

**NEBRASKA STATE
ACCOUNTABILITY**



**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
ITEM AND SCORING SAMPLER
GRADE 6**

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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 6, 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**A Highway of Water**

In 1849, travelers going from the East Coast to the West Coast of the United States had three choices. They could go by wagon across America's sometimes dangerous prairie land. They could travel by sea to Panama, cross Panama by foot, and then sail the rest of the way to the West Coast of the United States. The third choice was to board a sailing ship in New York bound for California. This route led down the Atlantic Coast, around the southern tip of South America into the Pacific Ocean, and then north up the Pacific Coast to California. The 15,000-mile journey took months. Severe weather, which is common at the tip of South America where the two oceans meet, could add as much as five extra months to the trip.

The Solution

Could there be any other way to travel from the Atlantic to the Pacific? The answer was a canal. A canal is a human-made waterway. It provides passage between two natural bodies of water. For centuries, people around the world have been using human-made waterways to move goods and people from one place to another. A canal is a highway made of water.

In the 1850s, the United States and Great Britain negotiated a treaty for the rights to build a canal through the Central American Republic of Nicaragua. However, this canal was never built. The project did not make it beyond the planning stages.

Panama, a small country connecting Central America to South America, was another logical option for a canal. It is located a little farther south than Nicaragua. At its narrowest part, Panama is barely 50 miles wide. The Atlantic Ocean is on the eastern side of Panama, and the Pacific Ocean is on the western side. With a canal in Panama, the trip from New York to California would be about 8,000 miles shorter than sailing around South America. Travel time could be three months instead of eight months.

The First Attempt to Build the Panama Canal

In 1879, France began to build a canal across Panama. This project was led by Ferdinand de Lesseps. He was the builder of the Suez Canal in Egypt. He was experienced, and the French government felt that he could get the job done.

- 6 Unfortunately, problems began as soon as construction started. It rained every day, causing the soil to become heavy and sloppy. Temperatures climbed as high as 130 degrees. Tropical diseases such as yellow fever and malaria caused illness or death to the majority of workers. These complications put a great deal of stress on the project. The money **allotted** to build the canal quickly ran out. In 1899, France abandoned the project.

The United States Decides to Finish the Panama Canal

The U.S. Congress decided to finish the canal. The U.S. government paid \$40 million to France for the completed work and abandoned equipment. In 1903, after some negotiating, a treaty between the United States and Panama was signed paying Panama \$10 million for a 10-mile-wide strip of land for the canal. This treaty also guaranteed \$250,000 to Panama each year for use of its land and ensured its independence. This deal was viewed as a major foreign policy¹ achievement at the time.

In November 1904, American workers began completion of the Panama Canal. American officials wanted to avoid the problems that caused France to abandon the project. They wanted to protect workers from disease. An engineer, John F. Stevens, was sent to the work camp in Panama. He began building hospitals as well as water and sewage systems making the working conditions sanitary. He supported the camp doctor's efforts to fight mosquitoes, the cause of malaria and yellow fever. All of these efforts helped to keep the workers healthy and focused on the task at hand.

Using the Panama Canal

Since the water level of the Pacific and Atlantic Oceans is not the same, a system of locks and gates had to be built in the canal. These locks are a pathway for ships to move from one ocean to the other. A lock is a giant box made of concrete. A ship must pass through three locks in the Panama Canal. Each lock holds millions of gallons of water. A ship moves into a lock, which is filled with water. Water is pumped into the lock or out of the lock. This raises or lowers the ship to the level of water in the next lock. The gates open, and the ship moves into the next lock.

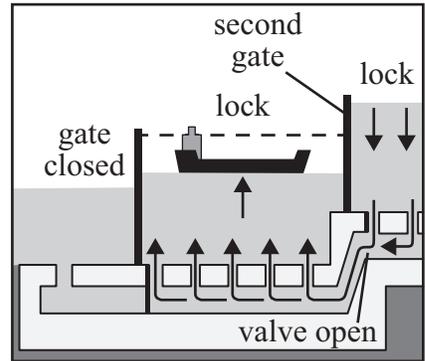
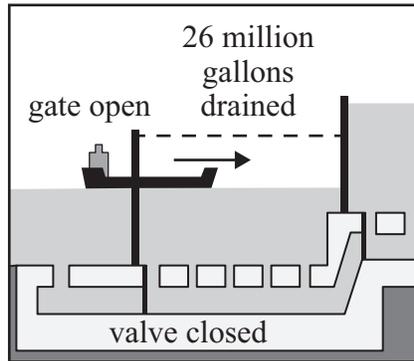
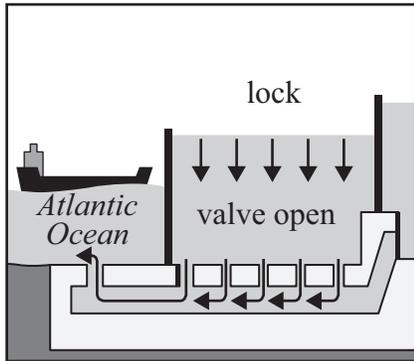
By early 1913, the canal was nearly complete. It took several months to fill the canal with water. On September 26, 1913, an old tugboat was the first ship through the canal. Thousands of people watched and cheered. The locks worked perfectly.

In modern times, approximately 14,000 ships make the 50-mile trip through the canal each year. On average, the trip through the canal takes a ship 8 to 10 hours. The ship captain does not steer the ship through the canal. A specially trained canal pilot takes control of the vessel and expertly guides it through the canal.

Time, money, and possibly even lives have been saved as ships use the shorter route from ocean to ocean provided by the canal. The Panama Canal, a highway of water, is a phenomenon.

¹ foreign policy—strategies a nation uses when dealing with other nations

The Lock System



MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

1. In paragraph 6, what is the meaning of the word **allotted**?

- A. paid
- B. assigned
- C. achieved
- D. wasted

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.5.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	B	Option Annotations The student is asked to identify the meaning of the word “allotted.” Option B is the correct answer since “assigned” is a definition of “allotted.” Options A, C, and D are not definitions of the given word.
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Context Clues	

2. According to the passage, what caused France to stop work on the canal?
- A. Ferdinand de Lessep managed another canal project in Egypt.
 - B. The U.S. government paid France and took over the project.
 - C. Tropical diseases infected the majority of the people working on the project.
 - D. France incorrectly believed Ferdinand de Lessep could complete the project successfully.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.j	Apply knowledge of organizational patterns to comprehend informational text (e.g., sequence/chronological, description, cause and effect, compare/contrast, fact/opinion).
Answer Key	C	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to identify the reason France stopped working on the canal. Option C is the correct answer since the passage indicates France’s workers were unable to work due to the tropical diseases in Panama. Options A, B, and D are accurate details that do not provide a reason that France gave up the project.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Organizational Pattern	

3. Which characteristic BEST distinguishes this passage as nonfiction?
- A. The events in the passage tell about the life of a real person.
 - B. The passage presents facts and tells about real-life events.
 - C. The passage presents a conflict, which is resolved by the characters.
 - D. The events in the passage include a rising action, climax, and falling action.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.g	Use textual evidence to compare and contrast the characteristics that distinguish a variety of literary and informational texts.
Answer Key	B	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to choose the feature that makes “A Highway of Water” nonfiction. Option B is the correct answer since factual information about real-life events is characteristic of nonfiction, but not of other types of texts. Option A is incorrect since the passage does not include biographical information about anyone. Options C and D are incorrect since conflict/resolution and rising action/climax/falling action are characteristics of fiction.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Characteristics of Nonfiction	

4. How does the graphic BEST support the information in the passage?
- A. It shows the reader how the water levels help boats pass through each lock in the Panama Canal.
 - B. It shows the reader why the trip through the three locks in the Panama Canal takes several hours.
 - C. It shows the reader how the locks worked the first time a boat passed through the Panama canal.
 - D. It shows the reader why an expert pilot is needed to move ships through each lock in the Panama Canal.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.f	Apply knowledge of text features to locate information and explain how the information contributes to an understanding of print and digital text.
Answer Key	A	Option Annotations The student is asked to determine how the graphic supports the information in the passage. Option A is the correct answer since the graphic shows how the locks help ships by changing the water levels. Options B, C, and D are incorrect since the graphic does not show how long the trip takes, why a pilot is needed, or what happened the first time the canal was used.
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Text Feature	

5. What is the author’s purpose for writing the passage?
- A. to inform readers about the Panama Canal and its history
 - B. to persuade readers that they should visit the Panama Canal
 - C. to inform readers with interesting facts about who built the Panama Canal
 - D. to persuade readers that building the Panama Canal was a good political decision

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.a	Analyze text to determine author’s purpose(s) and describe how author’s perspective influences text.
Answer Key	A	Option Annotations The student is asked to determine the author’s purpose for writing the passage. Option A is the correct answer since the passage contains information about the history of the Panama Canal. Options B and D are incorrect since the passage makes no attempt at persuasion. Option C is incorrect since the passage is not intended to go into great detail about “who” built the Panama Canal.
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Focus	Author’s Purpose	

EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE ITEM

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

Part A

Based on the passage, which conclusion can be drawn about the building of the Panama Canal?

- A. It caused feelings of resentment between France and the United States.
- B. It strengthened the relationship between Panama and the United States.
- C. It united the people living on the east and west coasts of the United States.
- D. It created a strain on the relationship between Great Britain, Nicaragua, and the United States.

Part B

Which evidence from the passage BEST supports the answer in part A? Choose **two** answers.

- A. In the 1850s, the United States and Great Britain negotiated a treaty for the rights to build a canal through the Central American Republic of Nicaragua.
- B. With a canal in Panama, the trip from New York to California would be about 8,000 miles shorter than sailing around South America.
- C. These complications put a great deal of stress on the project.
- D. The U.S. government paid \$40 million to France for the completed work and abandoned equipment.
- E. This treaty also guaranteed \$250,000 to Panama each year for the use of its land and ensured its independence.
- F. This deal was viewed as a major foreign policy achievement at the time.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.h	Explain the relationships or interactions between two or more individuals, events, ideas, or concepts in literary and informational texts, citing textual evidence to develop a regional, national, and international multicultural perspective.
Answer Key	Part A: B Part B: E & F	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to identify a reasonable conclusion that may be drawn from the passage and then to identify two pieces of evidence from the passage that support that conclusion.</p> <p>Part A: Option B is the correct answer since the passage indicates that the building of the Panama Canal strengthened the relationship between Panama and the United States. Option A is incorrect since it is the opposite of the correct conclusion. Options C and D are incorrect since the passage does not discuss these ideas.</p> <p>Part B: Options E and F are the correct answers since each provides evidence that the building of the canal strengthened the two countries' relationship. Options A, B, C, and D are incorrect since they are accurate details from the passage but are unrelated to Panama-U.S. relations.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must select the correct answer for part A and both correct answer choices for part B. To receive 1 point, the student must select the correct answer for part A. No credit will be given for a correct response to part B if part A is incorrect.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Focus	International Perspective	

AUTO-SCORED CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEM

7. Complete the chart to show which section of the passage supports each main idea.

	?	
The Solution		To avoid problems, John F. Stevens was hired to oversee efforts to keep workers productive.
First Attempt to Build the Panama Canal		A canal in Panama would reduce the travel time between the East Coast and the West Coast of the United States.
The United States Decides to Finish the Panama Canal		France wanted to build the canal but abandoned the project.
Using the Panama Canal		A system of the three locks, or pathways, helps ships move from one ocean to the other.
<i>Click To Respond</i>		

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

?		
	?	
The Solution		To avoid problems, John F. Stevens was hired to oversee efforts to keep workers productive.
First Attempt to Build the Panama Canal		A canal in Panama would reduce the travel time between the East Coast and the West Coast of the United States.
The United States Decides to Finish the Panama Canal		France wanted to build the canal but abandoned the project.
Using the Panama Canal		A system of the three locks, or pathways, helps ships move from one ocean to the other.
OK		

Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

?

?

The United States Decides to Finish the Panama Canal	To avoid problems, John F. Stevens was hired to oversee efforts to keep workers productive.
The Solution	A canal in Panama would reduce the travel time between the East Coast and the West Coast of the United States.
First Attempt to Build the Panama Canal	France wanted to build the canal but abandoned the project.
Using the Panama Canal	A system of the three locks, or pathways, helps ships move from one ocean to the other.

OK

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.e	Summarize and analyze an informational text and/or media, using supporting details to explain the main idea.
Answer Key	See Completed Correct Response	<p style="text-align: center; margin: 0;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to show which of four sections of the passage supports which of four main ideas. The main idea of the section “The United States Decides to Finish the Panama Canal” is that John F. Stevens was hired to oversee efforts to keep the workers productive. The main idea of the section “The Solution” is that the canal would reduce East Coast-West Coast travel time in the U.S. The main idea of the section “First Attempt to Build the Panama Canal” is that France began the project but gave it up. The main idea of the section “Using the Panama Canal” is that a system of locks moves ships from one ocean to the other.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly complete all four sections of the chart. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly complete at least two sections of the chart.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Focus	Main Idea/ Summary	

TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS ITEM



8. Read the definition below.

phenomenon: an unusual or significant fact or event

In the last sentence of “Highway of Water,” the author claims the Panama Canal is a **phenomenon**. Analyze how the author supports this claim throughout the passage. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the passage to support your answer.

XXX/6000

Item Information		
Alignment	Reading: 6.1.6.a Writing: See Rubric	Analyze text to determine author’s purpose(s) and describe how author’s perspective influences text.
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 Demonstrates <u>limited</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills	2 Demonstrates <u>partially effective</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills	3 Demonstrates <u>effective</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills	4 Demonstrates <u>exemplary</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills
Analysis of Text 1.6* 1.6.i	<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) 	<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) 	<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) 	<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. Read the definition below.

phenomenon: an unusual or significant fact or event

In the last sentence of “Highway of Water,” the author claims the Panama Canal is a **phenomenon**. Analyze how the author supports this claim throughout the passage. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the passage to support your answer.

The author states the Panama Canal is a phenomenon that is an unusual or significant fact or event. It is a phenomenon because before it was built sailing by ship from ocean to ocean was a dangerous 15000 mile journey that took months. After it was built, the route was 8000 miles shorter. It saved time, money and even lives which is always significant. But building a canal was not easy. It started with failure but after a lot of work it ended in success.

Plans to build a canal started in 1850 when the United States and Great Britain planned to build a canal through the Central American Republic of Nicaragua. “The project didn’t even make it beyond the planning stages”. That is pretty unusual.

Next, in 1879 the French decided to build a canal in Panama which was only 50 miles wide at its narrowest part. They hired an experienced builder who had built the Suez Canal in Egypt but they experienced problems they were not able to overcome such as tropical diseases killing the majority of the workers, and temperatures as high as 130 degrees. The French ran out of money for the canal and in 1899 abandoned the project. All these details are very unusual!

Finally in November 1904 the United States began to finish the canal. It wasn’t easy because before they started they needed to sign a treaty between the United States and Panama, “this deal was viewed as a major foreign policy achievement at the time”. The United States learned from the problems the French had and found ways to “avoid the problems that caused France to abandon the project”. Some of the things they did was keep the workers healthy by building hospitals and water and sewage systems. Their hard work all paid off on September 26, 1913 when an old tugboat went through the canal through a system of locks and gates, another huge significant achievement.

Overall, the Panama Canal is a phenomenon because it is unusual and significant. It created a new “highway of water” through Panama which is significant. It all took place through the extraordinary (unusual) efforts of many countries involved in the planning and building of the canal. It also was a major foreign policy achievement and it changed how ships travel forever! That is very significant!

2235/6000

This response demonstrates exemplary analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses all parts of the task, thoroughly analyzing the author’s claim that the Panama Canal is a phenomenon and provides purposeful, relevant analysis of text. The response skillfully integrates the text to support the idea that building the canal was an unusual and significant event. The response is well-focused and demonstrates an appropriate organizational pattern. Precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text are evident. The response thoroughly demonstrates conventions of standard English.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 3 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC



8. Read the definition below.

phenomenon: an unusual or significant fact or event

In the last sentence of “Highway of Water,” the author claims the Panama Canal is a **phenomenon**. Analyze how the author supports this claim throughout the passage. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the passage to support your answer.

The author of “Highway of Water” claims that the Panama Canal is a phenomenon. I think the author is correct because the canal is both unusual and significant. First the canal is unusual because it was a new route to connect New York and California. Before the canal was built the travelers had to cross the prairie land, sail and walk across Panama by foot, or sail all the way around the tip of South America. The canal was like crossing Panama but without having to walk. Second, the canal was significant because it was a huge project to complete. France tried to build the canal but their workers got sick and some even died. It also took lots of money. Because of all these problems France gave up and the United States had to take over. Third the canal was also significant because it used a system of locks so the ships could travel between the two oceans and each lock contained millions of gallons of water! Fourth, the canal is significant because so many ships use it, “approximately 14,000 ships make the 50 mile trip through the canal each year.” That is a lot of ships that can now take a short cut and save a lot of time! In conclusion, the author was correct in calling the Panama Canal a phenomenon because it was both unusual and significant.

1261/6000

This response demonstrates an effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses all parts of the task of analyzing how the author supports the claim that the Panama Canal is a phenomenon. Specific, relevant analysis and text support is evident. The response is focused on the idea that the canal was both unusual and significant and is appropriately organized. Precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text are evident. The response demonstrates conventions of standard English; errors, when present, do not interfere with meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 2 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC



8. Read the definition below.

phenomenon: an unusual or significant fact or event

In the last sentence of “Highway of Water,” the author claims the Panama Canal is a **phenomenon**. Analyze how the author supports this claim throughout the passage. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the passage to support your answer.

The Panama canal is phenomenon because before it was built it was hard to travel the long distance from the east coast to the west coast and they had to find a way to get there in less time.

The idea was to build a canal to move people and goods from place to place much quicker. A canal is a human-made waterway.

The first attempt to build the canal was France but they couldn't do it. Then the United States decided to finish the canal after France had started it. They built the canal and now in modern times 14000 ships make the 50 mile trip through the canal each year which is shorter than going all the way around.

621/6000

This response demonstrates partially effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response partially addresses the task of analyzing how the author supports the claim that the Panama Canal is a phenomenon and provides partial analysis and text support for the central idea. The response includes a weak introduction, body, and conclusion. Appropriately cited quotations are lacking. Errors in conventions of standard English occasionally interfere with meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 1 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC



8. Read the definition below.

phenomenon: an unusual or significant fact or event

In the last sentence of “Highway of Water,” the author claims the Panama Canal is a **phenomenon**. Analyze how the author supports this claim throughout the passage. Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the passage to support your answer.

The Panama Canal is a phenomenon. It is unusual because there are not alot of canals in the world. It is the only one I have heard of that connects 2 oceans. It connects the Atlantic and pacific oceans. It took a long time to build and it is really long. It makes the trip to california shorter. its a phenominal canal.

319/6000

This response demonstrates limited analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response minimally addresses the task, demonstrating a limited understanding of the text, and provides little evidence from the passage to support ideas. This brief response does not demonstrate evidence of adequate control of writing skills.

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INTENTIONALLY BLANK.**

PASSAGE 2**Campfire**

We arrive close to dusk
after a day-long drive
down winding, country roads,
the dust billowing behind us
5 like the tail of a kite.
Already
it is late October,
and the campsite is nearly empty;
a handful of brightly colored tents
10 in the distance
flutter like faraway flags.

Together, we five
construct tents of our own
near the banks of a narrow creek
15 whose waters gurgle and bubble
over mossy fields
of slippery-smooth pebbles.
Silently, the fog rolls in,
its wispy, white mist
20 resembling strands of pulled cotton,
and lowers slowly into the treetops,
rudely dimming the light
of the rising yellow moon.

And the deeper the sun sinks,
25 the more aware we become
that winter will soon be coming
to whisk away our warmth.
To our dismay, all we can do
is gather up firewood
30 and pile it inside
a circle of large rocks.
Once we light the flame,

the comfort of heat is gradual,
and we're hopeful that winter
35 might be merciful after all.

Silently, we watch
as red-hot splinters of wood
whiz past our noses
and flicker against the fog,
40 then **dissolve** in an instant
against a slate gray sky.
Someone pulls out a guitar,
and we begin to sing,
each note lingering
45 warm, round, and full
before following the smoke
that swirls upward and away.
Our campfire grows weaker,
just as we knew it would,
50 finally mellowing to nothing more
than a faint
late-autumn glow.

MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

9. In lines 1–5, how does the poet use a literary device?
- A. The poet uses personification to make dust seem human.
 - B. The poet uses a simile to compare the appearance of dust to a kite tail.
 - C. The poet uses onomatopoeia to describe the sound of dust billowing.
 - D. The poet uses a metaphor to compare the action of dust to a billowing kite.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.c	Identify and explain why authors use literary devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, alliteration, onomatopoeia, imagery, rhythm, personification, hyperbole, idioms, analogy, tone, mood).
Answer Key	B	Option Annotations The student is asked how the poet uses a literary device in the first five lines. Option B is the correct answer since “the dust billowing behind us / like the tail of a kite” is a simile that compares the appearance of the dust to a kite tail. Options A, C, and D are incorrect since the lines do not use personification, onomatopoeia, or a metaphor.
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Literary Device – Similes	

10. In lines 32–35, which idea is developed?

- A. the sense of loss versus the feeling of hope
- B. the warmth of the fire versus the cold threat of winter
- C. the brightness of the future versus the darkness of the past
- D. the intense color of the flame versus the absence of color in winter

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.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	B	Option Annotations The student is asked to identify the idea developed in lines 32–35 of the poem. Option B is the correct answer since the lines compare the warmth of the fire to the impending cold of winter. Option A is incorrect since the lines do not deal with loss versus hope. Options C and D are incorrect since the lines are not related to light or color.
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Critical Thinking/ Inference	

11. In lines 18–23, what image does the poet BEST create for the reader?

- A. The campsite is going to be rained on.
- B. The wildlife surrounding the campsite is calm.
- C. The sky is becoming dark over the campsite.
- D. The campsite is located near water.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.c	Identify and explain why authors use literary devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, alliteration, onomatopoeia, imagery, rhythm, personification, hyperbole, idioms, analogy, tone, mood).
Answer Key	C	Option Annotations The student is asked to identify the image that is created in lines 18–23 of the poem. Option C is the correct answer since the lines show that the sky is becoming dark over the campsite. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since the lines do not suggest that it is “going to rain,” the “wildlife is calm,” or that the “campsite is near water.”
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Analyze Imagery	

12. Which word is a synonym for **dissolve**?

- A. vanish
- B. burn
- C. hasten
- D. mix

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.5.d	Identify and use semantic relationships (e.g., multiple meanings, metaphors, similes, idioms, analogies, synonyms, antonyms) to determine the meaning of words, aid in comprehension, and improve writing.
Answer Key	A	Option Annotations The student is asked to identify a synonym for the word “dissolve” as it is used in the poem. Option A is the correct answer since “vanish” is a synonym for “dissolve.” Options B, C, and D are not synonyms for the given word.
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Synonym	

13. How is the setting important to the poem?

- A. The setting causes each character to respond differently to the events that occur.
- B. The setting strengthens the conflict between the speaker and the other characters.
- C. The setting provides the opportunity for reflection of the speaker.
- D. The setting allows events in the plot to advance quickly.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.b	Analyze and explain the relationships between elements of literary text (e.g., character development, setting, plot, conflict, point of view, theme).
Answer Key	C	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to indicate how the setting is important to the poem. Option C is correct since the setting in a campsite inspires the speaker’s thoughts in the poem. Options A and B are incorrect since there are no descriptions of other characters in the poem. Option D is incorrect since there are few “events” in the poem and they do not allow a “plot to advance quickly.”</p>
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Focus	Setting	

EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE ITEM

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

Part A

From which point of view is the poem told?

- A. first person, through a camper
- B. first person, through a minor character
- C. third person, through an objective speaker
- D. third person, through a campground owner

Part B

Which excerpt from the poem supports the answer in part A?

- A. Already
it is late October
- B. a handful of brightly colored tents
- C. Together we five
construct tents of our own
- D. Someone pulls out a guitar

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.b	Analyze and explain the relationships between elements of literary text (e.g., character development, setting, plot, conflict, point of view, theme).
Answer Key	Part A: A Part B: C	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to identify the point of view used in the poem along with an excerpt that supports that identification.</p> <p>Part A: Option A is the correct answer since the poem’s narrator is one of the campers. Option B is incorrect since the narrator is not a minor character in the poem. Options C and D are incorrect since the poem is not told from a third-person point of view.</p> <p>Part B: Options C is the correct answer since “Together we five construct tents of our own” provides evidence that the poem is narrated by one of the campers. Options A, B, and D are incorrect since they contain no evidence to support any point of view.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must select the correct answer for both part A and part B. To receive 1 point, the student must select the correct answer for part A. No credit will be given for a correct response to part B if part A is incorrect.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Point of View	

AUTO-SCORED CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE ITEM

15. Select **two** lines from the poem that suggest the poet does not enjoy cold weather. Select **two**.

And the deeper the sun sinks,
the more aware we become
that winter will soon be coming
to whisk away our warmth.
To our dismay, all we can do
is gather up firewood
and pile it inside
a circle of large rocks.

Answer Key – Completed Correct Responses

Select **two** lines from the poem that suggest the poet does not enjoy cold weather. Select **two**.




?

And the deeper the sun sinks,
the more aware we become
that winter will soon be coming
to whisk away our warmth.
To our dismay, all we can do
is gather up firewood
and pile it inside
a circle of large rocks.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.1.6.a	Analyze text to determine author’s purpose(s) and describe how author’s perspective influences text.
Answer Key	See Completed Correct Response	<p>Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to select two lines from the poem that suggest the poet does not enjoy cold weather. The lines “to whisk away our warmth” and “To our dismay, all we can do” are correct since they suggest the poet is unhappy with the cold. The other lines are incorrect since they are either unrelated to the idea of cold weather or fail to indicate the poet’s feelings about it.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must select the two correct answer choices indicated in the completed correct response. To receive 1 point, the student must select one of the two correct answer choices.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Author’s Perspective	

TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS ITEM



- 16.** Mood is the feeling or emotion that a reader experiences from a poem or story. Explain how the poet’s word choice helps create mood throughout the poem “Campfire.” Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the poem to support your answer.

XXX/6000

Item Information		
Alignment	Reading: 6.1.6.c Writing: See Rubric	Identify and explain why authors use literary devices (e.g., simile, metaphor, alliteration, onomatopoeia, imagery, rhythm, personification, hyperbole, idioms, analogy, tone, mood).
Answer Key	See Rubric	Option Annotations
Depth of Knowledge	3	Refer to the sample student responses.

TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

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

Nebraska English Language Arts Standards	1 Demonstrates <u>limited</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills	2 Demonstrates <u>partially effective</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills	3 Demonstrates <u>effective</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills	4 Demonstrates <u>exemplary</u> analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills
Analysis of Text 1.6* 1.6.i	<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) 	<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) 	<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) 	<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.** Mood is the feeling or emotion that a reader experiences from a poem or story. Explain how the poet's word choice helps create mood throughout the poem "Campfire." Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the poem to support your answer.

A campfire is an experience that most readers can relate to. The words chosen by the poet in the poem "Campfire" definitely create a feeling and describe the experience of an actual campfire throughout.

The poet's choice of words sets the scene from the beginning. It is "late October and the campsite is nearly empty" suggests that it is a chilly October evening and the trees are turning brown and it is quiet and empty there. You can hear "The banks of a narrow creek gurgle and bubble" and a cool fall breeze makes the tents "flutter like faraway flags. Fog silently rolls in" further setting the scene and the "rising yellow moon" also conveys the feeling of a cold night beginning.

Next, "the sun sinks deeper" and the campers feel a fire is needed to warm up the night. When the poet says we "light the flame, the comfort of heat is gradual" allows the reader to feel the warmth of the fire slowly warming and tingling the face. "Silently" further sets the mood and "red-hot splinters of wood whiz past our noses" engages the sense of smell. The reader can picture and feel the warm fire on a cool fall night on the "banks of a narrow creek."

As the evening winds down a "guitar" is added along with "singing" and the reader can hear the night. When the poet says "the smoke swirls" and the "campfire grows weaker," his word choice closes the poem with "mellowing," and last a "faint late autumn glow" gives the reader a complete sense of the end of the evening. By the end of the poem, the reader feels relaxed and warm, and just like the campers, ready for slumber.

1570/6000

This response demonstrates exemplary analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses all parts of the task of explaining how the poet's word choice helps create mood throughout the poem and thoroughly analyzes the text by purposefully addressing explicit ideas from the text. Relevant evidence from the text has been well-integrated into the response, and the skillful use of well-chosen, relevant, and accurate examples thoroughly supports the explanation. The writer makes consistent use of paraphrases and quoted material, appropriately citing references to the text. An appropriate organizational pattern and mode suited to the purpose are evident. Precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text are skillfully used to enhance the ideas. The writer has thoroughly demonstrated conventions of standard English, and errors do not interfere with the writer's meaning.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 3 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

- 16.** Mood is the feeling or emotion that a reader experiences from a poem or story. Explain how the poet's word choice helps create mood throughout the poem "Campfire." Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the poem to support your answer.

In the poem, Campfire, the words the poet chooses set the mood that allows the reader to experience the feeling of the campfire.

Words like "dusk" say it is getting late in the day and nearly night. The fog rolls in creates a almost spooky feeling with the yellow moon rising in the sky. As the sun sets it is getting colder and the words "winter will soon be coming to whisk away our warmth" make the reader feel chilly and cold. These words set the mood so the reader can feel it. Continuing that feeling, words like "flame" and "comfort of heat" make the reader feel closer to the heat and "red hot", "flicker", and "warm" allow the reader to feel the warmth of campfire. And then finally, words like the campfire grows weaker, mellowing, faint and glow clearly helps the reader feel the fire is going out and the long day is ending too.

This is how the poets words help create the mood and allows the reader to experience the feeling of the campfire in the poem.

964/6000

This response demonstrates effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response addresses all parts of the task of explaining how the poet's word choice helps create mood throughout the poem. Specific, relevant analysis is evident, and accurate examples have been provided to support the explanation. The response is well focused on the central theme and is appropriately organized with a clear introduction, body, and conclusion, as well as appropriate transitions. Some precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text are evident. Quotations from the text are appropriately cited using quotation marks.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 2 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

- 16.** Mood is the feeling or emotion that a reader experiences from a poem or story. Explain how the poet's word choice helps create mood throughout the poem "Campfire." Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the poem to support your answer.

The poet has shown different feelings or moods throughout the poem. At first when they arrive it is dusk and they feel cold and tired after a long trip. After they put up their tents, they then feel dismayed that all they can do is gather wood for a fire. Then they are hopeful that winter might be merciful or forgiving. The heat from the fire makes them feel happy and they sing and play the guitar. When the campfire grows weaker they are cold and mellow again. This is how the poet uses word choices to create the mood throughout the poem.

542/6000

This response demonstrates partially effective analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response demonstrates a partial understanding of the task, attempting to explain how the poet's word choice helps create the mood that the reader experiences. The writer has focused on highlighting the feelings that the campers experience in the poem (dismayed, hopeful, and happy), showing some understanding of the text. Some relevant and accurate evidence from the text has been integrated to support ideas. The writer occasionally uses precise word choice and content-specific vocabulary from the text. The response includes a weak introduction, body, and conclusion.

AN EXAMPLE OF A LEVEL 1 ON TEXT DEPENDENT ANALYSIS RUBRIC

- 16.** Mood is the feeling or emotion that a reader experiences from a poem or story. Explain how the poet's word choice helps create mood throughout the poem "Campfire." Write a well-organized, structured response using specific evidence from the poem to support your answer.

They set up the tents at night and build a camp fire cause it is cold and the fire keeps them warm and happy. They gather fire wood and pile it inside a circle of large rocks and play a gitar and sing songs. The campfire grows weak and it time to go to bed. That is the mood of the poem.

287/6000

This response demonstrates limited analysis of text, use of evidence, and writing skills. The response minimally addresses the task. The response only implies how the poet's word choice helps create mood throughout the poem. Some explicit and implicit ideas, such as fire keeping them warm and happy, are minimally addressed. The response provides little evidence from the passage for support and demonstrates limited understanding of the text. The response consists mainly of a summary of the text that ineffectively demonstrates conventions of standard English.

INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS

17. A student made a plan for a research report. Read the plan and the directions that follow.

Research Report Plan
Topic: Antarctica
Audience: my classmates and teacher
Purpose: to inform
Research Question: How do people adapt to the difficult conditions in Antarctica?

The student found a source for the research report. Select **two** sentences that answer the research question. Select **two**.

?

Source

Since 1956, people have been living at McMurdo Station in Antarctica. Scientists go there to do research in many areas, including biology and medicine. On Earth, there are few places that are more difficult for life to survive than on the continent of Antarctica—it is the coldest and windiest place on Earth. Winter temperatures can be between minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit and minus 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and winds can reach close to 200 miles per hour. Those who work at McMurdo Station must follow rules when traveling in and out of the station. There are many dangers that come with spending time in such cold conditions. To have some fun, the people staying at McMurdo Station can make use of the station's small bowling alley or rent musical instruments.

Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

A student made a plan for a research report. Read the plan and the directions that follow.

Research Report Plan
Topic: Antarctica
Audience: my classmates and teacher
Purpose: to inform
Research Question: How do people adapt to the difficult conditions in Antarctica?

The student found a source for the research report. Select **two** sentences that answer the research question. Select **two**.




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Source

Since 1956, people have been living at McMurdo Station in Antarctica. Scientists go there to do research in many areas, including biology and medicine. On Earth, there are few places that are more difficult for life to survive than on the continent of Antarctica—it is the coldest and windiest place on Earth. Winter temperatures can be between minus 40 degrees Fahrenheit and minus 90 degrees Fahrenheit, and winds can reach close to 200 miles per hour. Those who work at McMurdo Station must follow rules when traveling in and out of the station. There are many dangers that come with spending time in such cold conditions. To have some fun, the people staying at McMurdo Station can make use of the station’s small bowling alley or rent musical instruments.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
Answer Key	Sentence 5, Sentence 7	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to select two sentences that show how people have adapted to the difficult conditions in Antarctica. Sentence 5 is correct because it shows how people stay safe in Antarctica. Sentence 7 is also correct because it explains how people in Antarctica find entertainment indoors. Sentences 1 and 2 are incorrect because they simply state that people live and study in Antarctica, but this information does not answer the research question. Sentences 3 and 4 are incorrect because they describe the conditions of Antarctica, which also does not answer the research question.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify both sentences that show how people have adapted to difficult conditions in Antarctica. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify one of the sentences.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Provide Evidence to Support Research	

18. Read the paragraph from a story.

Sanjay felt elated—it was the first time that he had successfully swam from one end of the pool to the other without taking a rest or touching the bottom of the pool with his feet. Swimming over to the edge of the pool, he saw his friend, Seth, cheering and waving his arms in the air. For much of the summer, Seth had tried to convince Sanjay to try to swim across the pool, but Sanjay resisted. Eventually, Sanjay gave in and mustered up the courage to attempt to cross the pool. It was a week of awkward, and sometimes exhausting effort.

Choose the BEST concluding sentence for the paragraph.

- A. Seth dove in the water and challenged Sanjay to race him across the pool.
- B. Sanjay was proud he had gained enough strength to achieve his goal.
- C. Swimming had always been one of Sanjay’s favorite activities.
- D. Sanjay enjoyed sharing hobbies with his friend Seth.

Item Information		
Alignment	6.2.1.b	Generate a draft that develops a clear topic suited to the purpose and intended audience and organizational pattern, including a strong thesis, body, conclusion, and appropriate transitions links to the purpose of the composition.
Answer Key	B	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to select the best concluding sentence for a paragraph. Option B is the correct answer because it logically summarizes how Sanjay felt about the experience described in the paragraph. Option A is incorrect because, while plausible, it is an additional event that could take place in the story rather than a conclusion. Option C is incorrect because the events in the paragraph would imply swimming has been a challenge more so than one of Sanjay’s favorite activities. Option D is incorrect because the paragraph only talks about one activity Sanjay and Seth had participated in together.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Conclusion	

19. A student is writing an informative report on how airplanes are built and is looking for relevant sources of information.

Move the sources into the correct places in the chart.


?

Relevant Source	Not a Relevant Source
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	

an airline pilot training video

a tour guide from an aircraft factory

instructions from a model airplane kit

the website of an aircraft manufacturer

a flight attendant's description of airplane interiors

images of different kinds of airplanes from the Internet

Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

A student is writing an informative report on how airplanes are built and is looking for relevant sources of information.

Move the sources into the correct places in the chart.

Relevant Source	Not a Relevant Source
a tour guide from an aircraft factory	an airline pilot training video
the website of an aircraft manufacturer	a flight attendant's description of airplane interiors
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	images of different kinds of airplanes from the Internet
XXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXXX	instructions from a model airplane kit

Item Information		
Alignment	6.2.1.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	See Completed Correct Response	<p style="text-align: center;">Option Annotations</p> <p>The student is asked to determine relevancy of sources to a task by moving the sources under the categories <i>Relevant Source</i> and <i>Not a Relevant Source</i>. The correct relevant sources are “a tour guide from an aircraft factory” and “the website of an aircraft manufacturer” because factory and manufacturer relate to building an aircraft. The first option, “an airline pilot training video,” goes under the <i>Not a Relevant Source</i> category because it is about how to fly an airplane, not how it is built. The “instructions from a model airplane kit” also goes under the <i>Not a Relevant Source</i> category because the instructions are not applicable to real airplane construction. The last two options go under <i>Not a Relevant Source</i> because, while about airplanes, neither source relates to building an airplane.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly complete all six sections of the chart. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly complete at least three sections of the chart.</p>
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Focus	Gather Relevant Information	

**NeSA-ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
ITEM AND SCORING SAMPLER
GRADE 6**

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