

Grade 8 English Language Arts Computer-Based Released Items

The spring 2017 grade 8 English Language Arts test was administered in two formats: a computer-based version and a paper-based version.

Released items from the **computer-based version** of the test are available online at mcas.pearsonsupport.com/released-items. This document provides information about each released item from the computer-based test, including: reporting category, standard(s) covered, item type, item description, and correct answer (for selected-response items only). Information about unreleased operational items is also presented here, along with scoring rubrics for essay questions.

Released items from the **paper-based version** of the test are available on the Department’s website at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html.

Grade 8 English Language Arts Spring 2017 Computer-Based Released Operational Items: Reporting Categories, Standards, Item Descriptions, and Correct Answers

Item No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Item Type*	Description	Correct Answer (SR)**
1	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.3	SR	Analyze how incidents in a passage reveal aspects of character.	A
2	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.1	SR	Make an inference based on information in the excerpt.	D
3	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.1	SR	Make an inference about characters in an excerpt.	B
4	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.2	SR	Analyze the development of a central idea in an excerpt.	D
5	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.2	SR	Determine the theme of an excerpt.	B
6	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.6	SR	Analyze characters’ points of view to determine a character’s feelings.	A
7	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.3	SR	Analyze the attitude of a character based on dialogue from the excerpt.	D
8	<i>Language</i>	L.8.4	SR	Determine the meaning of unknown words using context.	A
9	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.9	SR	Compare how two excerpts address similar topics.	D
10	<i>Writing Language</i>	W.8.2, W.8.4, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3	ES	Write an essay explaining similarities between characters from two different excerpts; use information from both excerpts to support the explanation.	

* ELA item types are: selected-response (SR), constructed-response (CR), and essay (ES).

**Answers are provided here for selected-response items only. Sample responses and scoring guidelines for any constructed-response and essay items will be posted to the Department’s website later this year.

Grade 8 English Language Arts
Spring 2017 Computer-Based Unreleased Operational Items:
Reporting Categories, Standards, and Item Descriptions

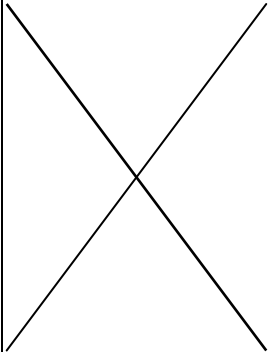
Item No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Item Type*	Description
11	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.3	SR	Analyze how lines in a passage reveal character and identify supporting evidence.
12	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.2	SR	Analyze how the setting is related to the central idea in a passage and identify supporting evidence.
13	<i>Reading</i>	RL.8.2	SR	Determine the theme of a passage and identify supporting evidence.
14	<i>Language</i>	L.8.4	SR	Determine the meaning of a phrase in a passage and identify supporting evidence.
15	<i>Writing Language</i>	W.8.3, W.8.4, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3	ES	Rewrite the passage from another character's point of view.
16	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.1	SR	Make an inference about a character in an excerpt.
17	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.3	SR	Analyze which character trait is most revealed in a section of the excerpt.
18	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.4	SR	Analyze the technical use of word choice in the excerpt.
19	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.5	SR	Analyze a shift in attitude among characters by noting how specific portions of an excerpt relate to each other and to the whole.
20	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.6	SR	Determine the author's point of view.
21	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.4	SR	Analyze the effect of a phrase on meaning in a commentary.
22	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.2	SR	Analyze the development of a central idea over the course of an excerpt and commentary.
23	<i>Reading</i>	RI.8.2	SR	Determine the central idea common to an excerpt and a commentary.
24	<i>Language</i>	L.8.4	SR	Determine the meaning of unknown words using context from two texts.
25	<i>Writing Language</i>	W.8.2, W.8.4, L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3	ES	Write an essay explaining how an important event affected characters in a specific way; use information from the excerpt and commentary to support the explanation.

* ELA item types are: selected-response (SR), constructed-response (CR), and essay (ES).

Scoring rubric for Grade 8 items #10 and #25: Essay

Idea Development		Conventions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • QUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRAL IDEA • SELECTION AND EXPLANATION OF EVIDENCE/DETAILS • ORGANIZATION • EXPRESSION OF IDEAS • AWARENESS OF TASK AND MODE 		<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENTENCE STRUCTURE • GRAMMAR, USAGE AND MECHANICS 	
5	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea is insightful and fully developed • Skillful selection and explanation of evidence/details • Skillful and/or subtle organization • Rich expression of ideas • Full awareness of the task/mode 	3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Consistent control of a variety of sentence structures relative to length of essay • Consistent control of grammar, usage and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea is clear and well-developed • Effective selection and explanation of evidence/details • Effective organization • Clear expression of ideas • Full awareness of the task/mode 	2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Mostly consistent control of sentence structures relative to length of essay • Mostly consistent control of grammar, usage and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea is general and moderately developed • Appropriate selection and explanation of evidence/details • Moderate organization • Adequate expression of ideas • Sufficient awareness of the task/mode 	1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Little control and/or no variety in sentence structure and/or • Little control of grammar, usage and mechanics relative to complexity and/or insufficient length
		0	Sentences are formed incorrectly with no control of grammar, usage and mechanics and/or insufficient length
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea may be present and is somewhat developed • Limited selection and explanation of evidence/details • Limited organization • Basic expression of ideas • Partial awareness of the task/mode 		
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Central idea is not developed • Insufficient evidence/details • Minimal organization • Poor expression of ideas • Minimal awareness of the task/mode 		
0	The response shows evidence the student has read the text, but does not address the question or incorrectly responds to the question.		

Scoring rubric for Grade 8 item #15: Essay

	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
Written Expression	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is effectively developed with narrative elements and is consistently appropriate to the task; is effectively organized with clear and coherent writing; establishes and maintains an effective style. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is mostly effectively developed with narrative elements and is mostly appropriate to the task; is organized with mostly clear and coherent writing; establishes and maintains a mostly effective style. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is developed with some narrative elements and is generally appropriate to the task; demonstrates some organization with somewhat coherent writing; has a style that is somewhat effective. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is minimally developed with few narrative elements and is limited in its appropriateness to the task; demonstrates limited organization and coherence; has a style that has limited effectiveness. 	<p>The student response</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> is undeveloped and/or inappropriate to the task; lacks organization and coherence; has an inappropriate style.
Knowledge of Language and Conventions		<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates full command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be a few minor errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage, but meaning is clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates some command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that occasionally impede understanding, but the meaning is generally clear.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates limited command of the conventions of standard English at an appropriate level of complexity. There may be errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage that often impede understanding.</p>	<p>The student response to the prompt demonstrates no command of the conventions of standard English. Frequent and varied errors in mechanics, grammar, and usage impede understanding.</p>