



# *New York State Testing Program*

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## **Educator Guide to the 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests**

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## **A Note for the 2021 English Language Arts Tests**

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As the school year progresses, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) and the Board of Regents continue to make our primary focus the physical and mental health, safety, and well-being of the children and adults in our schools. We continue to be mindful of the many uncertainties faced statewide and nationally, and we will continuously monitor the situation and provide updated guidance, as the situation requires.

This will include NYSED and the Board of Regents closely monitoring the feasibility and fairness of administering the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts (ELA) and Mathematics Tests this spring. At this time, no final decision regarding the 2021 Grades 3–8 Mathematics Tests has been made. Keeping this in mind, we are sharing the information in this guide as a means to prepare should it be deemed feasible to proceed with the Spring 2021 test administrations in person in schools throughout the State.

Adjustments to the 2021 Grades 3–8 Mathematics Tests have been made to facilitate student completion of these assessments, in the event we are able to proceed with the administration. For 2021 only, these adjustments include reduction in the total number of multiple-choice test questions for each grade level by the removal of the embedded field test questions.

# 2021 English Language Arts Tests

## New York State Educators Involvement in Test Development

While teachers have always been included the Grades 3–8 Test Development Process, since 2016 NYSED has expanded the number of opportunities for New York State educators to become more involved. New York State educators provide the critical input necessary to ensure that the tests are fair, valid, and appropriate for students through their participation in many test development activities.

This process includes the review and approval of passages, the development of items for those passages, the construction of field and operational test forms, rangefinding (setting scores for field test constructed responses), final approval of test forms prior to administration, and the development of scoring material. NYSED remains committed to improving the quality of the State's assessments and the experiences that students have taking these tests. For more information on opportunities to participate in the test development process, please visit the [Teacher Participation Opportunities website](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/teacher/home) (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/teacher/home>).:

### Option for Schools to Administer the English Language Arts Tests on Computer

Beginning in 2017, schools have had the option to administer the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests on computer or paper. More information about this option is available at the NYSED computer-based testing (CBT) [Support](https://cbtsupport.nysed.gov/) website (<https://cbtsupport.nysed.gov/>).

### Reduction in the Number of Test Sessions

In June 2017, the Board of Regents decided to reduce the number of days of student testing on the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics Tests from three sessions for each test to two. This change took effect beginning with the tests that were administered in 2018. In addition to reducing the number of sessions, the Board's decision also reduced scoring time for teachers.

As a result of the change to a two-session test design, panels of New York State educators from across the State were brought together to engage in a standards review process. These panels of educators established new performance standards for each grade level. They followed a standardized, research-based process to discuss expectations for students in each performance level, reviewed the actual test questions, and made recommendations on the knowledge and skills required of students at each grade level. These recommendations form the basis for the performance standards that are applied to individual student tests to make proficiency level determinations from 2018 onward.

### Guidance on Constructed-Response Questions

Teachers have reported that many students have been writing long responses that go well beyond the task required by the prompt. To provide greater clarity as to the amount of writing that is expected, **Appendix A** provides examples of exemplary student responses to 2016 and 2017 English Language Arts Test questions that received full credit. Additional examples can be referenced in the previously released editions of the English Language Arts Test Materials, which can be found on the [EngageNY website](https://www.engageny.org/3-8) (<https://www.engageny.org/3-8>).

To provide greater clarity as to the amount of writing that is expected, examples of exemplary student responses can be referenced in the previously released editions of the English Language Arts Test Materials, which can be found on the [EngageNY website](https://www.engageny.org/3-8) (<https://www.engageny.org/3-8>).

This document provides specific details about the 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests and the standards that they measure.

# Learning Standards for English Language Arts

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The New York State P–12 Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy define general, cross-disciplinary literacy expectations that must be met for students (Standards) and characteristics of instruction (“Note on range and content”). The standards are organized into four overlapping strands: Reading, Writing, Language, and Speaking and Listening. In each of these strands, the shifts are borne out in the specific fluency, comprehension, analytic, and communication expectations stated in the standards. The Learning Standards present an integrated model of literacy in which standards mutually inform one another and progress fluidly across grades. A successful integration of the standards will provide students with the fluency, comprehension, analytic, and communication skills necessary to be on track for college and career readiness.

As detailed in the “Note on range and content” (found alongside the Grade K–5 Anchor Standards), teaching and learning have certain distinct characteristics. The characteristics, detailed below by strand, further articulate what NYS means by the instructional “Shifts” demanded by these standards. The information below is meant to provide the context and expectations to enable student success and inform teacher practice.

## Reading

### Grades 3–5

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students:

- must read widely and deeply from among a broad range of high-quality, increasingly challenging literary and informational texts. Through extensive reading of stories, dramas, poems, and myths from diverse cultures and different time periods, students gain literary and cultural knowledge as well as familiarity with various text structures and elements (Shift 1: Balancing Informational & Literary Text; Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 3: Staircase of Complexity).

By reading texts in history/social studies, science, and other disciplines, students:

- build a foundation of knowledge in these fields that will also give them the background to be better readers in all content areas. Students can only gain this foundation when the curriculum is intentionally and coherently structured to develop rich content knowledge within and across grades. Students also acquire the habits of reading independently and closely, which are essential to their future success (Shift 1: Balancing Informational & Literary Text; Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary).

### Grades 6–8

To become college and career ready, students must grapple with works of exceptional craft and thought whose range extends across genres, cultures, and centuries. Such works offer insights into the human condition and serve as models for students’ own thinking and writing. Along with high-quality contemporary works, these texts should be chosen from among influential U.S. documents, the classics of American literature, and the timeless works from a diverse range of authors. Through wide and deep reading of literature and nonfiction of steadily increasing sophistication, students gain:

- a reservoir of literary and cultural knowledge, references, and images (Shift 1: Balancing Informational & Literary Text; Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 3: Staircase of Complexity; Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary); and
- the ability to evaluate intricate arguments (Shift 1: Balancing Informational & Literary Text; Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 5: Writing from Sources).

## **Writing**

### **Grades 3–5**

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students need to:

- learn to use writing as a way of offering and supporting opinions, demonstrating an understanding of the subjects they are studying, and conveying real and imagined experiences and events (Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 5: Writing from Sources);
- learn to appreciate that a key purpose of writing is to communicate clearly to an external, sometimes unfamiliar audience, and begin to adapt the form and content of their writing to accomplish a particular task and purpose (Shift 4: Text-based Answers; Shift 5: Writing from Sources); and
- develop the capacity to build knowledge on a subject through research projects and to respond analytically to literary and informational sources (Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines; Shift 5: Writing from Sources).

### **Grades 6–8**

For students, writing is a key means of asserting and defending claims, showing what they know about a subject, and conveying what they have experienced, imagined, thought, and felt. To become college- and career-ready writers, students:

- must take the task, purpose, and audience into careful consideration, choosing words, information structures, and formats deliberately (Shift 5: Writing from Sources);
- need to know how to combine elements of different kinds of writing—for example, to use narrative strategies within arguments and explanations within narratives—to produce complex and nuanced writing (Shift 4: Text-based Answers; Shift 5: Writing from Sources);
- need to be able to use technology strategically when creating, refining, and collaborating on writing;
- have to become adept at gathering information, evaluating sources, citing material accurately, and reporting findings from their research and analysis of sources in a clear and cogent manner (Shift 4: Text-based Answers; Shift 5: Writing from Sources); and
- must have the flexibility, concentration, and fluency to produce high-quality, first-draft text under a tight deadline, as well as the capacity to revisit and make improvements to a piece of writing over multiple drafts when circumstances encourage or require it (Shift 4: Text-based Answers; Shift 5: Writing from Sources).

To meet these goals students must devote significant time and effort to writing, producing numerous pieces over short and extended time frames throughout the year.



## **Language**

### **Grades 3–5**

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students:

- must gain control over many conventions of standard English grammar, usage, and mechanics, as well as learn other ways to use language to convey meaning effectively;
- must also be able to determine or clarify the meaning of grade-appropriate words encountered through listening, reading, and media use (Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary); and
- come to appreciate that words have non-literal meanings, shadings of meaning, and relationships to other words, and expand their vocabulary in the course of studying content (Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary).

### **Grades 6–8**

To become college and career ready, students:

- must have firm control over the conventions of standard English;
- must come to appreciate that language is at least as much a matter of craft as of rules and be able to choose words, syntax, and punctuation to express themselves and achieve particular functions and rhetorical effects;
- must also have extensive vocabularies built through reading and study, enabling them to comprehend complex texts and engage in purposeful writing about and conversations around content (Shift 1: Balancing Informational & Literary Text; Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines);
- need to become skilled in determining or clarifying the meaning of words and phrases they encounter, choosing flexibly from an array of strategies to aid them (Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary); and
- must learn to see an individual word as part of a network of other words—words, for example, that have similar denotations but different connotations (Shift 6: Academic Vocabulary).

Placing Language Standards in their own strand should not be taken as an indication that skills related to conventions, effective language use, and vocabulary are unimportant to reading, writing, speaking, and listening; indeed, they are inseparable from such contexts.

## **Speaking and Listening**

### **Grades 3–5**

To build a foundation for college and career readiness, students:

- must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner. To be productive members of these conversations requires that students contribute accurate, relevant information (Shift 4: Text-based Answers);
- respond to and develop what others have said; and
- make comparisons and contrasts, analyzing and synthesizing a multitude of ideas in various domains (Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines).

## Grades 6–8

To become college and career ready, students:

- must have ample opportunities to take part in a variety of rich, structured conversations—as part of a whole class, in small groups, and with a partner—built around important content in various domains (Shift 2: Knowledge in the Disciplines); and
- must be able to contribute appropriately to these conversations, to make comparisons and contrasts, and to analyze and synthesize a multitude of ideas in accordance with the standards of evidence appropriate to a particular discipline. Whatever their intended major or career, high school graduates will depend heavily on their ability to listen attentively to others so that they will be able to build on others’ meritorious ideas while expressing their own ideas clearly and persuasively (Shift 4: Text-based Answers).

For more information about [Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy](https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-p-12-common-core-learning-standards-for-english-language-arts-and-literacy), please refer to the [EngageNY website](https://www.engageny.org).

<https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-p-12-common-core-learning-standards-for-english-language-arts-and-literacy>.

# Assessing the Learning Standards for English Language Arts

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The 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests will focus entirely on the Learning Standards for English Language Arts & Literacy for each grade.

## Reading, Writing, and Language

The 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests will assess Reading, Writing, and Language Standards using multiple-choice, short-response, and extended-response questions. All questions will be based on close reading of informational and literary texts, including paired texts. All texts will be drawn from authentic, grade-level works that are worthwhile to read. The length of the texts on the 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests will typically be:

Length of Texts	
Grade 3	500–600 words
Grade 4	600–700 words
Grade 5	700–800 words
Grade 6	750–850 words
Grade 7	800–900 words
Grade 8	900–1000 words

Please see pages 8–10 for further information about authentic texts and text selection.

Reading and Language Standards will be assessed using multiple-choice questions. Short-response (2-point) questions will primarily assess reading, but will also require writing and command of language. Extended-response (4-point) questions will primarily assess Writing from Sources, whereby student responses will be rated on the degree to which they can communicate a clear and coherent analysis of one or two texts.

## Speaking and Listening

While Speaking and Listening Standards will **NOT** be assessed on the State test, they remain two of the most important components of college and career readiness and critical building blocks in students' ability to read and write at grade level. Speaking and Listening Standards provide the dialogic building blocks that directly support students in acquiring the necessary skills and knowledge to *Read to Learn*.

In Grades 3–5, Speaking and Listening Standards (practiced daily in evidence-based conversations about text) create habits, models, and developmental supports for students so that they are prepared to write from sources, strategically and correctly citing evidence from text to make strong arguments.

In Grades 6–8, Speaking and Listening Standards (practiced daily in evidence-based conversations about text) add to the foundation built in the early grades' instruction by strengthening and evolving habits, models, and developmental supports for students so that they are prepared to write from sources.

Only through rigorous, structured classroom discourse will students gain valuable experiences interrogating texts they need in order to meet the rigors of what is required in writing. It is imperative that teachers continue to instruct and assess the Speaking and Listening Standards in the classroom. Instructional resources and examples of formative assessments for the Speaking and Listening Standards can be found in the [Grades 3–8 curriculum materials](https://www.engageny.org) (<https://www.engageny.org>).

**For more information about [Curriculum Materials](https://www.engageny.org), please refer to the EngageNY website.** (<http://engageny.org/common-core-curriculum/>).

## What It Means to Use Authentic Texts

State testing programs use either commissioned or authentic texts, or a combination thereof, as passages for questions. Commissioned texts are authored by test developers or writers and are developed specifically for use in standardized tests. In contrast, authentic texts are published works that are typically encountered by students in daily life, such as in magazines, books, or newspapers. The Grades 3-8 English Language Arts Tests will use only authentic texts which have been reviewed and approved by NYS educators.

Many of the *Reading for Information* Standards require students to recognize how authors support their opinions, to understand the author’s point of view and purpose, and to be able to discern well-supported arguments from those that are not. In order to assess these standards on the test, we must include text passages that express opinions and theories with which not all readers may agree. Students must demonstrate their ability to determine point of view, purpose, and success of argumentation with supporting evidence in subjects that they will encounter both in other academic classes and in their daily lives.

Using authentic texts allows for the inclusion of works of literature that are worthy of reading outside an assessment context. The use of authentic, meaningful texts may mean that some texts are more emotionally charged or may use language outside of a student’s particular cultural experience, including intentional and unintentional use of incorrect grammar and spelling. While all assessments will include appropriate literary passages and poems, please be aware that authentic texts will likely prompt real responses—perhaps even strong disagreement— among our students. Students need to be prepared to respond accordingly while engaging with the test. The alternative would be to exclude many authors and texts that are capable of supporting the rigorous analysis called for by the Standards

For example, selections from Roald Dahl’s *The BFG* or Robert Coles’ *The Story of Ruby Bridges* may appear on tests even though the complete works from which they would be drawn include controversial ideas and language that some may find provocative. Additionally, selections from these authors may include writing that contains incorrect grammar and spelling. Both Dahl and Coles intentionally use incorrect grammar and spelling to develop characters, themes, and settings. However, both of these texts are foundational texts for the grade-band. While passages from these examples do not appear on this year’s test, passages drawn from similarly great works will be read in classrooms across the State, and some of them may end up on future tests.

The use of authentic, meaningful texts may also mean that some students have read texts included on the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests prior to administration. For the very reasons that texts were selected for use on the assessment, it is possible that teachers have selected the same texts for use in their classrooms or students may have read the books that passages were drawn from for their personal reading.

Additionally, the use of authentic passages also means that students may encounter passages drawn from works commonly taught at higher grades. Oftentimes, parts of larger, more complex works are perfectly suited for younger readers.

## Text Selection

During the test development process, NYS educators approve all passages for use on the NYS Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests. Selecting high-quality, grade-appropriate texts requires both objective text complexity metrics and educator judgement. For the 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests, both qualitative and quantitative measures are used to determine the complexity of the texts. Based on research and the guidance of nationally-recognized literacy experts<sup>1</sup>, the following ranges for quantitative measures were used to guide text selections.

**Common Scale for Grade Band Level Text Difficulty Ranges<sup>2</sup>**

Band	Text Analyzer Tool					
	ATOS	DRP	FK	LEXILE	SR	RM
<b>2nd–3rd</b>	2.75–5.14	42–54	1.98–5.34	420–820	0.05–2.48	3.53–6.13
<b>4th–5th</b>	4.97–7.03	52–60	4.51–7.73	740–1010	0.84–5.75	5.42–7.92
<b>6th–8th</b>	7.00–9.98	57–67	6.51–10.34	925–1185	4.11–10.66	7.04–9.57
<b>9th–10th</b>	9.67–12.01	62–72	8.32–12.12	1050–1335	9.02–13.93	8.41–10.81
<b>11th–12th</b>	11.20–14.10	67–74	10.34–14.20	1185–1385	12.30–14.50	9.57–12.00

Key	
<b>ATOS</b>	ATOS® (Renaissance Learning)
<b>DRP</b>	Degrees of Reading Power® (Questar)
<b>FK</b>	Flesch-Kincaid®
<b>LEXILE</b>	Lexile Framework® (MetaMetrics)
<b>SR</b>	Source Rater© (Educational Testing Service)
<b>RM</b>	Pearson Reading Maturity Metric© (Pearson Education)

For more information about passage selection, please refer to [Passage Selection Resources](#) and [Appendix B](#) of the Learning Standards for English Language Arts on the [EngageNY website](#)

(<https://www.engageny.org/resource/new-york-state-passage-selection-resources-for-grade-3-8-assessments>)

And (<http://engageny.org/resource/appendix-b-common-core-standards-for-elaliteracy-text-exemplars-and-sample-performance>).

<sup>1</sup>Nelson, Jessica; Perfetti, Charles; Liben, David; and Liben, Meredith, “Measures of Text Difficulty: Testing Their Predictive Value for Grade Levels and Student Performance,” 2012.

<sup>2</sup>Ibid

## Range of Informational Texts

One of the major shifts of the Learning Standards is an emphasis on developing skills for comprehending and analyzing informational texts. The Learning Standards for English Language Arts call for balance of literary and informational texts. This balance is reflected in the standards, instruction, and in the texts selected for the Grades 3–8 tests.

The 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests will have questions on a variety of informational texts. The array of passages selected for the tests will assess whether student can comprehend and analyze a wide range of text types. The chart below categorizes common informational texts according to their structure. Please note that the chart below is not specific to any grade, rather it is meant to help teachers understand the range of informational texts that students may encounter by the end of Grade 8.

EXPOSITORY	ARGUMENTATIVE	INSTRUCTIONAL	NARRATIVE
Textbooks (science)	Opinion/Editorial Pieces	Training Manuals	(Auto)Biographies
Textbooks (humanities)	Speeches (including those from seated politicians)	Contracts	Histories
Reports	Advertisements	User Guides/Manuals	Correspondence
Tourism Guides	Political Propaganda	Legal Documents	Curriculum Vitae
Product Specifications	Journal Articles	Recipes	Memoirs
Product/Service Descriptions	Government Documents	Product/Service Descriptions	News Articles
Magazine Articles	Legal Documents		Essays
Company Profiles	Tourism Guides		Interviews
Legal Documents	Correspondence		Agendas
Agendas	Essays		
Correspondence	Reviews		
Essays	Memoirs		
Interviews			
Government Documents			
News Articles			

For more information about informational texts, please refer to [Appendix B](#) of the Learning Standards for English Language Arts

(<https://www.engageny.org/resource/appendix-b-common-core-standards-for-elaliteracy-text-exemplars-and-sample-performance>).

# The 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests

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## Testing Sessions

The 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests consist of two sessions that are administered over two days. Students will be provided as much time as necessary to complete each test session. Below is a table of the average time it will take students to complete each session by grade.

	Average Time to Complete Session 1	Average Time to Complete Session 2
Grade 3	60–70 Minutes	70–80 Minutes
Grade 4	60–70 Minutes	70–80 Minutes
Grade 5	80–90 Minutes	70–80 Minutes
Grade 6	80–90 Minutes	90–100 Minutes
Grade 7	80–90 Minutes	90–100 Minutes
Grade 8	80–90 Minutes	90–100 Minutes

The tests must be administered under standard conditions and the directions must be followed carefully. The same test administration procedures must be used with all students so that valid inferences can be drawn from the test results.

NYSED devotes great attention to the security and integrity of the NYSTP. School administrators and teachers involved in the administration of State assessments are responsible for understanding and adhering to the instructions set forth in the *School Administrator's Manual* and the *Teacher's Directions*. These resources will be found at the [Office of State Assessment](http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ei/eigen) website (<http://www.p12.nysed.gov/assessment/ei/eigen>).

## When Students Have Completed Their Tests

Students who finish their assessment should be encouraged to go back and check their work. Once the student checks their work, or chooses not to, examination materials should be collected by the proctor. After a student's assessment materials are collected, or the student has submitted the test if testing on computer, that student may be permitted to read silently. This privilege is granted at the discretion of each school. No talking and no other schoolwork is permitted<sup>3</sup>.

Given that the Spring 2021 tests have no time limits, schools and districts have the discretion to create their own approach to ensure that all students who are productively working are given the time they need **within the confines of the regular school day** to continue to take the tests. If the test is administered in a large-group setting, school administrators may prefer to allow students to hand in their test materials, or submit the test if testing on computer, as they finish and then leave the room. If so, take care that students leave the room as quietly as possible so as not to disturb the students who are still working on the test.

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<sup>3</sup>For more detailed information about test administration, including proper procedures for proctoring, please refer to the [School Administrator's Manual](#) and the [Teacher's Directions](#).



## Test Design

The charts below illustrate the test designs for the 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests. This chart details the number of passages and the type(s) of questions in each session. Session 1 consists of passages with multiple-choice questions only. Session 2 consists of passages with short- and extended-response questions only.

Also noted is the approximate number of informational and literary passages present on the 2021 tests. Please note that for the 2021 tests only, no embedded field test questions will be included in the tests and all questions on the tests will contribute to students' scores.

<b>2021 Grades 3–4 English Language Arts Test Design</b>			
	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	
<b>Passages</b>	3	3	<b>6</b>
<b>Multiple-Choice Questions</b>	18	0	<b>18</b>
<b>Short-Response Questions</b>	0	6	<b>6</b>
<b>Extended-Response Questions</b>	0	1	<b>1</b>
	<b>Total Number of Literary Passages</b>		<b>2–4</b>
	<b>Total Number of Informational Passages</b>		<b>2–4</b>

<b>2021 Grades 5–6 English Language Arts Test Design</b>			
	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	
<b>Passages</b>	4	3	<b>7</b>
<b>Multiple-Choice Questions</b>	28	0	<b>28</b>
<b>Short-Response Questions</b>	0	6	<b>6</b>
<b>Extended-Response Questions</b>	0	1	<b>1</b>
	<b>Total Number of Literary Passages</b>		<b>3–4</b>
	<b>Total Number of Informational Passages</b>		<b>3–4</b>



<b>2021 Grades 7–8 English Language Arts Test Design</b>			
	<b>Session 1</b>	<b>Session 2</b>	<b>Total</b>
	<b>Reading</b>	<b>Writing</b>	
<b>Passages</b>	4	3	<b>7</b>
<b>Multiple-Choice Questions</b>	28	0	<b>28</b>
<b>Short-Response Questions</b>	0	7	<b>7</b>
<b>Extended-Response Questions</b>	0	1	<b>1</b>
	<b>Total Number of Literary Passages</b>		<b>3–4</b>
	<b>Total Number of Informational Passages</b>		<b>3–4</b>

## Test Blueprint

The charts below show the percentage of points that relate to Reading, Language, and Writing Standards. When reading these charts, it is essential to remember that most questions assess many standards simultaneously. Additionally, Reading Standards are divided by focus (Key Ideas, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge) to help guide instruction.

### Grades 3–5

Area of Focus		Approximate Percentage of Points
Reading Standards (RL and RI)		100% of points require close reading
Language and Writing Standards		Up to 50% of points require writing and command of language
Approximate Percent of Reading Points		
Key Ideas and Details	Craft and Structure	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
Up to 65%	Up to 35%	Up to 30%

### Grades 6–8

Area of Focus		Approximate Percentage of Points
Reading Standards (RL and RI)		100% of points require close reading
Language and Writing Standards		Up to 40% of points require writing and command of language
Approximate Percent of Reading Points		
Key Ideas and Details	Craft and Structure	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
Up to 60%	Up to 40%	Up to 40%

It should be noted that Standards RL3.1, RI3.1, RL4.1, RI4.1, etc., provide a foundation for all questions on the tests, as all will require text-based responses. Likewise, Standards RL3.10, RI3.10, RL4.10, etc., form the heart of all text-based instruction. While not assessed directly in questions, RL3.10, RI3.10, RL4.10, etc., are present on the test in the form of rigorous, worthwhile texts.

## Question Formats

The 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests contain multiple-choice (1-point), short-response (2-point), and extended-response (4-point) questions. For multiple-choice questions, students select the correct response from four answer choices. For short-response and extended-response questions, students write an answer to an open-ended question.

## Multiple-Choice Questions

Multiple-choice questions are designed to assess 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.

Multiple-choice questions will assess Reading and Language 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.<sup>4</sup> Each distractor will require students to comprehend the whole passage.

## Short-Response Questions

Short-response questions are designed to assess Reading and Language Standards. These are single questions in which students use textual evidence to support their own answers to an inferential question. These questions ask the student to make an inference (a claim, position, or conclusion) based on their analysis of the passage, state it in their own words, and then provide two pieces of text-based evidence to support their 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 typically require no more than three or four complete sentences. The rubric used to evaluate these types of responses is provided on page 17. It is important to note that students who answer the question only using details from the text will **NOT** receive full credit. A full-credit response is characterized by both a valid inference and sufficient textual support.

## Sample Responses

**Appendix A** of this document contains sample responses to previously administered ELA operational test questions that received full credit.

Samples responses can be referenced in the previously released editions of the English Language Arts Test Materials, which can be found on the [EngageNY website](https://www.engageny.org/3-8) (<https://www.engageny.org/3-8>).

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<sup>4</sup>A distractor is an incorrect response that may appear to be a plausible, correct response to a student who has not mastered the skill or concept being assessed.

## Extended-Response Questions

Extended-response questions are designed to assess *Writing from Sources*. They will focus primarily on Writing Standards. In Grade 3, extended-response questions will require comprehension and analysis of an individual text. In Grades 4–8, extended-response questions will require students to read and analyze paired texts. Paired texts are related by theme, genre, tone, time period, or other characteristics. Many extended-response questions will ask students to express a position and support it with text-based details. Extended-response questions allow students to demonstrate their ability to write a coherent essay using textual evidence to support their ideas.

Student responses will be evaluated based on Writing Standards and a student’s command of evidence to defend their point.

## Sample Responses

**Appendix A** of this document contains sample responses to previously administered ELA operational test questions that received full credit.

Samples responses can be referenced in the previously released editions of the English Language Arts Test Materials, which can be found on the [EngageNY website](https://www.engageny.org) (<https://www.engageny.org/3-8>).

## Released Questions

**[Released Questions for the Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests](https://www.engageny.org/ccss-library)** are available on the EngageNY website (<https://www.engageny.org/ccss-library>).

## English Language Arts Rubrics

The 2021 Grades 3–8 English Language Arts Tests will be scored using the same rubrics as were used in the most recent previous administration. Both the English Language Arts 2-Point and 4-Point Rubrics reflect the demands called for by the Learning Standards.

### Short-Response (2-Point) Holistic Rubric

Short-response questions will ask students to make a claim, take a position, or draw a conclusion, and then support it with details. This structure forms the foundation of the Learning Standards. As such, the 2-Point Rubric focuses on both the inference and evidence a student provides. This structure allows students to have wide latitude in responding to each prompt so long as their response is supported by the text.

Additionally, the expectation for all short responses will be complete, coherent sentences. By weaving these elements together, the questions, responses, and scores remain firmly focused on student reading ability.

#### 2-Point Rubric—Short Response

Score	Response Features
<b>2 Points</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 Points*</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).

### Extended-Response (4-Point) Holistic Rubric

Writing does not take place in a vacuum. To be college and career ready, one must be able to write for a purpose using information from textual sources. Extended-response questions on the 2021 English Language Arts Tests will ask students to analyze texts and address meaningful questions using strategic, textual details. Scores for extended responses will be based on four overarching criteria:

- **Content and Analysis**—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
- **Command of Evidence**—the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided texts to support analysis and reflection
- **Coherence, Organization, and Style**—the extent to which the essay logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language
- **Control of Conventions**—the extent to which the essay demonstrates command of the conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

These four characteristics combined make up the focus of the 4-point, extended-response tasks, *Writing from Sources*. Whether in response to an individual text or a paired selection, a student will be asked to synthesize, evaluate, and provide evidence for their thinking in a coherent and legible manner. Please note the holistic 4-Point Writing Evaluation Rubric in Grade 3 on page 19, Grades 4–5 on page 20, and Grades 6–8 on page 21.

### New York State Grade 3 Writing Evaluation Rubric

CRITERIA	CCLS	SCORE				
		4 Essays at this level:	3 Essays at this level:	2 Essays at this level:	1 Essays at this level:	0* Essays at this level:
<b>CONTENT AND ANALYSIS:</b> the extent to which the essay conveys ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to support analysis of topics or text	W.2 R.1–9	—clearly introduce a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose  —demonstrate comprehension and analysis of the text	—clearly introduce a topic in a manner that follows from the task and purpose  —demonstrate grade-appropriate comprehension of the text	—introduce a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task and purpose  —demonstrate a confused comprehension of the text	—introduce a topic in a manner that does not logically follow from the task and purpose  —demonstrate little understanding of the text	—demonstrate a lack of comprehension of the text or task
<b>COMMAND OF EVIDENCE:</b> the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided text to support analysis and reflection	W.2 R.1–8	—develop the topic with relevant, well-chosen facts, definitions, and details throughout the essay	—develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, and details throughout the essay	—partially develop the topic of the essay with the use of some textual evidence, some of which may be irrelevant	—demonstrate an attempt to use evidence, but only develop ideas with minimal, occasional evidence which is generally invalid or irrelevant	—provide no evidence or provide evidence that is completely irrelevant
<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	—clearly and consistently group related information together  —skillfully connect ideas within categories of information using linking words and phrases  —provide a concluding statement that follows clearly from the topic and information presented	—generally group related information together  —connect ideas within categories of information using linking words and phrases  —provide a concluding statement that follows from the topic and information presented	—exhibit some attempt to group related information together  —inconsistently connect ideas using some linking words and phrases  —provide a concluding statement that follows generally from the topic and information presented	—exhibit little attempt at organization  —lack the use of linking words and phrases  —provide a concluding statement that is illogical or unrelated to the topic and information presented	—exhibit no evidence of organization    —do not provide a concluding statement
<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	—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—are minimal, making assessment of conventions unreliable

- If the student writes only a personal response and makes no reference to the text, 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 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).

## New York State Grades 4–5 Writing Evaluation Rubric

CRITERIA	CCLS	SCORE				
		4 Essays at this level:	3 Essays at this level:	2 Essays at this level:	1 Essays at this level:	0* Essays at this level:
<b>CONTENT AND ANALYSIS:</b> the extent to which the essay conveys ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to support analysis of topics or text(s)	W.2 R.1–9	—clearly introduce a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose  —demonstrate insightful comprehension and analysis of the text(s)	—clearly introduce a topic in a manner that follows from the task and purpose  —demonstrate grade-appropriate comprehension and analysis of the text(s)	—introduce a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task and purpose  —demonstrate a literal comprehension of the text(s)	—introduce a topic in a manner that does not logically follow from the task and purpose  —demonstrate little understanding of the text(s)	—demonstrate a lack of comprehension of the text(s) or task
<b>COMMAND OF EVIDENCE:</b> the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided text(s) to support analysis and reflection	W.2 R.1–8	—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	—develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples from the text(s)  —sustain the use of relevant evidence, with some lack of variety	—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	—demonstrate an attempt to use evidence, but only develop ideas with minimal, occasional evidence which is generally invalid or irrelevant	—provide no evidence or provide evidence that is completely irrelevant
<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	—exhibit clear, purposeful organization  —skillfully link ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases  —use grade-appropriate, stylistically sophisticated language and domain-specific vocabulary  —provide a concluding statement that follows clearly from the topic and information presented	—exhibit clear organization  —link ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases  —use grade-appropriate precise language and domain-specific vocabulary  —provide a concluding statement that follows from the topic and information presented	—exhibit some attempt at organization  —inconsistently link ideas using words and phrases  —inconsistently use appropriate language and domain-specific vocabulary  —provide a concluding statement that follows generally from the topic and information presented	—exhibit little attempt at organization, or attempts to organize are irrelevant to the task  —lack the use of linking words and phrases  —use language that is imprecise or inappropriate for the text(s) and task  —provide a concluding statement that is illogical or unrelated to the topic and information presented	—exhibit no evidence of organization  —exhibit no use of linking words and phrases  —use language that is predominantly incoherent or copied directly from the text(s)  —do not provide a concluding statement
<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	—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—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).



# New York State Grades 6–8 Writing Evaluation Rubric

CRITERIA	CCLS	SCORE				
		4 Essays at this level:	3 Essays at this level:	2 Essays at this level:	1 Essays at this level:	0* Essays at this level:
<b>CONTENT AND ANALYSIS:</b> the extent to which the essay conveys ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to support analysis of topics or text(s)	W.2 R.1–9	—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)	—clearly introduce a topic in a manner that follows from the task and purpose  —demonstrate grade-appropriate analysis of the text(s)	—introduce a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task and purpose  —demonstrate a literal comprehension of the text(s)	—introduce a topic in a manner that does not logically follow from the task and purpose  —demonstrate little understanding of the text(s)	—demonstrate a lack of comprehension of the text(s) or task
<b>COMMAND OF EVIDENCE:</b> the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided text(s) to support analysis and reflection	W.2 R.1–8	—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	—develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples from the text(s)  —sustain the use of relevant evidence, with some lack of variety	—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	—demonstrate an attempt to use evidence, but only develop ideas with minimal, occasional evidence which is generally invalid or irrelevant	—provide no evidence or provide evidence that is completely irrelevant
<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	—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	—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	—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	—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  —provide a concluding statement or section that is illogical or unrelated to the topic and information presented	—exhibit no evidence of organization  —use language that is predominantly incoherent or copied directly from the text(s)  —do not provide a concluding statement or section
<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	—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors	—demonstrate grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension	—demonstrate emerging command of conventions, with some errors that may hinder comprehension	—demonstrate a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors that hinder comprehension	—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).

## Appendix A

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### Guidance on Constructed-Response Questions

This section provides examples of student responses to previously administered English Language Arts (ELA) operational test questions that received full credit. Using clear and concise writing helps a student communicate their message effectively. Additional examples can be referenced in the previously released editions of the English Language Arts Test Materials, which can be found on the [EngageNY](https://www.engageny.org/3-8) website (<https://www.engageny.org/3-8>).

#### Responses to Short-Response Questions

Short-response questions are designed to assess a student's ability to comprehend and analyze text. Short-responses with a valid inference and two supporting details from the associated text receive full credit. As such, full credit can typically be achieved in three to four sentences.

#### Responses to Extended-Response Questions

Extended-response questions allow students to demonstrate their ability to write a coherent essay using textual evidence to support their ideas. Whether in response to an individual text or paired texts, a student needs to synthesize, evaluate, and provide their thinking in a coherent and concise manner. As with short-response questions, students are encouraged to answer in an efficient manner.

### Sample Response to a 2016 Grade 3 Short-Response Question

Note that the three-sentence response below from the 2016 Grade 3 released scoring materials provided on the [EngageNY website](https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2016-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions) (<https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2016-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions>) received full credit.

32

**How are paragraphs 1 through 4 alike? Use two details from "Excerpt from How To Convince Your Parents You Can . . . Care For A Kitten" to support your response.**

They are alike because they all ask questions and give good reasons why you should have a kitten. The text says they need little space. Also, they bathe themselves.

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

This response provides a valid inference from the text to explain how paragraphs 1 through 4 are alike (*because they all ask questions and give good reasons why you should have a kitten*). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt (*they need little space and they bathe themselves*). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

### Sample Response to a 2016 Grade 6 Short-Response Question

Note that the two-sentence response below from the 2016 Grade 6 released scoring materials provided on the [EngageNY website](https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2016-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions) (<https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2016-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions>) received full credit.

44

How does Trina's mood change from the beginning to the end of "Excerpt from *Katerina's Wish*"? Use two details from the story to support your response.

Trina's mood changes from the beginning to the end by changing from a sad non-dreaming girl to a girl of happiness and wonder. "By 1901, neither the dream or the countr felt new." To, "Around the bend, I stopped in amazement."

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

This response provides a valid inference from the text to explain how Trina's mood changes from the beginning to the end of "Excerpt from *Katerina's Wish*" (from a sad non-dreaming girl to a girl of happiness and wonder). The response provides a sufficient number of concrete details from the text for support as required by the prompt ("By 1901, neither the dream or the countr felt new" and To "Around the bend, I stopped in amazement"). This response includes complete sentences where errors do not impact readability.

### Sample Response to a 2016 Grade 7 Extended-Response Question

Note that the 2016 Grade 7 response below from the released scoring materials on the [EngageNY website \(https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2016-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions\)](https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2016-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions) received full credit as a coherent essay which uses textual evidence.

51

In "Excerpt from *Buddha Boy*" and "Excerpt from *One + One = Blue*," both Justin and Basil take chances that they learn from. What chances do they each take? What do they learn about themselves through the conversations and events in each story? Use details from both stories to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain what chances Justin and Basil each take
- explain what they learn about themselves through the conversations and events in each story
- use details from both stories to support your response

Both Justin and Basil take chances that they learn from. They learn a lot about themselves through the conversations and events in each story and have different outcomes.

In "Excerpt from *Buddha Boy*", Justin takes the chance of inviting a new friend named Jensen to his house. Justin learns that Jensen likes art and offers to bring him to his Father's studio. Jensen declines since his grandfather is weak and frail so he has to care for her. Justin learns how nice of a friend Jensen is and how lucky he is to have what he has. That's Justin's risk that he took and what he learned from it.

Basil also takes a risk in "One + One = Blue". Basil invites Tenzie to her house and shows her around and Tenzie says Basil is lucky.

See scoring information for this response on the following page.

to have a family but Basil says her parents aren't around a lot. Tenzie tries to fit in with Basil and her grandmother but Basil gets mad at her for doing so. Basil realizes that she is unfortunate for not seeing her parents and doesn't want to lose Gram. That's Basil's risk in "One + One = Blue".

Both characters in both stories take a risk and learn from it. One has a happy ending while the other doesn't.

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

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose (They learn a lot about themselves through the conversations and events in each story and have different outcomes). The response demonstrates insightful analysis of the texts (Justin learns how nice of a friend Jinsen is and how lucky he is; Tenzie tries to fit in with Basil and her grandmother, and Basil realizes that she is unfortunate for not seeing her parents). The topic is developed with the sustained use of varied, relevant evidence from the texts (Justin takes the chance of inviting a new friend named Jensen to his house; Justin learns that Jinsen likes art and offers to bring him to his Father's studio; Basil invites Tenzie to her house and shows her around; Basil says her parents aren't around a lot). Clear organization is exhibited by the use of appropriate transitions to create a unified whole (Both, In "Excerpt, Basil also, That's Basil's risk). A formal style is established and maintained through the use of grade-appropriate language and domain-specific vocabulary (take chances, different outcomes, offers to bring, declines, weak and frail). The concluding statement follows from the topic and information presented (Both characters in both stories take a risk and One has a happy ending while the other doesn't). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors (too his house and parents).



### Sample Response to a 2017 Grade 5 Extended-Response Question

Note that the 2017 Grade 5 response below from the released scoring materials on the [EngageNY website \(https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2017-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions\)](https://nysed-prod.engageny.org/resource/released-2017-3-8-ela-and-mathematics-state-test-questions) received full credit as a coherent essay which uses textual evidence.

In "Excerpt from *Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time!*" and "Excerpt from *Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My Adventures on Ampato*," what challenges did the discoverers face? How did these challenges affect their decisions about what to do with the mummies? Use details from both articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- ✕ describe the challenges the discoverers faced
- ✕ explain how the challenges affected their decisions about what to do with the mummies
- ✕ use details from **both** articles to support your response

People always face challenges in life that they have to sooner or later face. These challenges affect their decisions, making it harder or easier. In two articles, the boys have a challenge that affects their decision in many ways.

In the article, "Baby Mammoth Mummy: Frozen in Time," Yuki and his sons have to face a challenge. They weren't sure if they should take the baby mammoth. Serotello on the <sup>boys</sup> are scared of touching it because legends say that touching remains of mammoths bring bad luck or even death. On paragraph 3, it says, "Some Nenets say that mammoths bring bad luck or even death to the people who touch their remains." So Yuki's fear and nervousness.

GP ON

DO NOT WRITE BEYOND THIS AREA

Sample response is continued on the following page.

changes his decision.

According to "Discovering the Inca Ice Maiden: My adventures on Ampato," the challenge the two boys face is that they are not sure if they should take the frozen mummy or leave it on the mountain. In the text it says, "I wondered what to do next. If we left the mummy behind in the open, the sun and volcanic ash would cause further damage. The boys are hesitating of what to do and are thinking of the consequences that can occur."

Regarding the challenge Yuki and his sons face their final decision, was that they decided to leave the mammoth alone<sup>alone</sup> to tell Serotetto about it. When they all came back, the mammoth was gone. Their decision had a terrible consequence. The challenge they faced affected their decision because their fear of bad luck caused them to leave the mammoth<sup>alone</sup>. Apparently, Yuki's cousin took the baby mammoth into the camp. The other 2 boys also faced a challenge, they weren't sure if they should take the mummy. The challenge was confusing and affected their decision by causing the boy to take the mummy<sup>because</sup> he rethought the consequences and chose his final decision.

To conclude, the boys from both stories faced difficult challenges that affected their final decisions. They thought about the consequence to help them with their choice. People all around the world face challenges, some more confusing than others, but they all have a choice.

COON

See scoring information for this response on the following page.



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

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose (People always face challenges in life that they have to sooner or later face. These challenges affect their decisions, making it harder or easier. In two articles, the boys have a challenge that affects their decision in many ways). The response demonstrates insightful comprehension and analysis of the texts (So Yuki's fear and nervousness changes his decision; The boys are hesitating of what to do and are thinking of the consequences that can occur; Their decision had a terrible consequence. The challenge they faced affected their decision because their fear of bad luck caused them to leave the mammoth alone; The challenge was confusing and affected their decision by causing the boy to take the mummy because he rethought the consequences and chose his final decision). The response develops the topic with relevant, well-chosen details from the texts ("Some Nenets say that mammoths bring bad luck or even death to the people who touch their remains"; "I wondered what to do next. If we left the mummy behind in the open, the sun and volcanic ash would cause further damage"; they decided to leave the mammoth alone and to tell Serotetto about it. When they all came back, the mammoth was gone; Yuki's cousin took the baby mammoth into the camp). The response exhibits clear, purposeful organization, skillfully linking ideas using grade appropriate words and phrases (In the article, According to, Regarding, To conclude). The response uses grade-appropriate, stylistically sophisticated language and domain-specific vocabulary (fear and nervousness, terrible consequence). The response provides a concluding statement that follows clearly from the topic and information presented (To conclude, the boys from both stories faced difficult challenges that affected their final decisions). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors.

