

# SAMPLE TEST ITEMS

This document, originally published in 2013, contains information relating to a transition to PARCC testing; however, at this time, there is no plan to transition to PARCC. The sample items and student work reflect the current EOC English III assessment; therefore, teachers are encouraged to use the samples provided in this document as additional resources, but should use the current Assessment Guidance for English III document for up-to-date EOC testing information.

## English III



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# Introduction

*Louisiana Believes* embraces the principle that all children can achieve at high levels, as evidenced in Louisiana’s adoption of the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). *Louisiana Believes* also promotes the idea that Louisiana’s educators should be empowered to make decisions to support the success of their students. In keeping with these values, the Department has created documents with sample test items to help prepare teachers and students as they transition to the CCSS. The documents reflect the State’s commitment to consistent and rigorous assessments and provide educators and families with clear information about expectations for student performance.

## **Purpose of This Document**

Teachers are encouraged to use the sample items presented in this document in a variety of ways to gauge student learning and to guide instruction and development of classroom assessments and tasks. The document includes a writing prompt and multiple-choice items that exemplify how the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) in English Language Arts will be assessed on the End-of-Course (EOC) tests. A discussion of each item highlights the knowledge and skills the item is intended to measure.

As Louisiana students and teachers transition to the CCSS and the Partnership for Assessment of Readiness for College and Careers (PARCC) assessments, the English III EOC assessment will include only items aligned to the CCSS. In reviewing the items, it is important to remember that the sample items included in this document represent only a portion of the body of knowledge and skills measured by the EOC test.

## **English III Administration**

The English III EOC test is administered to students who have completed English III: course code 120333.

## **Resources**

Below are resources that offer additional information about the transitional tests and the PARCC assessments, plus instructional resources for teaching the CCSS, including links to unit assessments:

- [Assessment Guidance for 2013-2014](#)
- [Unit Assessments and Planning Tools](#)
- Transitional Writing Prompts on the [Practice Assessment/Strengthen Skills \(PASS\) System](#)
- CCSS-Aligned [EAGLE Items](#)
- [Samples of PARCC Assessment Items](#)
- [Samples of Smarter Balanced Assessment Items](#)

## Test Administration

The English III test contains three sessions. Session 1 includes the writing prompt. Sessions 2 and 3 include passage-based reading and vocabulary items, plus a set of discrete items that address research and language skills. Specific information about the structure of the test can be found in the [Assessment Guidance for 2013-2014](#).

The EOC test is **untimed**. Although suggested testing times are provided for each session, it is very important that students be given sufficient time to complete the test.

The directions in the *Test Administration Manual* will clearly explain all the procedures for administering each session of the test, but each of the sections that follow will provide a brief overview of materials provided during testing.

### EOC Achievement Levels

Student scores for the English III EOC test are reported at four achievement levels: *Excellent*, *Good*, *Fair*, and *Needs Improvement*. General definitions of the EOC achievement levels are shown below.

#### EOC Achievement-Level Definitions

<p><b>Excellent:</b> A student at this achievement level has demonstrated mastery of course content beyond <i>Good</i>.</p>
<p><b>Good:</b> A student at this achievement level has demonstrated mastery of course content and is well prepared for the next level of coursework in the subject area.</p>
<p><b>Fair:</b> A student at this achievement level has demonstrated only the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of coursework in the subject area.</p>
<p><b>Needs Improvement:</b> A student at this achievement level has not demonstrated the fundamental knowledge and skills needed for the next level of coursework in the subject area.</p>

Because of the shift from grade-level expectations to the CCSS, this document differs from the *Released Test Items Documents*. Many of the released items from past test administrations may not be indicative of the types of items on the upcoming December and May EOC transitional assessments. To better align the transitional test to the content of the CCSS, new items were developed. Therefore, this document includes sample items, rather than released items. These sample items reflect the way the CCSS will be assessed and represent the new items that students will encounter on the transitional EOC assessments. Because these are not released items, item-specific information about achievement levels is not included.

## Session 1: Writing

The writing prompt requires students to write a well-developed multiparagraph essay. A typical writing prompt may require students to read two sources about an issue and then write an essay that takes a position on the issue and uses evidence from **both** sources.

All students are provided with the following materials during the administration of the writing portion of the English III test:

- scratch paper
- two pencils
- a dictionary and a thesaurus
- a Writer’s Checklist (a hard copy and an online version)

Test administrators will be instructed to read aloud the Writer’s Checklist for the writing session of the English III test. However, the sources on the writing test must **not** be read aloud or signed to students, except for those students with the accommodations *Tests Read Aloud* or *Communication Assistance*, who will receive their accommodations as part of the EOC Tests System.

Students are expected to type the final draft of their response in the online testing environment. At the top of the testing screen, there will be three buttons; one will open the Writer’s Checklist and the other two will open the sources. Students will be able to keep the sources open while typing their essay in the text box below the task.

This section presents rubrics used to score the Writing session of the English III EOC test, a sample writing prompt, and examples of student responses representing a range of score points.

### Scoring Information

Student responses to the writing prompt are scored on three dimensions—Content, Style, and Conventions.

A 1- to 4-point scoring rubric is used for the Content and Style dimensions, and it is possible for students to receive different score points for each dimension. The Conventions scoring rubric is broken into four parts: sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling, each worth 0–1 points for a total of 4 possible points. The total score for the Writing session is the sum of all three dimensions and ranges from 0–12 points.

The Content dimension measures the following:

- how well students present their position
- the development of that position, including the appropriate and accurate use of evidence from both sources and how well the evidence is integrated
- the organization of the ideas

The Style dimension evaluates the ways in which the student shapes and controls the language and the flow of the essay. Features of Style include the following:

- word choice
- sentence fluency, which includes sentence structure and sentence variety
- voice, the individual personality of the writing

The Conventions dimension evaluates the student’s knowledge and control of the conventions of standard English based on the grade 11–12 CCSS Language standards and the grade-appropriate language skills identified in the [Common Core Language Progressive Skills Chart](#).

A summary of the score points for the Writing session is shown below.

<b>Dimension</b>	<b>Maximum Points Possible</b>
Content	4
Style	4
Sentence Formation	1
Usage	1
Mechanics	1
Spelling	1
<b>Total Points</b>	<b>12</b>

Essays that are off topic, incoherent, blank, insufficient, not written in English, a restatement of the prompt, or include only copied text from the sources are considered unscorable and will receive a score of zero points. However, an off-topic paper that cannot be scored for Content or Style may still be scored for Conventions. Such a paper could receive a maximum score of 4 of 12 points.

## Content Rubric

### CONTENT: Position, Development, and Organization

**Key Questions:** *Does the writer present a clear position and share insightful information related to the given task? Does the writer’s use of the sources strengthen the position and show an understanding of both sources? Does the organizational structure enhance the writer’s ideas and make the essay easier to read?*

Score Point	<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
	<b>Consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the traits’ features; many strengths are present.</b>	<b>Reasonable control of the traits’ features; essay has some strengths and some weaknesses.</b>	<b>Inconsistent control of the traits’ features; weaknesses outweigh the strengths.</b>	<b>Little or no control of the traits’ features; a minimal attempt is made to develop an essay.</b>
<b>A response in which there is evidence from only one of the two sources can receive no higher than a score of 2 in Content. A score of 3 or 4 cannot be assigned unless there is evidence from both sources.</b>				
<b>POSITION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writer’s position is sharply focused.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writer’s position is clear and generally focused.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writer’s position is vague or superficial.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The writer’s position is unclear or absent.</li> </ul>
<b>DEVELOPMENT/USE OF SOURCES</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development is thorough. Supporting ideas include details that are specific, relevant, and accurate.</li> <li>Well-chosen evidence from BOTH sources strengthens the writer’s position and shows a thorough understanding of the sources.</li> <li>Information from both sources has been skillfully integrated. (The writer is effective at handling information from the source that may conflict with his or her position.)</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development is adequate but may be uneven. Supporting ideas include details that are, for the most part, relevant and accurate.</li> <li>Sufficient and appropriate evidence from BOTH sources is used to support the writer’s position and shows an understanding of the sources.</li> <li>The writer elaborates on the source information (does more than summarize the sources).</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development is inadequate. Supporting ideas may be repetitive or list-like or show gaps in thinking.</li> <li>There is evidence from only one source, or the response merely summarizes the sources, usually without explanation, or misrepresents the sources.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The development is minimal. There are little or no supporting ideas, and details included are irrelevant and/or inaccurate.</li> <li>The connection between ideas may be confusing.</li> <li>There is no evidence from either source or the evidence shows a misunderstanding of the source(s).</li> <li>Essay is too brief to provide an adequate sample of writing; minimal attempt.</li> </ul>
<b>ORGANIZATION</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organizational strategy demonstrates evidence of planning and a purposeful, logical progression of ideas.</li> <li>There is an effective introduction and conclusion and thoughtful transitions that convey a sense of wholeness.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The organizational strategy is apparent with a progression of ideas that allows the reader to move through the text with little confusion.</li> <li>The introduction, conclusion, and transitions often work well.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>There is an attempt at organization, but there may be digressions, repetition, or contradictory information.</li> <li>The introduction and conclusion are weak or may be missing. There may be a lack of adequate transitions.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response lacks an identifiable organizational strategy (random order).</li> <li>The lack of an introduction, conclusion, and/or progression of ideas makes it difficult for the reader to move through the text.</li> </ul>

*Control* is defined as the writer’s ability to use a given feature of written language effectively at the appropriate grade level.

## Style Rubric

<b>STYLE: Word Choice, Sentence Fluency, and Voice</b>				
<b>Key Questions:</b> <i>Would you keep reading this essay if it were longer? Do the words, phrases, and sentences enrich the content and allow the reader to move through the writing with ease?</i>				
Score Point	4	3	2	1
<b>Score Point</b>	<b>Consistent, though not necessarily perfect, control of the traits’ features; many strengths are present.</b>	<b>Reasonable control of the traits’ features; the essay has some strengths and some weaknesses.</b>	<b>Inconsistent control of the traits’ features; the weaknesses outweigh the strengths.</b>	<b>Little or no control of the traits’ features; a minimal attempt is made to develop an essay.</b>
<b>WORD CHOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of language is purposeful and reinforces the writer’s position.</li> <li>• Word choice is precise, effective, and includes some striking words and phrases as appropriate to the task.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of language is appropriate and communicates the writer’s position.</li> <li>• Word choice is fitting; includes some interesting words and phrases.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The use of language is generic and does nothing to strengthen the writer’s position.</li> <li>• Word choice is limited and/or repetitive.</li> <li>• Many words are used incorrectly.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Language is simple and/or may be inappropriate to the task.</li> <li>• Word choice is basic; words are used incorrectly.</li> <li>• Essay is too brief to provide an adequate sample of writing; minimal attempt.</li> </ul>
<b>SENTENCE FLUENCY</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences are fluent and vary in length, structure, and beginnings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences are generally varied in length and structure, and most sentences have varied beginnings.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences show little or no variety in length and structure and some may be awkward or lack fluency. Many sentences begin the same way leading to a monotonous reading.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The sentences are simple and lack variety, and their construction makes the response confusing and difficult to read.</li> </ul>
<b>VOICE</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer’s voice (individual personality) is compelling and engaging.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer’s voice is present but may not be particularly compelling.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The writer’s voice is weak and/or inconsistent.</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Voice is not evident.</li> </ul>

## Conventions Rubric

<p><b>CONVENTIONS: Sentence Formation, Usage, Mechanics, Spelling</b></p> <p><i>Each dimension—Sentence Formation, Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling—is scored 1 point for acceptable or 0 points for unacceptable, for a total of up to 4 points. Scorers look for acceptable control based on the amount of original student writing in the response. (For example, in a response with very little original work by the student, one mistake may signal unacceptable control in a dimension. However, for a longer response, it may take several errors to demonstrate a pattern of mistakes in a dimension.) Scorers also look for correct application of grade-level skills based on the <a href="#">Common Core Language Standards</a> and the grade-appropriate skills identified on the <a href="#">Common Core Language Progressive Skills Chart</a>.</i></p>	
<p><b>Sentence Formation:</b> completeness and correct construction of different types of sentences</p>	
<b>1</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>acceptable</b> control of sentence formation. Most sentences are correct; there are few, if any, fragments, run-on sentences, comma splices, or syntax problems. Sentences show the appropriate level of complexity for the grade level.</p>
<b>0</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>unacceptable</b> control of sentence formation. There are run-on sentences, fragments, and/or poorly constructed sentences that indicate that the writer does not have adequate skill in sentence formation.</p>
<p><b>Usage:</b> correct agreement, verb tenses, and word choice</p>	
<b>1</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>acceptable</b> control of usage. Subject-verb agreement and pronoun-antecedent agreement; verb tenses; forms of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs; and word meaning are generally correct. If errors are present, they do not appear to be part of a pattern of usage errors.</p>
<b>0</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>unacceptable</b> control of usage. There are errors in agreement; verb tenses; forms of nouns, pronouns, adjectives, and adverbs; and/or word meaning. The pattern of errors is evidence of a lack of control of the features of usage.</p>
<p><b>Mechanics:</b> correct punctuation and capitalization</p>	
<b>1</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>acceptable</b> control of mechanics. Punctuation and capitalization are generally correct. If errors are present, they do not appear to be part of a pattern of mechanics errors.</p>
<b>0</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>unacceptable</b> control of mechanics. There are errors in punctuation and capitalization. The pattern of errors is evidence of a lack of control of the features of mechanics.</p>
<p><b>Spelling:</b> correct spelling of high-frequency and grade-appropriate words</p>	
<b>1</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>acceptable</b> control of spelling. High-frequency words and the majority of grade-appropriate words are spelled correctly. There is no pattern of spelling errors.</p>
<b>0</b>	<p>The response exhibits <b>unacceptable</b> control of spelling. There are errors in spelling high-frequency and grade-appropriate words. There is a pattern of spelling errors.</p>

When it is difficult to determine the dimension to which an error should be assigned, the scorer will consider context clues and error patterns that are evident in the response. See *Additional Scoring Criteria for Writing* on page 43.

## Sample Writing Prompt

Below is a prompt that appeared on the Spring 2013 English III EOC field test, followed by the English Language Arts Writer's Checklist. The example reflects what the student sees in the online testing environment.

### Writing Prompt Example

#### Session 1 – Writing

Read through the writing task below (question 1). Then read the two sources by clicking on the Source 1 and Source 2 buttons at the top of the screen. Use specific details from **both** sources in your essay.

To record your answer, type your essay in the box below question 1. When you are satisfied with your essay, click Submit.

- 
- 1. After reading the sources, write a well-developed multiparagraph essay that discusses how you think social networking websites have affected the quality of people's social lives. Use specific details from Source 1 and Source 2 to support your response.**

*(student enters response in text box)*

## Source 1 Pop-up Window

As you read both sources, reflect on your own views about social networking websites.

**Source 1—from the essay “Social Networking Sites and the Culture of Isolation,” written in 2010**

A *social networking* site is typically defined as a website that enables individuals with common interests or social ties to form relationships or build networks with other users of the same site through email, instant messaging, and other integrated communication. The popularity of social networking sites such as Facebook, MySpace, LinkedIn, and Twitter has surged in recent years. Many people from all over the world have taken part in this social-technology trend. In 2009, people tripled the time they spent on social networking sites compared with 2008. A 2009 study by The Nielsen Company indicated social networks and blogging sites accounted for 17% of total time spent on the Internet. Nonetheless, there is reason to be concerned about the growing impact of social media use on our society and culture.

*Social networking* is an unfortunate term since the data actually indicates that social networking sites weaken our social lives and keep us from authentic human interaction by providing showy yet shallow communication alternatives. In an online poll, Joe Thomas of the Yahoo! Contributor Network found “social networking has led to a reduction in face time between friends, as users perceive themselves to be socially connected despite the absence of personal encounters.” Thomas concluded, “The news feed feature on Facebook and Twitter keeps users aware of the recent activities of close friends and family, in many cases eliminating the motivation for deeper interaction.” Indeed, a 2010 Stanford University study, “How the Internet is Changing Daily Life,” shows a negative correlation<sup>[1]</sup> between time spent on social networking sites and time in offline social activities.

The cultural shift from face-to-face human interaction to online social communication has serious consequences for individuals and the quality of their interpersonal relationships. A study found that nearly 70% of college students have read posts from someone close to them that seemed like a cry for emotional help, and while most students offered support in some way, fewer than half made a personal visit. Furthermore, while 84% of students say they prefer to resolve conflicts with friends in person, nearly 70% report that they have had arguments exclusively via text messages (*Katonda News Network*). As a result, responsible, empathetic communication is a casualty of social media, as illustrated by the increasing incidences of cyber bullying and cyber ranting.

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**[1]** A relationship between two variables in which one variable increases as the other decreases, and vice versa.

## Source 2 Pop-up Window

**As you read both sources, reflect on your own views about social networking websites.**

**Source 2—an article from the magazine *TechTalk*, “Study Redeems Social Networking,” written in 2011**

Much has been made lately of the assertion that social networking sites (SNS) discourage social interaction and deteriorate interpersonal relationships. However, according to a new study by the Pew Internet and American Life Project, the SNS skeptics may be wrong. By exploring the links between use of SNS technologies and the social traits of tolerance, social support, and civic engagement, the study attempted to test the hypothesis that technology causes people to hole up in their pajamas and lose their ability to interact effectively when communicating in person.

The study redeems the value of Facebook by indicating its users are more than 43% as likely as other Internet users to respond affirmatively to the question, “I feel that most people can be trusted.” The study also found that Facebook users are significantly more likely to attend a political rally and to state an intention to vote than other Internet users. Additionally, Facebook users are more likely to volunteer for local organizations or visit parks and cafés. Facebook users were also found to receive more emotional support, companionship, and instrumental aid (help doing something) than other Internet users. The study concluded that Facebook users have an average of 9% more close personal confidants than other Internet users.

What’s more, as use of SNS has increased, the average number of Americans with close personal confidants has also gone up, from 1.93 close personal confidants in 2008 to 2.16 in 2011. This finding stands in direct opposition to the prevailing wisdom that SNS lead to superficial and fewer deep relationships among users.

## English Language Arts Writer's Checklist

### English III



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**As you write your essay, remember these important points.**

#### **Content:**

- Read the instructions, the writing task, and **both** sources, and respond as directed.
- Present a clear central idea (position).
- Give enough details to support and develop your central idea, your position.
- Use well-chosen information from **both** sources in your essay.
- Present your ideas in a logical order, and include an introduction and conclusion.

#### **Style:**

- Use words that reinforce your position and express your meaning well.
- Write in complete sentences and use a variety of sentence types and lengths to make your writing easy to follow.

#### **Sentence Formation:**

- Write complete and correct sentences.

#### **Usage:**

- Write using appropriate subject-verb agreement, verb tenses, word meaning, and word endings.

#### **Mechanics:**

- Write using correct punctuation.
- Write using correct capitalization.
- Write using appropriate formatting.

#### **Spelling:**

- Write using correct spelling.

## Directions for Writing



Follow the steps below to help you write a successful essay.

### Step 1: Planning

- ✓ Read the instructions, the writing task, and **both** sources carefully.
- ✓ Think about what you will write before you begin.
- ✓ As you read the sources, jot down notes that will help you create your essay. Include relevant information from **both** sources to support your central idea, your position.
- ✓ Use the paper provided by your test administrator for planning your composition and/or writing your rough draft.

### Step 2: Drafting and Revising

- ✓ Type your essay in the space provided.
- ✓ To begin a paragraph, use the **Enter** key. Then use the **Tab** key or the space bar to indent the paragraph.
- ✓ Review your essay to make sure you have covered all the points on the Writer's Checklist.
- ✓ Read through your essay.
- ✓ Rearrange ideas or change words to make your meaning clear and improve your essay.

### Step 3: Proofreading

- ✓ Read your final draft.
- ✓ Make any needed corrections.

### Points to Remember:

- ✓ Only the **final draft** submitted online will be scored.
- ✓ Your essay will be scored on content (central idea, development of ideas, use of **both** sources, and organization); style (word choice, expression of ideas, and sentence variety); and conventions of language (sentence formation, usage, mechanics, and spelling).

## **Sample Student Responses**

The student essays that are included in this document represent a range of scores designed to show teachers several kinds of responses to the prompts. In the explanations that follow the essays, rubric language was used whenever possible to help teachers better understand how the scores were determined.

The purpose of the score-point explanations is to

- provide concrete examples from the essay to show specific strengths and weaknesses; and
- provide models of how to discuss writing in the classroom so that students can better understand how to improve their writing.

This information will help teachers work with the prompts and rubrics, but it will also guide them as they continue to implement evidence-based writing, an important instructional shift of the CCSS.

## Student Response #1

### Score Points

Content/Style		Conventions	
Content	4	Sentence Formation	1
		Usage	1
Style	4	Mechanics	1
		Spelling	1

Today's world is universal and inner-connected. As the world grows, the method in which we communicate is expanded. International calling, emails, instant messaging; those are some of the incarnations to name a few, however, with the massive rise of the internet, much more than that is possible. The most recent of these "communication catalyst" are social networking websites. Social networking sites are disgned to connect users to other people and various social parties, while at the same time, stimulate poeple's awariness of current events, thus improving their quality of life. While social networking has succeeded in some of those efforts, it has also similarly affected people's social lives in a negative light.

Social networking sites such as Facebook and Twitter has allowed people to form new friendships and develop existing friendships through the ease and swiftness of chatting options. At the press of a button, you can be informed on family relations or the current news. With the popularitiy surging in recent years, social networking provides a sure-fire way to contact someone. According to the magazine article "Study Redeems Social Networking", "Facebook users are significantly more likely to attend a political rally...volunteer for local organizations" and are "also found to receive more emotional support...than other internet users."(Source 2). This increased relationship to the social and political world improves the quality of people's social life and are owed in part to the increase of social networking.

While the use of social netwroking websites have demonstrated great potential in connecting people to each other and the world around them, it efforts are hindered when considering the adverse effects. As people spend more time on these social networking sites, there arises a strong "absence of personal encounters."(Source 1). Social networks are typically designed to enable users to build relationships on a deeper, personal level. However, computers are incapable of feeling emotions; a text message or chat cannot capture the essence of a laugh or voice. These social networks do not measure empathy or sarcasm, anger or passion while they are simutaneously "eliminating the motivation for deeper interaction"(Source 1). Relationships without feelings, information without emotions, it is all a dangerous correlation. "A negative correlation"(Source 1). Instead of carryout out its planned role, social networking websites decrease the quality of people's lives as it can create a void between face-to-face interaction and produce negative results such as cyber bullying and onllne arguments.

Social networking websites are designed for a certain purpose - a purpose in which it half-heartily fulfills. While social networking sites have affected the quality of people's social lives for the better, uniting a wide network of friends with the political and social world and providing a fast and reliable form of communication that is conducive to the growing population, it has failed to stimulate true, deep relationships between people. In turn, they ruin the quality of people's social lives; becoming the accepted and natural form of communication and weakening the real, direct impact of voice and conversation. The loss of tangible relationship is the opportunity cost of it all, and that happens to be a cost too great.

**CONTENT: 4 points**

The student demonstrates consistent control of the Content dimension. The central idea is clear and logically elaborated over several paragraphs. Although there is not a lot of evidence from the sources, the details are well-chosen and relevant (such as the quotes in the second paragraph that support the pro-social network argument), and the student does a good job of analyzing and balancing the opposing arguments to come up with a unique and personal conclusion. The student quotes mostly from the first source ("absence of personal encounters," "eliminating the motivation for deeper connections," and "negative correlation"), which makes sense given the position the student takes in the essay. The response is well organized, with a fairly strong introduction, transitions between body paragraphs ("While the use..."), and a thoughtful conclusion that both restates the main points of the two articles and clearly articulates the student's position.

**STYLE: 4 points**

The student demonstrates consistent control of the Style dimension. Sentences vary in length and structure, and quotes from the sources are skillfully inserted into running text. The overall vocabulary level is impressive. The essay not only includes some striking words ("catalyst," "tangible"), it also has some vivid imagery ("...a text message or chat cannot capture the essence of a laugh or voice"). There is an occasional misused word ("half-heartily"), but the essay's style is strong enough to overlook such lapses. The student's voice is clear and engaging; there is a strong sense of an intelligent mind grappling with complex ideas.

**CONVENTIONS: 4 points**

The student demonstrates consistent control of Conventions. With the exception of a couple of comma splices and a sentence fragment, most sentences are well constructed and structured in a variety of ways. There are a few agreement errors ("sites...has", "people's social life") and some word choice errors ("inner-connected", "incarnations") that suggest the student is reaching for vocabulary that hasn't quite been mastered; overall, however, the response shows acceptable control of usage. The student has good control

of punctuation and capitalization rules, particularly given the length and complexity of sentences. There are quite a few misspelled words—enough to make this a borderline score. However, the misspellings appear to be careless typos rather than a pattern of spelling errors.

## Student Response #2

### Score Points

Content/Style		Conventions	
Content	3	Sentence Formation	1
		Usage	0
Style	4	Mechanics	0
		Spelling	1

Several weeks ago, I watched a commercial that kept me thinking. It wasn't the purpose, which was to sell cars, but the content of the advertisement that was provoking. In the commercial, a college girl was complaining that she set up a facebook up for her parents and after several weeks, they only gained 9 friends. She muttered that they had no life while the commercial shifts to show her parents mountain biking with their friends in the wild. The commercial concluded with the college girl sitting alone in a large room, staring at puppies on facebook, stating, "this is living".

Of course, this commercial is just a screenplay to promote the vehicle that brought the parents to the Wild, but in real life, like the commercial, social networking isn't exactly "living". The fact that the creators of the commercial played on this idea indicates that many people believe that social networking does not improve the quality of life. Social networking does help people connect more easily, but in another sense it also isolates people.

By interacting via social networks, people spend less time actually interacting face to face with other people. According to Joe Thomas of the Yahoo! Contributor Network, "The news feed feature on Facebook and Twitter keeps users aware of the recent activities of close friends and family, in many cases eliminating the motivation for deeper interaction" (Social Networking Sites). These people believe that just internet, impersonal interactions is enough to sustain a great social life. However, in a study involving college students, 84% prefer to resolve conflicts in person (Social Networking Sites). A online confrontation may just as well worsen the relationship.

Because social networking is so impersonal, it is easy for cyberbullying to occur. People easily insult their friends without giving it a second thought. This ruins many relationships that decrease the quality of people's social lives.

Though social networks are becoming more and more predominant, not everyone will have an account at a site. Because most interactions nowadays occur on such sites, many non-users are left out of the loop. As social networks become even more important, the quality of the non-users' social lives will decrease even more.

Social networking, however, does facilitate communication between people, but communication through the internet is more impersonal than in person communication. There seems to be a positive correlation between Social Networking Users and positive personalities, i.e. volunteering (Study Redeems), but correlation does not imply causation. It may be that people with positive personalities are more likely to use Social Media because they can connect more easily with others.

An personal (face to face) relationship can never be replaced by an online one. Social Networking debilitates the quality of people's social lives.

**CONTENT: 3 points**

The student demonstrates reasonable control of the Content dimension. The central idea is fairly clear, but the supporting evidence is more repetitive than cumulative. The student brings in a few details and quotes from both sources, but there is some unevenness in the analysis of the sources. The essay starts off really well, with an excellent first paragraph that establishes the main arguments by recounting a thematically appropriate television commercial. However, the organization breaks down when the essay discusses cyberbullying and social network non-users. By placing (and only partly refuting) the counterargument near the end of the essay (“Social networking, however, does facilitate communication between people...”), the student weakens the impact of the strong position taken in the final two sentences.

**STYLE: 4 points**

The student demonstrates consistent control of the Style dimension. Sentences flow well, with a nice balance of compound and complex structures. Word choices are striking (“provoking”, “predominant”, “debilitates”) and there are some impressive phrases, such as “correlation does not imply causation.” The student’s voice is clear and conversational, evident most in the introduction, which creates an engaging tone throughout the essay.

**CONVENTIONS: 2 points**

The student demonstrates inconsistent control of Conventions. Sentences are well constructed throughout the essay. However, there are enough errors in usage—agreement errors (“interactions is”), verb shifts (“muttered...shifts”), and two article errors (“A online” and “An personal”)—to suggest some lack of control of this dimension. There is also a pattern of capitalization errors: a sentence-initial word and the proper noun “facebook” is uncapitalized, while the common nouns “Wild,” “Social Networking Users,” and “Social Media” are capitalized. There are a few misspelled words, but they appear to be typos that should have been caught and corrected with a more careful proofreading.

### Student Response #3

#### Score Points

Content/Style		Conventions	
Content	3	Sentence Formation	0
		Usage	1
Style	3	Mechanics	1
		Spelling	1

Today majority of teens are actively involved in social networking websites. Some of these websites include Facebook and Twitter. Just a few years ago, social networking was not nearly as popular as it is today. In many ways, social networking websties have affected the quality of people’s lives.

There are several ways, in which social networking has improved the quality of people’s lives. Now, many people are connecting to long distance friends. The reason for this is because communication is much easier compared to several years ago, before the growth of social networking websites. According to the TechTalk article, people of closer relationships because of social networking. This is because it is easier to communicate with friends. Friends can now stay up to date with each other, because all they have to do is check their social networking pages. By looking at their pages, they can learn who their friends are, and what they are interested in. Another positve aspect of social networking is that now people are becoming more active in their communitis. According to the Tech Talk article, “Facebook users are more likely to volunteer for local organizations.” This is because many people want to be involved in their friends’ lives. If their friends want to participate in community activities, then other people are more likely to as well. This is also true because information is spread around more quickly, than before social networking. It is easy to post information about upcoming events. As a result, people can easily respond and show up for events, and fun activites.

Although social networking does improve the quality of life in some ways, it also has some negative effects. According to the essay in source one, people are less likely to engage in face to face conversations. Many people find it easier to quickly comment on a person’s wall, than to personally talk to them. Source one also claims that many people would rather resolve conflicts in person, but seventy percent say that the conflicts began with a tect message. Another serious concern with social networking, is that a new type of bullying has evolved, called cyber bullying. Now more than ever, people are being bullied through these social networking websites. This is because, it is easier to write mean things online. Most people would not say these things to their faces. It has become easier to bully people through the internet interaction.

In some ways, social networks are making a positive difference in people’s lives, but some ways are negatively affecting the quality of people’s lives. Social networking is bringing people closer together, but it is also tearing relationships apart. Social networking is changing the quality of people’s lives, and will continue to do so for many years to come.

**CONTENT: 3 points**

The student demonstrates reasonable control of the Content dimension. The essay contains a clear central idea, one that explains how social networking sites are both positive and negative. While this essay is fairly general, it does include adequate evidence from each source and does a good job of incorporating the quotes (“According to the essay in source one...”, “Source one also claims...”). A key strength of this essay can be found in the explanations that follow the quotes, which show the student’s understanding of the sources (“This is because many people want to be involved in their friends’ lives...”). Although the wording may be a bit repetitive (“This is because”), the explanations in the essay illustrate how students can go beyond summary and provide the elaboration required for the higher score points.

**STYLE: 3 points**

The student demonstrates reasonable control of the Style dimension. Even though the word choice is not especially striking, it is appropriate to the task and communicates the writer’s position. There are some interesting sentences, such as “Social networking is bringing people together, but it is also tearing relationships apart.” The sentences are generally varied, and the student’s voice is apparent although not engaging enough to merit a higher style score.

**CONVENTIONS: 3 points**

The student demonstrates acceptable control of Conventions. There are no serious patterns of usage errors or errors in mechanics or spelling. However, the essay does show unacceptable control of sentence formation. Throughout the essay the student interrupts the flow of the sentences with unnecessary commas (“There are several ways, in which social networking...”, “Another serious concern with social networking, is that a new type of bullying has evolved...”, “This is because, it is easier to write mean things online”) that suggest some lack of understanding of sentence structure.

## Student Response #4

### Score Points

Content/Style		Conventions	
Content	2	Sentence Formation	1
		Usage	1
Style	4	Mechanics	1
		Spelling	1

In recent years, the number of people using social networking sites has skyrocketed. More and more people everyday log in to Facebook and Twitter so they can see what all of their friends are up to. The increased use of social networking is starting to affect the social skills of people by decreasing the time they spend face to face with peers, greatly impairing the amount of time they spend on social interaction offline, and making them more apathetic to human emotions and interaction.

Today, it is very easy to make a friend without ever even seeing their face. There are many ways to communicate through the internet that require no facetime at all. If someone wanted to know what their friends are doing, who they are with, and where they are, they just simply need to log on to Facebook and click on their profile. The fact that a person can see what is going on around them online makes them believe that they have a great social life when in fact they just have a great social networking life.

People waste more time on the internet than in any other area of their lives. They would rather just sit on the computer all day talking to their friends than go and meet them somewhere to hang out. Online games can even take the place of athletics and recreation for some people. When everything needed to have a sort of relationship with a person is right at your fingertips, then why go outside and talk to someone in person? Social networking can even affect schoolwork because people are so addicted to the sites that they will not log off to do pencil and paper work. These sites are affecting more than just social interactions that take place offline.

The ability to effectively communicate with other human beings is also being hurt by the social networking sites. People are losing their ability to read human emotions and their personal relationships are suffering. It is much easier for people to have a conversation over text messages, Facebook chat, and subtweets today than it is to go meet someone and talk to them face to face. The ability to read human emotion is very hard when talking to someone over the internet and there has been an increase in incidents of cyberbullying because of it. In person, it is very easy to tell when and if someone is joking, but online there is no way to tell and people are getting hurt because of it. If one person makes a rude comment about someone on Facebook, either serious or joking, people can begin to chime in and since they can not see the person they are making fun of's face, they do not know when enough is enough.

Social networking is an easy way to create superficial relationships with other people but it is no way to form deep and meaningful personal relationships with others. Human interaction in today's day and age is seriously lacking and part of that could easily be linked to the increased use of social networking sites. If they were not around, people would still be having one on one conversations face to face with their friends instead of putting their life out there for everyone to see. Human compassion is also being directly affected by the decrease in personal realtionships. Social networking is not evil though, it just needs to be used in moderation.

**CONTENT: 2 points**

The student demonstrates inconsistent control of the Content dimension. This essay is an example of a good writer ignoring an essential element of the task: incorporation of the sources. It is clear that this student has a strong opinion about the topic, but instead of using the sources to argue for a particular position, the student focuses on his or her point of view and makes only occasional mention of source details that support that point of view. The essay seems to allude to the first source in a couple of places (mentioning the idea of “face to face” connections), but there are no clear references to the second source. Although this essay is thoughtful and easy to follow, it only partially addresses the task. The low content score should remind students to make sure that they do not ignore the sources, especially when they have strong opinions about the provided topic.

**STYLE: 4 points**

The student demonstrates consistent control of the Style dimension. It is obvious that this student is a very competent writer. While control of Content is lacking, the control of Style is clear, especially when the writer focuses on his or her most passionate beliefs (“The increased use of social networking is starting to affect the social skills of people by decreasing the time they spend face to face with peers, greatly impairing the amount of time they spend on social interaction offline, and making them more apathetic to human emotions and interaction”). There is very good flow to the writing, and the student uses a nice variety of sentence structures. With a few exceptions, word choices are effective and appropriate to the task. The student's voice is clear and conversational, which makes the essay engaging.

**CONVENTIONS: 4 points**

The student demonstrates consistent control of Conventions. Sentences are well constructed and show an appropriate level of complexity. There are a few odd word choices, but usage overall is well controlled. Aside from one capitalization error, there are no significant mechanical problems in the essay. There are a couple of misspelled words, but no pattern of errors.

## Student Response #5

### Score Points

Content/Style		Conventions	
Content	2	Sentence Formation	0
		Usage	0
Style	2	Mechanics	1
		Spelling	1

Truthfully I don't think that social networking sites really affect anyone, or at least they shouldn't. From personal experience, I really only use my social networks whenever I am bored. They keep you entertained and actually help you get to know other people who really don't express themselves. in person. Sure there are some downfalls to this. Some people get themselves into bullying situations and others like to talk a big game, but no one should let those people affect themselves.

In source 1, It is discussed that social networking sites harm your actual social life. That may be true for some people, but not all. Honestly, some people rather stay indoors sometimes and surf the web. So? That doesn't mean that all of those people don't have a life of their own, now does it'? I find it quite judgemental. Or maybe stereotypical. If a person would really like to see the affect of a social networking site, they should personally undergo having one of their own and see how much their life would really change.

In source 2, the author somewhat favors social networking sites. Facebook to be exact. I agree with this source. Seeing other people post statuses and pictures of what they're doing really does make the person seeing the posts want to do something of the sort. Social networking sites don't discourage you from having a life. They encourage you to go out there and do something. It's as if some of these sites were purposely created for this reason. And maybe they were. I enjoy the idea of seeing what people are up to. It gives me an idea of doing something productive. And I very much enjoy the idea of people voicing and stating their opinions.

I find that life has been better since social networking sites have entered my life. In some ways it has been negative, but that's only if you let it happen that way. I've found myself doing more productive useful things with my time, connecting with long distance friends and family, and just a lot more entertained than I used to be. I'm thankful to those who have created social networking sites. And I'm sure I'm not the only one who feels this way, either.

### CONTENT: 2 points

The student demonstrates inconsistent control of the Content dimension. The student's position is clear, but it's not supported with evidence so much as restated in several different ways. The student pulls one broad idea from each of the articles but doesn't attempt to engage with the larger arguments in either source. The student essentially ignores the sources and focuses on

his or her feelings, which are clear but not very persuasive. This is especially evident in the second paragraph, where the student's ideas come across as a rant rather than a successful argument. There is some basic organization, but no progression of ideas.

**STYLE: 2 points**

The student demonstrates inconsistent control of the Style dimension. There is good alternation of shorter and longer sentences and the writing flows pretty well overall. However, the phrasing often becomes too informal for this writing context ("Sure there are some downfalls to this.... So? That doesn't mean that all of these people don't have a life of their own, does it?"). The student's voice is clear and conversational, but also rather defensive throughout, which weakens the student's position.

**CONVENTIONS: 2 points**

The student demonstrates inconsistent control of Conventions. Most sentences are fairly well constructed, but there are two sentence fragments and one compound sentence that is missing a subject and predicate. The level of complexity is a little below grade level overall. There are several usage errors, including shifts in address ("whenever I am bored. They keep you entertained"), faulty agreement ("no one should let those people affect themselves"), and incorrect word choice ("see the affect of a social networking site"). There are a couple of punctuation errors, but mechanics are generally well controlled. Spelling is also well controlled, with only one misspelled word.

## Student Response #6

### Score Points

Content/Style		Conventions	
Content	1	Sentence Formation	0
		Usage	0
Style	1	Mechanics	1
		Spelling	0

Social networking websites have affected the quality of people's social lives because, it has a big impact on teenagers an they lose focus of the school work an it cause bad outcome on their grades. Source 1 says that social networking has led to a reducation in facetime with friends, as users perceive themselves to be socially connected despite the absence of personal encounters.

The news feed feature on Facebook an Twitter keeps users aware of the recent activites of close friends and family, in many cases eliminating the motivation for deeper interaction. The social network is sometimes a good thing because you can get very useful information off the web.

The social network is soemtimes a problem teens get into conflicts with other teens on the social network. The social network also has alot of cyber bullying. Source 1 says that the cultural shift from face to face human interaction to online social communication has serious consequences for indiviuals and the quality of their interpersonal relationships. a study found that nearly 70% of college students offered support in some way, fewer than half made a personal visit.

This is some of the reasons that social networking has affected the quality of people's social lives.

**CONTENT:** 1 point

The student demonstrates little control of the Content dimension. There is an attempt to establish a personal position in the first sentence, but rather than construct an argument for that position, the student largely copies or paraphrases details from one of the source documents. The student doesn't reference the second source at all.

**STYLE:** 1 point

The student demonstrates little control of the Style dimension. Words are used incorrectly ("an" for "and"), and the awkward sentence structure makes the essay difficult to read. The only clearly phrased segments of the response are copied directly from Source 1.

CONVENTIONS: 1 point

The student demonstrates little control of Conventions. The sentences not copied from the source document contain a variety of syntax errors, agreement errors, and word formation errors. Several high-frequency words are misspelled. However, there are only a couple of punctuation and capitalization errors, earning a point for mechanics.

## Sessions 2 and 3: Multiple-Choice Items

This section presents ten multiple-choice items selected to illustrate the type of skills and knowledge students would need in order to demonstrate understanding of the CCSS in English III. Information shown for each item includes the following:

- the reading passage the item references (if applicable)
- the Common Core standard each item measures
- the correct answer
- commentary on the skills and knowledge measured by the item

### Reading Passages

On the English III test, students will read four passages, literary and informational, and answer questions about them. The reading items support key instructional shifts required by the CCSS. They are reflected in three components of the reading section:

- careful, close reading, which draws students into deeper encounters with texts (as in an excellent classroom)
- a focus on students using evidence when analyzing the passages
- a focus on words that matter most in the texts, which include words essential to understanding a particular text and academic vocabulary that can be found in complex texts

The passage set that follows represents a typical set that might appear on the transitional English III test. The items show a range of standards and use the language of the standards so teachers will become more familiar with the CCSS.

## Passage Pop-up Window

Here is an excerpt from an autobiography published in 1922. Although the author calls herself Mary in the passage, the full identity of the author is never revealed.

### The Log-Cabin Lady: An Anonymous Autobiography

I was born in a log cabin. I came to my pioneer mother in one of Wisconsin's bitterest winters.

The first thing I remember is being grateful for windows. I was three years old. My mother had set me to play on a mattress carefully placed in the one ray of sunlight streaming through the one glass window of our log cabin. Baby as I was, I had ached in the agonizing cold of a pioneer winter. Lying there, warmed by that blessed sunshine, I was suddenly aware of wonder and joy and gratitude. It was gratitude for glass, which could keep out the biting cold and let in the warm sun.

My father was a schoolteacher from New England, where his family had taught the three Rs and the American Constitution since the days of Ben Franklin. My mother was the daughter of a hardworking Scotch immigrant. Father's family set store on ancestry. Mother's side was more practical.

The year before my birth, these two young people had started West in a prairie schooner to stake a homestead claim. Father's chest held a dictionary, Bancroft's *History of the United States*, several books of mathematics, *Plutarch's Lives*,<sup>[1]</sup> a history of Massachusetts, a leather-bound file of Civil War records, Thackeray's *Vanity Fair*,<sup>[2]</sup> Shakespeare in two volumes, and *The Legend of Sleepy Hollow*. My mother took a Bible.

5 I can still quote pages from every one of those books. Until I was fourteen, I saw no others, except a primer, homemade, to teach me my letters. Because *Vanity Fair* contained simpler words than the others, it was given me first, so at the age of seven I was spelling out pages of the immortal Becky.<sup>[3]</sup>

My mother did not approve, but father laughed and protested that the child might as well begin with good things.

After mother's eighth and last baby, she lay ill for a year. The care of the children fell principally on my young shoulders. One day I found her crying.

"Mary," she said, with a tenderness that was rare, "if I die, you must take care of all your brothers and sisters. You will be the only woman within eighteen miles."

I was ten years old.

**10** That night and many other nights I lay awake, trembling at the possibility of being left the only woman within eighteen miles.

But mother did not die. I must have been a sturdy child, for, with the little help father and his homestead partner could spare, I kept that home going until she was strong again.

Every fall the shoemaker made his rounds through the country, reaching our place last, for beyond us lay only untamed forest and wild beasts. His visit thrilled us more than the arrival of any king today. We had been cut off from the world for months. The shoemaker brought news from neighbors eighteen, forty, sixty, even a hundred and fifty miles away. Usually he brought a few newspapers too, treasured afterward for months. He remained a royal guest, for many days, until all the family was shod.

Up to my tenth birthday, we could not afford the newspaper subscription. But after that, times were a little better, and the *Boston Transcript* began to come at irregular intervals. It formed our only tie with civilization, except for the occasional purely personal letter from “back home.”

By the time I was fourteen, three tremendous events had marked my life: sunlight through a windowpane, the log-rolling on the river when father added two rooms to our cabin, and the night I thought mother would die and leave me the only woman within eighteen miles.

**15** But there was a fourth event that was the most tremendous. One night father hurried in without even waiting to unload or water his horses. He handed my mother a letter. Our Great-Aunt Martha had willed father her household goods and personal belongings and a modest sum that to us was a fortune. Someone back East “awaited his instructions.” Many discussions followed, but in the end my mother gained her way. Great-Aunt Martha’s household goods were sold at auction. Father, however, insisted that her “personal belongings” be shipped to Wisconsin.

After a long, long wait, one day father and I rose at daybreak and rode thirty-six miles in a springless wagon, over ranchmen’s roads to the nearest express station, returning with a trunk and two packing cases. It was a solemn moment when the first box was opened. Then mother gave a cry of delight. Sheets and bedspreads edged with lace! Real linen pillowcases with crocheted edgings. Soft woolen blankets and bright handmade quilts. Two heavy, lustrous tablecloths and two dozen napkins, one white set hemmed, and one red-and-white, bordered with a soft fringe.

What the world calls wealth has come to me in after years. Nothing ever equaled in my eyes the priceless value of Great-Aunt Martha’s “personal belongings.”

I was in a seventh heaven of delight. My father picked up the books and began to read, paying no attention to our exclamations over dresses and ribbons, the boxful of laces, or the little shell-covered case holding a few ornaments in gold and silver and jet.

We women did not stop until we had explored every corner of that trunk and the two packing boxes. Then I picked up a napkin.

**20** “What are these for?” I asked curiously.

My father slammed his book shut. I had never seen such a look on his face.

“How old are you, Mary?” he demanded suddenly.

I told him that I was going on fifteen.

“And you never saw a table napkin?”

**25** His tone was bitter and accusing. I didn’t understand—how could I? Father began to talk, his words growing more and more bitter. Mother defended herself hotly. Today, I know that justice was on her side. But in that first adolescent self-consciousness, my sympathies were all with father. Mother had neglected us—she had not taught us to use table napkins! Becky Sharp used them. People in history used them.

From that time on, we used napkins and a tablecloth on Sundays.

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**[1]** a collection of biographies of famous Greeks and Romans, originally written in Latin during the late first century

**[2]** a satirical and very popular British novel, first published in 1848

**[3]** Becky Sharp, the heroine of *Vanity Fair*

## Reading Item Examples and Annotations

**Anchor Standard:** Reading Informational Text, Key Ideas and Details

**Common Core State Standard:** RI.11-12.2  
Determine two or more central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.

This excerpt is **best** summarized as

- A. a collection of anecdotes about pioneers.
- B. a young girl's ideas about cultural values.
- C. a critique of nineteenth-century customs.
- \*D. a narrative of events in a young girl's life.

\*correct answer

This item requires students to identify an objective summary of the text.

Option A is too broad; while the excerpt does depict pioneer life, it is focused solely on the experiences of a single pioneer family and on the coming of age of its narrator, so “a collection of anecdotes” is not an accurate description. Option B is too narrow; though some of the narrator’s ideas about cultural values are mentioned, that is not a primary focus of the excerpt. Option C is not supported by the passage: there is no explicit or implied critique of nineteenth-century customs evident in this excerpt.

Option D is the correct answer. The passage is clearly a recollection of events in Mary’s young life.

**Anchor Standard:**

Reading Informational Text, Craft and Structure

**Common Core State Standard:** RI.11-12.4

Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines *faction* in *Federalist* No. 10).

Read these sentences from paragraph 3.

**Father’s family set store on ancestry. Mother’s side was more practical.**

What does *set store on* mean in this context?

- \*A. valued
- B. negotiated
- C. left behind
- D. traded for

\*correct answer

This item requires students to identify the meaning of a figurative expression based on context clues.

Options B, C, and D are all contextually inappropriate.

Option A is the correct answer. To *set store on/by* means to value or consider important, a meaning that is contextually suggested by the narrator’s comment that her father’s family had taught school in New England “since the days of Ben Franklin.”

**Anchor Standard:**

Reading Informational Text, Craft and Structure

**Common Core State Standard:** RI.11-12.5

Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.

Read paragraph 9.

**I was ten years old.**

The author placed this sentence in a paragraph by itself **most likely** to

- \*A. emphasize how young Mary was to have taken on such responsibilities.
- B. provide a time frame to make it easy to follow the sequence of events.
- C. illustrate how calm Mary remained concerning her mother's illness.
- D. make clear for modern readers the greater maturity of pioneer children.

\*correct answer

This item requires students to evaluate the effect of a structural choice made by the author.

Option B might be reasonable if the narrator used a similar technique throughout the passage to keep track of other significant events, but that is not how the rest of the passage is organized. Options C and D are contradicted in the next paragraph of the passage; the narrator admits that she was extremely frightened by the prospect of losing her mother to illness, just as a modern girl would be.

Option A is the correct answer. Presenting this sentence in a paragraph by itself, surrounded by white space, emphasizes the stark and terrible reality that the narrator faced at a very young age.

**Anchor Standard:**

Reading Informational Text, Key Ideas and Details

**Common Core State Standard:** RI.11-12.3

Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.

What connection can be drawn between the narrator’s memories of “the immortal Becky” in paragraph 5 and the “seventh heaven of delight” she recalls in paragraph 18?

- A. They both depict occasions when the narrator had to overcome her mother’s disapproval.
- B. They both illustrate the narrator’s tendency to exaggerate her emotional reactions as a child.
- \*C. They both represent moments when the narrator’s understanding of the world expanded.
- D. They both reflect how few pleasures the narrator was able to enjoy as a child.

\*correct answer

This item requires students to recognize how events interact over the course of the text and deepen the reader’s understanding of the meaning of those events.

Option A may be true of the first memory, but it is clearly not true of the second. There is no textual evidence to support Option B; the narrator is more often stoic than exaggerated in her recollection of the hardships her family faced. Option D may seem true from our contemporary perspective, but it is not supported by the text; the narrator seems to have found great pleasure in simple things like warm sun through a window and the annual visit of the shoemaker.

Option C is the correct answer. Reading the books that her parents carried with them to Wisconsin and rummaging through her aunt’s personal belongings were both critical events where the narrator’s life on the frontier opened up to the possibilities of a wider and more cultured world.

**Anchor Standard:**

Reading Informational Texts, Key Ideas and Details

**Common Core State Standard:** RI.11-12.1

Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.

Which two details in the passage **best** capture the contrast in the values of Mary’s parents?

- A. their preparations for moving West and response to family illnesses
- \*B. their cultural background and choice of reading materials
- C. their treatment of the shoemaker and reaction to Aunt Martha’s belongings
- D. their discussion about Aunt Martha’s napkins and regard for newspapers

\*correct answer

This item requires students to identify textual evidence that supports an inference drawn from the text.

Each option includes one plausible detail, but only one option contains two correct details. The first detail in Option A is plausible because the passage mentions the different things the mother and father packed (which might suggest what they value), but the second detail is not discussed in the passage. Option C is not correct because the parents don’t disagree about the shoemaker, so there is no contrast in values evident in that detail. Option D also contains a similar distractor by including the detail about reading newspapers, which did not represent a difference in the parents’ values; the passage mentions that the newspapers were “treasured afterward for months.”

Option B is the correct answer. It is the only option that includes two details that show the contrast in the parents’ values. Paragraph 3 mentions their background and how it shaped their values: “Father’s family set store on ancestry. Mother’s side was more practical.” Paragraphs 4 and 6 discuss the difference in their reading preferences and the mother’s disapproval of the books the father gave to Mary.

**Anchor Standard:**

Reading Informational Text, Craft and Structure

**Common Core State Standard:** RI.11-12.6

Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

What do paragraphs 18 through 26 convey about the narrator’s point of view in this passage?

- A. Her memory of this event is suspect because she didn’t fully understand what was happening at the time.
- \*B. She recounts this event both as she remembers it as a child and as she perceives it as an adult.
- C. She tells this story both from her mother’s perspective and from her father’s to show how different they were.
- D. The story reveals more about her feelings toward her parents than it does about her growing knowledge of the world.

\*correct answer

This item requires students to determine how the author’s point of view influences the structure and effectiveness of the text.

Option A is not supported by the text; while the narrator admits to imperfect understanding of the situation at the time, she clearly understands it much better as an adult. Option C is obviously not true, as the entire text is written from the narrator’s first-person perspective. Option D is not the best answer because—although we *do* learn something about the narrator’s feelings about her parents and how they have changed over time—we learn *more* about how the narrator’s knowledge of the world is expanded through this experience.

Option B is the correct answer. Much of the richness of this excerpt is due to the way that the narrator combines a child’s perspective on frontier life—her gratefulness for windows, for example—with her mature perspective on the hardships and austerity that life on the frontier required.

## **Language Conventions**

On the English III test, students will answer four multiple-choice questions that measure grammar and usage skills. The Language Conventions section addresses the following Common Core State Standards for ELA/Literacy:

- Language Standards L.11-12.1 and L.11-12.2, which list the grade-level skills
- Skills that apply to English III (grades 11-12) on the [CCSS Language Progressive Skills Chart](#)

The two items that follow represent the type of items that might appear in this section of the transitional English III test.

## Language Conventions Item Examples and Annotations

<b>Anchor Standard:</b>	Language, Conventions of Standard English
<b>Common Core State Standard:</b>	L.7.1c Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. c. Place phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.

Read this section of a student's essay about his experience working on the school newspaper.

**My first day on the newspaper staff was rather productive. After listening to the club sponsor, the chairs were moved so the staff could start working on their assignments. I received a pretty simple task; I would be taking pictures of the homecoming activities.**

Which is the correct way to revise the underlined sentence?

- A. No change.
- B. So the staff could start working on their assignments, the chairs were moved after listening to the club sponsor.
- C. After listening to the club sponsor and moving the chairs, the assignments were started on by the staff.
- \*D. After listening to the club sponsor, the staff moved the chairs so they could start working on the assignments.

\*correct answer

This item requires students to recognize and correct a dangling modifier (standard L.7.1c from the Language Progressive Skills chart).

Option A is incorrect because the underlined sentence contains a dangling modifier, which must be addressed. Option B is not correct because moving the phrase “after listening to the club sponsor” to the end of the sentence does not fix the problem; in this location, the phrase is still modifying “chairs.” Option C is not correct because adding “moving the chairs” to the introductory phrase does not fix the problem; “moving the chairs” cannot logically modify “the assignments,” either.

Option D is the correct answer. The staff is listening to the club sponsor and moving the chairs.

**Anchor Standard:**

Language, Conventions of Standard English

**Common Core State Standard:** L.11-12.2a

Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

a. Observe hyphenation conventions.

Which sentence is punctuated correctly?

- A. For low priced, used clothes, Jenna likes to shop at a store that is a bit out of the way.
- B. The vintage dress Jenna is wearing comes from an out of the way store she happened to find.
- \*C. Jenna likes to shop at an out-of-the-way store that sells low-priced, used clothes.
- D. Jenna's favorite store has really low prices, but it's so out-of-the-way that I never go with her.

\*correct answer

This item requires students to identify the correct hyphenation of compound adjectives.

Option A is not correct because “low priced” is a compound adjective in this sentence and is not hyphenated. Option B is not correct because “out of the way” is a compound adjective in this sentence and should be hyphenated. Option D is not correct because “out-of-the-way” is serving as a complement in this sentence and doesn’t appear before a noun, so it should not be hyphenated.

Option C is the correct answer. Both “out-of-the-way” and “low-priced” are used as adjectives in this sentence, so they should be hyphenated.

## **Research**

On the English III test, students will answer ten multiple-choice questions that measure research skills. The Research section of the test will focus on:

- Researching to answer a question or solve a problem
- The narrowing or broadening of a topic of inquiry
- The synthesis of multiple sources on a subject
- Gathering relevant information
- Assessing the strengths and limitations of sources
- Integrating information from sources
- Following a standard citation format

The two items that follow represent the type of items that might appear in this section of the transitional English III test.

## Research Item Examples and Annotations

**Anchor Standard:**

Writing, Research to Build and Present Knowledge

**Common Core State Standard:** W.11-12.7

Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation.

Jonas is writing down ideas for a research paper on the Civil Rights Movement. Which is the **best** question for him to ask to guide his research?

- A. When and where did the Freedom Rides take place?
- B. How many people participated in the March on Washington?
- \*C. What were the methods and goals of civil rights activists?
- D. What was the most important event in the Civil Rights Movement?

\*correct answer

This item requires students to identify a suitable self-generated research question.

Options A and B are not correct because they are too simple and easily answered; they will not support a sustained research project. Option D is not the best research question because the answer will depend more on perspective and opinion than on objective analysis and evidence.

Option C is the correct answer. This question is most likely to lead to a rich and meaningful research project.

**Anchor Standard:**

Writing, Research to Build and Present Knowledge

**Common Core State Standard:** W.11-12.8

Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the strengths and limitations of each source in terms of the task, purpose, and audience; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and overreliance on any one source and following a standard format for citation.

Terrel is writing a report on crime and punishment in early pilgrim colonies. Which set of results from a library catalog search will likely supply the **most useful** titles for his research?

- A. pilgrims (New Plymouth Colony)—religious practices [8 titles]
- B. pilgrims (New Plymouth Colony)—genealogy and lineage [4 titles]
- \*C. pilgrims (New Plymouth Colony)—society and customs [5 titles]
- D. pilgrims (New Plymouth Colony)—history [7 titles]

\*correct answer

This item requires students to assess the strengths and limitations of a list of possible sources in terms of their usefulness to a particular research task.

The titles in Option A might provide some information that would be useful to Terrel (since at least some crime and punishment in Pilgrim society would be related to religious beliefs and behaviors), but the focus of these titles will probably be on matters unrelated to his research topic. The titles in Option B are not likely to provide any information about crime and punishment in pilgrim colonies. Option D is not the best answer because these titles are likely to be too general for Terrel’s purposes.

Option C is the correct answer. Titles focused on pilgrim society and customs are most likely to provide Terrel with information relevant to his research topic.

## Appendix

### Additional Scoring Criteria for Writing: All Grades

To avoid double jeopardy during scoring, one word will constitute only one error. In situations where it is difficult to determine the dimension to which an error should be assigned, the scorer will consider context clues and error patterns that are evident in the response.

- Context clues may indicate the writer’s intention.
- Error patterns already evident in the response indicate a skill weakness in that dimension.

<b>Sentence Formation:</b>	
If a sentence contains a run-on or a comma splice, it is a <b>sentence formation</b> error.	Run-on: <i>The character is looking for answers he can’t seem to find them.</i> Comma splice: <i>The character feels lost, he can’t find his way.</i>
A sentence fragment is a <b>sentence formation</b> error unless it is deliberately presented for effect.	Fragment: <i>We saw the boys at the pool. Laughing and jumping into the water.</i> Intentional: <i>What a break!</i>
If a sentence requires the rearrangement, omission, or addition of more than one word, the error is a <b>sentence formation</b> error.	<i>I saw those boys fighting <u>while driving my car.</u></i>
A pattern of awkward syntax (word order) is a <b>sentence formation</b> error.	<i>I for you have some important news.</i>
Nonparallel structure, often in a series, is a <b>sentence formation</b> error.	<i>We live better lives, coping with sorrows, and how to be joyful.</i>

<b>Usage, Mechanics, and Spelling:</b>	
Usage and mechanics errors count each time they occur in a response. However, if the same word is misspelled repeatedly, it counts <b>only once</b> , even if it is misspelled in more than one way.	
Omissions, extra words, or wrong words that can be corrected by changing one word are <b>usage</b> errors.	<i>When <u>it</u> is no school, I play all day.</i>
If a sentence begins with a capital letter but is not preceded by a period, the error is a <b>mechanics</b> error.	<i>Martha went to the well and looked <u>inside Far below</u>, something was sparkling in the water.</i>
If a sentence begins with a lowercase letter but is preceded by a period, the error is a <b>mechanics</b> error.	<i>Teddy is the youngest in the family. <u>he</u> is my only nephew.</i>
Use of double comparatives or double negatives is a common <b>usage</b> error.	Double comparative: <i>I’m even <u>more better</u> at soccer than at football.</i> Double negative: <i><u>None</u> of them are not my friend.</i>
Use of the wrong preposition is a common <b>usage</b> error.	<i>He went <u>for</u> the house.</i>

Agreement errors of compound pronouns with possessives are <b>usage</b> errors.	<i>Everybody situation is different.</i>
Agreement errors of collective nouns with possessives are <b>usage</b> errors.	<i>People lives all take different paths.</i>
Agreement errors with collectives, phrases, and conjunctions are <b>usage</b> errors.	Incorrect: <i>None of the teachers are <u>good role models</u> or <u>a hero</u>.</i>
When an error may be both a <b>usage</b> and a <b>spelling</b> error, and the context clues do not help determine which dimension the error belongs to, the error should be counted in <b>usage only</b> .	<i>She <u>allway</u> comes to work on time.</i>
If a misused word in a sentence is a real word, it is a <b>usage</b> error. If it is not a real word, it is a <b>spelling</b> error.	<b>Usage:</b> <i>We all went to the skating <u>ring</u>.</i> <b>Spelling:</b> <i>We joined my <u>parnets</u> and were <u>reddy</u> to leave.</i>
If a homonym or a word that is so phonetically similar to another word ( <i>are/our, through/though</i> ) is used instead of the correct word, it is a <b>usage</b> error.	<i>Martin gave him a <u>peace</u> of his chocolate bar. I would rather have a vacation <u>then</u> a raise. She was late for her piano <u>listens</u>.</i>
An error may be either a <b>spelling, mechanics,</b> or <b>usage</b> error. Use either context clues or error patterns to determine which dimension would be most appropriate.	<b>Spelling:</b> <i>All the <u>hero's</u> aren't in the movies.</i> <b>Mechanics:</b> <i><u>Were</u> going to Disneyland on our vacation.</i>
In a series, a comma before <i>and</i> is optional; both ways are considered correct.	Either: <i>The pet shop was filled with birds, cats, <u>and</u> dogs.</i> Or: <i>The pet shop was filled with birds, cats <u>and</u> dogs.</i>
In some series, the placement of the comma is not optional because it affects the sense of the sentence.	<i>The pet shop was filled with birds, kenneled <u>cats and dogs</u>, and fish of every color.</i>
Direct quotations <b>should not</b> be preceded by <i>that</i> . Indirect quotations should be preceded by <i>that</i> . These are <b>mechanics</b> errors.	Direct: <i>Then Mom said <u>that</u>, "We cannot go along."</i> Indirect: <i>After we returned, she <u>said we are in trouble</u>.</i>
A word divided at the end of a line that is not broken at the end of a syllable or is broken and has only one syllable is a <b>mechanics</b> error.	<i>I worked at the National Fou- ndation for the Blind.</i>
TV, T.V., and <i>tv</i> are all acceptable and <b>not mechanics</b> errors.	
Use of <i>so they</i> instead of <i>so that they</i> is acceptable and <b>not a usage</b> error.	

<b>Other Issues:</b>	
Errors resulting from <b>incorrect copying</b> of information provided in the passage(s) are counted as <b>sentence formation, usage, mechanics,</b> or <b>spelling</b> errors, depending upon the type of error.	
The rules of <b>standard written English</b> apply and override foreign language, regional, ethnic, and colloquial speech patterns. Unless such speech is used in a direct quotation, it is considered a <b>usage</b> error.	<i>I'm very happy <u>y'all</u> are reading my test and I hope <u>y'all</u> pass me.</i>





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