

Computer-Based Released Items
Grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts
Spring 2021

The spring 2021 grade 10 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. 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.

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). Scoring rubrics are also provided for released essay items.

A Note about Testing Mode

Most of the operational items on the grade 10 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 10 English Language Arts
Spring 2021 Computer-Based Released Operational Items

| CBT Item No. | Reporting Category | Standard | Item Type¹ | Item Description | Correct Answer (SR)² |
|---------------------|---------------------------|--|------------------------------|--|--|
| 1 | Language | L.9-10.4 | SR | Identify the meaning of a phrase in the passage. | B |
| 2 | Reading | RL.9-10.3 | SR | Determine what a description suggests about a character. | D |
| 3 | Language | L.9-10.4 | SR | Identify what two words with similar meanings show about a character. | A |
| 4 | Reading | RL.9-10.1 | SR | Make an inference about a character based on evidence from the passage. | D |
| 5 | Reading | RL.9-10.3 | SR | Determine how a character in one passage is similar to a character in a second passage. | A |
| 6 | Reading | RL.9-10.3 | SR | Identify a similarity shared by the main characters in three passages. | C |
| 7 | Reading | RL.9-10.4 | SR | Determine the effect of a sentence in one passage and identify a detail from a second passage that has the same effect. | C;D |
| 8 | Reading | RL.9-10.4 | SR | Identify literary devices used in details from three passages. | <i>see page 4</i> |
| 9 | Language, Writing | L.9-10.1, L.9-10.2, L.9-10.3, W.9-10.2, W.9-10.4 | ES | Write an essay explaining the techniques the authors use to reveal the personalities of the main characters in three passages; use information from each passage to develop the essay. | <i>see page 6</i> |
| 10 | Reading | RL.9-10.4 | SR | Interpret the effect of a phrase in the poem. | D |
| 11 | Reading | RL.9-10.3 | SR | Determine how a character influences the speakers in two poems. | D |
| 12 | Reading | RL.9-10.2 | SR | Identify a central idea shared by two poems based on a quotation from each poem. | A |
| 13 | Reading | RL.9-10.2 | SR | Determine a central idea of one poem and identify a detail that suggests the same idea in a second poem. | C;D |
| 14 | Reading | RI.9-10.7 | SR | Determine how a text feature is important to the passage. | D |
| 15 | Language | L.9-10.4 | SR | Determine the meaning of a word in context. | B |
| 16 | Reading | RI.9-10.4 | SR | Identify the purpose of a phrase in the passage. | B |
| 17 | Reading | RI.9-10.3 | SR | Determine what excerpted sentences from two passages suggest about two individuals. | D |
| 18 | Reading | RI.9-10.6 | SR | Identify the main purpose of similar sentences from two different passages. | A |
| 19 | Reading | RI.9-10.9 | SR | Determine how the experiences of two individuals in two passages were most alike. | C |
| 20 | Reading | RI.9-10.2 | SR | Determine a main idea of one passage and identify evidence from a second passage that suggests the same idea. | C;B |
| 21 | Reading | RI.9-10.4 | SR | Identify the mood conveyed by details from two passages. | <i>see page 4</i> |

| CBT Item No. | Reporting Category | Standard | Item Type ¹ | Item Description | Correct Answer (SR) ² |
|--------------|--------------------|--|------------------------|--|----------------------------------|
| 22 | Language, Writing | L.9-10.1, L.9-10.2, L.9-10.3, W.9-10.2, W.9-10.4 | ES | Write an essay comparing and contrasting the emotions of an individual in one passage with the emotions of an individual in a second passage; use information from both passages to develop the essay. | <i>see page 6</i> |
| 23 | Reading | RL.9-10.6 | SR | Determine what a sentence reveals about an individual's point of view in the passage. | A |
| 24 | Reading | RL.9-10.1 | SR | Identify key details in the passage. | A |
| 25 | Reading | RL.9-10.4 | SR | Determine the impact of the repetition of a phrase. | A |
| 26 | Reading | RL.9-10.1 | SR | Determine the main effect of two excerpted sentences. | C |
| 27 | Reading | RL.9-10.5 | SR | Analyze the structure of the passage. | B |
| 28 | Language | L.9-10.2 | SR | Identify the function of phrases set off by dashes. | A |
| 29 | Reading | RL.9-10.2 | SR | Interpret the meaning of a sentence in the passage and identify additional evidence that supports the same meaning. | A;D |
| 30 | Reading | RL.9-10.4 | SR | Determine whether details from the passage mainly contribute to mood, setting, or characterization. | <i>see page 5</i> |

¹ ELA item types are selected-response (SR) and essay (ES).

²Answers 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.

Correct Answer for CBT Item #8: Technology-Enhanced Item

| Detail | Metaphor | Fore-shadowing | Under-statement |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| "Javert unsmiling was a bulldog; when he laughed he was a tiger." (paragraph 4 of <i>Les Misérables</i>) | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| "'You crossed my path on the 4th of January,' said he. 'On the 23d you incommoded me; by the middle of February I was seriously inconvenienced by you; . . .'" (paragraph 18 of "The Final Problem") | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |
| "'This is not danger,' said he. 'It is inevitable destruction.'" (paragraph 24 of "The Final Problem") | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| "Something about the build of his frame—his musculature, his stance and carriage—made it easier to imagine him doing some physical violence to someone—swinging a wooden club—than being sedate and civil." (paragraph 1 of <i>Where the Sea Used to Be</i>) | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |

Correct Answer for CBT Item #21: Technology-Enhanced Item

| Sense of Isolation | Sense of Danger |
|---|---|
| "... in seconds the divers become toy figures far above on the churning surface." (paragraph 7 of "Pressure Dive") | "My sub <i>DEEPSEA CHALLENGER</i> heaves and lurches as huge Pacific swells roll above me." (paragraph 2 of "Pressure Dive") |
| "Through the barrier of the suit, the world can still be seen, but that is all—not smelled, or heard, or felt, or tasted." (paragraph 1 of <i>Carrying the Fire</i>) | "With all the checks, and counterchecks, and tests and verifications, could someone have forgotten to fill the tank with our rendezvous fuel?" (paragraph 4 of <i>Carrying the Fire</i>) |
| "... we cannot see it or any other part of the outside world, save a tiny patch of blue sky overhead." (paragraph 5 of <i>Carrying the Fire</i>) | |

Correct Answer for CBT Item #30: Technology-Enhanced Item

| Detail | Mood | Setting | Characterization |
|--|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|----------------------------------|
| <p>"No matter the plan, no matter the words of caution during briefings, what might start sensibly began to pick up speed and soon everything was imbued with a frantic sense of urgency." (paragraph 5)</p> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <p>"Sleds would be shattered, turned into kindling, and mushers would be dragged for blocks. . . ." (paragraph 7)</p> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <p>"There was only two inches of snow on the street, trucked in for the start. . . ." (paragraph 7)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> |
| <p>"We had worked together for two years and she knew how to lead incredibly well and I trusted her completely." (paragraph 12)</p> | <input type="radio"/> | <input type="radio"/> | <input checked="" type="radio"/> |

Scoring Rubric for Grade 10 Items #9 and #22: Essay

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

*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.

| Standard English Conventions | |
|---|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • SENTENCE STRUCTURE • GRAMMAR, USAGE, AND MECHANICS | |
| 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 |
| 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 |
| 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 | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Sentences are formed incorrectly with no control of grammar, usage, and mechanics and/or insufficient length. |