

**NEBRASKA STATE
ACCOUNTABILITY**



**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
ITEM AND SCORING SAMPLER
GRADE 8**

Nebraska State Accountability assessments are administered by the Nebraska Department of Education (NDE).
301 Centennial Mall South – P.O. Box 94987 – Lincoln, Nebraska 68509 – (402) 471-2495

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GENERAL INTRODUCTION

The Nebraska Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instructional programs aligned to the state assessment system. These tools include Table of Specifications documents, administration manuals, and content-based item and scoring samplers. This Item and Scoring Sampler is a useful tool for Nebraska educators in the preparation of local instructional programs and the statewide NeSA-ELA.

SAMPLER CONTENTS

This sampler contains reading passages with test questions (items) that have been written to align to the assessment indicators that are based on the Nebraska College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Standards. The passages represent some of the genres approved by NDE to appear on an operational Nebraska College- and Career-Ready NeSA-ELA. The test questions provide a simulation of the types of items that will appear on an operational Nebraska College- and Career-Ready NeSA-ELA. Each sample test question has been through a rigorous review process to ensure alignment with the assessment indicators.

PURPOSE AND USES

The purpose of the sampler is to expose teachers and administrators to new item types and to show how these items align to the revised Nebraska College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Standards. Many of the items provided in the sampler will be accessible to students in the form of ELA Practice Tests, Guided Practice Tests, and Online Tools Training resources.

ITEM FORMAT AND SCORING GUIDELINES

The Nebraska College- and Career-Ready NeSA-ELA has four types of test questions. For grade 8, the types of test questions are Multiple-Choice (MC), Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR), Auto-Scored Constructed Response (ASCR), and Text Dependent Analysis (TDA).

Multiple Choice (MC):

All MC items have four answer choices, including three distractors and one correct answer. Distractors represent common misconceptions, incorrect logic, common misinterpretations, unsound reasoning, casual reading, etc. A correct response to an MC item is worth one point.

Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR):

EBSR items have two parts and are designed to elicit an evidence-based response based on what a student has read from either an Informational Text or Literature stimulus passage. Each EBSR item is linked to a passage or passage set. Part A of an EBSR item is similar to a typical MC test question. A student analyzes a passage and chooses a single, best (correct) answer from four answer choices. Part B of an EBSR item elicits evidence from the stimulus passage and requires that the student select one or two answers based on the response the student provided in Part A. Part B is also different from Part A in that it may have more than four answer options, which is typical of an MC item. Each EBSR (Part A and Part B combined) is worth two points.

Auto-Scored Constructed Response (ASCR):

ASCR item types provide a new forum in which to address higher-level thinking skills without the use of hand-scored test questions. Using the expansive features and functions of online testing, developers will incorporate technical enhancements to the test question, the response area, and/or the stimulus. Item types may include drag-and-drop, hot-spot, and in-line selection of multiple answers from drop-down menus. Students will be able to manipulate information within dynamic tasks such as dragging and pasting elements, highlighting text, and selecting multiple answers from a variety of presentation methods. Each ASCR test question is worth one or two points.

Text Dependent Analysis (TDA):

Similar to an EBSR item, the TDA Writing Prompt is designed to elicit an evidence-based response from a student who has read either an Informational Text or Literature passage during the test event. The TDA is an on-demand, text-based writing piece that requires students to provide evidence from the text to support analysis, reflection, or ideas and opinions. Students must draw on basic writing skills while inferring and synthesizing information from the passage (making use of and referencing content from the passage to support the analysis) in order to develop a comprehensive response. Students will be given a TDA Writer's Checklist to assist in composing their response. The TDA will be scored using a holistic scoring rubric designed to provide a measurement of writing, conventions, and reading. The TDA is in alignment across grades 3–8 and 11 with the NeSA-ELA Standards indicated on the rubric. Each TDA Writing Prompt test question is scored using a rubric and will be reported to reading and writing.

DEPTH OF KNOWLEDGE

In addition to being aligned to the standards, the sample items included in this sampler were also developed with a particular emphasis on cognitive complexity, or Depth of Knowledge (DOK). The DOK level is also provided for each item in this sampler in the Item Information Table. DOK measures the level of cognitive demand required to complete an assessment item. The following descriptions show the expectations of the DOK levels in greater detail.

Level 1 (Recall of Information) generally requires students to identify, list, or define, often asking them to recall who, what, when, and where. Consequently, this level usually asks students to recall facts, terms, concepts, and trends and may ask them to identify specific information contained in documents, excerpts, quotations, maps, charts, tables, graphs, or illustrations. Items that require students to “describe” and/or “explain” could be classified at Level 1 or Level 2, depending on what is to be described and/or explained. A Level 1 “describe” and/or “explain” would require students to recall, recite, or reproduce information.

Level 2 (Basic Reasoning) includes the engagement of some mental processing beyond recalling or reproducing a response. A Level 2 “describe” and/or “explain” would require students to go beyond a description or explanation of recalled information to describe and/or explain a result or “how” or “why.”

Level 3 (Complex Reasoning) requires reasoning, using evidence, and thinking on a higher and more abstract level than Level 1 and Level 2. Students will go beyond explaining or describing “how and why” to justifying the “how and why” through application and evidence. Level 3 questions often involve making connections across time and place to explain a concept or “big idea.”

ITEM AND SCORING SAMPLER FORMAT

Sample questions are provided in this sampler, along with any related stimulus information such as a passage or graphic. Following each test question is an item information table.

Example Response Item Information Table

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------|--|
| Alignment | Assigned Indicator | Assigned indicator definition |
| Answer Key | Correct Answer | Option Annotations Brief answer option analysis or rationale |
| Depth of Knowledge | Assigned DOK | |
| Focus | Skill/Task | |

All Text Dependent Analysis items in this sampler are supported by an item information table, the TDA Scoring Rubric, and annotated sample student responses at each score point.

The NeSA-ELA is administered primarily online. Although there is a paper-pencil format, the examples in this sampler include samples of students' responses in online format.

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

For more information related to the Nebraska plan and schedule for making the transition to NeSA-English Language Arts, see <http://www.education.ne.gov/Assessment> and select the link on the left titled "ELA Transition."

PASSAGE 1**Oversleeping**

So Jake spread his arms, leaped skyward from the sidewalk, and began to fly, rocketing up over the neighborhood. Suddenly he heard the distant voice of his father calling, as if from another universe, and Jake pried open sleep-heavy eyes.

“Get up, pal,” said Jake’s father, “or you’ll miss the school bus.”

“Just let me sleep a little longer,” Jake mumbled. Then he groaned and turned over, pulling the covers up over his head like a tent, as if to somehow recapture his dream. Jake loved to sleep. It wasn’t that he was lazy or lacked energy. Jake was a normal fourteen-year-old kid in every way. But he loved to curl up under a soft white cloud of sheets, rest his head on a marshmallow pillow, and luxuriate in the twilight world of slumber where life is exciting and dreams always come true.

So Jake was sitting at a table at a fancy café in Hollywood, having lunch with a famous movie director, who was offering Jake a role in his next big action flick when . . .

“Get up,” said Jake’s father, gently shaking his son’s shoulders. Jake yawned and hauled his legs over the side of the mattress, where he sat for a few moments to reconcile himself with the shocking reality of upright existence. He dragged himself into the shower, where he briefly dreamed of tropical rain forests, and at last shuffled downstairs to breakfast.

“Jake’s going to sleep his life away!” stated Taylor, his nine-year-old sister, as she sat at the table, kicking her dangling legs excitedly as if to show by comparison how wide awake she was.

“He’s just a growing boy,” said Jake’s father, washing dishes at the kitchen sink. “Right?” Jake nodded sleepily and finished his breakfast. He trudged out the front door with Taylor, still half-sleepwalking, and they waited on the curb for their school bus, as usual.

At school, finally fully awake, Jake cycled through the pleasant routine of another typical day. He greeted his buddy Benjamin at the locker they shared. They discussed hockey games and books. Then there was science with Mr. Albert, math with Ms. Freed, and lunch with Benjamin, who always told great jokes. After school, there was homework, dinner with his dad and Taylor, maybe a little TV, and then off to dreamland. And so went week after week, and month after month.

So Jake swung the bat, sending the ball out of the stadium and into the Baseball Hall of Fame . . .

“Come on, get up,” commanded Taylor, holding a ringing alarm clock only inches from her brother’s face. “You’ll be late for school!” Jake shook his head in disbelief and ducked under the covers.

- 11 Moments later Jake awakened to an empty, quiet room. Then he got up and padded sleepily down the hallway. The bathroom mirror reflected a face that was oddly unfamiliar—one with heavier eyebrows and new creases in its brow. Jake rubbed a hand over his face and felt the unexpected sandpaper abrasion of whiskers. **Mystified** and dazed, he staggered downstairs to the kitchen, where he was perplexed to discover a teenaged Taylor sitting at the breakfast table beside his father, who seemed older somehow.

“So you finally woke up,” commented Jake’s father, casually sipping his coffee. “We thought you’d sleep forever.”

“You certainly overslept!” added Taylor in a surprisingly mature voice.

Jake shook his head as if to disperse the fog of dreams. “What are you talking about?”

“You’ve been asleep for four years,” Jake’s father replied calmly. “Better get dressed, or you’ll be late for your last day of school.” This statement set Jake’s mind reeling. His last day of school? Had he really slept so long? Was he now eighteen years old?

Lost in a whirl of confusion, Jake went to his room to dress for school and discovered that none of his clothes fit him. He borrowed a shirt, pants, and shoes from his father—and they made him look and feel even older.

- 17 Taylor led Jake out the front door to the curb. Boarding his bus, Jake stared in bewilderment. He was **enthralled** by the aged faces of his friends. “Hey, it’s Jake!” shouted someone from the back of the bus. “He’s back!” One by one, his schoolmates began to recognize him.

“Buddy, you sure look older!” said someone sitting near where Jake stood. Jake looked down to discover his friend Benjamin smiling heartily and looking startlingly like his older brother. Jake sat beside Benjamin, who eagerly told what had happened during Jake’s years of slumber—how Mr. Albert had retired from teaching science, and how Ms. Freed had been named Teacher of the Year. Benjamin spoke excitedly of hockey games won and lost; of books read and remembered; of school plays, classes, pep rallies, and car washes. They were small, ordinary events, but to Jake they seemed extraordinary because they had happened without him. He had missed grades nine through twelve. His stomach sank when he realized there would be no more school days with Benjamin, his teachers, or his other friends. Jake had slept them all away . . .

“Come on, buddy, get up,” called Jake’s father. Jake pried open leaden eyelids to see his father standing in the doorway, with his familiar easy-going grin. Beside him was nine-year-old Taylor, seemingly more girlish and bubbly than ever before.

“Come on, sleepyhead!” she giggled. Her laughter seemed as bright as the yellow sunshine splashing about the room. “You don’t want to miss school, do you?”

Jake beamed and looked at his family. “No, I wouldn’t want to do that,” he said as he jumped up to greet the day.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

1. Which word is a synonym for **mystified**?

- A. dazed
- B. staggered
- C. perplexed
- D. seemed

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|---------|---|
| Alignment | 8.1.5.d | Analyze and use semantic relationships (e.g., multiple meanings, synonyms, antonyms, figurative language, connotations, subtle distinctions) to determine the meaning of words, aid in comprehension, and improve writing. |
| Answer Key | C | Option Annotations The student is asked to identify a synonym for the word “mystified” as it is used in paragraph 11. Option C is the correct answer since “perplexed” is a synonym for “mystified.” Options A, B, and D are not synonyms for the given word. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Synonym | |

2. In paragraph 17, what is the meaning of **enthralled**?

- A. fascinated
- B. offended
- C. frightened
- D. amused

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|---------------|--|
| Alignment | 8.1.5.b | Select and apply knowledge of context clues (e.g., word, phrase, sentence, and paragraph clues) and text features to determine meaning of unknown words. |
| Answer Key | A | Option Annotations The student is asked to identify the meaning of the word “enthralled” as it is used in paragraph 17. Option A is the correct answer since “fascinated” is a definition for “enthralled.” Options B, C, and D are not correct meanings for the given word. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Context Clues | |

3. Which detail from the story supports the idea that a great deal of time has passed while Jake was sleeping?
- A. He needs to borrow clothing from his father.
 - B. He awakens to a room that is quiet and empty.
 - C. He has to ride the school bus with all of his friends.
 - D. He still feels sleepy as he staggers down to the kitchen.

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------------|--|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.i | Construct and/or answer literal, inferential, critical, and interpretive questions and support answers with explicit evidence from the text or additional sources. |
| Answer Key | A | Option Annotations The student is asked to identify evidence that supports a given conclusion. Option A is the correct answer since Jake's need to borrow larger clothing from his father supports the conclusion that a great deal of time has passed while he was sleeping. Options B, C, and D are accurate details from the passage, but they are unrelated to the given conclusion. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Answer Interpretive Questions | |

4. Which characteristic helps the reader identify the genre of the story?
- A. The futuristic setting helps the reader identify the story as science fiction.
 - B. The abilities of the main character help the reader identify the story as fantasy.
 - C. The lesson that is taught helps the reader identify the story as a folktale.
 - D. The main problem helps the reader identify the story as realistic fiction.

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|---------|--|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.g | Cite specific textual evidence to analyze and make inferences based on the characteristics of a variety of literary and informational texts. |
| Answer Key | D | Option Annotations The student is asked to determine the genre of the story and the characteristic that identifies it as such. Option D is the correct answer since the problem in the story turning out to be a dream identifies the story as realistic fiction. Option A is incorrect since the story does not have a “futuristic setting.” Options B and C are incorrect since the story is neither fantasy nor a folktale. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Genre | |

5. Which theme is most strongly conveyed through the story?

- A. independence versus dependence
- B. age versus experience
- C. opportunity versus disappointment
- D. individual versus society

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|----------------|--|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.b | Analyze and explain the relationships between elements of literary text (e.g., character development, setting, plot, conflict, point of view, inferred and recurring themes). |
| Answer Key | C | Option Annotations The student is asked to identify the theme conveyed through the story. Option C is the correct answer since the main character is torn between enjoying the opportunity to sleep late and disappointment in finding out what he might miss by oversleeping. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since they are unrelated to the theme of the conflict in the story. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 3 | |
| Focus | Inferred Theme | |

EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE ITEM

6. This question has two parts. Answer part A, and then answer part B.





Part A

In paragraph 11, how does the author use a metaphor?

- ☐ (a) to exaggerate the seriousness of Jake's situation
- ☐ (b) to give human qualities to Jake's whiskers
- ☐ (c) to express Jake's shocked reaction to his situation
- ☐ (d) to describe the roughness of Jake's face

Part B

Choose the sentence that BEST supports the answer in part A.



Moments later Jake awakened to an empty, quiet room. Then he got up and padded sleepily down the hallway. The bathroom mirror reflected a face that was oddly unfamiliar—one with heavier eyebrows and new creases in its brow. Jake rubbed a hand over his face and felt the unexpected sandpaper abrasion of whiskers. Mystified and dazed, he staggered downstairs to the kitchen, where he was perplexed to discover a teenaged Taylor sitting at the breakfast table beside his father, who seemed older somehow.

Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

This question has two parts. Answer part A, and then answer part B.





Part A

In paragraph 11, how does the author use a metaphor?

- ☐ a to exaggerate the seriousness of Jake's situation
- ☐ b to give human qualities to Jake's whiskers
- ☐ c to express Jake's shocked reaction to his situation
- ☒ d to describe the roughness of Jake's face

Part B

Choose the sentence that BEST supports the answer in part A.







Moments later Jake awakened to an empty, quiet room. Then he got up and padded sleepily down the hallway. The bathroom mirror reflected a face that was oddly unfamiliar—one with heavier eyebrows and new creases in its brow. Jake rubbed a hand over his face and felt the unexpected sandpaper abrasion of whiskers. Mystified and dazed, he staggered downstairs to the kitchen, where he was perplexed to discover a teenaged Taylor sitting at the breakfast table beside his father, who seemed older somehow.

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|---|---|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.c | Analyze the author's use of literary devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification, idiom, oxymoron, hyperbole, alliteration, onomatopoeia, analogy, tone, mood). |
| Answer Key | Part A: D Part B: Jake rubbed a hand over his face and felt the unexpected sandpaper abrasion of whiskers. | Option Annotations The student is asked to determine how the author uses a metaphor in paragraph 11 and then to identify a sentence from the paragraph that supports this determination. Part A: Option D is the correct answer since "felt the unexpected sandpaper abrasion of whiskers" is a metaphor describing "the roughness of Jake's face." Options A and B are incorrect since these descriptions align with the purposes of hyperbole and personification. Option C is incorrect because, while plausible for a metaphor, "to express shock" is not the purpose of this specific metaphor. Part B: Sentence 4 is the correct answer since "felt the unexpected sandpaper abrasion of whiskers" is the metaphor the author uses. The other sentences are incorrect because they do not use metaphor. The item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify the answers to part A and part B. To receive 1 point, the student must at least select the correct answer for part A. No credit will be given for a correct response to part B if part A is incorrect. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Figurative Language, Metaphor | |

AUTO-SCORED CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEM





7. Choose **two** sentences that support the inference that Jake regrets oversleeping. Choose **two**.



"Buddy, you sure look older!" said someone sitting near where Jake stood. Jake looked down to discover his friend Benjamin smiling heartily and looking startlingly like his older brother. Jake sat beside Benjamin, who eagerly told what had happened during Jake's years of slumber—how Mr. Albert had retired from teaching science, and how Ms. Freed had been named Teacher of the Year. Benjamin spoke excitedly of hockey games won and lost; of books read and remembered; of school plays, classes, pep rallies, and car washes. They were small, ordinary events, but to Jake they seemed extraordinary because they had happened without him. He had missed grades nine through twelve. His stomach sank when he realized there would be no more school days with Benjamin, his teachers, or his other friends.

Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

Choose **two** sentences that support the inference that Jake regrets oversleeping. Choose **two**.



“Buddy, you sure look older!” said someone sitting near where Jake stood. Jake looked down to discover his friend Benjamin smiling heartily and looking startlingly like his older brother. Jake sat beside Benjamin, who eagerly told what had happened during Jake’s years of slumber—how Mr. Albert had retired from teaching science, and how Ms. Freed had been named Teacher of the Year. Benjamin spoke excitedly of hockey games won and lost; of books read and remembered; of school plays, classes, pep rallies, and car washes. They were small, ordinary events, but to Jake they seemed extraordinary because they had happened without him. He had missed grades nine through twelve. His stomach sank when he realized there would be no more school days with Benjamin, his teachers, or his other friends.

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.g | Cite specific textual evidence to analyze and make inferences based on the characteristics of a variety of literary and informational texts. |
| Answer Key | Sentence 5, Sentence 7 | Option Annotations The student is asked to select two sentences that support a given inference. The third-from-last sentence and the last sentence are the correct answers since they both indicate Jack’s disappointment over the things he has missed by oversleeping. The other sentences are incorrect since they reveal details concerning the things he has missed during that time, but not his feelings of regret. This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify both sentences that support the inference. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify one of the sentences that support the inference. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Character Emotions/ Evidence to Support Inference | |

TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS ITEM

8. In the story “Oversleeping,” the author blends reality and fantasy. Analyze how this helps the reader identify with the main character. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the story to support your answer.

XXX/6000

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Alignment | Reading: 8.1.6.b Writing: See Rubric | Analyze and explain the relationship between elements of literary text (e.g., character development, setting, plot, conflict, point of view, inferred and reoccurring themes). |
| Answer Key | See Rubric | Option Annotations Refer to the sample student responses. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 3 | |

TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

DRAFT Nebraska Department of Education Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Scoring Rubric

| Nebraska English Language Arts Standards | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Analysis of Text 1.6* 1.6.i | Demonstrates limited analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimally addresses part(s) of the task to demonstrate limited understanding of the text(s) Inadequately analyzes text(s) by minimally addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) | Demonstrates partially effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses some part(s) of the task to demonstrate partial understanding of text(s) Partially analyzes text(s) by occasionally addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) | Demonstrates effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses all parts of the task to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the text(s) Analyzes text(s) by addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) | Demonstrates exemplary analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses all parts of the task to demonstrate thorough understanding of the text(s) Thoroughly analyzes text(s) by purposefully addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) |
| Use of Evidence 1.6.i 2.1.c 2.2.b 4.1.a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficiently integrates evidence from the text(s) by using few details, examples, and/or quotes Provides little or no relevant and/or accurate evidence from the text(s) to support claims or ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially integrates evidence from the text(s) by using some details, examples, and/or quotes Provides some relevant and accurate evidence from the text(s) to partially support claims or ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates specific evidence from the text(s) by using details, examples, and/or quotes Provides relevant and accurate evidence from the text(s) to sufficiently support claims or ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skilfully integrates specific evidence from the text(s) by using details, examples, and/or quotes Provides relevant and accurate evidence from the text(s) to thoroughly support claims or ideas |
| Writing Skills 1.5.c 2.1.b 2.1.d 2.1.e 2.1.h 2.1.i 2.2.a 2.2.d 4.1.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates an inadequately focused response which lacks an introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and/or transitions Demonstrates little or no evidence of an organizational pattern and/or mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Limited or no use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Limited or no use of precise word choice and/or content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) Ineffectively demonstrates conventions of standard English; errors may seriously interfere with meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a partially focused response which includes a weak introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and/or transitions Demonstrates partial evidence of an organizational pattern and/or mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Weak use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Occasionally uses precise word choice and/or content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) Partially demonstrates conventions of standard English; errors may interfere with meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a focused response which includes a clear introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and appropriate transitions Demonstrates an appropriate organizational pattern and mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Clear use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Uses precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) Demonstrates conventions of standard English; if present, errors seldom interfere with meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a well-focused response which includes a strong introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and purposeful transitions Skilfully demonstrates an appropriate organizational pattern and mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Strong use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Skilfully uses precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) to enhance ideas Thoroughly demonstrates conventions of standard English; if present, errors do not interfere with meaning |

*Individual TDA prompts are aligned to one of the following 1.6 Reading Comprehension indicators: 1.6.a, 1.6.b, 1.6.c, 1.6.d, 1.6.e, 1.6.f, 1.6.g, 1.6.h, 1.6.i, or 1.6.j

EXAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES**AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 4 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC**

8. In the story “Oversleeping,” the author blends reality and fantasy. Analyze how this helps the reader identify with the main character. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the story to support your answer.

In the story “Oversleeping”, the author blends reality and fantasy to help the reader identify with Jake, the main character. Jake is living a typical fourteen year old life with his family and friends but everything changes when he dreams. When he dreams his life changes from routine to thrilling. His dreams take him to fantasies where one day he is flying, the next day he is in the Baseball Hall of Fame and on another day he is offered a role in a big action movie. Jake wants to stay in his dreams each morning and so he doesn’t want to wake up to reality. But what he learns at the end of the story, just like we all learn at some time, is just how important each ordinary day is.

At the beginning of the story we find Jake flying through the neighborhood like a superhero. That seems like lots of fun. But we quickly learn that he is only dreaming. Jake like most fourteen year olds lives at home with his dad and sister, he catches the school bus each morning and goes through “the pleasant routine of another typical day”. He takes classes with his various teachers and has lunch with his friend Benjamin. His day ends with homework, dinner with his family, maybe TV and then sleep. His routine seems monotonous and boring we know this when the author writes “and so it went week after week and month after month”. Nothing sounds very exciting in the reality of life. I can identify with Jake because my life seems similar. I go to school every day, have cheerleading practice after school, go home and do my homework, and maybe have a little time to read or talk with my family before going to bed, and starting all over again the next day. This is how most student’s lives are.

But reality turns to fantasy when Jake dreams. He leaves his relationships with family, friends and teachers behind and takes off to Hollywood dining with famous movie directors, getting parts in big action movies. The next night he leaves Hollywood and is now hitting the homerun that will put him in the Baseball Hall of Fame. His dreams take him away from his boring life. They are so exciting that it is difficult to wake up in the morning from his dreams. He would prefer to “luxuriate in the twilight world of slumber where life is exciting and dreams always come true”. I don’t think I could blame him for wanting to sleep later. I also love my dreams, especially when I have superpowers and can fly, and I sometimes wish they could go on forever. Some mornings I wish I could sleep in and save the world, instead of going to my boring algebra class.

In the end, Jake is jolted into seeing how important his normal life really is and he realizes that his dreams can't compete with actually spending time with his family, friends and teachers. In his final dream Jake has slept through grades nine through twelve and missed out on all those experiences. In his dream he awakes four years later. When he sees his family, friends and teachers and all that time has elapsed, "his stomach sank when he realized there would be no more school days with Benjamin, his teachers, or his other friends, Jake had slept them all away." Just like all of us, Jake thought he was bored of his everyday life when really he just needed to realize how important living each day with his friends and family actually is. I can relate to how Jake feels because I realize I would miss my friends and family too, and cheerleading, and yes, maybe even algebra with Ms. Thompson. In this way Jake's fantasy helps me identify with him.

3503/6000

This response demonstrates exemplary analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses all parts of the task, thoroughly explaining how the author blends reality and fantasy to help the reader identify with the main character, and provides purposeful, thorough analysis and relevant text support from the passage to show how the exciting fantasy world of dreams would be no substitute for the more normal reality with family and friends. The writer makes consistent use of appropriately cited quotations and paraphrases from the text. The response is well focused and demonstrates an appropriate organizational pattern complete with purposeful transitions and a strong introduction and conclusion. Precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text are used skillfully. A thorough understanding of conventions of standard English has been demonstrated; there are few errors that do not interfere with meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 3 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

8. In the story “Oversleeping,” the author blends reality and fantasy. Analyze how this helps the reader identify with the main character. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the story to support your answer.

The story “Oversleeping,” goes back and forth between reality and fantasy. Jake is a typical fourteen year old boy who loves to lie in bed and dream about fun things. He would rather dream instead of getting up and go to school. The reader can identify with Jake because we all have dreams too, just like Jake does. I love dreaming in my warm bed and if anyone wakes me up too soon I always try and go back to sleep and finish my dream. In the story Jake was dreaming about flying and “rocketing up around the neighborhood”. After his father wakes him up for school he went back to sleep. He was then getting a role in a TV show or a movie. His dreams are exciting and fantasy, but then he has to go to school to face reality. School life is boring and a “pleasant routine” and not fun. In his dreams “life is exciting and his dreams always come true”. This is one example of how the author blends the reality of getting up and going to school with the fantasy of being a superhero or movie star.

Sometimes I wake up and I hope that my dream will come true and happen in the future (unless it’s a bad dream!). But when I wake up I know that they are not true now. I am still an eighth grader going to school every day like Jake, and some days I feel tired and half asleep and I just want to stay in my warm bed and keep on dreaming too. I can identify with Jake and often feel the same.

In the story Jake has another dream. He dreamt that he had been sleeping for four years. He dreamt that he woke up and he was a senior in high school. But the way the author wrote the story made the dream seem like it was really happening. He blended the dream about playing baseball into the dream about waking up as a high school kid and the reader was tricked into thinking it was real. When he did finally wake up, Jake was happy to find out that he hadn’t missed those years. But at first we feel bad for Jake for missing all those important things in High School like “Ms. Freed being named teacher of the year”, “all the hockey games won and lost”, and “pep rallies and car washes”. We even sympathize with Jake since we would feel the same if we slept through grades 9,10, 11 and 12. Just think, you would never get the chance to play soccer for your high school team or go to homecoming or prom and it would be terrible. “I wouldn’t want to do that” either.

So Jake’s fantasy (his dreams) helps the reader identify with him, especially when the reader is also in 8th grade.

1682/6000

This response demonstrates effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses the task of explaining how the author blends reality and fantasy to help the reader identify with the main character. Relevant evidence from the text has been chosen to support the analysis. Specific details relating to Jake's experiences and feelings have been effectively integrated into the response and provide sufficient support for the analysis. The response is focused and occasionally uses precise word choice and vocabulary from the text. An organizational pattern and mode suited to the purpose are evident, and paraphrases from the text are integrated into the response. Demonstration of conventions of standard English is evident with a few errors that do not interfere with meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 2 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

8. In the story “Oversleeping,” the author blends reality and fantasy. Analyze how this helps the reader identify with the main character. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the story to support your answer.

The author of “Oversleeping” blends reality and fantasy by helping me identify with the main charater called Jake. I am 13 years old just like Jake and I sometimes oversleep and almost miss the bus to school. I have done that many times and i think most teenagers would say the same thing. Mixing dreams with real life helps me relate to jake because I do the same thing. Yesterday I dreamed I was playing soccer for LA Galaxy and it was the final and i was playing forward with one minute left in the game. I scored a bicycle kick to win the game and the crowd went crazy cheering for me. It was an amazing dream but i woke up and had to run down stairs quickly and grab a slice of toast and then I barely made the bus. But I hope my dream comes true one day.

758/6000

This response demonstrates partially effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. While it addresses parts of the task, a large portion of the response consists of a personal account of a dream about playing soccer. The student attempts to use the account to suggest a comparison with the main character. This comparison demonstrates only partially effective analysis of how the blending of fantasy and reality helps the reader identify with the main character. Additionally, only a partial understanding of the text is demonstrated. Insufficient evidence from the text has been integrated into the response. A weak introduction, body, and conclusion are evident. Paraphrases or quotations attributing information to the text are lacking. Some errors in conventions of standard English occasionally interfere with meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 1 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

8. In the story “Oversleeping,” the author blends reality and fantasy. Analyze how this helps the reader identify with the main character. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the story to support your answer.

Jake liked to sleep. He liked to sleep a lot. When he slept he dreamed that he was a famous movie star. He dreamed that he was older. He had been sleeping for 4 years. But it was just a dream. His dad woke him up and he went to school. He was still in 8th grade not 12th grade. I like to sleep too like Jake. I would rather sleep in my bed than go to school. I have awesome dreams where i can fly.

397/6000

This response demonstrates limited analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response minimally addresses the task, inadequately analyzes the texts, provides little relevant evidence from the passage to support a claim, and demonstrates limited understanding of the text. The response is essentially a brief summary of the text followed by a minimal attempt at identifying with the main character. The response lacks evidence of an organizational pattern. An ineffective demonstration of conventions of standard English is shown.

PASSAGE 2

The next two passages are paired. Read the first passage, and then read the second passage.

There's Still Gold in Those Hills

America experienced a “gold rush” in the middle of the nineteenth century. Gold was discovered in the California mountains in 1848, and thousands of people hurried there. These gold seekers were called forty-niners, named after the year that followed, 1849. Gold rushes also took place in the present-day states of Colorado, Nevada, Montana, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Oregon, and Alaska.

Now, over one hundred years later, the gold-mining operations have long since been abandoned, but that doesn't mean that all the precious metal is gone. In fact, there's still gold in those hills, and with a little luck and a bit of work, people can find it. They can pan for gold, just as the forty-niners did so many years ago.

Where to Look

Although gold has been found in all 50 states, the most promising areas in which to search are the states in the western third of the country. Because the metal gets washed out of the mountains by water, a gold seeker looks for a stream. A smaller creek is usually the best place to find gold, since a stream that fills with rainwater from time to time will have seen a good deal of erosion, allowing gold to travel most easily.

With much luck, gold can be found in nugget form, but most often, it appears as small flakes. Gold is very heavy and sinks. A miner might look for a little waterfall in the stream, as gold may be below it. Also, gold gets trapped deep down along the banks where the creek bends or might also be found immediately downstream of a boulder or rock formation in the stream.

Getting to the Gold

Those searching for gold will likely need a shovel to dig up the rocks in the stream where there might be gold, as well as a pan that looks like a pie plate. Gold-panning pans are still sold at sports stores and hobby shops. Knowing how to care for the pan, however, is especially important.

Any grease or oil in the pan needs to be removed. If there's anything slick on the pan's surface—even just oil from a person's fingers—the flakes of gold will be washed out. Heating the pan on a fire or the stove is the suggested way to get rid of the oil and make the pan ready for use!

A gold seeker digs up a shovelful of gravel from the stream and puts it in the pan; then, he or she dips the pan into the stream and allows the water to soak the material. The seeker shakes the pan a few times to let the heavier bits settle to the bottom. After the pan is tipped slightly so that the grass, leaves, pine needles, and any other material float out, the gold will begin sinking to the bottom of the pan.

The seeker will want to get rid of the remaining rocks and gravel but should avoid using his or her hands, since the oil left behind by fingers will wash the gold out. It is best to use a stick to scrape out the top inch or so of gravel.

More Water

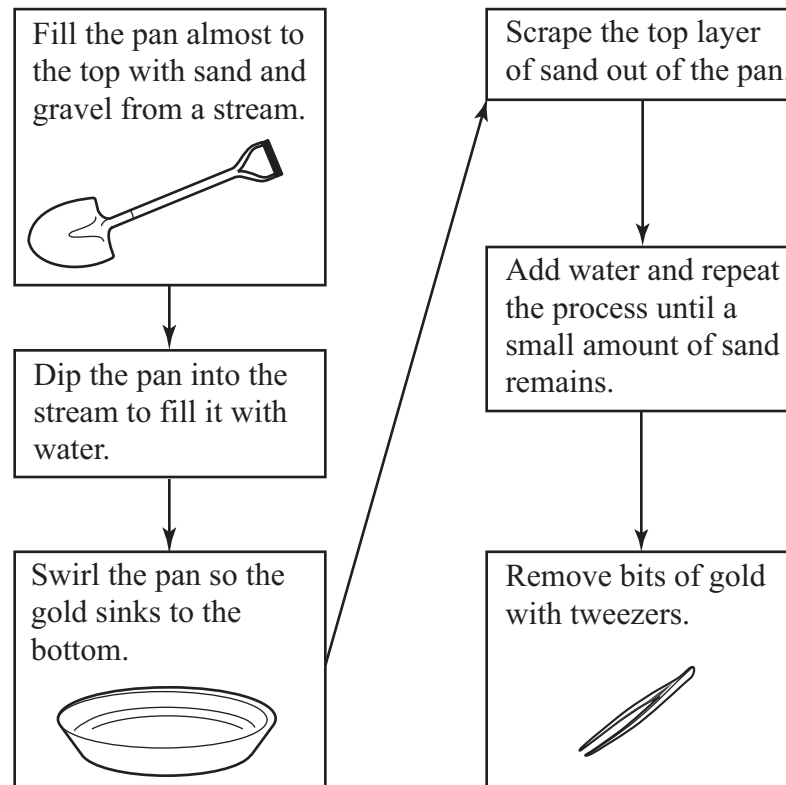
Unless a gold seeker spies a nugget in the pan (what luck!), he or she needs to add more water to the mix. The seeker swishes the material in the pan in a slow, circular movement. The pan is tilted slightly so that the lightweight sand slips over the edge. Water is added as needed, and the process is repeated.

Soon only a small part of the pan will be covered with concentrated material of what appears to be black sand. The swishing motion will spread the sand out in a feather pattern. The bits of material at the tail end of the feather are called tailings, and it is in these tailings where the gold bits can be found.

Is It Gold?

- 11 The black sand is called magnetite because of its magnetic **properties**. By using a magnet, the sand can actually be picked up and moved out of the pan. What gold panners hope to see left behind are flakes of gold, which can be tiny specks or larger flakes the size and shape of breakfast cereal. But people can be tricked by the matter that twinkles like a crystal. This material is probably “fool’s gold”—a nearly worthless material that resembles gold—while actual gold is yellow with a sheen to it. Tweezers are used to pick out the authentic gold flakes and place them in a container. Now the gold miner is ready to dig up another shovelful of gravel and begin the process all over again.

What if the miner didn’t find any gold? He or she shouldn’t give up. Even the best miners didn’t find precious metal in every pan. But like the gold seekers of today who enjoy panning, the forty-niners were well aware that there was still gold in those hills.

How to Pan for Gold

Now read the second passage.

The following letter was written in 1850 by Sheldon Shufelt, a gold seeker who wrote to his cousin from the gold fields in California.

Letter from a Gold Miner

Dear Cousin,

We hired an ox team to carry our baggage and started for this place . . . Ten miles from the river we passed Sutters fort, an old looking heap of buildings surrounded by a high wall of unburnt brick, and situated in the midst of a pleasant fertile plain, covered with grass and a few scattering oaks with numerous tame cattle and mules. We walked by the wagon and at night cooked our suppers, rolled our blankets around us and lay down to rest on the ground . . . After leaving the plains we passed over some hills that looked dry and barren being burnt up by the sun and the long droughts that we have there. We reached this place at night on the fourth day, and in the morning found ourselves in the midst of the diggings, being surrounded by holes dug.

We pitched our tents, shouldered our picks and shovels and with pan in hand sallied forth to try our fortunes at gold digging. We did not have very good success being green at mining, but by practice and observation we soon improved some, and found a little of the shining metal.

It is found along the banks of the streams and in the beds of the same, and in almost every little ravine putting into the streams. And often from 10 to 50 feet from the beds up the bank. We sometimes have to dig several feet deep before we find any, in other places, all the dirt and clay will pay to wash, but generally the clay pays best. If there is no clay, then it is found down on the rock. All the lumps are found on the rocks—and most of the fine gold. We tell when it will pay by trying the dirt with a pan. This is called prospecting here. If it will pay from six to 12 ½ per pan full, then we go to work. Some wash with cradles some with what is called a tom and various other fixings. But I like the tom best of anything that I have seen.

It is a box or trough, about 8 or 9 feet long, some 18 inches wide and from 5 to 6 inches high, with an iron sieve in one end punched with ½ inch holes. Underneath this is placed a ripple or box with two ripples across it. The tom is then placed in an oblique position, the water is brought on by means of a hose. The dirt, stone, clay and all is then thrown in and stirred with a shovel until the water runs clear, the gold and finer gravel goes through the sieve and falls in the under box and lodges above the ripples. Three men can wash all day without taking this out as the water washes the loose gravel over and all the gold settles at the bottom.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

9. In paragraph 11 of “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills,” what is the meaning of **properties**?
- A. specific pieces of land
 - B. individual items that are owned
 - C. special characteristics of a substance
 - D. common traits among a group of people

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|-----------------------|---|
| Alignment | 8.1.5.d | Analyze and use semantic relationships (e.g., multiple meanings, synonyms, antonyms, figurative language, connotations, subtle distinctions) to determine the meaning of words, aid in comprehension, and improve writing. |
| Answer Key | C | Option Annotations The student is asked to determine the meaning of the word properties in paragraph 11 of the text. This is a multiple meaning word. Option C is the correct answer because as “properties” is used in the sentence this is the correct meaning. Options A, B, and D are incorrect because while they are true meanings of “properties,” they do not define the word as it is used in paragraph 11. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 1 | |
| Focus | Multiple Meaning Word | |

10. Which detail from “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” would be beneficial to include in the chart?

- A. Heat the pan over fire.
- B. Know how to care for the pan.
- C. Find an area that has eroded.
- D. Search the hills like the forty-niners did.

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|-------------------------|---|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.f | Analyze and evaluate information from print and digital text features to support comprehension. |
| Answer Key | A | Option Annotations The student is asked to identify helpful information that is missing from the chart. Option A is the correct answer since the passage suggests heating the pan to remove any oils in it before beginning. Option B is incorrect since it is not a specific step in the process. Options C and D are incorrect since they refer to locating a place to pan for gold and are not steps in “how to pan for gold.” |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Text Features— Chart | |

11. Which statement BEST explains how the author’s purpose is achieved in “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills”?
- A. By telling about one gold seeker’s experiences, the author entertains the reader about gold mining.
 - B. By using the example of a gold seeker, the author explains to the reader how to mine for gold.
 - C. By including historical details, the author informs the reader about the past and present of gold mining.
 - D. By presenting a challenge to overcome, the author encourages the reader to keep trying to mine for gold despite obstacles.

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|------------------|---|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.a | Analyze the meaning, reliability, and validity of text considering author’s purpose and perspective. |
| Answer Key | C | Option Annotations The student is asked to determine how the author’s purpose in the passage is achieved. Option C is the correct answer since the author includes historical details to provide information about past and present gold mining. Options A and B are incorrect since the author does not tell about one particular gold miner’s experiences. Option D is incorrect since the author does not present the reader with a challenge to overcome. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 3 | |
| Focus | Author’s Purpose | |

12. In paragraph 2 of “Letter from a Gold Miner,” what does the author’s use of the idiom, “being green,” indicate about the gold seekers?
- A. The miners were envious of others.
 - B. They lacked mining experience.
 - C. The miners felt ill after their first day.
 - D. They were wealthy from mining.

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|---------|---|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.c | Analyze the author’s use of literary devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, personification, idiom, oxymoron, hyperbole, alliteration, onomatopoeia, analogy, tone, mood). |
| Answer Key | B | Option Annotations The student is asked to interpret the idiom, “being green,” as used by the author to describe gold seekers. Option B is the correct answer since “green” suggests the gold seekers were new to the task. Options A, C, and D are incorrect since they offer incorrect interpretations of the given phrase. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Idiom | |

13. How are the organizational structures of the two passages different?

- A. “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” uses sequential steps to describe the process of panning for gold. “Letter from a Gold Miner” uses first-hand experience to describe a different process for locating gold.
- B. “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” describes in detail how to identify gold. “Letter from a Gold Miner” explains the sequence of events that took place during the gold rush.
- C. “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” compares the modern gold-seeking process to the original process. “Letter from a Gold Miner” uses facts about the gold-seeking process and expresses the author’s opinions about it.
- D. “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” provides facts about how to find gold and opinions about the process. “Letter from a Gold Miner” explains the problems caused by the gold rush and the effects they had on people.

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|------------------------|--|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.j | Apply knowledge of organizational patterns to comprehend informational text (e.g., sequence/chronological, description, spatial, cause and effect, compare/contrast, fact/opinion, proposition/support). |
| Answer Key | A | The student is asked to contrast the organizational structures of the two passages. Option A is correct since the first passage uses a sequence structure and the second passage uses “first-hand experience.” Options B, C, and D are incorrect since they incorrectly identify the organizational structures of both passages. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 3 | |
| Focus | Organizational Pattern | |

EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE ITEM

14. This question has two parts. First answer part A, then answer part B.

Part A

What conclusion can be drawn from “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills”?

- A. Gold is not found outside the United States.
- B. People in the United States continue to pan for gold.
- C. The gold mining process has changed over time.
- D. Gold is valuable because large companies have stopped looking for it.

Part B

Which evidence from “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” supports the conclusion in part A?

- A. Gold rushes also took place in the present-day states of Colorado, Nevada, Montana, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Oregon, and Alaska.
- B. Now, over one hundred years later, the gold-mining operations have long since been abandoned, but that doesn’t mean that all the precious metal is gone.
- C. In fact, there’s still gold in those hills, and with a little luck and a bit of work, people can find it.
- D. Gold-panning pans are still sold at sports stores and hobby shops.

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------------|---|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.i | Construct and/or answer literal, inferential, critical, and interpretive questions and support answers with explicit evidence from the text or additional sources. |
| Answer Key | Part A: B Part B: D | Option Annotations The student is asked to select a conclusion that may reasonably be drawn from the passage and to identify evidence from the passage which supports that conclusion. Part A: Option B is the correct answer since the passage suggests that panning for gold continues to be done by people in the United States. Option A is incorrect since there is nothing in the passage to suggest that gold is only found in the U.S. Option C is incorrect since the passage indicates the opposite is true. Option D is incorrect since the passage does not indicate that the cessation of large-scale gold mining has affected the value of gold in any way. Part B: Option D is the correct answer since the fact that gold-panning equipment is still sold in stores is evidence that people are still engaging in the practice. Options A, B, and C are incorrect since they do not provide evidence in support of the correct conclusion. This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify the answers to part A and part B. To receive 1 point, the student must at least select the correct answer for part A. No credit will be given for a correct response to part B if part A is incorrect. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Textual Evidence to Support an Idea | |

AUTO-SCORED CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEM

15. Complete the chart to show which main ideas are supported by information in BOTH “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” and “Letter from a Gold Miner.”

| Main Ideas Shared by Both Passages | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |

A stream is vital to the gold mining process.
Teamwork helps to make gold mining more efficient.
There is no guarantee that a miner will find gold.
Gold is often found in the form of flakes rather than nuggets.
People use the original panning techniques to gold mine as a hobby.
In the mid-1800s, people traveled to California in search of gold.
Miners can be tricked by fool's gold.

[Click To Respond](#)


Appears after the student selects the Click To Respond box (above).

| Main Ideas Shared by Both Passages | |
|------------------------------------|--|
| 1. | |
| 2. | |
| 3. | |

A stream is vital to the gold mining process.
Teamwork helps to make gold mining more efficient.
There is no guarantee that a miner will find gold.
Gold is often found in the form of flakes rather than nuggets.
People use the original panning techniques to gold mine as a hobby.
In the mid-1800s, people traveled to California in search of gold.
Miners can be tricked by fool's gold.

[OK](#)

Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

 ?

Main Ideas Shared by Both Passages

1. A stream is vital to the gold mining process.
2. In the mid-1800s, people traveled to California in search of gold.
3. There is no guarantee that a miner will find gold.

Teamwork helps to make gold mining more efficient.

Gold is often found in the form of flakes rather than nuggets.

People use the original panning techniques to gold mine as a hobby.

Miners can be tricked by fool's gold.

OK

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|--|--|
| Alignment | 8.1.6.e | Summarize, analyze, and synthesize the connection between the main ideas of two informational texts and/or media. |
| Answer Key | See Completed Correct Response | Option Annotations The student is asked to identify three main ideas that are supported by both passages. The options “A stream is vital to the gold mining process,” “In the mid-1800s, people traveled to California in search of gold,” and “There is no guarantee that a miner will find gold” are correct. These ideas are supported in both passages. While the other ideas are presented in one of the passages, they are not supported by both. This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify all three main ideas that are supported by information from the passage. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify at least one of the main ideas. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 3 | |
| Focus | Main Idea with Supporting Textual Evidence | |

TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS ITEM

- 16.** The passages “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” and “Letter from a Gold Miner” are both about the history of gold mining. Explain how the passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from BOTH passages to support your answer.

XXX/6000

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|---|--|
| Alignment | Reading: 8.1.6.h Writing: See Rubric | Analyze the social, historical, cultural, and biographical influences in a variety of texts, citing textual evidence from literary and informational text to develop a national and international multicultural perspective. |
| Answer Key | See Rubric | Option Annotations Refer to the sample student responses. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 3 | |

TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

DRAFT Nebraska Department of Education Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Scoring Rubric

| Nebraska English Language Arts Standards | 1 | 2 | 3 | 4 |
|--|---|---|--|--|
| Analysis of Text 1.6* 1.6.i | Demonstrates limited analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Minimally addresses part(s) of the task to demonstrate limited understanding of the text(s) Inadequately analyzes text(s) by minimally addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) | Demonstrates partially effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses some part(s) of the task to demonstrate partial understanding of text(s) Partially analyzes text(s) by occasionally addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) | Demonstrates effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses all parts of the task to demonstrate sufficient understanding of the text(s) Analyzes text(s) by addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) | Demonstrates exemplary analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Addresses all parts of the task to demonstrate thorough understanding of the text(s) Thoroughly analyzes text(s) by purposefully addressing explicit and implicit ideas from the text(s) |
| Use of Evidence 1.6.i 2.1.c 2.2.b 4.1.a | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficiently integrates evidence from the text(s) by using few details, examples, and/or quotes Provides little or no relevant and/or accurate evidence from the text(s) to support claims or ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Partially integrates evidence from the text(s) by using some details, examples, and/or quotes Provides some relevant and accurate evidence from the text(s) to partially support claims or ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Integrates specific evidence from the text(s) by using details, examples, and/or quotes Provides relevant and accurate evidence from the text(s) to sufficiently support claims or ideas | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Skilfully integrates specific evidence from the text(s) by using details, examples, and/or quotes Provides relevant and accurate evidence from the text(s) to thoroughly support claims or ideas |
| Writing Skills 1.5.c 2.1.b 2.1.d 2.1.e 2.1.h 2.1.i 2.2.a 2.2.d 4.1.b | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates an inadequately focused response which lacks an introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and/or transitions Demonstrates little or no evidence of an organizational pattern and/or mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Limited or no use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Limited or no use of precise word choice and/or content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) Ineffectively demonstrates conventions of standard English; errors may seriously interfere with meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a partially focused response which includes a weak introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and/or transitions Demonstrates partial evidence of an organizational pattern and/or mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Weak use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Occasionally uses precise word choice and/or content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) Partially demonstrates conventions of standard English; errors may interfere with meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a focused response which includes a clear introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and appropriate transitions Demonstrates an appropriate organizational pattern and mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Clear use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Uses precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) Demonstrates conventions of standard English; if present, errors seldom interfere with meaning | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Generates a well-focused response which includes a strong introduction/thesis, body, conclusion, and purposeful transitions Skilfully demonstrates an appropriate organizational pattern and mode suited to the purpose and intended audience Strong use of paraphrases or quotes that attribute information to the text(s) Skilfully uses precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text(s) to enhance ideas Thoroughly demonstrates conventions of standard English; if present, errors do not interfere with meaning |

*Individual TDA prompts are aligned to one of the following 1.6 Reading Comprehension indicators: 1.6.a, 1.6.b, 1.6.c, 1.6.d, 1.6.e, 1.6.f, 1.6.g, 1.6.h, 1.6.i, or 1.6.j

EXAMPLE STUDENT RESPONSES**AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 4 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC**

- 16.** The passages “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” and “Letter from a Gold Miner” are both about the history of gold mining. Explain how the passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from BOTH passages to support your answer.

The passages “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” and “Letters from a Gold Miner” are both about the history and process of gold mining. These two passages are very descriptive and helpful to the reader in understanding what gold mining is like today and during the gold rush of the 1850s. The passage “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills”, provides the reader with useful historical information about the gold rush era, and then goes on to explain how and where people today can still pan for gold. The passage “Letters from a Gold Miner”, is an actual historical document in the form of a letter written in 1850 by a ‘forty-niner’ Sheldon Shufelt which, among other things, explains a method of gold mining using a device called a tom.

The passage “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” gives the reader useful historical information about the gold rush era. America experienced the gold rush in the middle of the nineteenth century and gold was found in Colorado, Nevada, Montana, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Oregon and Alaska. In California gold was discovered in 1848, and the gold seekers there were called forty-niners after the year that followed. The passage “Letters from a Gold Miner”, gives useful information into the life of a gold miner as it describes what life was like in 1850. Sheldon Shufelt wrote “we walked by the wagon and at night cooked our suppers, rolled our blankets around us and lay down to rest on the ground... After leaving the plains we passed over some hills that looked dry and barren being burnt up by the sun and long droughts” Life sounds hard for the miners in 1850.

Both passages are very helpful in showing the process of mining for gold. “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” tells the reader where exactly is the best places to look for gold in the rivers. “A gold seeker looks for a stream. A smaller creek is usually the best place to find gold since a stream that fills with rainwater from time to time will have seen a good deal of erosion, allowing gold to travel most easily”. The passage then explains in detail how to pan for gold. “A gold seeker digs up a shovelful of gravel from the stream and puts it in the pan, then he dips the pan into the stream and allows water to soak the material”. Then “The seeker shakes the pan a few times. The seeker swishes the material in the pan in a slow circular movement”. When a small amount of sand remains you can use tweezers to remove bits of gold. This is how the passage helps us understand the process of panning for gold today and a useful flow chart is also included to help as well. In the 1850s the process for mining gold was different and they used a cradle or tom to find the gold. The letter from Shufelt also tells us where the best

places to find gold are. “It is found along the banks of the streams and in the beds of the same, and in almost every little ravine putting into the streams” This information is very similar to that in the first passage. Panning for gold like we do today was called prospecting and was done to find where the most gold could be found. When they found enough gold they used the tom. In the passage “Letters from a Gold Miner”, the process of using a tom is described in detail. “It is a box or trough, about 8 or 9 feet long, some 18 inches wide and from 5 to 6 inches high with an iron sieve in one end punched with ½ inch holes. Underneath this is placed a ripple or box with two ripples across it. The tom is placed in an oblique position, the water is brought on by a hose. The dirt stone clay is then thrown in and stirred with a shovel, the gold and finer gravel goes through the sieve and falls under the box and lodges under the ripples”. The process of mining for gold in 1850 was very hard work with lots of digging and shoveling and long days of labor. The tom was a good way to find lots of gold during the gold rush era when there was still plenty of gold in the hills. Today much of the gold has gone, but by panning for gold in the same way they prospected for gold in the 1850s, you may get lucky and find small amounts of it in the hills. Finding gold today is a hobby, where it was a way of life for Sheldon Shufelt in 1850.

Both passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the US. They both provide detailed information on where to look for gold and how to get the gold out from the hills. The processes used today and in the past have not changed too much over time and both seem like they would take a long time and a lot of hard work, without always being successful. But after reading both passages I now know where to look for gold, and how to get rich.

4689/6000

This response demonstrates exemplary analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses all parts of the task, thoroughly explaining how the passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States, and it provides purposeful, relevant analysis and specific text support from both passages about the processes of gold mining in the 1850s and panning for gold today. The writer makes consistent use of appropriately cited quotations from the text. The response is well focused and demonstrates an appropriate organizational pattern. Precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text are evident and used skillfully. A thorough understanding of conventions of standard English has been demonstrated, with few errors present.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 3 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC



16. The passages “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” and “Letter from a Gold Miner” are both about the history of gold mining. Explain how the passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from BOTH passages to support your answer.

There’s Still Gold in Those Hills and *Letter from a Gold Miner* helps the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in several ways. It gives basic information on gold mining as well as an explanation on how to mine for gold. It also give a first-hand account of being a gold miner in the California Gold Rush.

There has been many gold rushes in the history of the U.S. in states Colorado, Nevada, Montana, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Oregon, and Alaska, according to *There’s Still Gold in Those Hills*. which also stated that over a hundred years later, the gold mining operations have been abandoned although there is still gold in those hills today. People can still mine for gold today just like they did in the 1800s.

In 1850, Sheldon Shufelt, a man who went to California in search of gold, wrote a letter to his cousin explaining the fields of gold there as described in *Letter From a Gold Miner*. First, these miners set up camp. The pitched tents, and bought their picks, shovels, and pans to try their luck at gold panning. Shufelt describes a scenery where gold seems to be in abundance. “It is found along the banks of the streams and and in the beds of the same, and in almost every little ravine putting into the streams,” he says. Shufelt also talks about prospecting and the different methods people use to obtain their gold, such as a tool called a tom. A tom is, as Shufelt states, “a box or trough, about 8 or 9 feet long, with some 18 inches wide and from 5 to 6 inches high with an iron sieve in one end punched with $\frac{1}{2}$ in holes. Underneath this is placed a ripple or box with two ripples across it.” He then describes how the tom works. It is placed in an oblique position and a hose brings water. All the dirt, stone, clay, etc. is stirred into the water with a shovel until the water is clear of everything and the gold falls into the box underneath.

People today can use a similar process to pan for gold. If you wish to do so, you will need a shovel to dig up rocks and a gold-panning pan. These pans can be sold at sports stores and hobby shops. Next, you must find a location to pan for gold. Gold can be found in all 50 states, but it is most abundant in the western third of the country. The first step is to fill your pan with sand and gravel from a stream. Then, you dip the pan into water. Once that is completed, you swirl the pan around, slowly ridding it of dirt and debris. This will also get rid of the water, so you will need to refill the pan with water periodically as you repeat this process. Finally, all that will remain are some flecks of gold and probably some black sand known as magnetite. Magnetite is given its name

because of its magnetic properties, so you can easily use just a magnet to get rid of the magnetite. The only remaining substance in the pan should be tiny, sparkling flecks. “Is this real gold?” you ask yourself. Hopefully so, but these shimmering flecks could also be fool’s gold which is a nearly useless material the looks similar to real gold. This information was obtained and paraphrased from *There’s Still Gold in Those Hills*.

As you can see, these two passages are extremely informative on the history and process of gold mining. *There’s Still Gold in Those Hills* gives a brief history on previous gold rushes as well as descriptive instructions on how to pan for gold. *Letter from a Gold Miner* gave a primary source for what things were like for gold miners in the 1849 California Gold Rush. Clearly, these sources helped the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States very well.

3601/6000

This response demonstrates effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses the task of explaining how the passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States. Relevant evidence from both texts has been chosen to support the explanation. Specific details relating to the history and process of gold mining have been effectively integrated into the response and provide sufficient support for the explanation. The response is focused and occasionally uses precise word choice and vocabulary from the text. An organizational pattern and mode suited to the purpose are evident, and appropriately cited quotations from the text are integrated into the response. Demonstration of conventions of standard English is evident, with a few errors that do not interfere with meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 2 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

- 16.** The passages “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” and “Letter from a Gold Miner” are both about the history of gold mining. Explain how the passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from BOTH passages to support your answer.

Gold is everywhere, but it is difficult to find. In America, gold was first discovered in the mountains of California in 1848. At this time, thousands of people went to California because of this discovery. Gold rushes did not only take place in California, but in other states like Colorado, Nevada, Montana, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Oregon, and Alaska. Since then, gold has been found in all of the 50 states. To the people who were seeking to find it, they were called forty-niners. Their names were that because of the year that followed, 1849. Today, there is still gold in the mountains that people are discovering.

People who try to find gold usually look for a stream. Thee they will use a shovel and dig up the rocks where there might be gold. You will need a shovel, a pan, and tweezers. You will fill the pan full of sand and gravel from the stream. The pan needs water to swirl around so the gold can sink to the bottom. After the gold will hopefully sink to the bottom, you will need to scrape the top layer of sand off and add some more water. You keep repeating until there isn’t a lot of sand left. That is when you use the tweezers to take the bits of gold away from the rest of the sand. You do that process over and over again until you are finished.

In the letter, it explained how the gold miners ate and slept. There was a wagon that had suppers for them. They had to build tents and brought blankets so it would be easier to sleep and not be cold at night. After they woke up, they had to go over hills that looked burnt by the sun and dry. There were long droughts while they were trying to find gold. It took them four days to reach where they wanted to be. They got there at night on the fourth night. There was dirt, clay, and rocks. The gold was normally found on the clay. If it wasn’t then it was on the rocks which was the most fine of the gold. They used a box eight or nine feet long and had running water down it. The gold was caught on the bottom and the other sand and materials were left to was down the box.

Both of the passages could help learn the history in many ways. The first passage explained where gold first was found in American and where all gold was found. It stated how today, gold was still found in the hills. The process of gold mining was told in

text and in a picture. The second passage said how long it was unit you got to where you'd want to be to find gold. It also said how the box to find gold looked like and where the gold could be at like in clay or rocks. All in all, those two passages could help a reader understand the history of gold mining.

2610/6000

This response demonstrates partially effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. While the final paragraph appears to be an attempt to address the task of explaining how the passages help the reader understand the history of gold mining, the response is simply summarizing or paraphrasing portions of the text without focusing on the task. A partial understanding of the text is evident. The response includes a weak introduction, body, and conclusion. Appropriately cited paraphrases or quotations are lacking. Some errors in conventions of standard English occasionally interfere with meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 1 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

- 16.** The passages “There’s Still Gold in Those Hills” and “Letter from a Gold Miner” are both about the history of gold mining. Explain how the passages help the reader understand the history and process of gold mining in the United States. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from BOTH passages to support your answer.

American experience a “gold rush” in the middle of the nineteenth century. Gold was discovered in the California mountains in 1848, and thousands of people hurried there. The gold seekers were called forty-niners named after the year that followed 1849. There was gold in Colorado, Nevada, Montana, Arizona, New Mexico, Idaho, Oregon and Alaska.

A gold seeker digs up a shovelful of gravel from the stream and puts it in the pan; Then he or she digs up the pan into the stream and allows the water to soak the material those searching will likely need a shovel to dig up rocks in the stream where gold might be as well as a pan that looks like a pie plate. Gold-panning pans are still sold at sports stores and hobby shops.

The black sand is called magnetic because of its magnetic properties. You can pan a gold by fill the pan most to the top with sand and gravel from the stream, scrape the top layers of the sands out of the pan and swirl the pan so the gold sinks to the bottom.

984/6000

This response demonstrates limited analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response minimally addresses the task, inadequately analyzes the texts, provides little relevant evidence from the passages to support a claim, and demonstrates limited understanding of the texts. The response appears to be a somewhat-random selection of minimal text information about the history or process of gold mining, which lacks evidence of an organizational pattern or central idea. An ineffective demonstration of conventions of standard English is evident.

INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS

17. Read the paragraph from a letter to city council.

City council members have proposed a new noise ordinance for the city. The new ordinance is an excellent idea. Noise has been a problem in my neighborhood for many years. Many people blare music through open windows until the wee hours of the morning. Often people ride by in cars or motorcycles with their radios playing at full volume. It is often impossible to sleep through such loud noise. Excessive noise can be harmful to people's health, causing hearing damage and affecting blood pressure.

Choose the BEST concluding sentence for the paragraph.

- A. Therefore, I strongly support the new noise ordinance and plead with council members to pass it into law.
- B. The current ordinance is a weak one and is so vaguely worded that it is difficult to enforce.
- C. As a result, my neighbors close their windows at night, even in the heat of summer, and wear earplugs when they go to sleep.
- D. Persistent lack of sleep due to noise issues can cause a multitude of other health problems.

| Item Information | | |
|--------------------|---------------------|--|
| Alignment | 8.2.1.b | Generate a draft that conveys complex ideas through analysis and use of organizational patterns that are suited to the purpose and intended audience and includes a strong thesis, body, conclusion, and appropriate transitions linked to the purpose of the composition. |
| Answer Key | A | Option Annotations The student is asked to determine the best concluding sentence for the paragraph. The correct answer option is A because it includes an opinion that is supported by the information in the paragraph. The opinion also serves as a solid conclusion that connects back to the introductory sentence in the paragraph. Options B, C, and D are incorrect because they provide additional information rather than a relevant conclusion. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Concluding Sentence | |

18. A student is writing a research report about George Washington Carver. Read the paragraph from the report and the directions that follow.

George Washington Carver was an influential scientist and educator. He was a pioneer in studying how particular crops affected the health of farmland. At the time, southern farmers grew primarily cotton, which depleted nutrients in the soil. Carver showed farmers the value of alternating which crops they planted each year. For example, planting cotton one year, then peanuts or soybeans the next, restored nutrients in the soil and resulted in better crops with higher yields. Carver also discovered new ways to use a variety of crops, which meant higher demand and better prices. Carver's work helped reshape farming in the South in the early twentieth century.

The student found information in different sources. Choose **two** pieces of information that support the claims in the student's paragraph. Choose **two**.

- A. He appreciated art and studied painting at Simpson College in Iowa.
- B. Although known for his peanut research, Carver did not invent peanut butter.
- C. In 1947, a fire destroyed many of the contents of a museum dedicated to Carver's work.
- D. In 1939, he received a presidential medal for his contributions to agriculture in the South.
- E. He was the first African American graduate of the college now known as Iowa State University.
- F. Carver thought of hundreds of ways to use peanuts, including nonfood ideas such as paper and ink.

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|-----------------------------|--|
| Alignment | 8.2.1.c | Gather and use relevant information and evidence from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources including primary and secondary sources to support claims or theses. |
| Answer Key | D, F | Option Annotations The student is asked to determine two pieces of information that support the claim that George Washington Carver was an important scientist and educator. Option D is correct because being awarded a presidential medal for contributions to agriculture supports the idea that George Washington Carver was an important scientist. Option F is also correct because the statement reinforces how George Washington Carver discovered new ways to use a variety of crops. Although Options A, B, C, and E are specific facts about George Washington Carver, they do not support the claim that he was an important scientist and educator. This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify both sentences that support claim. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify one of the sentences that support the inference. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Gather Relevant Information | |

19. A student is doing research for a report on early filmmaking. Read her two sources and complete the task that follows.

Source 1

Modern moviegoers, familiar with dramatic special effects, are often surprised by the simplicity of early motion pictures. It is hard to imagine how black-and-white movies with no sound and simple plots could excite an audience. And yet in 1903, *The Great Train Robbery* created a sensation with no color, no soundtrack, and less than a dozen minutes in which to tell a simple but exciting story.

Source 2

The Kinetoscope was an early type of movie projector invented by Thomas Edison in 1891. For Edison, the invention was an amusing distraction, a toy. The moving images were the result of playful experiment. Most of the early efforts to produce motion pictures were brief representations of familiar scenes, such as a running horse or a man sneezing. Even so, people found them fascinating.

Select **two** statements that should be revised because they plagiarize one or both of the sources. Select **two**.

- A. Audiences were amazed by even simple images like a man sneezing or a horse running.
- B. As filmmakers gradually learned, audiences loved motion pictures that told an interesting story.
- C. Most of the early efforts to produce motion pictures were brief representations of familiar scenes.
- D. People today, who are familiar with dramatic special effects, are often surprised by the simplicity of early movies.
- E. It seems likely that people were attracted to even the simplest of motion pictures because of novelty.
- F. Even without special effects or sound, black-and-white movies were as popular as any movie made today.

| Item Information | | |
|---------------------------|------------------|--|
| Alignment | 8.2.1.i | Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation. |
| Answer Key | C, D | Option Annotations The student is asked to determine two statements that are plagiarized. The correct answers are Options C and D. Option C is plagiarized because it is a direct copy of the first half of a sentence used in Source 2. Option D is plagiarized because, while the words “People today” and “movies” are used to replace “Modern moviegoers” and “motion pictures,” the rest of the sentence is verbatim to the original sentence in Source 1. Options A, B, E, and F are incorrect because, while they include information from the sources, the information has been put into the student’s own words. This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify both statements that are plagiarized. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify one of the statements that is plagiarized. |
| Depth of Knowledge | 2 | |
| Focus | Avoid Plagiarism | |

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**NeSA-ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
ITEM AND SCORING SAMPLER
GRADE 8**

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