thomas found more work as a carpenter. But 1818 was a cruel year. A disease called “milk-sick” struck the community. It killed Nancy, who was just 34 years old.

Death at such an early age was common in the 1800s. Abe’s younger brother, Thomas, died when he was only a baby; his sister, Sarah, died at age 20 while bearing her first child. When Abe was 10, he was nearly killed after being kicked in the head by a horse. He learned quickly the hard lessons of life.

Abe also learned to value knowledge. Thomas and Nancy had little formal education. In fact, Thomas could hardly sign his name, while Nancy signed with an X. Still, Nancy had great respect for learning. She loved to tell stories to Sarah and Abe, and before the family left Kentucky, she sent Abe to a small school near their home.

About a year after Nancy died, Thomas went back to Elizabethtown. When he returned to Indiana, he brought with him his second wife. Sarah Bush Johnston Lincoln was a widow with three children. Warm and loving, she treated Abe and Sarah as though they were her own children.

Abe's stepmother encouraged him to learn all he could. Over the years, he received fewer than 12 months of schooling, but he learned to read, write, and do a bit of arithmetic. An eager student, Abe often walked several miles to borrow books. He read *Aesop's Fables*, *Robinson Crusoe*, *Pilgrim's Progress*, a biography of George Washington—anything he could find. He enjoyed listening to his father and other adults talk late into the night about farming, politics, and life.

By age 14, Abe was old enough to work away from the Lincoln farm when his father could spare him. Over the next few years, he held several jobs—clearing land, splitting logs for fence rails, running a ferry. He gave most of his earnings to his father. When he was 19, he helped guide a flatboat loaded with produce down the Mississippi River to New Orleans. It was his first trip to a big city.

In 1830, the Lincoln family moved west again, this time to Illinois. Soon afterward, Abe left home and began working in a general store in New Salem, a small settlement near Springfield. He enjoyed roughhousing with his new friends, and he loved to wrestle, but he also spent many hours reading. He joined a debating group and, in 1831, voted for the first time.

The following year, Lincoln decided to run for the Illinois legislature. His campaign was severely delayed, though, when he volunteered for the state militia during the Black Hawk War. After serving for three months, he returned to New Salem in late July. He campaigned hard but lost the election. Still, he got 277 of the 300 votes in his town, and that encouraged him to run again. In 1834, with overwhelming support from New Salem, Lincoln won a seat in the state legislature, an office he would win three more times. After he was admitted to the bar in 1836, politics and the practice of law would pave a new path for this hardworking frontier boy.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question

1. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

In “Frontier Boy,” which claim about Lincoln does the author make?

- A. Lincoln had a determination to succeed.
- B. Lincoln used his physical appearance to gain popularity.
- C. Lincoln achieved more in his life than his parents.
- D. Lincoln understood the importance of educating others.

Part Two

Which sentences from the passage support the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “Abe’s stepmother encouraged him to learn all he could.”
- B. “Over the next few years, he held several jobs—clearing land, splitting logs for fence rails, running a ferry.”
- C. “In fact, Thomas could hardly sign his name, while Nancy signed with an X.”
- D. “In 1830, the Lincoln family moved west again, this time to Illinois.”
- E. “Still, he got 277 of the 300 votes in his town, and that encouraged him to run again.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.1
Answer Key: Part One	A
Answer Key: Part Two	B, E
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.25
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to identify a claim about Lincoln that the author makes in the passage and to select two sentences from the passage that support the claim.</p> <p>Part One: Option A is the correct answer since the passage gives details of how Lincoln always tried to do his best and did not give up. Option B is not correct since there is no textual evidence to support this claim. Options C and D are not correct; even though the reader may draw these inferences, the author does not put forth these claims in the passage.</p> <p>Part Two: Options B and E are correct since they support the claim in Part One that Lincoln was determined to succeed. Options A, C, and D do not support the correct answer in Part One. Option A is not correct since it focuses on how Lincoln's stepmother supported his education. Option C is not correct since it focuses on the education of Lincoln's parents. Option D is not correct since it focuses on the fact that Lincoln moved a lot in his childhood.</p>

Multiple-Choice Questions

2. Which sentence from “Frontier Boy” **best** conveys the central idea of the passage?
- A. “Abraham Lincoln’s rise to the national political stage and the presidency did not come easily.”
 - B. “An eager student, Abe often walked several miles to borrow books.”
 - C. “He enjoyed listening to his father and other adults talk late into the night . . .”
 - D. “His campaign was severely delayed, though, when he volunteered for the state militia . . .”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-K.1.1.2
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	80% (correct answer)
p-value B	9%
p-value C	4%
p-value D	7%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the sentence that best conveys the central idea of the passage. Option A is the correct answer since it represents the central idea that is supported by the entire passage; Lincoln had challenges throughout his life that he was able to overcome with hard work and dedication. Option B is not correct since it only shows how as a child Lincoln worked hard to succeed, and it does not connect his childhood to his adulthood and to his rise to national politics; it is merely a detail from his childhood, not a central idea. Option C is not correct since it merely identifies an event from Lincoln’s childhood. Option D is not correct since it is a detail that supports how Lincoln’s rise in politics was temporarily stalled.

3. Which statement **best** describes the author’s purpose in “Frontier Boy”?
- A. to explain to the reader how Lincoln was educated
 - B. to persuade the reader that Lincoln was a great leader
 - C. to entertain the reader with stories of Lincoln’s childhood
 - D. to inform the reader about Lincoln’s life before the presidency

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.1
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	5%
p-value B	5%
p-value C	9%
p-value D	81% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the author’s purpose in the passage. Option D is the correct answer since the intent of the passage is to inform the reader about Lincoln’s life. Options A, B, and C are not correct since they misidentify the author’s purpose. Option A is not correct; even though the passage does include information about how Lincoln was educated, that is not the author’s purpose. Option B is not correct; the passage does not include information about how Lincoln was a great leader. Option C is not correct; the passage does not seek to entertain but to inform the reader.

PASSAGE 2

Abraham Lincoln wrote this autobiography for Jesse Fell, a long-time Illinois Republican friend who was a native of Pennsylvania. Fell used his influence to get the piece incorporated in an article appearing in a Pennsylvania newspaper on February 11, 1860. Lincoln enclosed the autobiography in a letter to Fell that said, “There is not much of it, for the reason, I suppose, that there is not much of me.”

Abraham Lincoln Autobiography

December 20, 1859

I was born Feb. 12, 1809, in Hardin County, Kentucky. My parents were both born in Virginia, of undistinguished families—second families, perhaps I should say. My mother, who died in my tenth year, was of a family of the name of Hanks, some of whom now reside in Adams, and others in Macon County, Illinois. My paternal grandfather, Abraham Lincoln, emigrated from Rockingham County, Virginia, to Kentucky, about 1781 or 2. His ancestors, who were Quakers, went to Virginia from Berks County, Pennsylvania.

My father, at the death of his father, was but six years of age; and he grew up, literally without education. He removed from Kentucky to what is now Spencer County, Indiana, in my eighth year. We reached our new home about the time the State came into the Union. It was a wild region, with many bears and other wild animals, still in the woods. There I grew up. There were some schools, so called; but no qualification was ever required of a teacher beyond “readin, writin, and cipherin” to the Rule of Three. If a straggler supposed to understand Latin happened to sojourn in the neighborhood, he was looked upon as a wizard. There was absolutely nothing to excite ambition for education. Of course when I came of age I did not know much. Still somehow, I could read, write, and cipher to the Rule of Three; but that was all. I have not been to school since. The little advance I now have upon this store of education, I have picked up from time to time under the pressure of necessity.

I was raised to farm work, which I continued till I was twenty-two. At twenty-one I came to Illinois, and passed the first year in Macon County. Then I got to New-Salem (at that time in Sangamon, now in Menard County), where I remained a year as a sort of Clerk in a store. Then came the Black-Hawk war; and I was elected a Captain of Volunteers—a success which gave me more pleasure than any I have had since. I went the campaign, was elated, ran for the Legislature the same year (1832) and was beaten—the only time I ever have been beaten by the people. The next, and three succeeding biennial elections, I was elected to the Legislature. I was not a candidate afterwards. During this Legislative period I had studied law, and removed to Springfield to practice it. In 1846 I was once elected to the lower House of Congress. Was not a candidate for re-election. From 1849 to 1854, both inclusive, practiced law more assiduously than ever before. Always a Whig in politics, and generally on the Whig electoral tickets, making active canvasses—I was losing interest in politics, when the repeal of the Missouri Compromise aroused me again. What I have done since then is pretty well known.

If any personal description of me is thought desirable, it may be said, I am, in height, six feet, four inches, nearly; lean in flesh, weighing on an average one hundred and eighty pounds; dark complexion, with coarse black hair, and grey eyes—no other marks or brands recollected.

Multiple-Choice Questions

4. Read the sentence from the text box that introduces “Abraham Lincoln Autobiography.”

“Lincoln enclosed the autobiography in a letter to Fell that said, ‘There is not much of it, for the reason, I suppose, that there is not much of me.’ ”

What does the repetition of the phrase “not much” **most** reveal about Lincoln?

- A. Lincoln’s simple education
- B. Lincoln’s humble personality
- C. Lincoln’s reluctance to write the piece
- D. Lincoln’s fear of disappointing a friend

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.2.1.3
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	27%
p-value B	50% (correct answer)
p-value C	14%
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to infer what the repetition of the phrase “not much” most reveals about Lincoln. Option B is the correct answer since his words indicate to the reader that he felt humble about his own accomplishments. Option A is not correct since Lincoln’s reference “not much of me” encompasses more than his education. Options C and D are not correct since they are not supported by textual evidence.

5. Which meaning of the word tickets is used in “Abraham Lincoln Autobiography”?
- A. lists of candidates for nominations
 - B. cards recording transactions
 - C. documents that serve as permits
 - D. certificates showing that fees have been paid

Item Information	
Alignment	B-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	65% (correct answer)
p-value B	12%
p-value C	15%
p-value D	8%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the meaning of the multimeaning word “tickets” by using context clues. Option A is the correct answer because “lists of candidates for nominations” is the appropriate meaning based on how the word is used in the passage. Options B, C, and D, although they are other correct meanings of the word, do not make sense in the given context.

6. Which sentence expresses how the focus of “Frontier Boy” differs from the focus of “Abraham Lincoln Autobiography”?
- A. “He lost his first election, finishing eighth among 13 candidates.”
 - B. “He learned quickly the hard lessons of life.”
 - C. “He gave most of his earnings to his father.”
 - D. “He joined a debating group and, in 1831, voted for the first time.”

Item Information	
Alignment	B-C.3.1.2
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	17%
p-value B	52% (correct answer)
p-value C	15%
p-value D	16%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to compare the presentation of events about Abraham Lincoln in both passages. Option B is the correct answer since the choice reflects the focus of the first passage: Lincoln had to overcome great personal challenges as a young person. Options A, C, and D are not correct since they focus more on the development of his professional life, which is discussed in both passages.

PASSAGE 3

Read the following folktale about the creation of a famous dessert. Then answer question 7.

Paranka's Dumplings

based on a Ukrainian Tale
by Nancy Hallas

In old Ukraine, before cooks collected their recipes in books, a young girl named Paranka worked alongside the old cook of a wealthy aristocrat's manor house, memorizing all of her delicious recipes. The old cook, whom everyone affectionately called Babka after her wonderful small cakes, loved Paranka dearly. The two spent many hours working together, passing the time with stories and riddles.

One day Paranka was making her favorite recipe, tasty fruit dumplings, called *varenyky* or *pyrohy*. Paranka laughed as she mixed the dumpling dough. Paranka formed the dough into small circles and spooned cherries into the center of each. She gently folded the half-moon pockets, then pinched them closed with her nimble fingers. As Paranka delicately boiled the dough to perfection, Babka told her how dumplings were brought to Europe from Asia long ago.

Summer days passed, and Babka, who was getting quite old, suddenly became ill and couldn't cook anymore.

Ivan, the butler, hoped Paranka would take over the running of the kitchen. But the next day the lady of the manor said, "Paranka, I'm afraid you are too young and inexperienced to cook for my husband and our important guests. I have hired a new head cook." Paranka's heart sank, but she did not complain.

That afternoon Olya came to take over the kitchen of the manor. She marched about and bragged of the fine houses she had cooked for all over Europe. Soon she was shrieking orders. Olya laughed scornfully as Paranka and the others scurried about trying to stay out of her way. It wasn't long until the older servants had had enough of her nasty ways.

One morning the aristocrat sent word that he would like fruit dumplings for dessert. Paranka begged Olya, "Please let me make them—it is my favorite recipe."

"No," barked Olya. "You are only a girl. You know nothing of dumplings."

Paranka watched in horror as Olya jabbed the dough, threw on more flour, and whacked it with a rolling pin. Paranka shook her head and thought, dumplings must be made tenderly and gently.

Olya poked cherries into the dumplings and clumsily pinched them shut with her thick fingers. When the dumplings had overboiled in the too-salty water, she put them on a cold, wet, drippy plate and sent them into the dining room.

The aristocrat bit into a dumpling and cried out in pain. "I've broken a tooth on a cherry pit!" The lady of the manor was furious.

"Take these back!" she ordered Ivan. "Send out the new cook. I wish to speak with her."

Olya rushed into the dining room.

The lady of the manor stared at her coldly and said, “These dumplings are terrible.”

Olya smiled like a snake. “It is that girl Paranka, my lady,” she hissed. “I told her to let me make the dumplings, but she wouldn’t listen. She is so useless—no help at all.”

“Paranka is young, and you must teach her,” said the lady, her tone softening, “but don’t let it happen again.”

Back in the kitchen, Olya laughed at her own cleverness. “Not a word from any of you,” she snapped at the servants, “or I’ll have Paranka sacked¹!”

Days passed, and whenever a meal was not pleasing to the lady, Olya blamed it on Paranka.

The day came when the gardener brought a basket of sweet, ripe, purple plums. As everyone made ready to serve the midday meal, Olya ordered Paranka to make plum dumplings for dessert.

“And if you tell anyone that you made them,” she threatened, “I’ll have you sent to live with the pigs.”

Paranka nodded and reached for a bowl.

“And, by the way,” said Olya, yawning, “I’m going to have a rest. So you’ll have to serve the soup and all of the courses, too.” Then Olya sneaked some sweets from the cupboard, which she always kept locked, and retired to her bedroom by the kitchen. Soon she was snoring heavily.

“That Olya!” steamed Paranka as she flew about the kitchen giving direction to the other servants. She ladled out the soup and served the bread rolls. She arranged the fish, meats, and *kovbasa* onto platters and the *holubtsi* and vegetables into bowls. Hurrying to make the dumplings, she raced to the flour bin. She threw open the lid and gasped. There was hardly any flour left! Lazy Olya had forgotten to order more to be ground. Paranka scraped the last of the flour from the bin and mixed her dough.

“There isn’t much, but hopefully the dumplings will work,” she told herself. While the dough rested, Paranka washed and pitted the plums. Just as she was about to start making dumplings, Ivan burst through the door.

“A most distinguished guest has arrived!” he announced, rushing into the kitchen. “He is to join the master’s table for dessert.” Ivan turned to Paranka. “This guest is very important. You must help our master make a good impression.”

“I’m making plum dumplings, but—” started Paranka.

“Ah, that is good!” interrupted Ivan. “They are the master’s favorite. Your dumplings would warm the heart of any aristocrat. Hurry! Work, Paranka, and prosperity could be ours!”

Ivan rushed out of the kitchen before Paranka could say another word.

“But there’s no flour to make more dumplings!” she wailed.

“What are you going to do?” asked the scullery maid.

Paranka shook her head. She paced the floor in front of the cooking fire and pondered her dilemma. The fire crackled gently, whispering to her.

Suddenly in the small, friendly flames Paranka saw an image of Babka, the beloved old cook.

“Oh, Babka!” Paranka cried. “Please help me.”

¹ sacked—dismissed from a job

The image smiled at Paranka. Then the flames flickered, and pictures began to emerge. The first showed the plums as they stood on the table. The second showed a white sheet on a clothesline flapping in the breeze. Then the image grew smoky and turned into a whirlpool of water, spinning round and round, until it dissolved into the flames and a puff of smoke.

Babka's image has given me a riddle to solve, thought Paranka. What could it mean?

Paranka quickly but gently rolled the dough onto the table. As she rolled, she grew calmer. She thought over the riddle she had seen in the fire: the plums, a bedsheet, and a rolling swirl of water. How could she make a dessert from a bedsheet? It was crazy! As if in a dream, she rolled the dough thinner and thinner. Could it possibly stretch to make enough? But when she looked, it was too thin to make proper dumplings. It was thin like a sheet.

"That's it!" exclaimed Paranka. She brushed the stretched dough with melted butter, then topped it with sliced plums and honey. Taking one edge, she rolled it over and over, as she would to make a poppy seed roll. She rolled it like a bedsheet into a whirlpool. Then she cut the roll into two long pieces and placed them in the hot oven to bake.

When Ivan returned to the kitchen, Paranka was serving warm slices of thick, flaky pastry filled with sweet plums onto plates. She sprinkled each slice with poppy seeds and a drizzle of buckwheat honey, then placed a generous dab of rich sour cream on the top.

The delicious smells soon woke Olya. She stumbled into the kitchen, rubbed her eyes, and yawned.

"These are not dumplings!" she scolded Paranka. "How dare you disobey me!" Olya grabbed the dessert from Paranka and prepared to toss it into the fire, but Ivan stopped her.

"Stop, I beg you, Olya," Ivan said. "While you were resting, a distinguished guest arrived. We have nothing else to serve him for dessert."

"Is that so?" Olya sneered. "If the lady doesn't like this strange dessert, tell her that Paranka made it. But if she does like it, be sure to tell her that I made it."

"As you wish," said Ivan, gritting his teeth. The servers took the dessert into the dining room. Soon Ivan returned.

"They like it!" he said. The servants cheered, but not Olya. She grumbled jealously.

"The master and the lady would like to have a word with the cook of the dessert," Ivan announced.

"That's me!" said Olya. She primped her hair and rushed into the dining room.

"Cook, it seems you have made a new dessert to celebrate our guest's visit," said the lady. "How did you make it?"

Olya, who didn't have a clue how Paranka had made the dessert, was quick to boast all the same. "I chose only the finest flour and the sweetest plums . . .," she began.

"It's delicious!" exclaimed the guest. He turned to his host. "I simply must have your cook. She must come to my manor house and make this wonderful dessert for all of my guests."

"Very well," commanded the aristocrat, not wanting to offend his guest. "She will go with you today." Olya, who was taken completely by surprise, was, for once, speechless.

Paranka, Ivan, and the other servants happily waved good-bye as Olya trundled away behind the guest's carriage, in a pig's cart filled with heaping baskets of ripe plums and squawking geese.

After the carriage had gone, the lady of the manor complained, "I am tired of replacing cooks just to have them taken away."

"My lady, may I suggest that you put Paranka in charge of the kitchen?" said Ivan. "She is young, but she is very capable." Desperate, the lady took the butler's advice and appointed Paranka head cook on a trial basis.

Olya went to the guest's fine manor house, but she didn't know how to make the rolled plum dessert and was eventually let go. The rolled pastry, however, traveled widely throughout central Europe. Eventually the artful cooks of Hungary and Austria made it into a grand dessert. World famous, it became known by the German name for whirlpool—strudel.

As for Paranka, she stayed on at the manor and became a great cook, and the aristocrat and his wife were pleased to find that she made very tasty fruit dumplings after all.

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

7. The passage “Paranka’s Dumplings” focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka’s and Olya’s different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Writer’s Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the prompt carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the prompt relates to the passage.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.
- I stayed focused on responding to the prompt.
- I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline

#7 Item Information

Alignment	E.1.1	Depth of Knowledge	3	Mean Score	1.86
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Assessment Anchor:

E06.E.1–Evidence-Based Analysis of Text

Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E06.E.1.1–Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s) • Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) • Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas • Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Skillful use of transitions to link ideas • Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s) • Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) • Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas • Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas • Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning

Score	Description
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s) • Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s) • Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas • Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose • Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas • Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s) • Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion • Minimal evidence of an organizational structure • Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s) • Few, if any, transitions to link ideas • Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) • Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points



7. The passage “Paranka’s Dumplings” focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka’s and Olya’s different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Throughout the story of “Paranka’s Dumplings,” there were different ways Paranka and Olya approached to make dumplings. Paranka took making dumplings seriously, and deep in the heart. Olya on the other hand could’ve cared less about the different tips to prepare dumplings, all she did was brag.

In the beginning, Paranka talks about how dumplings should be tender and gentle. I know this because it said that she gently folded the half moon pockets. Also, she delicately boiled the dough to perfection. Then, Olya thinks she knows everything about dumplings, and she totally screws up. She jabbed the dough and threw in more flour, and she overboiled the dumplings on a cold, wet, drippy plate.

In the middle of the story, Paranka got to make plum dumplings to serve to the guests. When she starts, she realizes there is no flour left to make another dumpling. Paranka panicks and goes to the fire when an image appears. She asks for help and solves this riddle. While Paranka was doing that, Olya was taking a nap and steals some snacks. This shows their different personalities and how much they care about their job.

In the end of the story, Paranka made a lovely dish the guests loved. Olya was frustrated that Paranka disobeyed Olya and didn’t make dumplings. Olya showed her jealousy and said it was her dish she made. After, the guests took her to their house to serve that meal to them, and later was fired. Happily, Paranka became head chef of the lovely house.

In conclusion, both Paranka and Olya take their jobs and preparing dumplings very differently. The story is telling you that if you aim nowhere that’s where you’ll go. Olya was being selfish and careless and she got fired. Paranka was strong, and caring and became head chef.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong, and the response follows the passage chronologically with an effective introduction and conclusion. Thorough analysis of the text demonstrates an understanding of the implicit and explicit meanings of the text and effectively addresses the significance of the cooks’ different approaches to preparing dumplings (*Paranka took making dumplings seriously . . . Olya on the other hand could’ve cared less . . . all she did was brag, Olya thinks she knows everything about dumplings, and she totally screws up, This shows their different personalities and how much they care about their job, Olya was frustrated, Olya showed her jealousy, Olya was being selfish, Paranka was strong*). Substantial, accurate, and direct references to the text (*gently folded the half moon pockets, Paranka panicks . . . She asks for help . . . Olya was taking a nap*) are interwoven with the analysis and support the student’s claims and ideas. Varied transitions (*When she starts, In the end of the story, Happily*) skillfully link ideas as they are developed. Precise language and domain-specific vocabulary help to effectively explain the student’s analysis of the significance of the differences between the two approaches. Although there are a few errors present in sentence structure and spelling, they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points

7. The passage "Paranka's Dumplings" focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka's and Olya's different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the passage, Paranka and Olya have different approaches when preparing dumpling. While Paranka takes her time, Olya is very harsh and careless. Paranka's dumplings taste better because she takes her time and cares about making them.

When Paranka creates dumplings, she works slowly, but wastes no time. Paranka boils dumplings that taste delicious because kneads and folds the dough delicately. An example from the passage reads, "Paranka formed the dough into small circles and spooned cherries into the center of each. She gently folded the halfmoon pockets, then pinched them closed with her nimble fingers. As Paranka delicately boiled the dough to perfection..."

GO ON 

The girl makes her dumpling caringly because she wants to please the people who are going to eat them.

On the otherhand, Olya makes her dumplings in a cruel way. In the passage it says, "Olya poked cherries into the dumplings and clumsily pinched them shut with her thick fingers.

When the dumplings had overboiled in the too-salty water, she put them on a cold, wet, drippy plate and sent them into the dining room." A few sentences later the passage expresses that a lady broke her tooth on a cherry pit. Olya lies and says that Paranka made the dumplings so that she could keep her job and not have to take the blame. This information shows the reader that Olya is a selfish and careless person. She did not care that she was serving an overcooked, sloppy dumpling. All she cared about was completing the

GO ON 

task so that she could get paid.

When Olya got in trouble she blamed it on her competitor, Paranka, in order to get the girl out of her way. Olya did everything in a way to only help herself.

The significance of Paranka and Olya's dumplings is to explain to the reader good and bad character traits and where they will lead you in the future. For example, Olya got fired while Paranka became a head chef. The ways that Paranka and Olya make their dumpling reflects on their character traits and flaws.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong, and the response has an effective introduction and conclusion focused on the significance of the different approaches of the cooks to preparing dumplings. The implications of these different approaches are addressed with thorough analysis (*Paranka takes her time, Olya is very harsh and careless, Paranka . . . wastes no time, The girl makes her dumpling carefully because she wants to please the people who are going to eat them, Olya makes her dumplings in a cruel way, Olya lies . . . so that she could keep her job, Olya is a selfish and careless person*) of implicit and explicit meanings of the text. Substantial, accurate, and direct references to the text (*kneads and folds the dough delicately, Olya . . . clumsily pinched them shut, dumplings had overboiled*) combine with the analysis to support the claims made about the differences between the two cooks. Precise language and domain-specific vocabulary from the text effectively clarify the student's explanations (*overcooked, sloppy dumpling, This information shows, competitor, good and bad character traits*). The use of transitions to link ideas is skillful (*When Paranka creates dumplings, On the otherhand*). Few errors are present in this response, and they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points



7. The passage “Paranka’s Dumplings” focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka’s and Olya’s different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

When an ill cook dies in an aristocrat’s manor, they call up a new cook to take over. Were they using their heads? I don’t think so. They ignored the dead cook’s daughter, Paranka, who makes the best dumplings around. They tell young Paranka that she is too inexperienced. Paranka is a gentle, tender, and delicate woman, unlike the new head cook, Olya. Olya is nasty to all the servants and brags about how good she is. Paranka and Olya have a different approach to preparing dumplings.

Just like Paranka’s personality, she makes dumplings with love and delicacy. Paranka has a personal connection to dumplings. When her mom was still alive, she used to make dumplings with her all the time. Dumplings are Paranka’s specialty and has a fun time making and preparing them. Paranka gently pinches close the dough with her nimble fingers. She also carefully forms the dough into small circles. Paranka takes her time and doesn’t rush when she has to make shapes with the floppy dough. She takes her time the most when she folds the dough into half moon pocket shapes. Then, Paranka delicately boils the dough to perfection. Right before she serves the dumplings to the people, she tenderly spoons out cherries on top. Paranka has gotten mistreated and should be the head cook.

Olya is the complete opposite of Paranka. She makes her dumplings roughly and carelessly. Olya doesn’t care about how well she makes her food, just how much credit she gets. She shouldn’t be head cook, because she jabs the dough roughly. Olya also throws flour on top without measuring. Instead of flattening it gently like Paranka, she whacks it with a rolling pin. Olya clumsily pinches shut the dough with her thick fingers. Olya also doesn’t care when she overboils the dough in way too salty water. She thinks putting it on a cold, wet, drippy plate will make it better. To top it off, she then jabs and pokes cherries in the dumpling. When she presented it to her master, she barely snuck out of getting blames for breaking the master’s tooth with a cherry pit.

Paranka becomes head cook in the end. Olya is sent to another aristocrat’s kitchen where she later gets fired. Dishonesty gets paid off in the end.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. There is an appropriate organizational structure with an effective introduction. Although the conclusion is abrupt, holistically the organization is adequate and focus is maintained on the task of analyzing the significance of the different approaches of the two cooks. Clear analysis (*Paranka is a gentle, tender, and delicate woman . . . Olya is nasty to all the servants and brags, Paranka has a personal connection to dumplings, has a fun time making and preparing them, Olya is the complete opposite . . . roughly and carelessly, Olya doesn’t care about how well she makes her food, just how much credit she gets*) is used to support the writer’s claims. There are sufficient, accurate text references (*When her mom was still alive . . . make dumplings with her all the time, Paranka gently pinches close the dough . . . she tenderly spoons out cherries on top, Olya also throws flour on top . . . snuck out of getting blames for breaking the master’s tooth with a cherry pit*) that explain and support the analysis. Precise language is used appropriately (*personal connection*), and transitions link ideas. Few errors are present in this response, and they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points

7. The passage "Paranka's Dumplings" focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka's and Olya's different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

In the passage "Paranka's Dumplings"
There are two different cooks with
different styles, working in the same
kitchen. Paranka cares about her food
and Olya does not care about her
food. In the next paragraph I will
explain the style Paranka uses
in cooking.

Paranka is graceful and calm
in the kitchen. She make delectable
food and pleases the aristocrats. In the
passage it says "She gently folded
the half-moon pocket, then pinched
them closed with her nimble
fingers. "This tells the reader
that Paranka is prideful in her
work and only wants to serve
the best. It also says in the

GO ON 

passage "Paranka shook her head and thought, dumplings must be made tenderly and gently." This proves that Paranka cares about her ending product. That was Parankas cooking style.

Olyas cooking style is careless and disgraceful. Olya only wanted to take credit for Parankas brilliant work. The reader can infer that Olya is careless because of what it says in the passage. In the passage it says "Olya jabbed the dough, threw on more flour, and whacked it with a rolling pin." Also Olya bossed the servants around and they didn't appreciate that. That was Olyas cooking style.

As you can see Paranka cared about her wonderful and



enjoyable food. Also you can see that Olya was crude and careless. Those are some significant differences between the cooks cooking styles.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. There is an appropriate organizational structure that supports the focus of analyzing the significance of Paranka's and Olya's different approaches to preparing dumplings, and the response has an adequate introduction and conclusion. Clear analysis of the explicit and implicit meanings of the text is present throughout the response (*Paranka cares, Olya does not care, Paranka is graceful and calm, Paranka is prideful in her work and only wants to serve the best, cares about her ending product, Olyas cooking style is careless and disgraceful, wanted to take credit for Parankas brilliant work, Olya is careless because . . .*). Sufficient, accurate, and direct references to the text (*she make delectible food and pleases the aristocrats, gently folded the half-moon pocket, thought, dumplings must be made tenderly, Olya jabbed the dough, Olya bossed the servants around*) support these ideas. There is an appropriate use of language to better explain the different approaches (*reader can infer, wonderful and enjoyable, didn't appreciate*). Some errors are present in this response (*make for made*) but they seldom interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points



7. The passage “Paranka’s Dumplings” focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka’s and Olya’s different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

The passage “Paranka’s Dumplings” has two cooks that cook dumplings with different styles. Paranka is more gentle and delicate when she cooks dumplings, where as Olya cooks dumplings more rough and clumsily. As it says in the passage, “Paranka formed the dough into small circles and spooned cherries into the center of each.” But in the passage, “Olya jabbed the dough, threw on more flour, and whacked it with a rolling pin.” It also says that Paranka, “gently folded the half-moon pockets, then pinched them closed with her nimble fingers.” On the other hand, “Olya poked cherries into the dumplings and clumsily pinched them shut with her thick fingers.” And don’t forget how “Paranka delicately boiled the dough to perfection” shows how delicate Paranka really is in the story. In the story Olya, “When the dumplings had overboiled in too salty water, she put them on a cold wet drippy plate, and sent them into the dining room.” These two cooks really have different cooking styles when it comes to dumplings. Olya is harsh, and brash cooking her dumplings, but Paranka is gentle, and delicate when cooking her dumplings. The two cooks have completely different styles cooking dumplings.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak with a simplistic introduction and conclusion. There is weak analysis analyzing the differences of their approaches (*Paranka is more gentle and delicate, Olya cooks dumplings more rough and clumsily, shows how delicate Paranka really is, Olya is harsh, and brash, Paranka is gentle, and delicate*). These ideas are supported with quoted text references (“*Olya jabbed the dough . . . whacked it with a rolling pin*,” “*Paranka delicately boiled the dough to perfection*”) that contain some details from the text; however, there is no analysis that clearly explains the significance of Paranka’s and Olya’s different approaches to preparing dumplings. Transitions are used between ideas (*But in the passage, On the other hand, And don’t forget*) but inconsistently serve to link them. Few errors are present, and they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points

7. The passage "Paranka's Dumplings" focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka's and Olya's different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Paranka's approach to preparing dumplings is making them very gently with her hands, in the book it said "Paranka gently folded the half-moon packets, then pinched and closed them with her nimble fingers." The book also said "Paranka shook her head and thought, dumplings should be made tenderly and gently."

O

Olya's approach to preparing dumplings is making the dumplings carelessly without concern. The book said on page 48, "Olya jabbed the dough threw on more flour, and whacked it with a rolling pin." The book also said on page 48, "Olya poked cherries into the dumplings and clumsily pinched them shut with her thick fingers. When the dumplings had overboiled in the too-salty water, she put them on a cold, wet, drippy plate."

These were the approaches of Olya and Paranka making dumplings, Paranka makes them tenderly and gently and Olya makes them roughly.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak and does little to support the development of ideas. The response has no introduction and a simple conclusion. Weak analysis identifies the two cooks' techniques (*Olya's approach to preparing dumplings is making the dumplings carelessly without concern, Paranka makes them tenderly and gently and Olya makes them roughly*) but does not adequately explain the significance of these differences. Direct quotes provide references to the text, but they lack explanation. Transition use is inconsistent, and there is an overreliance on the phrase "The book said" throughout the response. Few errors are present in this response, and they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point



7. The passage “Paranka’s Dumplings” focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka’s and Olya’s different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Olya really didn’t know how to make dumplings. According to the text it say “Olya poke cherries into the dumplings and clumsily pinched them shut with her thick fingers. When the dumplings had overboiled in the too-salty water, she put them on a cold, wet drippy plate and sent them in to the dining room. The aristocrat bit into the dumpling and cried out pain. “I’ve broken a tooth on a cherry pit!” The lady of the manor was furious.

Paranka made good dumplings. Even though Olya said Paranka is to young and knows nothing about dumpling. Plus Paranka is a great cook but Olya tells Paranka to making dumplings so Olya can get credit for something that she didn’t even make.

This response minimally addresses parts of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is minimal, and the response has no introduction or conclusion. There is insufficient reference to the main ideas of the text. Most of the first paragraph is a direct quote, and the only attempt at analysis (*Olya really didn’t know how to make dumplings*) does not address the significance of their different approaches. There is an additional attempt at analysis in the second paragraph (*Olya tells Paranka to making dumplings so Olya can get credit for something that she didn’t even make*), but it does not go beyond a literal interpretation of the text. Few transitions (*Plus*) are used and they do little to link ideas. A few errors are present in sentence formation and usage (*According to the text it say, dumpling for dumplings*), and they sometimes interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point

7. The passage “Paranka’s Dumplings” focuses on two cooks with different styles who work in the same kitchen. Write an essay analyzing the significance of Paranka’s and Olya’s different approaches to preparing dumplings. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

Paranka and Olya's approaches to making dumplings are a lot different. Olya is an old woman who has been cooking for years. And Paranka is a young woman who just started cooking. People say Paranka's dumplings were good even great. But people say Olya's dumplings are not so good. Olya's dumplings aren't good because she is old and forgets stuff. Paranka's dumplings are good because she is young and has good taste.

This response minimally addresses parts of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. A minimal organizational structure is evident; the response has a simple introduction, insufficient development, and no conclusion. There are two insufficient attempts at analysis in the response. The first draws a minor inference (*Olya's dumplings aren't good because she is old and forgets stuff*), but there are insufficient text references to support this idea. The second piece of analysis (*Paranka's dumplings are good because she is young and has good taste*) is speculative and not supported by the text. Errors are present in usage (*women* for *woman*), spelling (*arn't*), and grammar (*people say Olya's dumplings Not so good*) that at times interfere with meaning.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR LANGUAGE QUESTIONS AND WRITING PROMPT

Directions:

On the following pages are the Language questions and the Writing Prompt.

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Each question will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

Directions for the Writing Prompt:

- Review the Writer’s Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.
- Read the writing prompt carefully.
- Write your response in the appropriate space in the answer booklet.

STANDALONE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

8. Read the sentence.

For my research paper, I studied the giant sculptures on exhibit at the museum.

Which change would correct a spelling mistake in the sentence?

- A. Change research to reserch.
- B. Change giant to giante.
- C. Change sculptures to sculpters.
- D. Change exhibit to exhibit.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.2.2
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	5%
p-value B	1%
p-value C	8%
p-value D	86% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which change in the given sentence would correct a spelling mistake. Option D is the correct answer because the word “exhibit” should be changed to “exhibit.” Options A, B, and C are not correct since these words are spelled correctly in the given sentence.

9. Read the paragraph.

(1) Plants, just like animals, need certain things to stay alive. (2) Water is one thing that is needed to stay alive by both plants and animals. (3) If a plant does not have water, it will start to look droopy, and its leaves will dry up and eventually fall off the stems. (4) If the plant goes without water for too long, it will die. (5) Plants need other things too, such as air and light. (6) Most plants, but not all, also need soil. (7) Those that do not need soil can get the nutrients, or food, that they need in other ways instead.

Which revision that combines sentences 1 and 2 into one sentence **best** improves the style of the paragraph?

- A. Plants and certain animals are the same in that they need water to stay alive.
- B. By plants and animals, water is needed by both to stay alive.
- C. Water, by both plants and animals, is needed to stay alive.
- D. Plants, just like animals, need water to stay alive.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.1
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	17%
p-value B	15%
p-value C	13%
p-value D	55% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which revision of sentences 1 and 2 would best improve the style of the paragraph. Option D is the correct answer because it provides the most concise revision and provides variety to the sentence structure of the paragraph. Option A is not correct since it is wordy. Option B is not correct since it uses the passive voice, and the paragraph establishes the use of active voice; option B is also awkward and uses nonstandard syntax by placing the prepositional phrase first in the sentence. Option C is incorrect since it uses the passive voice, and the paragraph establishes the use of active voice; option C is also awkward in style.

10. Read the paragraph.

(1) Some people think bananas, which are available at many grocery stores, make good desserts. (2) They are healthier than many other sweet foods. (3) Many people believe, that sugary desserts should be avoided. (4) Eating fruits like bananas may be a great way to enjoy a healthy dessert.

Which revision should be made to the paragraph?

- A. Remove the comma after stores in sentence 1.
- B. Add a comma after healthier in sentence 2.
- C. Remove the comma after believe in sentence 3.
- D. Add a comma after fruits in sentence 4.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.2.1
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	13%
p-value B	6%
p-value C	62% (correct answer)
p-value D	19%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to choose the punctuation revision that should be made to the given paragraph. Option C is the correct answer because the comma after “believe” is not needed. Option A is correct since the comma after “stores” is needed to set off the nonrestrictive phrase “which are available at many grocery stores.” Option B is not correct since there is no comma needed after “healthier.” Option D is not correct since there is no comma needed after “fruits.”

11. Read the paragraph.

(1) Monarch butterflies, like many other animals, migrate south for the winter. (2) Butterfly lovers flocks to Michoacán, Mexico, every year to see the millions of monarchs that spend the winter there. (3) These monarchs hatched somewhere in the north the previous spring, and because monarchs have a short lifespan, no single monarch lives long enough to make the return trip. (4) That task is left to their offspring, who somehow find their way north.

Which change should be made to the paragraph to correct the error in agreement?

- A. Change migrate to migrates in sentence 1.
- B. Change flocks to flock in sentence 2.
- C. Change lives to live in sentence 3.
- D. Change find to finds in sentence 4.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.1.8
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	63% (correct answer)
p-value C	8%
p-value D	17%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which revision should be made to the given paragraph to correct the error in agreement. Option B is the correct answer because “flocks” should be changed to “flock” to show subject-verb agreement in sentence 2. Option A is not correct since sentence 1 already shows subject-verb agreement between “butterflies” and “migrate.” Option C is not correct since sentence 3 already shows subject-verb agreement between “monarch” and “lives.” Option D is not correct since sentence 4 already shows subject-verb agreement between “offspring” and “find.”

Change in Test Design

Beginning with tests taken in the 2017–2018 school year, the English Language Arts PCS-based PSSA will no longer include a mode-specific writing prompt. This Item and Scoring Sampler contains items representative of the tests administered during the 2016–2017 school year. The writing prompt in this sampler is provided as an instructional resource. The writing prompt and all resources for the writing prompt in this item sampler are for instructional purposes. The 2018 ELA PSSA test will not include a mode-specific writing prompt.

WRITER'S CHECKLIST AND OPINION WRITING PROMPT

12.

Some people prefer to study for a test in a quiet place with few or no people. Others prefer to study in a noisy place with many people and sounds. Think about the best conditions for studying for an important test. Consider the location, noise level, time of day, presence of others, or anything else.

Write an argumentative essay for your teacher supporting your claim about which conditions are best for studying for a test and why they are better than other conditions. Be sure to use reasons and evidence to support your argument.

Writer's Checklist for the Argumentative Writing Prompt

PLAN before you write

- Make sure you understand what the prompt is asking you to do.
- Think about your task and your audience.
- Think about the topic and the claim you want to support for that topic.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- State your claim about the topic.
- Support your claim with reasons and evidence.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.
- Use transitions to connect your ideas.

PROOFREAD after you write

- I stayed focused on the topic.
- I used reasons and evidence to support my claim.
- I corrected any errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

Directions: On the following pages is the Argumentative Writing Prompt.

12.

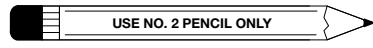
Some people prefer to study for a test in a quiet place with few or no people. Others prefer to study in a noisy place with many people and sounds. Think about the best conditions for studying for an important test. Consider the location, noise level, time of day, presence of others, or anything else.

Write an argumentative essay for your teacher supporting your claim about which conditions are best for studying for a test and why they are better than other conditions. Be sure to use reasons and evidence to support your argument.

Go to the next page to begin writing your response.

12.

**Argumentative Writing Prompt
Final Copy**



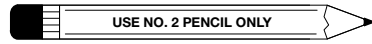
Lined writing area consisting of 25 horizontal lines for student response.

If you need additional space, please continue on the next page.



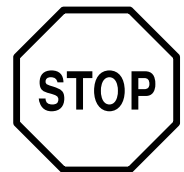
12.

**Argumentative Writing Prompt (cont.)
Final Copy**



Lined writing area for the student's response.

After you have checked your work, close your answer booklet and test booklet so your teacher will know you are finished.



Argumentative Scoring Guideline

#12 Item Information

Alignment	C.1.1	Depth of Knowledge	3	Mean Score	2.25
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Assessment Anchor:

E06.C.1 – Text Types and Purposes

Specific Eligible Content addressed by this item:

E06.C.1.1 – Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.

Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sharp, distinct claim made convincing through a thoughtful and substantiated argument with evident awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Effective organizational strategies and structures that logically support reasons and evidence • Substantial, specific, and relevant content that demonstrates a clear understanding of the purpose • Thorough elaboration that includes a clear position that is consistently supported with precise and relevant evidence • Effective transitions that connect and clarify ideas and concepts • Established and consistently maintained formal style with effective control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety • Consistent control of sentence formation • Few errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Clear claim made convincing through a credible and substantiated argument with general awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Adequate organizational strategies and structures that support reasons and evidence • Adequate and relevant content that demonstrates an understanding of the purpose • Sufficient elaboration that includes a clear position that is supported with relevant evidence • Appropriate transitions that connect and clarify ideas and concepts • Established and maintained formal style with appropriate control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety • Adequate control of sentence formation • Some errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning

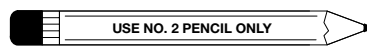
Score	Description
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Claim may lack a credible and/or substantiated argument; limited awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Inadequate organizational strategies and structures that ineffectively support reasons and evidence • Inadequate, vague content that demonstrates a weak understanding of the purpose • Insufficient elaboration that includes an underdeveloped position supported with little relevant evidence • Inconsistent transitions that somewhat connect ideas and concepts • Inconsistently maintained formal style with limited control of language, domain-specific vocabulary, stylistic techniques, and sentence variety • Inconsistent control of sentence formation • Errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimal evidence of a claim that lacks a credible and/or substantiated argument with little awareness of task, purpose, and audience • Minimal organizational strategies and structures • Minimal content that demonstrates little or no understanding of the purpose • Undeveloped position with little support; may be a bare list • Minimal transitions that may or may not connect ideas and concepts • Ineffective formal style with little control of language • Minimal control of sentence formation • Many errors may be present in grammar, usage, spelling, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

STUDENT RESPONSE**Response Score: 4 points****12.**

Some people prefer to study for a test in a quiet place with few or no people. Others prefer to study in a noisy place with many people and sounds. Think about the best conditions for studying for an important test. Consider the location, noise level, time of day, presence of others, or anything else.

Write an argumentative essay for your teacher supporting your claim about which conditions are best for studying for a test and why they are better than other conditions. Be sure to use reasons and evidence to support your argument.

12.

Argumentative Writing Prompt
Final Copy

Studying for a test in a noisy, crowded room is a Bad idea. Whenever and wherever I study, I make sure that I am comfortable with the noise level, the time of day, and the presence of others. Each of those could easily cause you distress, distract you, and give you an "F" on an important test.

First off, I check the noise level of my location before I study. Sometimes, if there are voices around you, that could cause you to want to talk. Another example is, if you hear a strange noise, you could become distracted by it, and want to find out where it is coming from.

It may not seem like it, but another distraction while studying is the time of day. If you are trying to study in the morning, you would have just woken up. You might not be fully awake, and might not process all the information. If you choose to study in the middle of the day, you will want to go outside and play, or go into your basement and play Xbox. There is also a problem with studying at night. If you chose to procrastinate, and study after dinner, you may start to get tired. Another thing, is you may want to watch your favorite show that you can't miss at 7:00 pm.

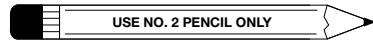
To me, the most distracting thing that can happen while you are studying, is having people around you. If they are talking, you may want to join in and share your opinion. Or, whatever they are doing may be distracting. From coughing, to making

If you need additional space, please continue on the next page.

GO ON 

12.

Argumentative Writing Prompt (cont.)
Final Copy



weird and annoying noises, you never know what will bother you. Most tempting of all, you may be distracted when kids are playing around you. Whether it is board games, card games, or outdoor games, you may want to watch or join in.

As you can see, it is smart to be studying in an environment that is quiet and deserted. Also, be sure that you are studying at the appropriate time of day, to eliminate all distractions.

Blank lined writing area for the student response.

This response provides a sharp, distinct claim (*Studying for a test in a noisy, crowded room is a Bad idea*) that is made convincing through a thoughtful and substantiated argument with evident awareness of task, purpose, and audience. The organizational strategy is effective, and ideas are presented in a logical order. There is substantial relevant content; support for the position is thoroughly elaborated (*If you are trying to study in the morning, you would have just woken up. You might not be fully awake, and might not process all the information. If you choose to study in the middle of the day, you will want to . . .*) with precise and relevant evidence. Transitions (*It may not seem like it, Most tempting of all*) effectively connect ideas. Sentences are varied (*From coughing, to making weird and annoying noises, you never know what will bother you*), and sentence formation is consistently controlled. Language is used effectively (*might not process all the information, If you chose to procrastinate*). The few errors present in this response do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points



15.

Some people prefer to study for a test in a quiet place with few or no people. Others prefer to study in a noisy place with many people and sounds. Think about the best conditions for studying for an important test. Consider the location, noise level, time of day, presence of others, or anything else.

Write an argumentative essay for your teacher supporting your claim about which conditions are best for studying for a test and why they are better than other conditions. Be sure to use reasons and evidence to support your argument.

I think it is better to study in a quiet place with few people. I think it is better because you would be more focused. Also, you would get done quicker. Finally, you would get more information into your head.

First, you would be more focused. There would be nobody to talk to you. Also, you would be less likely to get side tracked. There would also be nobody that would take the paper or packet you are studying from. that is why you would be more focused in a quiet place.

Secondly, you would get done quicker. Nobody would be there to talk to you. Next, nobody would be there to make sure you don't finished studying. Thirdly, nobody would try to distract you so they can copy your notes. That is why you would get done quicker in a place with no people.

Lastly, you would get more information into your head. You would be reading your notes instead of playing with your friends. It would be more quiet so you could study more. Finally, none of your friends would be there to give false information. That is why you would get more information into your head in a quiet place with few people.

There are many reasons why it is better to study in a quiet place with few people. First, you would be more focused. Secondly, you would get done quicker. Lastly, you would get more information into your head. In conclusion, you would do better on a test of you study in a quiet place with few people.

This response provides a clear claim (*I think it is better to study in a quiet place with few people*) that is made convincing through a credible and substantiated argument with general awareness of task, purpose, and audience. The organizational structure supports the reasons and evidence. There is sufficient elaboration that supports the claim with relevant evidence (*Also, you would be less likely to get side tracked. There would also be nobody that would take the paper or packet you are studying from*) that is supported with well-chosen, detailed examples. A formal style is maintained and there is appropriate control of language and domain-specific vocabulary (*distract, false information, focused*). Sentence formation is adequately controlled and errors present seldom interfere with meaning.

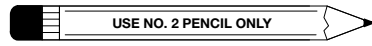
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STUDENT RESPONSE**Response Score: 2 points****12.**

Some people prefer to study for a test in a quiet place with few or no people. Others prefer to study in a noisy place with many people and sounds. Think about the best conditions for studying for an important test. Consider the location, noise level, time of day, presence of others, or anything else.

Write an argumentative essay for your teacher supporting your claim about which conditions are best for studying for a test and why they are better than other conditions. Be sure to use reasons and evidence to support your argument.

12.

Argumentative Writing Prompt
Final Copy

The best conclusion to study for a test is a quiet room. A quiet room is better in many ways. One is that you won't Get distracted. If you are in a nosie room you can be distracted easily. Also if you are in a nosie room people can hovering over you looking at what you are doing. Another is you can consirtrate on what you are doing, so you can get done faster. On the other hand if you are studing in a nosie room someone could say a word that reminds you of a answer. Have you ever had someone say a word that you wrote down by mistake? If you have, it won't happen if you are in a quiet room. Also if you know the answer and someone blurts something out you can forget what you where going to write witch could mean you got it rong. And that is why a Quiet room is the best place to study.

This response has a claim (*The best condushon to study for a test is a quiet room*) that lacks a substantiated argument and demonstrates limited awareness of task, purpose, and audience. The organizational structure is inadequate; there is little order to the ideas presented and both the introduction and conclusion only serve to provide the student's claim. Content is inadequate as ideas are underdeveloped and occasionally vague (*One is that you won't Get distracted. If you are in a nosie room you can be distracted easily*). Errors present in grammar, usage (*people can hovering over you*), and spelling (*condushon, nosie, studing*), at times, interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point



15.

Some people prefer to study for a test in a quiet place with few or no people. Others prefer to study in a noisy place with many people and sounds. Think about the best conditions for studying for an important test. Consider the location, noise level, time of day, presence of others, or anything else.

Write an argumentative essay for your teacher supporting your claim about which conditions are best for studying for a test and why they are better than other conditions. Be sure to use reasons and evidence to support your argument.

I think that a quiet place is better cause if your in a loud place it's distracting and you will fail if you talk. And if you are done you can read or do nothing. Back to the quiet thing the most quietest place is a library.

This response has a claim (*I think that a quiet place is better cause . . .*), but it lacks a credible and substantiated argument demonstrating little awareness of task (*And if you are done you can read or do nothing. Back to the quiet thing . . .*), purpose, or audience. There is minimal evidence of an organizational strategy. The position is underdeveloped with minimal content (*cause if your in a loud place it's distracting and you will fail if you talk*) to support it. The response lacks an effective formal style (*Back to the quiet thing*). Errors present (*the most quietest palce*) at times interfere with meaning.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—SAMPLE ITEM SUMMARY DATA

MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D
1	B-C.3.1.1	Part One: A Part Two: B, E	3	Mean Score: 1.25			
2	B-K.1.1.2	A	3	80%	9%	4%	7%
3	B-C.2.1.1	D	3	5%	5%	9%	81%
4	B-C.2.1.3	B	2	27%	50%	14%	9%
5	B-V.4.1.1	A	2	65%	12%	15%	8%
6	B-C.3.1.2	B	3	17%	52%	15%	16%
8	D.1.2.2	D	2	5%	1%	8%	86%
9	D.2.1.1	D	2	17%	15%	13%	55%
10	D.1.2.1	C	2	13%	6%	62%	19%
11	D.1.1.8	B	2	12%	63%	8%	17%

TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS AND WRITING PROMPT

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
7	E.1.1	4	3	1.86
12	C.1.1	4	3	2.25

ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PSSA Grade 6 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler

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