

# Georgia Milestones

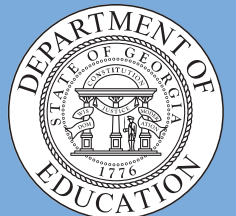
Assessment System



## Assessment Guide Ninth Grade Literature and Composition



**Assessment Guide**



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## THE GEORGIA MILESTONES ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

The purpose of the Georgia Student Assessment Program is to measure student achievement of the state-adopted content standards and inform efforts to improve teaching and learning. Results of the assessment program are utilized to identify students failing to achieve mastery of content, to provide educators with feedback about instructional practice, and to assist school districts in identifying strengths and weaknesses in order to establish priorities in planning educational programs.

The State Board of Education is required by Georgia law (O.C.G.A. §20-2-281) to adopt assessments designed to measure student achievement relative to the knowledge and skills set forth in the state-adopted content standards. The Georgia Milestones Assessment System (Georgia Milestones) fulfills this requirement and, as a key component of Georgia's Student Assessment Program, is a comprehensive summative assessment program spanning Grade 3 through high school. Georgia Milestones measures how well students have learned the knowledge and skills outlined in the state-adopted content standards in Language Arts, Mathematics, Science, and Social Studies. Students in grades 3 through 8 take an end-of-grade assessment in English Language Arts and Mathematics, while students in grades 5 and 8 also take an end-of-grade assessment in Science and Social Studies. High school students take an end-of-course assessment for each of the ten courses designated by the State Board of Education. In accordance with State Board Rule, Georgia Milestones end-of-course measures serve as the final exams for the specified high school courses.

The main purpose of Georgia Milestones is to inform efforts to improve student achievement by assessing student performance on the standards specific to each course or subject/grade tested. Specifically, Georgia Milestones is designed to provide students and their parents with critical information about the students' achievement and, importantly, their preparedness for the next educational level. The assessment system is a critical informant of the state's accountability measure, the College and Career Ready Performance Index (CCRPI), providing an important gauge about the quality of the educational services and opportunities provided throughout the state. The ultimate goal of Georgia's assessment and accountability system is to ensure that all students are provided the opportunity to engage with high-quality content standards, receive high-quality instruction predicated upon those standards, and are positioned to meet high academic expectations.

Features of the Georgia Milestones Assessment System include:

- technology-enhanced items in all grades and courses;
- open-ended (constructed-response) items in English Language Arts and Mathematics (all grades and courses);
- a writing component (in response to passages read by students) at every grade level and course within the English Language Arts assessment;
- norm-referenced items in all content areas and courses to complement the criterion-referenced information and to provide a national comparison; and
- a transition to online administration over time, with online administration considered the primary mode of administration and paper/pencil as a backup until the transition is complete.

The primary mode of administration for the Georgia Milestones program is online, with the goal of completing the transition from paper/pencil within five years after the inaugural administration (i.e., the 2014–2015 school year). Paper/pencil test materials (such as Braille) will remain available for students with disabilities who may require them in order to access the assessment.

Georgia Milestones follows guiding principles to help ensure that the assessment system:

- is sufficiently challenging to ensure Georgia students are well positioned to compete with other students across the United States and internationally;
- is intentionally designed across grade levels to send a clear signal of student academic progress and preparedness for the next level, whether it is the next grade level, course, or college or career;
- is accessible to all students, including those with disabilities or limited English proficiency, at all achievement levels;
- supports and informs the state’s educator-effectiveness initiatives, ensuring items and forms are appropriately sensitive to quality instructional practices; and
- accelerates the transition to online administration, allowing—over time—for the inclusion of innovative technology-enhanced items.

## **GEORGIA MILESTONES END-OF-COURSE (EOC) ASSESSMENTS**

As previously mentioned, Georgia law (§20-2-281) mandates that the State Board of Education adopt EOC assessments for core courses to be determined by the Board. An EOC assessment serves as a student’s final exam in the associated course.

With educator input and State Board approval, the Georgia Milestones EOC assessments measure student achievement in the following courses: Ninth Grade Literature and Composition, American Literature and Composition, Algebra I, Geometry, Coordinate Algebra, Analytic Geometry, Physical Science, Biology, United States History, and Economics/Business/Free Enterprise.

Any student enrolled in and/or receiving credit for one of the above-mentioned courses, regardless of grade level, is required to take the Georgia Milestones EOC assessment upon completion of that course. This includes middle school students completing a course associated with a Georgia Milestones EOC assessment, regardless of whether they are receiving high school credit. Students enrolling from non-accredited programs are required to take and pass the Georgia Milestones EOC assessment prior to receiving credit for the course.

A student’s final grade in the course will be calculated using the Georgia Milestones EOC assessment as follows (State Board Rule 160-4-2-.13):

- For students enrolled in Grade 9 for the first time before July 1, 2011, the EOC assessment counts as 15% of the final grade.
- For students enrolled in Grade 9 for the first time on or after July 1, 2011, the EOC assessment counts as 20% of the final grade.

Results of the EOC assessments, according to the legislated and identified purposes, must:

- provide a valid measure of student achievement of the state content standards across the full achievement continuum;
- serve as the final exam for each course, contributing 15% or 20% to the student’s final course grade;
- provide a clear signal of each student’s preparedness for the next course and ultimately post-secondary endeavors (college and career);
- allow for the detection of the academic progress made by each student from one assessed course to the next;
- support and inform educator-effectiveness measures; and
- inform state and federal accountability measures at the school, district, and state levels.

Additional uses of the EOC assessments include: (1) certifying student proficiency prior to the awarding of credit for students enrolling from non-accredited private schools, home study programs, or other non-traditional educational centers and (2) allowing eligible students to demonstrate competency without taking the course and earn course credit (e.g., “test out”). In both cases, students are allotted *one* administration.

## ASSESSMENT GUIDE

The Georgia Milestones Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC Assessment Guide is provided to acquaint Georgia educators and other stakeholders with the structure of and content assessed by the test. Importantly, this guide is not intended to inform instructional planning. It is essential to note that there are a small number of content standards that are better suited for classroom or individual assessment than for large-scale summative assessment. While those standards are not included in the tests and therefore are not included in this Assessment Guide, the knowledge, concepts, and skills inherent in those standards are often required for the mastery of the standards that are assessed. Failure to attend to all content standards within a course can limit a student’s opportunity to learn and show what he or she knows and can do on the assessment.

The Georgia Milestones Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC Assessment Guide is in *no way* intended to substitute for the state-mandated content standards; it is provided to help educators better understand the structure and content of the assessment, *but it is not all-encompassing of the knowledge, concepts, and skills covered in the course or assessed on the test*. The state-adopted content standards and associated standards-based instructional resources, such as the Content Frameworks, should be used to plan instruction. This Assessment Guide can serve as a *supplement* to those resources, in addition to any locally developed resources, **but should not be used in isolation**. In principle, the Assessment Guide is intended to be descriptive of the assessment program and should not be considered all-inclusive. The state-adopted content standards are located at [www.georgiastandards.org](http://www.georgiastandards.org).

## TESTING SCHEDULE

The Georgia Milestones Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment is offered during three Main Administrations. Main Administrations are primarily intended to provide an opportunity to assess student achievement at the completion of a course and to serve as the final exam for the associated course as required by State Board Rule. As a result, the EOC assessment should occur as close to the conclusion of the course as possible. Main Administrations can also be utilized to verify credit from a non-accredited school or home schooling. In addition to the Main Administrations, Mid-Month Administrations are provided in order to allow students additional testing opportunities for the various reasons noted below.

Purpose for EOC Assessment	Winter & Spring Main Administrations	Mid-Month Administrations	Summer Main Administration
Completion of Course	Yes	Yes	Yes
Makeup from Previous Administration	Yes	Yes	Yes
Retest	No*	Yes	Yes
Test Out	No	Yes**	Yes
Validation of Credit	Yes	Yes	Yes

\*Winter and Spring Main Administrations cannot be used for the purpose of a retest.

\*\*August, September, and March Mid-Month Administrations as well as the Summer Main Administration can be used for the purpose of a test out.

**Note:** Each district determines a local testing window within the state-designated testing window.

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## TEST STRUCTURE

### DESCRIPTION OF TEST FORMAT AND ORGANIZATION

The Georgia Milestones Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment is primarily a criterion-referenced test designed to provide information about how well a student has mastered the state-adopted content standards within the course. Each student will receive one of four Achievement Level designations, depending on how well the student has mastered the course content standards. The four Achievement Level designations are Beginning Learner, Developing Learner, Proficient Learner, and Distinguished Learner. In addition to criterion-referenced information, the Georgia Milestones measures will also include a limited sample of nationally norm-referenced items to provide a signal of how Georgia students are achieving relative to their peers nationally. The norm-referenced information provided is supplementary to the criterion-referenced Achievement Level designation and will not be utilized in any manner other than to serve as a barometer of national comparison. Only the criterion-referenced scores and Achievement Level designations will be utilized in the accountability metrics associated with the assessment program (such as student course grades, student growth measures, educator-effectiveness measures, and the CCRPI).

The Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment consists of both operational items (contribute to a student's criterion-referenced and/or norm-referenced score) and field test items (newly written items that are being tried out and do not contribute to the student's score). A subset of the norm-referenced operational items have been verified as aligned to the course content standards by Georgia educators and will also contribute to the criterion-referenced score and Achievement Level designation. The other norm-referenced items will contribute only to the national percentile rank, which is provided as supplemental information.

With the inclusion of the norm-referenced items, students may encounter items for which they have not received direct instruction. These items will not contribute to the students' criterion-referenced Achievement Level designation; only items that align to the course content standards will contribute to the criterion-referenced score. Students should be instructed to try their best should they ask about an item that is not aligned to the content they have learned as part of the course.

The following table outlines the number and types of items included on the Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment.

**Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC Assessment Design**

Description	Number of Items	Points for CR <sup>1</sup> Score	Points for NRT <sup>2</sup> Feedback
CR Selected-Response Items	26	26	0
NRT Selected-Response Items	20 <sup>3</sup>	10 <sup>4</sup>	20
CR Technology-Enhanced Items	2	4	0
CR Constructed-Response Items	2	4	0
CR Extended Constructed-Response Items	1	4	0
CR Extended Writing-Response Items	1	7	0
CR Field Test Items	9	0	0
<b>Total Items/Points<sup>5</sup></b>	<b>61</b>	<b>55</b>	<b>20</b>

<sup>1</sup>CR—Criterion-Referenced: items aligned to state-adopted content standards

<sup>2</sup>NRT—Norm-Referenced Test: items that will yield a national comparison; may or may not be aligned to state-adopted content standards

<sup>3</sup>Of these items, approximately 10 will contribute to both the CR scores and NRT feedback. The other 10 of these items will contribute to NRT feedback only and will not impact the student’s Achievement Level designation, scale score, or grade conversion.

<sup>4</sup>Alignment of national NRT items to course content standards was verified by a committee of Georgia educators. Only approved, aligned NRT items will contribute to a student’s CR Achievement Level designation, scale score, and grade conversion score.

<sup>5</sup>Of the 61 total items, 42 items contribute to the CR score, for a total of 55 points; 20 total items contribute to NRT feedback, for a total of 20 points.

The test will be given in three sections. Students will be given a maximum of 90 minutes to complete Section 1, which includes the extended writing response. Students may have up to 85 minutes per section to complete Sections 2 and 3. The total estimated testing time for the Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment ranges from approximately 190 to 260 minutes. Total testing time describes the amount of time students have to complete the assessment. It does not take into account the time required for the test examiner to complete pre-administration and post-administration activities (such as reading the standardized directions to students). Section 1, which focuses on writing, must be administered on a separate day. Sections 2 and 3 may be administered on the same day or across two consecutive days based on the district’s testing protocols for the EOC measures (in keeping with state guidance).

## CONTENT MEASURED

The Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment will measure the Ninth Grade Literature and Composition standards that are described at [www.georgiastandards.org](http://www.georgiastandards.org).

The content of the assessment is organized into two groupings, or domains, of standards for the purposes of providing feedback on student performance. A content domain is a reporting category that *broadly* describes and defines the content of the course, as measured by the EOC assessment. The standards for Ninth Grade Literature and Composition are grouped into two domains: Reading and Vocabulary,



and Writing and Language. Each domain was created by organizing standards that share similar content characteristics. The content standards describe the level of expertise that Ninth Grade Literature and Composition educators should strive to develop in their students. Educators should refer to the content standards for a full understanding of the knowledge, concepts, and skills that may be assessed on the EOC assessment.

The approximate proportional number of points associated with each domain is shown in the following table. A range of cognitive levels will be represented on the Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment. Educators should always use the content standards when planning instruction.

## NINTH GRADE LITERATURE AND COMPOSITION: DOMAIN STRUCTURES AND CONTENT WEIGHTS

Domain	Standard	Approximate Weight
<p><b>Reading and Vocabulary</b></p>	ELAGSE9-10RL1	<p>53%</p>
	ELAGSE9-10RL2	
	ELAGSE9-10RL3	
	ELAGSE9-10RL4	
	ELAGSE9-10RL5	
	ELAGSE9-10RL6	
	ELAGSE9-10RL7	
	ELAGSE9-10RL9	
	ELAGSE9-10RI1	
	ELAGSE9-10RI2	
	ELAGSE9-10RI3	
	ELAGSE9-10RI4	
	ELAGSE9-10RI5	
	ELAGSE9-10RI6	
	ELAGSE9-10RI7	
	ELAGSE9-10RI8	
	ELAGSE9-10RI9	
	ELAGSE9-10L4 (4a, 4b, 4c)	
ELAGSE9-10L5 (5a, 5b)		
ELAGSE9-10L6		

Domain	Standard	Approximate Weight
<b>Writing and Language</b>	ELAGSE9-10W1 (1a, 1b, 1c, 1d, 1e) ELAGSE9-10W2 (2a, 2b, 2c, 2d, 2e, 2f) ELAGSE9-10W3 (3a, 3b, 3c, 3d, 3e) ELAGSE9-10W4 ELAGSE9-10W5 ELAGSE9-10W7 ELAGSE9-10W8 ELAGSE9-10W9 ELAGSE9-10L1 (1a, 1b) ELAGSE9-10L2 (2a, 2b, 2c) ELAGSE9-10L3 ELAGSE9-10L6	47%

## ITEM TYPES

The Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment consists of selected-response, technology-enhanced, constructed-response, extended constructed-response, and extended writing-response items.

A selected-response item, sometimes called a multiple-choice item, is defined as a question, problem, or statement that appears on a test followed by several answer choices, sometimes called options or response choices. The incorrect choices, called distractors, usually reflect common errors. The student’s task is to choose, from the alternatives provided, the best answer to the question posed in the stem (the question). The Ninth Grade Literature and Composition selected-response items will have four answer choices. All norm-referenced items will be selected-response.

A technology-enhanced item is an innovative way to measure student skills and knowledge using scaffolding within a multi-step response. For ELA, the specific type of technology-enhanced item being used is a two-part item called an Evidence-Based Selected Response item (EBSR). In the first part of an EBSR item, the student responds to an inferential or key concept question related to a stimulus text. In the second part of an EBSR item, the student provides evidence from the same text to support the inference or idea. In both parts of an EBSR item, the student selects the responses from the choices provided. There is one correct answer for each part of an EBSR item. If the student responds correctly to both parts of the EBSR item, the student receives two points. Partial credit will be awarded when a student answers the first part correctly. The student will not receive partial credit for answering only the second part correctly.

A constructed-response item asks a question and solicits the student to provide a response he or she constructs on his or her own, as opposed to selecting from options provided. The constructed-response items on the EOC assessments will be worth two points. Partial credit may be awarded if part of the response is appropriate based upon the prompt and the rubric.

An extended constructed-response item is a specific type of constructed-response item that elicits a longer, more detailed response from the student than a two-point constructed-response item. The stimulus used for this type of item may be either literary or informational. The extended constructed-response items on the EOC assessments will be worth four points. For Ninth Grade Literature and Composition, the student will respond to a narrative prompt based on a passage the student has read, and the response will be scored according to the Writing and Language domain. Partial credit may be awarded if part of the response is appropriate based upon the prompt and the rubric.

The extended writing-response items require the student to produce an argument or develop an informative or explanatory response. As part of the extended writing task, students must first read two passages and then respond to three multiple-choice items and one constructed-response item. All of these items help students write their extended essay by focusing them on the main idea(s) and key details in the passages. Two of the selected-response items will address each of the passages separately. One selected-response item and the constructed-response item will address both of the passages together. All three selected-response items and the constructed-response item contribute to the Reading and Vocabulary domain. These items will be followed by an extended writing-prompt, which requires the student to draw from the reading experience when writing an essay response and to cite evidence from the passage(s) to support claims and conclusions in the essay. The writing task is worth seven points that contribute to the Writing and Language domain.

## DEPTH OF KNOWLEDGE DESCRIPTORS

Items found on the Georgia Milestones assessments, including the Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment, are developed with a particular emphasis on cognitive complexity or Depth of Knowledge (DOK). DOK is measured on a scale of 1 to 4 and refers to the level of cognitive demand required to complete a task (or in this case, an assessment item). The higher the level, the *more complex* the item; however, higher levels do not necessarily mean *more difficult* items. For instance, a question can have a low DOK but a medium or even high difficulty level. Conversely, a DOK 4 question may have a low difficulty level but still require a great deal of cognitive thinking (e.g., analyzing and synthesizing information instead of just recalling it). The following descriptions and table show the expectations of the four DOK levels in greater detail.

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

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

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

**Level 4** (Extended Reasoning) requires the complex reasoning of Level 3 with the addition of planning, investigating, applying significant conceptual understanding, and/or developing that will most likely require an extended period of time. Students should be required to connect and relate ideas and concepts *within* the content area or *among* content areas in order to be at this highest level. The distinguishing factor

for Level 4 would be a show of evidence (through a task, a product, or an extended response) that the cognitive demands have been met.

The following table identifies skills that students will need to demonstrate at each DOK level, along with question cues appropriate for each level.

Level	Skills Demonstrated	Question Cues
<p>Level 1 Recall of Information</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Make observations</li> <li>• Recall information</li> <li>• Recognize properties, patterns, processes</li> <li>• Know vocabulary, definitions</li> <li>• Know basic concepts</li> <li>• Perform one-step processes</li> <li>• Translate from one representation to another</li> <li>• Identify relationships</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Tell who, what, when, or where</li> <li>• Find</li> <li>• List</li> <li>• Define</li> <li>• Identify; label; name</li> <li>• Choose; select</li> <li>• Read from data displays</li> <li>• Order</li> </ul>
<p>Level 2 Basic Reasoning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply learned information to abstract and real-life situations</li> <li>• Use methods, concepts, and theories in abstract and real-life situations</li> <li>• Perform multi-step processes</li> <li>• Solve problems using required skills or knowledge (requires more than habitual response)</li> <li>• Make a decision about how to proceed</li> <li>• Identify and organize components of a whole</li> <li>• Identify/describe cause and effect</li> <li>• Make basic inferences or logical predictions from data or text</li> <li>• Interpret facts</li> <li>• Compare or contrast simple concepts/ideas</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Apply</li> <li>• Complete</li> <li>• Describe</li> <li>• Explain how; demonstrate</li> <li>• Construct data displays</li> <li>• Construct; draw</li> <li>• Analyze</li> <li>• Extend</li> <li>• Connect</li> <li>• Classify</li> <li>• Arrange</li> <li>• Compare; contrast</li> <li>• Predict</li> </ul>

Level	Skills Demonstrated	Question Cues
<p style="text-align: center;">Level 3 Complex Reasoning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Solve an open-ended problem with more than one correct answer</li> <li>• Generalize from given facts</li> <li>• Relate knowledge from several sources</li> <li>• Draw conclusions</li> <li>• Translate knowledge into new contexts</li> <li>• Compare and discriminate between ideas</li> <li>• Assess value of methods, concepts, theories, processes, and formulas</li> <li>• Make choices based on a reasoned argument</li> <li>• Verify the value of evidence, information, numbers, and data</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Plan; prepare</li> <li>• Create; design</li> <li>• Ask “what if?” questions</li> <li>• Generalize</li> <li>• Justify; explain why; support; convince</li> <li>• Assess</li> <li>• Rank; grade</li> <li>• Test; judge</li> <li>• Recommend</li> <li>• Select</li> <li>• Conclude</li> </ul>
<p style="text-align: center;">Level 4 Extended Reasoning</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Analyze and synthesize information from multiple sources</li> <li>• Examine and explain alternative perspectives across a variety of sources</li> <li>• Describe and illustrate how common themes are found across texts from different cultures</li> <li>• Combine and synthesize ideas into new concepts</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Design</li> <li>• Connect</li> <li>• Synthesize</li> <li>• Apply concepts</li> <li>• Critique</li> <li>• Analyze</li> <li>• Create</li> <li>• Prove</li> </ul>

## SCORES

Selected-response items and technology-enhanced items are machine scored. However, the Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment consists of a variety of item types that contribute to the student's score, including selected-response, technology-enhanced, constructed-response, extended constructed-response, and extended writing-response. Items that are not machine scored—i.e., constructed-response, extended constructed-response, and extended writing-response items—require rubrics for manual scoring.

Students will receive a scale score and an Achievement Level designation based on total test performance. In addition, students will receive information on how well they performed at the domain level. Students will also receive a norm-referenced score based on a set of norm-referenced items included within the test; this score will allow comparison to a national norming group of students.

## EXAMPLE ITEMS

Example items, which are representative of the applicable DOK levels across various Ninth Grade Literature and Composition content domains, are provided.

**All example and sample items contained in this guide are the property of the Georgia Department of Education.**

### Example Items 1 and 2

Read the excerpt and answer example items 1 and 2.

#### excerpt from “The Ambitious Guest”

by Nathaniel Hawthorne

- 1 One September night, a family had gathered round their hearth, and piled it high with the driftwood of mountain streams, the dry cones of the pine, and the splintered ruins of great trees that had come crashing down the precipice. Up the chimney roared the fire, and brightened the room with its broad blaze. The faces of the father and mother had a sober gladness; the children laughed; the eldest daughter was the image of Happiness at seventeen; and the aged grandmother, who sat knitting in the warmest place, was the image of Happiness grown old. They had found the “herb, heart’s ease,” in the bleakest spot of all New England. This family were situated in the Notch of the White Hills, where the wind was sharp throughout the year, and pitilessly cold in the winter, giving their cottage all its fresh inclemency before it descended on the valley of the Saco. They dwelt in a cold spot and a dangerous one; for a mountain towered above their heads, so steep that the stones would often rumble down its sides and startle them at midnight.
- 2 The daughter had just uttered some simple jest that filled them all with mirth, when the wind came through the Notch and seemed to pause before their cottage—rattling the door, with a sound of wailing and lamentation, before it passed into the valley. For a moment it saddened them, though there was nothing unusual in the tones. But the family were glad again when they perceived that the latch was lifted by some traveler, whose footsteps had been unheard amid the dreary blast which heralded his approach, and wailed as he was entering, and went moaning away from the door.
- 3 Though they dwelt in such a solitude, these people held daily converse with the world. The romantic pass of the Notch is a great artery, through which the lifeblood of internal commerce is continually throbbing between Maine, on one side, and the Green Mountains and the shores of the St. Lawrence, on the other. The stagecoach always drew up before the door of the cottage. The wayfarer, with no companion but his staff, paused here to exchange a word, that the sense of loneliness might not utterly overcome him ere he could pass through the cleft of the mountain, or reach the first house in the valley. And here the teamster, on his way to Portland market, would put up for the night; and, if a bachelor, might sit an hour beyond the usual bedtime, and steal a kiss from the mountain maid at parting. It was one of those primitive taverns where the traveler pays only for food and lodging, but meets with a homely kindness beyond all price. When the footsteps were heard, therefore, between the outer door and the inner one, the whole family rose up, grandmother, children, and all, as if about to welcome some one who belonged to them, and whose fate was linked with theirs.

- 4 The door was opened by a young man. His face at first wore the melancholy expression, almost despondency, of one who travels a wild and bleak road, at nightfall and alone, but soon brightened up when he saw the kindly warmth of his reception. He felt his heart spring forward to meet them all, from the old woman, who wiped a chair with her apron, to the little child that held out its arms to him. One glance and smile placed the stranger on a footing of innocent familiarity with the eldest daughter.
- 5 “Ah, this fire is the right thing!” cried he; “especially when there is such a pleasant circle round it. I am quite benumbed; for the Notch is just like the pipe of a great pair of bellows; it has blown a terrible blast in my face all the way from Bartlett.”
- 6 “Then you are going toward Vermont?” said the master of the house, as he helped to take a light knapsack off the young man’s shoulders.
- 7 “Yes; to Burlington, and far enough beyond,” replied he. “I meant to have been at Ethan Crawford’s tonight; but a pedestrian lingers along such a road as this. It is no matter; for, when I saw this good fire, and all your cheerful faces, I felt as if you had kindled it on purpose for me, and were waiting my arrival. So I shall sit down among you, and make myself at home.”
- 8 The frank-hearted stranger had just drawn his chair to the fire when something like a heavy footstep was heard without, rushing down the steep side of the mountain, as with long and rapid strides, and taking such a leap in passing the cottage as to strike the opposite precipice. The family held their breath, because they knew the sound, and their guest held his by instinct.

### Example Item 1

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

**DOK Level:** 2

**Ninth Grade Literature and Composition Content Domain:** Reading and Vocabulary

**Standard:** ELAGSE9-10RL1. Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

**Which detail BEST suggests that the guest’s arrival foreshadows trouble?**

- A. The chimney is roaring with fire that “brightened the room with its broad blaze.”
- B. The eldest daughter “had just uttered some simple jest that filled them all with mirth.”
- C. The wind is “rattling the door, with a sound of wailing and lamentation.”
- D. The family feels “glad again when they perceived that the latch was lifted by some traveler.”

**Correct Answer:** C

**Explanation of Correct Answer:** The correct answer is choice (C) The wind is “rattling the door, with a sound of wailing and lamentation.” These words personify the wind as someone deeply mournful and sad attempting to enter the cottage. This foreshadows the moment when the stranger enters the cottage; his face at first “wore the melancholy expression, almost despondency.” Choices (A) and (B) are incorrect because they describe the warmth and cheer of the family and the cottage, not trouble. Choice (D) is incorrect because, although there is a slight feeling of suspense at the perception of the latch being lifted, the family is described as “glad,” which does not indicate trouble.



## Example Item 2

**Constructed-Response:** 2 points

**DOK Level:** 3

**Ninth Grade Literature and Composition Content Domain:** Reading and Vocabulary

**Standard:** ELAGSE9-10RL2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze in detail its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text.

**Explain how the author develops the theme that home is a joyful and safe place.**

**Use details from the excerpt to support your answer.**

### Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives sufficient evidence of the ability to determine and analyze the development of a theme over the course of the text</li> <li>• Includes specific examples/details that make clear reference to the text</li> <li>• Adequately explains the development of the theme with clearly relevant details based on the text</li> </ul>
1	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives limited evidence of the ability to determine and analyze the development of a theme over the course of the text</li> <li>• Includes limited examples that make reference to the text</li> <li>• Explains the development of the theme with vague/limited details based on the text</li> </ul>
0	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives no evidence of the ability to determine and analyze the development of a theme over the course of the text</li> </ul>

**Exemplar Response**

<b>Points Awarded</b>	<b>Sample Response</b>
2	<p>The author develops the theme that home is a joyful and safe place by contrasting the fierceness of the weather outside with the warmth and happiness within the cottage. At the beginning of the passage, the author describes the fireplace warming and brightening the room. The author also describes how the family is glad and laughing and how the eldest daughter and the grandmother each is an image of “Happiness.” However, the cottage is set in the “bleakest spot” in New England with biting wind and bitter cold. The wind rattles outside the door as if wailing or lamenting, yet the family stays happy within its home. When the stranger arrives, he is “benumbed” from being out in the biting wind on a “wild and bleak road.” As soon as he enters the cottage, he feels the “kindly warmth” of the home and of the family members who treat him as if he is part of the family. He immediately feels at home there.</p>
1	<p>The author compares the outside of the cottage with the inside. At the beginning of the passage, the author describes the family as happy and glad and warm inside their cottage while outside the cold and bitter wind slams at their cottage, the hillside, and anyone who travels out there. When the stranger shows up, he immediately feels safer and at home inside the cozy cottage.</p>
0	<p>The author tells how happy the family is when the stranger appears at their door. They welcome him into the house as if he is part of their family. He is also happy to see them and makes himself at home.</p>

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### Example Item 3

**Extended Writing-Response:** 7 points

**DOK Level:** 4

**Ninth Grade Literature and Composition Content Domain:** Writing and Language

**Standards:**

ELAGSE9-10W2. Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.

ELAGSE9-10L1. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

ELAGSE9-10L2. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

This section of the test assesses your skill to comprehend reading passages and use information from the passage to write an informational essay.

Before you begin writing your essay, you will read two passages.

As you read the passages, think about details you may use in an informational essay explaining how libraries are adapting and changing in the 21st century.

**These are the titles of the passages you will read:**

1. A New Twist on Libraries
2. Take One, Return One

### **A New Twist on Libraries**

Anyone walking into the new public library on the south side of San Antonio, Texas, can do many of the usual things, including check out titles, grab a few movies, do some online surfing, and scan the new releases. The one thing patrons cannot do in this library is flip through, skim, read, and take home actual books. Why? Patrons cannot touch the books because San Antonio's BiblioTech is a library that does not contain a single book on a single shelf. BiblioTech is the nation's first—but unlikely its last—completely book-free, digital public library.

Instead of rows of gray metal shelves with books arranged in order of author's last name or Dewey Decimal code, patrons of BiblioTech are met with rows of tablets and e-readers. Instead of checking out titles, readers either download titles to their own digital devices or check out the library's devices with nothing more than a card. Children can even take home e-readers that have been preloaded with more than one hundred titles just for their particular age group's abilities and interests. For those patrons who would rather sit in the library and read, dozens of desktop computers are accessible.

The choices of what can be read at BiblioTech are growing by leaps and bounds. When the digital library opened in autumn 2013, it had only about 10,000 titles. By March, 10,000 more titles were added. Currently, thousands more titles are being added to the bookless library's inventory every month. This library of the future is proving to be a big hit with patrons, and its first year has seen 100,000 visitors. Recently, the American Library Association officially named BiblioTech the first bookless public library in the country, but chances are, this bookless library will not be the last. People from all over the nation, as well as from other countries, have toured the Texan branch and started making plans to build their own.

The advantage of a digital public library goes beyond making materials easier to access for its patrons. Bookless libraries require less space and less structural strength since they do not have to support the weight of thousands of hardbacks and paperbacks. This means less money spent on construction and maintenance and more to spend on updating tablets and e-readers.

When Thomas Jefferson once said, "I cannot live without books," he most likely could not have imagined such a place as BiblioTech. Nonetheless, book-free libraries are most likely a sign of the future, and one that brings knowledge faster, closer, and even more economically. Jefferson probably would have approved.

### Take One, Return One

It all began as a simple way to share a love of reading and books. In 2009, the very first Little Free Library was built and posted in the town of Hudson, Wisconsin. Measuring just about two feet square, it had a clear message: reading is wonderful, so share the pleasure by taking any book and leaving behind any no longer needed. The idea caught on quickly. Just a few years later, there are more than 18,000 of these little birdhouse-like boxes posted in cities large and small, foreign and domestic! Most of the simple libraries are hand-built and brightly painted. Each one invites people to pause, explore, and pick a book to take home without any concerns about late fines or returns. Although the selection is limited—most of these tiny libraries only hold about 20 books or so—that adds to the excitement and charm of stopping by. Who knows what titles might be waiting—and how they might change tomorrow?

Little Free Libraries have been established in people’s front yards, on small city curbs, along simple country roads, and in the middle of bustling metropolises. Many community members believe that these libraries do far more than promote the passion of reading; they also foster interaction between neighbors, attract customers to local businesses, and encourage reluctant readers to reach out and turn a few pages. These libraries are even becoming part of people’s daily walks and bicycle rides. Sometimes, they have even become tourist stops.

The concept of free libraries scattered across the country has not remained inside U.S. borders. While every state in the country has multiple libraries, so do cities found in 70 additional countries, including the Ukraine, Uganda, South Korea, and Italy. These libraries are spreading so quickly and have become such popular stops that online maps attempting to mark each one cannot possibly keep up.

In a digital age when bookstores are closing every moment, and libraries are becoming less analog and more digital, these Little Free Libraries are a nice reminder of the line from a well-known poem, “Oh for a book and a shady nook!”

## WRITING TASK

There are many ways in which libraries are adapting and changing in the 21st century.

Think about the information in BOTH passages. Then write an **informational essay** in your own words explaining how people can access books without visiting a traditional public library.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your **informational essay**.

### Writer's Checklist

**Be sure to:**

- Introduce the topic clearly, provide a focus, and organize information in a way that makes sense.
- Use information from the two passages so that your essay includes important details.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to connect ideas and to clarify the relationship among ideas and concepts.
- Use clear language and vocabulary.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the information presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

**Now write your informational essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer's Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.**

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**The following is an example of a seven-point response. See the seven-point, two-trait rubric for a text-based informational response on pages 51 and 52 to see why this example would earn the maximum number of points.**

*A person only has to sit in a mall, a coffee shop, or a bus terminal for a few minutes to realize that the way people read has changed in the last several decades. It is more likely that people are reading the daily news on their smartphones or tablets now than reading an actual newspaper. The same is true for books. As reading has changed, the way people access books has changed as well.*

*Public libraries have changed the ways in which people access books. They have a unique opportunity because of digital media. Now, a public library can hold thousands more volumes than it once could, since so much print media is available digitally. In the passage, "A New Twist on Libraries," the author explains how the size of the collection at the San Antonio, Texas, library doubled in size without requiring any new space. The library has no paper books at all. People are able to access entire collections of newspapers, books, magazines, and reference materials that are completely electronic. This also means that any number of people can check out the same book at the same time.*

*Not everyone is excited about the loss of old-school books. Another trend that has changed the way people access books is citizen-operated Little Free Libraries. They are popping up all around the world. In "Take One, Return One," the author reports that "Little Free Libraries have been established in people's front yards, on small city curbs, along simple country roads, and in the middle of bustling metropolises." These libraries operate on an honor code and are a safe house for paperback and hardcover books that are being replaced so rapidly by e-readers. Anyone can access books by borrowing, donating, and sharing at these pop-up libraries.*

*These changes to the typical library have changed the way people access books. Whether people access books through a technology-enhanced public library or through a Little Free Library in their own neighborhoods, they are proving that reading is still as important as it always has been.*

## ADDITIONAL SAMPLE ITEMS

This section has two parts. The first part is a set of 13 sample items for Ninth Grade Literature and Composition. The second part contains a table that shows for each item the standard assessed, the DOK level, the correct answer (key), and a rationale/explanation about the key and distractors. The sample items can be utilized as a mini-test to familiarize students with the item formats found on the assessment.

**All example and sample items contained in this guide are the property of the Georgia Department of Education.**



**Items 1 through 8**

Read the article and answer questions 1 through 8.

**Dragon Mythology: East versus West**

- 1 Among the many beasts of mythology, no creature can match the dragon. Descriptions of dragons vary widely, but the creature is usually portrayed as a serpentine, or snakelike, reptile. In most cases, the traditional beliefs and symbols associated with this mythical creature can be divided into two opposing concepts: the benevolent Eastern or Asian dragon versus the malevolent Western or European dragon.
- 2 The dragon is an ancient symbol. The Sumerians, whose early civilization arose 7,000 years ago in West Asia, developed the first system of writing. Strikingly, one of the things they chose to write about was a dragon. Dragons also appear in China's earliest myths, and the powerful creatures are revered throughout Asia to this day. Even the Old Testament mentions dragon-like creatures.
- 3 References to dragons also appear early in Western civilization. The ancient Greeks knew about dragons: in Homer's epic the *Iliad*, the hero Agamemnon carries a shield emblazoned with a dragon. The first great work of English literature, *Beowulf*, which dates from the 700s, tells how the hero Beowulf kills a fire-breathing dragon. The Vikings of Scandinavia launched their raids against the rest of Europe in longboats with dragon mastheads. Indeed, it is hard to find any culture that does not include dragons in its earliest myths and legends.
- 4 The prevalence of dragon legends in ancient times leads to an obvious question: Could dragons have actually existed and then become extinct? For centuries, people assumed that was the case, and scientists published detailed reports on dragon anatomy and behavior. Early investigators mistook the bones of dinosaurs and other reptiles for dragon bones. Today, we know that no dragon fossils have ever been found.
- 5 If there were no real-life dragons, how did a belief in dragons arise? Perhaps a monitor lizard, crocodile, or some other large reptile was the basis of the first dragon tale. More likely, the image of the dragon grew in the human imagination, springing from our natural fear of snakes, reptiles, and predators with claws and wings. Dragons became the stuff of legends and, after countless retellings, took on a life of their own. These possibilities, however, do not explain the different attitudes toward dragons in the East and the West.
- 6 The Chinese dragon represents promise and good fortune. It brings rain, for example, which supports prosperity in an agricultural society. The dragon was also the symbol of the emperor, whose wisdom and divine power protected his subjects. The Chinese dragon's supernatural powers are limitless; it can become as small as a silkworm or as large as the universe. It can fly among the clouds, become invisible, or turn into water or fire. A traditional way to offer best wishes to a young child in China was to say, "May you become a dragon!"

- 7 In the West, by contrast, no one wanted their children to become dragons. In tales from medieval Europe, ferocious dragons terrorized communities. They kidnapped princesses, torched villages with their fiery breath, and greedily hoarded piles of wealth in their caves. Only the greatest heroes dared to enter one of those lairs to fight the beast. Latin mapmakers used the phrase “Here be dragons!” to denote an unexplored—and presumably dangerous—region on a map. Rather than bringing protection and good luck, the Western dragon threatened death and danger.
- 8 Westerners also used the dragon as a symbol of might. Roman legions carried battle flags with dragons on them to terrify their enemies. Later, the dragon motif appeared on the flags of some countries and on the coats of arms of powerful families. In the 18th and 19th centuries, a word for specially skilled soldiers was *dragoons*, a derivation of *dragon*. In all these instances, the dragon suggested prowess in warfare, not benevolence and good fortune.
- 9 Today, at least in literature, the West may be reevaluating its traditional attitudes toward dragons. Gone is the stark contrast of good versus evil found in medieval tales such as “St. George and the Dragon.” Western dragons now often have individual personalities, as well. In his famous fantasy *The Hobbit*, J. R. R. Tolkien paints a slightly sympathetic portrait of the dragon Smaug. The same might be said for the baby dragon in J. K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter and the Philosopher’s Stone*. Another popular series of books, Anne McCaffrey’s *The Dragonriders of Pern*, presents a unique society based on cooperation between dragons and humans.

**Item 1**

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

**How does the author of “Dragon Mythology: East versus West” MAINLY develop the ideas about the symbolic and historical significance of dragons?**

- A. by contrasting how dragons are currently portrayed in art from different countries
- B. by showing how two countries’ portrayals of dragons changed over time
- C. by providing a list of what dragons represented to different cultures
- D. by comparing different cultures’ representations of dragons

**Item 2**

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

**Read the sentence from paragraph 2.**

The Sumerians, whose early civilization arose 7,000 years ago in West Asia, developed the first system of writing. Strikingly, one of the things they chose to write about was a dragon.

**What does the author MOST LIKELY suggest by using the word *strikingly*?**

- A. It is unusual for people in that part of the world to write about dragons.
- B. It is notable that dragons were the subject of some of the first writings.
- C. It is amazing that people developed a system of writing 7,000 years ago.
- D. It is puzzling that people would find mythical creatures so interesting.

**Item 3**

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

**Which idea is BEST demonstrated by the modern-day realization that dinosaur and other reptile bones were mistaken for dragon bones?**

- A. Scientists are obligated to question previous theories.
- B. Lack of knowledge can lead to incorrect assumptions.
- C. Great care should be taken when conducting research.
- D. New research techniques are superior to traditional methods.

### Item 4

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

**Use the dictionary entry to answer the question.**

**stark** *adj* **1.** clear, without exception **2.** barren, desolate **3.** simple, without decoration **4.** stiff, rigid

**Which definition is the correct meaning for *stark* as it is used in paragraph 9?**

- A. definition 1
- B. definition 2
- C. definition 3
- D. definition 4

### Item 5

**Evidence-Based Selected-Response Technology-Enhanced:** 2 points

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

**Part A**

**Which sentence BEST reflects a central idea of the article?**

- A. Differences among cultural traditions should be respected.
- B. People from different cultures may share common beliefs.
- C. People should question different beliefs about similar things.
- D. Similar things can symbolize different ideas for different people.

**Part B**

**Which sentence from the article BEST supports the answer in Part A?**

- A. "In most cases, the traditional beliefs and symbols associated with this mythical creature can be divided into two opposing concepts: the benevolent Eastern or Asian dragon versus the malevolent Western or European dragon."
- B. "Dragons also appear in China's earliest myths, and the powerful creatures are revered throughout Asia to this day."
- C. "The ancient Greeks knew about dragons: in Homer's epic the *Iliad*, the hero Agamemnon carries a shield emblazoned with a dragon."
- D. "The Vikings of Scandinavia launched their raids against the rest of Europe in longboats with dragon mastheads."

**Item 6**

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

**What is the MAIN purpose of the article?**

- A. to prove that the dragon is a mythical creature in many cultures
- B. to explain how the concept of the dragon differs across cultures
- C. to describe the physical characteristics of dragon-like creatures
- D. to convince readers that the dragon should be portrayed in a particular way

### Item 7

**Constructed-Response:** 2 points

In paragraph 2, the author claims that there is a long tradition of dragon myths in China and that dragons are “revered throughout Asia to this day.” How does the author develop this claim?

Use details from the passages to support your answer. Write your answer on the lines on your answer document.

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## Item 8

**Extended Constructed-Response:** 4 points

The author describes many ways that dragons have been significant to different cultures throughout history. Using information from the article, write a narrative about a Chinese or “Eastern” dragon that encounters and gradually befriends a European or “Western” dragon.

Be sure your narrative establishes the story’s setting and point of view. Write your answer on the lines on your answer document.

Go to the next page to finish Item 8.

**Item 8. *Continued.***

A large rectangular box containing 20 horizontal lines for writing.



## Items 9 and 10

This section of the test assesses your skill to comprehend reading passages and use information from the passage to write an informational essay.

Before you begin writing your essay, you will read two passages and answer one short constructed-response question about what you have read.

As you read the passages, think about details you may use in an informational essay explaining how libraries are adapting and changing in the 21st century.

**These are the titles of the passages you will read:**

1. A New Twist on Libraries
2. Take One, Return One

### **A New Twist on Libraries**

Anyone walking into the new public library on the south side of San Antonio, Texas, can do many of the usual things, including check out titles, grab a few movies, do some online surfing, and scan the new releases. The one thing patrons cannot do in this library is flip through, skim, read, and take home actual books. Why? Patrons cannot touch the books because San Antonio's BiblioTech is a library that does not contain a single book on a single shelf. BiblioTech is the nation's first—but unlikely its last—completely book-free, digital public library.

Instead of rows of gray metal shelves with books arranged in order of author's last name or Dewey Decimal code, patrons of BiblioTech are met with rows of tablets and e-readers. Instead of checking out titles, readers either download titles to their own digital devices or check out the library's devices with nothing more than a card. Children can even take home e-readers that have been preloaded with more than one hundred titles just for their particular age group's abilities and interests. For those patrons who would rather sit in the library and read, dozens of desktop computers are accessible.

The choices of what can be read at BiblioTech are growing by leaps and bounds. When the digital library opened in autumn 2013, it had only about 10,000 titles. By March, 10,000 more titles were added. Currently, thousands more titles are being added to the bookless library's inventory every month. This library of the future is proving to be a big hit with patrons, and its first year has seen 100,000 visitors. Recently, the American Library Association officially named BiblioTech the first bookless public library in the country, but chances are, this bookless library will not be the last. People from all over the nation, as well as from other countries, have toured the Texan branch and started making plans to build their own.

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### Take One, Return One

It all began as a simple way to share a love of reading and books. In 2009, the very first Little Free Library was built and posted in the town of Hudson, Wisconsin. Measuring just about two feet square, it had a clear message: reading is wonderful, so share the pleasure by taking any book and leaving behind any no longer needed. The idea caught on quickly. Just a few years later, there are more than 18,000 of these little birdhouse-like boxes posted in cities large and small, foreign and domestic! Most of the simple libraries are hand-built and brightly painted. Each one invites people to pause, explore, and pick a book to take home without any concerns about late fines or returns. Although the selection is limited—most of these tiny libraries only hold about 20 books or so—that adds to the excitement and charm of stopping by. Who knows what titles might be waiting—and how they might change tomorrow?

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The concept of free libraries scattered across the country has not remained inside U.S. borders. While every state in the country has multiple libraries, so do cities found in 70 additional countries, including the Ukraine, Uganda, South Korea, and Italy. These libraries are spreading so quickly and have become such popular stops that online maps attempting to mark each one cannot possibly keep up.

In a digital age when bookstores are closing every moment, and libraries are becoming less analog and more digital, these Little Free Libraries are a nice reminder of the line from a well-known poem, “Oh for a book and a shady nook!”

**Item 9**

**Constructed-Response:** 2 points

**Which author MOST successfully uses rhetoric to advance his or her purpose?**

**Use details from BOTH passages to support your answer. Write your answer on the lines on your answer document.**

_____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____ _____
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**Item 10**

**Extended Writing-Response:** 7 points

**WRITING TASK**

There are many ways in which libraries are adapting and changing in the 21st century.

Think about the information in BOTH passages. Then write an **informational essay** in your own words explaining how people can access books without visiting a traditional public library.

Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your **informational essay**.

**Writer’s Checklist**

**Be sure to:**

- Introduce the topic clearly, provide a focus, and organize information in a way that makes sense.
- Use information from the two passages so that your essay includes important details.
- Develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples related to the topic.
- Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
- Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
- Use appropriate and varied transitions to connect ideas and to clarify the relationship among ideas and concepts.
- Use clear language and vocabulary.
- Establish and maintain a formal style.
- Provide a conclusion that supports the information presented.
- Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.

**Now write your informational essay on your answer document. Refer to the Writer’s Checklist as you write and proofread your essay.**

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## Items 11 through 13

### Item 11

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

Joan is beginning to research a report about the benefits of vitamins.

Which research question **BEST** narrows the topic for a report?

- A. Which vitamin is most common in the American diet?
- B. How are vitamins processed by the human body?
- C. How many Americans take daily vitamin supplements?
- D. How does taking vitamins impact recovering from a cold?

### Item 12

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

Which sentence demonstrates correct use of a semicolon?

- A. I enjoy hiking; however, I can't go today.
- B. I volunteer at the library; and I enjoy what I do there.
- C. My sister said she'd like to get; some books, paper, and pens.
- D. Be careful on the stage; because someone just spilled some paint.

### Item 13

**Selected-Response:** 1 point

Frances is writing a history report about the planet Jupiter.

Which sentence would be the **BEST** way to begin her report?

- A. Jupiter is a truly amazing planet in many different ways.
- B. One of Jupiter's moons, Ganymede, is larger than any other moon in the solar system.
- C. Jupiter is a very large planet and has a volume over 1,300 times the volume of Earth.
- D. About 10,000 years ago, ancient people first recorded sightings of Jupiter.

## ADDITIONAL SAMPLE ITEM KEYS

Item	Standard/ Element	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
1	ELAGSE9-10RI3	2	D	The correct answer is choice (D) by comparing different cultures' representations of dragons. This is correct because the passage shows this type of comparison throughout. Choices (A), (B), and (C) are incorrect because they are not main ways the author organizes the information and represent information about the text that is not accurate.
2	ELAGSE9-10RI4	2	B	The correct answer is choice (B) It is notable that dragons were the subject of some of the first writings. The paragraph that contains the sentence in question progresses from the idea that the dragon is an ancient symbol to the fact that Sumerians developed the first system of writing. It then brings the two topics together by expressing surprise that the first writings were, in fact, about dragons; this is a striking fact. Choices (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect because, although they present ideas with a grain of truth, these ideas are not conclusions that are supported by the context of the sentences or paragraph.
3	ELAGSE9-10RI1	3	B	The correct answer is choice (B) Lack of knowledge can lead to incorrect assumptions. Since people had no conclusive proof about the existence of dragons, they assumed that dragons were real and mistook the bones of other species for those of dragons. Modern science attempts to rely on facts rather than assumptions, so mistakes like these occur less often now. Choices (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect because, although they present conclusions with a grain of truth, they do not represent the best, most objective conclusion. In other words, they rely on assumptions, using absolutes like <i>are</i> and <i>should be</i> instead of objective words like <i>can</i> .
4	ELAGSE9-10L4a	2	A	The correct answer is choice (A) definition 1. The sentence in which <i>stark</i> appears is describing a clear, indisputable contrast between good and evil. Thus, the meaning "clear, without exception" fits the context of the sentence. Choices (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because the remaining definitions do not fit the intended meaning of the word <i>stark</i> .



Item	Standard/ Element	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
5	ELAGSE9-10RI2	3	D/A	<p>The correct answer choices are (D) Similar things can symbolize different ideas for different people, <b>and</b> (A) “In most cases, the traditional beliefs and symbols associated with this mythical creature can be divided into two opposing concepts: the benevolent Eastern or Asian dragon versus the malevolent Western or European dragon.”</p> <p>In Part A, choice (D) is correct because the passage is focused on comparing and contrasting how dragons are/have been viewed by Eastern vs. Western society. The author rarely diverges from this idea. Choice (A) is incorrect because, while the author speaks respectfully about the differing views, there is no emphasis on the need to respect differences and no suggestions that there is disrespect between the two different viewpoints. Choice (B) is incorrect because the passage focuses on opposing beliefs, not overlapping ones. Choice (C) is incorrect because the author does not challenge either belief system; rather, the author celebrates the different beliefs and wishes to inform the reader about the beliefs. In Part B, choice (A) is correct because it focuses on “two opposing concepts” related to dragon symbolism. The incorrect options in Part B support incorrect answers in Part A.</p>
6	ELAGSE9-10RI6	3	B	<p>The correct answer is choice (B) to explain how the concept of the dragon differs across cultures. While the essence of the dragon as a powerful creature remains the same across cultures, each culture puts its own unique spin on what the dragon means, what it can do, and how important it is. These differences arise from the inherent general differences of the cultures. Choices (A) and (C) are incorrect because, although the passage touches on these topics, the main purpose is to show cultural differences. Choice (D) is incorrect because the purpose of the passage is to inform rather than to persuade.</p>
7	ELAGSE9-10RI5	3	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar responses on page 43.
8	ELAGSE9-10W3	4	N/A	See exemplar responses on page 44 and the four-point holistic rubric beginning on page 49.
9	ELAGSE9-10RI6	3	N/A	See scoring rubric and exemplar responses beginning on page 45.
10	ELAGSE9-10W2 ELAGSE9-10L1 ELAGSE9-10L2	4	N/A	See exemplar response on page 47 and the seven-point, two-trait rubric beginning on page 51.

Item	Standard/ Element	DOK Level	Correct Answer	Explanation
11	ELAGSE9-10W7	2	D	The correct answer is choice (D) How does taking vitamins impact recovering from a cold? This option presents a question that lends itself to a narrower scope of research but still has depth. Choices (A) and (C) are much too specific and choice (B) is much too broad.
12	ELAGSE9-10L2a	2	A	The correct answer is choice (A) I enjoy hiking; however, I can't go today. This sentence uses the semicolon correctly. In this case, it breaks up two short independent clauses that are related. Choices (B), (C), and (D) are incorrect because the semicolon is either the wrong punctuation or no punctuation is needed.
13	ELAGSE9-10W2a	2	D	The correct answer is choice (D) About 10,000 years ago, ancient people first recorded sightings of Jupiter. This sentence is a plausible way to begin a history report on the planet, providing a broad historical overview. Choice (A) is both wordy and vague and does not suggest any particular topical angle for the report. Choice (B) is about a feature of Jupiter that is far too specific for an introductory sentence for a report. Choice (C) is useful information about Jupiter and might feature as a fact in a body paragraph, but it is not a strong introductory/topic sentence for a history report.

## EXAMPLE SCORING RUBRICS AND EXEMPLAR RESPONSES

### Item 7

#### Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives sufficient evidence of the ability to determine and analyze the development/progression of an author’s claim within the text</li> <li>• Includes specific examples/details that make clear reference to the text</li> <li>• Adequately explains the development of the author’s claim within the text with clearly relevant information based on the text</li> </ul>
1	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives limited evidence of the ability to determine and analyze the development/progression of an author’s claim within the text</li> <li>• Includes limited examples that make reference to the text</li> <li>• Explains the development of the author’s claim within the text with vague/limited information based on the text</li> </ul>
0	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives no evidence of the ability to determine and analyze the development/progression of an author’s claim within the text</li> </ul>

#### Exemplar Response

Points Awarded	Sample Response
2	<p>Most of the details that support the author’s claim—that dragons have long been considered good in Asia—are presented in paragraph 6. For example, the author says that Chinese people believe that dragons bring good luck. They can cause rain, which is good for farmers, and they can also provide protection. The dragon was a symbol of the Chinese emperor, and it had the power to change size, fly, become invisible, or change into water or fire. All of these powers were usually used to bring good fortune to people in Asia, so dragons are considered to be very good by the people there.</p>
1	<p>Dragons are good in Asia because the Chinese people believe they can cause rain, and that’s good for growing crops. The dragon is also a symbol of the emperor, which is very powerful. In China, dragons can become as small as a silkworm or as large as the universe. In the West, dragons are very dangerous, and only brave people can kill them. They are symbols of war, like for the Vikings and the Romans.</p>
0	<p>Dragons are good in China. They can change their shape, too. This is why they are so good in China. They are also very wise, and intelligent. They help people. People tell children they should become dragons.</p>

**Item 8**

To view the four-point holistic rubric for a text-based narrative response, see pages 49 and 50.

**Exemplar Response**

Points Awarded	Sample Response
4	<p>Way back in the mists of time, dragons roamed the Earth. Some were peaceful, but others were terrible and caused destruction.</p> <p>One of the terrible dragons was Drago. He lived in a cave near a village in the West where he stole treasure and breathed fire on people who tried to stop him. After many years the villagers drove him out with swords and spears.</p> <p>Drago wandered many miles to the East. He found another cave and coiled himself up in it, feeling dejected. Soon he heard the sound of farmers talking outside the cave.</p> <p>“It’s the year of the dragon,” one farmer said. “We will have good luck!”</p> <p>“Yes,” said the other. “Here comes the dragon now, bringing rain for our crops!”</p> <p>Once the farmers went on their way, Drago peered outside the cave and saw a gentle rain drizzling over the fields in the valley. Looking up, he saw a magnificent dragon swirling in the rainclouds. The dragon swooped down and spoke to him.</p> <p>“I’m Shenlong,” she said.</p> <p>For a moment, Drago was speechless. He foresaw a new life for himself as a peaceful dragon, bringing good to the people of the land. Then he said, “I’m Drago. It’s nice to meet you.”</p> <p>Drago and Shenlong became close friends. Together, they brought rain and bountiful harvests to the farmers of the Eastern villages, and they were loved and respected by the people.</p>
3	<p>Long ago there were two dragons, one in the East and one in the West. The dragon from the West was terrible. He breathed fire and destroyed villages. He stole gold. The dragon from the East was peaceful and wise and helped people. Then the Western dragon went to the East and saw the Eastern dragon up in the clouds, and she said, “You can be helpful and not hurt people.” She was helping people get rain on their crops, so the Western dragon did that too. He learned another way to be good to people, instead of being destructive. In the end, they were friends.</p>
2	<p>The dragon from the West was terrible. He breathed fire and people hated it. The Chinese dragon was lucky and helped people. They met and the Eastern dragon said, “Don’t hurt people. You can help them.” Western dragon learned how to do good things for people. Before that he was not good but after meeting the Chinese dragon he was calmer.</p>
1	<p>The Western dragon was bad and hurt people with fire from his breath. But the Chinese dragon was good and people liked him. So they met and that dragon was more calm and became friends with the Western dragon.</p>
0	<p>Dragons can be good or bad. In China, they are very good. They can change the size and shape. But in West they are very bad, and they live in caves.</p>

## Item 9

## Scoring Rubric

Points	Description
2	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives sufficient evidence of the ability to analyze how authors use rhetoric to advance the purpose of the text</li> <li>• Includes specific examples/details that make clear reference to the text</li> <li>• Adequately analyzes how authors use rhetoric to advance the purpose with clearly relevant information based on the text</li> </ul>
1	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives limited evidence of the ability to analyze how authors use rhetoric to advance the purpose of the text</li> <li>• Includes limited examples/details that make reference to the text</li> <li>• Analyzes how the authors use rhetoric to advance the purpose with vague/limited information based on the text</li> </ul>
0	<p>The response achieves the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Gives no evidence of the ability to analyze how authors use rhetoric to advance the purpose of the text</li> </ul>

**Item 9**

**Exemplar Response**

Points Awarded	Sample Response
2	<p>Both of these passages have the purpose of getting people interested in a new type of library. Passage 1 tells about the BiblioTech Library, and Passage 2 describes Little Free Libraries. While both authors do a good job of using rhetoric to advance their purpose, I found Passage 1 slightly more successful.</p> <p>In Passage 1, the author uses words and phrases that make digital libraries sound exciting and appealing. For example, choices at the library are “growing by leaps and bounds” and it is the “library of the future.” By mentioning that many people from around the world have toured the library and that it is a “big hit with patrons,” the author entices the reader to join the crowd and visit a digital library too.</p> <p>Passage 1 also uses logical arguments to explain why digital libraries have advantages over the traditional kind, as they make materials easier to access, require less space and structural strength, and are much less costly to build and maintain. In closing, Passage 1 quotes a famous person, Thomas Jefferson, and implies that he would endorse digital libraries.</p> <p>In Passage 2, the author uses appealing imagery, describing the “excitement and charm” of these little “birdhouse-like boxes.” Passage 2 also uses bandwagon appeal in noting that Little Free Libraries have spread all over the country and to countries worldwide. The passage implies endorsement from community members who believe that Little Free Libraries “promote the passion of reading,” encourage interaction between neighbors, increase traffic to local businesses, and get people to read who otherwise might not. In closing, it uses a quote from a well-known poem.</p> <p>However, Passage 2 does not rely as strongly on logic as Passage 1. It also fails to cite a single example of any Little Free Library that has gotten as much attention as the BiblioTech library. While these small libraries may have some appeal, I am not convinced they will be as important as the digital libraries discussed in Passage 1.</p>
1	<p>I think Passage 1 is more convincing because it included so many facts about the BiblioTech library and why it is better than regular libraries. The passage says that everyone seems to be interested in it and that it is “the library of the future.” Who wants to lug around heavy books (or build libraries to stack them)? The author of the second passage did not really make Little Free Libraries sound very exciting or important.</p>
0	<p>Both authors make you try to be interested in the libraries, but I like the first author better.</p>

**Item 10**

**The following is an example of a seven-point response. See the seven-point, two-trait rubric for a text-based informational response on pages 51 and 52 to see why this example would earn the maximum number of points.**

*A person only has to sit in a mall, a coffee shop, or a bus terminal for a few minutes to realize that the way people read has changed in the last several decades. It is more likely that people are reading the daily news on their smartphones or tablets now than reading an actual newspaper. The same is true for books. As reading has changed, the way people access books has changed as well.*

*Public libraries have changed the ways in which people access books. They have a unique opportunity because of digital media. Now, a public library can hold thousands more volumes than it once could, since so much print media is available digitally. In the passage, "A New Twist on Libraries," the author explains how the size of the collection at the San Antonio, Texas, library doubled in size without requiring any new space. The library has no paper books at all. People are able to access entire collections of newspapers, books, magazines, and reference materials that are completely electronic. This also means that any number of people can check out the same book at the same time.*

*Not everyone is excited about the loss of old-school books. Another trend that has changed the way people access books is citizen-operated Little Free Libraries. They are popping up all around the world. In "Take One, Return One," the author reports that "Little Free Libraries have been established in people's front yards, on small city curbs, along simple country roads, and in the middle of bustling metropolises." These libraries operate on an honor code and are a safe house for paperback and hardcover books that are being replaced so rapidly by e-readers. Anyone can access books by borrowing, donating, and sharing at these pop-up libraries.*

*These changes to the typical library have changed the way people access books. Whether people access books through a technology-enhanced public library or through a Little Free Library in their own neighborhoods, they are proving that reading is still as important as it always has been.*

## WRITING RUBRICS

Ninth Grade Literature and Composition items that are not machine-scored—i.e., constructed-response, extended constructed-response, and extended writing-response items—are manually scored using either a holistic rubric or a two-trait rubric.

### Four-Point Holistic Rubric

#### Genre: Narrative

A holistic rubric essentially has one main trait. On the Georgia Milestones EOC assessment, a holistic rubric contains a single point scale ranging from zero to four. Each point value represents a qualitative description of the student’s work. To score an item on a holistic rubric, a scorer or reader need only choose the criteria and associated point value that best represents the student’s work. Increasing point values represent a greater understanding of the content and, thus, a higher score.

### Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

#### Genre: Argumentative or Informational/Explanatory

A two-trait rubric, on the other hand, is an analytic rubric with two traits. On the Georgia Milestones EOC assessment, a two-trait rubric contains two point scales, one for each trait, ranging from zero to four on one scale (ideas) and zero to three on the other (conventions). A score is given for each of the two traits, for a total of seven possible points for the item. To score an item on a two-trait rubric, a scorer or reader must choose the criteria and associated point value, for each trait, that best represents the student’s work. The two scores are added together. Increasing point values represent a greater understanding of the content and, thus, a higher score.

On the following pages are the rubrics that will be used to evaluate writing on the Georgia Milestones Ninth Grade Literature and Composition EOC assessment.



## Four-Point Holistic Rubric

### Genre: Narrative

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on a text that has been read.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student's response is a well-developed narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience based on a text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively establishes a situation, one or more points of view, and introduces a narrator and/or characters</li> <li>• Creates a smooth progression of events</li> <li>• Effectively uses multiple narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, pacing, reflection, and plot to develop rich, interesting experiences, events, and/or characters</li> <li>• Uses a variety of techniques consistently to sequence events that build on one another</li> <li>• Uses precise words and phrases, details, and sensory language consistently to convey a vivid picture of the events</li> <li>• Provides a conclusion that follows from the narrated experiences or events</li> <li>• Integrates ideas and details from source material effectively</li> <li>• Has very few or no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning*</li> </ul>
	3	<p><i>The student's response is a complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on a text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Establishes a situation, a point of view, and introduces one or more characters</li> <li>• Organizes events in a clear, logical order</li> <li>• Uses narrative techniques such as dialogue, description, pacing, reflection, and plot to develop experiences, events, and/or characters</li> <li>• Uses words and/or phrases to indicate sequence</li> <li>• Uses words, phrases, and details to convey a picture of the events</li> <li>• Provides an appropriate conclusion</li> <li>• Integrates some ideas and/or details from source material</li> <li>• Has few minor errors in usage and/or conventions with no significant effect on meaning*</li> </ul>

### Four-Point Holistic Rubric

**Genre: Narrative  
(continued)**

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on a text that has been read.</i></p>	2	<p><i>The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on a text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduces a vague situation and at least one character</li> <li>• Organizes events in a sequence but with some gaps or ambiguity</li> <li>• Attempts to use a narrative technique such as dialogue, description, reflection, and plot to develop experiences, events, and/or characters</li> <li>• Inconsistently uses occasional signal words to indicate sequence</li> <li>• Inconsistently uses some words or phrases to convey a picture of the events</li> <li>• Provides a weak or ambiguous conclusion</li> <li>• Attempts to integrate ideas or details from source material</li> <li>• Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with meaning*</li> </ul>
	1	<p><i>The student’s response provides evidence of an attempt to write a narrative based on a text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Response is a summary that includes narrative techniques in the summary</li> <li>• Provides a weak or minimal introduction</li> <li>• May be too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events</li> <li>• Shows little or no attempt to use dialogue or description</li> <li>• Uses words that are inappropriate, overly simple, or unclear</li> <li>• Provides few if any words that convey a picture of the events, signal shifts in time or setting, or show relationships among experiences or events</li> <li>• Provides a minimal or no conclusion</li> <li>• May use few if any ideas or details from source material</li> <li>• Has frequent major errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*</li> </ul>
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank</li> <li>• Copied</li> <li>• Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible</li> <li>• Non-English/Foreign Language</li> <li>• Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive</li> </ul>

\*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

## Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

### Trait 1 for Informational/Explanatory Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><b>Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence</b></p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to effectively establish a controlling idea and to support the idea with evidence from the text(s) read and to elaborate on the idea with examples, illustrations, facts, and other details in order. The writer must integrate the information from the text(s) into his/her own words and arrange the ideas and supporting evidence (from text that they have read) in order to create cohesion for an informative/explanatory essay.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student's response is a well-developed informative/explanatory text that examines a topic in depth and presents related information based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Effectively introduces the topic and main idea(s) to be examined</li> <li>• Uses an organizational strategy to present information effectively and maintain focus and to make important connections and distinctions</li> <li>• Thoroughly develops the topic with well-chosen, relevant, and enough facts; extended definitions; concrete details; quotations; or other information and examples that are appropriate for the audience</li> <li>• Uses appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion, to link major sections of the text, and to clarify the relationship among ideas</li> <li>• Effectively uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary appropriate to the audience and complexity of the topic</li> <li>• Establishes and maintains a formal style and an objective tone</li> <li>• Provides a strong concluding statement or section that logically follows from the ideas presented</li> </ul>
	3	<p><i>The student's response is a complete informative/explanatory text that examines a topic and presents information based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Introduces the topic and main idea(s) to be examined</li> <li>• Has an organizational strategy to group information and provide focus, but sometimes connections and distinctions are not clear</li> <li>• Uses a few pieces of relevant information from sources to develop topic</li> <li>• Uses some transitions to connect and clarify relationships among ideas, but relationships may not always be clear</li> <li>• Uses some precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to explain the topic</li> <li>• Maintains a formal style and objective tone, for the most part</li> <li>• Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the ideas presented</li> </ul>
	2	<p><i>The student's response is an incomplete or oversimplified informative/explanatory text that cursorily examines a topic based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Attempts to introduce a topic or main idea</li> <li>• Ineffectively organizes ideas, concepts, and information</li> <li>• Develops topic, sometimes unevenly, with little relevant information</li> <li>• Attempts to link ideas and concepts, but cohesion is inconsistent</li> <li>• Uses limited precise language and/or domain-specific vocabulary to manage the topic</li> <li>• Attempts to establish formal style and objective tone but struggles to maintain them</li> <li>• Provides a weak concluding statement or section</li> </ul>
	1	<p><i>The student's response is a weak attempt to write an informative/explanatory text that examines a topic based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• May not introduce a topic or main idea, or the topic or main idea must be inferred</li> <li>• May be too brief to demonstrate an organizational structure, or no structure is evident</li> <li>• Provides minimal information to develop the topic, little or none of which is from sources</li> <li>• Struggles to link some ideas and concepts, but cohesion is weak throughout</li> <li>• Uses vague, ambiguous, inexact, or repetitive language</li> <li>• Lacks appropriate formal style and tone</li> <li>• Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section</li> </ul>
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank</li> <li>• Copied</li> <li>• Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible</li> <li>• Non-English/Foreign Language</li> <li>• Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive</li> </ul>

### Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

#### Trait 2 for Informational/Explanatory Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><b>Language Usage and Conventions</b></p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics as embodied in the grade-level expectations of the language standards.</i></p>	3	<p><i>The student's response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses clear and complete sentence structure, with appropriate range and variety</li> <li>• Makes an attempt to attribute paraphrases and direct quotations to their sources via in-text or parenthetical citations</li> <li>• Has no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning*</li> </ul>
	2	<p><i>The student's response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Uses complete sentences, with some variety</li> <li>• Attributes paraphrases and direct quotations inconsistently to their sources via in-text or parenthetical citations</li> <li>• Has minor errors in usage and/or conventions with no significant effect on meaning*</li> </ul>
	1	<p><i>The student's response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has fragments, run-ons, and/or other sentence structure errors</li> <li>• Makes little, if any, attempt to attribute paraphrases and direct quotations to their sources</li> <li>• Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*</li> </ul>
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank</li> <li>• Copied</li> <li>• Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible</li> <li>• Non-English/Foreign Language</li> <li>• Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive</li> </ul>

\*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the "Language Progressive Skills, by Grade" chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

## Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric

### Trait 1 for Argumentative Genre

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><b>Idea Development, Organization, and Coherence</b></p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer's ability to effectively establish a claim as well as to address counterclaims, to support the claim with evidence from the text(s) read, and to elaborate on the claim with examples, illustrations, facts, and other details. The writer must integrate the information from the text(s) into his/her own words and arrange the ideas and supporting evidence in order to create cohesion for an argument essay.</i></p>	4	<p><i>The student's response is a well-developed argument that develops and supports claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively introduces claim(s), acknowledges and counters opposing claim(s), and engages the audience</li> <li>Uses an organizational strategy to establish clear relationships among claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons, and relevant evidence</li> <li>Uses specific and well-chosen facts, details, definitions, examples, and/or other information from sources to develop claim(s) and counterclaim(s) fully and fairly and to point out strengths and limitations of both while anticipating the audience's knowledge and concerns</li> <li>Uses words, phrases, and clauses that effectively connect the major sections of the text and clarify relationships between claim(s) and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claim(s) and counterclaim(s)</li> <li>Uses and maintains a formal style and objective tone that is appropriate for task, purpose, and audience</li> <li>Provides a strong concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented</li> </ul>
	3	<p><i>The student's response is a complete argument that relates and supports claims with some evidence based on text as a stimulus.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Clearly introduces claim(s) and attempts to acknowledge and counter opposing claim(s)</li> <li>Uses an organizational strategy to present claim(s), reasons, and evidence</li> <li>Uses multiple pieces of relevant information from sources adequately to develop claim(s) and counterclaim(s) and to clarify relationships between claim(s), reasons, evidence, and counterclaim(s) while attempting to attend to the audience's knowledge or concerns</li> <li>Uses words and/or phrases to connect ideas and show relationships among claim(s), reasons, and evidence</li> <li>Uses an appropriate tone and style fairly consistently for task, purpose, and audience</li> <li>Provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented</li> </ul>
	2	<p><i>The student's response is an incomplete or oversimplified argument that partially supports claims with loosely related evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Attempts to introduce claim(s), but claim(s) may be unclear; makes reference to opposing claim(s)</li> <li>Attempts to use an organizational structure, which may be formulaic</li> <li>Develops, sometimes unevenly, reasons and/or evidence to support claim(s) and present opposing claim(s), but shows little awareness of the audience's knowledge or concerns</li> <li>Attempts to use words and/or phrases to connect claim(s), counterclaim(s), reasons, and evidence, but cohesion is inconsistent or weak</li> <li>Attempts to use an appropriate tone and style are not consistently appropriate for task, purpose, and audience</li> <li>Provides a weak concluding statement or section that may not follow the argument presented</li> </ul>
	1	<p><i>The student's response is a weak attempt to write an argument and does not support claims with adequate evidence.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>May not introduce claim(s), or the claim(s) must be inferred; does not reference or acknowledge opposing claim(s)</li> <li>May be too brief to demonstrate an organizational structure, or no structure is evident</li> <li>Provides minimal information to develop the claim(s), little or none of which is from sources, and fails to attend to the audience's knowledge or concerns</li> <li>Makes no attempt to use words and/or phrases to connect claim(s) and reasons, reasons and evidence, and claim(s) and counterclaim(s)</li> <li>Uses a style and tone that are inappropriate and/or ineffective</li> <li>Provides a minimal or no concluding statement or section</li> </ul>
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Blank</li> <li>Copied</li> <li>Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible</li> <li>Non-English/Foreign Language</li> <li>Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive</li> </ul>

**Seven-Point, Two-Trait Rubric**  
**Trait 2 for Argumentative Genre**

Writing Trait	Points	Criteria
<p><b>Language Usage and Conventions</b></p> <p><i>This trait examines the writer’s ability to demonstrate control of sentence formation, usage, and mechanics as embodied in the grade-level expectations of the language standards.</i></p>	3	<p><i>The student’s response demonstrates full command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has clear and complete sentence structure, with appropriate range and variety</li> <li>• Shows command of language and its conventions when writing</li> <li>• Any errors in usage and conventions do not interfere with meaning*</li> </ul>
	2	<p><i>The student’s response demonstrates partial command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has complete sentences, with some variety</li> <li>• Shows some knowledge of language and its conventions when writing</li> <li>• Has minor errors in usage and conventions with no significant effect on meaning*</li> </ul>
	1	<p><i>The student’s response demonstrates weak command of language usage and conventions.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Has fragments, run-ons, and/or other sentence structure errors</li> <li>• Shows little knowledge of language and its conventions when writing</li> <li>• Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning*</li> </ul>
	0	<p><i>The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Blank</li> <li>• Copied</li> <li>• Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible</li> <li>• Non-English/Foreign Language</li> <li>• Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive</li> </ul>

\*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.

## APPENDIX: LANGUAGE PROGRESSIVE SKILLS, BY GRADE

The following skills, marked with an asterisk (\*) in Language standards 1–3, are particularly likely to require continued attention in higher grades as they are applied to increasingly sophisticated writing and speaking.

Standard	Grade(s)									
	3	4	5	6	7	8	9–10	11–12		
<b>L.3.1f.</b> Ensure subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.										
<b>L.3.3a.</b> Choose words and phrases for effect.										
<b>L.4.1f.</b> Produce complete sentences, recognizing and correcting inappropriate fragments and run-ons.										
<b>L.4.1g.</b> Correctly use frequently confused words (e.g., <i>to/too/two; there/their</i> ).										
<b>L.4.3a.</b> Choose words and phrases to convey ideas precisely.*										
<b>L.4.3b.</b> Choose punctuation for effect.										
<b>L.5.1d.</b> Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.										
<b>L.5.2a.</b> Use punctuation to separate items in a series.†										
<b>L.6.1c.</b> Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.										
<b>L.6.1d.</b> Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).										
<b>L.6.1e.</b> Recognize variations from standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.										
<b>L.6.2a.</b> Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.										
<b>L.6.3a.</b> Vary sentence patterns for meaning, reader/listener interest, and style.†										
<b>L.6.3b.</b> Maintain consistency in style and tone.										
<b>L.7.1c.</b> Places phrases and clauses within a sentence, recognizing and correcting misplaced and dangling modifiers.										
<b>L.7.3a.</b> Choose language that expresses ideas precisely and concisely, recognizing and eliminating wordiness and redundancy.										
<b>L.8.1d.</b> Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.										
<b>L.9-10.1a.</b> Use parallel structure.										

\* Subsumed by L.7.3a

† Subsumed by L.9-10.1a

‡ Subsumed by L.11-12.3a

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