



Grade Eight English/Language Arts
Georgia Online Assessment Based
Formative Benchmark One
2014-2015



Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

The Java Disaster

excerpted and originally published in Nature
by Captain W.J. Watson



On August 27, 1883, a volcano called Krakatoa exploded in the Pacific Ocean near the island of Java in Indonesia. This enormous eruption was heard 2,800 miles away. But it was witnessed firsthand by a ship's captain, W.J. Watson, and his crew, who were anchored nearby. Months later, Watson submitted his observations to the scientific journal Nature. The following is a portion of his account of the eruption.

[August 26] At 2:30 p.m., noticed some agitation about the Point of Krakatoa; clouds or something being propelled from the north-east point with great velocity. At 3:30 we heard above us and about the island a strange sound as of a mighty, crackling fire, or the discharge of heavy artillery at second intervals of time.

At 4:15 p.m., observed a repetition of that noted at 2:30, only much more furious and alarming, the matter, whatever it was, being propelled with amazing velocity to the north-east. To us it looked like blinding rain, and had the appearance of a furious squall of ashen hue. . . .

At five the roaring noise continued and increased. Wind [was] moderate from south-south-west. Darkness spread over the sky, and a hail of pumice-stone fell on us, many pieces

being of considerable size and quite warm. Had to cover up the skylights to save the glass, while feet and head had to be protected with boots and southwesters.

About six o'clock the fall of larger stones ceased, but there continued a steady fall of a smaller kind, most blinding to the eyes, and covering the decks to three or four inches very speedily, while an intense blackness covered the sky and land and sea. [We] sailed on our course until we got what we thought was a sight of Fourth Point light. Then brought ship to the wind, south-west, as we could not see any distance, and we know not what might be in the Straits, the night being a fearful one. The blinding fall of sand and stones, the intense blackness above and around us, broken only by the incessant glare of varied kinds of lightning and the continued explosive roars of Krakatoa, made our situation a truly awful one.

At 11:00 p.m., having stood off from the Java shore, wind strong from the south-west, the island, west-north-west, eleven miles distant, became more visible. Chains of fire appeared to ascend and descend between the sky and it, while on the south-west end there seemed to be a continued roll of balls of white fire. The wind, though strong, was hot and choking, sulfurous, with a smell as of burning cinders. . . .

From midnight to 4:00 a.m. (27th) wind strong, but very unsteady, between south-south-west and west-south-west, the same impenetrable darkness continuing. The roaring of Krakatoa [was] less continuous, but more explosive in sound. . . .

At 6:00 a.m., being able to make out the Java shore, set sail, passing Fourth Point lighthouse at eight o'clock; hoisted our signal letters, but got no answer. Passed Anjer at 8:30, name still hoisted, close enough in to make out the houses, but could see no movement of any kind; in fact, through the whole Straits we have not seen a single moving thing of any kind on sea or land.

At 10:15 a.m., passed the Button Island one-half to three-quarters of a mile off; sea like glass round it, weather much finer-looking, and no ash or cinders falling . . .

At 11:15 there was a fearful explosion in the direction of Krakatoa, now over thirty miles distant. We saw a wave rush right on to the Button Island, apparently sweeping right over the south part, and rising halfway up the north and east sides. This we saw repeated twice, but the helmsman says he saw it once before we looked. The same wave seemed also to run right on to the Java shore. At the same time the sky rapidly covered in; the wind came strong from south-west by south.

By 11:30 we were enclosed in a darkness that might almost be felt, and at the same time commenced a downpour of mud, sand, and I know not what. . . . We had seen two vessels to the north and north-west of us before the sky closed in, adding much to the anxiety of our position. At noon the darkness was so intense that we had to grope our way about the decks, and although speaking to each other . . . [we] could not see each other.

This horrible state and downpour of mud, etc., continued until 1:30, the roaring of the volcano and lightning being something fearful.

By 2:00 p.m. the fall of mud ceased.

By 5:00 p.m. the horizon showed out in the north and north-east, and we saw West Island bearing east and north, just visible. Up to midnight the sky hung dark and heavy, a little sand falling at times, the roaring of the volcano very distinct, although in sight of the North Watcher, and fully sixty-five or seventy miles off it. Such darkness and time of it in general few would conceive, and many, I dare say, would disbelieve. The ship, from truck to water-line, is as if cemented; spars, sails, blocks, and ropes in a terrible mess; but, thank God, nobody hurt or ship damaged. On the other hand, how fares it with Anjer, Merak, and other little villages on the Java coast?

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

Part A

Circle the text structure that **best** describes the overall structure of “The Java Disaster.”

Text Structures	Chronological
	Cause and Effect
	Compare and Contrast
	Problem and Solution

Part B

Briefly describe how the author organized the text to reflect the structure you circled. How do these choices help the reader better understand the text?

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

Part A

Suppose the author had wanted to illustrate the series of events that took place during the eruption of Krakatoa. Which graphic would **best** serve that purpose?

- A. table C. diagram
B. map D. timeline

Part B

Which detail from the passage would **most likely** be represented on the graphic you chose in Part A?

- A. villages on the Java coast C. nobody hurt or ship damaged
B. At five the roaring noise continued D. made our situation a truly awful one

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

Part A

What was the author's **primary** purpose for writing "The Java Disaster"?

- A. to explain why Krakatoa erupted
B. to share observations of the eruption and its effects
C. to persuade readers to donate money to help victims of the eruption
D. to entertain readers with facts about different types of volcanoes

Part B

Choose the characteristic of the text that **best** supports your response to Part A.

- A. The text contains vivid descriptions of what the eruption looked and sounded like.
B. The text indicates the approximate time at which each event happened.
C. The text provides details that clarify the specific route the ship took as Krakatoa erupted.
D. The text reflects the author's concern for villages in the area.

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

Part A

Circle the claim that could **best** be defended with evidence from the passage.

It is important for a sea captain to be able to write descriptively.
The crew of Captain Watson's ship was not prepared for a disaster of this magnitude.
Captain Watson should have escaped the area sooner.
The noise of the eruption was one of the most frightening things about the experience

Part B

Underline a detail from the passage that supports your response to Part A.

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

Part A

Read the excerpt from "The Java Disaster."

By 11:30 we were enclosed in a darkness that might almost be felt, and at the same time commenced a downpour of mud, sand, and I know not what. . . . We had seen two vessels to the north and north-west of us before the sky closed in, adding much to the anxiety of our position. At noon the darkness was so intense that we had to grope our way about the decks, and although speaking to each other . . . [we] could not see each other. This horrible state and downpour of mud, etc., continued until 1:30, the roaring of the volcano and lightning being something fearful.

Which is the **best** description of the main idea of the paragraph?

A. The eruption occurred in the evening.

- B.** The crew members could not find their way around the ship.
- C.** The eruption caused debris to block out all light from the sun.
- D.** The eruption caused other ships in the area to flee.

Part B

Explain your answer to Part A using at least two details from the text.

Read the passage.

The Java Horror

excerpted from the Burlington, VT, Weekly Free Press



After the eruption of Krakatoa, news spread quickly. The following article was written several days after the eruption. It was published in London and in smaller newspapers around the world. It gives details of the eruption itself and the devastation that resulted.

Unless the reports from Java are greatly exaggerated, the series of earthquakes in that island form the most serious disturbance of the surface of the earth that has been known in

modern times, perhaps the most serious within historical times. The earthquakes amount, in fact, to a terrene tidal wave of unprecedented extent.

London, August 30—A dispatch from Batavia says the condition of the strait of Sunda is dangerous to navigation. New islands have arisen. . . . Sixteen volcanoes have appeared between the site where the island of Krakatoa formerly stood and Sebesi Island. A portion of Bantam is an ashy desert. Cattle are starving and the population is in despair. Sungepan volcano has split into five portions. . . .

The disturbances began on the island of Krakatoa in the Strait of Sunda, about fifteen miles off the coast. Deep rumblings were distinctly audible at Surakarta and Batavia, about forty-five and twenty-two miles away, respectively.

The first eruptions were on Saturday night. On Sunday morning the disturbances extended beneath the waters of the strait, and they were soon boiling and hissing violently. . . . The threatening rumblings gradually became more and more distinct, and by noon the Mahameru, the largest of the volcanoes of Java, was belching forth flames at a very alarming rate. This eruption soon spread to the Gunung Tennger, the crater of which is the largest in the world, being nearly four miles in diameter. . . .



This map from the U.S. Geological Survey shows that the Krakatoa eruption and subsequent tsunami reduced the size of the island by more than half.

Fissure after fissure appeared in the sides of the mountains, and here and there in the valleys came a great, yawning chasm. Much of the northern portion of the island, which was covered with tracts of forests, was soon in one great blaze of flame. The redhot vomiting from the craters had set the trees on fire. At noon Sunday the eruption and shocks were supposed to have reached their greatest height, but late in the afternoon and evening the violence of the disturbances

suddenly increased. . . . At the same time the enormous waves began to dash with greater force upon the shores, coming in some places far up into the interior. . . .

About midnight the most frightful scene of the whole disturbance took place. Suddenly an enormous, luminous cloud formed over the Kandang range of mountains, which skirt the southeast coast of the island. This cloud gradually increased in size until it formed a canopy of red and whitish gray over a wide extent of territory. During this time the eruptions increased, and streams of lava poured incessantly down the sides of the mountain into the valleys, sweeping everything before them. Here and there a stream of lava would enter an arm of the sea or come in contact with the waters of a river. . . .

The fissures that opened in this thin crust, as it solidified, would emit torrents of vapor extending high into the air. . . . Here and there in the lava stream were innumerable thin plate-like crystals of feldspar arranged in trains, one behind the other, in the direction of the flow of the current. . . .

About two o'clock Monday morning the great cloud suddenly broke into small sections and quickly vanished. At the same time the most frightful rumblings were heard. . . . Craters in the other parts of Java seemed to open their fiery throats still wider.

The hissing of the sea became so loud as to be almost deafening, and the waves rushed up on the shores to an unprecedented height. When daylight came, it was seen that an enormous tract of land had disappeared. ..

The entire Kandang range of mountains extending along the coast in a semi-circle for about sixty-five miles had gone out of sight. . . . Here and there the peak of a high crater was exposed for a moment by the receding of a great wave and occasionally a puff of brownish gray smoke or a slight shower of rocks showed that the volcanoes still continued in active subaqueous eruption. . . .

A violent shock occurred on the island of Sumatra Monday afternoon and it was feared other violent disturbances would follow. Middle Island, ten miles off the Javanese coast, and halfway between Sumatra and Java, was almost wholly engulfed in the sea. The small island of Singkel . . . entirely disappeared. It was uninhabited.

The island of Krakatoa . . . is about six or seven miles in length and four or five miles in width. Like the surrounding islands of the East Indian group, it is mountainous and volcanic. The island of Krakatoa is surrounded by many smaller islands, many of which are nameless.

The mountain of Kramatan, which has sunk into the sea, was a very high peak. As the bird flies, this mountain would be one hundred eighty miles from Batavia. Its immediate neighborhood was uninhabited.

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

Part A

What does the word subaqueous mean as it is used in “The Java Horror”?

- A. without question
- B. unrelated
- C. below water
- D. under ground

Part B

Which word parts **best** help the reader determine the meaning of subaqueous?

- A. the prefix *sub-* meaning “under” and the suffix *-ous* meaning “relating to”
- B. the root *aqu* meaning “water” and the suffix *-ous* meaning “relating to”
- C. the prefix *a-* meaning “not” and the suffix *-ous* meaning “relating to”
- D. the root *aqu* meaning “water” and the suffix *-quis* meaning “to ask”

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

Part A

Read the excerpt from “The Java Horror” below.

About two o’clock Monday morning the great cloud suddenly broke into small sections and quickly vanished. At the same time the most frightful rumblings were heard. . . . Craters in the other parts of Java seemed to open their fiery throats still wider. The hissing of the sea became so loud as to be almost deafening, and the

waves rushed up on the shores to an unprecedented height. When daylight came, it was seen that an enormous tract of land had disappeared. . . .

Which inference is **best** supported by the text?

- A. The cloud caused Krakatoa to erupt.
- B. The eruption caused distress to the undersea life surrounding the island.
- C. The eruption triggered a tsunami that swallowed up a piece of land.
- D. The area around Krakatoa had many volcanoes.

Part B

Underline a detail in the excerpt that **best** supports your response to Part A.

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

Part A

Circle the sentence from “The Java Horror” containing an analogy.

Much of the northern portion of the island, which was covered with tracts of forests, was soon in one great blaze of flame.
Here and there in the lava stream were innumerable thin plate-like crystals of feldspar arranged in trains, one behind the other, in the direction of the flow of the current. . . .
The hissing of the sea became so loud as to be almost deafening, and the waves rushed up on the shores to an unprecedented height.

Part B

Explain how the analogy helps you understand the idea the author is trying to convey.

9. Read each characteristic in the box. Decide which passage it **best** describes. Write the characteristic in the correct column. Then complete the sentence by filling in the blank with “primary” or “secondary” to correctly describe each passage.

First-person point of view	Writer witnessed events firsthand
Third-person point of view	Writer cites other sources
Events documented as they happen	Events documented after the fact

“The Java Disaster”	“The Java Horror”
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This passage is a _____ source.	This passage is a _____ source.
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10. In the sentence below, what is the function of the underlined phrase?

My bike, the one with the flat tire, is over at Jack's house.

- A. direct object
- B. modifier
- C. predicate
- D. subject

11. What word or phrase can replace gaping in the passage?

and the inside of its cradle-shaped mouth
gaping,
and rimmed with teeth—

- A. bleeding
- B. wide open
- C. chewing
- D. closed shut

12. Use the paragraph below to answer this question.

(1)The library is always quiet, but we often find it hard to get our work done there. (2)The old man in the comfortable chair is pretending to read, but his snoring gives him away. (3)The woman in the "special study area" is counting the days in her calendar book, as if she doesn't know that the final tally will be 365. (4) And me, I think I'd better clean my glasses one more time.

Which of the following would make the BEST closing sentence for the paragraph above?

- A. Almost everyone in the library goes there to work or study.
- B. There are so many new ways to find information at the library.
- C. The forced quiet of the library seems to challenge us to find ways to avoid work.
- D. All of the people who go to the library get a lot of work done.

13. *Use the paragraph below to answer this question.*

(1)The first hill on the new roller coaster ride combined slowness and speed to give a totally fantastic experience. (2)The climb up the first hill started out very slowly and made me feel like this ride was a waste of my time. (3)However, once the coaster started down the first steep incline, my eyes were watering. (4) I was sure I would never be able to catch my breath. (5) I didn't have a speedometer, but I felt like the coaster was going 200 miles an hour as it plunged downward. (6)I was gasping for breath at the end of that first hill.

Which sentence repeats an idea already stated in the paragraph above?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 3
- C. sentence 5
- D. sentence 6

14. *Use the paragraph below to answer this question.*

(1) Mother said I could paint my room any way I wanted. (2)I went to my friends' houses and looked at their rooms—to see what not to do.

Which of the following would make the BEST sentence 3 in the paragraph above?

- A. I painted my room to make it look really good.
- B. I wasn't sure I wanted to make my room better.
- C. Then, I thought about it and thought about it for a while.
- D. Then, I went to the library and read some decorating magazines.

15. What organizational method is used in the paragraph?

Butterflies are very sensitive. The smallest changes in weather conditions often make them do unusual things. A Pennsylvania man who raises butterflies in his house experienced this for

himself. When a thunderstorm blew through his town, his butterflies came out of their cocoons early. Imagine his surprise when he came home to find thousands of butterflies in every room of his house!

- A. cause and effect
- B. chronological order
- C. question and answer
- D. similarity and difference

16. Which transitions BEST connect the sentences?

What is the largest lake in the world? It depends on how you define a lake. If you think that a body of salt water surrounded by land can be a lake, the largest would be the Caspian Sea. _____, if you define a lake as containing only fresh water, there would be a different answer. _____, the award would then go to America's own Lake Superior, which is part of the

- A. Therefore, In addition
- B. Supposedly, However
- C. However, Consequently
- D. Additionally, On the other hand

17. Which idea is repeated in the paragraph?

(1) Did you know that crickets, katydids, and locusts all belong to the grasshopper family? (2) Some insects in the grasshopper family can jump up to 200 times their length. (3) Their long and powerful legs help them jump away from their enemies. (4) Grasshoppers are famous for their songs, which are actually sounds made by the males to attract the attention of females. (5) Female grasshoppers are attracted to the sounds the males make. (6) Insects in the grasshopper family are fun and interesting to study.

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 5

18. What is the function of the underlined sentence in the paragraph?

My family's first camping trip will probably be our last. First, we had to set up the campsite in the pouring rain. Everything was so wet when we finally finished, we decided to sleep in the car. We were awakened at 3 A.M. by a loud noise outside the car. When we looked out, we saw a family of raccoons helping themselves to our food. By then we had no food, no dry clothes, and no forecast for good weather. We were all so tired that we decided to pack everything up and head for the nearest hotel. I don't think we will ever try camping again.

- A. topic sentence
- B. detail sentence
- C. closing sentence
- D. supporting sentence

19. Which is the unifying topic of the paragraph?

We teenagers have heroes or people we look up to and admire. My friends and I all have different heroes. Tynesia admires her English teacher because he takes the time to help her with her writing. Tom says his hero is his mother because she makes sacrifices for him. Sara's hero is Martin Luther King, Jr., because he changed so many people's lives. My hero is my father because he helps me with anything I need.

- A. heroes
- B. parents
- C. friends
- D. helping

20. Which information completes the graphic organizer for a descriptive essay?

A Freshly Baked Apple Pie

Appeals to Sight _____
Appeals to Hearing Apples bubbling over
Appeals to Smell Fragrant
Appeals to Touch Warm and flaky
Appeals to Taste Sweet and buttery

- A. Sugary and sticky
- B. Golden brown
- C. Hot and crispy
- D. Deliciously tart

Extended Response

Both “The Java Disaster” and “The Java Horror” present the devastation at Krakatoa that occurred in August of 1883. After reading both accounts, which do you think is more informative? To support your response, consider the following:

- What kind of information is presented in each passage? How does the purpose of each passage impact the type of information presented?
- How are the two passages similar? How are they different? Think about what you learned by reading each one.
- Do you consider one account more reliable than the other? Explain your reasoning. Remember to support your answer with textual evidence from both passages.

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Item Number	Answer	Standard(s) Addressed
1.	Part A: Students should circle: <i>chronological</i> . Part B: Responses will vary. Possible response: In nearly all cases, the author devotes a separate paragraph to each specific event and begins each paragraph with the time at which the event happened. This allows readers to easily	<i>ELACC8RI1, ELACC8RI5</i>

	follow the events in the order in which they occurred.	
2.	Part A: D Part B: B	<i>ELACCR182</i>
3.	Part A: B Part B: A	<i>ELACC8RI1, ELACC8RI6</i>
4.	Part A: Students should circle “The noise of the eruption was one of the most frightening things about the experience.” Part B: Responses will vary. Students might underline “This horrible state and downpour of mud, etc., continued until 1:30, the roaring of the volcano and lightning being something fearful.”	<i>ELACC8RI1, ELACC8RI8</i>
5.	Part A: C Part B: Responses will vary. Possible response: The author describes a downpour of mud and sand that occurred as darkness fell. He also describes details that occur as a result of the darkness, such as the fact that the crewmen could not see each other and had trouble finding their way around in the darkness.	<i>ELACC8RI1, ELACC8RI2</i>
6.	Part A: C Part B: B	<i>ELACC8L4b</i>
7.	Part A: C Part B: Students should underline “the waves rushed up on the shores to an unprecedented height. When daylight came, it was seen that an enormous tract of land had disappeared. . . .”	<i>ELACC8RI1</i>
8.	Part A: Students should circle the second sentence. Part B: Responses will vary. Possible response: The author wants to convey the idea that the crystals are moving slowly in a line, similar to the line of cars on a train.	<i>ELACC8RI1, ELACC8RI3, ELACC8RI4</i>
9.	“The Java Disaster”: First-person point of view, Events documented as they happen, Writer witnessed events firsthand; primary source	<i>ELACC8RI9</i>

	“The Java Horror”: Third-person point of view, Writer cites other sources, Events	
10	B	<i>ELACC8L4</i>
11	B	<i>ELACC8L61</i>
12	C	<i>ELACC8W1</i>
13	D	<i>ELACC8W1</i>
14	D	<i>ELACC8W1</i>
15	A	<i>ELACC8W4</i>
16	C	<i>ELACC8W5</i>
17	D	<i>ELACC8W1</i>
18	C	<i>ELACC8W1</i>
19	A	<i>ELACC8W1</i>
20	B	<i>ELACC8W1</i>