



## **NEBRASKA STUDENT-CENTERED ASSESSMENT SYSTEM**

### **2015 NSCAS–Alternate Assessment Item and Scoring Sampler**

**English Language Arts (NSCAS–AAELA)**

## **High School**

Assessments for the Nebraska Student-Centered Assessment System are administered by the  
Nebraska Department of Education (NDE)

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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 Alternate Assessment.

## SAMPLER CONTENTS

This sampler contains test questions (items) that have been written to align to the assessment extended indicators that are based on the Nebraska College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Standards. The test questions provide an example of the types of questions that will appear on an operational, College- and Career-Ready NeSA-Alternate Assessment in ELA. All sample test questions have been through a rigorous review process to ensure alignment with the assessment extended indicators.

## PURPOSE AND USES

The purpose of the sampler is to expose teachers and administrators to new items and to show how these items align to the revised Nebraska College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Extended Standards.

## DOK

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. Four levels of DOK are used for this analysis. The NeSA-Alt assessments include items written at levels 1 and 2. Levels 3 and 4 items are not included. In addition, the NeSA-Alt items are classified based on DOK stages—subsets of the four DOK levels. The stages include responding, reproducing, recalling at DOK 1, and basic reasoning at DOK 2.

## READING LEVEL 1-STAGE 1: RESPONDING TO DISCOURSE MATERIALS

Level 1-Stage 1 requires students to display the ability to respond to or indicate, or acknowledge text or discourse related features. Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 1-Stage 1 performance are:

- Students demonstrate the ability to attend to pictures/symbols/objects pertinent to a story.
- Students display attention to people, surroundings, or materials.
- Students attend while teacher reads.

## READING LEVEL 1-STAGE 2: REPRODUCING DISCOURSE RELATED MATERIALS

Level 1-Stage 2 requires students to display the ability to copy, replicate, repeat, re-enact, mirror, or match text or discourse related features. Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 1-Stage 2 performance are:

- Students match pictures and/or words that depict emotions such happy, sad, or angry.
- Students match printed words to objects.

## READING LEVEL 1-STAGE 3: RECALLING INFORMATION ABOUT DISCOURSE RELATED MATERIALS

Level 1-Stage 3 requires the ability to recite or recall facts or information. Involves the ability to distinguish between text-based or discourse features. Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 1-Stage 3 performance are:

- Students demonstrate understanding of new words or passages by making connections with personal experience via speech, writing, signs, or assistive device.
- Students retell information taken from printed materials.
- Students answer who, what, and where questions about a story.

## READING LEVEL 2-STAGE 4: BASIC REASONING

Level 2-Stage 4 requires processing beyond recall and observation. This requires both comprehension and subsequent processing of text. It also involves ordering, classifying text as well as identifying patterns, relationships, and main points. Some examples that represent, but do not constitute all of, Level 2-Stage 4 performance are:

- Students correct grammar mistakes in a reading selection.
- Students summarize the main idea of paragraph.
- Students identify the author's purpose for writing a brief passage.

## ITEM FORMAT AND SCORING GUIDELINES

The Nebraska College- and Career-Ready Alternate Assessment in ELA has one type of test question. Each assessment incorporates multiple-choice (MC) items to assess the Nebraska College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Extended Standards. Students are required to select a correct answer from three response choices with a single correct answer. MC items are used to assess a variety of skill levels in relation to the tested extended standards.

## MULTIPLE CHOICE (MC)

All MC items have three answer choices, including two 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.

## DESCRIPTION OF SAMPLE ITEMS

Sample items are provided in this sampler, along with any related stimulus information such as a passage or graphic. Before each test item is an item information table. It is followed by the administrator's directions and then the student view of the item.

Example Response Item Information Table

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	Assigned Extended Indicator	Assigned extended indicator definitions
<b>Answer Key</b>	Correct Answer	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Brief answer analysis or rationale
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	DOK Level, Stage	
<b>Focus</b>	Skill/Task	

## ADDITIONAL INFORMATION

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

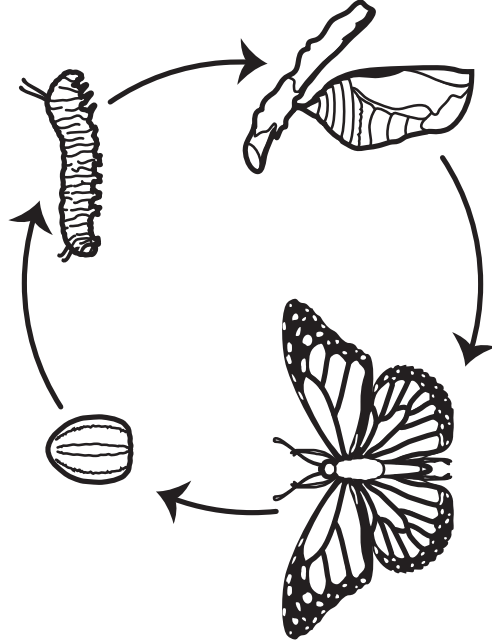
## ITEM INFORMATION AND QUESTIONS

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.2.1.c	Use relevant evidence to support a claim or theses.
<b>Answer Key</b>	A	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option A is correct. A website about how butterflies grow would explain the life cycle of monarch butterflies. Students may choose options B and C if they do not understand what the question is asking.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2, 4	
<b>Focus</b>	Use Relevant Evidence	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.2.1.c</b> <b>Use Relevant Evidence</b> <b>DOK Level 2, Stage 4</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student's attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this story. Indicate.</b> <b>Tony is making a poster for science class. He wants to show the life cycle of a monarch butterfly. Indicate.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>Which website should Tony use?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>one about how butterflies grow</b> B. <b>one about why butterflies are colorful</b> C. <b>one about what butterflies eat</b>

## Question 1

Tony is making a poster for science class. He wants to show the life cycle of a monarch butterfly.



**one about how butterflies grow**

**one about why butterflies are colorful**

**one about what butterflies eat**

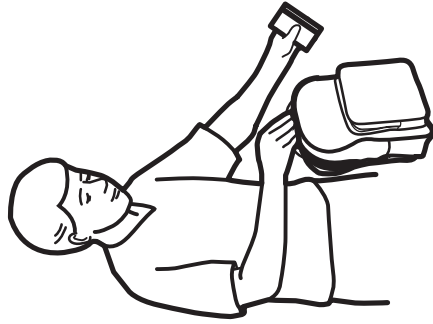
Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.1.6.i	Answer literal and inferential questions using explicit evidence from text.
<b>Answer Key</b>	C	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option C is correct. Sitting in a seat while riding a bus helps to keep riders safe. Options A and B are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they misunderstand the question.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	1, 3	
<b>Focus</b>	Answer Inferential Questions	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.1.6.i</b> <b>Answer Inferential Questions</b> <b>DOK Level 1, Stage 3</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Place student test page in front of the student.</i></li><li>• <i>Call student's attention to the page.</i></li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this paragraph.</b> <i>Indicate.</i> <b>Some people ride a bus to work. When the bus comes, people get on and pay or swipe a bus card. Each rider finds a seat. When the bus arrives at the stop nearest their work place, the people get off. Taking a bus often saves time and money. It is also a time when people can read a book, rest, or talk with other bus riders.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>Which detail tells how a bus rider stays safe?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>A rider swipes a card.</b> B. <b>A rider reads a book.</b> C. <b>A rider sits in a seat.</b>

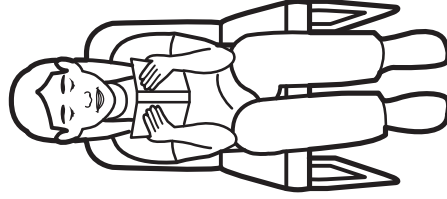


## Question 2

Some people ride a bus to work. When the bus comes, people get on and pay or swipe a bus card. Each rider finds a seat. When the bus arrives at the stop nearest their work place, the people get off. Taking a bus often saves time and money. It is also a time when people can read a book, rest, or talk with other bus riders.



**A rider swipes  
a card.**



**A rider reads  
a book.**



**A rider sits  
in a seat.**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.1.6.c	Recognize how literary devices are used purposefully in literary text (onomatopoeia, personification, alliteration, simile, metaphor, idiom).
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option B is correct. The wind caused the branches to sway in the wind. The word “danced” is used in the sentence to indicate this movement. Options A and C are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they do not understand the context within the sentences.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2, 4	
<b>Focus</b>	Literary Devices	

<b>Administrator’s Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.1.6.c Literary Devices DOK Level 2, Stage 4</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student’s attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read these sentences. Indicate.</b> <b>As the sun set, there was a cool breeze. The branches of the trees danced in the wind.</b> <b>The word “danced” is underlined. Indicate.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>What does the word “danced” tell about the branches?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>They were falling.</b> B. <b>They were swaying.</b> C. <b>They were growing.</b>

### Question 3

As the sun set, there was a cool breeze.  
The branches of the trees danced in the wind.

**They were falling.**

**They were swaying.**

**They were growing.**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.1.6.d	Identify a theme in one literary text or a main idea that is common across two informational texts.
<b>Answer Key</b>	C	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option C is correct. Tom practiced hard during the week to memorize his lines for the play, so this shows that “working hard makes a difference.” Options A and B are incorrect. The story does not focus on forgetting lines or having fun when helping others.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2,4	
<b>Focus</b>	Theme/Literary Text	

<b>Administrator’s Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.1.6.d Theme/Literary Text DOK Level 2, Stage 4</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• <i>Place student test page in front of the student.</i></li><li>• <i>Call student’s attention to the page.</i></li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this story. Indicate.</b> <b>Tom was in the school play. He had to memorize several lines. Tom asked his sister Becca to help him practice. She agreed. They practiced each night until the day of the play. The extra effort was worth it. Tom remembered all of his lines.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>What is the theme of this story?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> <b>A. Helping others is fun.</b> <b>B. Forgetting lines is easy to do.</b> <b>C. Working hard makes a difference.</b>

### **Question 4**

Tom was in the school play. He had to memorize several lines. Tom asked his sister Becca to help him practice. She agreed. They practiced each night until the day of the play. The extra effort was worth it. Tom remembered all of his lines.

**Helping others is fun.**

**Forgetting lines is easy to do.**

**Working hard makes a difference.**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.1.6.j	Identify organizational patterns in informational text (e.g., sequence/chronological, cause/effect, compare/contrast, fact/opinion, problem/solution).
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option B is correct. Jared has a new puppy and needs to remember how to care for the puppy before going to school. He solves his problem by looking for pictures on the Internet to create a poster. Options A and C are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they do not understand how the story is organized.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2, 4	
<b>Focus</b>	Organizational Patterns	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	Indicator LAE.12.1.6.j Organizational Patterns DOK Level 2, Stage 4
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li> <li>Call student's attention to the page.</li> </ul>
<b>SAY</b>	Follow along as I read this story. <i>Indicate.</i> Jared has a new puppy. Before he goes to school, Jared has to care for the puppy. He wants to remember what he needs to do. So Jared looks for pictures on the Internet. He creates a poster. Now he can see what he has to do before going to school.
<b>ASK</b>	How is this story organized? <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. by giving directions to make a poster B. by telling a problem and how it is solved C. by making a list of places and activities

## Question 5

Jared has a new puppy. Before he goes to school, Jared has to care for the puppy. He wants to remember what he needs to do. So Jared looks for pictures on the Internet. He creates a poster. Now he can see what he has to do before going to school.

**by giving directions to make a poster**

**by telling a problem and how it is solved**

**by making a list of places and activities**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.2.1.h	Edit writing for conventions of standard English (e.g., initial capitalization and proper nouns, and punctuation limited to period and question mark).
<b>Answer Key</b>	C	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option C is correct. The word “tuesday” is a day of the week and should be capitalized. Options A and B are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they think they are proper nouns.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	1, 3	
<b>Focus</b>	Edit Writing/ Capitalization	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.2.1.h</b> <b>Edit Writing/Capitalization</b> <b>DOK Level 1, Stage 3</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student's attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this sentence. Indicate.</b> <b>The senior class will visit the college on tuesday.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>Which word should begin with a capital letter?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>senior</b> B. <b>college</b> C. <b>tuesday</b>



**Question 6**

The senior class will visit the college on tuesday.

**senior**

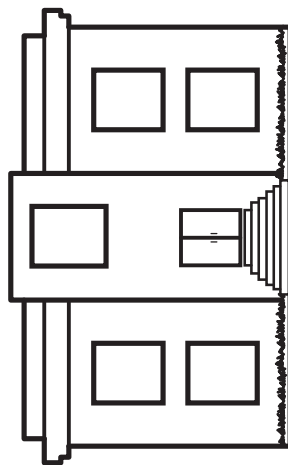
**college**

**tuesday**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.1.5.a	Use roots and affixes to determine the meaning of words, as well as context clues (e.g., word, phrase, sentence and/or paragraph clues).
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option B is correct. The student points to the word “building.” Option A is incorrect. Students may choose this answer if they misunderstand that they are to point to the word.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	1, 1	
<b>Focus</b>	Word Structure	

<b>Administrator’s Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.1.5.a</b> <b>Word Structure</b> <b>DOK Level 1, Stage 1</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student’s attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Here is a picture of a building. Indicate.</b> <b>The suffix “-ing” is added to the word “build” to make the word “building.” Indicate.</b> <b>The suffix “-ing” is underlined.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>Where is the word “building”?</b> A. The student indicates the picture of the building or any other part of the page. B. The student indicates the word “building”. C. The student does not respond.

## Question 7



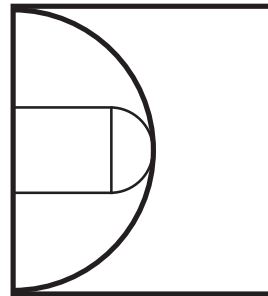
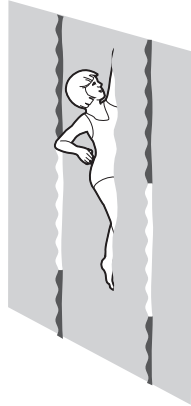
building

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.1.5.a	Use roots and affixes to determine the meaning of words, as well as context clues (e.g., word, phrase, sentence and/or paragraph clues.)
<b>Answer Key</b>	C	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option C is correct. The picture matches the one shown with the context. Also, swimming and diving provide clues that aquatic refers to water. Options A and B are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they do not use the context clues of swimming and diving or the picture provided with the context.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	1, 2	
<b>Focus</b>	Context Clues	

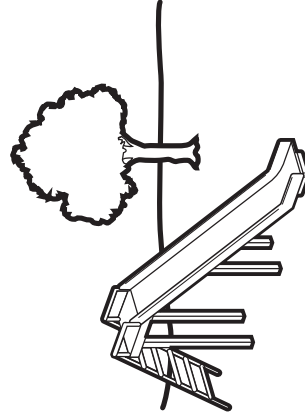
<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.1.5.a</b> <b>Context Clues</b> <b>DOK Level 1, Stage 2</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student's attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this story. Indicate.</b> <b>Hal and his friends are spending Saturday afternoon watching swimming and diving competitions. All <u>aquatic</u> events are being held in the pool.</b> <b>The word "aquatic" is underlined. Indicate.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>What does the word "aquatic" refer to?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>in the gym</b> B. <b>in the park</b> C. <b>in the water</b>

## Question 8

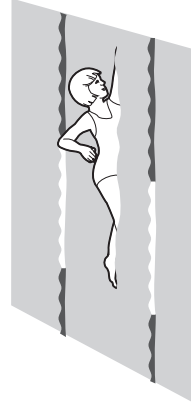
Hal and his friends are spending Saturday afternoon watching swimming and diving competitions. All aquatic events are being held in the pool.



**in the gym**



**in the park**



**in the water**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.1.6.b	Identify and describe elements of literary text (e.g., character(s), setting, conflict, theme, story sequence, point of view).
<b>Answer Key</b>	A	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option A is correct. The story is about Lexi and is told by a narrator. Options B and C are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they do not understand third-person point of view.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	1, 3	
<b>Focus</b>	Elements of Literary Text	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.1.6.b Elements of Literary Text DOK Level 1, Stage 3</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student's attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this story. Indicate.</b> <b>Lexi is visiting the city with her family. She wants to experience what it was like to travel a long time ago. She wants to ride on a train. She has never been on a train. Her brother tells her about the fun she will have. Lexi feels brave as she finds a seat for everyone in her family.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>Who is telling the story?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>the narrator</b> B. <b>Lexi</b> C. <b>her brother</b>

**Question 9**

Lexi is visiting the city with her family. She wants to experience what it was like to travel a long time ago. She wants to ride on a train. She has never been on a train. Her brother tells her about the fun she will have. Lexi feels brave as she finds a seat for everyone in her family.

**the narrator**

**Lexi**

**her brother**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.2.1.h	Edit writing for conventions of standard English (e.g., initial capitalization and proper nouns, and punctuation limited to period and question mark).
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option B is correct. A question mark is the correct way to punctuate a question. Options A and C are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they do not understand how to punctuate a question.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	1, 3	
<b>Focus</b>	Edit Writing/ Punctuation	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.2.1.h Edit Writing/Punctuation DOK Level 1, Stage 3</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student's attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this sentence. Indicate.</b> <b>Why do birds sing</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>What should be at the end of this sentence?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>a period</b> B. <b>a question mark</b> C. <b>an exclamation point</b>



## Question 10

Why do birds sing

▪  
**a period**

**?**  
**a question  
mark**

**!**  
**an exclamation  
point**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.2.2.b	Identify evidence from the text that supports an idea found in literary or informational text.
<b>Answer Key</b>	C	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option C is correct. Ford changed the way people traveled by making cars easier to drive and repair. Option A is incorrect because, even though people use cars every day, this is not how Ford changed the way people traveled. Option B is incorrect because it is a general statement that is not specific to Ford.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2, 4	
<b>Focus</b>	Evidence/ Informational Text	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.2.2.b Evidence/Informational Text DOK Level 2, Stage 4</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student's attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this paragraph. Indicate.</b> <b>Have you ever thought what life would be like without cars? People use cars every day. Cars help people get to different places. In the early 1900s, Henry Ford made cars that people could afford. He made cars that were easy to drive and repair. Henry Ford totally changed the way people traveled.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>How does the reader know that Henry Ford changed the way people traveled? Indicate and read answers.</b> <b>A. People use cars every day.</b> <b>B. Cars help people get to different places.</b> <b>C. He made cars that were easy to drive and repair.</b>

## Question 11

Have you ever thought what life would be like without cars? People use cars every day. Cars help people get to different places. In the early 1900s, Henry Ford made cars that people could afford. He made cars that were easy to drive and repair. Henry Ford totally changed the way people traveled.

**People use cars every day.**

**Cars help people get to different places.**

**He made cars that were easy to drive and repair.**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	LAE.12.2.2.d	Identify precise word choice in a variety of modes.
<b>Answer Key</b>	A	<b>Option Annotations</b>  Option A is correct. The word “museum” names a specific place that the family may visit. Options B and C are incorrect. Students may choose these options if they misunderstand what the question is asking.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2, 4	
<b>Focus</b>	Precise Words	

<b>Administrator's Test Booklet</b>	<b>Indicator LAE.12.2.2.d</b> <b>Precise Words</b> <b>DOK Level 2, Stage 4</b>
<b>Prepare</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>Place student test page in front of the student.</li><li>Call student's attention to the page.</li></ul>
<b>SAY</b>	<b>Follow along as I read this sentence. Indicate.</b> <b>My family will visit a new <u>place</u> tomorrow afternoon.</b> <b>The word “place” is underlined. Indicate.</b>
<b>ASK</b>	<b>Which word is more precise than the word “place”?</b> <i>Indicate and read answers.</i> A. <b>museum</b> B. <b>location</b> C. <b>area</b>

## Question 12

My family will visit a new place tomorrow afternoon.

**museum**

**location**

**area**

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**2015 NeSA-ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT  
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS  
ITEM AND SCORING SAMPLER 2015  
GRADE 11**

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