

# ELA Practice Test

## 5 Fiction Reading Passages

Read the text and answer the questions.

**Excerpt from The Lightning Thief**  
by Rick Riordan

Look, I didn't want to be a half-blood.

If you're reading this because you think you might be one, my advice is close this book right now. It's how whatever in your mom or dad told you about your birth, and try to lead a normal life.

Being a half-blood is dangerous. It's scary. Most of the time, it gets you killed in painful, nasty ways.

If you're a normal kid, reading this because you think it's fiction, great. Good as I wish you for being able to believe that none of this ever happened.

But if you recognize yourself in these pages—if you feel something strange inside—stop reading immediately. You might be one of us. And when you know that, it's only a matter of time before they notice it too, and they'll come for you.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

My name is Percy Jackson. I'm twelve years old. Until a few months ago, I was a budding student in Valley Woods, a private school for troubled kids in upstate New York.

Am I a troubled kid?

Yeah. You could say that.

I could start at any point in my often miserable life to prove it, but things really started going bad last May, when my sixth-grade class took a field trip to Manhattan, twenty-eight excited new kids and two teachers on a yellow school bus, heading to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to look at ancient Greek and Roman stuff.

I know, it sounds like summer. Most kids freak their parents.

But Mr. Bruner, our Latin teacher, was loving the trip, so I had hopes.

Mr. Bruner was this middle-aged guy in a starched white shirt. He had thinning hair and a scruffy beard and a faded towel jacket, which always smelled like coffee. I wouldn't think he'd be cool, but he told stories and jokes and let us play games.

He also had this awesome collection of Roman armor and weapons, so he was a teacher whose class didn't just die to sleep.

I hoped the trip would be okay. At least, I hoped that for once I wouldn't get in trouble. But, was I wrong?

**3**

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer Part B.

**Part A**

Which of these conclusions is **best** supported in the text?

Ⓐ Percy will get in trouble on his field trip.  
Ⓑ Percy will discover he is a half-blood on his next field trip.  
Ⓒ Percy will learn more about his teacher Mr. Bruner.  
Ⓓ Percy will leave his learning school.

**Part B**

Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

Ⓐ Am I a troubled kid? Yeah. You could say that.  
Ⓑ Being a half-blood is dangerous. It's scary.  
Ⓒ If you're a normal kid, reading this because you think it's fiction is fine, and there's nothing wrong with that.  
Ⓓ At least, I hoped that for once I wouldn't get in trouble. But, was I wrong?

**4**

Read the following lines from the text.

I hoped the trip would be okay. At least, I hoped that for once I wouldn't get in trouble. But, was I wrong?

Which **best** matches the feeling the narrator is trying to express?

Ⓐ Mad  
Ⓑ Optimistic  
Ⓒ Excited  
Ⓓ Worried

**1**

Read the following lines from the text.

Look, I didn't want to be a half-blood.

If you're reading this because you think you might be one, my advice is close this book right now. It's how whatever in your mom or dad told you about your birth, and try to lead a normal life.

Being a half-blood is dangerous. It's scary. Most of the time, it gets you killed in painful, nasty ways.

If you're a normal kid, reading this because you think it's fiction, great. Good as I wish you for being able to believe that none of this ever happened.

But if you recognize yourself in these pages—if you feel something strange inside—stop reading immediately. You might be one of us. And when you know that, it's only a matter of time before they notice it too, and they'll come for you.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

Which of the following **best** summarizes a central idea of this text?

Ⓐ A kid who is not so normal and all the trouble he goes through to be normal.  
Ⓑ Being half-blood is dangerous and you could get killed in painful, nasty ways.  
Ⓒ A kid giving advice about being a half-blood.  
Ⓓ A not so normal kid who realized many of the troubles he was having were due to being a half-blood.

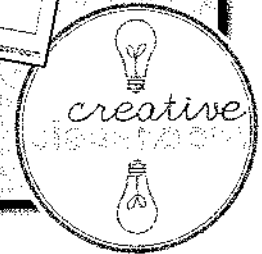
**2**

According to the passage where does the main character get into trouble? Select two options.

Ⓐ  at private school  
Ⓑ  on a field trip  
Ⓒ  in the classroom  
Ⓓ  at home  
Ⓔ  the library  
Ⓕ  on the playground

Excerpts from:  
Mockingjay,  
The Lightning Thief,  
Divergent and The Giver

Grades  
6-8



Read the text and answer the questions.

## Excerpt from Mockingjay

by Suzanne Collins

I stare down at my shoes, watching as a fine layer of ash settles on the worn leather. This is where the bed I shared with my sister, Prim, stood. Over there was the kitchen table. The bricks of the chimney, which collapsed in a charred heap, provide a point of reference for the rest of the house. How else could I orient myself in this sea of gray?

Almost nothing remains of District 12. A month ago, the Capitol's firebombs obliterated the poor coal miner's house in the seam, the shops in the town, even the Justice Building. The only area that escaped incineration was the Victor's Village. I don't know why exactly. Perhaps so anyone forced to come here on capital business would have somewhere decent to stay. The odd reporter. A committee assessing the condition of the coal mines. A squad of peacekeepers checking for returning refugees.

But no one is returning except me. And that's only for a brief visit. The authorities in District 13 were against my coming back. They viewed it as a costly and pointless venture given that at least a dozen hovercrafts are circling overhead for my protection and there's no intelligence to be gained. I had to see it, though. So much so that I made it a condition of my cooperating with any of their plans.

Finally, Plutarch Heavensbee, the Head Gamemaker who had organized the rebels in the Capital, threw up his hands. "Let her go. Better to waste a day than another month. Maybe a little tour of Twelve is just what she needs to convince her we're on the same side."

The same side. A pain stabs my left temple and I press my hand against it. Right on the spot where Johanna Mason hit me with a coil of wire. The memories swirl as I try to sort out what is true and what is false. What series of events led me to be standing in the ruins of my city? This is hard because the effects of the concussion she gave me haven't completely subsided and my thoughts still have a tendency to jumble together. Also, the drugs used to control my pain and mood sometimes make me see things. I guess. I'm still not entirely convinced that I was hallucinating the night the floor of my hospital room transformed into a carpet of writhing snakes.

I use a technique one of the doctors suggested. I start with the simplest things I know to be true and work toward the more complicated. The list begins to roll in my head....

*My name is Katniss Everdeen. I am seventeen years old. My home is District 12. I was in the Hunger Games. I escaped. The Capital hates me. Peeta was taken prisoner.*

Excerpt from *Mockingjay* by Suzanne Collins. Copyright © 2010 by Suzanne Collins.

**4**

Read the paragraph from the text.

The same side. A pain stabs my left temple and I press my hand against it. Right on the spot where Johanna Mason hit me with a coil of wire. The memories swirl as I try to sort out what is true and what is false. What series of events led me to be standing in the ruins of my city? This is hard because the effects of the concussion she gave me haven't completely subsided and my thoughts still have a tendency to jumble together. Also, the drugs used to control my pain and mood sometimes make me see things. I guess. I'm still not entirely convinced that I was hallucinating the night the floor of my hospital room transformed into a carpet of writhing snakes

Which words does the author use to show the narrator's confusion? Select **two** options.

- A  concussion
- B  pain
- C  ruin
- D  hallucinating
- E  control
- F  memories

**5**

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A**

Which **best** expresses the purpose of the memory flashback in this story?

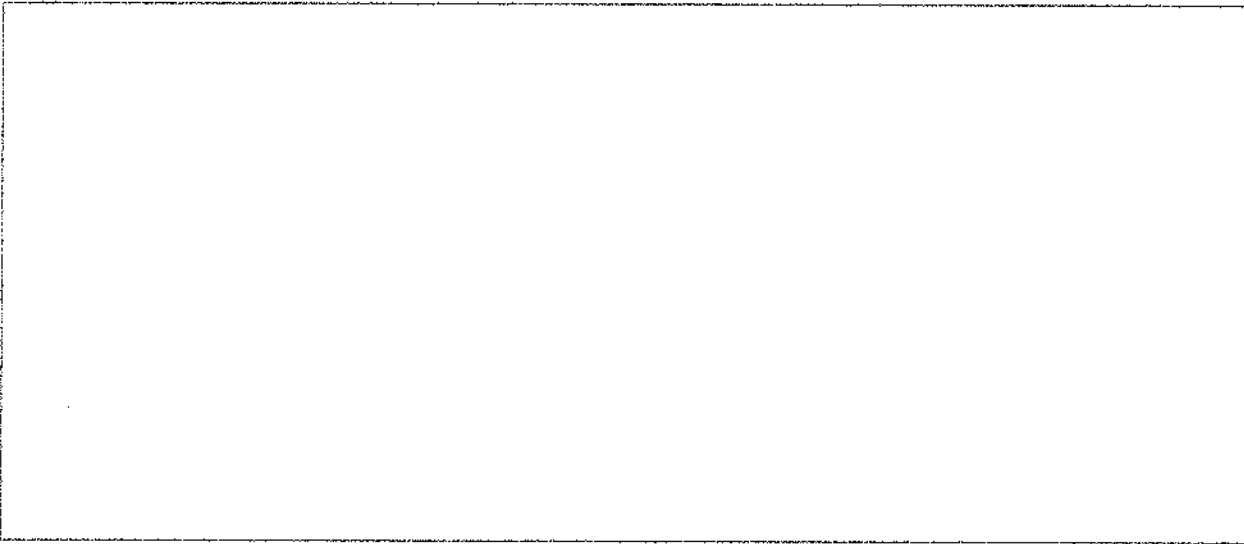
- (A) It shows the reader that she is in present time.
- (B) It suggests that the author is looking for the family she loves.
- (C) It explains the narrator's own confusion as she pieces together what has happened.
- (D) It tells what the narrator is going to do about the bombing.

**Part B**

Underline a sentence in the text that best supports your answer in part A?

9

Summarize what happens while Katniss returns to District 12. Use key events from the text to support your summary.



10

A theme expressed in the story centers on

- (A) helping those who are in need.
- (B) making the best of a bad situation.
- (C) hiding your anger from others.
- (D) forget the past and move on.

Read the text and answer the questions.

## Excerpt from *The Lightning Thief*

by Rick Riordan

Look, I didn't want to be a half-blood.

If you're reading this because you think you might be one, my advice is close this book right now. Believe whatever lie your mom or dad told you about your birth, and try to lead a normal life.

Being a half-blood is dangerous. It's scary. Most of the time, it gets you killed in painful, nasty ways.

If you're a normal kid, reading this because you think it's fiction, great. Read on. I envy you for being able to believe that none of this ever happened.

But if you recognize yourself in these pages - if you feel something stirring inside - stop reading immediately. You might be one of us. And once you know that, it's only a matter of time before they sense it too, and they'll come for you.

Don't say I didn't warn you.

My name is Percy Jackson. I'm twelve years old. Until a few months ago, I was a boarding student at Yancy Academy, a private school for troubled kids in upstate New York.

Am I a troubled kid?

Yeah. You could say that.

I could start at any point in my short miserable life to prove it, but things really started going bad last May, when our sixth-grade class took a field trip to Manhattan, twenty-eight mental-case kids and two teachers on a yellow school bus, heading to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to look at ancient Greek and Roman stuff.

I know, it sounds like torture. Most Yancy field trips were.

But Mr. Brunner, our Latin teacher, was leading this trip, so I had hopes.

Mr. Brunner was this middle-aged guy in a motorized wheelchair. He had thinning hair and a scruffy beard and a frayed tweed jacket, which always smelled like coffee. You wouldn't think he'd be cool, but he told stories and jokes and let us play games in class. He also had this awesome collection of Roman armor and weapons, so he was the only teacher whose class didn't put me to sleep.

I hoped the trip would be okay. At least, I hoped that for once I wouldn't get in trouble.

Boy, was I wrong.

Excerpt from *The Lightning Thief* by Rick Riordan. Copyright © 2005 by Rick Riordan.

3

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

Which of these conclusions is **best** supported in the text?

- Ⓐ Percy will get in trouble on his field trip.
- Ⓑ Percy will discover he is a half-blood on his next field trip.
- Ⓒ Percy will learn more about his teacher Mr. Brunner.
- Ⓓ Percy will leave his boarding school.

Part B

Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- Ⓐ Am I a troubled kid? Yeah. You could say that.
- Ⓑ Being a half-blood is dangerous. It's scary.
- Ⓒ If you're a normal kid, reading this because you think it's fiction, great.
- Ⓓ At least, I hoped that for once I wouldn't get in trouble. Boy, was I wrong.

4

Read the following lines from the text.

I hoped the trip would be okay. At least, I hoped that for once I wouldn't get in trouble.  
Boy, was I wrong.

Which **best** matches the feeling the narrator is **trying** to express?

- Ⓐ Mad
- Ⓑ Optimistic
- Ⓒ Excited
- Ⓓ Worried

8

Read the line from the text.

“if you feel something stirring inside...”

What does the narrator mean in the following line from the text?

- (A) If you do not feel threatened by the actions.
- (B) If you understand what’s happening in the story.
- (C) If you enjoy the events and happenings of the story.
- (D) If you feel something familiar about the story.

9

Read the paragraph from the text.

I could start at any point in my short miserable life to prove it, but things really started going bad last May, when our sixth-grade class took a field trip to Manhattan, twenty-eight mental-case kids and two teachers on a yellow school bus, heading to the Metropolitan Museum of Art to look at ancient Greek and Roman stuff.

Why is the paragraph important to the text?

- (A) It tells where Percy is when he’s telling the story.
- (B) It sets the stage for where everything begins for Percy.
- (C) It has important details about Percy’s life.
- (D) It shows how Percy feels about field trips.

10

Which of these **most likely** describes why the author decided to end the text in this way?

- (A) The author wanted to inform the reader about what really happened.
- (B) The author wanted to describe who Percy is as a character.
- (C) The author wanted to build suspense to catch the reader’s attention.
- (D) The author wanted to summarize the events that occurred in the text.

Read the text and answer the questions.

## Excerpt from *Divergent*

by Veronica Roth

There is one mirror in my house. It is behind a sliding panel in the hallway upstairs. Our faction allows me to stand in front of it on the second day of every third month, the day my mother cuts my hair. I sit on the stool and my mother stands behind me with the scissors, trimming. The strands fall on the floor in a dull, blond ring. When she finishes, she pulls my hair away from my face and twists it into a knot. I note how calm she looks and how focused she is. She is well-practiced in the art of losing herself. I can't say the same of myself. I sneak a look at my reflection when she isn't paying attention—not for the sake of vanity, but out of curiosity. A lot can happen to a person's appearance in three months. In my reflection, I see a narrow face, wide, round eyes, and a long, thin nose—I still look like a little girl, though sometime in the last few months I turned sixteen. The other factions celebrate birthdays, but we don't. It would be self-indulgent. "There," she says when she pins the knot in place. Her eyes catch mine in the mirror. It is too late to look away, but instead of scolding me, she smiles at our reflection.

I frown a little. Why doesn't she reprimand me for staring at myself? "So today is the day," she says. "Yes," I reply. "Are you nervous?" I stare into my own eyes for a moment. Today is the day of the aptitude test that will show me which of the five factions I belong in. And tomorrow, at the Choosing Ceremony, I will decide on a faction; I will decide the rest of my life; I will decide to stay with my family or abandon them. "No," I say. "The tests don't have to change our choices." "Right." She smiles. "Let's go eat breakfast." "Thank you. For cutting my hair." She kisses my cheek and slides the panel over the mirror. I think my mother could be beautiful, in a different world. Her body is thin beneath the gray robe. She has high cheekbones and long eyelashes, and when she lets her hair down at night, it hangs in waves over her shoulders. But she must hide that beauty in Abnegation. We walk together to the kitchen. On these mornings when my brother makes breakfast, and my father's hand skims my hair as he reads the newspaper, and my mother hums as she clears the table—it is on these mornings that I feel guiltiest for wanting to leave them.



4

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

What conclusion can be made about the faction or group the narrator lives in?

- Ⓐ They try to be selfless.
- Ⓑ They value beauty.
- Ⓒ They try to be honest.
- Ⓓ They value family.

Part B

Which sentence from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- Ⓐ She is well-practiced in the art of losing herself.
- Ⓑ She has high cheekbones and long eyelashes, and when she lets her hair down at night, it hangs in waves over her shoulders.
- Ⓒ The other factions celebrate birthdays, but we don't. It would be self-indulgent.
- Ⓓ I will decide the rest of my life; I will decide to stay with my family or abandon them.

5

Summarize what happens throughout the text. Use key events from the text to support your summary.

9

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

What will **most likely** happen when the narrator makes her choice at the Choosing Ceremony?

- (A) She will stay in her family's faction.
- (B) She will leave her family's faction.
- (C) She will be unable to make a choice.
- (D) She will let someone else make her choice.

Part B

Which part from the text **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A) ...it is on these mornings that I feel guiltiest for wanting to leave them.
- (B) "No," I say. "The tests don't have to change our choices."
- (C) And tomorrow, at the Choosing Ceremony, I will decide on a faction...
- (D) Today is the day of the aptitude test that will show me which of the five factions I belong in.

10

What is the significance of the mirror in the text? Support your answer with details from the text.

Read the text and answer the questions.

## Excerpt from *The Giver* Chapter 1

by Lois Lowry

It was almost December, and Jonas was beginning to be frightened. No. Wrong word, Jonas thought. Frightened meant that deep, sickening feeling of something terrible about to happen. Frightened was the way he had felt a year ago when an unidentified aircraft had overflown the community twice. He had seen it both times. Squinting toward the sky, he had seen the sleet jet, almost a blur at its high speed, go past, and a second later heard the blast of sound that followed. Then one more time, a moment later, from the opposite direction, the same plane.

At first, he had been only fascinated. He had never seen an aircraft so close, for it was against the rules for Pilots to fly over the community. Occasionally, when supplies were delivered by cargo planes to the landing field across the river, the children rode their bicycles to the riverbank and watched, intrigued, the unloading and then the takeoff directed to the west, always away from the community.

But the aircraft a year ago had been different. It was not a squat, fat-bellied cargo plane but a needle-nosed single-pilot jet. Jonas, looking around anxiously, had seen other adults as well as children stop what they were doing and wait, confused, for an explanation of the frightening event.

Then all of the citizens had been ordered to go into the nearest building and stay there. **IMMEDIATELY**, the rasping voice through the speakers had said. **LEAVE YOUR BICYCLES WHERE THEY ARE.**

Instantly, obediently, Jonas had dropped his bike on its side on the path behind his family's dwelling. He had run indoors and stayed there, alone. His parents were both at work, and his sister Lily, was at the childcare center where she spend her after-school hours.

Looking through the front window, he had seen no people: none of the busy afternoon crew of street cleaners, Landscape Workers, and Food Delivery people who usually populated the community at that time of day. He saw only the abandoned bikes here and there on their sides: an upturned wheel, one was still revolving slowly.

He had been frightened then. The sense of his own community silent, waiting, had made his stomach churn. He had trembled.

But it had been nothing. Within minutes the speakers had crackled again, and the voice reassuring now and less urgent, had explained that a Pilot-in-Training had misread his navigational instructions and made a wrong turn. Desperately the Pilot had been trying to make his way back before his error was noticed.

Excerpt from *The Giver* by Lois Lowry. Copyright © 1993 by Lois Lowry.

**1**

Read the sentence from the text.

“No. Wrong word, Jonas thought. Frightened meant that deep, sickening feeling of something terrible about to happen.”

The author uses this sentence to explain how Jonas

- (A) became interested in the plane.
- (B) is feeling.
- (C) is detailed with his words.
- (D) made the day better.

**2**

Summarize what happens throughout the text. Use key events from the text to support your summary.

**3**

What can the reader infer about the community the narrator lives in?

- (A) The community is in a far off country and different from ours.
- (B) The community has a speaker system that makes important announcements.
- (C) The community fears flying.
- (D) The community is usually safe and predictable.

**6**

How would you describe the mood of the text? Support your answer with details from the text.

**7**

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A**

What do you think the assignments are?

- Ⓐ assigning a place as a Caretaker of the Old
- Ⓑ assigning a job
- Ⓒ assigning badges
- Ⓓ assigning seats

**Part B**

Which part from the text best supports your answer in part A?

- Ⓐ The assignments continued, and Jonas watched and listened, relieved now by the wonderful Assignment his best friend had been given
- Ⓑ Eighteen, Fiona, on his left, was called. Jonas knew she must be nervous, but Fiona was a calm female.
- Ⓒ For some – one studious male had been selected as Doctor, a female as Engineer, and another for Law and Justice – it would be years of hard work and study.
- Ⓓ Now the new Twelve's in the row ahead had all received their badges.

Use **The Giver Chapter 1** and **The Giver Chapter 7** to answer questions 10-14.

**10**

Which of these **best** describes what Jonas is feeling in **both** the excerpts? Select **three** options.

- A  concern
- B  fear
- C  grown-up
- D  scared
- E  sad
- F  unsure

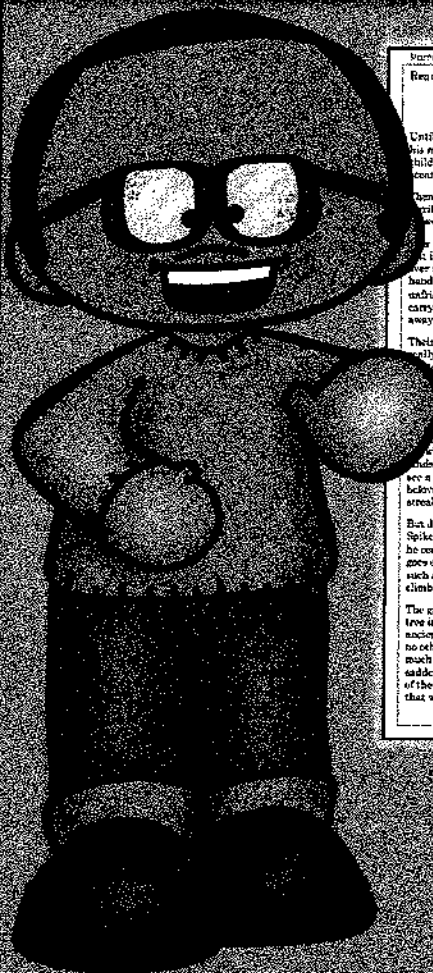
**11**

Jones experiences a similar emotion in both chapters. Explain what and how that emotion is **similar**, but also how it is **different**. Use evidence from the text to support your answer.

# ELA Practice Test

Elementary Grades 3-5

Fiction Set #1



Read the text and answer the questions.

**Excerpt from *James and the Giant Peach***  
by Roald Dahl

Until he was four years old, James Henry Trotter had had a happy life with his mother and father in a beautiful house beside the sea. There were children for him to play with, and there was the sandy beach for him to run to paddle in. It was the perfect life for a small boy.

From one day, James's mother and father went to London to do some-thing terrible happened. Both of them suddenly got eaten up (in fact, they were devoured) by an enormous angry rhinoceros which had escaped from a zoo. This, as you can well imagine, was a rather nasty experience for James. In the long run it was far easier for James than it was for those who were eaten in a jiffy. They were dead and gone in thirty-five seconds flat, but James was still very much alive, and all at once he found himself all unkindly world. The lovely house had to be sold and James was left carrying nothing but a small suitcase containing a pair of pajamas and a comb to live with his two aunts.

Their names were Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker, and I am sorry to say they were really horrible people. They were selfish and lazy and cruel, and they were beating poor James for almost no reason at all. They never said anything to him as "you disgusting little beast" or "you horrible creature," and they certainly never gave him any toys or presents to look at. His room was as bare as a prison cell.

One day Aunt Sponge, Aunt Spiker, and now James as well, were on the top of a high hill in the south of England. The hill was covered with a carpet of moss and ferns and on a very clear day, if he looked over a tiny gray dot far away on the horizon, which was the head of his beloved mother and father. And just beyond that, he could see a streak of blackish-blue, like a line of ink, beneath the run of the sea.

But James was never allowed to go down off the top of that hill. Aunt Spiker could ever be bothered to take him out herself, not even when he certainly wasn't permitted to go alone. "The nasty little beast goes out of the garden," Aunt Spiker had said. And terrible things had happened, such as being locked up in the cellar with the rats for a week, or being climb over the fence.

The garden, which covered the whole of the top of the hill, was a vast tree in the entire place apart from a clump of forty old-fashioned ancient peach trees that never gave any peaches. There were no other children were ever invited to come up the hill to play with James as much as a dog or a cat around to keep him company. And Aunt Spiker and Aunt Sponge, sitting separately at the lovely oak table in the garden, were spreading out below him like a mosaic carpet.

Excerpt from *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl.

**1**

Read the sentence from the text.

"Poor James, on the other hand, was still very much alive, and all at once he found himself all unkindly world."

What does the word *unkindly* mean?

(A) area  
(B) great  
(C) large  
(D) very

**2**

What happens after the end of the excerpt?

(A) James goes to London.  
(B) James spends time with his mother and father.  
(C) James goes to school.  
(D) James decides to move.

**3**

What can you infer from the text?

(A) James is a very happy child.  
(B) James is a very sad child.  
(C) James is a very brave child.  
(D) James is a very smart child.

**4**

Which of the following best matches James' mood? Select two choices.

A  uneasy  
B  afraid  
C  content  
D  miserable  
E  joyful  
F  unhappy

**5**

The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A**

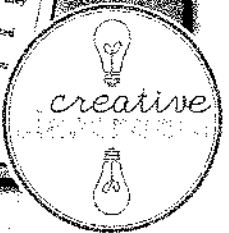
What conclusion about the aunts is supported by the text?

(A) The aunts can be kind some of the time.  
(B) The aunts are only mean to James.  
(C) The aunts do not like children.  
(D) The aunts did not like James' parents.

**Part B**

Which sentence from the passage best supports your answer in part A?

(A) "Their names were Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker, and I am sorry to say that they were both really horrible people."  
(B) "They were selfish and lazy and cruel, and right from the beginning they started beating poor James for almost no reason at all."  
(C) "They lived — Aunt Sponge, Aunt Spiker, and now James as well — in an enormous ramshackle house on the top of a high hill in the south of England."  
(D) "There wasn't so much as a dog or a cat around to keep him company."



Read the text and answer the questions.

## Excerpt from *James and the Giant Peach*

by Roald Dahl

Until he was four years old, James Henry Trotter had had a happy life. He lived peacefully with his mother and father in a beautiful house beside the sea. There were always plenty of other children for him to play with, and there was the sandy beach for him to run about on, and the ocean to paddle in. It was the perfect life for a small boy.

Then, one day, James's mother and father went to London to do some shopping, and there a terrible thing happened. Both of them suddenly got eaten up (in full daylight, mind you, and on a crowded street) by an enormous angry rhinoceros which had escaped from the London Zoo.

Now this, as you can well imagine, was a rather nasty experience for two such gentle parents. But in the long run it was far nastier for James than it was for them. *Their* troubles were all over in a jiffy. They were dead and gone in thirty-five seconds flat. Poor James, on the other hand, was still very much alive, and all at once he found himself alone and frightened in a vast unfriendly world. The lovely house by the seaside had to be sold immediately, and the little boy, carrying nothing but a small suitcase containing a pair of pajamas and a toothbrush, was sent away to live with his two aunts.

Their names were Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker, and I am sorry to say that they were both really horrible people. They were selfish and lazy and cruel, and right from the beginning they started beating poor James for almost no reason at all. They never called him by his real name, but always referred to him as "you disgusting little beast" or "you filthy nuisance" or "you miserable creature," and they certainly never gave him any toys to play with or any picture books to look at. His room was as bare as a prison cell.

They lived — Aunt Sponge, Aunt Spiker, and now James as well — in an unusual ramshackle house on the top of a high hill in the south of England. The hill was so high that from almost anywhere in the garden James could look down and see for miles and miles across a marvelous landscape of woods and fields; and on a very clear day, if he looked in the right direction, he could see a tiny gray dot far away on the horizon, which was the house that he used to live in with his beloved mother and father. And just beyond that, he could see the ocean itself — a long thin streak of blackish-blue, like a line of ink, beneath the rim of the sky.

But James was never allowed to go down off the top of that hill. Neither Aunt Sponge nor Aunt Spiker could ever be bothered to take him out herself, not even for a small walk or a picnic, and he certainly wasn't permitted to go alone. "The nasty little beast will only get into mischief if he goes out of the garden," Aunt Spiker had said. And terrible punishments were promised him, such as being locked up in the cellar with the rats for a week, if he even so much as dared to climb over the fence.

The garden, which covered the whole of the top of the hill, was large and desolate, and the only tree in the entire place (apart from a clump of dirty old laurel bushes at the far end) was an ancient peach tree that never gave any peaches. There was no swing, no seesaw, no sand pit, and no other children were ever invited to come up the hill to play with poor James. There wasn't so much as a dog or a cat around to keep him company. And as time went on, he became sadder and sadder, and more and more lonely, and he used to spend hours every day standing at the bottom of the garden, gazing wistfully at the lovely but forbidden world of woods and fields and ocean that was spread out below him like a magic carpet.

Excerpt from *James and the Giant Peach* by Roald Dahl. Copyright © 1961 by Roald Dahl.



4

Which of the following **best** matches James' mood? Select **two** choices.

- A  uneasy
- B  afraid
- C  content
- D  miserable
- E  joyful
- F  unhappy

5

The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B

Part A

What conclusion about the aunts is supported by the text?

- (A) The aunts can be kind some of the time.
- (B) The aunts are only mean to James.
- (C) The aunts do not like children.
- (D) The aunts did not like James' parents.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports your answer in part A?

- (A) "Their names were Aunt Sponge and Aunt Spiker, and I am sorry to say that they were both really horrible people."
- (B) "They were selfish and lazy and cruel, and right from the beginning they started beating poor James for almost no reason at all."
- (C) "They lived — Aunt Sponge, Aunt Spiker, and now James as well — in an unusual ramshackle house on the top of a high hill in the south of England."
- (D) "There wasn't so much as a dog or a cat around to keep him company."

9

Read the paragraph from the passage.

“The garden, which covered the whole of the top of the hill, was large and desolate, and the only tree in the entire place (apart from a clump of dirty old laurel bushes at the far end) was an ancient peach tree that never gave any peaches. There was no swing, no seesaw, no sand pit, and no other children were ever invited to come up the hill to play with poor James. There wasn’t so much as a dog or a cat around to keep him company. And as time went on, he became sadder and sadder, and more and more lonely, and he used to spend hours every day standing at the bottom of the garden, gazing wistfully at the lovely but forbidden world of woods and fields and ocean that was spread out below him like a magic carpet.”

What does the use of the word wistfully suggest?

- (A) James is happy with his view of the world.
- (B) James wishes for more in his life.
- (C) James is thinking about his parents.
- (D) James does not want to leave the garden.

10

What lesson does James learn at the end of the passage? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

Read the text and answer the questions.

### Excerpt from *Freckle Juice*

by Judy Blume

Andrew Marcus wanted freckles. Nicky lane had freckles. He had about a million of them. They covered his face, his ears and the back of his neck. Andrew didn't have any freckles. He had two warts on his finger. But they didn't do him any good at all. If he had freckles like Nicky, his mother would never know if his neck was dirty. So he wouldn't have to wash. And then he'd never be late for school.

Andrew had plenty of time to look at Nicky's freckles. He sat right behind him in class. Once he even tried to count them. But when he got to eighty-six Miss Kelly called,

"Andrew... are you paying attention?"

"Yes, Miss Kelly," Andrew said.

"Good, Andrew. I'm glad to hear that. Now will you please pick up your chair and join your reading group? We're all waiting for you."

Andrew stood up in a hurry. His reading group giggled. Especially Sharon. He couldn't stand that Sharon. She thought she knew everything! He picked up his chair and carried it to the corner where his reading group sat.

"You may begin, Andrew," Miss Kelly said. "Page sixty-four."

Andrew turned the pages in his book. Sixty-four...sixty-four. He couldn't find it. The pages stuck together. Why did Miss Kelly have to pick him?

Everybody else already had their books opened to the right page.

Sharon kept giggling. She covered her mouth to keep in the noise, but Andrew knew what was going on. He finally found page sixty-four. Right where it was supposed to be...between pages sixty-three and sixty-five. If he had his own freckles he wouldn't have to count Nicky Lane's. Then he'd hear Miss Kelly when she called reading groups. And nobody would laugh at him.

Later, when the bell rang, Andrew poked Nicky Lane.

"What do you want?" Nicky asked, turning around. "I was wondering about your freckles," Andrew said.

"Oh yeah? What about them?"

Andrew felt pretty stupid. "Well, how did you get them?"

"What do you mean how? You get born with them. That's how!"

Andrew thought that's what Nicky would say.

Some help he was!

1

What is Andrew thinking about throughout the passage?

- (A) Miss Kelly
- (B) Sharon
- (C) school
- (D) freckles

2

How does Andrew feel after he asks Nicky about his freckles? Pick **two** choices.

- A  upset
- B  frustrated
- C  mean
- D  happy
- E  scared
- F  sad

3

The author uses the word hurry in the passage. Select a group of words that best shows that idea.

“Good, Andrew. I’m glad to hear that. Now will you please pick up your chair and

- (A) join your reading group? (B) We’re all waiting for you.”

Andrew stood up in a hurry. (C) His reading group giggled. Especially Sharon. He couldn’t stand that Sharon. She thought she knew everything! He picked up his chair and carried it to the corner (D) where his reading group sat.

6

What can the reader infer about what Andrew will do now that Sharon told him about freckle juice?

.....

.....

.....

.....

.....

7

Select **two** sentences that should be included in a summary of page two of the passage.

- A  Andrew tried to get Nicky to help him but he just said you are born with freckles.
- B  At the end of the day Sharon, who Andrew does not like, told him about freckle juice.
- C  Andrew wanted freckles more than anything.
- D  Andrew does not believe that freckle juice was a real thing.
- E  Andrew keeps getting in trouble at school.
- F  Andrew is excited to finally be picked to be the line leader.

8

What is **most likely** the reason Miss Kelly thought Andrew was not paying attention?

- (A) Andrew was staring at the back of Nicky's neck and she could tell because he was not looking at her.
- (B) Andrew was the only one who did not follow the directions and move to his reading group.
- (C) Andrew does not normally pay attention so Miss Kelly knew he was not listening.
- (D) Miss Kelly just made a lucky guess and happened to catch Andrew not listening.

Read the text and answer the questions.

## Excerpt from *Charlotte's Web*

by E. B. White

### Before Breakfast

"Where's Papa going with that ax?" said Fern to her mother as they were setting the table for breakfast.

"Out to the hoghouse," replied Mrs. Arable. "Some pigs were born last night." "I don't see why he needs an ax," continued Fern, who was only eight. "Well," said her mother, "one of the pigs is a runt. It's very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything. So your father has decided to do away with it."

"Do away with it?" shrieked Fern. "You mean kill it? Just because it's smaller than the others?"

Mrs. Arable put a pitcher of cream on the table. "Don't yell, Fern!" she said. "Your father is right. The pig would probably die anyway."

Fern pushed a chair out of the way and ran outdoors. The grass was wet and the earth smelled of springtime. Fern's sneakers were sopping by the time she caught up with her father.

"Please don't kill it!" she sobbed. "It's unfair."

Mr. Arable stopped walking.

"Fern," he said gently, "you will have to learn to control yourself."

"Control myself?" yelled Fern. "This is a matter of life and death, and you talk about controlling myself." Tears ran down her cheeks and she took hold of the ax and tried to pull it out of her father's hand.

"Fern," said Mr. Arable, "I know more about raising a litter of pigs than you do. A weakling makes trouble. Now run along!"

"But it's unfair," cried Fern. "The pig couldn't help being born small, could it? If I had been very small at birth, would you have killed me?"

Mr. Arable smiled. "Certainly not," he said, looking down at his daughter with love. "But this is different. A little girl is one thing, a little runty pig is another."

**1**

---

What is the main theme of the passage?

- Ⓐ It is important to share things with others.
- Ⓑ It is helpful for people to work together.
- Ⓒ It is good to stand up for what you believe in.
- Ⓓ It is often possible to overcome your fears.

**2**

---

Why are paragraphs 1 through 3 important to the story?

- Ⓐ They provide details about the runt.
- Ⓑ They explain why Fern is so upset.
- Ⓒ They introduce Fern's family.
- Ⓓ They show how Fern saves the runt.

**3**

---

Why does Fern stop her father from doing away with the pig?

- Ⓐ She believes it is wrong.
- Ⓑ She loves animals so much.
- Ⓒ She wants to raise a pig.
- Ⓓ She thinks her father is mean.

6

Read the following paragraph from the text.

"Out to the hoghouse," replied Mrs. Arable. "Some pigs were born last night." "I don't see why he needs an ax," continued Fern, who was only eight. "Well," said her mother, "one of the pigs is a runt. It's very small and weak, and it will never amount to anything. So your father has decided to do away with it."

What does the word runt **most likely** mean?

- (A) an undersized or weak person
- (B) an animal that is a baby
- (C) an animal that is smaller than average
- (D) the smallest member of a family

7

Which detail from the passage **best** explains why Mr. Arable did not kill the pig?

- (A) Mr. Arable changed his mind.
- (B) Mr. Arable believed it was unfair.
- (C) Mr. Arable did what was best for the pigs.
- (D) Mr. Arable wanted to make Fern happy.

8

Read the following sentence from the text.

"Please don't kill it!" she sobbed. "It's unfair."

What does the word sobbed suggest about Fern? Pick **two** choices.

- A  Fern is angry with her mother.
- B  Fern is happy with her father.
- C  Fern is very upset about the pig.
- D  Fern is sad about the weather.
- E  Fern is angry about the ax.
- F  Fern is serious about saving the runt.



Read the text and answer the questions.

## Excerpt from *The BFG*

by Roald Dahl

The Big Friendly Giant picked Sophie off the table and carried her to the cave entrance. He rolled the huge stone to one side and said, "Peep out over there, little girl, and tell me what you is seeing."

Sophie, sitting on the BFG's hand, peeped out of the cave.

The sun was up now and shining fiery-hot over the great yellow wasteland with its blue rocks and dead trees.

"Is you seeing them?" the BFG asked.

Sophie, squinting through the glare of the sun, saw several tremendous tall figures moving among the rocks about five hundred yards away. Three or four others were sitting quite motionless on the rocks themselves.

"This is Giant Country," the BFG said. "Those is all giants, every one."

It was a brain-boggling sight. The giants were all naked except for a sort of short skirt around their waists, and their skins were burnt brown by the sun. But it was the sheer size of each one of them that boggled Sophie's brain most of all. They were simply colossal, far taller and wider than the Big Friendly Giant upon whose hand she was now sitting. And oh how ugly they were! Many of them had large bellies. All of them had long arms and big feet. They were too far away for their faces to be seen clearly, and perhaps that was a good thing.

"What on earth are they doing?" Sophie asked.

"Nothing," said the BFG. "They is just moocheling and footcheling around and waiting for the night to come. Then they will all be galloping off to places where people is living to find their suppers."

"You mean to Turkey," Sophie said.

"Bonecrunching Giant will be galloping to Turkey, of course," said the BFG. "But the others will be whiffling off to all sorts of flungaway places like Wellington for the booty flavour and Panama for the hatty taste. Every giant is having his own favourite hunting ground."

"Do they ever go to England?" Sophie asked.

**1**

When the BFG talks, many times he uses words differently or incorrectly since he does not completely understand the English language. Using clues in the passage, what do you think the BFG means when he says flungaway places in paragraph 11?

- Ⓐ to throw away
- Ⓑ a faraway place
- Ⓒ to find a place
- Ⓓ a favorite place

**2**

What can you infer about Sophie in paragraph 2? Include information from the text in your answer.

Handwriting practice area with five sets of horizontal lines for writing an answer.

**3**

What is the main difference between the BFG and the other giants?

- Ⓐ The BFG does not eat people.
- Ⓑ The other giants do not eat people.
- Ⓒ The BFG is bigger in size.
- Ⓓ The other giants are smaller.

7

This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

Which statement about the BFG is supported by the passage?

- Ⓐ The BFG lives alone.
- Ⓑ The BFG has many friends.
- Ⓒ The BFG does not like humans.
- Ⓓ The BFG knows how to help.

Part B

Which part from the passage **best** supports your answer in part A?

- Ⓐ "The Big Friendly Giant picked Sophie off the table and carried her to the cave entrance."
- Ⓑ "This is Giant Country," the BFG said. "Those is all giants, every one."
- Ⓒ "All of them is guzzling human beans every night," the BFG answered. "All of them excepting me."
- Ⓓ "That is why you will be coming to an ucky-mucky end if any of them should ever be getting his goggles upon you."

8

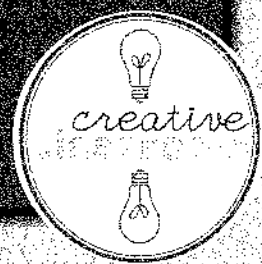
What is paragraph seventeen **mainly** about?

- Ⓐ What the giants look like.
- Ⓑ The giants eat humans.
- Ⓒ Where the giants like to hunt.
- Ⓓ The BFG helping out.

# Performance Task



How do you think you will perform?  
What do you think you will learn?  
What do you think you will do?  
What do you think you will be?



grades  
6-8

**Student Directions****Stephen Curry Informative Performance Task****Part 1****Task:**

The Golden State Warriors and Stephen Curry have been in the news a lot lately due to their appearances in the NBA finals. Are they one of the best teams around? Will they win it all again? Your school newspaper is looking to boost sales and decided to do a feature on the team. You decide to write an article on Stephen Curry. As part of your research, you found three sources about Stephen Curry.

After you review the sources, you will answer a few questions about them in Part 1. Then, in Part 2 you will write an informative article about Stephen Curry.

**Directions for Beginning:**

You will now examine three sources and can refer to them as much as you like.

**Research Questions:**

After reading the sources you will answer three questions about them. This work will be scored and will also help you think more about the informative article you will write in Part 2.

## Source #2

This quote is from Stephen Curry during his MVP acceptance speech. In his speech, he talks about what this award means to him.

### MVP Acceptance Speech

by Stephen Curry

"This hasn't sunk in at all. I'm on cloud nine for sure. We're in the middle of a playoff run, and that's that most important thing. But today's a celebration for sure, and I want to take the time to really appreciate what this means, and that's why we're here. So I'll try to explain how I feel the best I can just bear with me..."

"...Make sure you live in the moment and work (hard) every single day, and I hope I inspire people all around the world to just be themselves, be humble, and be grateful for all the blessings in your life. I'm truly honored to be your MVP this year. Thank you very much."

Quote from *Stephen Curry's 2014-2015 NBA MVP Acceptance Speech*



## Source #3

This blog post sums up Curry's success and positive attitude after Golden State won the 2015 NBA finals.

### Warriors Win!

Stephen Curry was seen by many as the underdog in the 2015 NBA finals. Despite all the talk and comparison to LeBron James and his strong talent, Curry continued to work his hardest. "It's all about winning," Curry said. "Stats really don't matter. I mean, guys have great series and all that and people take notice and take their place in history with those stats and all that stuff. But at the end of the day, it's all about winning and what you can do to help your team get to that point." With this team attitude, Curry led the Golden State Warriors to win the 2015 NBA Finals against the Cleveland Cavaliers 4-2, proving to his audience that if you set your mind to something nothing can stand in your way.

*Warriors Win* Blog Post 2015 by A Creative Classroom

**2**

Explain how the sources support the idea that Stephen Curry is a hard worker. Cite evidence from at least **two** sources and identify the source by title or number.

# Stephen Curry Performance Task

## Part I Answer Key

### Key Elements:

1. Responses will vary but should include two of the following sources, cited, and explained. Responses also need to discuss specific examples of Curry's success and explain how the sources they cite support this claim.

Source#1 (*Stephen Curry: The Inspiring Story...*)

- Curry put on a heroic performance managing to score thirty points in the second half. This gave the Wildcats their first win in an NCAA tournament since 1969.
- The holder of the record for total three-pointers made in a regular season in the NBA and in the NCAA...

Source#2 (MVP Acceptance Speech)

- I'm truly honored to be your MVP this year.

Source#3 (Warriors Win)

- With this team attitude, Curry led the Golden State Warriors to win the 2015 NBA Finals against the Cleveland Cavaliers 4-2, proving to his audience that if you set your mind to something nothing can stand in your way.

2. Responses will vary but should include at least two of the following sources, cited, and explained. Responses also need to explain using specific examples of how Curry is a hard worker.

Source#1 (*Stephen Curry: The Inspiring Story...*)

- Now Curry has transferred his work ethic attitude towards the game and personal values into his NBA career.

Source#2 (MVP Acceptance Speech)

- Make sure you live in the moment and work (hard) every single day, and I hope I inspire people all around the world to just be themselves, be humble, and be grateful for all the blessings in your life.

Source#3 (Warriors Win)

- Curry continued to work his hardest.
- With this team attitude, Curry led the Golden State Warriors to win the 2015 NBA Finals against the Cleveland Cavaliers 4-2, proving to his audience that if you set your mind to something nothing can stand in your way.



# Smarter Balanced Question Breakdown

## Stephen Curry Performance Task Part 2

	Common Core Standards Topic	Type of Question
I can produce effective writing for a range of purposes and audiences.	W.6.2, W.7.2, W.8.2 Write An Informative Text W.6.4, W.7.4, W.8.4 Produce Clear and Coherent Writing W.6.8, W.7.8, W.8.8 Gather Information RI.6.9, RI.7.9, RI.8.9 Draw Evidence	Extended Response

Name:

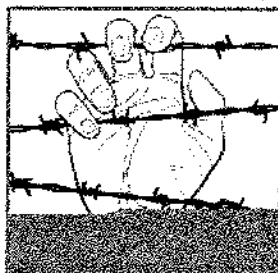
Date:

Class:

**Stephen Curry Informative Performance Task**

**Planning Page**



**7th and 8th Grade Performance Task – Narrative Prompt**

*Your assignment:*

During World War 2 (1939-1945), it is estimated that 6 million Jews were murdered by the Nazi Regime in Europe. This is known as the Holocaust. Read through multiple sources, and take notes on what life was like for the Jews as Adolf Hitler implemented the “Final Solution” within the Concentration Camps. Then, write a historical narrative in which you describe what a week within a Concentration Camp was like. Include a conflict, climax, and resolution along with sensory language and dialogue that moves the plot forward.

**PART 1 (Day 1-2)*****Directions for beginning:***

You will now read the three articles. Take notes and annotate the articles because you may want to refer back to your notes while writing your narrative. You can refer back to any of the sources as often as you like.

**Source 1:** *The Holocaust, Part One: The Rise of Adolf Hitler and World War 2*

**Source 2:** *Auschwitz-Birkenau*

**Source 3:** *The Final Solution*

**Source 4 (optional w/ internet access):** *The Holocaust:*

<https://www.brainpop.com/socialstudies/worldhistory/holocaust/>

## ***Source 1: The Holocaust, Part One: The Rise of Adolf Hitler and World War 2***

### ***Hitler's rise to power***

Anti-Jewish bigotry and discrimination had roots in Europe long before the rise of Hitler. Followers of the Jewish religion were often seen as strange outsiders by their Christian neighbors. In many places, this suspicion and hatred took the form of racism. Racism is a dislike of people because of their skin color, culture or where they come from.

Why Adolf Hitler hated Jewish people so intensely is unclear. He served in the German army in World War I, which lasted from 1914 to 1918. Germany's defeat in this war left the country poor and weak. Hitler and people like him blamed the Jews for Germany's downfall, though more than 100,000 German Jews fought for their country.

After the war, Hitler joined a political group that became known as the Nazi Party. He was jailed in 1923 for plotting against the government. In prison, he wrote a book called "Mein Kampf," which means "My Struggle" in English. In the book, he predicted another great war. He said Germany needed to seize more land for its people. He also argued for the elimination of all the Jews in Germany.

Many Germans were still upset about the troubles they faced after World War I. Following his release from prison in 1924, Hitler used their despair and anger to recruit followers.

Under his leadership, the Nazi Party grew. They went from a small political group to a powerful one. In 1933, he was chosen for a top post in the German government. A year later, he named himself "Führer," Germany's supreme ruler. Huge Nazi marches and rallies were staged to show off the Führer's power.

### ***Nazis begin persecuting the Jews***

In March 1933, the Nazis opened a prison camp near the town of Dachau. Special police called the Gestapo hunted down Nazi opponents. They filled Dachau with anyone who opposed them. By July, camps like the one at Dachau held about 27,000 prisoners.

In 1933, there were about 525,000 Jews in Germany. The Nazis began persecuting them. They fired Jews from government positions and forced Jewish businesses to close. In 1935, the Nazis passed anti-Jewish laws that took away many of their freedoms.

Jews were constantly bullied. One night in November 1938, Nazi gangs went on a rampage. They burned Jewish synagogues, their buildings of worship. They smashed the windows of Jewish businesses, littering the streets with glass. It became known as "the night of the broken glass," or "Kristallnacht" in German. Between 1933 and 1939, thousands of Jews left Germany if they could. Those who stayed lived in constant fear.

### ***World War II starts***

In September 1939, the German army invaded Poland. The attack marked the beginning of World War II. German forces made thousands of Polish Jews leave their homes and sent them to ghettos in Polish cities. There, they were trapped behind high walls and barbed wire.

That fall, Nazi officials also began a program to kill Germans with disabilities. They planned to use a poisonous gas to murder these individuals. Some religious leaders in Germany protested, but this program continued in secret. These murders served as practice for the Holocaust.

The Nazis would use these and other ways to kill 6 million Jews.

## Source 2: Auschwitz-Burkenau

### Deportation

Deportation and transportation to camps often took days. Individuals, families and whole communities together with their personal belongings were packed into cattle trucks. They were



locked in and transported for days. They had no information. They did not know where they were going, the length of the journey or what would happen to them when they eventually arrived at their destination.

The conditions on the journey were appalling.

We can learn about these journeys from the many child survivors who wrote of their experiences:

Agnes, an 11 year-old girl from Czechoslovakia, wrote: "Later we were moved and driven into railway wagons – the sort that transport animals – which were part of a long train. Some of the wagons were open-topped, some closed."

Jack, 15 years old, from Greece, talks of his experience at the start of what must have been a very long journey: "Some 20 railway cars were waiting for us... There were 70 to 80 people in a car... After a while, there was a muffled sound of closing latches... the whistle blew and the train started moving slowly. It was April 7, 1943. Pinned in and cramped, we departed from our homeland, without being able to see it."

Moshe, aged 17, from Hungary, then explains that: "the doors were shut, leaving us almost in darkness. The grills, too, were closed to prevent escape. Air entered only through the cracks. So

we travelled for 24 hours, without food or water. We were hungry and thirsty. But the desire and hope to see our families made us forget everything else.”

David, a Polish Jew aged 13, graphically describes how cramped it was on the train: “There is no room to sit. In order to make room we are forced to stand with our hands above our heads.... Suddenly, the door is slammed shut and sealed. A water bucket is tossed into the car for use as a disposal container for human waste.”

The packed railway wagons would often be shunted around from one railway siding to another for days on end, and for what must have seemed like an eternity. Many of the very young, the old and the sick would die because of the inhumane conditions during the journey. Those who did survive were severely traumatised by the experience.

### **Arrival at the camp**

Eventually, after days of travelling in the most cramped conditions, the railway carriages arrived at a camp. The doors of the carriages would be pulled open to give the prisoners their first glimpse of daylight, at a place they had never seen before.

### **Processing belongings**



While the prisoners were being processed after their arrival, their belongings were taken away. A group of prisoners was assigned to collecting the valuables, while others sifted through the possessions. These were then transported back to Germany. The prisoners working on this task



were in a privileged position. They were able to 'organise' (steal) extra food on which to survive, a pair of shoes or extra clothing to protect themselves from the severe winter weather.

There were examples of prisoners smuggling valuables which could be used to bribe guards. However, if caught, they risked death.

## Life within the Camps

### Dehumanization

Having arrived at a concentration camp and been unloaded from the cattle trucks, men and women were separated, children staying with their mothers. After registration, prisoners had to undress and have their hair shaved before showering. They usually had their own clothing taken away, which would be replaced by a striped uniform.



This process was designed to remove any remnants of human dignity or personal identity.

Anna, aged 11, from Poland, describes the effect of having her hair cut: "I look around and I see young girls with scissors and clippers cutting hair off clean to the scalp... when the cold scissors touch my scalp and my hair

slowly falls down, I can't help it, my tears fall down, mixed with my black curls." Mel, aged 15, from Czechoslovakia, goes on: "We all looked alike... Rich, poor, young, old. We shared the same fate as in no way before. I hardly recognised my father. Friends would pass you by. It was a nightmare."

Jacob, aged 17, describes the clothing he was given: "From there we went to the next room. We were handed a striped jacket, striped pants, wooden shoes and a striped cap."

Jack, aged 17, who had travelled from Greece to Auschwitz in Poland, says "They gave us striped pyjamas. Some of us got sizes too big or too small, but we changed among ourselves."

### **Daily routines**

Daily routines were also designed to reduce prisoners to mere numbers.

After an early wake-up, daily concentration camp routines would begin with the Appell, the daily roll call. During the Appell prisoners had to stand in rows, completely still, for hours at a time, and in all weathers. Long lists of orders and instructions would be read out. The number of prisoners would be counted. Often, the kapos would announce that the total number of prisoners in a block was inaccurate, leading to a recount at the whim of the SS. After waking and before roll call, up to 2,000 prisoners at a time would have to share toilet facilities. The toilet would be a concrete or wooden board with often 100 holes for seats. No privacy and no real sanitation was provided. Prisoners would have to wash in dirty water, without soap and with no change of clothes for weeks or months on end.

After eating a meagre ration of watery soup, a piece of bread and some imitation coffee, a prisoner's day would follow with work details.



The prisoners selected for work were housed in wooden or brick built barracks.

The brick barracks were constructed in the autumn of 1941. The Germans originally intended the barracks to house 40 prisoners, but very often more than 700 would be placed in each of them. The total number of prisoners to each barrack depended on the number of transports arriving. The prisoners slept in 60 spaces, with three bunks in each space. Prisoners slept on straw spread over the wooden bunks. The barracks had earth floors and few sanitary facilities.

The wooden barracks had once been stables. The walls were thin and had gaps at the bottom and top, which let in the bitterly cold wind in the winter. Near the entrance door were two rooms to house the 'functionaries' or kapos. The barracks had no windows, but instead had a row of skylights at the top of the roof. Each block had wooden three-tiered bunks. Prisoners slept under thin blankets or rags on their straw mattresses.

Each barrack had two stoves with a brick heating flue running between them. However, fuel was not provided. As a result many prisoners died during the extreme cold of the Polish winters.

### **Sanitation**

Sanitary facilities for prisoners at Auschwitz-Birkenau were extremely poor. It was impossible for inmates to keep clean or have a change of clothes. For the first two years of the camp's existence, the prisoners had no access to water for washing. When there was later water, it was not clean. Prisoners, therefore, spent their existence in the camp dirty and in filthy clothes, which increased the likelihood of them contracting infections and diseases.

### **Work**

Depending on the type of camp, prisoners were assigned to a whole range of different duties. Some remained inside were the camp, working on a variety of jobs, from administration tasks to heavy manual labour. Most prisoners worked outside in one of the many factories,

construction projects, farms or coal mines, owned by German companies and for whom they now provided free slave labour.

### **Source 3: The Final Solution**

#### **Wannsee Conference**

At the Wannsee Conference on January 20, 1942 in Wannsee, a Berlin suburb, the details of the “Final Solution” were worked out. The meeting was convened by Reinhard Heydrich, who was the head of the S.S. main office and S.S. Chief Heinrich Himmler’s top aide. The purpose of the meeting was to coordinate the Nazi bureaucracy required to carry out the “Final Solution,” which provided for:

- Deportation of Jews to killing centers.
- Immediate death for those who were unable to work or the very young, the old, and the weak.
- Segregation by gender of the remaining Jews.
- Decimation through forced labor with insufficient nourishment.
- Eventual death for the remnant.

#### **Concentration Camps**

Upon arrival at a camp, the inmates were usually stripped of all their valuables and clothes. They were then shorn of body hair, disinfected, given a shower, and issued a striped prison uniform without regard to size. Each step of the process was designed to dehumanize the prisoners, both physically and emotionally. Each prisoner was given a number. At Auschwitz, for example, the number was tattooed on the arm, but some camps did not tattoo their inmates.

Life in the camps was a living hell. As described by Judah Pilch in “Years of the Holocaust: The Factual Story,” which appears in *The Jewish Catastrophe in Europe*, a typical day in the life of a concentration camp inmate began at dawn, when they were roused from their

barracks which housed 300-800 inmates each. Their “beds” were bunks of slatted wood two and three tiers high. Frequently three to four prisoners shared each bunk, not permitting space enough for them to stretch out for normal sleep. The inmates were organized into groups to go to the toilets, marched to a distribution center for a breakfast consisting of some bread and a liquid substitute for tea or coffee, and then sent out to work for 10-14 hours in mines, factories, and road or airfield building, often in sub-zero weather or the severe heat of summer. They were subjected to constant physical and emotional harassment and beating. The inmates’ food rations did not permit survival for very long. Those who resisted orders of the guards were shot on the spot. Numerous roll calls were held to assure that no prisoners had escaped. If one did attempt an escape, all of the inmates suffered for it.

### **Death Camps**

The German skill in adapting the 20th century techniques of mass production was applied in engineering the “Final Solution.” In 1941, the engineers of the “Final Solution” utilized these same principles to cheaply and efficiently murder millions of Jews and other “undesirables.” The plants established to carry out this mass murder were the death camps.

Unlike concentration camps, death camps had no barracks to house prisoners, other than those for workers at the camps. In order to process the murder of thousands of people, great pains were taken to deceive the victims concerning their fate. Jews deported from ghettos and concentration camps to the death camps were unaware of what they were facing. The Nazi planners of the operation told the victims that they were being resettled for labor, issued them work permits, told them to bring along their tools and to exchange their German marks for foreign currency. Food was also used to coax starving Jews onto the trains. Once the trains arrived at the death camps, trucks were available to transport those who were too weak to walk directly to the gas chambers. The others were told that they would have to be deloused and enter the baths. The

victims were separated by sex and told to remove their clothes. The baths were in reality the gas chambers. The shower heads in the baths were actually the inlets for poison gas. At Auschwitz, the gas chambers held 2,000 people at a time. With the introduction of a cyanide-based gas called Zyklon B, all 2,000 occupants could be killed in five minutes. As a result of this technological “advancement,” Auschwitz was able to “process” the death of 12,000 victims daily. Before the bodies were removed by workers with gas masks and burned in crematoria, the teeth of the victims were stripped for gold, which was melted down and shipped back to Germany. Innocent victims were exploited and desecrated to a degree unknown in human history.

Unlike the death camps of Treblinka, Chelmno, Sobibor, and Belzec, which were built and operated solely to kill Jews, the two death camps of Maidanek and Auschwitz also had a work camp attached. Upon arrival at these two camps, a selection was made at the train station concerning which Jews (about 10 percent of the arrivals) would be permitted to live and escape immediate gassing in the gas chambers. These “lucky” survivors were permitted to live only to the extent that they endured the physical and emotional trauma inflicted upon them. They were given a food ration that permitted them to survive for only three months. As they died from exhaustion, beatings, and starvation, they were replaced with newly arrived victims. Auschwitz was also used as the site for medical experimentation. Many of these experiments had little scientific value but were only exercises to discover how much torture a victim could endure until death. By the end of 1944, an estimated two-and-a-half million Jews had died at Auschwitz. More than a quarter of a million Gypsies also died there.

**Questions:**

Use your remaining time to answer the questions below. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, they will help you think about the sources you've read and viewed, which should help you write your narrative. You may refer to the notes and annotations made on the articles. Answer the questions in the spaces provided below them (the questions and spaces are on the last page of this packet).

1. Analyze Source 2 and Source 3. Explain what life was like within the camps for the individuals that were sent there.
  
2. Source 3 provides shocking numbers relating to the death rates of individuals arriving at the Concentration Camps, Cite evidence that demonstrates that the final solution was an effective strategy for the Nazi Regime's purposes.



**PART 2 (Day 3-5)**

You have 70-90 minutes to plan, draft, and revise your narrative. You may refer to the articles and the answers you wrote to the questions in Part 1, but you cannot change those answers.

During World War 2 (1939-1945), it is estimated that 6 million Jews were murdered by the Nazi Regime in Europe. This is known as the Holocaust. As you read through multiple sources, take notes on what life was like for the Jews as Adolf Hitler implemented the “Final Solution” within the Concentration Camps. Then write a historical narrative in which you describe what a week within a Concentration Camp was like for you. Include a conflict, climax, and resolution along with sensory language and dialogue that moves the plot forward.

***How your essay will be scored: The people scoring your essay will be assigning scores for***

1. Narrative Focus—how well you maintain your focus, and establish a setting, narrator or characters, and point of view
2. Organization—how well the events logically flow from beginning to end using effective and appropriate transitions and how well you stay on topic throughout the essay
3. Elaboration of Narrative—how well you elaborate with details, dialogue, and description to advance the story or illustrate the experience
4. Language and Vocabulary—how well you effectively express experiences or events using sensory, concrete, and figurative language that is appropriate for your purpose
5. Conventions—how well you follow the rules of usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.

**Now begin work on your narrative. Manage your time carefully so that you can:**

- ***Write your narrative***
- ***Revise and edit the final draft of your narrative***