

**Computer-Based Released Items**  
**Grade 8 MCAS English Language Arts**  
**Spring 2019**

The spring 2019 grade 8 English Language Arts test was administered in two primary formats: a computer-based version and a paper-based version. The vast majority of students took the computer-based test. The paper-based test was offered as an accommodation for students with disabilities who are unable to use a computer, as well as for English learners who are new to the country and are unfamiliar with technology.

The Department of Elementary and Secondary Education is releasing items from both versions of the test to provide information about the knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate.

- Released items from the **computer-based test** are available online at [mcas.pearsonsupport.com/released-items](http://mcas.pearsonsupport.com/released-items). The computer-based released items are collected in a mini test called an ePAT (electronic practice assessment tool). Items in the ePAT are displayed in TestNav 8, the testing platform for the computer-based tests.
- Released items from the **paper-based test** are available in PDF format on the Department’s website at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html).

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, and scoring rubrics are provided for released essay items.

### **A Note about Testing Mode**

Most of the operational items on the grade 8 ELA test were the same, regardless of whether a student took the computer-based version or the paper-based version. In places where a technology-enhanced item was used on the computer-based test, an adapted version of the item was created for use on the paper test. These adapted paper items were multiple-choice or multiple-select items that tested the same ELA content and assessed the same standard as the technology-enhanced item.

**Grade 8 English Language Arts**  
**Spring 2019 Computer-Based Released Operational Items**

CBT Item No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Item Type*	Item Description	Correct Answer (SR)**
1	Reading	RL.8.4	SR	Analyze figurative language in a passage to understand a character.	B
2	Reading	RL.8.2	SR	Determine how a single paragraph helps develop the central idea of a passage and select supporting evidence from provided details from the passage.	A;C
3	Reading	RL.8.4	SR	Analyze an instance of irony in a passage.	C
4	Reading	RL.8.1	SR	Make an inference about a character in a passage based on details from a single paragraph.	D
5	Language	L.8.4	SR	Use context clues to determine the meaning of a word in a passage.	D
6	Reading	RL.8.5	SR	Analyze the role of a paragraph in the overall structure of a passage.	B
7	Reading	RL.8.3	SR	Identify significant character traits of characters in a passage.	<i>see page 4</i>
8	Language, Writing	L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3, W.8.2, W.8.4	ES	Write an essay analyzing multiple characters in a passage; use details from the passage to support the analysis.	<i>see page 5</i>

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

\*\*Answers are provided here for selected-response items only. Scoring rubrics for essay items are also provided in this document. Sample responses and scoring guidelines for essay items will be posted to the Department's website later this year.

**Grade 8 English Language Arts**  
**Spring 2019 Computer-Based Unreleased Operational Items**

CBT Item No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Item Type*	Item Description
9	Reading	RI.8.5	SR	Determine the purpose of a section header in an article.
10	Language	L.8.4	SR	Use context clues to determine the meaning of a word in an article.
11	Reading	RI.8.6	SR	Determine the reason for the inclusion of specific supporting evidence in an article.
12	Reading	RI.8.8	SR	Distinguish between facts and unproven claims presented in an article.
13	Reading	RI.8.6	SR	Compare the points of view of two authors writing on the same subject.
14	Reading	RI.8.5	SR	Analyze the similar purpose of paragraphs in two articles on the same subject.
15	Reading	RI.8.2	SR	Identify the main idea of a paragraph in an article and identify evidence from another article that supports the same main idea.
16	Language, Writing	L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3, W.8.2, W.8.4	ES	Write an essay explaining how the authors of articles on a similar subject help readers understand the subject; use details from both articles to support the explanation.
17	Reading	RL.8.4	SR	Analyze the effect of figurative language in a passage.
18	Reading	RL.8.1	SR	Make an inference about a character in a passage based on her actions.
19	Language	L.8.2	SR	Explain the role of a punctuation mark in a sentence.
20	Reading	RL.8.5	SR	Analyze how sentence length helps reveal a character's attitude.
21	Reading	RL.8.3	SR	Analyze the relationship between characters in a passage based on their interactions.
22	Reading	RL.8.3	SR	Determine a character's motivation in a passage and select supporting evidence from given details from the passage.
23	Reading	RL.8.3	SR	Identify the different attitudes behind a character's reactions to events in a passage.
24	Language, Writing	L.8.1, L.8.2, L.8.3, W.8.3, W.8.4	ES	Write a narrative that retells the events of a passage from the point of view of a secondary character; use details from the passage to support the narrative.

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

**Correct Answer for CBT Item #7: Technology-Enhanced Item**

**Douglas**

**single-minded  
while pursuing a  
goal**

**Both Characters**

**thoughtful in  
interactions with  
others**

**Mr. Sanderson**

**open to  
convincing  
persuasion**

## Scoring Rubric for Grade 8 Item #8: Essay

<b>Idea Development</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>QUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRAL IDEA *</b></li> <li>• <b>SELECTION AND EXPLANATION OF EVIDENCE AND/OR DETAILS *</b></li> <li>• <b>ORGANIZATION</b></li> <li>• <b>EXPRESSION OF IDEAS</b></li> <li>• <b>AWARENESS OF TASK AND MODE</b></li> </ul>	
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is insightful and fully developed</li> <li>• Skillful selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Skillful and/or subtle organization</li> <li>• Rich expression of ideas</li> <li>• Full awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is clear and well-developed</li> <li>• Effective selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Effective organization</li> <li>• Clear expression of ideas</li> <li>• Full awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is general and moderately developed</li> <li>• Appropriate selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Moderate organization</li> <li>• Adequate expression of ideas</li> <li>• Sufficient awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea may be present and is somewhat developed</li> <li>• Limited selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Limited organization</li> <li>• Basic expression of ideas</li> <li>• Partial awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is not developed</li> <li>• Insufficient evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Minimal organization</li> <li>• Poor expression of ideas</li> <li>• Minimal awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response shows evidence the student has read the text, but does not address the question or incorrectly responds to the question.</li> </ul>

\*For narrative writing (Standard 3), the quality and development of narrative elements will be assessed in place of a central idea. Narrative elements should include, but are not limited to: plot, character, setting, dialogue, action, and/or description. Students should use evidence/details to demonstrate understanding of text.

<b>Standard English Conventions</b>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• <b>SENTENCE STRUCTURE</b></li> <li>• <b>GRAMMAR, USAGE, AND MECHANICS</b></li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent control of a variety of sentence structures relative to length of essay</li> <li>• Consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly consistent control of sentence structures relative to length of essay</li> <li>• Mostly consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little control and/or no variety in sentence structure and/or</li> <li>• Little control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or insufficient length</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences are formed incorrectly with no control of grammar, usage, and mechanics and/or insufficient length.</li> </ul>