



pennsylvania
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler



2018–2019
Grade 8

Pennsylvania Department of Education Bureau of Curriculum, Assessment and Instruction—September 2018

TABLE OF CONTENTS

INFORMATION ABOUT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS	1
Introduction	1
General Introduction	1
Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)	1
What Is Included	1
Purpose and Uses	1
Change in Test Design 2017–2018	1
Item Format and Scoring Guidelines	2
English Language Arts Grade 8	3
PSSA ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS GRADE 8	4
English Language Arts Test Directions for Reading Passages and Questions	4
Passage 1	6
Multiple-Choice Questions	8
Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question	12
Multiple-Choice Questions	13
Passage 2	15
Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt	20
Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline	24
English Language Arts Test Directions for Language Questions	42
Standalone Multiple-Choice Questions	43
English Language Arts—Sample Item Summary Data	47
ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS	49

INTRODUCTION

General Introduction

The Pennsylvania Department of Education (PDE) provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instructional programs aligned with the Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS). These tools include Academic Standards, Assessment Anchor documents, assessment handbooks, and content-based item and scoring samplers. This Item and Scoring Sampler is a useful tool for Pennsylvania educators in preparing local instructional programs by providing samples of test item types and scored student responses. The Item Sampler is not designed to be used as a pretest, a curriculum, or other benchmark for operational testing.

This Item and Scoring Sampler is available in Braille format. For more information regarding Braille, call (717) 901-2238.

Pennsylvania Core Standards (PCS)

This sampler contains examples of test questions designed to assess the Pennsylvania Assessment Anchors and Eligible Content aligned to the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The Mathematics, Reading, and Writing PSSA transitioned to PCS-based operational Mathematics and English Language Arts assessments starting with the spring 2015 PSSA administration.

The 2013 PCS-aligned Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content documents are posted on this portal:

- www.education.pa.gov [Roll over 'DATA AND REPORTING' in the dark blue bar across the top of the page. Select 'ASSESSMENT AND ACCOUNTABILITY.' Click on the link that reads 'Pennsylvania System of School Assessment (PSSA)'. Then click on 'Assessment Anchors/Eligible Content.']

Change in Test Design 2017–2018

Beginning with tests taken in the 2017–2018 school year, the English Language Arts PCS-based PSSA will no longer include a mode-specific writing prompt. This Item and Scoring Sampler contains items representative of the tests administered during the 2017–2018 school year.

What Is Included

This sampler contains stimulus reading passages with test questions, standalone questions, and text-dependent analysis prompts that have been written to align to the Assessment Anchors that are based on the Pennsylvania Core Standards. The passages represent some of the genres approved by PDE to appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. The test questions provide an idea of the types of items that may appear on an operational, PCS-based PSSA. Each sample test question has been through a rigorous review process to ensure alignment with the Assessment Anchors.

Purpose and Uses

The items in this sampler may be used¹ as examples for creating assessment items at the classroom level. Classroom teachers may find it beneficial to have students respond to the text-dependent analysis prompt test questions in this sampler. Educators can then use the sampler as a guide to score the responses either independently or together with colleagues within a school or district.

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Item Format and Scoring Guidelines

The 2017–2018 PCS-based PSSA has multiple types of test questions. For grade 4, the types of test questions are Multiple-Choice (MC) questions, Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR) questions, and Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) prompts.

Multiple Choice: Each of this type of test question has four answer choices. Some MC test questions are based on a stimulus reading passage, while other MC test questions are independent of a passage. Each correct response to an MC test question is worth one point.

Evidence-Based Selected Response: Each two-part EBSR question is designed to elicit an evidence-based response from a student who has read either a literature or an informational text passage. In Part One, which is similar to a multiple-choice question, the student analyzes a passage and chooses the best answer from four answer choices. In Part Two, the student utilizes evidence from the passage to select one or more answers based on his or her response to Part One. Part Two is different from a multiple-choice question in that there may be more than four answer options and more than one correct answer. Each EBSR test question is worth either two or three points, and students can receive points for providing a correct response to Part One or for providing one or more correct responses in Part Two.

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt: The TDA prompt is a text-dependent analysis prompt based on a passage or passage set that each student has read during the test event. There are three response pages in the paper-and-pencil format and up to 5,000 characters in the online format. Both literature and informational texts are addressed through this item type. Students must use explicit and implicit evidence to make inferences leading to a conclusion or generalization in response to the task stated in the prompt. Students construct a well-written analytical essay to communicate inferences and connection to the evidence using grade-appropriate writing skills. The TDA response is scored using a holistic scoring guideline on a 1–4-point scale.

Non-Score Considerations: For TDA items, responses can be designated as non-scorable (NS). While every effort is made to score each student response, a response may receive a NS designation if it falls into one of five categories:

Blank – Blank, entirely erased, entirely crossed out, or consists entirely of whitespace

Refusal – Refusal to respond to the task

Non-scorable – In a language other than English, incoherent, illegible, insufficient, unrelated to the passage, or consisting solely or almost solely of text copied from the passage

Off Topic – Makes no reference to the item or passage but is not an intentional refusal

Copied – Consists of text copied from the item and/or test directions

Testing Time and Mode of Testing Delivery for the PCS-Based PSSA

The PSSA is delivered in traditional paper-and-pencil format as well as in an online format. The estimated time to respond to a test question is the same for both methods of test delivery. The following table shows the estimated response time for each item type.

During an official test administration, students are given as much additional time as is necessary to complete the test questions.


English Language Arts Item Type	MC	EBSR	TDA
Estimated Response Time (minutes)	1.5	3 to 5	45

English Language Arts Grade 8

This English Language Arts Sampler is composed of 2 passages, 5 passage-based multiple-choice questions, 2 evidence-based selected-response questions, a text-dependent analysis prompt, and 4 standalone multiple-choice questions.

There are two passages in this booklet. The first passage is followed by a set of passage-based multiple-choice questions and two evidence-based selected-response questions. The second passage is followed by a text-dependent analysis prompt. This booklet also contains 4 standalone multiple-choice questions.

Each question is accompanied by a chart that contains the Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content coding, answer key(s), depth of knowledge, and testing data. Each question is followed by a brief analysis or rationale. The text-dependent analysis prompt is displayed with the item-specific scoring guidelines and examples of student responses with scores and annotations at each scoring level.

The PCS-based PSSA may be administered in paper-and-pencil format or online. As a result, this sampler includes samples of text-dependent analysis prompt responses in both formats. A sample online response is noted by the symbol .

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR READING PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS**Directions:**

On the following pages are the Reading passages and questions.

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- First, read the passage carefully.
- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

Directions for Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions:

Some questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

- Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.
- Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.
- Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.
- Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.
- Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.

Directions for Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompts:

The English Language Arts TDA prompt will ask you to analyze the passage and use evidence from the passage to write an essay.

For the TDA Essay:

- Be sure to read the passage and the TDA prompt carefully.
- Review the Writer’s Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.
- You may look back at the passage to help you write your essay.
- Write your essay in the appropriate space in the answer booklet. If you use scratch paper to write a rough-draft essay, be sure to transfer your final essay to the answer booklet.
- Be sure to check that your essay contains evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Be sure to check your essay for errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

PASSAGE 1

Read the following passage about a young writer. Then answer questions 1–7.

The Manuscript

excerpt from *Little Women*

by Louisa May Alcott

Though very happy in the social atmosphere about her, and very busy with the daily work that earned her bread, and made it sweeter for the effort, Jo still found time for literary labors. The purpose which now took possession of her was a natural one to a poor and ambitious girl; but the means she took to gain her end were not the best. She saw that money conferred power: money and power, therefore, she resolved to have; not to be used for herself alone, but for those whom she loved more than self.

The dream of filling home with comforts, giving Beth everything she wanted, from strawberries in winter to a piano in her bedroom; going abroad herself, and always having more than enough, so that she might indulge in the luxury of charity, had been for years Jo's most cherished castle in the air.

She took to writing sensation stories; for in those dark ages, even all-perfect America read rubbish. She told no one, but concocted a "thrilling tale," and boldly carried it herself to Mr. Dashwood, editor of the "Weekly Volcano."

"Excuse me, I was looking for the 'Weekly Volcano' office; I wished to see Mr. Dashwood."

The gentleman advanced, with a nod, and a countenance expressive of nothing but sleep. Feeling that she must get through the matter somehow, Jo produced her manuscript, and, blushing redder and redder with each sentence, blundered out fragments of the little speech carefully prepared for the occasion.

"A friend of mine desired me to offer—a story—just as an experiment—would like your opinion—be glad to write more if this suits."

While she blushed and blundered, Mr. Dashwood had taken the manuscript, and was turning over the leaves with a pair of rather dirty fingers, and casting critical glances up and down the neat pages.

"Not a first attempt, I take it?" observing that the pages were numbered, covered only on one side, and not tied up with a ribbon—a sure sign of a novice.

"No, sir; she has had some experience, and got a prize for a tale in the 'Blarneystone Banner.' "

"Oh, did she?" and Mr. Dashwood gave Jo a quick look, which seemed to take note of everything she had on, from the bow in her bonnet to the buttons on her boots. "Well, you can leave it, if you like. We've more of this sort of thing on hand than we know what to do with at present; but I'll run my eye over it, and give you an answer next week."

Now, Jo did not like to leave it, for Mr. Dashwood didn't suit her at all; but, under the circumstances, there was nothing for her to do but bow and walk away. It was perfectly evident that her little fiction of "my friend" was considered a good joke; and a laugh, produced by some inaudible remark of the editor, as he closed the door. Half resolving never to return, she went home, and worked off her irritation by stitching pinafores vigorously; and in an hour or two was cool enough to laugh over the scene, and long for next week.

When she went again, Mr. Dashwood was much wider awake than before, which was agreeable.

"We'll take this if you don't object to a few alterations. It's too long, but omitting the passages I've marked will make it just the right length," he said, in a business-like tone.

Jo hardly knew her own manuscript again, so crumpled and underscored were its pages and paragraphs; she looked at the marked passages, and was surprised to find that all the moral reflections—which she had carefully put in as ballast for much romance—had been stricken out.

"But, sir, I thought every story should have some sort of a moral."

Mr. Dashwood's editorial gravity relaxed into a smile, for Jo had forgotten her "friend," and spoken as only an author could.

"People want to be amused, not preached at, you know. Morals don't sell nowadays;" which was not quite a correct statement, by the way.

"You think it would do with these alterations, then?"

"Yes; it's a new plot, and pretty well worked up—language good, and so on," was Mr. Dashwood's affable reply.

"What do you—that is, what compensation—" began Jo, not exactly knowing how to express herself.

"Oh, yes, well, we give from twenty-five to thirty for things of this sort. Pay when it comes out," returned Mr. Dashwood.

"Very well; you can have it," said Jo, handing back the story, with a satisfied air; for, after the dollar-a-column work, even twenty-five seemed good pay.

"Shall I tell my friend you will take another if she has one better than this?" asked Jo, unconscious of her little slip of the tongue, and emboldened by her success.

"Well, we'll look at it; can't promise to take it. Tell her to make it short and spicy, and never mind the moral. What name would your friend like to put to it?" in a careless tone.

"None at all, if you please; she doesn't wish her name to appear, and has no *nom de plume*," said Jo, blushing in spite of herself.

"Just as she likes, of course. The tale will be out next week; will you call for the money, or shall I send it?" asked Mr. Dashwood, who felt a natural desire to know who his new contributor might be.

"I'll call. Good morning, sir."

As she departed, Mr. Dashwood put up his feet, with the graceful remark, "Poor and proud, as usual, but she'll do."

Multiple-Choice Questions

1. At the end of the second paragraph, what is the meaning of the phrase “castle in the air”?
- A. fantasy
 - B. undertaking
 - C. motivation
 - D. expectation

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.2
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	68% (correct answer)
p-value B	6%
p-value C	18%
p-value D	8%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to interpret the phrase “castles in the air” in context. Option A is the correct answer because the examples of comforts that Jo wishes to give her family and herself are dreams or fantasies. Options B, C, and D are not correct since they are not supported by context clues in the paragraph and the phrase “castle in the air.”

2. What does the word concocted mean as it is used in the passage?
- A. obtained
 - B. invented
 - C. discovered
 - D. remembered

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	17%
p-value B	61% (correct answer)
p-value C	12%
p-value D	10%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the meaning of the word “concocted.” Option B is the correct answer because “invented” is the meaning of “concocted,” as it is used to signal that Jo is the creator of her tale. Options A, C, and D are not correct since they are not correct meanings of “concocted” and do not make sense in the given context.

3. Read the sentence from the passage.

“The gentleman advanced, with a nod, and a countenance expressive of nothing but sleep.”

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

- A. legitimate belief
- B. natural condition
- C. facial appearance
- D. scientific observation

Item Information	
Alignment	A-V.4.1.1
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	7%
p-value B	12%
p-value C	77% (correct answer)
p-value D	4%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the meaning of the word “countenance.” Option C is the correct answer because “countenance” refers to one’s facial appearance. Options A, B, and D are not correct since they do not reflect the correct meaning of “countenance” and do not make sense in the given context.

4. Read the sentence from the passage.

“While she blushed and blundered, Mr. Dashwood had taken the manuscript, and was turning over the leaves with a pair of rather dirty fingers, and casting critical glances up and down the neat pages.”

How does the author’s choice of words in the sentence affect the meaning of the passage?

- A. It emphasizes Jo’s fear about being in an unfamiliar place.
- B. It emphasizes Jo’s uncertainty about being a good writer.
- C. It emphasizes the power that the editor exerts over Jo.
- D. It emphasizes the tension of the moment for Jo.

Item Information	
Alignment	A-C.2.1.3
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	7%
p-value B	25%
p-value C	15%
p-value D	53% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to analyze the impact of the author’s words in the given sentence on the meaning of the passage. Option D is the correct answer because the words “blushed,” “blundered,” and “casting critical glances” suggest that Jo feels stress from the editor evaluating her work. Option A is not correct since Jo does not have fear from being in an office. Option B is not correct since there is no textual evidence to support the idea that Jo is uncertain about her own ability as a writer. Option C is not correct since the editor has not exerted any power over Jo at this point.

Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question

5. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

Part One

What does the passage reveal about Mr. Dashwood?

- A. He is skillful and relaxed.
- B. He is busy and exhausted.
- C. He is demanding and somewhat bored.
- D. He is practical and somewhat arrogant.

Part Two

Which sentences from the passage support the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “ ‘The tale will be out next week . . . ’ ”
- B. “ ‘Morals don’t sell nowadays . . . ’ ”
- C. “ ‘ . . . you can leave it, if you like.’ ”
- D. “. . . ‘Poor and proud, as usual, but she’ll do.’ ”

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.3
Answer Key: Part One	D
Answer Key: Part Two	B, D
Depth of Knowledge	3
Mean Score	1.68
Option Annotations	<p>The student is asked to analyze what the passage reveals about Mr. Dashwood and then to select sentences from the passage that supports this analysis.</p> <p>Part One: Option D is the correct answer. Mr. Dashwood is practical in that he wishes to print stories that sell well; he is arrogant since he laughs at Jo for her use of the phrase “my friend.” Options A and C are not correct since Mr. Dashwood portrays none of these traits. Option B is not correct since though there is some evidence to suggest Mr. Dashwood is tired and is receiving many submissions, these are minor details in the passage and are not clearly stated.</p> <p>Part Two: Options B and D are the correct answers. Option B is correct since the phrase “morals don’t sell nowadays” supports the idea Mr. Dashwood cares about the practical matter of making money by selling stories that people will buy. Option D is correct since the phrase “she’ll do” suggests that Mr. Dashwood is arrogant by judging the worth of Jo as writer. Options A and C are not correct since they do not support the idea that Mr. Dashwood is practical and arrogant.</p>

Multiple-Choice Questions

6. Which evidence from the passage **best** supports the inference that Jo is determined to succeed?
- A. “. . . money and power, therefore, she resolved to have . . .”
 - B. “She took to writing sensation stories . . .”
 - C. “. . . she has had some experience, and got a prize for a tale . . .”
 - D. “‘Very well; you can have it,’ . . .”

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.1
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	48% (correct answer)
p-value B	19%
p-value C	23%
p-value D	10%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the sentence from the passage that best supports the inference that Jo is determined to succeed. Option A is the correct answer because the words “resolved to have” indicate Jo’s commitment to achieving success. Options B and D are not correct; even though they show how Jo attempts to succeed, they do not support that she is determined to succeed. Option C is not correct since it does not relate to Jo’s determination to succeed.

7. Which theme is **most** developed through the interaction between Jo and Mr. Dashwood?
- A. Life often includes surprising encounters.
 - B. Compromises are sometimes necessary to reach an objective.
 - C. Important knowledge can be gained from difficult experiences.
 - D. Questionable methods are acceptable as long as the outcome is worthwhile.

Item Information	
Alignment	A-K.1.1.2
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	3
p-value A	12%
p-value B	49% (correct answer)
p-value C	22%
p-value D	17%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine the theme that is most developed through the interaction between Jo and Mr. Dashwood. Option B is the correct answer since Jo must consent to her story being significantly revised in order for it to be published. Option A is not correct since the meeting with Mr. Dashwood was planned and no evidence suggests a tone of surprise. Option C is not correct because though Jo gains knowledge from the revisions, this is a detail of the passage, not the theme. Option D is not correct since it is not developed through the interaction between Jo and Mr. Dashwood.

PASSAGE 2

Read the following drama about Abraham Lincoln when he was a young man. Then answer question 8.

Abe Buys a Barrel

by Mary Nygaard Peterson

Characters:

Abe Lincoln, twenty-four

Mrs. Hornbuckle, a customer at the general store

Bill Berry, co-owner with Abe of the general store

Jack Kelso, his friend

Russel Godbey, a farmer

Mentor Graham, the schoolteacher

Jim Jensen, a traveler

Hannah Jensen, Jim's wife

Peter, Jim and Hannah's son

Rebecca, Jim and Hannah's daughter

Time: A summer morning in 1833.

Setting: *The Lincoln-Berry general store in New Salem, Illinois.*

At Rise: Abe Lincoln is lying on the counter reading a book. There is a period of silence, broken after an interval by the sound of someone rattling the door. It gradually occurs to Abe that someone is trying to get in. He turns the book face down on the counter, goes to the door, and opens it.

Abe: Come in, Mrs. Hornbuckle.

Mrs. Hornbuckle (*Entering*): Is the store open? I didn't really know whether you were here yet or not.

Abe: I'm here. I just hadn't gotten around to opening the door yet.

Mrs. Hornbuckle: That's all right, Mr. Lincoln. I wouldn't want you to open it any earlier than usual just for me.

Abe: There's no one I'd rather open it for. What can I do for you this morning?

Mrs. Hornbuckle: I'd like half a pound of tea. I didn't realize I was out of it, and I just don't enjoy my breakfast without it.

Abe: You shall have your tea, ma'am. (*He measures out tea, weighs it, puts it in paper packet, and hands it to Mrs. Hornbuckle.*) Here you are. I hope you enjoy your breakfast.

Mrs. Hornbuckle (*Taking tea*): I will now, thanks to you. And here is your money. (*She digs deep into a worn, old-fashioned purse and hands him a coin.*)

Abe: Thank you. Come in again, won't you?

Mrs. Hornbuckle: Oh, I will, thank you. *(Abe escorts her to door, and she goes out. He returns to the counter, picks up book again, and sits on the counter, his legs dangling over the edge.)*

Abe (Muses): “To thine own self be true . . . Thou canst not then be false to any man¹.” *(Pause)* “To thine own self be true” —Hm-m-m. *(Door opens and Bill enters wearily.)*

Bill (Approaching counter): Howdy, Abe. How’s business? *(He pushes his straw hat back on his head and looks around.)*

Abe: Same as usual, Bill. Not rushing. All I’ve sold this morning is a half-pound of tea. *(Abe gets down from the counter and starts to straighten merchandise. He takes weight off the scale and as he looks at it, stops suddenly, obviously upset.)* Jumping crickety!

Bill: What’s the matter, Abe?

Abe: I charged Mrs. Hornbuckle for half a pound of tea and used only a four-ounce weight on the scale!

Bill: Oh, well, never mind. And we need the money a lot worse’n she does.

Abe: Maybe so, but she’s still got another fourth of a pound of tea coming to her. I’ll measure it out right now before I forget. *(He measures out a small packet of tea, writes her name on it, and leaves it on the counter.)*

Bill: Suit yourself, Abe. *(He shrugs.)* But I just don’t see how we’re goin’ to stay in business the way things are goin’. Have you any money, Abe?

Abe (Jingling a few coins in his jeans): Not more’n a few cents left from what Coleman Smoot paid me for pitchin’ hay for him last week. But Russ Godbey promised to come in today to pay me for the work I did at his place. I have plenty of places to spend it, too. Need new pants, for one thing. I remember I had to split four hundred rails for each yard of cloth in these jeans. Nancy Miller sewed them up for me. They sure have been good pants, but you can’t expect anythin’ to last forever.

Bill (He goes to the door, right, and looks out.): I’ll bet there are a hundred people in New Salem, an’ not a soul stirring. Where do they keep themselves? *(He turns back into the room in disgust.)* No business. I might just as well have stayed in bed. *(He sits on a chair, tilts it back against the wall, then pulls his hat down over his eyes.)* Call me if you need me, Abe. I’m bone tired. *(It is quiet in the room. Abe picks up his book and paces up and down reading it. Jack Kelso enters, right, carrying a fishing pole.)*

Jack: Is this the firm of Lincoln and Berry—dealers in general merchandise?

Abe (Laughing): Depends on who’s askin’. If it’s bill collectors, we just moved out of town—forwardin’ address unknown. *(Then, changing his tone.)* What’s on your mind, Jack?

Jack: Fishin’. It’s a perfect morning for fishin’. How about comin’ with me? I’ll fish an’ you can read—an’ if the fish won’t bite, we can talk.

Abe (Doubtfully): I don’t know, Jack. Maybe I’d better not—someone might want to buy something. We could sure use a few customers. Besides, Bill’s sleepin’ an’ I kinda hate to wake him up just to tell him I’m goin’ fishin’.

Jack: I’m in no hurry—the fish can wait. *(He takes a book out of his pocket, pushes a chair up against a wall, and settles himself down to read. Abe sits with his book. Russel Godbey enters.)*

¹ “To thine own self be true . . . Thou canst not then be false to any man”—a quotation from Shakespeare

Godbey: Hello, Abe. I brought in your pay, just like I said I would.

Abe: That's good. My bank account's gettin' kinda low—an' my pants are gettin' kinda high—as you can see.

Godbey (*Shifts about uncomfortably*): Well, now, Abe, I kinda hoped you wouldn't need to be paid in cash.

Abe (*Crestfallen*): Why, ah—are things runnin' kinda low for you, too, Russ?

Godbey: Just seems like I can't make both ends meet, Abe—had to get me a new plow if I wanted to stay in farmin'. Then the Missus said she had to get clothes for the young'uns—seems they had nothin' to wear.

Abe: In that case, why don't we just forget the whole thing? I know it takes a heap of money where there's a family of young'uns to support.

Godbey: Oh, I don't want to forget it, Abe. I always aim to pay my debts, somehow. I wondered if you might have any use for these two buckskins²? (*Shows him skins*) They're real nice skins.

Abe (*Feeling skins*): Why, yes, Russ—I'd be glad to take the skins for pay. They are real nice skins.

Godbey: Thanks, Abe, for bein' so accommodatin'. If there's ever anythin' we can do for you, all you have to do is name it.

Abe: I'll sure do that, Russ. (*Godbey exits, right. Abe folds the skins up and puts them away.*)

Jack: I see you're gettin' rich fast, Abe—just like me.

Abe: I wouldn't worry about gettin' rich, if I could just break even. Well, I guess there go my new pants. (*He shrugs and grins. Jim Jensen enters, right. He stands uncertainly near the door until Abe looks up and sees him.*) Howdy, stranger. I didn't see you standin' there. Something I can do for you?

Jensen (*Wringing his hands nervously*): Well, ah—I've got a barrel out in my wagon. I wondered if you might be interested in buyin' it?

Abe: What's in the barrel?

Jensen (*Shifting his feet uneasily*): Oh—nothin', I guess—just junk. We're movin' West, an' I'd like to get the thing out of the way.

Abe: Well, I don't rightly need a barrel, but I can look at it, I guess. (*Abe and Jensen exit. Bill shifts his position but continues sleeping. Jack reads. Mentor Graham enters and looks around.*)

Mentor: Abe here?

Jack: Out buyin' a barrel.

Mentor: A barrel of what? (*Jack shrugs. Abe enters with Mrs. Jensen and her two children.*)

Abe: Now you just sit here an' make yourself comfortable, Mrs. Jensen. (*He takes a chair and places it near the counter for her.*) An' you two young'uns sit here. (*He picks up the children and sets them on the counter.*) We'll see that you get some crackers an' milk to take away that hungry feelin'.

Jack: I'll get it for 'em, Abe. Where do you keep the milk?

² buckskins—hides of animals, usually from deer

Abe: There's a bucket of milk in the back room. Bowling Green brought it over—his wife told him I was gettin' too skinny, an' she wanted to fatten me up a little. *(He laughs and starts to leave, then notices that Mentor has come in. Jack exits.)* Be with you in a minute, Mentor. *(He waves and exits, right. Jack comes in from the storeroom, left, with three tin cups on the lid of a box.)*

Jack: Here you are, kids. Do you like milk? *(He offers it to them and they accept it eagerly, but shyly, and nod their heads. Mrs. Jensen takes a cup, also.)*

Mrs. Jensen: Thankee, kindly. Peter, Rebecca—where's your manners? Did you say thanks for the milk?

Jack: That's all right. Let them enjoy themselves. *(He reaches into a large bin, takes out two handfuls of crackers, and puts them on the box lid, which he holds out to the children.)*

Peter and Rebecca *(Helping themselves):* Thankee, thankee.

Mrs. Jensen *(Helping herself):* Thankee, mister.

Jack: Eat all you want—all you can hold. Abe wants you to. *(He puts the lid between the children and returns to his chair.)*

Mentor *(Looking inside the covers of the book on the counter):* Looks like Abe borrowed this from you, Jack.

Jack: Yep. He reads everything he can get his hands on—makes no difference what it is.

Mentor: I know. He'll get somewhere, some day—with that brain of his.

Jack: Yep. The place he'd like to get most right now is out of debt. He sure worries about those debts of his. *(Abe enters, rolling a barrel in on its rim.)*

Abe *(Speaking over his shoulder):* This'll come in real handy, one of these days. *(Mr. Jensen follows Abe, but says nothing. Abe digs into his pocket.)* Here's four bits. I know it's not much, but it's all I can pay.

Mr. Jensen: Thankee, mister. That's about all it's worth, I reckon. *(Then, to his wife)* You ready to start, Hannah? *(Mrs. Jensen rises and helps the children down.)*

Mrs. Jensen: Come on, Peter, Rebecca. Your Pappy's ready to start.

Abe: Wait a minute. *(He reaches into candy jar and gives each of the children a piece of candy.)* Here's a candy drop for each of you. Suck on that an' the way won't seem so long.

Mrs. Jensen *(Almost tearfully):* Thankee kindly, sir. We all feel much better, now. *(Then, to the children)* What do you say to the man—Peter, Rebecca?

Peter and Rebecca *(Shyly):* Thankee, sir.

Abe: That's all right. *(He escorts them to the door.)* Good luck to you out West! *(They exit, and Abe walks back to counter.)*

Jack: What a store! Seems to me you're givin' out more'n you're takin' in.

Abe: Oh, I dunno. The barrel might come in handy someday. You never can tell. Why, I might even have to wear it if I don't earn enough money for some new clothes soon.

Jack *(Jeering):* Now, Abe, you won't need clothes for a long time. Didn't Godbey just pay you a couple of perfectly good buckskins?

Abe (*Looks thoughtful for a moment, and then suddenly*): You're right, Jack. I know just what I can do with those buckskins—I can take them over to Jack Armstrong's and have his wife fix my pants with them—you know, sew them on the bottom and the insides of the legs! They'll wear like iron. Maybe I'll never need to buy another pair of pants.

Jack: Well, now you have that settled, why don't we set a match to this ol' barrel an' go fishin'?

Mentor (*He peers into it*): Wonder what all that junk is. It's almost full. (*He gingerly reaches inside barrel.*)

Abe: You've got me curious now. (*Reaches into barrel*) I don't imagine it's anything very valuable. When folks throw away somethin', it's generally not worth much. Well, what do you know? (*He begins tugging on something and pulls out an old bonnet.*) Anyone need a new bonnet? (*He plops it on Jack's head.*) Makes you look real handsome, Jack.

Jack (*Flinging the hat away from him*): Hey!

Abe (*Continuing to dig*): New shoes, anyone? (*He hauls out a pair of high-heeled, pointed ladies' shoes, tied together.*) Looks like they'd about fit you, Mentor. (*He dangles them enticingly in front of Mentor, but Mentor refuses to touch them. Abe lets them fall to the floor. Bill stirs, yawns, and wakes up to find Abe lifting some garments out of the barrel.*)

Bill: What in the world have you there, Abe?

Abe: Just a barrel I bought from a desperate stranger.

Bill (*Grumpily*): We're plenty desperate ourselves, without you buyin' junk that other folks throw away.

Abe (*Comfortingly*): Don't worry, Bill, I paid for it out of my own pocket—a whole fifty cents.

Bill (*Pacified*): Well, that's different. Though I can't see how you have any extra money to spend. I know I don't. Russ Godbey must have been in to pay you.

Abe (*Absently*): He was. (*He continues to take things out of barrel.*) Well, look what I found! (*He holds up a big book.*)

Jack: A book! Say, you should like that, Abe.

Abe: Yep. Maybe this isn't all junk. (*He reads the title from the back of the book.*) "Blackstone's Commentaries on English Law." Hip, hip, hooray! (*He flings his arms jubilantly into the air and dances a few awkward hops.*)

Jack: Sounds like kinda dull readin' to me. Too bad it isn't Shakespeare.

Abe (*Decidedly*): No, sir-ee. This is the book fellows have to read before they can become lawyers. John Stuart over in Springfield was tellin' me, he said I could even read this by myself, an' then if I could pass the bar examinations, I could be a lawyer. (*He looks thoughtful.*) There should be—I wonder if—(*He reaches into barrel again.*) There should be more—yes, sir, here's another! (*He takes out another huge volume. He puts it on top of the first one, on the floor, and pulls out another.*) An' here's the third one, and the fourth. (*He examines the last one.*) Yes, sir, they're all here! (*He hugs them all and cavorts about with them.*) Boy, oh, boy, oh, boy! This is my lucky day!

Bill (*Unbelieving*): You gonna read all those big books, Abe?

Abe: Not read 'em, Bill—study 'em. Why, these books must have cost almost a fortune. I could never own them, except by accident. An' to think we almost set a match to 'em!

Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt

8. In “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the author focuses on Abe’s interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

**Writer’s Checklist for the
Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt**PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the prompt carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the prompt relates to the passage.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

PROOFREAD after you write

- I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.
- I stayed focused on responding to the prompt.
- I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

8. In “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the author focuses on Abe’s interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.



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GO ON 

Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline

#8 Item Information

Alignment	E.1.1	Depth of Knowledge	3	Mean Score	1.94
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Assessment Anchor:

E08.E.1–Evidence-Based Analysis of Text

Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E08.E.1.1–Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and/or research.

Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s) • Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) • Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas • Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Skillful use of transitions to link ideas • Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s) • Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s) • Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas • Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas • Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning

Score	Description
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s) • Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s) • Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas • Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer’s purpose • Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas • Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events • Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s) • Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion • Minimal evidence of an organizational structure • Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences • Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions • Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s) • Few, if any, transitions to link ideas • Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) • Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points



8. In “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the author focuses on Abe’s interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

In the play “Abe Buys a Barrel” by Mary Mygaard Peterson, Abe welcomes many different characters into his store. The play illustrates the good deeds that Abe did for the other characters. Through revealing Abe’s interactions with the other characters, Peterson reveals certain characteristics about Abe. Throughout the play, Abe is portrayed as a character who is honest, caring, true to what he believes, sympathetic, and giving.

The first character that Lincoln welcomes into his store is Mrs. Hornbuckle. Abe is portrayed as a caring person when he opens the store earlier so that Mrs. Hornbuckle can come in and through his dialogue with Mrs. Hornbuckle. He states how he doesn’t mind opening early for her and he wishes her a good breakfast. “There’s no one I’d rather open it for What can I do for you this morning?” Although he wasn’t planning on having any customers, he was caring to open the store early and get her what she needed. He’s kind while she’s at the store, but he’s also honest and true to himself when she leaves. Abe charged her for more tea than she received, so he measured more tea for her although Bill, his co-owner, blew it off because they need the money more than she does. “I charged Mrs. Hornbuckle for half a pound of tea and used only a four-ounce weight on the scale!” “Oh, well, never mind. And we need the money a lot worse ‘n she does.” “Maybe so, but she’s still got another fourth of a pound of tea coming to her.” This dialogue is significant because it shows that Abe is both honest to others and himself. He knew that giving Mrs. Hornbuckle all of the tea she deserved was the right thing to do so he was honest to her to make up for his mistake He stayed true to what he believed even though Bill said that they are in need of money more than her and he didn’t let Bill interfere with what he wanted to do.

Additionally, when Russel Godbey entered the store, Abe exhibited the quality of being sympathetic, Godbey was supposed to pay Lincoln for his work in case. But, he explains how he had to buy a new plow and clothes for his kids. Instead, he says that he can pay Lincoln in buckskins. Lincoln accepts his offer because he understands how much it costs to support a family. “Just seems like I can’t make both ends meet, Abe—had to get me a new plow if I wanted to stay in farmin’. Then the Misses said she had to get clothes for the young’uns—seems they had nothin’ to wear.” “In that case, why don’t we just forget the whole thing? I know it takes a heap of money where there is a family of young’uns to support.” Lincoln understands the trouble Godbey is going through and is able to go without his normal pay even though he doesn’t have a lot of money either. This shows that Lincoln understands the feelings of others and shows sympathy for them.

Finally, when the Jensen family arrives, Lincoln shows the characteristic of sympathetic, caring, and giving. Abe wants to help the family with their move by lightening the load and he offers to take the barrel from the family even though he doesn't need it. This shows that he is caring towards others because he helped the family even when he was in tough times himself. Also, Abe is sympathetic and giving to Jim Jensen's kids. He gives them crackers and milk because he understands that they are hungry from traveling. "We'll see that you get some crackers an' milk to take away that hungry feelin'." That milk was given to Abe himself because he was becoming skinny, but he gave it to the kids because he felt bad that they were hungry. He also gives the kids candy. He went above what he had to do to satisfy the kids, which shows that Lincoln is sympathetic and giving.

Through revealing Abe's interactions with other characters, Peterson is able to indirectly characterize Abe as honest, caring, true to what he believes, sympathetic, and giving.

This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong, and an effective introduction sets the development of how Abe's interactions with the other characters in the drama reveal that he is *honest, caring, true to what he believes, sympathetic, and giving*. These ideas are developed with a thorough analysis (*he was caring to open the store early; This dialogue is significant because . . . honest to others and himself; didn't let Bill interfere with what he wanted to do; he understands how much it costs to support a family; understands the trouble Godbey is going through; shows sympathy for them; This shows that he is caring towards others . . . in tough times himself; went above what he had to do to satisfy the kids*) that is combined with specific, relevant text related to Abe's interactions with Mrs. Hornbuckle, Russel Godbey and the Jensen family to explain how the interactions reveal his characteristics. Skillful transitions link ideas (*Through revealing Abe's interactions, Although he wasn't planning, Additionally*). The precise language is effectively used to help explain the topic (*illustrates the good deeds, dialogue is significant, lightening the load*). Few errors are present and they do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 4 points

8. In "Abe Buys a Barrel," the author focuses on Abe's interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

Abe Lincoln was one of the most well-known U.S. Presidents and even a famous figure in U.S. history. Part of this may be due to the fact that he was a genuine, kind, and caring man. "Abe Buys a Barrel" shows his integrity, understanding, and generosity through communication.

Abe has a great deal of integrity. In the beginning, Mrs. Hornbuckle comes to the store for a $\frac{1}{2}$ lb of tea. Later, Abe realized he didn't give her a full $\frac{1}{2}$ lb but he charged her for it. Even though co-owner Bill says it's okay because they need the money more, Abe responds, "Maybe so, but she's still got another fourth of a pound of tea coming to her. I'll measure it out right now before I forget"

(Peterson, 2). Abe is showing his integrity because he makes sure to get everything Mrs. Hornbuckle asked for to her. He does not want unhappy customers because he treated them unfairly. This was a big part of Lincoln. Abe's integrity is shown through


 GO ON

simply getting tea for an innocent lady.

Another great quality Abe had was his sense of understanding. Later in the day, Godbey came to pay Abe for personal work he did for him. Abe was expecting cash, but Godbey could not give cash because he used it to take care of his family. Instead, Godbey offered buckskins. In this case, Abe tells Godbey, "In that case, why don't we just forget the whole thing? I know it takes a heap of money where there's a family of young 'uns to support" (Peterson, 3). Even though Abe wanted cash, he knows that it was difficult for Godbey to take care of a family. He knew "the responsibility, patience, and funds it took." Therefore, Abe used the understanding he had and happily accepted the skins Godbey offered. Abe showed he was very understanding.

Lastly, Abe conveyed his generosity. When the Jensens came to the store, Abe made sure to get Mrs. Jensen and the children food and provided candy on their way out. Abe tells them, "Now you just sit there an' make yourself comfortable, Mrs. Jensen. An' you two young 'uns sit here. We'll see

GO ON 

That you get some crackers an' milk to take away that hungry feelin'... wait a minute. Here's a candy drop for each of you. Suck on that an' the way won't seem so long" (Peterson, 3-4). It was made obvious previously that Abe was struggling financially at the store and in his personal life. So, the fact that he gave the family food and treats for free really shows his generosity. Abe gave the food so they would be happy, appreciative, and fulfilled, not so he would make a profit. Abe shows to be very generous to others.

Just a few hours in a general store showed the wonderful qualities Abe Lincoln had. Imagine all that and more in a presidency! It really added to the positive fame of Lincoln. The simplest things can reveal one's identity. Abe's interactions allowed his great aspects of his sense of understanding, integrity, and generosity to shine through in "Abe Buys a Barrel".

After you have checked your work, close your answer booklet and test booklet so your teacher will know you are finished.



This response effectively addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is strong, and an effective introduction provides specific characteristics of Abe's that have been revealed through his interactions with other characters in the drama (*integrity, understanding, and generosity*). A thorough analysis (*Abe is showing his integrity because he makes sure to get everything Mrs. Hurbuckle asked for . . . integrity is shown through simply getting tea for an innocent lady; Even though Abe wanted cash . . . Abe showed he was very understanding; It was made obvious previously that Abe was struggling financially . . . shows to be very generous to others*) and substantial relevant text (*Mrs. Hornbuckle comes to the store . . . "measure it out right now before I forget"; Later in the day, Godbey came to pay Abe . . . "there's a family of young 'uns to support"; the Jensens came to the store . . . "candy drop for each . . . won't seem so long"*) effectively develop how these characteristics were revealed through Abe's interactions with others. An effective conclusion skillfully summarizes that a few hours in a general store showed the wonderful qualities Abe Lincoln had and restates the specific characteristics. Precise language is effectively used to describe Abe and his interactions with others (*shown through simply getting tea, Just a few hours in a general store, famous figure*). Few errors are present and do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points



8. In “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the author focuses on Abe’s interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

The character, Abe, in the drama, “Abe Buys a Barrel,” has interactions with many different characters. When reading the drama, the reader can assume that Abe’s best character trait is kindness.

In the drama, the text explicitly shows many ways that Abe displays kindness. For example, “I charged Mrs. Hornbuckle for half a pound of tea and used only a four-ounce weight on the scale!” When Bill tells him that she does not need the money, Abe is kind enough to tell him otherwise. “Maybe so, but she’s still got another fourth of a pound of tea coming to her.” Abe could have kept the money, but he goes out of his way to make sure she will get it.

Another example of how Abe uses kindness in the drama is when his friend, Jack, asks him to fish. Abe replies, “I don’t know, Jack. Mabye I’d better not—someone might want to buy something. We could sure use a few customers. Besides, Bill’s sleepin’ an’ I kinda hate to wake him up, just to tell him I’m goin’ fishin’.” Instead of Abe having a good time with Jack, he is considerate enough to let Bill sleep.

The final example of kindness Abe uses is when the farmer, Godbey, can’t pay Abe for his work. With a kind heart, Abe says, “In that case, why don’t we just forget about the whole thing? It takes a heap of money where there is a family of young’uns to support.” Even though Abe is poor, he allows the farmer to keep his money for his children. That is true kindness.

In the drama, “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the best characteristic that Abe shows is kindness. Abe is constantly showing kindness through his actions. He thinks friendship is more important than money. He really shows true kindness.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is appropriate and the introduction provides the focus of the response that Abe’s best character trait is kindness. The idea of kindness is developed with a clear analysis (*Abe could have kept the money; Instead of Abe having a good time with Jack; Even though Abe is poor*) and sufficient, accurate, and direct references to the text (“*I charged Mrs. Hornbuckle . . . on the scale*”; “*Maybe so, but she’s still got . . . tea coming to her*”; “*I don’t know, Jack . . . I’m goin’ fishin’*”; “*In that case . . . family of young’uns to support*”). Although only one characteristic of Abe has been provided, the interactions that he had with other characters in the drama are analyzed to adequately reveal his kindness. Appropriate transitions link ideas (*In the drama, Another example, Instead of*). Few errors are present and do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 3 points

8. In "Abe Buys a Barrel," the author focuses on Abe's interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

Has it ever been brought to your mind what a president was like when they were younger? In the drama "Abe Buys a Barrel", it explains what Abraham Lincoln was like when he was twenty-four. In this drama, Abe owns a store, along with Bill Berry, and he encounters different people that come into the store. These people: reveal certain characteristics of Abe in many ways.

First, a nice lady named Mrs. Hornbuckle comes into the store. Hoping the store is open, she walks in and asks for a half a pound of tea. Then Abe, in the middle of reading a book, goes and gets the half a pound of tea for her. After that, she thanks him and walks out. This interaction between Abe and Mrs. Hornbuckle reveals some specific characteristics of Abe. There is one main characteristic that is revealed in this interaction, though there are many more. This shows that Abe is dedicated to his work. Abe was in the middle of reading, probably a very important book, and he stops right where he is to get this lady her tea.

Next, another specific characteristic of Abe is revealed.

GO ON 

A farmer named Russ Godbey, one whom Abe worked for, walks into the store. Abe was supposed to get paid for working for Godbey. However, Godbey walks in and tells Abe that he can't pay him with money. With all that was happening, Godbey had to spend the money on some tools and clothes for his kids. Abe was very understanding of this, although he was desperate for money. Instead of being paid with money, Godbey offered to give him two buckskins instead. Abe accepted them and kept them. In this situation, another characteristic was revealed. This revealed that Abe was appreciative. Even though he needed the money, he was still appreciative of the buckskins given to him.

Lastly, one final characteristic is revealed in this story. A traveler and his family, the Jenseens, walk into the store. The wife and two kids walk in and Abe asks them if they want crackers and milk. They eat and drink and Abe doesn't charge them a dime. Then, Abe gives both of the kids a piece of candy. This interaction reveals that Abe is generous. He didn't have to give them something to eat, but he did out of his own generosity.

Certain characteristics are revealed about Abe in this drama. These characteristics show that Abe is a



wonderful person. Dedication, appreciation, and generosity are all included in this list of characteristics. As one can see, all people that Abe hardly knew brought out these characteristics. Therefore, anyone can bring out the best in you, even if you have no clue who they are.

This response adequately addresses all parts of the task, demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is appropriate, and an engaging introduction provides the focus for the rest of the response. The ideas of Abe being dedicated, appreciative, and generous are clearly developed within the response and are supported with a clear analysis (*shows that Abe is dedicated to his work . . . probably a very important book . . . get this lady her tea; Abe was very understanding of this, although he was desperate for money . . . Abe was appreciative; He didn't have to give them something to eat . . . his own generousness*). There are sufficient, accurate, and direct references to the text (*Mrs. Hornbuckle comes into the store . . . she thanks him and walks out; A farmer named Russ Godbey . . . offered to give him two buckskins instead. Abe accepted them and kept them; A traveler and his family, the Jensens . . . Abe doesn't charge them a dime . . . gives both of the kids a piece of candy*) that support how Abe demonstrates these characteristics. Appropriate transitions link ideas (*With all that was happening, Lastly, Therefore*) and there is appropriate use of precise language to clarify ideas (*ever been brought to your mind, even if you have no clue*). Few errors are present and they mostly do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points



8. In “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the author focuses on Abe’s interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

Abe is a very broad character. He has many characteristics. He is kind hearted. He is generous. He is also loyal.

Abe is kind hearted. He is kind hearted because he didn’t give Mrs.Hornbuckle enough tea. He says “Maybe so, but she’s got another fourth of a pound of tea coming to her.”He did this because he wanted Mrs. Horn buckle to get what she paid for.

He is also generous. Abe is generous because when the man asked him to buy the barrel from him he said yes. He spent all of his own money to pay for the barrel. He also did not know what was in the barrel. That is why Abe is generous.

Abe is also loyal. He is loyal because when Jack says “Fishin’, It’s a perfect morning for fishin’.” Abe says “Maybe I’d better not – someone might want to buy something.” This show loyalty because he wanted to stay and help, instead of goofing off.

Those are some of the characteristics that Abe have. He is kind hearted. He is geneoros. He is also loyal.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is weak and inconsistently supports the characteristics of Abe that are provided in the introduction (*kind hearted, generous, loyal*). The weak analysis identifying the characteristics of Abe lacks clear development. Each of Abe’s qualities is accompanied by a vague reference to the text including a quote and paraphrased text for each (*he didn’t give Mrs. Hornbuckle . . . to get what she paid for; when the man asked him to buy the barrel . . . did not know what was in the barrel; when Jack says “perfect morning for fishin’ . . . might want to buy something”*), but the connections between his actions described in the text and the specific characteristic are not clearly explained. Few transitions link ideas. Errors in usage (*show* instead of *shows*, *have* instead of *has*) may interfere with meaning.

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STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 2 points

8. In "Abe Buys a Barrel," the author focuses on Abe's interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

The author put a lot of characteristics in Abe. His interactions with other characters was all good things. He was helpful, generous, and honest to many different characters.

In the start of the story with Mrs. Hornbuckle he was helpful and honest. He opened the door for her before he normally opens the doors, just so she can get the tea she wanted. Abe gave her the wrong amount she asked for, so he put the rest of the tea Mrs. hornbuckle was supposed to get in a bag for her.

Abe was generous with Godbey. Godbey was supposed to pay Abe for the work he did, but Godbey didn't have the money. Godbey had to use the money for his kids, but Abe understood so he just took the buckskin Godbry offered him instead.

GO ON 

Abe is just the nice guy in the story. The author did a good job portraying that character.

This response inconsistently addresses some parts of the task, demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text. A weak organizational structure inconsistently supports the focus that Abe was helpful, generous, and honest. A weak analysis (*helpful and honest, generous, but Abe understood so he just took the buckskin; Abe is just the nice guy*) and vague references to the text (*He opened the door for her; supposed to get in a bag for her; Godbey was supposed to pay Abe . . . had to use the money for his kids*) inconsistently address the task of analyzing how Abe's interactions with many of the characters reveal specific characteristics of his. The characteristics are identified, but the support is mostly limited to relevant text references with few evaluative statements (*but Abe understood*). Transitions (*In the start of the story*) are used inconsistently and the language is imprecise and general at times (*all good things; nice guy*). Few errors are present and they mostly do not interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point



8. In “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the author focuses on Abe’s interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

In “Abe Buys a Barrel,” the author focuses on Abe’s interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Some characteristics about Abe is to nice to his customers. Abe needs a few customers in his store. In the quote, when Jack said, “How about comin’ with me,” I think when Jack asked Abe that I started to think that business is more important then friendship. Then Abe got his pay check from Godbey.

Abe’s bank account was gettin’ very low, but he was kinda happy that he got his pay check. Abe wasn’t worried about gettin’ rich. Then some lady named Mrs. Jensen came in Abe’s store with kids and tries to sale Abe a barrel. A part of text evidence is that Abe gives the kids free food, but that is why his business is so bad.

After that Abe had brought the barrel and that money had came from his own pockets. That’s when the drama starts. Then Bill asked Abe what the do he have in his store. Bill can’t see how Abe has extra money to spend and then Abe told Bill it came out of his pockets.

This response minimally addresses parts of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is minimal and the introduction does little more than restate part of the prompt and name a characteristic (*Abe is to nice to his customers*). The rest of the response lacks focus. Much of the response is a disorganized retelling of the plot that demonstrates little understanding of how Abe’s interactions with the other characters in the drama reveal specific characteristics of him. Few transitions are used to link ideas. Errors in spelling (*brought* instead of *bought*), usage (*sale* instead of *sell*), and sentence structure (*what the do he have in his*) are present and may interfere with meaning.

STUDENT RESPONSE

Response Score: 1 point

8. In "Abe Buys a Barrel," the author focuses on Abe's interactions with many of the other characters in the drama. Write an essay analyzing how these interactions reveal specific characteristics of Abe. Use evidence from the drama to support your response.

In "Abe Buys a Barrel", Abe show great pleasure in seeing other people happy and being truthful. For example, when Mrs. Hornbuckle pays him too much. he makes it even by giving her another quarter pound. Also, he accepts the deer hides instead of money. Finally, he buys the junk barrel, so that the family does not have to haul it to the west. He is rewarded with a new book that he finds in the "junk barrel."

This response minimally addresses parts of the task, demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text. The organizational structure is minimal and the response lacks development. An insufficient analysis (*Abe show great pleasure in seeing other people happy and being truthful*) is found in the introductory sentence but there is little development of this idea and little sense of a conclusion. Insufficient text references to some of Abe's actions are listed, but there is little explanation of how they relate to the task of analyzing how Abe's interactions with the other characters reveal his characteristics. Errors are present in usage (*show* instead of *shows*, *to* instead of *too*), spelling (*accepts*), and capitalization that may interfere with meaning.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR LANGUAGE QUESTIONS

Directions:

On the following pages are the Language questions.

Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:

Each question will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

STANDALONE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

9. Read the paragraph.

(1) Along the old pioneer trails in the West, you will find a huge rock that looks like the back of a turtle’s shell. (2) During the 1800s, pioneers—many from eastern states like Pennsylvania—would anxiously await the day they would arrive at this special landmark. (3) They knew that if they arrived there by Independence Day, then they would likely be able to make it to California and Oregon before the winter storms began to arrive. (4) Independence Day is the Fourth of July. (5) Because of this, the landmark was named Independence Rock.

Which revision that combines sentences 3 and 4 into one sentence **best** improves the logical relationship between the two sentences?

- A. The Fourth of July, Independence Day, was when they arrived in California and Oregon before the winter storms began to arrive.
- B. Independence Day, to California and Oregon, is where the pioneers wanted to be by the Fourth of July so they could avoid the winter storms.
- C. Arriving by Independence Day, they knew that they would be able to make it to California and Oregon before the winter storms began to arrive on the Fourth of July.
- D. They knew that if they arrived there by Independence Day, the Fourth of July, then they would likely be able to make it to California and Oregon before the winter storms began to arrive.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.3
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	10%
p-value B	7%
p-value C	16%
p-value D	67% (correct answer)
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the revision that combines sentences 3 and 4 into one sentence that best improves the logical relationship between the two sentences. Option D is the correct answer because it concisely revises the events of the sentences in a logistical order that preserves their original meaning and contains all of the original information. Option A is not correct since it does not preserve the meaning of the original sentences. Options B and C are not correct since the order of events in the sentences is unclear, resulting in a loss of meaning.

10. Read the sentence.

After the apartment manager received many complaints from tenants, a builder was hired by her to design a new entrance to the apartment complex.

Without changing the meaning of the sentence, which is the **best** way to rewrite the sentence using only active voice?

- A. After many complaints from tenants were received by the manager of the apartment complex, she hired a builder to design a new entrance to the apartment complex.
- B. After the manager of the apartment complex received many complaints from tenants, she was hired by a builder to design a new entrance to the apartment complex.
- C. After the apartment manager received many complaints from tenants, she hired a builder to design a new entrance to the apartment complex.
- D. After many complaints from the manager were received by tenants, a builder was hired to design a new entrance to the apartment complex.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.1.1.2
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	17%
p-value B	9%
p-value C	65% (correct answer)
p-value D	9%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the revision of the given sentence that only uses the active voice. Option C is the correct answer because both independent and dependent clauses are written in the active voice and the revision maintains the meaning of the original sentence. Option A is not correct since the dependent clause is written in the passive voice. Option B is not correct since the independent clause is written in the passive voice and the revision changes the meaning of the original sentence. Option D is not correct since both the independent and dependent clauses are written in the passive voice and the revision changes the meaning of the original sentence.

11. Read the sentences from a paragraph.

(1) While hot cereals like porridge or oatmeal have been popular in Europe for centuries, cold cereals that are packaged for quick and easy use are the invention of American entrepreneurs. (2) Two such pioneers were Charles Post and W. K. Kellogg, whose companies were founded in Battle Creek, Michigan known at one time as the capital of cereal production. (3) Their companies developed several varieties, such as corn flakes and crisped rice.

Choose the correct way to punctuate sentence 2 to **most** effectively emphasize the underlined information.

- A. Two such pioneers were Charles Post and W. K. Kellogg, whose companies were founded in Battle Creek, Michigan, “known at one time as the capital of cereal production.”
- B. Two such pioneers were Charles Post and W. K. Kellogg, whose companies were founded in Battle Creek, Michigan (known at one time as the capital of cereal production).
- C. Two such pioneers were Charles Post and W. K. Kellogg, whose companies were founded in Battle Creek, Michigan—known at one time as the capital of cereal production.
- D. Two such pioneers were Charles Post and W. K. Kellogg, whose companies were founded in Battle Creek, Michigan, known at one time as the capital of cereal production.

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.5
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	12%
p-value B	32%
p-value C	31% (correct answer)
p-value D	25%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to identify the correct way to punctuate sentence 2 to most effectively emphasize the underlined information. Option C is the correct answer because the use of the em dash emphasizes the information that comes after it. Option A is not correct since quotation marks are not used for emphasis, but to give credit to a source. Option B is not correct since parentheses are used to de-emphasize information. Option D is not correct since the use of commas is not as emphatic as the use of the em dash.

12. Read the paragraph from an essay about Alexander Hamilton.

(1) Alexander Hamilton served as secretary of the treasury in the cabinet of President George Washington. (2) One of his challenges was to come up with a way to get more cash for the United States. (3) His plan included establishing the credit of the new nation. (4) He also needed people to invest in a central bank that would keep the funds of the government secure.

Which sentence should be revised to maintain the formal style of the paragraph?

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

Item Information	
Alignment	D.2.1.4
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
p-value A	14%
p-value B	50% (correct answer)
p-value C	17%
p-value D	19%
Option Annotations	The student is asked to determine which sentence should be revised to maintain the formal style of the paragraph. Option B is the correct answer because the use of the phrase “come up with a way to get more cash” is informal language. Options A, C, and D are not correct since they maintain the formal language of the paragraph.

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS—SAMPLE ITEM SUMMARY DATA

MULTIPLE-CHOICE AND EVIDENCE-BASED SELECTED RESPONSE

Sample Number	Alignment	Answer Key	Depth of Knowledge	p-value A	p-value B	p-value C	p-value D
1	A-V.4.1.2	A	2	68%	6%	18%	8%
2	A-V.4.1.1	B	2	17%	61%	12%	10%
3	A-V.4.1.1	C	2	7%	12%	77%	4%
4	A-C.2.1.3	D	3	7%	25%	15%	53%
5	A-K.1.1.3	Part One: D Part Two: B, D	3	Mean Score: 1.68			
6	A-K.1.1.1	A	2	48%	19%	23%	10%
7	A-K.1.1.2	B	3	12%	49%	22%	17%
9	D.2.1.3	D	2	10%	7%	16%	67%
10	D.1.1.2	C	2	17%	9%	65%	9%
11	D.2.1.5	C	2	12%	32%	31%	25%
12	D.2.1.4	B	2	14%	50%	17%	19%

TEXT-DEPENDENT ANALYSIS

Sample Number	Alignment	Points	Depth of Knowledge	Mean Score
8	E.1.1	4	3	1.94

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ACKNOWLEDGEMENTS

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PSSA Grade 8 English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler

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