



**pennsylvania**  
DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION

# The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

## English Language Arts Item and Scoring Sampler



**2022–2023**  
**Grade 4**

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR READING PASSAGES AND QUESTIONS****Directions:**

On the following pages are the Reading passages and questions.

**Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:**

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- First, read the passage carefully.
- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer the question.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

**Directions for Evidence-Based Selected-Response Questions:**

Some questions will have two parts and will ask you to select one or more answers in each part.

For the evidence-based selected-response questions:

- Read Part One of the question and choose the best answer.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part One of the question.
- Record your answer to Part One in the answer booklet.
- Only one of the answers provided in Part One is correct.
- Then, read Part Two of the question and choose the evidence to support your answer in Part One. If Part Two tells you to select two answers, be sure to select two answers.
- You may look back at the passage to help you answer Part Two of the question.
- Record your answer or answers to Part Two in the answer booklet.

**Directions for Text-Dependent Analysis (TDA) Prompts:**

The English Language Arts TDA prompt will ask you to analyze the passage and use evidence from the passage to write an essay.

For the TDA Essay:

- Be sure to read the passage and the TDA prompt carefully.
- Review the Writer's Checklist to help you plan and organize your response.
- You may look back at the passage to help you write your essay.
- Write your essay in the appropriate space in the answer booklet. If you use scratch paper to write a rough-draft essay, be sure to transfer your final essay to the answer booklet.
- Be sure to check that your essay contains evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Be sure to check your essay for errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

**PASSAGE 1**

Read the following passage about using clay animation to make a movie. Then answer questions 1–8 in your answer booklet.

## **Clay Animation**

by Erica Elmer

Have you ever seen an animated movie or television show that looks like everything has been made out of clay? This technique using clay figurines and objects is called “claymation,” or stop-motion animation, and was first seen as early as 1902 in Georges Méliès’s film *A Trip to the Moon*. From that point, filmmakers around the world began to explore and grasp this technique, and in recent years this art form has become quite popular with films.

Making a film like this is somewhat similar to drawing a flipbook. If you were to draw a flipbook of a person waving his hand, there would be only slight, minor changes in the position of the hand on each page. When the pages are flipped through in one simultaneous motion, it gives the illusion of the character raising his arm to wave “hello.”

The techniques behind stop-motion film are very similar, except oftentimes filmmakers will use figures made entirely out of clay and will use a camera to capture their footage rather than a pencil and paper. In order to begin, they must first come up with a concept as to what they want the film to be about. They will then mold their characters and the entire world of the film using clay. Then they will move and manipulate each figure to create the illusion of movement. Each object is moved slowly and then recorded on film. After shooting one or two frames of film, the camera is paused and the object is moved again. Each character or object is moved extremely slowly, the movement being almost invisible to the naked eye. Objects are moved slowly to create fluid, realistic movements and faster to create swifter, jerkier movements. Sometimes this process of creating a claymation film can take years.

Although making a film this way may seem difficult, don’t let appearances be deceiving. With the right supplies and a lot of patience, you, too, can make your very own short claymation film.

### **Molding a Movie: How to Make a Claymation Film**

#### **Materials:**

- Modeling clay
- Video camera or digital still camera
- Tripod
- Dark cloth (to use for the background)

**Steps:**

1. Use modeling clay to create characters and objects that you will use to tell your story.
2. Get a video camera or digital still camera to record your images. Make sure that there is a memory card in the camera. Be sure to get your parent's permission first!
3. Using the dark cloth, create a backdrop for shooting your movie. The dark cloth will even out the lighting so everything will look the same.
4. Secure the camera onto the tripod, and secure your backdrop by hanging it up or draping it over a stable object like a box.
5. Place the characters and other objects onto the backdrop, positioning them for your first shot.
6. To record your movie, put the camera into "camera" mode to record, and if using a digital still camera, make sure the camera is in "video" mode.
7. Press the record button, count to one by saying, "one, one thousand," and then press the record button again to stop recording.
8. You have now captured the first image of your movie.
9. Move each clay figure or object in the movie slightly, about a couple of inches each time, to create more fluid, realistic effects. For quicker moving objects and faster moving action, move them farther, about 4–6 inches.
10. After moving each object to its desired position, press record again and count to one, as done in step 7, and then press record again.
11. Keep moving each object steadily and recording after each movement to create the illusion of a moving image.
12. When you are finished, put the camera into playback mode to view your masterpiece!

**Multiple-Choice Questions**

1. Which statement **best** describes the structure of the second paragraph of the passage?
- A. It compares drawing a flipbook to making a clay animation film.
  - B. It describes how a flipbook can be turned into a clay animation film.
  - C. It solves the problems of a flipbook by showing how to make a clay animation film.
  - D. It explains the process of using a flipbook to create a clay animation film.

2. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Each character or object is moved extremely slowly, the movement being almost invisible to the naked eye.”

What does the phrase “invisible to the naked eye” mean?

- A. unable to compare
- B. unable to explain
- C. too unusual to be believed
- D. too slow to be noticed

3. What reason does the author give for why character sculptures are moved slowly when filming clay animation?
- A. It creates the effect of slow motion.
  - B. The clay that is used is difficult to mold.
  - C. It makes their movements look smoother.
  - D. The camera is unable to capture quick movements.



4. Read the sentence from the passage.

“After moving each object to its desired position, press record again and count to one, as done in step 7, and then press record again.”

What does the word desired mean as used in the passage?

- A. concerned
- B. preferred
- C. reasoned
- D. required

5. Which statement **best** describes the structure of the section “Steps” at the end of the passage?
- A. The steps are listed in the order of their importance.
  - B. The steps are listed according to which materials are needed.
  - C. The steps are listed in the order they should be completed.
  - D. The steps are listed according to their level of difficulty.

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**Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question**

6. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

**Part One**

What is the main idea of the overall passage?

- A. Claymation is a well-known art that anyone can take part in.
- B. Claymation can be created using pencil and paper.
- C. Claymation films can take many years to create.
- D. Claymation is featured in many movies and television shows.

**Part Two**

Which evidence from the passage supports the answer in Part One? Choose **two** answers.

- A. “From that point, filmmakers around the world began to explore and grasp this technique, and in recent years this art form has become quite popular with films.”
- B. “When the pages are flipped through in one simultaneous motion, it gives the illusion of the character raising his arm to wave ‘hello.’ ”
- C. “With the right supplies and a lot of patience, you, too, can make your very own short claymation film.”
- D. “Use modeling clay to create characters and objects that you will use to tell your story.”

**Multiple-Choice Question**

7. How does the section “Steps” connect to the rest of the passage?
- A. It provides instructions for how to make a clay animation film.
  - B. It provides suggestions for how to improve a clay animation film.
  - C. It provides comparisons between clay animation films and other films.
  - D. It provides shortcuts to take when making a longer clay animation film.

**Evidence-Based Selected-Response Question**

8. This question has two parts. Answer Part One and then answer Part Two.

**Part One**

Based on information from the passage, which inference can **best** be made about clay animation?

- A. It is popular with children.
- B. It has a long history.
- C. It is more realistic than a flipbook.
- D. It requires artistic talent.

**Part Two**

Which evidence from the passage supports the answer in Part One? Choose **one** answer.

- A. “Have you ever seen an animated movie or television show that looks like everything has been made out of clay?”
- B. “This technique using clay figurines and objects is called ‘claymation,’ or stop-motion animation, and was first seen as early as 1902 in Georges Méliès’s film. . . .”
- C. “. . . except oftentimes filmmakers will use figures made entirely out of clay and will use a camera to capture their footage rather than a pencil and paper.”
- D. “Sometimes this process of creating a claymation film can take years.”

## PASSAGE 2

Read the following passage about two musicians. Then answer question 9 in your answer booklet.

## Playing Like Pa

by Pam Bachorz

I'll never play piano like my grandpa.

Pa's fingers fly so fast you don't see them touch the keys. His hands tumble and leap, and the notes spill from the piano faster than popcorn from a popper.

Pa has played at the Tulip Café for forty-nine years. He plays every Friday and Saturday night, except the Friday night when Mom was born.

Tonight the Tulip is bursting with people. They cleared away the tables so more people could fit. Everyone has to hold their plates on their laps and put drinks under their chairs, but nobody minds. It's a special night.

This is the last time my grandpa will play at the Tulip. Everyone is a little sad.

Pa is ready to retire.

Name a song—any song—and Pa will play it for you. Nobody can stump him. He has a music library in his head.

Jazz is his favorite. Whenever Pa rips into ragtime, I'm like a pot of water boiling over. I can't stop my toes a-tapping, fingers a-snapping, head bo-bopping to the beat.

All my aunts and uncles are at the Tulip tonight, with all my cousins. My great-aunt Pauline came on the train all the way from Albany. We whoop and holler at the end of every song. Pa even plays the song with my name in it: "Stella by Starlight."

Pa has been teaching me piano ever since I was five. He's taught me chords, so I can make any song sound fancy. Sometimes Pa balances a nickel on the back of my hand to keep my fingers curved and my hand level. He listens while I practice for a half hour every single day. I make mistakes, but Pa never says anything. He just reads the newspaper. Sometimes he smiles.

Some days I want to quit. I tell Pa that I'm no good at piano. But he says, "One day you'll be better than me." So I keep practicing. Other times the notes just flow. My mind stays quiet while my fingers do all the work. That's when Pa says, "Not bad, kid. Not bad." Then I know I've hammered it home.

Tonight people keep stopping by to talk. They leave money in a jar on top of the piano. They want Pa to leave with a pocketful of tips.

I'm finishing my dessert when Pa surprises me. "Ladies and gentlemen." His voice quavers a little, but it's still strong. "I have a special treat for you tonight. Please welcome my granddaughter, Stella Babcock, to the piano!"

I drop my spoon and duck low. What's Pa thinking? I can't play in front of all these people!

Cousin Amy pokes me. "Get up there already, Stella," she orders in a no-nonsense voice. "Do it for Pa."

My rubbery legs take me to the piano. Pa's big hands grip my shoulders and gently push me onto the piano bench. My fingers settle around middle C.

"I can't," I say. I'm not like Pa. People won't like what I play. They might laugh.

"Play something you love," Pa whispers in my ear.

But I can't remember a single song. I wish I knew my grandpa's favorite, "Mood Indigo," by the jazz great Duke Ellington. Pa makes it his last song every night.

I close my eyes and try to pretend there aren't dozens of people staring at me. Pa keeps his hands on my shoulders. They feel warm, strong, and steady. I'm trembling now.

I play one note, the D next to middle C. Then my fingers remember, and a song rushes through me: one of Bach's Two-Part Inventions. It's not jazz, but it's fast and tricky. Pa always smiles when I play this one.

One note tumbles out, and another. The music pushes my hands across the piano, with no mistakes. It's not like jazz bubbling under my skin. This song is a cool river running inside me, my fingers rippling and flowing over the rocky black keys.

Aunt Diann hollers, "You go, Stella! You're on fire."

And then I'm done. My fingers are ordinary again, with no notes left in them.

Everyone is cheering for me. I stand up and hug my grandpa hard. He turns me to the audience. I give them a little wave and say, "Thanks, folks," just like Pa.

I'll never play piano like my grandpa. But that's O.K. Because I can play like me, Stella Babcock, just the way Pa taught me.



**Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt**

9. Read the sentences from the passage.

“I’m not like Pa. People won’t like what I play. They might laugh.”

Write an essay analyzing how the sentences show a theme of the passage. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

## **Writer’s Checklist for the Text-Dependent Analysis Prompt**

### PLAN before you write

- Make sure you read the prompt carefully.
- Make sure you have read the entire passage carefully.
- Think about how the prompt relates to the passage.
- Organize your ideas on scratch paper. Use a thought map, outline, or other graphic organizer to plan your essay.

### FOCUS while you write

- Analyze the information from the passage as you write your essay.
- Make sure you use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use precise language, a variety of sentence types, and transitions in your essay.
- Organize your paper with an introduction, body, and conclusion.

### PROOFREAD after you write

- ☐ I wrote my final essay in the answer booklet.
- ☐ I stayed focused on responding to the prompt.
- ☐ I used evidence from the passage to support my response.
- ☐ I corrected errors in capitalization, spelling, sentence formation, punctuation, and word choice.

- 9.** Read the sentences from the passage.

"I'm not like Pa. People won't like what I play. They might laugh."

Write an essay analyzing how the sentences show a theme of the passage. Use evidence from the passage to support your response.

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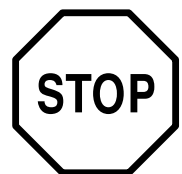
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**GO ON**

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**After you have checked your work, close your answer booklet and test booklet so your teacher will know you are finished.**



## Text-Dependent Analysis Scoring Guideline

## #9 Item Information

<b>Alignment</b>	A-K.1.1.2	<b>Depth of Knowledge</b>	3	<b>Mean Score</b>	1.69
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## Assessment Anchor:

E04.A-K.1 — Key Ideas and Details

## Specific Assessment Anchor Descriptor addressed by this item:

E04.A-K.1.1.2—Determine a theme of a story, drama, or poem from details in the text; summarize the text.

Score	Description
4	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Effectively addresses all parts of the task demonstrating in-depth analytic understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Effective introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s)</li> <li>Strong organizational structure that effectively supports the focus and ideas</li> <li>Thorough analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to effectively support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</li> <li>Substantial, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant key details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</li> <li>Substantial reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose</li> <li>Skillful use of transitions to link ideas</li> <li>Effective use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events</li> <li>Few errors, if any, are present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present do not interfere with meaning</li> </ul>

Score	Description
3	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Adequately addresses all parts of the task demonstrating sufficient analytic understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Clear introduction, development, and conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea related to the text(s)</li> <li>Appropriate organizational structure that adequately supports the focus and ideas</li> <li>Clear analysis of explicit and implicit meanings from text(s) to support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</li> <li>Sufficient, accurate, and direct reference to the text(s) using relevant details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</li> <li>Sufficient reference to the main idea(s) and relevant key details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose</li> <li>Appropriate use of transitions to link ideas</li> <li>Appropriate use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events</li> <li>Some errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present seldom interfere with meaning</li> </ul>
2	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Inconsistently addresses some parts of the task demonstrating partial analytic understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Weak introduction, development, and/or conclusion identifying an opinion, topic, or controlling idea somewhat related to the text(s)</li> <li>Weak organizational structure that inconsistently supports the focus and ideas</li> <li>Weak or inconsistent analysis of explicit and/or implicit meanings from text(s) that somewhat supports claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</li> <li>Vague reference to the text(s) using some details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</li> <li>Weak reference to the main idea(s) and relevant details of the text(s) to support the writer's purpose</li> <li>Inconsistent use of transitions to link ideas</li> <li>Inconsistent use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s) to explain the topic and/or to convey experiences/events</li> <li>Errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present may interfere with meaning</li> </ul>
1	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Minimally addresses part(s) of the task demonstrating inadequate analytic understanding of the text(s)</li> <li>Minimal evidence of an introduction, development, and/or conclusion</li> <li>Minimal evidence of an organizational structure</li> <li>Insufficient or no analysis of the text(s); may or may not support claims, opinions, ideas, and inferences</li> <li>Insufficient reference to the text(s) using few details, examples, quotes, facts, and/or definitions</li> <li>Minimal reference to the main idea(s) and/or relevant details of the text(s)</li> <li>Few, if any, transitions to link ideas</li> <li>Little or no use of precise language or domain-specific vocabulary drawn from the text(s)</li> <li>Many errors may be present in sentence formation, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation; errors present often interfere with meaning</li> </ul>

**ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS TEST DIRECTIONS FOR CONVENTIONS OF  
STANDARD ENGLISH QUESTIONS****Directions:**

On the following pages are the Conventions of Standard English questions.

**Directions for Multiple-Choice Questions:**

Some questions will ask you to select an answer from among four choices.

For the multiple-choice questions:

- Read each question and choose the best answer.
- Only one of the answers provided is correct.
- Record your choice in the answer booklet.

**CONVENTIONS OF STANDARD ENGLISH MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS**

10. Read the paragraph.

(1) I am watching a bird outside my window. (2) It is using sticks to build a nest in a tree.  
(3) It is flying up to the nest and down again. (4) Now it was picking up a string to use in the nest.

Which sentence should be revised to correct the error in verb tense?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 4



11. Which underlined word should be changed to correct the error in pronoun usage?
- A. Mary made the rocket that flew higher than all the other rockets.
  - B. The girl who just moved here from Arizona sits next to me in science class.
  - C. Paul and his cousin played a game of chess that lasted more than two hours.
  - D. The teacher which taught me to play the trumpet is a member of the community band.

12. Read the information.

\_\_\_\_\_ and then camped at a beautiful park.

Choose the words that complete the sentence.

- A. Went on a trip to the mountains
- B. My family and I visited our cousins
- C. My family, my friends, and I on a trip
- D. Visited our cousins in the mountains

13. Which sentence is punctuated correctly?

- A. Pittsburgh has many museums yet my favorite, is the sports museum.
- B. The museum shows the history of football in Pennsylvania, but it also has quite an exhibit on baseball.
- C. The museum has an exhibit on racing and it provides information about car, and bike races.
- D. The museum offers a lot of different activities so visitors, are sure to have a good time.