

# Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP)

## Summative

# Item Specifications

## English Language Arts

### Grade 8

# **Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) Summative Item Specifications English Language Arts, Grade 8**

The *Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) Summative* item specifications are based upon the development of summative assessments that measure the Alabama Course of Study Standards. The item specifications define the purpose of the *ACAP Summative* and provide important information regarding the content to be measured. The item specifications also serve as a road map to guide Alabama educators in the development and subsequent review of items that best measure the Course of Study Standards for a given grade and subject area. Each item specification is aligned to the given strand, subcategory, and standard and includes the following key information:

- Evidence statements
- Content limits/constraints
- Recommended Webb’s Depth of Knowledge (DOK) or cognitive levels
- Item types for measuring a given standard
- Information regarding whether or not context is allowable
- Sample item stem information

The appendices to this document include sample test items, along with information about the item, including item type, page reference, alignment, point value, depth of knowledge, and answer key. Also included is a sample text-dependent writing item and sample student responses. These sample items are provided to be an additional resource foreducators to help guide instruction and assessment-building in the classroom. Teachers can use the sample items as models when leading classroom discussion as well as creating items for classroom tests or quizzes. In each sample item, the level of rigor needed in the item in order to align with the content standard is evident.

## Definitions

**Course of Study Standards:** The Course of Study Standards are a set of content curriculum statements defining what students should know and be able to do at a given grade level. The goal is to prepare students for future opportunities and options in the workplace and for everyday life. Through the implementation of the Alabama Course of Study: English Language Arts, students will be well equipped for the workforce upon graduation or be ready to pursue higher levels of education in Alabama’s colleges and universities.

**Strand:** A strand is a group of related content standards. Reading Literature, Reading Informational Text, Writing, and Language are the strands for Grade 8 English Language Arts.

**Subcategory:** A subcategory is a smaller grouping of standards within the strand. For example, in the strand of Reading Literature are the subcategories of Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.

**Standard:** The standard defines what students should understand (know) and be able to do at the conclusion of a course or grade. The standard text in the item specification is preceded by a standard identifier; for example, RI.8.12 indicates the strand as Reading Informational Text, the student grade level as eighth (8), and the standard number as twelve (12).

**Evidence Statements:** Evidence statements are closely aligned to the standard and do not deviate from the requirements of the standard. Standards that are substantial in content do provide for a better opportunity to “go deeper into the standard,” which is the case for many of the Alabama Course of Study Standards. The evidence statements serve that purpose.

**Assessment Limits/Content Constraints:** Assessment limits and/or content constraints define the range of content knowledge and degree of difficulty that is allowable when items are written to measure a given standard.

**Depth of Knowledge (DOK):** Depth of knowledge involves the cognitive complexity or the nature of thinking required for a given item. Webb’s Depth of Knowledge levels are used in the development of items for cognitive demand. Therefore, when developing items for depth of knowledge, the item should be as demanding cognitively as what the actual standard expects. Webb’s Depth of Knowledge includes four levels, from the lowest (basic recall) to the highest (extended thinking.) The English language arts *ACAP Summative* assessment items are written to one of three cognitive levels of complexity as follows:

- Level 1: Recall
- Level 2: Application of a Skill/Concept
- Level 3: Strategic Thinking

**Item Types:** The *ACAP Summative* assessments are composed of various item types. These item types are described in the following section.

**Text Types/Context:** Text types/context provides information regarding the types of stimulus materials that must be used with or in the items. If a text type is present, that means that the item is to be drawn from the content of the text. If context is noted as “Allowed” in the item specification, then the item may use context. If context is required, then the item measuring the given standard must have context. If no context is noted in the item specification, the item measuring the given standard must not have context.

**Sample Item Stem Information:** This statement explains what students are expected to do when they respond to a given item.

## Item Types

The *Alabama Comprehensive Assessment Program (ACAP) Summative* assessments are composed of various item types. These item types are described below.

**Multiple-Choice (MC) Items:** MC items have four answer choices, including three distractors and one correct answer. Distractors for English language arts represent common misconceptions, incorrect logic, or incorrect understanding of a text, etc. A correct response to an MC item is worth one score point in the English language arts *ACAP Summative*.

**Multiple-Select (MS) Items:** MS items are similar in structure to MC items. MC items have a stem and four answer options, one of which is correct. However, unlike an MC item, an MS item is composed of more than four options and more than one correct answer. In other words, multiple responses are required for a given MS item. For English language arts, there are two types of MS configurations. One has five answer options, two of which are correct, and one has six answer options, two or three of which are correct. Directions for the number of options to select are provided with each item. A correct response to an MS item is worth two score points in the English language arts *ACAP Summative*.

**Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR) Items:** EBSR items have two parts. The first part answers an inferential or key concept question related to a text and includes one correct response. The second part may focus on evidence from the text to support the inference or key concept in the first part or may focus on an inference or statement that continues from the first part. The second part varies depending on the standard being assessed. The second part includes one correct response. A correct response to an EBSR item is worth two score points in the English language arts *ACAP Summative* when both parts are correct.

**Technology-Enhanced (TE) Items:** TE items share the same functional structure as traditional paper-and-pencil test items; however, the expansive features and functions of a computer-based medium allow for the incorporation of technical enhancements into traditional elements of a test item, such as the item stem, the stimulus (if any), the response area, or a combination of all three. These items require the use of one or more tools. A correct response to a TE item is worth one or two score points in the English language arts *ACAP Summative*. English language arts TE items include, but are not limited to, the following:

- **Drag and Drop Input:** These TE items provide a student with draggable entities that can be configured to be used once or multiple times.
- **Drop-Down List Input:** These TE items allow a student to select elements in drop-down lists that can be embedded within text or tables.
- **Hot Text:** These TE items allow a student to select words, phrases, or sentences in a paragraph or paragraphs to address a task.
- **Matching:** These TE items allow for the use of text or graphics as the matching objects. For example, the student selects one object and then selects a second object to connect them.
- **Matching Table:** These TE items include a table with multiple rows and columns, and the student makes matches between the given elements in the rows and columns. The table can be customized to allow for only a single selection in a row or column or for multiple selections within each.

**Performance Task—Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Items:** TDW items appear only in English language arts grades 4–8. TDW items require the student to provide a literary analysis of a reading passage, passage set, or other type of stimulus that the student has read during the test event. A student is then asked to draw on basic writing skills while inferring and synthesizing information from the passage, passage set, or other stimulus (using and referencing content from the source[s] to support the analysis) in order to develop

a comprehensive, holistic essay response. TDW items frequently ask students to analyze and explain in detail a more complex line of reasoning.

The demand required of a student’s reading and writing skills in response to a TDW item is similar to the demands required for a student to be college and career ready. TDW items are scored using a 4-point rubric.

# Reading

## **Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading**

Item specifications are one of the key requirements for a high-quality, legally defensible, standards-based assessment. Item specifications help define important characteristics of the items (i.e., test questions) developed for each standard. These item specifications provide guidelines to help clarify the focus of what is to be assessed, what items may include, and what items may not include (i.e., assessment limits). Item specifications are used by item writers, item editors, and item reviewers as a common reference throughout the item development process, from initial writing to final approval. These English language arts item specifications are based on Alabama Course of Study Standards.

Reading has two strands: Reading Literature and Reading Informational Text.

Each Reading strand has three subcategories: Key Ideas and Details, Craft and Structure, and Integration of Knowledge and Ideas.

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Literature**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Literature
<b>Subcategory</b>	Key Ideas and Details
<b>Standard</b>	RL.8.1. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will cite the textual evidence that supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly.</p> <p>The student will cite textual evidence that supports inferences drawn from the text.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of ideas and/or events directly stated in the text or a portion of the text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response will require the use of details and/or events stated explicitly in the text to support a larger idea, connection, or inference.</p> <p>Determining the correct response may require an understanding of the layers of support for an idea.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information</b>  (as applicable)	Which line or lines from the poem <b>best</b> support the inference that the speaker [inference]?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Literature**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Literature
<b>Subcategory</b>	Key Ideas and Details
<b>Standard</b>	RL.8.2. Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot; provide an objective summary of the text.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will determine a theme and/or central idea of a text.</p> <p>The student will analyze the development of the theme, including its relationship to the characters, setting, and plot.</p> <p>The student will provide an objective summary of the text.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of the central idea or theme of a literature text; the correct response may state the central theme or a topic/idea related to the central theme.</p> <p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of the key elements of a literature text and/or an ability to distinguish the most important details from the least important details in a literature text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of how to write an objective summary of a literature text.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information</b>  (as applicable)	Which paragraph provides an objective summary of [passage title]?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Literature**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Literature
<b>Subcategory</b>	Key Ideas and Details
<b>Standard</b>	RL.8.3. Analyze how particular lines of dialogue or incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will analyze how particular lines of dialogue in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.</p> <p>The student will analyze how particular incidents in a story or drama propel the action, reveal aspects of a character, or provoke a decision.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>Determining the correct response may require an understanding of the effect of a character’s words on other aspects of the text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response may require inferences about the relationship between dialogue or events and other aspects of the text.</p> <p>To determine a correct response, students may analyze the relationship between and among incidents in a text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of how incidents in a text arise from previous incidents and cause incidents that follow them, not a simple identification of specific events in a plot.</p> <p>Determining the correct response may require inferences drawn from incidents in a text and/or relate to an effect of an incident in a text.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature texts that may vary in complexity

Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)	Read the sentence from the passage. [sentence from the passage.] What is the outcome of [the character's] statement?
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**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Literature**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Literature
<b>Subcategory</b>	Craft and Structure
<b>Standard</b>	RL.8.4. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will determine the meaning of words and phrases used in a text as well as figurative and connotative meanings.</p> <p>The student will analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of the figurative or connotative meaning of words or phrases. Determining the correct response may also require an understanding of how the language affects the text.</p> <p>Determining the correct answer will require an understanding of how analogies and illusions can impact the meaning and tone of a text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of how specific language or word choices can impact the meaning and tone of a text.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	<p>Read the sentences from the passage.</p> <p>[sentences from the passage]</p> <p>How does the choice of words in the sentences impact the tone of the passage?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Literature**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Literature
<b>Subcategory</b>	Craft and Structure
<b>Standard</b>	RL8.5. Compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts and analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to its meaning and style.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	The student will compare and contrast the structure of two or more texts.  The student will analyze how the differing structure of each text contributes to the text’s meaning and style.
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	Determining the correct response will require an understanding of the structure of a literature text and its effect within the literature text, not simply an identification of the structure.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information</b>  (as applicable)	Which sentence <b>best</b> describes a similarity between the structure of the poem and the structure of the passage?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Literature**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Literature
<b>Subcategory</b>	Craft and Structure
<b>Standard</b>	RL.8.6. Analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader (e.g., created through the use of dramatic irony) create such effects as suspense or humor.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	The student will analyze how differences in the points of view of the characters and the audience or reader create such effects as suspense or humor.
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	Determining the correct response will require an understanding of how dramatic irony creates such effects as suspense or humor.  Determining the correct response may require an analysis of the effect of the varying points of view in a text.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information</b>  (as applicable)	Which statement <b>best</b> explains the dramatic irony created in the passage?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Literature**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Literature
<b>Subcategory</b>	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
<b>Standard</b>	RL.8.8. Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will analyze how a modern text compares with a traditional text.</p> <p>The student will analyze themes from myths, traditional stories, or religious texts.</p> <p>The student will analyze patterns of events from myths, traditional stories, or religious texts.</p> <p>The student will analyze character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious texts.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	Determining the correct response may require an understanding of similarities, differences, and/or connections between traditional texts and a modern text.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information</b>  (as applicable)	[Character in passage 1] and [character in passage 2] are examples of which character type found in traditional stories?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Key Ideas and Details
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.10. Cite the textual evidence that most strongly supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will cite the textual evidence that supports an analysis of what the text says explicitly.</p> <p>The student will cite the textual evidence that supports inferences drawn from the text.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>Determining the correct response may require an analysis of key ideas directly stated in the text or a portion of the text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response may require the use of key ideas and/or details stated explicitly in the text to support a larger idea, connection, or inference. The correct answer will demonstrate an understanding of the connections among the key ideas of the text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response may require an understanding of the layers of support for an idea, with a focus on the strongest support.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	Which <b>two</b> sentences from “Student Editorial” <b>best</b> support the idea that a public bicycle system would benefit individuals who live in the city?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Key Ideas and Details
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.11. Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including its relationship to supporting ideas; provide an objective summary of the text.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will determine a central idea of a text.</p> <p>The student will analyze the development of the central idea, including its relationship to supporting ideas.</p> <p>The student will provide an objective summary of the text.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of the details in the text that support a central idea.</p> <p>Determining the correct response will require an analysis of the key concepts in an informational text and/or an ability to distinguish the most important details from the least important details in an informational text.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information</b> (as applicable)	<p>Read the summary of “Student Editorial.”</p> <p>A public bicycle system would be a good idea for many reasons. Air quality, and therefore individual health, would improve because of reduced pollution by automobiles. Businesses in the city would likely want to help provide funding for the bike-sharing program. Visitors to the city could use the bikes, and people may even be attracted to visit the city because of the program.</p> <p>Choose a key detail that is missing from the summary.</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Key Ideas and Details
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.12. Analyze how a text makes connections among and distinctions between individuals, ideas, or events (e.g., through comparisons, analogies, or categories).
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will analyze connections among and distinctions between individuals.</p> <p>The student will analyze connections among and distinctions between ideas.</p> <p>The student will analyze connections among and distinctions between events.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	The item will require analysis of how the author strategically develops ideas in a text. Because the standard requires analysis, the item should not ask only for a label of the author’s strategy but also for a probable purpose, effect, or quality of the strategy.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	According to the information in “Student Editorial,” how would the city’s public bicycle system need to be different from the bike program in Seattle?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Craft and Structure
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.13. Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text as well as figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.</p> <p>The student will analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including analogies or allusions to other texts.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of the figurative, connotative, or technical meaning of words or phrases. Determining the correct response may also require an understanding of how the language affects the text.</p> <p>Determining the correct answer will require an understanding of how analogies and illusions can impact the meaning and tone of a text.</p> <p>Determining the correct response will require an understanding of how specific language can impact the meaning an tone of a text.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	<p>Read the sentences from “City Council Member Editorial.”</p> <p>Our city has very few designated bike lanes. Therefore, cars and bikes will be sharing the roads in an already <u>congested</u> city. Accidents will be unavoidable, especially during peak travel times, such as rush hour.</p> <p>What does the word <u>congested</u> mean as it is used in the sentences?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Craft and Structure
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.14. Analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text, including the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will analyze in detail the structure of a specific paragraph in a text.</p> <p>The student will analyze the role of particular sentences in developing and refining a key concept.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	The item may require an analysis of the structure of a specific paragraph of a text and its contribution to the development or refinement of key ideas or claims in the text.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	<p>Read the paragraph from “Student Editorial.”</p> <p>Bike sharing has successfully been implemented in more than 100 cities across the United States. Even in cities like Seattle, Washington, where the bike program was discontinued, community support never wavered. Although Seattle discontinued its bike program, which I am sure it could resurrect again with better planning, the program never lacked sponsorship from the community and businesses. Alaska Airlines committed to sponsoring the Seattle bike program with \$1,000 per bike for 5 years. This comes out to roughly \$500,000 per year. Additional sponsors also quickly signed up to support the program. However, due to a lack of planning and promotion, the program could not take off as intended.</p> <p>What impact does the information in the paragraph have on the claim that a bike-sharing program should be implemented?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Craft and Structure
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.15. Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	The student will determine an author’s point of view. The student will determine an author’s purpose. The student will analyze how the author acknowledges and responds to conflicting evidence or viewpoints.
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	The item will focus on the author’s perspective or viewpoint as evident in the text. Determining the correct answer will require a deeper understanding of the author’s purpose than the understanding that is stated in the text.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	How does the city council member acknowledge the opposing side of the argument regarding the proposal for a public bicycle system?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.17. Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text.</p> <p>The student will assess whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient.</p> <p>The student will recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	Items will focus on the development of the argument and claims presented in a text.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	<p>Read the claim from “Student Editorial”.</p> <p>Making bicycles easily accessible to rent at different locations around the city is a very sensible idea.</p> <p>Which sentence from the passage <b>best</b> supports the claim?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Reading Informational Text**

<b>Strand</b>	Reading Informational Text
<b>Subcategory</b>	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas
<b>Standard</b>	RI.8.18. Analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic and identify where the texts disagree on matters of fact or interpretation.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	The student will analyze a case in which two or more texts provide conflicting information on the same topic.  The student will identify where the texts disagree.
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	The item will require comparison of the information presented in all texts.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	The focus of the argument in “City Council Member Editorial is different from the focus of the argument in “Student Editorial.” Read each statement in the table. Place a check mark under the headings to indicate whether each statement is a main focus of the argument in “City Council Member Editorial” or “Student Editorial.”  [A matching table is included with several statements that the student must use to distinguish the differences in the articles.]

# Writing

## **Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Writing**

Item specifications are one of the key requirements for a high-quality, legally defensible, standards-based assessment. Item specifications help define important characteristics of the items (i.e., test questions) developed for each standard. These item specifications provide guidelines to help clarify the focus of what is to be assessed, what items may include, and what items may not include (i.e., assessment limits). Item specifications are used by item writers, item editors, and item reviewers as a common reference throughout the item development process, from initial writing to final approval. These English language arts item specifications are based on Alabama Course of Study Standards.

Writing has two subcategories: Text Types and Purposes and Research to Build and Present Knowledge.

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Text Types and Purposes**

<b>Strand</b>	Writing
<b>Subcategory</b>	Text Types and Purposes
<b>Standard</b>	<p>W.8.20. Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduce claim(s), acknowledge and distinguish the claim(s) from alternate or opposing claims, and organize the reasons and evidence logically.</li> <li>b. Support claim(s) with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, using accurate, credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.</li> <li>c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</li> <li>d. Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will introduce claim(s).</p> <p>The student will acknowledge and distinguish alternate or opposing claims.</p> <p>The student will organize the reasons and evidence logically.</p> <p>The student will support a claim with clear reasons and relevant evidence.</p> <p>The student will use accurate, credible sources.</p> <p>The student will demonstrate an understanding of the topic or text.</p> <p>The student will use words, phrases, and clauses to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among claim(s), counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.</p> <p>The student will establish and maintain a formal style.</p>

	The student will provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
Assessment Limits/Content Constraints	Sentence(s) or paragraph(s) in item stem.
DOK(s)	2, 3
Item Types	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
Text Types/Context	Allowed
Sample Item Stem Information  (as applicable)	<p>A student is writing an editorial for a school newspaper. Read a paragraph from the editorial.</p> <p>All football players at our school should be required to have their last names on their jerseys in addition to their uniform numbers. Our players recently voted to put their nicknames on their uniforms instead of their last names. But since our school does not distribute programs for our home games, spectators must now identify all the players by just a number and a nickname. _____, the fans who support our team should be able to determine who each player is without having to memorize dozens of nicknames.</p> <p>Which word or phrase <b>best</b> clarifies the relationship between the sentences?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Text Types and Purposes**

<b>Strand</b>	Writing
<b>Subcategory</b>	Text Types and Purposes
<b>Standard</b>	<p>W.8.21. Write informative or explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Introduce a topic clearly, previewing what is to follow; organize ideas, concepts, and information into broader categories; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.</li> <li>b. Develop the topic with relevant well-chosen facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.</li> <li>c. Use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</li> <li>d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</li> <li>e. Establish and maintain a formal style.</li> <li>f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will introduce a topic clearly.</p> <p>The student will organize ideas into broad categories.</p> <p>The student will include formatting, graphics, and multimedia for comprehension.</p> <p>The student will develop the topic of an informative/explanatory text with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, or quotations.</p> <p>The student will use appropriate and varied transitions to create cohesion and clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.</p> <p>The student will use precise language to inform about or explain the topic.</p>

	<p>The student will use domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.</p> <p>The student will establish and maintain a formal style.</p> <p>The student will provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation presented.</p>
Assessment Limits/Content Constraints	Sentence(s) or paragraph(s) in item stem.
DOK(s)	2, 3
Item Types	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
Text Types/Context	Allowed
Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)	<p>A student is writing a report about Rainbow Bridge National Monument. Read the paragraph from the student's report. Then, select the <b>two</b> sentences that should be removed because they interfere with the clear development of the main topic of the paragraph.</p> <p>[A paragraph follows. It contains two sentences that are off topic. The student can use hot text functionality to choose any of the sentences in the paragraph.]</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Text Types and Purposes**

<b>Strand</b>	Writing
<b>Subcategory</b>	Text Types and Purposes
<b>Standard</b>	<p>W.8.22. Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Engage and orient the reader by establishing a context and point of view and introducing a narrator, characters, or both; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</li> <li>b. Use narrative techniques, such as dialogue, pacing, description, and reflection, to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</li> <li>c. Use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.</li> <li>d. Use precise words and phrases, relevant descriptive details, and sensory language to capture the action and convey experiences and events.</li> <li>e. Provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will engage the reader by establishing a context and point of view.</p> <p>The student will introduce a narrator and/or characters.</p> <p>The student will organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally and logically.</p> <p>The student will use narrative techniques to develop experiences, events, and/or characters.</p>

	<p>The student will use a variety of transition words, phrases, and clauses to convey sequence, signal shifts from one time frame or setting to another, and show the relationships among experiences and events.</p> <p>The student will use precise words and phrases to convey experiences and events.</p> <p>The student will use relevant descriptive details to convey experiences and events.</p> <p>The student will use sensory language to convey experiences and events.</p> <p>The student will provide a conclusion that follows from and reflects on the narrated experiences or events.</p>
Assessment Limits/Content Constraints	Sentence(s) or paragraph(s) in item stem.
DOK(s)	2, 3
Item Types	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
Text Types/Context	Allowed
Sample Item Stem Information  (as applicable)	<p>Read the draft of a narrative a student is writing for a creative writing class.</p> <p>Meredith thought to herself, “Not again. How many times this week will I have to look after Kyle?”</p> <p>Kyle may be as cute as a button, but he often manipulated Meredith and took advantage of her leniency and kindness. She would need to pick him up from his kindergarten class and walk home with him. Whenever she did this, it took twice as long to get home as when she was by herself—Kyle was always stopping for some reason or running off to talk with someone. Watching Kyle also meant Meredith would be unable to start working on her homework until after 6:00.</p> <p>Which pair of sentences, if added to the beginning of the narrative, would <b>best</b> establish the setting and introduce the main characters?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

<b>Strand</b>	Writing
<b>Subcategory</b>	Research to Build and Present Knowledge
<b>Standard</b>	W.8.26. Conduct short research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question), drawing on several sources and generating additional related, focused questions that allow for multiple avenues of exploration.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	The student will conduct short research projects. The student will answer a question. The student will draw on several sources to generate additional focused questions.
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	The stimulus should be constructed to assess likely relevancy of information from sources.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	Allowed
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	A student is gathering sources for a report on [topic]. One source the student found is an article from a government website about [specific part of the topic]. Since the source addresses the focus of the student’s report, which research question is <b>most</b> relevant?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

<b>Strand</b>	Writing
<b>Subcategory</b>	Research to Build and Present Knowledge
<b>Standard</b>	W.8.27. Gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using search terms effectively; assess the credibility and accuracy of each source; and quote or paraphrase the data and conclusions of others while avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation.
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will gather relevant information from multiple print and digital sources, using advanced search features.</p> <p>The student will assess the credibility and accuracy of each source.</p> <p>The student will quote or paraphrase the evidence while avoiding plagiarism.</p> <p>The student will follow a standard format for citation.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	A stimulus may not be needed.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	Allowed
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	<p>A student is preparing the works cited page for a research paper. Read the citation style being used for a magazine article.</p> <p>Author. "Title of Article." <i>Title of Magazine</i>, Day Month Year, Pages.</p> <p>Which magazine article citation is written in the correct style?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Research to Build and Present Knowledge**

<b>Strand</b>	Writing
<b>Subcategory</b>	Research to Build and Present Knowledge
<b>Standard</b>	<p>W.8.28. Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Apply <i>Grade 8 Reading standards</i> to literature (e.g., “Analyze how a modern work of fiction draws on themes, patterns of events, or character types from myths, traditional stories, or religious works such as the Bible, including describing how the material is rendered new”).</li> <li>b. Apply <i>Grade 8 Reading standards</i> to literary nonfiction (e.g., “Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is sound and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; recognize when irrelevant evidence is introduced”).</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will draw evidence from literature texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p> <p>The student will draw evidence from informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	This standard is best measured through text-dependent writing. The student will draw from literature and informational texts and use textual evidence in the writing.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	TDW
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	one or more grade-appropriate literature or informational texts that may vary in complexity
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	See Appendix A on page 56

## **Item Specifications for English Language Arts:**

### **Performance Task—Text-Dependent Writing (TDW) Items**

TDW items appear only in English language arts grades 4–8. TDWs require the student to provide a literary analysis of a reading passage, passage set, and/or other type of stimulus that the student has read during the test event. A student is then asked to draw on basic writing skills while inferring and synthesizing information from the passage, passage set, or other stimulus (making use of and referencing content from the source[s] to support the analysis) in order to develop a comprehensive, holistic essay response. TDW items frequently ask students to analyze and explain a more complex line of reasoning in detail. The demand required of a student’s reading and writing skills in response to a text-dependent writing task is similar to the demands required for a student to be college and career ready. TDW items are scored using a 4-point rubric.

The TDW passage set is considered one of the operational reading passage sets, and it is presented like the other reading passages with all of its associated items (MC, MS, EBSR, TE, TDW). The student reads the passage set and answers the items (MC, MS, EBSR, and/or TE) that follow. This model helps to scaffold the student’s comprehension of the passage set and begins to prepare the student for the TDW task. The TDW task is the last item in the passage set. This model thus meets standard W.8.28: Draw evidence from literature or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.

In the table, the passage types for the TDW passage set may include, but are not limited to, the following text types.

**Passage Types for Text-Dependent Writing**

Literature Texts	Informational Texts
<p><b>Stories</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• adventure stories</li> <li>• folktales</li> <li>• legends</li> <li>• tall tales</li> <li>• fables</li> <li>• fantasy</li> <li>• realistic fiction</li> <li>• myths</li> <li>• historical fiction</li> <li>• excerpts from longer works</li> </ul> <p><b>Dramas</b> <b>Poetry</b></p>	<p><b>Literary Nonfiction</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• biographies</li> <li>• autobiographies</li> <li>• history</li> <li>• social studies</li> <li>• science</li> <li>• technical</li> <li>• journals/memoirs/diaries</li> <li>• essays</li> <li>• editorials</li> <li>• historical documents</li> </ul>

# Language

## **Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Language**

Item specifications are one of the key requirements for a high-quality, legally defensible, standards-based assessment. Item specifications help define important characteristics of the items (i.e., test questions) developed for each standard. These item specifications provide guidelines to help clarify the focus of what is to be assessed, what items may include, and what items may not include (i.e., assessment limits). Item specifications are used by item writers, item editors, and item reviewers as a common reference throughout the item development process, from initial writing to final approval. These English language arts item specifications are based on Alabama Course of Study Standards.

Language has two subcategories: Conventions of Standard English Types and Vocabulary Acquisition and Use.

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Conventions of Standard English**

<b>Strand</b>	Language
<b>Subcategory</b>	Conventions of Standard English
<b>Standard</b>	<p>L.8.36. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Apply rules of subject-verb agreement when interrupted by a prepositional phrase, with inverted word order, with indefinite pronouns as subjects, compound subjects joined by correlative and coordinating conjunctions, and collective nouns when verb form depends on the rest of the sentence.</li> <li>b. Explain the function of verbals (gerunds, participles, infinitives) in general and their function in particular sentences.</li> <li>c. Form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.</li> <li>d. Form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.</li> <li>e. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will form and use subject-verb agreement correctly when interrupted by a prepositional phrase, with inverted word order, with indefinite pronouns as subjects, compound subjects joined by correlative and coordinating conjunctions, and collective nouns when verb form depends on the rest of the sentence in writing.</p> <p>The student will explain the function of gerunds in general and their function in particular sentences.</p> <p>The student will explain the function of participles in general and their function in particular sentences.</p> <p>The student will explain the function of infinitives in general and their function in particular sentences.</p> <p>The student will form and use verbs in the active voice.</p> <p>The student will form and use verbs in the passive voice.</p>

	<p>The student will form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and/or subjunctive mood.</p> <p>The student will recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb voice and mood.</p>
Assessment Limits/Content Constraints	A stimulus may or may not be needed.
DOK(s)	2, 3
Item Types	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
Text Types/Context	Allowed
Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)	<p>Read the paragraph.</p> <p>Select the <b>two</b> underlined verbs that are in the imperative mood.</p> <p>[A paragraph follows with each of the verbs/verb phrases underlined. The student can use the hot text functionality to select two answers.]</p>

**Item Specifications for Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts:  
Conventions of Standard English**

<b>Strand</b>	Language
<b>Subcategory</b>	Conventions of Standard English
<b>Standard</b>	L.8.37. Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use punctuation (comma, ellipsis, dash) to indicate a pause or break.</li> <li>b. Use an ellipsis to indicate an omission.</li> <li>c. Spell correctly.</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	The student will use a comma to indicate a pause or break. The student will use an ellipsis to indicate a pause or break. The student will use a dash to indicate a pause or break. The student will use an ellipsis to indicate an omission. The student will spell correctly.
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	A stimulus may or may not be needed.
<b>DOK(s)</b>	1, 2
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	Allowed
<b>Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)</b>	Which sentence contains punctuation to indicate omitted words?

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**

<b>Strand</b>	Language
<b>Subcategory</b>	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
<b>Standard</b>	<p>L.8.39. Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words or phrases based on <i>Grade 8 reading and content</i>, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</li> <li>b. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., <i>precede</i>, <i>recede</i>, <i>secede</i>).</li> <li>c. Consult general and specialized reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.</li> <li>d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase (e.g., by checking the inferred meaning in context or in a dictionary).</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will use context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p> <p>The student will use common, grade-appropriate Greek and Latin affixes and/or roots as clues to the meaning of a word.</p> <p>The student will consult print and digital reference materials to find the pronunciation of a word.</p> <p>The student will consult print and digital reference materials to determine or clarify the precise meaning or part of speech.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>The item will focus on determining the most likely meaning of a word or phrase based on the context in which the word or phrase appears. Adequate context must be provided within the text.</p>

	<p>The item will focus on the correct meaning of a word based on its affix and/or root. The item may require discrete knowledge of Greek and Latin roots appropriate for Grade 8. The item may require the ability to assess the meaning of new words given the definition of Greek and Latin roots.</p> <p>The item will focus on the use of a reference resource to clarify the meaning of a word.</p>
DOK(s)	2, 3
Item Types	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
Text Types/Context	Allowed
Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)	<p>Read the sentences from the passage.</p> <p>[sentences from the passage]</p> <p>What is the meaning of the underlined word as it is used in the sentences?</p>

**Item Specifications for Grade 8 English Language Arts: Vocabulary Acquisition and Use**

<b>Strand</b>	Language
<b>Subcategory</b>	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use
<b>Standard</b>	<p>L.8.40. Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g. verbal irony, puns) in context.</li> <li>b. Use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.</li> <li>c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., <i>bullheaded</i>, <i>willful</i>, <i>firm</i>, <i>persistent</i>, <i>resolute</i>).</li> </ul>
<b>Evidence Statements</b>	<p>The student will interpret figures of speech in context.</p> <p>The student will use the relationship between particular words to better understand each of the words.</p> <p>The student will distinguish among the connotations of words with similar definitions.</p>
<b>Assessment Limits/Content Constraints</b>	<p>The item will focus on the use and intended or most likely meaning of figures of speech, such as verbal irony or a pun.</p> <p>The item may focus on synonym/antonym relationships to understand the meaning of a word or words. The item may focus on the proper word choice to use to express a particular meaning.</p>
<b>DOK(s)</b>	2, 3
<b>Item Types</b>	MC, MS, EBSR, TE
<b>Text Types/Context</b>	Allowed

Sample Item Stem Information (as applicable)	Read the sentences.  [A two or three sentence paragraph is provided that includes a figure of speech and enough context to determine the meaning.]  What does the metaphor “[phrase from the sentences]” suggest about John?
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## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Passage Set 1

## Public Bicycle Systems

### City Council Member Editorial

The city council recently heard a proposal requesting the implementation of a public “bikes for rent” program. The details of the program have yet to be specified. The general principle, however, is that the city will provide bicycles at designated locations throughout downtown. People will be able to rent a bike for a small fee. They can then “check in” or return the bike later at the same or another location. Proponents of the program believe that the program will make downtown travel and parking more convenient and that it will cut down on noise and air pollution—making our city a more environmentally friendly place. While I am all for environmental friendliness and improved traffic flow, I must vote against such a program at this time.

First and foremost is the expense. The city must buy the bicycles and locks. Even with discounts provided by local bike shops, this requires a substantial investment that the city just can’t afford. Special bike racks also need to be installed at designated locations throughout the city. The bike racks themselves require a great expense in materials and setup. Tracking systems—which include electronic locks and magnetic striped “smart” cards—can be quite expensive to install.

In addition, there are insurance and bicycle replacement costs. Theft and vandalism are common problems with many bike rental programs. Anti-theft devices and onboard computers can be installed to help cut down on these losses. In addition to covering theft and vandalism, insurance must also cover liability for possible injury or accident. However, implementing these is very expensive and will require monitoring—an additional cost.

Yearly maintenance costs will also need to be considered. All bikes need to be tuned up, oiled, and washed on a regular basis. Chains break, tires go flat, and brakes wear down. Maintenance costs must be figured into the program’s budget.

Aside from costs, accidents are always a concern. Our city has very few designated bike lanes. Therefore, cars and bikes will be sharing the roads in an already congested city. Accidents will be unavoidable, especially during peak travel times, such as rush hour. Accidents can have serious consequences; even a minor accident can tie up downtown streets for an hour or more, take up the valuable time of police officers, and add to the stress of people wanting to get to work or back home.

Bike programs in other cities do not have good track records. Several cities have tried to implement them with good intentions and failed because of excessive expenses. Seattle, Washington, is ranked the fifth-friendliest city for bikes in the United States by *Bicycling* magazine. Despite this, however, the city put a stop to its bike-share program. A number of factors played a role in the halt of the program, but it is no surprise that lack of funding was a leading reason. If the fifth-friendliest city for bikes in the United States couldn’t find success with this program, how can our city expect to succeed?

Our city is looking for ways to cut expenses in the annual budget. It cannot afford to take on such a major financial commitment. Where can we possibly find funding for such a program? How can we ask taxpayers to fund an expensive experiment? I agree that we need to make our city easily accessible and increase its environmental friendliness, but not at the expense of the taxpayer or of other city programs.

### **Student Editorial**

Our city council has been discussing the possibility of supplying bicycles for public use. I believe the students at our school should support this idea. Making bicycles easily accessible to rent at different locations around the city is a very sensible idea.

To begin with, using bicycles would cut down on the number of cars on the road, which would help the environment. The environmental damage caused by automobile pollution has been well publicized. In fact, the Environmental Protection Agency advocates the use of bicycles as a way to reduce the pollution caused by vehicles and engines. This pollution not only causes harm to the environment but also contributes to human health problems.

According to the Washington State Department of Ecology, toxic air pollutants from automobile emissions are known to cause or are suspected to cause a number of health problems and serious illnesses. The pollutants can be inhaled directly or be carried by small particles into the lungs.

Using bikes in place of cars would do more than cut down on health hazards. It would also improve the health of those who participate in the program. For most, riding a bike frequently would generally improve an individual's health. People would feel energized, and this in turn could create a more positive community environment.

A public bicycle system would also help both individuals and the city save money. When cars are not used as often, money is saved on gas. Some people may even be able to give up their cars completely, using the public bikes and other forms of public transportation instead. Costs from car repairs and insurance would also be saved. The city would save money because fewer parking spaces would be needed for cars. A bicycle parking space certainly takes up less room than one for a car. Providing enough parking spaces for cars along streets and in parking structures is much more expensive than providing parking for bicycles.

Bike sharing has successfully been implemented in more than 100 cities across the United States. Even in cities like Seattle, Washington, where the bike program was discontinued, community support never wavered. Although Seattle discontinued its bike program, which I am sure it could resurrect again with better planning, the program never lacked sponsorship from the community and businesses. Alaska Airlines committed to sponsoring the Seattle bike program with \$1,000 per bike for 5 years. This comes out to roughly \$500,000 per year. Additional sponsors also quickly signed up to support the program. However, due to a lack of planning and promotion, the program could not take off as intended.

We will not face the same situation if the proper planning and promotion are put in place here. We have several large local companies that would likely be interested in sponsoring the program. Additionally, visitors to our city would enjoy having such a bike system available to them because there are a number of places they could visit, such as the historic part of town, the zoo, and the art museum—all of which are fairly close together. Advertising the city's public bike system could also be a good way to attract visitors and bring money into the city.

The city council should most certainly vote in favor of establishing a public bike system. That is the only responsible decision—a decision that considers our environment, our city, and our citizens. I encourage all the students at our school to e-mail a city council member to make our views known and to ask our parents to do the same.

**Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)  
Passage-Based Sample Item 1**

How does the city council member acknowledge the opposing side of the argument regarding the proposal for a public bicycle system?

- (a) The city council member asks questions about other programs for the reader to consider.
- (b) The city council member references a publication that the reader may be familiar with.
- (c) The city council member discusses the budget limitations the city is facing before declaring that taxpayers would need to fund the program.
- (d) The city council member includes information about the positive effects the program could have before describing the obstacles the city would face.

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	24
Alignment	RI.8.15
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	D

**Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)**

**Passage-Based Sample Item 2**

Read the summary of “Student Editorial.”

A public bicycle system would be a good idea for many reasons. Air quality, and therefore individual health, would improve because of reduced pollution by automobiles. Businesses in the city would likely want to help provide funding for the bike-sharing program. Visitors to the city could use the bikes, and people may even be attracted to visit the city because of the program.

Choose a key detail that is missing from the summary.

- a People and the city could also save money if cars were used less.
- b More than 100 cities across the country have bike-sharing programs.
- c Corporate sponsors have made large donations to support bike sharing.
- d Environmental initiatives often fail due to lack of planning and promotion.

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Select
Page Reference	19
Alignment	RI.8.11
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	A

**Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)**

**Passage-Based Sample Item 3**

Read the claim from “Student Editorial”.

Making bicycles easily accessible to rent at different locations around the city is a very sensible idea.

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the claim?

- (a) I believe the students at our school should support this idea.
- (b) People would feel energized, and this in turn could create a more positive community environment.
- (c) When cars are not used as often, money is saved on gas.
- (d) The city council should most certainly vote in favor of establishing a public bike system.

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	25
Alignment	RI.8.17
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	3
Answer Key	C

**Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)**

**Passage-Based Sample Item 4**

Read the paragraph from “Student Editorial.”

Bike sharing has successfully been implemented in more than 100 cities across the United States. Even in cities like Seattle, Washington, where the bike program was discontinued, community support never wavered. Although Seattle discontinued its bike program, which I am sure it could resurrect again with better planning, the program never lacked sponsorship from the community and businesses. Alaska Airlines committed to sponsoring the Seattle bike program with \$1,000 per bike for 5 years. This comes out to roughly \$500,000 per year. Additional sponsors also quickly signed up to support the program. However, due to a lack of planning and promotion, the program could not take off as intended.

What impact does the information in the paragraph have on the claim that a bike-sharing program should be implemented?

- (a) The way that the bike program in Seattle was sponsored is described to discredit the idea that a bike program would be too expensive for the city.
- (b) The lack of planning for the bike program in Seattle is described to suggest that the city will need to employ people to work on advertisements for the bike program.
- (c) The fact that the bike program in Seattle was discontinued is described to reveal that people who use the bike program will need to be willing to pay for the bikes.
- (d) The type of company that was willing to support the bike program in Seattle is described to hint at the size of company that will be needed for the local bike program.

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	22
Alignment	RI.8.14
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	3
Answer Key	A

**Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)  
Text-Dependent Writing Scoring Guidelines**



TEXT DEPENDENT WRITING (TDW) SCORING GUIDELINES

<b>4</b>	<b>3</b>	<b>2</b>	<b>1</b>
<p><b>Demonstrates effective analysis of text and skillful writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively addresses all parts of the task to demonstrate an in-depth understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Strong organizational structure and focus on the task with logically grouped and related ideas, including an effective introduction, development, and conclusion</li> <li>Thorough analysis based on explicit and implicit meanings from the text(s) to support claims, opinions, and ideas</li> <li>Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using an effective combination of details, examples, quotes, and/or facts</li> <li>Substantial reference to the main ideas and relevant key details of the text(s)</li> <li>Skillful use of transitions to link ideas within categories of textual and supporting information</li> <li>Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s)</li> <li>Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Demonstrates adequate analysis of text and appropriate writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequately addresses all parts of the task to demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Appropriate organizational structure and focus on the task with logically grouped and related ideas, including a clear introduction, development, and conclusion</li> <li>Clear analysis based on explicit and implicit meanings from the text(s) to support claims, opinions, and ideas</li> <li>Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using an appropriate combination of details, examples, quotes, and/or facts</li> <li>Sufficient reference to the main ideas and relevant key details of the text(s)</li> <li>Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas within categories of textual and supporting information</li> <li>Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s)</li> <li>Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Demonstrates limited analysis of text and inconsistent writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task to demonstrate a partial understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Weak organizational structure and focus on the task with ineffectively grouped ideas, including a weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion</li> <li>Inconsistent analysis based on explicit and/or implicit meanings from the text(s) that ineffectively supports claims, opinions, and ideas</li> <li>Limited and/or vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, and/or facts</li> <li>Limited reference to the main ideas and relevant details of the text(s)</li> <li>Limited use of transitions to link ideas within categories of textual and supporting information</li> <li>Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s)</li> <li>Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning</li> </ul>	<p><b>Demonstrates minimal analysis of text and inadequate writing</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimally addresses part(s) of the task to demonstrate an inadequate understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Minimal evidence of an organizational structure and focus on the task with arbitrarily grouped ideas that may or may not include an introduction, development, and/or conclusion</li> <li>Minimal analysis based on the text(s) that may or may not support claims, opinions, and ideas</li> <li>Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, and/or facts</li> <li>Minimal reference to the main ideas and relevant details of the text(s)</li> <li>Few, if any, transitions to link ideas</li> <li>Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s)</li> <li>Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning</li> </ul>

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## **Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)**

### **Text-Dependent Writing Task**

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

#### **Writer’s Checklist**

##### **PROOFREAD after you write**

- I addressed all parts of the writing task.
- I included evidence from the text to support ideas in my essay.
- I stayed organized and focused on the writing task.
- I used correct language, a variety of sentence types, and paragraph transitions in my essay.
- I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.
- I reread the essay to make sure it was clear and well organized.

## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses

#### Student 1, Response Score 4

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

The Public Bicycle Systems argument is represented by a city council member and a student editorial. While the two authors disagree if the city should adopt a public bicycle system, they both share many of the same arguments to state their views. Cost, pollution, traffic flow and the city of Seattle all are used to make their points.

The city council member does not feel that the city can absorb the cost of the program. He mentions that bicycles will need “substantial investment” by purchasing special bike racks, installing tracking systems and “magnetic smart cards”. He also mentions that the city will not be able to afford the maintenance costs and anti-theft protection that will be needed. While the student editorial mentions the price of \$500,000 per year, he suggests that a sponsorship be found to defray the costs. He also argues that if the Public Bicycle system were in place that “the city would save money”. Cars would not be used as often, and money would be saved because fewer parking spaces would be needed. This would save the city money by not having to maintain parking spaces.

Both sides say that without as many cars in the city that pollution and congestion would be better. The city councilman says that “our city would be more environmentally friendly”. He feels that safety will become an issue as more bicyclists on the roads will collide with cars and the number of accidents will increase making the city less safe. The student argues using the same ideas but with different outcomes. The student feels that fewer cars will result in a much more “energized” city with a more positive community. He says toxic pollution from “automobile emissions” and “small particles” would decrease resulting in better health.

It is interesting that the two authors use the same city, Seattle, to share an example of how a Public Bicycle System can or cannot work. While Seattle did try a public bike system, it failed due to lack of funding in a very bike friendly city. If Seattle can’t do it, why would it work for our city? The student mentions the Seattle program as well, but points out that while it did not work, “our city could learn from the mistakes” made with better planning and programming.

Both authors explore the same ideas for the Public Bicycle System but draw different conclusions. Both like the idea of a cleaner and less congested city but are concerned about the finances and well-being of the citizens who use downtown.

*Item information on following page*

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 4—Demonstrates effective analysis of text and skillful writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response effectively addresses all parts of the task making the argument that the two authors may believe in different outcomes, they use the same ideas to delivery their viewpoints.</li> <li>Strong organizational structure is displayed in the introduction (<i>While the two authors disagree if the city should adopt a public bicycle system, they both share many of the same arguments to state their views. Cost, pollution, traffic flow and the city of Seattle all are used to make their points</i>). The response goes on to develop these three ideas and ends with a strong conclusion (<i>Both like the idea of a cleaner and less congressed city but are concerned about the finances and well-being of the citizens who use downtown.</i>)</li> <li>Thorough analysis is used to support claims (<i>This would save the city money by not having to maintain parking spaces; He says toxic pollution from “automobile emissions” and “small particles” would decrease resulting in better health</i>).</li> <li>Substantial and direct text with details that references the main ideas of the text (the city would save money; our city would be more environmentally friendly).</li> <li>Skillful use of transitions (<i>Both authors explore the same ideas...; It is interesting that both authors use the same city...; The city council member does not feel that the city can absorb the cost of the program; The student argues using the same ideas...</i>) links ideas throughout the response, creating a sense of coherence and completeness.</li> <li>An effective use of precise and domain-specific language (<i>...the city will not be able to afford the maintenance costs and anti-theft protection; ...not having to maintain parking spaces; “energized” city with a more positive community; the idea of a cleaner and less congressed city</i>) is evident throughout the response.</li> <li>Few errors do not interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	4	

## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses

#### Student 2, Response Score 4

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

Putting in bikes around a city can be a great idea, but, unfortunately, it might also have bad effects. When a debate comes up, it is important to take into consideration both sides, and they can even be strikingly similar. Although both claims in “Public Bicycle Systems? Seem very opposite, they actually have a lot in common.

City Council Member Editorial, the negative side, and Student Editorial, the positive side, both address the issue of environmental friendliness; although, they have different reasons as to if bikes would solve this problem. While addressing the seemingly positive attributes of the bike plan, City Council Member editorial says that “while [they are] all for environmental friendliness,” they “must vote against” this proposition (“Public Bicycle Systems”1). In this statement, one can tell that it has become quite apparent that this person hold an affection toward environmental friendliness, just as the opposing side does. Student editorial seems to think that implementing the bikes “considers our environment” (“Public Bicycle Systems” 6). The student who wrote this claim also agrees with the declaration that the environment is an important factor to take into consideration when thinking about putting bikes into a beloved city. Both stands agree that the environment is very important to think about.

Another thing that both sides agree is important is the costs that adding public bicycle systems would require. City Council Member Editorial is very quick to address this thought as they say, “First and foremost is the expense” (“Public Bicycle Systems” 1). It is clear to see that the role that money would be playing into this is very notable to them, as it should be. Student Editorial also has this in mind when they declare that the city has “several large local companies that would likely be interested in sponsoring the program” (“Public Bicycle Systems” 6). This person knows that the cost of the program must be put into people’s minds, just like the opposing side does. Both stands seemingly agree about the important role cost would play.

“Public Bicycle Systems” opposing sides actually have similar things that they find important to take into consideration when thinking about adding bicycle systems into their city. They just think that different things about the idea would effect it. The idea can have positive and negative attributes. It is important to know that even though two people might be on completely opposite sides, they are still both people who deserve to have their opinion heard.

*Item information on following page*

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 4—Demonstrates effective analysis of text and skillful writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response effectively addresses all parts of the task by analyzing two similar ideas in the opposing editorials. The ideas presented (<i>both sides address the issue of environmental friendliness; Another thing that both sides agree is important is the costs that adding public bicycle systems would require</i>) demonstrate an in-depth understand of the text that there are similar arguments used with different outcomes.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	4	



## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses

#### Student 1, Response Score 3

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

In the passage, the city council member and the student both have a myriad of opinions and differences and view. The city council member believes that the bike program would be too costly and various complications would unfold. However, the student claims that it would have positive benefits on our environment, health, and it would also allow the city to save money, as well as helping the people save money. Each has their own opinions, but they do share similarities.

One similarity they share is that they both believe that a bike program would help the environment. The city council member tells that even though there is against the programs emphasizing they say that they are all for environmental friendliness. Although, they don't seem to be too enthusiastic with their words, they still implied it. In comparison, the student also is involved in the idea of it helping the environment. In fact, they provide information about the dangers of automobile pollution. They give us information about the Environmental Protection Agency's advocacy of the use of bicycles as a way to reduce the pollution caused by vehicles and engines. The student explains the health risks to human by automobile pollution.

Another similarity involves the acknowledgment of other bike programs failing. The city council provides salient information of similar bike programs failing. The city council member tells that several cities have tried to implement bike programs with good intentions but failed due to excessive expenses. In addition, they also question, "If the fifth-friendliest city for bikes in the United States couldn't find success with this program, how can we expect to succeed?", there fore doubting their city's ability to afford and plan the bike program. The student, however, takes a more positive outlook on the other cities failing. The Student says that the city just needs to do careful planning and they will be able to uphold the bike program.

In conclusion, there are many benefits and negatives about the bike program. Although, the student and the city council member has many different views and opinions on the ideas, they both agree that it would be beneficial in some area, and not so beneficial in others.

*Item information on following page*

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 3—Demonstrates adequate analysis of text and appropriate writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response adequately addresses the all parts of the task and demonstrates sufficient understanding of the text. Two similarities are discussed (<i>they both believe that a bike program would help the environment and Another similarity involves the acknowledgment of other bike programs failing</i>).</li> <li>Appropriate organizational structure is used and focused on the task. The two similarities are logically grouped using a clear introduction (<i>Each has their own opinions, but they do share similarities</i>), the development of each similarity, and a conclusion (<i>Although, the student and the city council member has many different views and opinions on the ideas, they both agree that it would be beneficial in some area, and not so beneficial in others</i>).</li> <li>Clear analysis based on explicit and implicit meanings from the text (<i>The city council member tells that even though there is against the programs emphasizing they say that they are all for environmental friendliness. Although, they don't seem to be too enthusiastic with their words, they still implied it; In addition, they also question, "If the fifth-friendliest city for bikes in the United States couldn't find success with this program, how can we expect to succeed?"; ...there fore doubting their city's ability to afford and plan the bike program</i>) supports claims, opinions, and ideas. The clear analysis demonstrates appropriate writing skills as well as a sufficient understanding of the text.</li> <li>The response includes sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text (<i>they provide information about the dangers of automobile pollution. They give us information about the Enviornmental Protection Agency's advocacy of the use of bicycles as a way to reduce the pollution caused by vehicles and engines; The student, however, takes a more positive outlook on the other cities failing. The Student says that the city just needs to do careful planning and they will be able to uphold the bike program.</i>) using an appropriate combination of main ideas, relevant key details, examples, and facts.</li> <li>Appropriate use of transitions (<i>Another similarity involves the acknowledgment...; In fact, they provide information about the dangers...</i>) link the ideas and supporting information.</li> <li>An appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (<i>too costly and various complications; advocacy of the use of bicycles; takes a more positive outlook</i>) is evident throughout the response.</li> <li>Errors present seldom interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	3	

## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses

#### Student 2, Response Score 3

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

In the passages, the student and city council member discuss bike sharing. Although they have different opinions on the topic, they do agree on some things.

One thing the council member and student agree on is that this will affect the budget of the city, whether it is positively or negatively. As shown when the student says, "Providing enough parking spaces for cars along the streets and in parking structures is much more expensive than providing parking for bicycles." The student thinks that this can save the city money. They think that because there won't be as much need for car parking space, the city will be able to save money and make more parking spaces. The council member however, believes that this will have a terrible affect on the budget. One thing they say to support this is, "The bike racks themselves require a great expense in materials and setup. Tracking systems-which include electronic locks and magnetic stripe "smart" cards-can be quite expensive to install." This shows that the council member believes that the maintenance of the bikes will cost the city a lot of money.

Another thing the council member and student agree on is traffic. A quote from the council member supporting his view on the situation is, "cars and bikes will be sharing the roads in an already congested city." This shows that the council member thinks that providing bikes will just add to traffic problems, rather than reducing them. The student, on the other hand, believes that bikes can help traffic. In the passage, the student says, "To begin with, using bicycles would cut down on the number of cars on the road." This shows that the student feels the bikes will reduce the amount of cars being used, which can in turn help with traffic issues.

The student and council member have strong opinions on the topic of bike sharing, putting them at a disagreement. However, they are able to come together with opinions they share on what needs to be fixed.

*Item information on following page*

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 3—Demonstrates adequate analysis of text and appropriate writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response adequately addresses all parts of the task by analyzing how the two editorials discuss “bike sharing” and “agree on some things” ([Both]...<i>agree on is that this will affect the budget; both say The bike racks themselves require a great expense in materials and setup; Another thing the council member and student agree on is traffic</i>) to demonstrate a sufficient understanding of the text.</li> <li>The response demonstrates an appropriate organizational structure and focus on the task with logically grouped and related ideas (the budget and discusses costs; traffic) These ideas are developed and there is a clear introduction (<i>Although they have different opionions on the topic, they do agree on some things.</i>) and a conclusion (<i>However, they are able to come together with opinions they share on what needs to be fixed.</i>).</li> <li>Clear analysis that is based on meaning from the text support the claim that both authors use similarities in the two arguments (<i>The student thinks that this can save the city money; This shows that the council member believes that the maintenance of the bikes will cost the city a lot of money; This shows that the council member things that providing bikes will just add to traffic problems, rather that reducing them</i>).</li> <li>The response includes sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text (“The bike racks themselves require a great expense in materials and setup. Tracking systems- which include electronic locks and magnetic stripe “smart” cards-can be quite expensive to install.”; “To begin with, using bicycles would cut down on the number of cars on the road.”) using an appropriate combination of main ideas, relevant key details, examples, and facts.</li> <li>Appropriate transitions (<i>On thing; Another thing; The student, on the other hand; The council member however</i>) link ideas within categories of information throughout the response.</li> <li>An appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (...<i>affect the budget of the city, whether it is positively or negatively; terrible affect; which can in turn help with traffic issues</i>) is evident throughout the response.</li> <li>Some errors are present, but they do not interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	3	

## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses

#### Student 1, Response Score 2

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

There are many similarities and differences between what the city council member wrote and what the student wrote. But, I am going to do similarities.

Since I am only suppose to do similarities one of the similarities would be that the city council member agrees with the student that their city would be easily accessible and increase its environmental friendliness.

The city council member also agrees that with the bikes there would be less air pollution. There would be less air pollution because the more people that start to ride bikes the less they would use their car. And, the less they use their car the less air pollution there would be from the car.

And, improved traffic flow. Because the students said, "A car parking structures is much more expensive than providing parking for bicycles." There would also be less parking spaces for cars because they won't be needed as much. Which means more space for riding bicycles

Also, the city council member does agree that it can be a bad idea. But, with a lot of planning and promotion as the student said, it would not be as bad as the student council member thinks it is. Which the city council said that it can go wrong if there is not good planning. That is where the student agrees. She agreed with that because in her statement she was talking about how they dad to close the bicycle system in Washington.

That is all the similarities I found when reading City Council Member Editorial and Student Editorial.

*Item information on following page*

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 2—Demonstrates limited analysis of text and inconsistent writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task by mentioning that the city council member and student agree that the environment could benefit from more bike riding over car usage (<i>...one of the similarities would be that the city council member agrees with the student that their city would be easily accessible and increase its environmental friendliness.</i>). The second similarity regarding improved traffic flow is not as well done and demonstrates a partial understanding of the text.</li> <li>The response demonstrates a weak organizational structure as the focus on environmental friendliness is clear but the other ideas are ineffectively grouped together. The intro is weak (<i>But, I am going to do similarities</i>) and the conclusion repeats the introduction (<i>That is all the similarities I found...</i>). Development is uneven.</li> <li>Inconsistent analysis based on explicit and implicit meanings from the text (<i>the city council member does agree that it can be a bad idea. But, with a lot of planning and promotion as the student said, it would not be as bad as the student council member thinks it is. Which the city council said that it can go wrong if there is not good planning</i>) ineffectively supports claims, opinions, and ideas. The response ineffectively supports the concept of why the two authors agree that “good planning” is needed.</li> <li>The response includes some limited references to the main ideas of the text (<i>“A car parking structures is much more expensive than providing parking for bicycles.” There would also be less parking spaces for cars because they won’t be needed as much</i>) using some details, examples, main ideas, and facts.</li> <li>Transitions are limited (<i>and; also; But; That is</i>). These do little to link ideas and supporting information.</li> <li>Little precise language is used. The best vocabulary is taken from the text (<i>‘parking structures is much more expensive than providing parking for bicycles’</i>). The response uses vocabulary that is not domain-specific (<i>...she was talking about how they had to close the bicycle system is where the student agrees. She agreed with that because her statement she was talking about how they had to close the bicycle system</i>).</li> <li>Errors present interfere with meaning. Multiple readings are needed to understand the response.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	2	

## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses

#### Student 2, Response Score 2

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

There are some similarities in both author in their passages. The both had some agreement in their passages about the bicycle. The similarities that the both authors had was that they agreed they would have more parking spaces and decreases in health problem.

First of all, parking spaces there would be more parking spaces for people to park because less peopel are going to be usin their cars. They would be using their bicycles instead of cars and visitors would have more parking spots. This means the city wont be that crowded at places because the bicycles are smaller than cars and they would have more space.

Lastly, there would be less health problem in people. Most people won't be using their cars and they would ride there bicycles instead od cars. This means there wold be less air pollution and people wouldn't suffer of there health.

In conclusion this are the similarities that the authors had .They would conclud that they both had someagreements in their passages.

*Item information on following page*

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 2—Demonstrates limited analysis of text and inconsistent writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task mentioning that there are two similarities (<i>The similarities that the both authors had was that they agreed they would have more parking spaces and decreases in health problem.</i>) These ideas are not developed with details resulting in a partial understanding of the text.</li> <li>The response demonstrates a weak with a weak introduction (<i>The both had some agreement in their passages about the bicycle.</i>) and a weak repeating conclusion (<i>They would conclude that they both had some agreements in their passages.</i>). The response body touches upon the two ideas of more parking and decreasing health issues; however, development is lacking.</li> <li>Inconsistent analysis based on explicit and implicit meanings from the text (<i>Most people won't be using their cars and they would ride there bicycles instead od cars. This means there wold be less air pollution and people wouldn't suffer of there health</i>) ineffectively supports claims, opinions, and ideas.</li> <li>The response includes limited reference to the text(<i>They would be using their bicycles instead of cars and visitors would have more parking spots. This means the city wont be that crowded at places because the bicycles are smaller than cars and they would have more space</i>) using some details, examples, main ideas, and facts.</li> <li>Transitions use is limited and basic (<i>First of all; Lastly; In conclusion</i>)..</li> <li>An inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary (<i>Most people won't be using their cars and they would ride there bicycles instead od cars. This means there wold be less air pollution and people wouldn't suffer of there health</i>) is evident.</li> <li>Errors are present that may interfere with the intended meaning.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	2	

## Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)

### Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses

#### Student 1, Response Score 1

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

The council members opinion focuses more on money. While the Students opinions were more focused on the good of the community. Both of these opinions did share one common thought together which was Cars.

The council and the student opinion were about how there would be more parking and a lot less money spent on and for cars. Both also agreed that the expense would be big and would take lots of planning.

Students said that the bike program would lift expenses and the council said that it wouldn't. Students used the example that by using bikes pollution and car expenses would be reduced. Council members said that the program would cost to much and it would cut into there budget.

Both the council members and the students had very valid point to there opinion.

*Item information on following page*

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 1—Demonstrates minimal analysis of text and inadequate writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response minimally addresses part of the task by discussing the differences instead of similarities between the two authors (<i>The council members opinion focuses more on money. While the Students opinions were more focused on the good of the community</i>) to demonstrate an inadequate understanding of the text. The response also includes a physical similarity (<i>Cars</i>) instead of similar opinions which is asked in the prompt.</li> <li>The response demonstrates a minimal organizational. It includes an introduction and a conclusion, but the development is arbitrary and the ideas are not well grouped together and presented in a random fashion (<i>Students said that the bike program would lift expenses and the council said that it wouldn't. Students used the example that by using bikes pollution and car expenses would be reduced. Council members said that the program would cost to much and it would cut into there budget</i>).</li> <li>Minimal analysis based on explicit and implicit meanings from the text (<i>Both also agreed that the expense would be big and would take lots of planning</i>) only somewhat supports claims, opinions, and ideas. Most of the response is a summary and not an analysis of similar arguments.</li> <li>The response includes minimal reference to the text (<i>Students said that the bike program would lift expenses and the council said that it wouldn't; Both also agreed that the expense would be big and would take lots of planning</i>) using few details, examples, and facts. There is minimal reference to main ideas or relevant details.</li> <li>Transitions are minimal and consist primarily of the same words (<i>both; both of these</i>).</li> <li>Little domain-specific language is used. Multiple readings are needed to understand the meaning.</li> <li>Many errors are present, and the errors often interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	1	

**Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)**

**Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses**

**Student 2, Response Score 1**

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

They both made good points. The city council member had a good explanation for why he think that the bike sharing wouldn't work. He/she said that the costs for everything can be mighty expensive and accidents are most likely to happen. The student had a good explanation as of why he thought that the bike sharing program would work. He/she said that it will decrease pollution and health hazards, which is true.

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<p><b>Score 1—Demonstrates minimal analysis of text and inadequate writing.</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response is an inadequate understanding of the task by focusing on differences instead of similarities in the two authors' arguments.</li> <li>• The response demonstrates a minimal organizational structure and focus on the task. There appears to be an introduction (<i>They both made good points.</i>) but there is no conclusion. The ideas are presented as a summary and are arbitrarily arranged.</li> <li>• Analysis is minimal (at best) and is limited to the student's opinion (<i>which is true</i>) found at the end of the response.</li> <li>• The response includes minimal reference to the text using few details, examples, and facts.</li> <li>• There are few, if any, transitions between ideas.</li> <li>• Language is not precise and does not follow the task. The response is a summary of differences and does not use domain-specific vocabulary.</li> <li>• Errors are present.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	1	

**Appendix A: Passage-Based Sample Items (including Text-Dependent Writing)**

**Text-Dependent Writing: Student Responses**

**Student 1, Response Score Off-Topic**

In the passages, the city council member and the student each have a strong opinion concerning the topic of bike sharing. Write an essay analyzing the similarities in opinion of the city council member and the student. Use evidence from **both** passages to support your answer.

they were talking about flights and animals

Item Information		Response Score Annotation
Page Reference	36	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>The response does not address the task.</li> </ul>
Alignment	W.8.28	
Depth of Knowledge	3	
Response Score	Off-Topic	

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 1**

A student is writing an editorial for a school newspaper. Read a paragraph from the editorial.

All football players at our school should be required to have their last names on their jerseys in addition to their uniform numbers. Our players recently voted to put their nicknames on their uniforms instead of their last names. But since our school does not distribute programs for our home games, spectators must now identify all the players by just a number and a nickname. \_\_\_\_\_, the fans who support our team should be able to determine who each player is without having to memorize dozens of nicknames.

Which word or phrase **best** clarifies the relationship between the sentences?

- (a) Instead
- (b) Otherwise
- (c) As a result
- (d) In that case

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	28
Alignment	W.8.20c
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	A

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 2**

A student is writing an informative essay on the history of tea. Read the paragraphs from the student’s essay.

<sup>1</sup>Legend has it that tea drinking began in 2737 BCE when Chinese emperor Shen Nung drank water that had been accidentally boiled with the leaves from a *Camellia sinensis* tree. <sup>2</sup>However, it was not until the 17th century that tea was regularly consumed in the West, where women in England perceived the drink as more refined than coffee. <sup>3</sup>The first shop to sell tea in England opened in 1657. <sup>4</sup>The British East India Company soon developed into a powerhouse in the tea trade, contributing to the wealth of the British Empire while also adding land to its territories. <sup>5</sup>The Tea Act, which imposed heavy taxes on tea, really got the colonists in America all worked up. <sup>6</sup>Tensions led to colonists protesting “high taxation without representation” by dumping tea into Boston Harbor, an event known as the Boston Tea Party.

<sup>7</sup>While the history of tea is long and sometimes filled with controversy, today, many enjoy a cup as a way to relax. <sup>8</sup>In fact, tea consumption is second only to water in popularity in the United States. <sup>9</sup>We can give a shout-out to America for its contributions to the evolution of tea drinking. <sup>10</sup>For instance, in the early 20th century, the tea bag was developed in America, and in 1904, iced tea originated at the World’s Fair in St. Louis, Missouri.

Which **two** sentences include words or phrases that are inconsistent with the formal style of the student’s essay?

- (a) sentence 2
- (b) sentence 4
- (c) sentence 5
- (d) sentence 6
- (e) sentence 8
- (f) sentence 9

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Select
Page Reference	30
Alignment	W.8.21e
Point Value	2
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	C, F

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 3**

A student is writing a personal narrative about riding a roller coaster for the first time. Read the paragraph. Then, choose the **two** sentences in the narrative that **best** convey the sense of dread the student feels before riding the roller coaster.

?

People say the only way to overcome your fears is to face them, but I was not so sure. My heart raced as I stood staring up at the sinister-looking labyrinth of looping metal. Glancing down at my little brother, I considered suggesting another ride on the train, but a promise was a promise. I could not disappoint my brother, who had been counting down the days until our trip to the local theme park and his long-anticipated ride on the Light of Doom roller coaster.

“Hurry up before the line gets any longer,” Shawn whined. “If we run, we may be able to ride it twice before lunch.”

The park had been open for only one hour, but the lines were quickly growing with eager thrill seekers waiting to be funneled through the turnstiles. I wiped my sweaty palms on my shorts, grabbed my brother’s hand, and mumbled, “All right. Let’s get this over with.” Little did I know that I was about to find a new favorite pastime.

Item Information		Answer Key(s) Description
Item Type	Technology Enhanced	<div style="border: 1px solid gray; padding: 5px;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid gray; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <span style="float: left;"> </span> <span style="float: right;">?</span> </div> <p>People say the only way to overcome your fears is to face them, but I was not so sure. <b>My heart raced as I stood staring up at the sinister-looking labyrinth of looping metal.</b> Glancing down at my little brother, I considered suggesting another ride on the train, but a promise was a promise. I could not disappoint my brother, who had been counting down the days until our trip to the local theme park and his long-anticipated ride on the Light of Doom roller coaster.</p> <p>“Hurry up before the line gets any longer,” Shawn whined. “If we run, we may be able to ride it twice before lunch.”</p> <p>The park had been open for only one hour, but the lines were quickly growing with eager thrill seekers waiting to be funneled through the turnstiles. <b>I wiped my sweaty palms on my shorts, grabbed my brother’s hand, and mumbled, “All right. Let’s get this over with.”</b> Little did I know that I was about to find a new favorite pastime.</p> </div>

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 4**

A student is researching the benefits of exercise. Read the paragraph from a credible source the student has found.

Exercise has many physical benefits for teens. Regular daily exercise helps strengthen muscles, including the heart. With exercise, the heart improves its ability to pump oxygen to all parts of the body. Exercise can also help build strong bones. Specifically, weight-bearing exercise, such as running, walking, and dancing, increases bone mass by making the body work against gravity.

Which questions might the student ask to learn about the emotional benefits of exercise? Choose **two** answers.

- (a) Is it better to exercise outside or at a gym?
- (b) How can exercise reduce stress?
- (c) What are the most popular types of exercise?
- (d) How can people work exercise into their daily lives?
- (e) How can exercise help people improve their mood?
- (f) Does exercise help sharpen memory?

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Select
Page Reference	34
Alignment	W.8.26
Point Value	2
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	B, E

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 5**

A student is preparing the works cited page for a research paper. Read the citation style being used for a magazine article.

Author. "Title of Article." *Title of Magazine*, Day Month Year, Pages.

Which magazine article citation is written in the correct style?

- (a) "Calling for Change" by Carl Hughes. *Time*, 23 Oct. 2013. pp. 75–77.
- (b) Hughes, Carl. "Calling for Change." *Time*, 23 Oct. 2013, pp. 75–77.
- (c) *Time*. "Calling for Change." Carl Hughes. Oct. 23, 2013, pp. 75–77.
- (d) Carl Hughes. *Calling for Change*. "Time" 23 Oct. 2013: pp. 75–77.

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	35
Alignment	W.8.27
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	B

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 6**

Read the paragraph.

Select the **two** underlined verbs that are in the imperative mood.

?

Be on time, and bring your coat. That was the message Tara had received from her aunt. There was nothing unclear about it. Luckily, Tara was running on time. She also had remembered to throw her coat in the back of the car even though it was the middle of summer. If she were running late, she would be panicking about what to do.

Item Information		Answer Key(s) Description
Item Type	Technology Enhanced	<div style="border-bottom: 1px solid gray; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <span style="float: left;"> </span> <span style="float: right;">?</span> </div> <p style="margin-top: 10px;"> <u>Be</u> on time, and <u>bring</u> your coat. That was the message Tara <u>had received</u> from her aunt. There <u>was</u> nothing unclear about it. Luckily, Tara <u>was running</u> on time. She also <u>had remembered</u> to throw her coat in the back of the car even though it was the middle of summer. If she <u>were running</u> late, she <u>would be panicking</u> about what to do.                     </p>

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 8**

Which sentence contains punctuation to indicate omitted words?

- (a) When I looked out the window of my home and saw snow, I was completely astonished.
- (b) Most cats (and some dogs) enjoy eating fish.
- (c) I planned on taking many things to the beach, including a chair, a pair of sunglasses, . . . and a book.
- (d) Today I had time to start reading a new book—finally!

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	43
Alignment	L.8.37b
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	1
Answer Key	C

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**  
**Standalone Sample Item 7**

Read the paragraph. Choose the **two** underlined words in the paragraph that are misspelled.

?

Jamie wanted to buy a new dresser for her bedroom, but she wasn't sure if there was enough clearance to get one through the doorway. She loved efficiency, so she carefully measured the doorway before she purchased a dresser. However, she didn't take into account the fluorescent light that hung in the hallway. As Jamie and her friends started to manuver the new dresser toward the bedroom, they discovered that they needed a minimum of three more inches of space in the hallway. After careful consideration, they made a unanimous decision to take down the hallway light and try again.

Item Information		Answer Key(s) Description
Item Type	Technology Enhanced	<div style="border: 1px solid black; padding: 5px;"> <div style="border-bottom: 1px solid black; padding-bottom: 5px;"> <span style="float: left;"> </span> <span style="float: right; border: 1px solid black; padding: 2px 5px;">?</span> </div> <p>Jamie wanted to buy a new dresser for her bedroom, but she wasn't sure if there was enough <u>clearance</u> to get one through the doorway. She loved <u>efficiency</u>, so she carefully measured the doorway before she purchased a dresser. However, she didn't take into account the <u>fluorescent</u> light that hung in the hallway. As Jamie and her friends started to <u>manuver</u> the new dresser toward the bedroom, they discovered that they needed a <u>minimum</u> of three more inches of space in the hallway. After careful consideration, they made a <u>unanimous</u> decision to take down the hallway light and try again.</p> </div>
Page Reference	43	
Alignment	L.8.37c	
Point Value	2	
Depth of Knowledge	2	
Answer Key	(see description)	

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 9**

Read the sentence.

At the meeting, the teachers realized they would need to consolidate their math teams so they would have enough people to participate in the competition on Saturday morning.

What does the word consolidate mean as it is used in the sentence?

- (a) combine
- (b) critique
- (c) introduce
- (d) name

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	44
Alignment	L.8.39a
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	A

**Appendix B: Sample Standalone Items**

**Standalone Sample Item 10**

Read the paragraph from a student's narrative.

While biking home from school yesterday, I saw my friend Maria walking on the sidewalk. I hopped off my bike to walk with her. We came to the small park between our houses, and Maria suggested we sit for a while in the sun. I leaned my bike against a tree, but as soon as I turned around, it fell over. Maria made a face of mock pity and said, "I guess your bike was just too tired." Then I doubled over laughing.

What does the sentence "I guess your bike was just too tired" add to the narrative?

- (a) a metaphor that compares the narrator to her bike
- (b) a pun that plays off the double meaning of the phrase "too tired"
- (c) verbal irony because the speaker is being sarcastic
- (d) suspense about why the phrase "too tired" would make the narrator laugh

Item Information	
Item Type	Multiple Choice
Page Reference	46
Alignment	L.8.40a
Point Value	1
Depth of Knowledge	2
Answer Key	B

**Appendix C: Passage Length Ranges**

This chart shows the approximate word count ranges per grade for the reading passages in the *ACAP Summative Assessments*. Passages may be under or over the minimum or the maximum of the range based on the needs of the passage content or as recommended by Alabama educator review committee comments.

**Approximate Word Count Ranges by Grade Level**

<b>Grade</b>	<b>Word Count Range</b>
Grade 2	150–350
Grade 3	550–650
Grade 4	600–700
Grade 5	650–800
Grade 6	650–800
Grade 7	750–850
Grade 8	750–850