

**Example**  
**Independent Writing**  
**Items**

**ELA Indicator**  
**2.1.b, 2.1.c, 2.1.i, 2.2.b, 2.2.d**

Compiled from the Grade Level NeSA ELA Samplers

*(Grades 3-8, 11)*

**Example**  
**Independent Writing**  
**Items**

**ELA Indicator 2.1.b**

Compiled from the Grade Level NeSA ELA Samplers

*(Grades 3-8, 11)*

## 2.1.b

Grade Level Indicators	
3.2.1.b	Generate a draft that develops a clear topic suited to the purpose and intended audience and organizational pattern, including a clear introduction, body, and conclusion with appropriate transitions.
4.2.1.b	Generate a draft that develops a clear topic suited to the purpose and intended audience and organizational pattern, including a clear introduction, body, and conclusion with appropriate transitions.
5.2.1.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 linked to the purpose of the composition.
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 linked to the purpose of the composition.
7.2.1.b	Generate a draft that conveys complex ideas through analysis and use of organizational patterns that are suited to the purpose and intended audience and includes a strong thesis, body, conclusion, and appropriate transitions linked to the purpose of the composition.
8.2.1.b	Generate a draft that conveys complex ideas through analysis and use of organizational patterns that are suited to the purpose and intended audience and includes a strong thesis, body, conclusion, and appropriate transitions linked to the purpose of the composition.
12.2.1.b	Generate a draft that interprets complex ideas, raises relevant questions, solves problems, or evaluates ideas through synthesis, analysis, reflection, and use of effective organizational patterns that are appropriate to the purpose and intended audience.

## INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS

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

Read the paragraph.

I like many kinds of pets, but I think dogs are the best. Dogs can learn to obey when their owners say, “Sit,” or “Come.” Dogs wag their tails or bark when they are excited. They are easy to feed because they seem to like almost everything. Dogs need to go for walks, and walks are good exercise for dog owners.

### Part A

Which sentence BEST concludes the paragraph?

- A. Cats are good pets too.
- B. All in all, dogs are the best pets.
- C. Some dogs shed lots of fur in the spring.
- D. In the end, every pet is someone’s favorite.

### Part B

Why is your choice in part A the BEST choice?

- A. It is a fact.
- B. It restates the opinion.
- C. It states another opinion.
- D. It gives a fact that supports the opinion.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	3.2.1.b	Generate a draft that develops a clear topic suited to the purpose and intended audience and organizational pattern, including a clear introduction, body, and conclusion with appropriate transitions.
<b>Answer Key</b>	<b>Part A:</b> B <b>Part B:</b> B	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option Annotations</b></p> <p>The student is asked to determine the sentence that best concludes the paragraph and then to identify why this is the best concluding sentence.</p> <p><b>Part A:</b> Option B is the correct answer since it restates the author’s opinion that dogs are the best animals. Options A and D are incorrect because they are not specifically about dogs. Option C is incorrect because it is a general fact about dogs that does not support the author’s opinion.</p> <p><b>Part B:</b> Option B is correct because the answer to part A restates the main idea that dogs are the best animals. Option A is incorrect because the answer to part A is not a fact. Option C is incorrect because the answer to part A is not a new opinion. Option D is incorrect because the answer to part A is not an additional fact.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify the answers to part A and part B. To receive 1 point, the student must at least select the correct answer for part A. No credit will be given for a correct response to part B if part A is incorrect.</p>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Conclusion	

**INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS**

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

Read the paragraph.

In chess, there are six kinds of pieces: one king, one queen, two rooks, two knights, two bishops, and eight pawns. Each kind of chess piece moves a certain way. The object of the game is to checkmate your opponent's king. Checkmate means your opponent cannot make a move without his or her king being captured. At the same time, you must protect your own king. The more you play chess, the less difficult the game will become.

**Part A**

Which sentence is the BEST topic sentence for the paragraph?

- A. The most powerful piece in chess is the queen.
- B. The game chess is like checkers, but it is more complicated.
- C. Chess has become a popular program for schools.
- D. In recent years, computers have been programmed to play chess.

**Part B**

Why is your choice in part A the BEST choice?

- A. It states a fact and an opinion.
- B. It provides a reason to learn about the topic.
- C. It offers a reason for the opinion.
- D. It presents the topic and an opinion about it.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	4.2.1.b	Generate a draft that develops a clear topic suited to the purpose and intended audience and organizational pattern, including a clear introduction, body, and conclusion with appropriate transitions.
<b>Answer Key</b>	<b>Part A:</b> B <b>Part B:</b> D	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option Annotations</b></p> <p>The student is asked to determine the best topic sentence for the paragraph and then to identify why this is the best topic sentence.</p> <p><b>Part A:</b> Option B is the correct answer since it indicates that the topic of the paragraph is chess and provides an opinion that is supported by the details in the paragraph. Option A is incorrect because it is an additional detail about one of the specific pieces in the game. Options C and D are incorrect because they are ideas about chess that are not supported by any of the details in the paragraph.</p> <p><b>Part B:</b> Option D is correct because the answer to part A provides the topic of the paragraph (chess) and indicates an opinion about the topic (it is more complicated than checkers). While Option A is plausible, Option D is a better explanation of why the topic sentence in part A is correct. Option B is incorrect because the topic sentence does not provide a clear reason to learn about chess. Option C is incorrect because the answer to part A does not offer a reason for the opinion.</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>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	3	
<b>Focus</b>	Conclusion	

**INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS**

17. Read the paragraph from a story.

Danya stood in the long line in the lunchroom and looked around curiously while she waited her turn. The room was packed with students, but it looked like only those who had brought a lunch from home were eating. There were no school lunches at the counter yet. Danya wondered what was causing the delay. Then she saw a lunchroom worker come through the door from the kitchen, pushing a large cart full of fresh, hot food. The room erupted with cheers.

Choose the BEST concluding sentence for the paragraph.

- A. Danya was really hungry!
- B. Finally the food was ready!
- C. The other students in line were growing impatient.
- D. Danya wondered what the excitement was all about.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	5.2.1.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 linked to the purpose of the composition.
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<b>Option Annotations</b>  The student is asked to select the best concluding sentence for a paragraph. Option B is the correct answer because it is the most logical reason the lunch staff would appear with a cart of food and the students would cheer. Option A is incorrect because it does not logically follow the previous sentence in the paragraph. Option C is irrelevant now that more food has arrived. Option D is not plausible because the paragraph explains that Danya saw what happened to excite all of the students.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Conclusion	

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		
<b>Alignment</b>	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.
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option Annotations</b></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>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Conclusion	

## INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS

17. Read the paragraph from a student’s draft of a report.

Athletes at the university were not always known as the Cornhuskers, however. Their original nickname was the Old Gold Knights. Then the school adopted scarlet and cream as its colors. Through the 1899 football season, the athletes were known as the Bugeaters. This was an appropriate nickname in an agricultural region where bull bats were a blessing to farmers and a menace to crop-devouring insects. Still, the Cornhuskers did not emerge for another decade. Finally, at the turn of the century and after one less-than-glorious season, the university felt that a new image was overdue. The Cornhuskers came to stay.

Which sentence BEST begins the paragraph?

- A. The University of Nebraska has a proud and honored tradition in collegiate athletics.
- B. Some of the most exciting careers begin on practice fields at the University of Nebraska.
- C. The University of Nebraska may have one of the most recognized nicknames in college sports.
- D. It should be no surprise that the University of Nebraska offers advanced studies in agriculture.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	7.2.1.b	Generate a draft that conveys complex ideas through analysis and use of organizational patterns that are suited to the purpose and intended audience and includes a strong thesis, body, conclusion, and appropriate transitions linked to the purpose of the composition.
<b>Answer Key</b>	C	<b>Option Annotations</b>  The student is asked to determine the best topic sentence for the paragraph. The correct answer option is C because it provides the topic of college sports nicknames, which is supported by the information in the remaining sentences in the paragraph. Options A, B, and D are incorrect because even though they are about the University of Nebraska, they do not provide the specific topic of the school nickname.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Topic Sentence	

## INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS

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

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

Choose the BEST concluding sentence for the paragraph.

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

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

18. A student is writing an informative report about a hiking trip. Read the draft and complete the task that follows.

Three trails are clearly marked through Arrowhead Canyon. The Lower Trail is an easy, two-hour loop along the creek bed. Most of the trail is hard-packed earth, level and wide enough for three hikers—or any trio out for a stroll—to walk side by side. There are even a few park benches along the way. The Middle Trail is more challenging. In several places, hikers need to scramble over fallen timber or rugged rock outcroppings. The path up to and around the waterfall can be a little treacherous, but with a little determination and a sturdy pair of shoes, kids as young as eight or nine can hike to Mason Falls and back within four or five hours. I'm completely amazed by the Upper Trail. That hike requires a little more preparation and no less than 18 hours.

Which revision of the underlined sentence BEST maintains the tone and focus of the paragraph?

- A. The Upper Trail is an entirely different challenge.
- B. You have to see the Upper trail to believe it.
- C. The Upper Trail is too amazing to imagine.
- D. You must indeed travel the Upper Trail.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	12.2.1.b	Generate a draft that interprets complex ideas, raises relevant questions, solves problems, or evaluates ideas through synthesis, analysis, reflection, and use of effective organizational patterns that are appropriate to the purpose and intended audience.
<b>Answer Key</b>	A	<b>Option Annotations</b>  The student is asked to determine which revision best maintains the tone and focus of the paragraph. The correct answer is A because it fits the informational tone of the paragraph. In addition, it is an effective transition into the sentences that follow in the paragraph. Options B and D are incorrect because they refer directly to the reader, which does not fit the structure of the rest of the paragraph. Option C is incorrect because it does not fit the context of the surrounding sentences.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Draft Appropriate to Purpose and Audience	

**Example**  
**Independent Writing**  
**Items**

**ELA Indicator 2.1.c**

Compiled from the Grade Level NeSA ELA Samplers

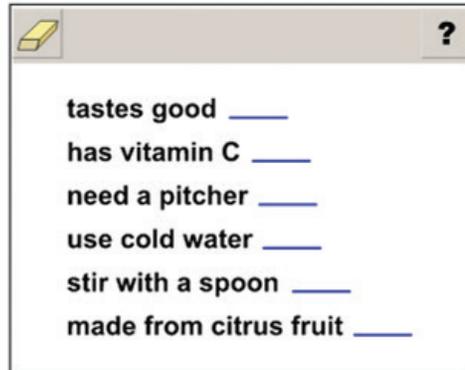
*(Grades 3-8, 11)*

## 2.1.c

Grade Level Indicators	
3.2.1.c	Gather and use relevant information and evidence from one or more authoritative print and/or digital sources to support claims or theses.
4.2.1.c	Gather and use relevant information and evidence from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources to support claims or theses.
5.2.1.c	Gather and use relevant information and evidence from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources to support claims or theses.
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.
7.2.1.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.
8.2.1.c	Gather and use relevant information and evidence from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources including primary and secondary sources to support claims or theses.
12.2.1.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.

18. Jen is taking notes for a paragraph about how to make orange juice.

Select the **three** notes that BEST support the topic. Select **three**.



tastes good \_\_\_\_

has vitamin C \_\_\_\_

need a pitcher \_\_\_\_

use cold water \_\_\_\_

stir with a spoon \_\_\_\_

made from citrus fruit \_\_\_\_

### Answer Key – Correct Responses

Jen is taking notes for a paragraph about how to make orange juice.

Select the **three** notes that BEST support the topic. Select **three**.


?

- tastes good
- has vitamin C
- need a pitcher
- use cold water
- stir with a spoon
- made from citrus fruit

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	3.2.1.c	Gather and use relevant information and evidence from one or more authoritative print and/or digital sources to support claims or theses.
<b>Answer Key</b>	Option 3, Option 4, Option 5	<p><b>Option Annotations</b></p> <p>The student is asked to determine which three notes support the topic of how to make orange juice. Options 3, 4, and 5 are the correct responses because they are all steps in the process. Options 1, 2, and 6 are incorrect because they are opinions about or features of orange juice.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify the three notes that support the topic. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify at least one note that supports the topic.</p>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Gather Relevant Information	

18. A student is writing a research report about silent movies. Read the sentences from her report and the directions that follow.

The first motion pictures, or movies, were invented in the late 1800s. These were not movies that told a story, though. They were moving pictures of scenes from real life. The first movie that told a story was *The Great Train Robbery*. This movie was made in 1903, and it was about eleven minutes long. Like all early movies, it was a silent movie. This means that it had no sound.

Which source would most likely give the student more information about the ideas she has written?

- A. a book called *The Greatest Movies of the Last Ten Years*
- B. a magazine article called “How to Make Your Own Movie”
- C. a chapter called “Silent Movies” in the book *A History of Movies*
- D. a dictionary that has the meanings of the words “silent” and “movie”

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	4.2.1.c	Gather and use relevant information and evidence from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources to support claims or theses.
<b>Answer Key</b>	C	<b>Option Annotations</b>  The student is asked to determine which source would include information to support the writer’s ideas. Option C is the correct answer since the book includes information that is relevant to the topic and the time period that is discussed in the paragraph. Options A and C are incorrect since the topic of the paragraph is not modern movies or movie-making. Option D is incorrect because the definitions of “silent” and “movie” are already provided in the paragraph.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Relevant Information	

19. A student is writing a research report about the animals of Antarctica. Select **one** sentence that has information the student can use to support the topic.

?





Antarctica is one of the most difficult places to live in the world. Antarctica is the coldest place on Earth. It is not surprising that very few people live there year-round. Even though few people live there, many people take trips to Antarctica each year. Some scientists go there to study the ice. Because Antarctica is almost all ice, it has few plants. Only two types of flowering plants are found there. Many different types of penguins make their home in Antarctica.

### Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

A student is writing a research report about the animals of Antarctica. Select **one** sentence that has information the student can use to support the topic.

?





Antarctica is one of the most difficult places to live in the world. Antarctica is the coldest place on Earth. It is not surprising that very few people live there year-round. Even though few people live there, many people take trips to Antarctica each year. Some scientists go there to study the ice. Because Antarctica is almost all ice, it has few plants. Only two types of flowering plants are found there. **Many different types of penguins make their home in Antarctica.**

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	5.2.1.c	Gather and use relevant information and evidence from multiple authoritative print and/or digital sources to support claims or theses.
<b>Answer Key</b>	Sentence 8	<b>Option Annotations</b>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Relevant Information	

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.

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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		
<b>Alignment</b>	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.
<b>Answer Key</b>	See Completed Correct Response	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option Annotations</b></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>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Gather Relevant Information	

18. A student is writing a research report about spiders. The student found a source. Read the source and select **one** claim that the author makes that is NOT supported by credible evidence.



**Source**

Spider silk, spun into beautiful webs to trap insects for food, is fascinating. This silk features several unique qualities. According to the National Nature Project, spider silk is stronger than steel, by weight, and yet it is more elastic than a rubber band. Scientists study spider silk because they hope to create materials with similar properties. Researchers at Utah State University are attempting to create synthetic spider silk for uses such as replacements for plastics and stronger airbags in cars. According to a man who makes online videos about current events, though, synthetic spider silk will probably take another twenty years to develop.

### Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

A student is writing a research report about spiders. The student found a source. Read the source and select **one** claim that the author makes that is NOT supported by credible evidence.



**Source**

Spider silk, spun into beautiful webs to trap insects for food, is fascinating. This silk features several unique qualities. According to the National Nature Project, spider silk is stronger than steel, by weight, and yet it is more elastic than a rubber band. Scientists study spider silk because they hope to create materials with similar properties. Researchers at Utah State University are attempting to create synthetic spider silk for uses such as replacements for plastics and stronger airbags in cars. According to a man who makes online videos about current events, though, synthetic spider silk will probably take another twenty years to develop.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	7.2.1.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.
<b>Answer Key</b>	Sentence 6	<b>Option Annotations</b>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Using Authoritative Sources	
		The student is asked to determine which claim in the paragraph is not supported by credible evidence. The correct answer is sentence 6 because the sentence includes an opinion of someone who is not an authoritative source. In addition, the information is not supported by evidence. Sentences 1, 2, and 4 are general statements that are supported by the credible evidence provided in sentences 3 and 5.

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

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

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

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

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

**Example**  
**Independent Writing**  
**Items**

**ELA Indicator 2.1.i**

Compiled from the Grade Level NeSA ELA Samplers

*(Grades 3-8, 11)*

## 2.1.i

Grade Level Indicators	
4.2.1.i	Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation.
5.2.1.i	Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation.
6.2.1.i	Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation.
7.2.1.i	Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation.
8.2.1.i	Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation.
12.2.1.i	Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation.

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

**Source 1**

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

**Source 2**

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

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

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

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

**INDEPENDENT WRITING ITEMS**

17. A student is conducting research for a report about the county where she lives. Read her online source and the directions that follow.

Source: [statehandbook/burlesoncounty/geography/online](http://statehandbook/burlesoncounty/geography/online)

Burleson County consists of 423 square miles of gently sloping and level terrain with elevations ranging from 4260 feet in the southeast to 4890 feet in the northwest. The La Salle River is the one major watercourse and flows from the northwest to the southeast with tributaries draining both the western and eastern half of the county. Two natural geographic regions dominate the county: the smaller, Redland Prairie region in the southeast is predominately rolling grassland with soil of mostly shallow clay. The Timber Breaks region contains an abundance of deep loamy soil that supports hardwoods such as American elm and box elder. 84% of Burleson County is considered prime farm land.

The student wrote the following paragraph for her report. Select the sentence that requires revision to avoid plagiarizing the online source.

Burleson County is one of the fastest growing areas in the state, particularly the southeast portion of the county. New apartments and single-family homes are being built in the Redland Prairie area, where 60 acres of rolling grassland have been set aside for a regional high school. One of the significant effects of this development will be increased recreational traffic in the two county parks along the river. The La Salle River is the one major watercourse and flows to the southeast with tributaries draining the county. The only other alternative for camping is Ladder Bluff Canyon in the Timber Breaks region where public access is limited. Most of that northwestern part of the county is prime farm land and privately owned.

## Answer Key – Completed Correct Response

A student is conducting research for a report about the county where she lives. Read her online source and the directions that follow.

Source: statehandbook/burlesoncounty/geography/online

Burleson County consists of 423 square miles of gently sloping and level terrain with elevations ranging from 4260 feet in the southeast to 4890 feet in the northwest. The La Salle River is the one major watercourse and flows from the northwest to the southeast with tributaries draining both the western and eastern half of the county. Two natural geographic regions dominate the county: the smaller, Redland Prairie region in the southeast is predominately rolling grassland with soil of mostly shallow clay. The Timber Breaks region contains an abundance of deep loamy soil that supports hardwoods such as American elm and box elder. 84% of Burleson County is considered prime farm land.

The student wrote the following paragraph for her report. Select the sentence that requires revision to avoid plagiarizing the online source.




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Burleson County is one of the fastest growing areas in the state, particularly the southeast portion of the county. New apartments and single-family homes are being built in the Redland Prairie area, where 60 acres of rolling grassland have been set aside for a regional high school. One of the significant effects of this development will be increased recreational traffic in the two county parks along the river. The La Salle River is the one major watercourse and flows to the southeast with tributaries draining the county. The only other alternative for camping is Ladder Bluff Canyon in the Timber Breaks region where public access is limited. Most of that northwestern part of the county is prime farm land and privately owned.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	12.2.1.i	Display academic honesty and integrity by avoiding plagiarism and/or overreliance on any one source and by following a standard format for citation.
<b>Answer Key</b>	Sentence 4	<b>Option Annotations</b>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Avoid Plagiarism	
		The student is asked to identify the sentence in the paragraph that is plagiarized. The correct answer is sentence 4, “The La Salle River is the one major watercourse and flows to the southeast with tributaries draining the county.” This is the correct answer because it is a direct copy of sentence 2 in the original source. The other options are incorrect because they include sentences that are not pulled directly from the online source.

**Example**  
**Independent Writing**  
**Items**

**ELA Indicator 2.2.b**

Compiled from the Grade Level NeSA ELA Samplers

*(Grades 3-8, 11)*

## 2.2.b

Grade Level Indicators	
3.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support ideas or opinions.
4.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
5.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
6.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
7.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
8.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
12.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.

19. A student is writing a research report about trees. Read the sentences from the student’s report and the directions that follow.

Trees are important, and we should plant more of them. Trees give people and animals food. Apples, peaches, nuts, and other foods grow on trees. Trees can give shade in hot weather. They help an area stay cool, so less electricity is used. Not only are trees useful, but they are beautiful. If you are able to help plant a tree, you should do it.

The student took additional notes about trees. Choose **two** notes that support the student’s opinion. Choose **two**.

- A. Trees take many years to grow tall.
- B. Trees provide a place for animals to live.
- C. The trunk of a tree is protected by its bark.
- D. Trees put oxygen in the air for us to breathe.
- E. Many kinds of trees grow in parks around our country.
- F. You should give a tree plenty of water after planting it.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	3.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support ideas or opinions.
<b>Answer Key</b>	B, D	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option Annotations</b></p> <p>The student is asked to determine which additional information supports the author’s opinion that trees are important. Options B and D are the correct answers since both sentences support the author’s opinion by describing benefits of trees. Options A, C, and E are incorrect because while they are aspects of trees, they do not provide information that would support the reader’s opinion. Option F is incorrect because while it is an opinion statement, it does not support the opinion the student has already established.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify both sentences that support the student’s opinion. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify one of the sentences that support the student’s opinion.</p>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Supporting Evidence	

18. A student is writing a research report about riding bikes. He wrote an opinion in the report. Read the sentences from the student’s report and the directions that follow.

To go from one place to another, riding a bike is better than riding in a car. If there is a traffic jam on the road, riders on the bike path next to the road can move faster. You do not have to put gas in a bike like you do in a car. Sometimes it is easier to park your bike close to the place where you are going.

The student took notes about riding bikes. Choose **two** notes that support the student’s opinion. Choose **two**.

- A. When riding a bike, you should always wear a bike helmet.
- B. The hardest part of learning to ride a bike is keeping your balance.
- C. Riding a bike is a lot faster than walking, especially if you need to go far.
- D. When the weather is rainy, you should ride in a car so you do not get wet.
- E. Riding your bike gives you exercise because your legs make the bike go.
- F. You spend more time outdoors when you are on a bike, and this is good for you.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	5.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support ideas or opinions.
<b>Answer Key</b>	E, F	<p style="text-align: center;"><b>Option Annotations</b></p> <p>The student is asked to determine which additional information supports the author’s opinion. Options E and F are the correct answers since they both support the author’s opinion by describing benefits of riding a bicycle that cannot be achieved by riding in a car. Options A, B, and C are incorrect because while they are aspects of riding a bike, the ideas do not support why riding a bike is better than riding in a car. Option D is incorrect because it supports the opposite of the author’s opinion.</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify both sentences that support the student’s opinion. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify one of the sentences that support the student’s opinion.</p>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Supporting Evidence	

**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**.

?

**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		
<b>Alignment</b>	6.2.2.b	Provide evidence from literary or informational text to support analysis, reflection, and research.
<b>Answer Key</b>	Sentence 5, Sentence 7	<p><b>Option Annotations</b></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>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Provide Evidence to Support Research	

**Example**  
**Independent Writing**  
**Items**

**ELA Indicator 2.2.d**

Compiled from the Grade Level NeSA ELA Samplers

*(Grades 3-8, 11)*

## 2.2.d

Grade Level Indicators	
3.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
4.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
5.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
6.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes
7.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
8.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
12.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.

19. Read the sentence.

The runner ran down the track at the start of the 100-meter race.

Which word BEST replaces ran to make the sentence more precise?

- A. stepped
- B. dashed
- C. walked
- D. hurried

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	4.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<b>Option Annotations</b>  The student is asked to select a word that is more precise than “ran.” Option B is correct because the word “dashed” is most precise for the context of a race. Options A, C, and D are incorrect because they do not fit the context of the sentence.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Precise Word Choice	

19. A student is writing a paragraph describing an event. She is looking for more precise words to use.

Read the paragraph.

Raindrops drummed on the roof as Mia finished getting ready for school. Just as the news meteorologist had predicted, Mia's morning commute would be interrupted by a downpour. She peaked out the window and surveyed her neighborhood. She watched as water splashed off the hoods of cars and puddles transformed into small rivers in the street. Mia was dreading the walk to the bus stop, but she needed to arrive to school on time. So Mia zipped up her jacket and grabbed her umbrella. Then, she went out the door and sprinted the three blocks to the bus stop.

Select **two** words that could replace went to make the paragraph more precise. Select **two**.

- A. coasted
- B. darted
- C. moved
- D. rushed
- E. sauntered
- F. wandered

<b>Item Information</b>		
<b>Alignment</b>	7.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
<b>Answer Key</b>	B, D	<b>Option Annotations</b>
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Precise Word Choice	
		<p>The student is asked to select two words that are more precise than “went.” Options B and D are the correct answers because “dashed” and “rushed” best fit the context of the paragraph. Since “sprinted” is also in the sentence, the words that are most precise need to imply “to move quickly.” Options A, E, and F are incorrect because they imply slow movement, which does not fit the context of the paragraph. Option C is incorrect because “moved” is as general as “went.”</p> <p>This item is worth 2 points. To receive full credit, the student must correctly identify both words that could replace “went” to make the paragraph more precise. To receive 1 point, the student must correctly identify one of the words that is more precise.</p>

19. Read the paragraph from a narrative about a hike.

Kim had hiked this mountain so many times. She loved the challenges of the trail, the gnarly roots that threatened to trip her and the embedded stones worn smooth by years of foot traffic. Her brother Ned had leapt ahead of her on the trail like a mountain goat. He had probably already arrived at Alpine Lake, the glistening, unspoiled expanse of brilliant blue that was their destination. As she emerged from the shaded trail for her first glimpse of the lake, she paused to take in its splendor.

Choose the sentence which, if added to the paragraph, would BEST create suspense.

- A. The lake settled into the landscape like a brilliant blue bowl, encircled by the emerald forest, presenting a striking contrast of intense color.
- B. Then, behind her, she heard the light thud of footsteps and the whisper of branches brushing against something, something mobile, and she shivered in the warm sunlight.
- C. Once, a real estate developer had threatened to create a small resort community on the shores of the lake, but he had met with so much resistance that he gave up the plan.
- D. She heard Ned calling for her somewhere along the shore, and she realized that he was waiting impatiently for her to join him.

Item Information		
<b>Alignment</b>	12.2.2.d	Use precise word choice and domain-specific vocabulary to write in a variety of modes.
<b>Answer Key</b>	B	<b>Option Annotations</b>  The student is asked to determine which sentence could be added to the paragraph to best create suspense. The correct option is B because “heard the light thud of footsteps,” “whisper of branches,” and “she shivered” all create a suspenseful tone. The other options are incorrect because, while descriptive word choice is used, the words do not create suspense.
<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	2	
<b>Focus</b>	Word Choice	