Gauge progress and inform instruction with data-driven assessment.

TEACHER ASSESSMENT GUIDE

ASSESSMENT CYCLE

1. Screening and Diagnostic
2. Benchmark Assessment
3. Instruction and Formative Assessment
4. Review and Reteach
5. End-Of-Unit Assessment
6. Test Preparation and Practice
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ASSESSMENT OVERVIEW

Assessment guides instruction in Texas StudySync. Ongoing benchmark, formative, and summative assessments provide teachers with the information they need to help every student progress toward TEKS mastery. Progress monitoring and reporting tools allow teachers to easily track student gains and revise instruction according to remediation needs. Best of all, StudySync embeds scaffolded instruction and provides extra lessons so teachers have resources at the ready to meet the needs of every learner in their classrooms.
SCREENING AND DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENTS

At the beginning of the year, two important assessments guide instruction for teachers: the Grade-Level Readiness Screener, and the Reading Diagnostic Assessment.

The **Grade-Level Readiness Screener** assesses students’ preparedness with relation to TEKS-aligned skills and content from the previous grade-level. Teachers can use this assessment to determine student strengths as well as reteaching and remediation needs.

The second assessment for the beginning of the year is the **Reading Comprehension Diagnostic**, which focuses on reading comprehension and fluency, key indicators of student literacy at Grades 9-12.

BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT

The **Benchmark Assessment** assesses students’ progress in TEKS mastery throughout the school year. Three assessment forms – to be delivered at the beginning of the school year, after the completion of Unit 2, and again after the completion of Unit 4 – provide a valid and reliable measure of students’ advancement.

An additional feature, the Administrator Item Bank, allows administrators to pull items from a selection of over 150 questions per grade-level to create their own Benchmarks and replicate a testing environment district-wide.
Every day, teachers have the opportunity to deepen their understanding of student’s strengths and needs through **Progress Monitoring**. The instructional path clearly identifies TEKS and ELPS coverage in every Texas StudySync lesson. Each lesson embeds activities across domains to ensure students are building foundational language and comprehension skills and progressing toward mastery of reading, writing, and research and inquiry standards every day.

Progress monitoring charts detail which standards are covered in each instructional sequence, identify standards tested on state assessments, and guide teachers toward resources for reteaching and remediation.

Text questions, quick checks for success, turn and talk activities, and many other short cycle **Formative Assessments** are embedded in every Texas StudySync lesson plan to provide teachers low-stakes opportunities to monitor student performance.

Every Texas StudySync lesson offers students an opportunity to demonstrate progress toward standards mastery. Responding to sources, auto-graded **Reading Quizzes**, skills mastery checks, and longer written responses in the Extended Writing Projects all include TEKS and ELPS labeling. When students complete assignments digitally, Texas StudySync tracks performance by standard. Data reporting tools provide teachers a comprehensive view of their students and their class’s progress toward mastery of each standard.
Each unit concludes with review and assessment. The pacing guide suggests time for teachers to revisit key concepts with which students may have struggled during core instruction and application. Review and reteaching is guided by the data tracking tools in Texas StudySync that allow teachers to view day-to-day student performance on all TEKS and ELPS.

Spotlight Skills are targeted lessons that provide resources to reteach or remediate without assigning additional readings. Each Core ELAR Skill lesson has a corresponding, TEKS-aligned, Spotlight Skill lesson. Spotlight Skills can be assigned at any point in the year, but the end of each unit provides a natural moment to pause, review data collected throughout the unit, and reteach skills students have not yet mastered.
End-of-Unit Assessments report on the outcome of student learning. As students complete each unit of the reading program, they will be assessed on their understanding of key instructional content and their ability to write in response to prompts across a series of genres. The results serve as a summative assessment by providing a status of current achievement in relation to student progress through the TEKS-aligned curriculum. The results of the assessments can be used to inform subsequent instruction, aid in making leveling and grouping decisions, and point toward areas in need of reteaching or remediation.

### Content | Assessed Skills & TEKS
---|---
**READING**

**A Fish Out of Water**
- Genre: Fiction
- Word Count: 671
- Lexile: 1150L

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**Friendship 101**
- Genre: Fiction
- Word Count: 515
- Lexile: 1080L

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**Revolutionary Child**
- Genre: Fiction
- Word Count: 509
- Lexile: 1060L

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**La Quinceañera**
- Genre: Fiction
- Word Count: 826
- Lexile: 1150L

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**REVISITING AND EDITING**

**Student Passage #1**

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**WRITING**

**Prompt:** Narrative Writing

| Narrative Writing 9.9(B)(i), 9.10(A), 9.9(B)(ii), 9.9(D) |

At the close of each instructional unit, students will be assessed on that unit’s skills in the unit assessment. The results will be used to inform grouping and additional instructional needs. The reporting associated with the assessment can be shared with students and parents to highlight the following:

- ✓ Skill strengths
- ✓ Skill deficiencies
- ✓ Standard and skill proficiency levels
- ✓ Across-unit growth
TEST PREPARATION AND PRACTICE

Texas Test Preparation and Practice serves as a benchmarking tool, provides students practice and familiarity with the item types and testing demands they will encounter in end-of-year assessment, and features skills-based lessons that walk students through a model and apply format.

The **Skill Lessons** focus of those reading and writing skills that make up the content of end-of-year testing, providing students with instruction and practice to prepare for gate-keeping assessments.

The **State Test Preparation** assessments can be administered to students throughout the year, leading up to end-of-year testing. In grades 11 and 12, these include ACT and SAT practice tests. Students’ growing mastery of the curriculum should evidence increasing scores at each administration and can point to student readiness for high-stakes testing and provide a picture of student year-long achievement.

DATA AND TRACKING

StudySync assessments are grounded in research, aligned with the curriculum, and designed to familiarize students with items and approaches associated with end-of-year Texas testing, as well as the SAT and ACT in Grades 11 and 12.

The assessments use existing testing designs as their validity structure and alignment model. The construct validity of the assessments is high because the questions reflect the skills as they are taught in the program. The items measure how well the students understood the skills and provide a reliable portrait of student mastery and progress.

In addition, StudySync Grade-Level Readiness Screeners and Benchmarks are unique for their high reliability: they have been field-tested extensively, ensuring the effectiveness of every item in these assessments.
Data Tracking and Presentation Tools

Data tracking and presentation tools help teachers use the results of assessments to identify which standards and skills present particular challenges for students, as well as where students are excelling and are ready for enrichment. Using the StudySync Gradebook, teachers can effectively decide how to scaffold instruction and provide remediation support for individual students.

Tracking tools for these assessments will provide teachers with a raw score as well as a breakdown of students’ performance against standards and performance against skills. In addition, color-coded reporting will allow teachers to quickly and easily monitor students’ performance and needs.

**Green**
Student is on track for grade-level mastery or beyond.

**Yellow**
Student may require scaffolded instruction to get back on track toward grade-level performance.

**Red**
Teacher should use diagnostic assessments to determine whether the student requires foundational skill intervention.

Access Tab

StudySync’s Assess tab includes test banks and instant data reporting on students’ performance and TEKS mastery. Teachers can create, edit, and share online using the electronic test bank to customize and generate TEKS-aligned assessments. Through StudySync’s Assess tab, teachers have a wide range of tools and opportunities to understand and communicate their students’ preparedness and progress throughout the school year.
SCREENING AND DIAGNOSTIC

Overview

At the beginning of the school year, there is a lot to learn about students in order to make data-informed decisions with regards to instruction. In Texas StudySync, the Grade-Level Readiness Screener and the Reading Comprehension Diagnostic provide teachers with uniquely valid and reliable assessments that will yield crucial preparedness data about each individual student.

The Grade-Level Readiness Screener uses existing testing designs as its validity structure and alignment model. It also has been field-tested repeatedly, ensuring the effectiveness of every item in the assessment. The items provide a reliable portrait of student mastery of TEKS-aligned skills at the beginning of the school year, including Reading, Revising and Editing, and Short Answer Response Writing skills.

In the Reading Comprehension Diagnostic students are presented with two grade-level appropriate passages, each accompanied by 5 items focused on assessing text understanding. The first set of passages is set at 9th grade complexity, with grades 10-12 following. The text complexity grows in difficulty with each grade level set. These levels correspond to what students need to be able to handle at each grade level, and they are far enough apart that they should generate performance differences between grade levels.

Students also need to be fluent in order to be proficient readers. Maze fluency passages are provided to administer a fluency assessment. Students should reach the expected cut-off numbers listed below:

- ✔ Fall—20 correct words
- ✔ Winter—24 correct words
- ✔ Spring—28 correct words

The digital version of these assessments can be assigned from the Assess tab inside your StudySync account. The paper-based version of the assessment can also be printed from the same tab.

READINESS SCREENER
Readiness Screener - Grade 9 - Form 1

READING DIAGNOSTIC ASSESSMENT
Reading Diagnostic - Grade 9 - Form 1

Samples of the Readiness Screener and Reading Comprehension Diagnostic are available in this Assessment Sampler.
Delay in India, an excerpt from Around the World in 80 Days

The Jules Verne novel Around the World in 80 Days begins in October 1872, when Englishman Phileas Fogg makes a wager that he can travel around the world in 80 days. The excerpt below describes how Fogg and his French servant, Passepartout, along with two other train passengers, the general Sir Francis Cromarty and Fix, deal with a delay in India.

1 The train entered the defiles of the Sutpour Mountains, which separate the Khandeish from Bundelcund, towards evening. The next day Sir Francis Cromarty asked Passepartout what time it was; to which, on consulting his watch, he replied that it was three in the morning. This famous timepiece, always regulated on the Greenwich meridian, which was now some seventy-seven degrees westward, was at least four hours slow. Sir Francis corrected Passepartout's time, whereupon the latter made the same remark that he had done to Fix; and upon the general insisting that the watch should be regulated in each new meridian, since he was constantly going eastward, that is in the face of the sun, and therefore the days were shorter by four minutes for each degree gone over, Passepartout obstinately refused to alter his watch, which he kept at London time. It was an innocent delusion which could harm no one.

2 The train stopped, at eight o'clock, in the midst of a glade some fifteen miles beyond Rothal, where there were several bungalows, and workmen’s cabins. The conductor, passing along the carriages, shouted, “Passengers will get out here!”

3 Phileas Fogg looked at Sir Francis Cromarty for an explanation; but the general could not tell what meant a halt in the midst of this forest of dates and acacias.

4 Passepartout, not less surprised, rushed out and speedily returned, crying: “Monsieur, no more railway!”

5 “What do you mean?” asked Sir Francis.

6 “I mean to say that the train isn’t going on.”

7 The general at once stepped out, while Phileas Fogg calmly followed him, and they proceeded together to the conductor.

8 “Where are we?” asked Sir Francis.

9 “At the hamlet of Kholby.”

10 “Do we stop here?”
“Certainly. The railway isn’t finished.”

“What! not finished?”

“No. There’s still a matter of fifty miles to be laid from here to Allahabad, where the line begins again.”

“But the papers announced the opening of the railway throughout.”

“What would you have, officer? The papers were mistaken.”

“Yet you sell tickets from Bombay to Calcutta,” retorted Sir Francis, who was growing warm.

“No doubt,” replied the conductor; “but the passengers know that they must provide means of transportation for themselves from Kholby to Allahabad.”

Sir Francis was furious. Passepartout would willingly have knocked the conductor down, and did not dare to look at his master.

“Sir Francis,” said Mr. Fogg quietly, “we will, if you please, look about for some means of conveyance to Allahabad.”

“Mr. Fogg, this is a delay greatly to your disadvantage.”

“No, Sir Francis; it was foreseen.”

“What! You knew that the way—”

“Not at all; but I knew that some obstacle or other would sooner or later arise on my route. Nothing, therefore, is lost. I have two days, which I have already gained, to sacrifice. A steamer leaves Calcutta for Hong Kong at noon, on the 25th. This is the 22nd, and we shall reach Calcutta in time.”

There was nothing to say to so confident a response.

It was but too true that the railway came to a termination at this point. The papers were like some watches, which have a way of getting too fast, and had been premature in their announcement of the completion of the line. The greater part of the travellers were aware of this interruption, and, leaving the train, they began to engage such vehicles as the village could provide four-wheeled palkigharis, waggons drawn by zebus, carriages that looked like perambulating pagodas, palanquins, ponies, and what not.

Mr. Fogg and Sir Francis Cromarty, after searching the village from end to end, came back without having found anything.

“I shall go afoot,” said Phileas Fogg.
28 Passepartout, who had now rejoined his master, made a wry grimace, as he thought of his magnificent, but too frail Indian shoes. Happily he too had been looking about him, and, after a moment's hesitation, said, "Monsieur, I think I have found a means of conveyance."

29 "What?"

30 "An elephant! An elephant that belongs to an Indian who lives but a hundred steps from here."

31 "Let's go and see the elephant," replied Mr. Fogg.

---

**Question 1:** Which of these best explains the mood in the first paragraph of the passage?

A. gloomy, because it tells about a difficult journey

B. lighthearted, because it details a humorous exchange

C. mysterious, because it describes an unfamiliar location

D. triumphant, because it celebrates an important accomplishment

**TEKS:** 8.9(F)

**Question 2:** Which of these details from the passage best supports the idea that Passepartout has great loyalty toward Phileas Fogg?

A. Passepartout feels responsible for the delay in Fogg's travel plans.

B. Passepartout is hesitant to suggest traveling on a stranger's elephant.

C. Passepartout is saddened at the thought of Fogg's having to walk fifty miles.

D. Passepartout becomes angry when he hears the conductor's explanation for the delay.

**TEKS:** 8.6(C)

**Question 3:** Which of these details from the passage best supports the conclusion that the traveling companions were surprised by the transportation delay in India?

A. They had made no advance arrangements to travel from Kholby to Allahabad.

B. They chose not to request assistance from any of the other travelers on the train.

C. Passepartout decided to keep his watch set on London time throughout the journey.

D. Mr. Fogg knew the exact time that the steamer would depart Calcutta for Hong Kong.

**TEKS:** 8.6(C), 8.7(C)
Question 4: Which of these best explains why Sir Francis says to the conductor, “Yet you sell tickets from Bombay to Calcutta.”?

A. He fears that this delay will cause his companion to lose the bet.
B. He expects a full refund of his ticket price to make up for the inconvenience.
C. He thinks the conductor should provide an explanation for the cause of the delay.
D. He wants the conductor to know how unfair he thinks the situation is for travelers.

TEKS: 8.7(B)

Question 5: Which of these best explains why Sir Francis becomes angry during his conversation with the conductor of the train?

A. Sir Francis realizes that Phileas Fogg has only two days to sacrifice to travel from Kholby to Allahabad.
B. The conductor informs Sir Francis and Passepartout that they will have to walk fifty miles from Kholby to Allahabad.
C. The conductor informs Sir Francis that his ticket from Bombay to Calcutta does not include travel from Kholby to Allahabad.
D. Sir Francis realizes that the other passengers have left the train and there are no vehicles left in the village to carry them from Kholby to Allahabad.

TEKS: 8.7(C)

Question 6: Read this excerpt from the passage.

“Mr. Fogg, this is a delay greatly to your disadvantage.”
“No, Sir Francis; it was foreseen.”
“What! You knew that the way—”
“Not at all; but I knew that some obstacle or other would sooner or later arise on my route. Nothing, therefore, is lost.

The author most likely includes the contrast between Sir Francis and Phileas Fogg to show that Phileas Fogg

A. maintains a positive outlook
B. is able to see into the future
C. is unconcerned about the bet
D. has planned for the unexpected

TEKS: 8.9(E)

Question 7: Read this dictionary entry.

Conveyance (ˈkən-ˈvēn-ənt) n.
1. the action of moving something. 2. a method of transport 3. a communication or exchange 4. the act of transferring property from one to another in writing

Now read this sentence from the passage.
“Sir Francis,” said Mr. Fogg quietly, “we will, if you please, look about for some means of conveyance to Allahabad.”

Which definition of conveyance is used in the sentence?

A. Definition 1  
B. Definition 2  
C. Definition 3  
D. Definition 4  

**TEKS**: 8.2(A)

**Question 8**: Write a summary of the passage. Be sure to include details about the characters, setting, and plot.

Phileas Fogg and his companions, his servant Passepartout, the general Sir Francis, and Fix, are traveling to Calcutta on a train. Suddenly, the train stops in the village of Kholby, and the conductor orders all the passengers off the train. When questioned about the stop, the conductor explains that the railway is incomplete between Kholby and Allahabad. Passengers on the train are expected to provide their own travel arrangements from Kholby to Allahabad. While Sir Francis is furious, Phileas calmly explains that obstacles are to be expected, and the two search the village for a vehicle to take them to Allahabad. They are unable to find a vehicle, so Phileas states that he will walk to Allahabad. The idea of walking does not appeal to Passepartout, who suddenly comes up with an unusual idea: they can ride an elephant to Allahabad.

**TEKS**: 8.6(D)

**READ THE PASSAGE “TANK MAN.” THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.**

**Tank Man**

1. The man emerged from nowhere, seized a moment of history, and disappeared again. He became a symbol for the pro-democracy movement in China, with his image appearing on televisions and in print around the world. Yet we know almost nothing about the man people have come to call “Tank Man.” Here’s what we do know.

2. On the morning of June 5, 1989, a man was walking beside Tiananmen Square in Beijing, China, carrying groceries. Anti-government protests had been ongoing in the Square for weeks. The protestors lacked a single leader or cause, but among their demands were democratic and economic reforms. The night before, the Chinese government had increased the violence of its response, using weapons, tear gas, and tanks in an effort to put an end to the uprising. Many protestors were killed or wounded.

3. The smell of smoke from the previous night still drifted in the air as the man walked. He heard a rumble, growing louder. As he watched, a long row of tanks appeared, 18 in all.
It was a massive show of force, an unmistakable warning to anyone who might dare oppose China's government. Rather than stand by as the tanks rolled past, this man—who would become known to the world as Tank Man—decided to stand in their path.

4 Observers, many of them members of the press, were stunned. Here was a lone individual, apparently just done shopping, dressed in plain white shirt and black pants, challenging this fearsome demonstration of China's military might. Cameras began snapping pictures as onlookers worried the tank would run the man down.

5 As the first tank attempted to steer around him, the man repeatedly moved back into its path, until the tank stopped and turned off its motor. As a crowd gathered, the man climbed onto the tank. He held a conversation with someone inside, but no reporter heard what was said.

6 Finally, the man climbed down and the tank restarted its engine. But as it moved forward, the man once again stepped in front. This time the standoff was short-lived, as two unidentified people arrived to lead the man away. He was never heard from again.

7 The Chinese government claimed it had no idea who Tank Man was or what happened to him, but theories abound. Some say he was arrested by government agents. Others say it was friends who pulled him away and that he went into hiding.

8 Although Tank Man may have disappeared, his courageous act of civil disobedience lives on, captured by photographers. One of them was Charlie Cole, a photographer for a popular news magazine. Cole hid the film when his hotel room was searched by Chinese police, who confiscated all the other film they could find.

9 Cole was quick to credit all the journalists and photographers who covered the event, but it was his photo of Tank Man that captured the world's attention. His was the lens that allowed Tank Man to shine a light on the Chinese government's harshness for the world to see.

10 No cameras captured Tank Man's face, so we will never know who he is. He will never be personally recognized for his heroism. In fact, because of the tight control of the media in China, he may not even know that his actions made him an enduring symbol of peaceful resistance to oppression around the world.

**Question 1:** Which sentence from the passage best states the main idea?

A. It was a massive show of force, an unmistakable warning to anyone who might dare oppose China's government.

B. The protestors lacked a single leader or cause, but among their demands were democratic and economic reforms.

C. Although Tank Man may have disappeared, his courageous act of civil disobedience lives on, captured by photographers.
D. Cole was quick to credit all the journalists and photographers who covered the event, but it was his photo of Tank Man that captured the world’s attention.

**TEKS:** 8.8(D)i

**Question 2:** Look at this timeline of some of the events in the passage.

<p>| | | | |</p>
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<td>1</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>4</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Anti-government protests take place in Tiananmen Square</td>
<td>Tank Man confronts a row of tanks by standing in front of them.</td>
<td>The first tank stops, and Tank Man climbs onto it.</td>
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Which of these belongs in Box 2?

A. Tank Man talks to someone inside one of the Chinese military tanks.
B. The Chinese government stages a violent crackdown on the uprising.
C. Protestors present a list of specific demands to the Chinese leaders.
D. The Chinese government claims not to know the identity of Tank Man.

**TEKS:** 8.6(C), 8.8(D)ii

**Question 3:** During the 1989 anti-government protests in China, what was similar about Tank Man and Charlie Cole?

A. They both contributed to revealing the events that occurred in China.
B. They both participated directly in an attempt to change China’s government.
C. They both made an effort to keep their identities hidden until they left China.
D. They both attempted to capture the actions of the Chinese government for all to see.

**TEKS:** 8.8(D)iii

**Question 4:** Which paragraph best supports the idea that Tank Man’s actions were extraordinary?

A. Paragraph 1
B. Paragraph 2
C. Paragraph 4
D. Paragraph 7

**TEKS:** 8.8(D)iii
Question 5: Which of these best summarizes the passage?

A. In 1989 anti-government protestors demanded democratic and economic reforms in China. Many were killed or wounded when the government increased the violence of its response.

B. Although he was captured on camera, no one knows who the Tank Man was or what happened to him. He will probably never know that people around the world considered him a hero.

C. An unidentified man stood up to the Chinese government in Tiananmen Square. His brave actions focused global attention on the government’s harshness in putting down protests. He became a symbol of peaceful resistance to oppression.

D. Members of the press saw a man wearing a white shirt and black pants challenge the Chinese military in Tiananmen Square. He repeatedly stood in front of a long row of tanks, which was intended as a show of force to help stop anti-government protests.

TEKS: 8.6(D)

Question 6: Read this sentence from the passage.

In fact, because of the tight control of the media in China, he may not even know that his actions made him an enduring symbol of peaceful resistance to oppression around the world.

Now read this dictionary entry.

Resistance (ri – ŋzistən(t)s) n.
1. an act of opposition or defiance 2. the ability to remain unaltered by something 3. the power to withstand or not give in to temptation 4. an underground organization of a conquered country that works secretly against occupation forces

Which definition of the word resistance is used in the sentence from the passage?

A. Definition 1
B. Definition 2
C. Definition 3
D. Definition 4

TEKS: 8.2(A)

Question 7: Read this sentence from the passage.

Although Tank Man may have disappeared, his courageous act of civil disobedience lives on, captured by photographers.

In the sentence, the phrase “civil disobedience” most nearly means

A. refusing to follow the demands of a law
B. standing in front of something to stop it
C. using force to fight a government policy
D. acting independently for a personal cause

TEKS: 8.2(B)
**Question 8:** What is the author’s overall purpose in writing this passage? Provide evidence from the passage to support your response.

The author probably wrote this passage to inform readers about an important historical event that was captured in a photograph and sent around the world. The author explains how a man’s act of courage became a symbol of peaceful resistance to an unfair government. Tank Man, a name that he earned through his heroic actions, was on his way home from shopping when he suddenly decided to stand in front of tanks that were brought in to stop protestors. The image of this man standing by himself in the path of the tanks and stopping them for a brief moment symbolizes the courage and determination of people who want to be free from oppressive governments.

**TEKS:** 8.9(A)

**READ THE PASSAGE “ECHOLOCATION IN BATS.” THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.**

**Echolocation in Bats**

Echolocation is used by bats to navigate and find their prey. Echolocation is a process of locating objects by hearing how sound echoes off them. Vibrations in the larynx, a part of the bat’s throat, make high-pitched sounds. When these vibrations occur, the sound escapes through the bat’s nose or mouth. Bats can produce sounds so high that humans cannot hear them.

The bat’s ears are adapted to hearing these high-pitched sounds. Because these sounds can be damaging to the inner ear, a muscle in the bat’s middle ear contracts before the bat makes a high-pitched sound. This reduces the ear’s sensitivity to sound. By the time the sound echoes, the middle ear muscle has relaxed, allowing the bat to hear its high-pitched echo.

Echolocation helps bats avoid running into things. Sounds are made by the bat that will bounce off any obstacle in the bat’s path. When the sound returns to the bat, the bat can approximate the location of these objects. The bat will then amend its flight pattern to avoid crashing into anything while in flight. Echolocation is especially useful for bats because they do not see well in the dark. If a bat were blindfolded, it could still fly safely because of echolocation.

Bats also use echolocation to catch their prey. If prey is in motion, the bat can follow it using echolocation. By listening to the echoed sounds, a bat can determine its prey’s speed, altitude, and size. These high-pitched noises are repeated by the bat at a faster rate as it nears its target. Repeating the sound helps improve the bat’s accuracy in pinpointing its prey’s location. Without using echolocation it would be difficult for bats to catch their prey.
Question 1: Which of these best revises Sentence 19 to add clarity to the passage?

A. The bat repeats these high-pitched noises at a faster rate as it nears its target.
B. As the target is neared, the bat repeats these high-pitched noises at a faster rate.
C. As it nears its target, these high-pitched noises are repeated by the bat at a faster rate.
D. These high-pitched noises are repeated by the bat at a faster rate as the target is neared.

**TEKS:** 8.10(D)(ii)

Question 2: Which revision of Sentence 21 contains correct punctuation?

A. Without using, echolocation it would be difficult for bats to catch their prey.
B. Without using echolocation, it would be difficult for bats to catch their prey.
C. Without using echolocation it would be difficult, for bats to catch their prey.
D. Without using echolocation it would be difficult for bats, to catch their prey.

**TEKS:** 8.10(D)(viii)

Question 3: Which sentence from the passage contains a misspelled word?

A. Sentence 6
B. Sentence 8
C. **Sentence 11**
D. Sentence 20

**TEKS:** 8.10(D)(ix)

Question 4: Which sentence from the passage best uses specific verb choice to express an unlikely possibility?

A. Sentence 4
B. Sentence 9
C. **Sentence 15**
D. Sentence 17

**TEKS:** 8.10(D)(ii)

Question 5: Read this sentence.

Bats are active mainly at night.

In which of these places does the sentence best fit in the passage?

A. after Sentence 10
B. after Sentence 11
C. after Sentence 12
D. **after Sentence 13**

**TEKS:** 8.10(B)(ii)
**Question 6:** Which of these would be the most reliable source for further information on echolocation?

A. a film on the declining bat population  
B. an Internet article about sound waves  
C. a Web site about animals with special skills  
D. a report about boats using sound to find objects in water  

**TEKS:** 8.12(G), 8.12(I)

**Question 7:** Read this excerpt from the passage.

At first, the trail was smooth, allowing my skis to glide gently along as if they were floating on air. Bumps along the path, where the snow had been swept up by the wind, provided gentle reminders of how important it was to maintain one's focus. Soon, however, we encountered a series of curves and downward slopes. We stopped, checked the maps, and discussed how we would traverse these obstacles.

Which revision of the third sentence best enhances the meaning of the paragraph?

A. Soon, however, we encountered a series of curves and downward slopes that very quickly infuriated us.  
B. Soon, however, we encountered a series of curves and downward slopes that seemed too easy even for me.  
C. Soon, however, we encountered a series of curves and downward slopes that required more skill and caution.  
D. Soon, however, we encountered a series of curves and downward slopes that quickly transformed our journey.  

**TEKS:** 9.9(C)

**Question 8:** Which of these would be the best concluding sentence to add after the final sentence of the passage?

A. I couldn’t wait to get to the warming hut and end my embarrassment.  
B. I wondered if there would be worse slopes ahead that would give me trouble.  
C. A sudden, cold wind reminded me that winter is not just innocent, powdery snow.  
D. Now that the first fall was out of the way, I relaxed and enjoyed the rest of the trip.  

**TEKS:** 9.9(B)(i)
The Harlem Renaissance

1. The Harlem Renaissance was an African American cultural and social movement. It took place in the early 20th century in Harlem, New York. The movement was characterized by a new and bold artistic expression, mostly through literary works that portrayed black life as it really was. Authors and poets of the Harlem Renaissance communicated a sense of black pride rather than a focus on social inequality. Their influential writing was so powerful that it was recognized in white culture, helping to raise awareness about racial prejudice. But this was not the primary goal of the movement. Its purpose was simply to express and celebrate black culture in America.

2. THE MOVE NORTHWARD
   The Harlem Renaissance took place roughly between World War I and the Great Depression. The American economy was booming in the early 1920s, right after the First World War. Many jobs were available in the cities of the North. Meanwhile, black people faced brutal prejudice and segregation in the South. Hate groups and hate crimes caused them to fear for their lives on a daily basis. They were paid very low wages, and work was not readily available. As a result, hundreds of thousands migrated to northern cities, where more opportunities awaited.

3. While the North was more desirable than the South, prejudice existed everywhere. African Americans found themselves segregated again, and Harlem quickly became a black community. Nearly 175,000 African Americans migrated to the neighborhood, which is only about three square miles in area. Suddenly, Harlem contained the largest concentration of black people in the world.

4. A LITERARY AWAKENING
   African American literary talent began to emerge at this time. Harlem already had a sense of black culture. It grew stronger as people from around the country came together to share their experiences. African American magazines and newspapers were established. Opportunity magazine was one of them, becoming a powerful voice for black culture. Black leader W.E.B. Du Bois also developed his journal, The Crisis, which helped to launch the literary careers of many black authors of the time. Du Bois highly encouraged black artists to leave the South and join the growing movement in Harlem.

5. At about the same time, sociologist and critic Alain Locke edited a popular anthology titled The New Negro, which included essays, stories, poems, and artwork that celebrated black life. The term “The New Negro” soon came to be associated with black pride and a demand for civil and political rights. As a result, the movement grew stronger.
Harlem as a community started to develop a new and more powerful sense of identity and culture. It became the center for art, fiction, poetry, theater, dance, and music. It was also the home of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP. As such, the neighborhood attracted many smart and talented African Americans who sought to tell their stories.

Langston Hughes was one of the most notable black literary figures to emerge from this movement. His first poem, “The Negro Speaks of Rivers,” was published in the June 1921 edition of *The Crisis*. Hughes wrote unique poetry that had a rhythm similar to that of blues or jazz, which were emerging in Harlem at the time. The unusual rhythms and improvised styles of this music were new and thrilling. Harlem’s Cotton Club hosted musicians such as Duke Ellington, Billie Holiday, and Louis Armstrong, and Hughes was one of thousands who went to listen to them. In fact, his book *The Weary Blues* is heavily influenced by the music he listened to in Harlem. Hughes would go on to become one of the most famous black poets in history.

Jean Toomer and Countee Cullen were two other influential writers during the movement, both recognized for publishing their works with well-known publishers—an African American accomplishment for the time. Other writers included Claude McKay, Nella Larsen, Rudolf Fisher, and Zora Neale Hurston.

All of them shared a common theme in their writing—to present the black experience from an honest and realistic perspective. Toomer addressed these issues through plays, short stories, and poetry. Cullen addressed social injustice and black identity through his collection of poems titled *Color*. McKay’s poetry appealed to his readers’ emotions, urging them to stand up for black rights. Meanwhile, Hurston used her novel *Their Eyes Were Watching God* to narrate her impressions of the black experience in America.

**THE END OF AN ERA**

The Harlem Renaissance was at its height in the mid-to-late 1920s. However, it began to decline quickly in 1929, with the crash of Wall Street and the beginning of the Great Depression. Harlem changed during this time as unemployment and crime rose. Still, the movement had made its impact on America, laying the groundwork that would influence future black writers.

Values such as race pride, self-respect, and a call for civil rights helped to establish the Harlem Renaissance as the most influential movement in African American literary history. Harlem literary figures introduced these values to the black public in such a powerful way that they changed the course of black history. The Harlem Renaissance influenced generations of black writers that followed it, and it continues to influence writers today.
Question 1: Read this statement about the text and the directions that follow.

The expression of black pride in Harlem was largely a result of the environment in which people lived. Which sentence from the text best supports this inference?

A. “Harlem as a community started to develop a new and more powerful sense of identity and culture.”
B. “The Harlem Renaissance was at its height in the mid-to-late 1920s.”
C. “Harlem changed during this time as unemployment and crime rose.”
D. “The Harlem Renaissance influenced generations of black writers that followed it, and it continues to influence writers today.”

Question 2: Read this statement about the text and the directions that follow.

THE MOVE NORTHWARD

The Harlem Renaissance took place roughly between World War I and the Great Depression. The American economy was booming in the early 1920s, right after the First World War. Many jobs were available in the cities of the North. Meanwhile, black people faced brutal prejudice and segregation in the South. Hate groups and hate crimes caused them to fear for their lives on a daily basis. They were paid very low wages, and work was not readily available. As a result, hundreds of thousands migrated to northern cities, where more opportunities awaited.

While the North was more desirable than the South, prejudice existed everywhere. African Americans found themselves segregated again, and Harlem quickly became a black community. Nearly 175,000 African Americans migrated to the neighborhood, which is only about three square miles in area. Suddenly, Harlem contained the largest concentration of black people in the world.

Select the sentence that best summarizes the excerpt.

A. After World War I, Harlem became the new South for many African Americans who moved there.
B. African Americans left the South to escape oppression and find jobs, but they still faced prejudice in the North.
C. African Americans encountered the same problems in the North that they had tried to leave behind in the South.
D. After World War I, the South became more prejudiced and the North became more accepting of black culture.

Question 3: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which sentence best states the central idea of the text?

A. The Harlem Renaissance was defined by a literary awakening across the country, which began with an important anthology titled The New Negro.
B. The Harlem Renaissance was an important era for African Americans because it helped to bring about the civil rights movement that began years later.
C. The Harlem Renaissance was a period of time in New York City when African Americans came together to express themselves in new and artistic ways.
D. The Harlem Renaissance was an important cultural movement characterized by strong African American literary figures that changed the way people viewed black life.

Part B: Which sentence from the text best supports your answer in part A?
A. “Their influential writing was so powerful that it was recognized in white culture, helping to raise awareness about racial prejudice.”
B. “Suddenly, Harlem contained the largest concentration of black people in the world.”
C. “The term ‘The New Negro’ soon came to be associated with black pride and a demand for civil and political rights.”
D. “It was also the home of the National Association for the Advancement of Colored People, or NAACP.”

Question 4: Which sentence explains the influence of music during the Harlem Renaissance?
A. It was a form of escape for some of the most notable African American authors in history.
B. It caused many African American authors to shift toward writing about different genres of music.
C. It affected the overall culture in Harlem, which resulted in its expression through some literary works.
D. It represented an exciting form of entertainment, encouraging authors to write about less serious topics.

Question 5: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement best summarizes how the author develops the idea that literary figures of the Harlem Renaissance had strong and independent voices?
A. The author provides examples of magazines and journals established in Harlem.
B. The author explains how black authors were published on a large scale for the public.
C. The author explains how prejudice was a part of everyday life for African Americans.
D. The author provides examples of black authors and gives details about what they wrote.

Part B: Select the sentence from the text that best supports your answer in part A.
A. “Black leader W.E.B. Du Bois also developed his journal, The Crisis, which helped to launch the literary careers of many black authors of the time.”
B. “Jean Toomer and Countee Cullen were two other influential writers during the movement, both recognized for publishing their works with well-known publishers—an African-American accomplishment for the time.”
C. “Cullen addressed social injustice and black identity through his collection of poems titled Color.”
D. “However, it began to decline quickly in 1929, with the crash of Wall Street and the beginning of the Great Depression.”
A Piece of Home

1 Dahlia awoke to the pitter-patter of rain falling gently on her rooftop. Somewhere in the distance, a Mourning Dove cooed softly to welcome the day. Rolling over, she felt the soft, humid breeze envelop her, and she breathed in deeply, sighing at the smell of the familiar salty sea air. Then she remembered, and, like every other morning for the past three years, the new day hit her like a heavy stone in her stomach.

2 Opening her eyes, she looked around at her pristine surroundings—a beautiful rounded space with a high dome. It was the perfect mood room to recreate a sensory experience. Any sight, sound, or smell could be generated, and Dahlia had everything she needed to remember life as a young girl in Seattle, Washington. But that was a long time ago, and this was not Seattle.

3 “Good MORNING, DAH-lee-ah!” The weight of the moment was interrupted as a wall panel suddenly slid open and what could only be described as a three-foot rolling wastebasket with arms came cheerfully whizzing into the room.

4 “How are you feeling TO-day, DAH-lee-ah?”

5 Dahlia couldn’t help but smile as her Personal Robotic Assistance Module (PRAM) didn’t bother to wait for an answer. Instead, it zoomed over to the mood control panel and started frantically tapping buttons. The Mourning Dove and distant sound of waves suddenly diminished to nothingness, and the heavy raindrops against the high dome quickly faded away as the gray light of a rainy day grew ever brighter. Eventually, the room was bathed in a soft white light.

6 Sitting up, Dahlia threw her legs over the side of her four-poster princess bed, a replica of the one she left behind when she was a little girl. Not that she needed a bed at all—for she could have simply used the antigravity device to float gently as she slept—but there was something about the bed that comforted her every morning, and so it remained.

7 She watched wearily as PRAM moved to another panel and began to raise the flat white blinds on the windows that surrounded the room. Outside, a desolate gray environment revealed itself. It was so alien that it could never be mistaken for any place on Earth. The dark blue atmosphere above was just starting to turn red, and the Fire Mountains in the distance looked like they were in flames. There was no water on land near this particular community—water was irrigated from beneath the surface—so there were no oceans or lakes to admire. And there certainly was nothing green.

8 This was Calypto—the third planet to be colonized for human habitation—and Dahlia’s family was one of the first to make the one-way trip. It had been a journey of many years. Dahlia’s last memory of Earth was when she was just seven years old and had
said goodbye to the willow tree in her backyard. Now she was fourteen, and she had been on Calypto for about three years. Everything seemed both new and familiar at the same time, and she was left with a sad longing for a home that she barely remembered.

“HAP-py BIRTH-day, DAH-lee-ah!” PRAM had zoomed back across the room and was idling at Dahlia’s bedside. Its electrical circuits seemed to be crackling in robotic excitement, and Dahlia realized that her father must have added an emotional card to PRAM’s circuitry. It was his specialty as a robotic engineer. She laughed before reminding PRAM that her family decided last year not to celebrate birthdays anymore. A year was much longer on Calypto, and humans also aged more slowly here than they did on Earth.

In response, PRAM blinked its lights at Dahlia and wiggled a little before turning around and rolling away. “HAP-py BIRTH-day...HAP-py BIRTH-day...HAP-py BIRTH-day...” it repeated as the wall panel reopened and it zoomed out of the room.

Fifteen minutes later, Dahlia entered the common room and found her father eating breakfast.

“I think something is wrong with my module...” Turning toward the food prep area, she saw what looked like a small tree with a bow on it sitting in the corner. “What...” she began, unable to continue as emotion overwhelmed her.

“It’s a tree,” her scientific and very logical father said plainly between bites. “Happy birthday.”

Overcome, Dahlia didn’t know whether to laugh or cry. Instead, she bent down to gently examine the deep green leaves and touch the rough brown trunk. It was the most beautiful thing in the entire universe, for it was Earth, in the truest sense of the word. Her heart filled with all that the little tree represented. Somewhere in the midst of her joy, she heard her father say something about a new arboretum and her responsibility to monitor it...how it was a sapling, but it would grow quickly in this environment with the new artificial sunlight they had recently invented...how it was only the first of many, and they were developing other plants and trees to incorporate.

To Dahlia, it was a dream come true. She felt like she was still in her mood room with the sensory panel that reminded her of home. But this was reality, not a sensory experience. And for the first time since she had arrived at Calypto, reality felt good. She laughed when she realized that PRAM must have known about the baby tree, and she wanted to hug both the tree and her module. Instead, she turned to her father and smiled with the simple joy of a seven-year-old.

“It’s a willow, isn’t it, Father?” she asked softly, but she already knew the answer.
Question 1: Which detail from the text best supports the inference that Dahlia is not completely unhappy with her new life?

A. She sleeps in a beautiful mood room.
B. She celebrates her birthday every year.
C. She is comforted by memories of Seattle.
D. She is amused by the actions of her robot.

Question 2: Select the best summary of the events in the text.

A. Dahlia thinks that she is in Seattle until her personal robot reveals that she was having a sensory experience in her mood room. At first, Dahlia does not understand her robot, but when she speaks to her father, she realizes that it is her birthday. She takes on a new responsibility to plant trees in an arboretum.
B. Dahlia awakens in the morning to a sensory experience that is designed to remind her of Earth, but it only makes her feel homesick. Her personal robot prepares her room for the new day and excitedly wishes her a happy birthday. Dahlia’s father then gives her a sapling to remind her of the tree she left behind on Earth.
C. Dahlia awakens to a sensory experience that recreates the weather in Seattle, but she is not fooled by the illusion it creates. Instead, she tells her personal robot to turn off the experience and show her the reality of Calypto outside her windows. Dahlia is disappointed with the planet until her father gives her a tree to plant.
D. Dahlia misses Seattle, her old home, but she accepts that she lives on Calypto now with her family. She tries to make the best of her situation by planting a young tree in an effort to start an arboretum on the planet. Dahlia’s father approves of her decision and supervises her as she makes plans for the sapling she has just received.

Question 3: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read the excerpt from the text and the directions that follow.

She watched wearily as PRAM moved to another panel and began to raise the flat white blinds on the windows that surrounded the room. Outside, a desolate gray environment revealed itself. It was so alien that it could never be mistaken for any place on Earth. The dark blue atmosphere above was just starting to turn red, and the Fire Mountains in the distance looked like they were in flames. There was no water on land near this particular community—water was irrigated from beneath the surface—so there were no oceans or lakes to admire. And there certainly was nothing green.

This was Calypto—the third planet to be colonized for human habitation—and Dahlia’s family was one of the first to make the one-way trip. It had been a journey of many years. Dahlia’s last memory of Earth was when she was just seven years old and had said goodbye to the willow tree in her backyard. Now she was fourteen, and she had been on Calypto for about three years. Everything seemed both new and familiar at the same time, and she was left with a sad longing for a home that she barely remembered.
Which central idea is expressed in the excerpt?

A. Dahlia does not live on planet Earth any longer.
B. Dahlia’s new home is far from Earth and very dangerous.
C. Dahlia’s new home is very different from the old home she loves.
D. Dahlia does not like to look at her new home through her windows.

Part B: Which sentence from the text best supports your answer in part A?

A. “She watched wearily as PRAM moved to another panel and began to raise the flat white blinds on the windows that surrounded the room.”
B. “There was no water on land near this particular community—water was irrigated from beneath the surface—so there were no oceans or lakes to admire.”
C. “This was Calypto—the third planet to be colonized for human habitation—and Dahlia’s family was one of the first to make the one-way trip.”
D. “Dahlia’s last memory of Earth was when she was just seven years old and had said goodbye to the willow tree in her backyard.”

Question 4: Which sentence explains how Dahlia changes in the text?

A. She becomes more hopeful about the future.
B. She becomes more sociable and affectionate.
C. She becomes more knowledgeable about the past.
D. She becomes more independent and self-confident.

Question 5: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read this statement about the theme of the text and the directions that follow.
Home is where the heart is.
Select the sentence that explains how Dahlia helps to develop this theme in the text.

A. She is overjoyed to receive a gift that reminds her of Earth.
B. She is confused to wake up to the sound of falling rain in Seattle.
C. She is surprised to see her personal robot react in an emotional manner.
D. She is deeply moved to learn that her family is celebrating her birthday.

Part B: Select the sentence from the text that best supports your answer in part A.

A. “Somewhere in the distance, a Mourning Dove cooed softly to welcome the day.”
B. “A year was much longer on Calypto, and humans also aged more slowly here than they did on Earth.”
C. “It was the most beautiful thing in the entire universe, for it was Earth, in the truest sense of the word.”
D. “And for the first time since she had arrived at Calypto, reality felt good.”
A Piece of Home

1. Dahlia awoke to the pitter-patter of rain falling gently on her rooftop. Somewhere in the distance, a Mourning Dove [sweet, make, cooed] softly to welcome the day. Rolling [except, over, predict], she felt the soft, humid breeze [created, envelop, offense] her, and she breathed in deeply, [sighing, flower, educate] at the smell of the familiar [middle, toward, salty] sea air. Then she remembered, and, [like, below, build] every other morning for the past [able, walk, three] years, the new day hit her [glad, past, like] a heavy stone in her stomach.

2. [Carefully, Opening, Remark] her eyes, she looked around at [and, you, her] pristine surroundings—a beautiful rounded space [with, limb, since] a high dome. It was the [perfect, absence, various] mood room to recreate a sensory [available, thermostat, experience]. Any sight, sound, or smell could [so, be, was] generated, and Dahlia had everything she [needed, risking, opposite] to remember life as a young [theirs, girl, mask] in Seattle, Washington. But that was [he, it, a] long time ago, and this was [cry, out, not] Seattle.

3. “Good MORN-ing, DAH-lee-ah!” The weight [up, of, so] the moment was interrupted as a [wall, miss, lie] panel suddenly slid open and what [could, agree, your] only be described as a three-foot [selfishly, shouted, rolling] wastebasket with arms came cheerfully whizzing [during, nine, into] the room.

4. “How are you feeling [SHOW-ing, TO-day, CON-cern], DAH-lee-ah?” Dahlia couldn’t help but smile [or, me, as] her Personal Robotic Assistance Module (PRAM) [border, didn’t, hated] bother to wait for an answer. [instead, Proposal, Rarely], it zoomed over to the mood [include, ankle, control] panel and started frantically tapping buttons. [The, Had, Why] Mourning Dove and distant sound of [defend, waves, school] suddenly diminished to nothingness, and the [numb, cooking, heavy] raindrops against the high dome quickly [provide, faded, sunlight] away as the gray light of [a, she, is] rainy day grew ever brighter. Eventually, [by, on, the] room was bathed in a soft [pain, white, lost] light.

5. Sitting up, Dahlia threw her [ruin, naps, legs] over the side of her four-poster [tradition, retreating, princess] bed, a replica of the one [she, these, with] left behind when she was a [lunge, little, fallen] girl. Not that she needed a [gym, act, bed] at all—for she could have [factory, around, simply] used the antigravity device to float [where, gently, person] as she slept—but there was [something, humorous, everyone] about the bed that comforted her [every, annoy, oval] morning, and so it remained.

6. She [applying, transport, watched] wearily as PRAM moved to another [catch, panel, public] and began to raise the flat [hover, white, timid] blinds on the windows that
surrounded [are, will, the] room. Outside, a desolate gray environment [revealed, population, migrating] itself. It was so alien that [we, it, so] could never be mistaken for any [menu, grow, place] on Earth. The dark blue atmosphere [anxious, without, above] was just starting to turn red, [what, and, bald] the Fire Mountains in the distance [talking, weather, looked] like they were in flames. There [can, was, joy] no water on land near this [particular, fragrant, hibernate] community—water was irrigated from beneath [the, an, own] surface—so there were no oceans [the, or, as] lakes to admire. And there certainly [say, life, was] nothing green.

This was Calypto—the [fear, stuck, third] planet to be colonized for human [comfortable, habitation, sidewalk]—and Dahlia’s family was one of [me, how, the] first to make the one-way trip. [It, Yes, Our] had been a journey of many [years, farms, away]. Dahlia’s last memory of Earth was [later, when, fine] she was just seven years old [till, from, and] had said goodbye to the willow [tree, been, less] in her backyard. Now she was [written, fourteen, possible], and she had been on Calypto [into, for, some] about three years. Everything seemed both [eye, wet, new] and familiar at the same time, [done, nor, and] she was left with a sad [express, longing, business] for a home that she barely [remembered, excitement, dreading].

“HAP-py BIRTH-day, DAH-lee-ah!” PRAM had zoomed [back, this, with] across the room and was idling [up, no, at] Dahlia’s bedside. Its electrical circuits seemed [up, his, to] be crackling in robotic excitement, and Dahlia [happily, realized, explaining] that her father must have added [is, an, now] emotional card to PRAM’s circuitry. It [know, your, was] his specialty as a robotic engineer. [She, Who, Their] laughed before reminding PRAM that her [hurry, family, money] decided last year not to celebrate [scientific, confidence, birthdays] anymore. A year was much longer [on, if, but] Calypto, and humans also aged more [slowly, above, knows] here than they did on Earth.

[At, Me, In] response, PRAM blinked its lights at Dahlia [so, and, each] wiggled a little before turning around [fly, that, and] rolling away. “HAP-py BIRTH-day...HAP-py BIRTH-day...[MORNING, NOR-mal, HAP-py] BIRTH- day . . . ” it repeated as the wall [panel, rugged, memory] reopened and it zoomed out of [old, the, safe] room.

Fifteen minutes later, Dahlia entered [for, us, the] common room and found her father [eating, apparent, pledged] breakfast.

“I think something is wrong [create, with, like] my module...” Turning toward the food [clock, prep, the] area, she saw what looked like [a, us, he] small tree with a bow on [it, to, my] sitting in the corner. “What...” she [rapid, helping, began], unable to continue as emotion overwhelmed [their, near, her]. “It’s a tree,” her scientific and [notify, very, away] logical father said plainly between bites. “[Parent, Forward, Happy] birthday.”

Overcome, Dahlia didn’t know whether [by, to, it] laugh or cry. Instead, she bent [down, overall, lonely] to gently examine the deep green [promise, inquire, leaves]
and touch the rough brown trunk. [One, It, Her] was the most beautiful thing in [so, or, the] entire universe, for it was Earth, [in, be, up] the truest sense of the word. [Those, Her, Just] heart filled with all that the [turning, friend, little] tree represented. Somewhere in the midst [at, yes, of] her joy, she heard her father [buy, say, now] something about a new arboretum and [her, he, when] responsibility to monitor it...how it [far, was, live] a sapling, but it would grow [through, giving, quickly] in this environment with the new [artificial, discussion, porcelain] sunlight they had recently invented...how [it, to, my] was only the first of many, [nor, may, and] they were developing other plants and [minor, noise, trees] to incorporate.

13 To Dahlia, it was [as, a, if] dream come true. She felt like [set, they, she] was still in her mood room [about, bring, with] the sensory panel that reminded her [in, of, to] home. But this was reality, not [be, a, let] sensory experience. And for the first [time, gold, must] since she had arrived at Calypto, [antique, critical, reality] felt good. She laughed when she [aging, realized, vision] that PRAM must have known about [is, have, the] baby tree, and she wanted to [stem, leap, hug] both the tree and her module. [Instead, Whenever, Coping], she turned to her father and [smiled, regal, arranged] with the simple joy of a [father-in-law, seven-year-old, not-for-profit].

14 “It’s a willow, isn’t it, Father?” [so, it, she] asked softly, but she already knew [the, by, to] answer.
At regular intervals throughout the school year, teachers should have a detailed understanding of students’ progress towards mastery of TEKS skills and standards. Three Benchmarks – one administered at the beginning of the year, another administered after Unit 2, and a final administered after Unit 4 – will provide students and teachers with an accurate picture of students’ mastery of grade-level skills.

The three Benchmarks are composed of 35 multiple-choice and tech-enhanced items that assess Reading, Revising and Editing, as well as Language skills. These assessments are leveled throughout the school year to assess students’ TEKS preparedness at specific intervals:

- Benchmark 1: 33% of items on grade-level, 66% of items below grade-level
- Benchmark 2: 66% of items on grade-level, 33% of items below grade-level
- Benchmark 3: 100% of items on grade-level

The digital version of these assessments can be assigned from the Assess tab inside your StudySync account. The paper-based version of the assessment can also be printed from the same tab. See below for an overview of the Benchmarks available for Grade 9.

A sample of Benchmark - Grade 9 - Form 1 is available in this Assessment Sampler.

**BENCHMARK ASSESSMENT**
- Benchmark - Grade 9 - Form 1
- Benchmark - Grade 9 - Form 2
- Benchmark - Grade 9 - Form 3
How The Golden Carp Learned To Fly

1 Alongside the ocean in the mouth of a wide river lived a school of carp in many colors—blue and gray, white and red—and the leader of them all was a carp of a rich golden color, with scales that glistened in the sunlit waters. The golden carp had lived in that harbor all her life and watched with concern as the human port town grew thick and dense like riverweed. People dredged the bottom of the river to make way for massive ships and developed a taste for carp. They cast down their terrifying twine nets over the sides of their ships, eager to feast upon what they considered a delicacy. With a heavy heart, the golden carp determined it was time to search for safer waters, for it was early spring and time for her to find a hidden place to lay her eggs. Some carp objected to leaving the only home they had ever known, fearing unknown dangers more than their enemies at hand, but the golden carp was determined.

2 The golden carp led the school through the wide, deep body of the river city. “Don’t look back,” she told them. “Swim upstream at all costs, as fast as you can.” She hoped against hope that beyond a bend in the river, they would find a safer haven, for their very future depended upon it. Farther upstream, the river narrowed and there were no longer any ships—only small fishing boats from a nearby village. Most carp felt relieved, but the golden carp urged them to press on. “There are still too many hungry people living near these waters for my comfort.” Some carp agreed, but many more elected to stay behind, and most ended up served on plates with grated radish and a splash of soy sauce.

3 Muscles aching, tailfins flapping, the golden carp and her stalwart companions swam on. Their bodies and minds were tired as they swam higher and higher upstream, fighting against the current, into the foothills. Here, too, they were hunted, surrounded by the fishing rods and reels of country farmers. Around a bend they heard the thudding rush of water churning and saw that they had come to the foot of a towering waterfall. The golden carp saw the jagged rocks above, judged that no humans could live above the water line, and set her sights on leaping to the top where she knew she and her eggs would be safe. She swam and leapt as high as she could, but it was not high enough. Undaunted, she attempted her jump again and again until she shot into the sky and landed in a pool of water at the top, where she laid her eggs. The fish who remained below claimed the golden carp was magical and had turned into a flying dragon. They argued it was useless to try and shrugged their fins. But the few who kept trying eventually joined her, and they and their offspring lived there at the top for many generations in perfect safety.
Question 1: Which statement best summarizes the passage?

A. A golden carp teaches her school how to fly.
B. A golden carp learns how to become a good leader.
C. A school of carp disagrees about finding a new home.
D. A school of carp struggles to find a new home far away from the danger of humans.

TEKS: 8.6(D)

Question 2: Read this sentence from the passage.

The golden carp had lived in that harbor all her life and watched with concern as the human port town grew thick and dense like riverweed.

What does the phrase “grew thick and dense like riverweed” suggest about the port town?

A. The town population is increasing.
B. The town is foggy and difficult to see.
C. The riverweed has spread to the town.
D. The townspeople have built many new buildings.

TEKS: 8.9(D)

Question 3: Choose two ways in which the author creates suspense in the passage.

A. by mentioning that the golden carp laid eggs
B. by indicating that the carp traveled together up the river
C. by describing the dangers the carp faced while traveling up the river
D. by stating that the harbor had been the golden carp’s home her whole life
E. by demonstrating the golden carp’s attempts to get to the top of the waterfall

TEKS: 8.9(E)

Question 4: Read these sentences from the passage.

The golden carp led the school through the wide, deep body of the river city. “Don’t look back,” she told them. “Swim upstream at all costs, as fast as you can.” She hoped against hope that beyond a bend in the river, they would find a safer haven, for their very future depended upon it.

What do the lines of dialogue suggest about the golden carp? Choose two responses.

A. She is foolish.
B. She is focused.
C. She is negative.
D. She is fearless.
E. She is determined.

TEKS: 8.7(B)
READ THE PASSAGE “THE SLOW REVEAL.” THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

The Slow Reveal

1 In mid-October, Georgia drew a special picture at her desk. She held it reverently in both hands and carefully laid it on the kitchen table in front of her mother, who praised her work, only to ask if the sloping line in the center represented the tall slide in their local park.

2 “That’s not what it is at all!” Georgia said and blew air out of her mouth like an exasperated steam whistle. She slunk out of the kitchen, picture tucked under her arm, and went to sulk alone in the privacy of her bedroom. She crumpled it up into a ball, threw it in the trash, and drew another attempt, which took her two additional hours, and took it to her father.

3 Georgia’s spirits plummeted when she saw the look of utter confusion on his face, though he did compliment her on her color selection, and at least he could tell it was a person, not a playground. When he asked her who it was, her face flushed hot and red. She ran to her room, slammed the door shut, and fully expected someone to come and look after her. She threw herself on the bed and muffled her mouth on her pillow so that no one could hear her cry. When that didn’t make her feel better, she decided to cry louder, but they couldn’t hear her because the television was blaring, and finally she was all cried out and hungry from her efforts. As much as she adored drawing, Georgia admitted that her desire to be a fine artist outweighed her current skills. At this rate, she would never attain her heart’s desire. She lay on her bed thinking dreadful thoughts and feeling sorry for herself until she ran out of self-pity.

4 Georgia sat up, took several deep breaths, and wiped her eyes with the back of her hand. She rifled through her desk, found a new notebook, and labeled it “My Goal.” Inside, she brainstormed a list of ways to improve. She ran through the house collecting magazines and circled pictures of faces that caught her eye. She pinned each on her bulletin board and portrayed each hairline, eyebrow, and rugged jaw until her fingers cramped. She set aside her bright pastels and colored markers, favoring dark, soft graphite pencils; experimented with loose sketches; and then, after watching numerous online video tutorials and working intently to accomplish her mission, tightened her drawing style.

5 By the time her brother, Reggie, returned home from art school for Thanksgiving, her work was as ready as she could make it. When he came through the front door, she rushed up and hugged him tightly. “I’ve got something to show you,” she said, and she led him to her desk.

6 “Nobody at school has ever drawn me that well,” Reggie told her, and over turkey and mashed potatoes, her whole family claimed they had known she was working on his portrait all along.
**Question 1:** Read this summary of the passage.

A girl attempts to draw a portrait of her brother, but her family members are unable to identify what she is drawing. The girl’s frustrations grow until she finally realizes that in order to create the portrait, she will need to improve her skills. She creates a plan and spends a significant amount of time striving to meet her goal.

Which statement best completes the summary?

A. **By the end of the passage, the girl has improved her skills and creates a much better portrait.**
B. At the end of the passage, her brother suggests that she has enough talent to get into art school.
C. By the end of the passage, the girl’s family proves to her that they supported her efforts the whole time.
D. At the end of the passage, the girl’s family admits they were just teasing her and knew what she was creating the whole time.

**TEKS:** 8.6(D)

**Question 2:** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A:** Which statement best expresses how the author uses the varying viewpoints of the reader, Georgia, and her parents to create humor in the passage?

A. The reader knows that Georgia throws a major tantrum to seek attention, but her parents can’t even hear her.
B. The reader knows that Georgia’s parents are trying to be helpful, but her parents are unaware of how their comments make her feel.
C. Georgia’s parents praise her work even though they don’t know what she is drawing, but the reader knows it is a portrait of her brother.
D. Georgia believes that her parents knew what she had been drawing all along, but the reader knows they are just trying to make her feel better.

**Part B:** Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer to the previous question?

A. She held it reverently in both hands and carefully laid it on the kitchen table in front of her mother, who praised her work, only to ask if the sloping line in the center represented the tall slide in their local park.
B. Georgia’s spirits plummeted when she saw the look of utter confusion on his face, though he did compliment her on her color selection, and at least he could tell it was a person, not a playground.
C. When that didn’t make her feel better, she decided to cry louder, but they couldn’t hear her because the television was blaring, and finally she was all cried out and hungry from her efforts.
D. “Nobody at school has ever drawn me that well,” Reggie told her, and over turkey and mashed potatoes, her whole family claimed they had known she was working on his portrait all along.

**TEKS:** 8.6(C), 8.9(E)
Question 3: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read this sentence from the passage.

“Nobody at school has ever drawn me that well,” Reggie told her, and over turkey and mashed potatoes, her whole family claimed they had known she was working on his portrait all along.

Based on the passage, what does Reggie’s response reveal about Georgia’s actions throughout the passage?

A. Georgia cares about her brother, so her feelings for him enabled her to draw him better than anyone else.
B. Georgia was able to improve her artistic skills on her own without needing to attend art school like her brother.
C. Georgia is a talented artist, and showing her work to her parents had been a mistake because they only discouraged her.
D. Georgia needed to work hard in order to improve her artistic skills, and dedicating time to practice helped her become successful.

Part B: Which detail from the passage best supports the answer to the previous question?

A. . . . slunk out of the kitchen, picture tucked under her arm, and went to sulk alone . . .
B. . . . and then, after watching numerous online video tutorials and working intently to accomplish her mission, tightened her drawing style.
C. By the time her brother, Reggie, returned home from art school for Thanksgiving . . .
D. . . . she rushed up and hugged him tightly.

TEKS: 8.6(C), 8.7(B)

READ THE PASSAGES “HOW THE GOLDEN CARP LEARNED TO FLY” AND “THE SLOW REVEAL.” THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Question 1: How do both authors develop their ideas in the passages?

A. by using dialogue that reveals background
B. through imagery that describes the setting
C. through supporting characters that propel the action
D. by explaining how a main character endures challenges

TEKS: 8.7(B)

Question 2: How do the passages use similar patterns of events to establish a common theme? Drag and drop each event from “How the Golden Carp Learned to Fly” with a similar event from “The Slow Reveal.”

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>How the Golden Carp Learned to Fly</th>
<th>The Slow Reveal</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The golden carp finds a safe home.</td>
<td>Georgia draws a realistic portrait of her brother.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The golden carp continue to search for a suitable home while other carp end their journey.</td>
<td>Georgia studies the art of drawing and spends a great deal of time practicing.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The golden carp sets out to find a new place to live.</td>
<td>Georgia draws a special picture and shows it to her mother.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEKS: 8.6(B)
A Computer Is No Substitute For A Teacher

1 It seems like computers have changed almost every element of life over the past few decades. People use computers to pay bills, buy food, order clothes, talk to friends, and catch up on the latest local and national news, and now, they even use them to go to school. The use of virtual classrooms, also called distance learning, is growing quickly throughout the country. Most colleges offer at least a few of their classes online. Some degrees can be started and finished without ever stepping foot inside a real classroom.

2 But although computers are helpful in daily matters, using them as a substitute for being in a real classroom with a teacher is a huge mistake. Students who have to sit in a real classroom in front of a teacher will be more likely to pay attention. They will not be as easily distracted as they would be at home, where they have to contend with ringing phones, people stopping by, or just being called to get off the computer and come to dinner.

3 For people who are not familiar with computers and new technology, an online class can be confusing and frustrating. They may not understand how to open files or access the recommended classroom materials. A slow Internet connection can make audio files stutter. A local disruption in power can make a computer suddenly unusable for an unknown period of time. This is clearly no replacement for a real classroom with a teacher present.

4 Finally, a real classroom gives students far more opportunities to interact with others. Students in a real classroom can ask questions of the teacher, debate or share opinions with other students, and hold relevant discussions. Since most students will typically be the same age and from the same region, these interactions can also merge into extracurricular social activities, such as joining some of the school’s clubs or groups, where lessons from the classroom may be applied and reinforced. Clearly, it is impossible to do this by just staring at a computer screen.

5 A virtual classroom is simply no substitute for a real one with a teacher at the front of the room. In a poll taken in 2013, 78 percent of the more than 1,000 students polled stated that learning was easier in a standard classroom than it was in a virtual one. This is most likely due in part to the fact that so much more hands-on learning can take place in traditional education. Imagine trying to learn how to dissect a frog or read a role in a Shakespeare play aloud while sitting at home.

6 Computers have become irrevocably entrenched in society. It is obvious that they will only continue to become more and more common in everyday life. However, as convenient as they may be, they can never take the place of a teacher. Sometimes the old-fashioned methods really are the best. When it comes to an education, this is absolutely true.
Question 1: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Which statement best describes a central idea of the passage?
A. Face-to-face instruction offers more benefits than virtual instruction.
B. Old-fashioned teaching methods are being replaced by digital methods.
C. Many students prefer learning in a traditional classroom to learning in a virtual classroom.
D. Digital assignments can be frustrating for students who are unfamiliar with new technology.

Part B: Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer to the previous question?
A. It seems like computers have changed almost every element of life over the past few decades.
B. Some degrees can be started and finished without ever stepping foot inside a real classroom.
C. But although computers are helpful in daily matters, using them as a substitute for being in a real classroom with a teacher is a huge mistake.
D. Students in a real classroom can ask questions of the teacher, debate or share opinions with other students, and hold relevant discussions.

TEKS: 9.5(C), 9.7(D)(i), 9.7(E), 9.8(A)

Question 2: Read this sentence from the passage.
For people who are not familiar with computers and new technology, an online class can be confusing and frustrating.

Choose two sentences that best explain how an online class can be confusing to those who are not familiar with new technology.
A. They may not understand how to open files or access the recommended classroom materials.
B. A slow Internet connection can make audio files stutter.
C. A local disruption in power can make a computer suddenly unusable for an unknown period of time.
D. This is clearly no replacement for a real classroom with a teacher present.

TEKS: 9.7(D)(i)

Question 3: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read this sentence from the passage.
Computers have become irrevocably entrenched in society.

What is the meaning of the word irrevocably?
A. to withdraw or take back
B. unable to be withdrawn or taken back
C. to refuse to withdraw or take back
D. capable of being withdrawn or taken back
Part B: Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer to the previous question?

A. It seems like computers have changed almost every element of life over the past few decades.
B. Most colleges offer at least a few of their classes online.
C. But although computers are helpful in daily matters, using them as a substitute for being in a real classroom with a teacher is a huge mistake.
D. However, as convenient as they may be, they can never take the place of a teacher.

TEKS: 9.2(A), 9.5(C)

Question 4: How does the author establish a main disadvantage of virtual schooling?

A. by explaining the challenges students face when dissecting a frog at home
B. by outlining statistics that prove students prefer hands-on learning to online learning
C. by providing examples of how student learning can get disrupted by computer issues
D. by illustrating why students in traditional classrooms are taught using old-fashioned methods

TEKS: 9.7(D)(i)

READ THE PASSAGE “BETTER TECHNOLOGY—BETTER ATHLETES.” THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Better Technology—Better Athletes

1 Technology has affected just about every sphere of life. It has changed the way we work, the way we socialize, and the way we play. And now it is changing the way we compete. The trend of using technology to improve athletes' performance has exploded in recent years. Some experts claim technology’s impact on athletic success is overrated. They name research that indicates inconsistent results among varying sports. However, more athletes are looking to high-tech devices, clothing, and gear to edge out the competition.

2 The author of a popular book, The Sports Gene, states that technology can make a difference in just about every sport. Sporting goods companies are certainly on board with this idea, as they promise athletes better performance through use of their high-tech, performance-enhancing gear: from aerodynamic clothing and light-as-air running shoes to compression garments and high-tech sensors, there is something for everyone.

3 Sprinters might be particularly interested in the aerodynamic full-body suit. One company claims that runners can shave an additional 0.023 second off their run time compared to previous suits. That may not sound very impressive, but when wins often come down to split-second differences, every millisecond counts!

4 Another popular product with runners is an airy running shoe that is 19 percent lighter than shoes worn by professional runners in previous world championships. The popularity of this product and others like it proves that athletes are buying into the idea (quite literally, since these shoes are not cheap) that the lighter the shoe, the faster the runner.
5 Another item favored by many athletes is compression gear. Competitors from sports of all kinds are squeezing their arms, legs, and bodies into these compression garments. The idea behind compression gear is that it constricts a particular part of the body, increasing blood circulation. This helps deliver more oxygen to the muscles and thereby leads to fewer muscle-related injuries.

6 Perhaps the strongest relationship between technology and enhanced athletic performance, however, can be traced to the use of high-tech sensors. Sensors are attached to parts of the body. They collect data that can be downloaded to a computer or even to a smartphone. An athlete or a coach can analyze the information to learn exactly what the athlete needs to do to improve performance. Unlike in the past, when information like this could be collected only in a lab, today’s sensors are small, easy to use, and can be worn during routine training in the field. Coaches no longer need to put a lot of effort into tracking every movement by eye or watching film footage over and over. Sensors can provide more accurate feedback than even the best coach out there; the proof is in the records.

7 Tech support tools such as performance-enhancing gear and easy-to-use feedback sensors have led to smarter training—which in turn has led to a chain of record-breaking players. One running coach who has been participating in a study regarding the effectiveness of sensor feedback is finding benefits right off the bat. In no time, the coach knew exactly which muscle groups to focus on to increase his runners’ strength. He’s already used the data to make changes in his training program, such as adapting the way his runners exercise in the weight room. The results? Seventy percent of the athletes participating in the study are surpassing their own records in the weight room. The most promising result, however, is that the runners are consistently gaining an advantage on the track.

8 Despite all the hype over the benefits technology can provide to athletes, not everybody is excited. Some say that the use of such high-tech tools is dishonest. For example, a group of record-breaking swimmers in the 2008 Beijing Olympics were blasted for technological doping. In other words, the swimmers, who were wearing special performance-enhancing body suits, were accused of gaining an unfair advantage. The special suits were later banned.

9 Regardless of the debates storming around the use of high-tech gadgets and gear, people still want them. As long as there is a demand for faster, higher, and better, designers and engineers will continue to deliver products that promise to do just that.

**Question 1:** This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A:** What is the central idea of the passage?

A. Technology is changing the way athletes train and compete.

B. Technology is impacting the way most people live their lives.
C. There are no sports left unaffected by the influence of technology.
D. There is not yet enough proof that technology can make athletes perform better.

Part B: Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer to the previous question?
A. Technology has affected just about every sphere of life.
B. Some experts claim technology’s impact on athletic success is overrated.
C. However, more athletes are looking to high-tech devices, clothing, and gear to edge out the competition.
D. The author of a popular book, The Sports Gene, states that technology can make a difference in just about every sport.

TEKS: 8.6(C), 8.8(D)(i)

Question 2: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: Read this sentence from the passage.
Technology has affected just about every sphere of life.
What does the phrase sphere of life mean as it is used in the sentence?
A. popular life trends, such as fashion
B. parts of life that are competitive, such as sports
C. particular areas of life, such as work, home, or entertainment
D. important topics about life, such as career, finances, or family

Part B: Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer to the previous question?
A. It has changed the way we work, the way we socialize, and the way we play.
B. And now it is changing the way we compete.
C. The trend of using technology to improve athletes’ performance has exploded in recent years.
D. They name research that indicates inconsistent results among varying sports.

TEKS: 8.6(C), 8.9(E)

Question 3: This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A: How does the author present conflicting evidence regarding the use of tech-enhanced performance gear?
A. by dismissing critics’ claims as lacking evidence, but then giving an example that supports the use of high-tech gear
B. by providing several reasons that the use of high-tech gear provides an unfair edge in only some sports, not all of them
C. by stating that although some people disapprove of the use of high-tech gear, the trend is gaining popularity nonetheless
D. by admitting that opponents had reason to distrust the use of high-tech gear in the past, but they do not have reason to in the present
Part B: Which sentence from the passage best supports the answer to the previous question?
A. Despite all the hype over the benefits technology can provide to athletes, not everybody is excited.
B. For example, a group of record-breaking swimmers in the 2008 Beijing Olympics were blasted for technological doping.
C. In other words, the swimmers, who were wearing special performance-enhancing body suits, were accused of gaining an unfair advantage.
D. Regardless of the debates storming around the use of high-tech gadgets and gear, people still want them.
TEKS: 8.6(C), 8.8(E)(ii)

Question 4: Read this claim from the passage.
Tech support tools such as performance-enhancing gear and easy-to-use feedback sensors have led to smarter training—which in turn has led to a chain of record-breaking players.
Choose two sentences that are the best evidence to support the claim.
A. One running coach who has been participating in a study regarding the effectiveness of sensor feedback is finding benefits right off the bat.
B. In no time, the coach knew exactly which muscle groups to focus on to increase his runners' strength.
C. He’s already used the data to make changes in his training program, such as adapting the way his runners exercise in the weight room.
D. The results? Seventy percent of the athletes participating in the study are surpassing their own records in the weight room.
E. The most promising result, however, is that the runners are consistently gaining an advantage on the track.
TEKS: 8.8(E)(i)

Question 5: Choose three ideas from the passage that are strengthened by the information presented in the statistics below.

Value of Wearable Devices Sold Worldwide
2013 - 2.5 Billion U.S. Dollars
2014 - 5 Billion U.S. Dollars
2015 - 7 Billion U.S. Dollars
2016 - 8.8 Billion U.S. Dollars
A. Technology can make a difference in every sport.
B. Technology has changed the way athletes compete.
C. In recent years, more athletes have depended on technology to improve their performance.
D. The number of athletes who depend on high-tech devices, clothing, and gear is on the rise.
E. The demand for tech-enhanced gear has led designers and engineers to continue to design new products.
F. Sporting goods companies promise athletes better performance through the use of their high-tech, performance-enhancing gear.
TEKS: 8.8(C)
Question 6: Read this claim from the passage.

Perhaps the strongest relationship between technology and enhanced athletic performance, however, can be traced to the use of high-tech sensors.

Choose two sentences from the passage that best support the claim.

A. Sensors are attached to parts of the body.
B. They collect data that can be downloaded to a computer or even to a smartphone.
C. An athlete or a coach can analyze the information to learn exactly what the athlete needs to do to improve performance.
D. Unlike in the past, when information like this could be collected only in a lab, today's sensors are small, easy to use, and can be worn during routine training in the field.
E. Sensors can provide more accurate feedback than even the best coach out there; the proof is in the records.

TEKS: 8.8(E)(i)

Question 7: How has technology impacted athletic performance? Group and sort each sentence to match it with “Yes” if the sentence explains how technology has impacted athletic performance or with “No” if the sentence does not explain how technology has impacted athletic performance.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Compression gear increases blood circulation, which leads to fewer muscle-related injuries.</td>
<td>Tech-enhanced gear can be used by athletes in a variety of sports.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Coaches use the accurate feedback from sensors to customize training programs for their players.</td>
<td>Runners are spending more money than ever before to purchase light-as-air running shoes.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Sporting goods companies promise athletes better performance through the use of their high-tech, performance-enhancing gear.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEKS: 8.8(E)(i)
**Question 8:** Which pair of sentences from the passage would be **best** to include in a summary of the passage?

A. The trend of using technology to improve athletes’ performance has exploded in recent years. / Tech support tools such as performance-enhancing gear and easy-to-use feedback sensors have led to smarter training—which in turn has led to a chain of record-breaking players.

B. One company claims that runners can shave an additional 0.023 second off their run time compared to previous suits. / That may not sound very impressive, but when wins often come down to split-second differences, every millisecond counts!

C. This helps deliver more oxygen to the muscles and thereby leads to fewer muscle-related injuries. / In no time, the coach knew exactly which muscle groups to focus on to increase his runners’ strength.

D. They collect data that can be downloaded to a computer or even to a smartphone. / Unlike in the past, when information like this could be collected only in a lab, today’s sensors are small, easy to use, and can be worn during routine training in the field.

**TEKS:** 8.6(D)

**Revising and Editing**

**Question 1:** Read the sentence and then answer the question that follows.

Rocker snowboards have a reverse camber, and this banana shape is less likely to catch an edge.

Which phrase should the writer insert in the sentence to improve its clarity?

A. meaning they touch the snow only in the middle of the board
B. a technology that has recently emerged in the snowboarding world
C. something snowboarders who enjoy riding in the parks will appreciate
D. an innovative and overdue technology for snowboarding professionals

**TEKS:** 9.9(B)i

**Question 2:** A student is writing an essay about NASA’s shuttle program. Read the draft of the essay and answer the question that follows.

The shuttle program should never have ended. NASA was silly to make that decision. All three remaining shuttles could have taken more than 50 flights each based on their designs. That’s enough for years of exploration, research, and repairs. It’s true that two of the shuttles failed, resulting in the tragic loss of life of several astronauts, but that failure rate is no greater than any of the other manned NASA programs. Besides, danger is inherent in space travel. We can’t learn and grow without taking chances. And without a shuttle program, vital equipment such as the Hubble telescope and the International Space Station will degrade and finally fail.

The writer wants to change the sentence “NASA was silly to make that decision” to make it more fair and objective. Which revised sentence will work best?

A. The decision by NASA was incredibly shortsighted.
B. NASA really made the wrong move with this decision.
C. NASA’s decision was based on emotions and not science.
D. There is clear evidence that explains why NASA’s decision was a mistake.

**TEKS:** 8.10(B)i
**Question 3:** Read this story a student wrote about a fishing experience and answer the question that follows.

1 I can still remember the first time I went fishing with my uncle.  
2 After we’d sat in the boat for an eternity, I felt a tug on my line.  
3 My uncle helped me reel it in, and I held up a scaly, dripping walleye on my line.  
4 My uncle said I could decide what to do with it.  
5 I could tell that the fish wanted to be free, so I decided to let it go.  
6 I felt good when the fish swam away.

Which sentence should the student substitute for the sixth sentence to best convey a clear, vivid picture of the experience?

A. As the fish quickly swam away, I felt like I had done something really good to help it.
B. It felt especially good to watch the fish go back into its home in the beautiful lake and be free again.
C. Contentment washed over me as we watched its silvery body disappear into the dark depths of the lake.
D. The fish happily swam away from the boat back into the lake, and I was happy that it was free to live its life.

**TEKS:** 9.10(A)

**Question 4:** A student is writing a narrative essay for class. Read this paragraph from the essay and the directions that follow.

When I saw a wolf pack in Yellowstone National Park a few years ago, I decided to learn more about them. I talked with scientists at Yellowstone who were concerned that wolves could be hunted in Montana outside the park. They explained that after the wolves returned to the park, the elk population decreased, more brush began to grow, and other species such as beavers came back to the park. The scientists firmly believe that the wolves are critical to the health of the Yellowstone ecosystem. Later I talked with some ranchers and guides outside of Yellowstone. The ranchers are committed to protecting their herds. They explained that the wolves are numerous enough that they’re targeting calves and even adult cows. The guides explained that since there are fewer elk, fewer hunters now come to Montana, and the guides are losing business. I told them that there must be an answer to the wolf issue. What steps can we take to solve the problem and acknowledge everyone’s concerns?

Choose the two sentences that would best conclude the paragraph.

A. The first thing to do would be to invite all concerned parties to a meeting so that they can begin to outline their specific views.
B. Environmental issues have been ignored for far too long, so the government should take steps to protect the environment no matter the cost.
C. Because people are immensely more important than animals, hunters should be able to hunt an unlimited number of wolves to protect both ranch agriculture and the economy.
D. A compromise is vital to the success of both the environment and people’s livelihoods, as wolves promote healthy ecosystems and without them, hunters may lose access to other species as well.
E. Although we cannot entirely prevent wolves from preying on livestock, perhaps we can settle losses people have taken and allow the packs some freedom to roam safely outside the park.

**TEKS:** 8.10(B)i
Question 5: Read this essay about going fishing and answer the question.

How to Go Fishing
1. If you're using a motorboat, make sure you check the gas. 2. You don't want to get stuck in the middle of the lake. 3. Also, ensure you have all necessary fishing equipment such as fishing poles, bait, a life jacket, and sunglasses. 4. Have at least one boat paddle just in case. 5. Load all of your equipment into the boat. 6. Hook up the boat on the trailer with the equipment in it to the truck. 7. Drive to your favorite fishing destination. 8. Launch your boat. 9. Pick an area of the lake to start fishing. 10. Get the gear ready, and bait a hook. 11. Don't forget to wear a hat.

Group and sort each revision suggestion to match it to “Yes” if it will help make the paragraph clearer while explaining the sequence of ideas, or to “No” if the revision suggestion will not help.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Yes</th>
<th>No</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Switch Sentence 3 and Sentence 4.</td>
<td>Split Sentence 10 into the two following sentences: &quot;Get the gear ready. Bait a hook.&quot;</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Combine Sentence 5 and Sentence 6 to make &quot;Load all of your equipment into the boat on the trailer, and hook up the trailer to the truck.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Incorporate Sentence 11 with Sentence 3 to make &quot;Also, ensure you have all necessary fishing equipment such as fishing poles, bait, a life jacket, a hat, and sunglasses.&quot;</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEKS: 9.9(B)(i)

Research

FOR THE FOLLOWING QUESTIONS, YOU WILL USE YOUR RESEARCH SKILLS. READ THE DIRECTIONS AND ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Question 1: A student is writing a research report about medieval Japan. He found a trustworthy source. Read Source 1 and the directions that follow.

**Source 1:** Medieval Japan was officially ruled by an emperor. However, the emperor had no real power. Instead, power was held by a “shogun,” which translates approximately to “general.” The shogun controlled Japan using an army of samurai. Samurai were professional warriors who trained and fought fulltime in exchange for a salary. The shogun’s samurai prevented rebellions and punished the shogun’s enemies. Below the shogun, there were landlords who hired their own samurai in order to fight crime and collect taxes in their individual regions. This system created a huge professional army that drained the funds from Japan.

The student found these pieces of information in different sources. Which piece of information supports the information in Source 1?

A. The samurai followed a code of conduct during battles.
B. The samurai gave the shogun power over the emperor.
C. The samurai were considered to be the highest social class.
D. The samurai needed to fight more battles during some periods.

TEKS: 8.8(D)(ii)
Question 2: A student is writing a research report about the rise and fall of the Berlin Wall. He found a trustworthy source. Read Source 1 and answer the question that follows.

Source 1: Following World War II, Germany was divided up into what eventually became two states, East Germany and West Germany. East Germany was the smaller state, and its population decreased as millions of Germans fled the communist East for the democratic West. This could have ruined the workforce and economy of East Germany, as many of those who left were skilled workers and professionals it needed. In response, East Germany built a wall in 1961, dividing the city of Berlin in two. The wall was heavily guarded, with watchtowers, armed guards around the clock, and even mines. Thousands of people were captured attempting to escape to the West, and several died trying. The wall became a symbol for the division between democratic Western Europe and communist Eastern Europe. It also did more damage to East Germany’s economy than the loss of the skilled workers and professionals. The cost of building and maintaining the wall, as well as the massive security measures being taken, was a huge burden that East Germany could not afford for long. It wasn’t until 1989, when much of the east became democratized, that the Berlin Wall was finally torn down.

The student found information in different sources. Which two pieces of information support the author’s argument in Source 1?

A. Most Germans were unhappy living under communist rule.
B. West Germany had an economic boom shortly after World War II.
C. The fall of communism helped reunite Germany as one country.
D. Repayments to the Soviet Union crippled the East German economy.
E. The failure of East Germany proved democracy was superior to communism.
F. West Germany was initially made up of the three zones overseen by Western countries.

TEKS: 9.7(D)(ii), 9.11(H)

Question 3: A student is writing a report about the branches of the United States government. Read both the text source and the information about three branches of government and the directions that follow.

The United States federal government is designed to separate control of legislative, executive, and judicial powers. Each branch has methods to check the powers of the other two. The legislature can change the laws that the executive and judicial branches must enforce. The executive branch can veto, or reject, legislative decisions. The executive branch can also nominate judges. Finally, the judicial branch can decide if actions taken by the other two branches are legal.

Three Branches of U.S. Government

✓ Legislative (makes laws): Congress, Senate, House of Representatives

✓ Executive (carries out laws): President, Vice President, Cabinet
Judicial (evaluates laws): Supreme Court, Other Federal Courts

The student took notes about information in the sources. Which note correctly paraphrases, or re-states, information from both sources?

A. The Supreme Court makes decisions that can overturn the decisions of other federal courts.
B. The Constitution is considered more powerful than any of the three branches of government.
C. The legislative branch is expected to work together to check the power of the other two branches.
D. The three major types of government power are divided between different branches of government.

TEKS: 8.6(D)

Question 4: A student is writing a research report about the effectiveness of school uniforms. She finds a source. Read Source 1 and the directions that follow.

Source 1: In a poll of marketing consultants for school uniform manufacturers, an overwhelming 98 percent said that the uniforms help solve school problems and create a better learning environment.

Should the student use the source in her report? Determine why or why not. Choose all that apply.

A. No, because it provides evidence from a source that is very likely to be biased.
B. No, because the data leans so far in one direction that it is likely to be misleading.
C. No, because insufficient information is given about what types of problems the uniforms are claimed to solve.
D. Yes, because it includes statistical data, which is a strong form of quantitative evidence.
E. Yes, because it gives solid evidence that clearly supports an opinion on the research question.

TEKS: 9.7(D)(ii), 9.11(H)

Question 5: A student is preparing a class presentation about democratization in South Korea. He found two sources. Read the sources and answer the question that follows.

Source 1: South Korea spent most of the later twentieth century under the control of military generals. According to a summary by the Elling Institute, these generals ruled through the manipulation and intimidation of the civilian government. In 1987, though, political reforms led to real elections and the return of civilian control. According to the Elling Institute, these reforms led to economic liberalization and a period of growth. However, the CIA's World Factbook points out that the fast growth rate actually dates back to before 1987 and may not be related to democratization.

Source 2: Over the last several decades, South Korea has transformed its economy. Once considered to be one of the poorest countries in Asia, South Korea today is one of the trillion-dollar economies of the world. This was done through a combination of shifting toward technology early, importing raw materials to be developed, and encouraging citizens to save and invest rather than spend frivolously. Though South Korea was impacted by financial crises such as the Asian financial crisis in 1997 and 1998 and the global recession in 2008, the country
has quickly rebounded and worked to find ways to continue economic growth for its citizens.

Which two sentences best synthesize the information from the two sources?

A. South Korea turned its economy around in 1987, after the return of civilian control over the government and the explosion of new technology.

B. South Korea was ruled by military generals for most of the twentieth century, so the transformation of the country's economy might not be due entirely to democratization.

C. South Korea became a trillion-dollar economy at the turn of the century thanks in large part to an early shift toward technology and the manufacturing of technological products.

D. South Korea saw some of its greatest economic growth around 1987, following reforms that brought back democratic elections and saw a shift toward creating new technology.

E. South Korea has a history of oppression and poverty but became a country with a strong economy at the end of the twentieth century after working toward an economic transformation.

TEKS: 9.7(D)(ii), 9.11(H)

Language

Question 1: Choose the sentence that has an inappropriate shift in verb voice.

A. After the holiday ended, we made the long journey back home.

B. When my friends arrived at my apartment, the doorbell was rung.

C. The trees were pushed to and fro and the windows were rattled by the strong wind.

D. I was disappointed that the game was canceled but excited to go to the movies instead.

TEKS: 8.10(D)

Question 2: A student wrote a paragraph in her journal that includes a grammar error. Read the paragraph and answer the question that follows.

I started at my new school today. It was not what I imagined at all. 1 The math teacher insisted that the class be quiet and respectful, but some students ignored her. They were very distracting. 2 If I had known those students better, I would have asked them to be quiet. 3 Later, at lunch, a new friend suggested that I will not eat the meatloaf. I saw it, and it looked strange. 4 If I keep buying lunch in the cafeteria, I will definitely always skip the meatloaf.

Choose the numbered sentence that has the grammar error

A. 1 The math teacher insisted that the class be quiet and respectful, but some students ignored her

B. 2 If I had known those students better, I would have asked them to be quiet.

C. 3 Later, at lunch, a new friend suggested that I will not eat the meatloaf.

D. 4 If I keep buying lunch in the cafeteria, I will definitely always skip the meatloaf.

TEKS: 8.10(D)
**Question 3:** A student is writing a descriptive essay about her friend Sasha. Read this paragraph from the essay and answer the question that follows.

1. Sasha's favorite hobby is cooking, and she is a very talented chef.  
2. She loves cooking for her friends and enjoys hosting dinner parties to try out her new recipes.  
3. The food that is made by Sasha is always delicious, and there are never any leftovers.  
4. No one ever turns down one of her dinner invitations.

Which sentence is written in the passive voice?

A. Sentence 1  
B. Sentence 2  
C. **Sentence 3**  
D. Sentence 4

**TEKS:** 8.10(D)

**Question 4:** Read the paragraph. Then choose the answer that identifies all of the words that are misspelled.

Jim was feeling optimistic about the compensation he would receive for the article he had just submitted to his college newspaper. He knew the article would be noteworthy and read by many students and faculty members. He walked dreamily to the bakery while contemplating his achievement of this personal goal. His current sense of accomplishment felt equivalent to how he felt when he had won a chess match against the most formidable player on campus. As the aroma of cakes and bread wafted out the door of the serene bakery, Jim paused for a moment outside. What if his success was all an illusion? He questioned just how good his article was, suddenly mistrusting his self-confidence. Perhaps he should retract his article and review it again, just to make sure it was perfect. Without delaying another moment, he sprinted to the newspaper office.

A. optimistic, equivalent, accomplishment, delaying  
B. **achievement, equivalent, formidable, misstrusting**  
C. contemplating, accomplishment, serene, illusion  
D. noteworthy, achievement, equivalent, retract

**TEKS:** 9.9(D)vi
INSTRUCTION & FORMATIVE ASSESSMENT

READING

StudySync’s rigorous reading and writing routine hones foundational language and reading comprehension skills as students prepare to analyze and respond to multiple genres of increasingly complex texts.

Summaries provide quick overviews of every text in the program. With one click, teachers can deliver digital summaries and audio in English, Spanish, Cantonese, Mandarin, Vietnamese, Tagalog, or Haitian Creole.

Access Complex Text features identify aspects of every text that may pose challenges, particularly for English Language Learners and Approaching grade-level learners.

Over the course of the year, StudySync’s curriculum challenges students to read texts of increasing complexity and length.
First Read

First Read lessons open the close reading routine. First Read instruction focuses on developing foundational language skills, reading comprehension skills, and vocabulary.

Every First Read begins with a movie trailer–like multimedia preview to grab students’ attention and engage them in the reading to come.

The Teacher’s Edition, in both print and digital, features point-of-use think alouds, text questions, differentiation strategies, and a wealth of other resources to aid close reading instruction.

StudySyncTV models, collaborative conversations, peer review, and a host of other exercises encourage students to develop their own voices and ideas throughout the close reading process.
Reading Skills

Skill lessons follow First Reads. Each lesson employs the Gradual Release of Responsibility Model to instruct students toward TEKS mastery.

Concept Definition videos put student voices front and center to introduce key concept vocabulary.

Short, tech-enhanced vocab practice and Turn and Talk activities enrich and solidify students’ understanding of concept vocabulary.

The Identification and Application section provides students a clear, repeatable process to identify key concepts and analyze their impact on a text.
Models present clear, repeatable processes for applying skills and include exemplar student annotations.

SkillsTV videos model effective reading strategies in relatable, student-friendly language.

Skills lessons conclude with short, auto-graded assessments that use the same format and question stems as Texas state assessments and provide teachers immediate feedback about student progress toward TEKS mastery.
Close Read lessons conclude the reading routine as students respond in a variety of writing genres to demonstrate mastery of the skills in the lesson sequence.

Close Reads revisit selection vocabulary, enriching student understanding as they integrate acquired vocabulary into classroom discourse.

TEKS-aligned Skills Focus questions guide students to reread and analyze the text using the same highlighting and annotation strategies they saw modeled in the preceding Skill lesson.

At the end of each Close Read lesson, students draw on the skills they’ve acquired throughout the reading routine to engage in a collaborative conversation and write a short response to the text. Targeted rubrics ensure that writing assessment also supports TEKS mastery tracking.
Independent and Self-Selected Reading

Paired text sets in every Core ELAR unit challenge students to compare within and across genres.

Each Core ELAR unit contains at least three Independent Reading lessons per unit. These lessons scale back instruction and scaffolding to provide students opportunities to practice and apply the skills they’ve acquired with other texts.

Integrated Reading and Writing sections culminate with opportunities for students to self-select texts and respond in a form of their choosing.
Writing and Writing Process

Each Core ELAR unit’s Extended Writing Project (EWP) guides students through the process of writing multiparagraph essays in a variety of forms. Each EWP delivers explicit writing instruction through a combination of Writing Process and Skill lessons, guiding students—and their work—through the stages of Planning, Drafting, Revising, Editing, and Publishing.
Writing Skills

Specific, TEKS-aligned writing skills in each Extended Writing Project teach students the genre characteristics and craft necessary for writing in that specific form.

Writing skill lessons allow students to see the skill applied to the unit’s Student Model before they apply it to their own writing.

At the end of each skill lesson, students apply the skill to their own writing, breaking the process of writing a multiparagraph essay into discrete writing tasks.
Responding to Sources

In addition to the Extended Writing Project, Texas StudySync students write daily to respond to an increasingly challenging variety of sources that are read, heard, or viewed. This variety of writing activities is enhanced by class and group discussions, as well as teacher and peer review.

At the conclusion of each Close Read or Independent Read lesson, students engage in a collaborative conversation and respond to a writing prompt that challenges them to integrate their reading, writing, speaking, listening, and language skills.

Blasts challenge students to develop short, coherent statements in order to respond to a variety of topical issues, from breaking news to complex historical and global issues.
Peer Review

StudySync’s Peer Review platform allows teachers to assign immediate, anonymous peer review responses with any writing lesson. Peer review helps build students into skilled writers and critical thinkers by providing them with immediate feedback on their own writing and offering the opportunity to reflect critically as they analyze and respond to other students’ writing. Texas StudySync utilizes peer review to help transform classrooms into true communities of writers and readers in which students develop their own unique voices in a collaborative, mediated, and supportive environment.
**Writer’s Workshop**

Teachers using the Writer’s Workshop approach to teach, model, and assess writing will find that the Extended Writing Project (EWP) instruction meets their needs.

Skill models throughout each EWP include Connect to Mentor Text activities which ask students to examine texts from the unit and consider how they can emulate that text in their own writing.

Each Skill lesson culminates with an opportunity for students to transfer the skill they’ve learned to their own writing. This approach not only breaks the writing process into small, manageable pieces, but also allows students to practice each skill individually before combining several skills in the writing process lessons.

**6+1 Traits of Writing**

Teachers using the 6+1 Traits to teach writing can integrate this approach seamlessly with the Extended Writing Project in a variety of ways.

Specific lessons on Ideas and Organization provide explicit instruction on traits, while grammar lessons allow for focused instruction on conventions. Strategies for voice, sentence fluency, and word choice appear in every Revise lesson.

Rubrics grouped by trait allow teachers to give targeted and specific feedback, while the ability to upload alternative rubrics or adapt the rubrics on the site means teachers can focus their assessment and their students’ peer reviews on specific traits.
Grammar

Grammar instruction is embedded in the writing process to create a clear link and rationale for learning about conventions. Grammar skills are immediately contextualized as they are applied to students’ own writing.

Lessons conclude with three opportunities for practice in different formats including the style of questions they will encounter on state assessments.

The StudySync Skills library contains hundreds of additional grammar, usage, mechanics, and spelling lessons for extension, practice, and remediation.

Each grammar skill uses authentic texts to teach the skill in question, underscoring the link between knowledge of conventions and effective communication.
READING QUIZZES

Marigolds
READ THE PASSAGE “MARIGOLDS.” THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

Question 1: According to paragraph 3, which of the following selections best describes the narrator’s hometown as it compares to the rest of Depression-era America?

I suppose that futile waiting was the sorrowful background music of our impoverished little community when I was young. The Depression that gripped the nation was no new thing to us, for the black workers of rural Maryland had always been depressed. I don’t know what it was that we were waiting for; certainly not for the prosperity that was “just around the corner,” for those were white folks’ words, which we never believed.

A. The people in both her hometown and the rest of America believe that things will improve.
B. The people in her hometown believe in the promise of the American Dream.
C. The people in the rest of America are just starting to experience the deep poverty that the people in her town have suffered through for many years.
D. The Depression is the first time people in her hometown, and the rest of America, are finding themselves poor and unhappy.

TEKS: 9.4(G), 9.6(B)

Question 2: What can the reader mainly infer from the following passage (paragraph 22)?

For some perverse reason, we children hated those marigolds. They interfered with the perfect ugliness of the place; they were too beautiful; they said too much that we could not understand; they did not make sense.

A. The children decide to destroy the marigolds because Miss Lottie has become arrogant and proud.
B. The children change their minds about destroying the marigolds.
C. The children hope that the beauty of the marigolds will bring them good luck.
D. The children hate the marigolds because they cannot understand or appreciate the flowers’ beauty.

TEKS: 9.4(F)

Question 3: What does the following passage mainly reveal about Lizabeth (paragraph 35)?

Suddenly I was ashamed, and I did not like being ashamed. The child in me sulked and said it was all in fun, but the woman in me flinched at the thought of the malicious attack that I had led.

A. The mature part of Lizabeth experiences remorse and shame.
B. Lizabeth wishes that she and the neighborhood kids had gotten the chance to kill all of Miss Lottie’s marigolds.
C. Getting older means that now Lizabeth realizes what poverty her family lives in.
D. Lizabeth feels more like a woman because she is bored by summer and ready to go back to school.

**TEKS:** 9.5(C)

**Question 4:** What does Lizabeth *most likely* mean in the following passage (paragraph 7)?

> For the most part, those days are ill-defined in my memory, running together and combining like a fresh watercolor painting left out in the rain. I remember squatting in the road drawing a picture in the dust, a picture which Joey gleefully erased with one sweep of his dirty foot. I remember fishing for minnows in a muddy creek and watching sadly as they eluded my cupped hands, while Joey laughed uproariously. And I remember, that year, a strange restlessness of body and of spirit, a feeling that something old and familiar was ending, and something unknown and therefore terrifying was beginning.

A. She realizes that her days growing up poor in rural Maryland are what inspired her to become a painter.
B. She is not sure if she remembers the exact details of everything that happened, but she can recall the way that she felt when she was growing up.
C. Memories of the flood haunt Lizabeth.
D. None of the events of the story she is about to tell about Miss Lottie’s marigolds are things that actually happened to her.

**TEKS:** 9.8(D)

**Question 5:** What does Lizabeth’s parents’ interaction in the middle of the night *mainly* reveal about Lizabeth’s father?

A. He does not think men should be the providers.
B. He is a proud and frustrated man who does not want to accept help from other people.
C. He is hopeful that the family will experience a financial windfall.
D. He thinks that his wife should stop working for Mr. Ellis.

**TEKS:** 9.4(G), 9.6(B)

**Question 6:** Which passage from the text *most strongly* supports the correct answer to Question 5?

A. “Damn Mr. Ellis’s coat! And damn his money! You think I want white folks’ leavings?”
B. “But my father’s voice cut through hers, shattering the peace.”
C. “It’s all right, honey, you’ll get something. Everybody out of work now, you know that.”
D. “My father whittled toys for us, and laughed so loud that the great oak seemed to laugh with him, and taught us how to fish and hunt rabbits.”

**TEKS:** 9.5(C)
**Question 7:** Based on the last three paragraphs of the text, which statement would the narrator most likely agree with?

A. People need to find small pleasures to give them hope when life becomes too painful to endure.
B. Children growing up in extreme poverty tend to remain innocent until an older age than most other kids.
C. The harder children’s lives are, the more likely they are to show respect for the other people suffering around them.
D. Poor children are just as afraid of witches as children who grow up in much wealthier families.

**TEKS:** 9.4(F)

**Question 8:** Which passage from the text best supports the correct answer to Question 7?

A. “Innocence involves an unseeing acceptance of things at face value, an ignorance of the area below the surface.”
B. “The witch was no longer a witch but only a broken old woman who had dared to create beauty in the midst of ugliness and sterility.”
C. “The years have taken me worlds away from that time and that place...”
D. “For one does not have to be ignorant and poor to find that his life is as barren as the dusty yards of our town. And I too have planted marigolds.”

**TEKS:** 9.5(C)

**Question 9:** Drag and drop the attribute to the character it belongs to.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Attribute</th>
<th>Character</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Rocking in a chair in a mindless stupor</td>
<td>John Burke</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Usually fool enough to try anything</td>
<td>Joey</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A voice like a cool, dark room in summer</td>
<td>Lizabeth's Mother</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A laugh so loud that the great oak seemed to laugh with it</td>
<td>Lizabeth's Father</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>A face with stern stoicism and doesn’t like intruders, especially children</td>
<td>Miss Lottie</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEKS:** 9.4(G), 9.6(B)

**Question 10:** Drag and drop these events to order them chronologically as they occur in the story.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Event</th>
<th>Order</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>First</td>
<td>Lizabeth, Joey, and some other neighborhood kids throw stones at Miss Lottie’s marigolds.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Second</td>
<td>Lizabeth hears her father crying in her mother’s arms.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Third</td>
<td>Lizabeth wakes up Joey and leads him to Miss Lottie’s yard in a hurry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Fourth</td>
<td>Lizabeth feels compassion for Miss Lottie after realizing the importance of the marigolds.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEKS:** 9.5(D)
I Have a Dream

READ THE PASSAGE “I HAVE A DREAM.” THEN ANSWER THE QUESTIONS.

**Question 1:** Which example of figurative language best states what the author hopes will happen when he returns to the South after his speech?

A. “... we will be able to hew out of the mountain of despair a stone of hope.”
B. “... transform the jangling discords of our nation into a beautiful symphony of brotherhood.”
C. “Let freedom ring from the curvaceous slopes of California.”
D. “... we've come to cash this check, a check that will give us upon demand the riches of freedom and the security of justice.”

**TEKS:** 9.4(F); 9.5(C); 9.8(D)

**Question 2:** The repetition of the phrase “Let freedom ring...” adds to the power of the author’s message mainly by __________.

A. showing all the physical locations the speaker imagines his message being heard
B. reminding his audience that freedom is important
C. emphasizing to his audience that we are all one nation
D. revealing to his audience how many places he has visited

**TEKS:** 9.4(F), 9.8(D)

**Question 3:** To what is the speaker most closely referring with the phrase withering injustice in the passage below (paragraph 2)?

Five score years ago, a great American, in whose symbolic shadow we stand today, signed the Emancipation Proclamation. This momentous decree came as a great beacon light of hope to millions of Negro slaves who had been seared in the flames of withering injustice. It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.

A. the experience of enslaved Africans before the Emancipation Proclamation
B. the weather on the day of the march
C. the cruelty African Americans continue to experience in the present
D. the personalities of the politicians who were in power during the speaker's time

**TEKS:** 9.2(B), 9.5(C)

**Question 4:** How does the speaker mainly appeal to different races of people in his speech?

A. He uses the pronouns “we” and “us” throughout his speech.
B. He gives the speech at the national monument where many different kinds of people come together.
C. He specifically mentions the white people in attendance and says “we cannot walk alone.”
D. Dr. King is only interested in speaking to the African Americans in the audience.

**TEKS:** 9.4(F); 9.8(A)
Question 5: Which inference is best supported by the passage below (paragraph 3)?

But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free. One hundred years later, the life of the Negro is still sadly crippled by the manacles of segregation and the chains of discrimination. One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity. One hundred years later, the Negro is still languished in the corners of American society and finds himself an exile in his own land. And so we've come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.

B. The United States is a vast ocean of material prosperity.
C. This speech is a dramatization of the African American situation.
D. The Emancipation Proclamation did not greatly improve the lives of all African Americans.

TEKS: 9.4(F); 9.5(C)

Question 6: Which statement from the speech best supports the correct answer to Question 5?

A. “It came as a joyous daybreak to end the long night of their captivity.”
B. “But one hundred years later, the Negro still is not free.”
C. “One hundred years later, the Negro lives on a lonely island of poverty in the midst of a vast ocean of material prosperity.”
D. “And so we’ve come here today to dramatize a shameful condition.”

TEKS: 9.5(C)

Question 7: What is most closely the central idea of the passage below (paragraph 7)?

It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment. This sweltering summer of the Negro’s legitimate discontent will not pass until there is an invigorating autumn of freedom and equality. Nineteen sixty-three is not an end, but a beginning. And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual. And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights. The whirlwinds of revolt will continue to shake the foundations of our nation until the bright day of justice emerges.

A. The nation is in a very urgent moment.
B. Most people hope that this collective anger will end soon.
C. African Americans will continue to revolt until they are granted their rights.
D. The bright day of justice is about to arrive.

TEKS: 9.4(F); 9.5(C)

Question 8: Which sentence from the passage best supports the correct answer to Question 7?

A. “And there will be neither rest nor tranquility in America until the Negro is granted his citizenship rights.”
B. “And those who hope that the Negro needed to blow off steam and will now be content will have a rude awakening if the nation returns to business as usual.”

Texas StudySync Assessments | Grade 9
C. “It would be fatal for the nation to overlook the urgency of the moment.”
D. “Now is the time to make justice a reality for all of God’s children.”

**TEKS:** 9.4(F); 9.5(C)

**QUESTION 9:** Drag and drop each vocabulary word with its correct definition:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Definition</th>
<th>Word</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>reasonable; able to be defended by logic</td>
<td>legitimate</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>not enough</td>
<td>insufficient</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>great in quantity, size or extent</td>
<td>prodigious</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the condition of being wealthy</td>
<td>prosperity</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>the act of treating people cruelly because of their identity or beliefs</td>
<td>persecution</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>inseparable; impossible to disentangle</td>
<td>inextricably</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEKS:** 9.2(B)

**Question 10:** Which meaning of **persecution** most closely matches its meaning in the following passage (paragraph 14)?

I am not unmindful that some of you have come here out of great trials and tribulations. Some of you have come fresh from narrow jail cells. And some of you have come from areas where your quest for freedom left you battered by the storms of persecution and staggered by the winds of police brutality. You have been the veterans of creative suffering. Continue to work with the faith that unearned suffering is redemptive. Go back to Mississippi, go back to Alabama, go back to South Carolina, go back to Georgia, go back to Louisiana, go back to the slums and ghettos of our northern cities, knowing that somehow this situation can and will be changed.

A. noun | hostile or ill treatment
B. noun | persistent annoyance
C. verb | to chase another person
D. verb | to treat someone poorly

**TEKS:** 9.2(B)
REVIEW AND RETEACH

At the end of every unit in Texas StudySync, time is allotted for review and assessment. Review and reteaching is guided by the data tracking tools that allow teachers to view day-to-day student performance on all TEKS and ELPS.

To help students prepare for the End-of-Unit Assessment teachers can use StudySync’s Spotlight Skill lessons as a remediation tool. Spotlight Skill lessons provide explicit instruction and additional practice on the TEKS-aligned skills previously taught in the unit, offer a flexible method of review and remediation, and can be adapted to meet the needs of all learners in the classroom.

Spotlight Skill lessons are highly effective, flexible remediation tools because they...

- utilize excerpts and are not connected to a Close Read lesson cycle or an Extended Writing Project,
- are more accessible for students in need of remediation,
- provide students with concrete examples and non-examples for each skill,
- give students multiple opportunities to practice

In addition, teachers can assign Spotlight Skill lessons utilizing a variety of methods that are informed by the formative data collected throughout unit instruction.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Student Need</th>
<th>Spotlight Skill Strategy</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The majority of the class can benefit from revisiting a specific skill.</td>
<td>A teacher might use the Spotlight Skill lesson for whole class instruction.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>The majority of the class can benefit from revisiting several skills.</td>
<td>A teacher can create stations for each Spotlight Skill lesson. Students can rotate from station to station in order to acquire mastery of each skill.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Subgroups of students would benefit from revisiting specific skills.</td>
<td>A teacher might divide the class into groups and assign each group the skill they could most benefit from revisiting. The teacher can float from group, or work with the group who requires the most support. Students with mastery over the skill can also act as facilitators of a group and offer peer support. A teacher might also choose to assign Spotlight Skills as homework or an independent assignment.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
The digital version of these lessons can be assigned from the Library - Skills tab inside your StudySync account.

**Spotlight Skills**

The following Spotlight Skill lessons are available for Reading, Writing, and Speaking and Listening reviewing and reteaching in Grade 9.

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<td>Organizing Argumentative Writing 9.9(B)(i)</td>
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Samples of the “Author’s Purpose and Message” and the “Persuasive Techniques” Spotlight Skill lessons are available in this Assessment Sampler.

**SPOTLIGHT SKILL: AUTHOR’S PURPOSE AND MESSAGE**

**Define**

While reading a text, readers evaluate and analyze the choices authors make in order to understand how authors communicate meaning. These choices include the author’s purpose, audience, and message.

**Author’s purpose** is the author’s reason for writing. Authors typically write for one or more of the following purposes: to entertain, to inform, or to persuade.

An author’s **audience** is comprised of their listeners or readers. The **author’s message** is the main meaning or idea that the author is trying to express to his or her audience.
Analyzing and evaluating author’s craft helps you develop your own writing and thinking.

---

**Term Form Meaning**

**author’s purpose** noun
- An author’s reason for writing, such as to entertain, to inform, or to persuade

**audience** noun
- Those who hear or read the author’s message

**author’s message** noun
- The main meaning or idea that the author is trying to express

---

**Model Checklist for Author’s Purpose and Message**

In order to identify the author’s purpose and message, note the following:

1. Why did the author write this document?
   - In argumentative texts, the purpose is often stated in the form of a thesis
   - Authors writing informational texts may break down complex information into plain language. This suggests their purpose is to inform

2. Is the author’s writing style technical and academic, or conversational and informal?
   - An author may use signal words, such as “I believe” or “as a result,” if his or her purpose is to persuade
   - An author may use humorous or conversational language if his or her purpose is to entertain

3. What is the common idea reflected throughout the work?
   - Does the author restate a particular point throughout the essay?
   - Does the author include a thesis or introductory statement?

To analyze the author’s purpose and message, use the following guide:

1. Why did the author write this text? How do I know?

2. What details in the text explain why the author is writing this piece?

3. What does the author want his or her audience to understand after reading this text? How do I know?
What is the main idea, or thesis, of the text? How does the author convey this idea to his or her audience?

**Skill Model**

Reviewing examples of **incomplete thinking** and **complete thinking** helps you better understand how to determine the author’s purpose and message.

For example, in the informational text *A Night to Remember* by Walter Lord, you would need to look for important details that reveal why the author wrote the text and what he wants readers to learn. In this text, the author describes the moments leading up to the ocean liner *Titanic* striking an iceberg.

First, let’s begin with an example of **incomplete thinking**:

The reader highlights the suspenseful details and tries to determine the author’s purpose. He thinks about his own reaction to the text and determines that the author’s purpose is to entertain. However, he does not consider the overall context of the passage. The reader needs to remember that the informational text describes the sinking of the Titanic. He should ask himself why the author has framed the tragic story in this way.

Here’s an example of **complete thinking** with the same passage of text:
The reader cites key details about the eyewitnesses’ point of view in order to determine the author’s purpose. He understands that the author is not only building suspense but also accurately conveying the eyewitnesses’ experience. The reader’s analysis helps him determine that the author is informing the audience about the night’s events.

Let’s see another example of incomplete thinking:

The reader identifies some important details and uses them to make an inference about a possible message in the text. However, she overlooks other important details that would help her determine what the author wants readers to understand.

An example of complete thinking of the same passage identifies an additional detail:

Noting additional details, the reader is able to make a connection between the different experiences of people aboard the ship. The reader then considers what lesson could be learned from this important moment. She determines that the author might be suggesting that the events leading up to the catastrophe of the sinking of the *Titanic* were not obvious or immediately understood.
Your Turn 1

Student Directions: Read the following passage from the nonfiction text “A Kenyan Teen’s Discovery: Let There Be Lights to Save Lions” by Nina Gregory. Based on your interpretation of details from the text, determine if the statements about the author’s message and purpose are examples of incomplete thinking or complete thinking.

A Kenyan Teen’s Discovery: Let There Be Lights to Save Lions

1 The Kenya Wildlife Service estimates there are just 2,000 lions left in the country. One of the main causes of their demise, “is that people kill them in retaliation for lions attacking their livestock,” says Paula Kahumbu, executive director of Wildlife Direct, a wildlife conservation organization in Africa.

2 She has been studying the conflict between humans and lions, and her work led her to Richard. In one week, she monitored over 50 cases where lions attacked livestock. “It’s a very, very serious problem,” she says.

3 Her work studying the problem led her to Richard.

4 One night he was walking around with a flashlight and discovered the lions were scared of a moving light. A light went on inside him and an idea was born.

5 Three weeks and much tinkering later, Richard had invented a system of lights that flash around the cow shed, mimicking a human walking around with a flashlight. His system is made from broken flashlight parts and an indicator box from a motorcycle.

Statement 1: The author’s purpose is to persuade readers of the value of Richard’s invention of a light that frightens lions.

A. Incomplete Thinking  
B. Complete Thinking

Statement 2: The author’s purpose is to inform readers how a community in Africa solved its problem with lions.

A. Incomplete Thinking  
B. Complete Thinking

Statement 3: One message in the text is that often the best solution to a difficult problem is a simple one.

A. Incomplete Thinking  
B. Complete Thinking

Statement 4: One message in the text is that scientists have been studying the demise of lions.

B. Incomplete Thinking  
C. Complete Thinking

Statement 5: The author’s use of dialogue suggests that her purpose is to entertain readers.

A. Incomplete Thinking  
B. Complete Thinking

Statement 6: The author’s formal writing style and use of technical language signals that her purpose is to inform readers.

A. Incomplete Thinking  
B. Complete Thinking

TEKS: 9.8(A)
Your Turn 2

Student Directions: Read the following passage from the short story “The Woman Who Befriended Ghosts” by Ransom Riggs. Then, for each of the selected quotations, choose the sentence that best states the author’s purpose or message.

The Woman Who Befriended Ghosts

1 Hildy found she preferred the company of ghosts to living people, and so she decided to make some ghost friends. The trouble was how to do it. Even though Hildy could see ghosts, they were not easy to talk to. Ghosts, you see, are a bit like cats—they’re never around when you want them, and rarely come when called.

2 Hildy went to a cemetery. She stood around waiting for hours, but no ghosts came to talk to her. They watched Hildy from across the grass, standoffish and suspicious. She thought perhaps they’d been dead too long and had learned not to trust living people. Hoping the recently deceased would be easier to befriend, she started going to funerals. Because people she knew didn’t die very often, she had to go to strangers’ funerals. When the mourners would ask why she was there, Hildy would lie and say she was a distant relative, then ask whether the deceased had been a nice person, and had they enjoyed running in fields or playing stick-a-whack? The mourners thought she was strange (which, to be fair, she was), and the ghosts, sensing their relatives’ disapproval, gave Hildy the cold shoulder.

Quotation 1: “Hildy found she preferred the company of ghosts to living people, and so she decided to make some ghost friends.”
   A. The author’s purpose is to entertain readers with a story about a woman who prefers ghosts to living people.
   B. The author’s purpose is to inform readers about a young woman who is interested in communicating with ghosts.

Quotation 2: “Ghosts, you see, are a bit like cats—they’re never around when you want them, and rarely come when called.”
   A. The author’s use of humor helps reinforce her purpose of entertaining readers.
   B. The author directly addresses the audience. This helps her engage with and persuade readers.

Quotation 3: “Hildy went to a cemetery. She stood around waiting for hours, but no ghosts came to talk to her.”
   A. The author’s message suggests that ghosts are not real.
   B. The author’s message suggests that it is difficult to make friends.
Quotation 4: “She thought perhaps they’d been dead too long and had learned not to trust living people. Hoping the recently deceased would be easier to befriend, she started going to funerals.”

A. The author’s message states that a logical approach to making friends will be successful.
B. The author’s message states that there’s value in being persistent about getting what you want.

Quotation 5: “The mourners thought she was strange (which, to be fair, she was), and the ghosts, sensing their relatives’ disapproval, gave Hildy the cold shoulder.”

A. The author’s message is that people—living and dead—are often unkind and subject to peer pressure.
B. The author’s message is that death and separation from one’s loved one is a cruel reality.

TEKS: 9.8(A)

Your Turn 3

Student Directions: Read the following passage of the speech “Address to the Nation on the Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger” by President Ronald Reagan. Then, complete each row by dragging the strongest example of text evidence to the second column. Then, in the third column, write your explanation as to why this text evidence most strongly supports the statement.

Address to the Nation on the Explosion of the Space Shuttle Challenger

1  Today is a day for mourning and remembering. [First Lady] Nancy and I are pained to the core by the tragedy of the shuttle Challenger. We know we share this pain with all of the people of our country. This is truly a national loss.

2  Nineteen years ago, almost to the day, we lost three astronauts in a terrible accident on the ground. But we’ve never lost an astronaut in flight; we’ve never had a tragedy like this. And perhaps we’ve forgotten the courage it took for the crew of the shuttle. But they, the Challenger Seven, were aware of the dangers, but overcame them and did their jobs brilliantly. We mourn seven heroes: Michael Smith, Dick Scobee, Judith Resnik, Ronald McNair, Ellison Onizuka, Gregory Jarvis, and Christa McAuliffe. We mourn their loss as a nation together.

3  For the families of the seven, we cannot bear, as you do, the full impact of this tragedy. But we feel the loss, and we’re thinking about you so very much. Your loved ones were daring and brave, and they had that special grace, that special spirit that says, “Give me a challenge, and I’ll meet it with joy.” They had a hunger to explore the universe and discover its truths. They wished to serve, and they did. They served all of us.
Speaker’s Purpose/Message: The speaker’s purpose is to persuade Americans that it is acceptable to grieve after a national tragedy.

Text Evidence
“Today is a day for mourning and remembering. [First Lady] Nancy and I are pained to the core by the tragedy of the shuttle Challenger. We know we share this pain with all of the people of our country.”

Explain
☑️ Reagan reveals that he and the First Lady are deeply affected by the tragedy and believes that all fellow Americans feel the same way.

Speaker’s Purpose/Message: The speaker uses plain language to convey the depths of the nation’s grief.

Text Evidence
“For the families of the seven, we cannot bear, as you do, the full impact of this tragedy. But we feel the loss, and we’re thinking about you so very much.”

Explain
☑️ Reagan simply says that “we mourn seven heroes” and then names them.

Speaker’s Purpose/Message: The speaker’s purpose is to console the astronauts’ family members.

Text Evidence
“For the families of the seven, we cannot bear, as you do, the full impact of this tragedy. But we feel the loss, and we’re thinking about you so very much.”

Explain
☑️ Reagan understands that the astronauts were not only heroes but individuals with families who will miss and mourn them.

Speaker’s Purpose/Message: The speaker’s message is about the strength of the astronauts’ characters.

Text Evidence
“Your loved ones were daring and brave, and they had that special grace, that special spirit that says, ‘Give me a challenge, and I’ll meet it with joy.’”

Explain
☑️ Reagan recognizes the astronauts’ spirit of adventure and bravery.

TEKS: 9.8(A)
SPOTLIGHT SKILL: PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES

Define

Writers and speakers of argumentative texts can use a variety of persuasive techniques. Most arguments make use of a persuasive technique known as a rhetorical appeal. An appeal to logic presents facts and logical reasoning. An appeal to emotion attempts to stir up positive or negative feelings. And an appeal to ethics aims to establish the writer’s or speaker’s good character and credibility.

Persuasive techniques may also include rhetorical devices, which are specific ways of using language to make arguments more persuasive. One common rhetorical device is repetition. For example, Martin Luther King, Jr., repeated “I have a dream” eight times, making his speech one of the most powerful and memorable in American history.
Another persuasive technique is a **counter argument**, in which the writer or speaker acknowledges an opposing opinion and then attempts to disprove that opinion. A counter argument shows that the writer has considered alternatives and has tested his or her position against a different viewpoint.

**Vocabulary**

**Student Instructions:** For each term, drag and drop the correct meaning into the last column.

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<thead>
<tr>
<th>Term</th>
<th>Form</th>
<th>Meaning</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>appeal to logic</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>a persuasive technique that appeals to logic and reasoning</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appeal to emotion</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>a persuasive technique that attempts to stir up emotions</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>appeal to ethics</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>a persuasive technique that aims to establish a writer’s or speaker’s good character or credibility</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>rhetorical device</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>a specific way of using language to make an argument more persuasive</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>counter argument</td>
<td>noun</td>
<td>the part of an argument in which the writer considers and attempts to disprove an opposing opinion</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

**TEKS:** 9.1(C), 9.9(B)(i), 9.10(C)

**Model**

**Checklist for Persuasive Techniques**

In order to strengthen your argumentative essays with persuasive techniques, use the following steps:

**First, Consider your audience and purpose, you may ask yourself:**

- ✓ Who is my primary audience? How might I characterize a member of this audience? What are my audiences’ primary motivations?

- ✓ What is my purpose? What do I hope to achieve?

**Next, think about the following persuasive techniques and how you might use them. Consider what you know about your audience and your overall purpose for writing:**

- ✓ **Appeals to Logic**
  - › What facts or statistics will convince my audience to agree with my argument?
  - › What is the most effective way to present factual information to persuade my audience that my argument is logically sound and reasonable?
✓ **Appeals to Emotion**
  › What emotions do I want my audience to feel about my topic?
  › What words or phrases should I include to bring about those feelings in my audience?

✓ **Appeals to Ethics**
  › What ideas about right and wrong and fairness do I want my audience to keep in mind as they read or listen to my argument?
  › Which experts could I use to establish the credibility of my claims?
  › What words or phrases should I include to remind my audience of our shared values about what is right, good, and fair?

✓ **Rhetorical Devices**
  › How can I use language in artful and persuasive ways to convince my audience to accept my position?
  › What specific rhetorical devices, such as rhetorical question, repetition, or parallelism, do I want to try to use to make my argument more persuasive?

✓ **Counter Argument**
  › What is an opposing opinion that my audience might have?
  › How can I rebut that opposing opinion in a way that respects my audience and strengthens my argument?

**Skill Model**

Reviewing examples of a writer’s **incomplete thinking** and **complete thinking** as he refines the application of writing skills, including using persuasive techniques, will help you better understand how to compose stronger argumentative texts.

For example, while drafting an argument with persuasive techniques, you would need to consider your purpose, or what you want to achieve. Then, you would need to consider the rhetorical devices or counter arguments you want to incorporate into your writing.

While reviewing the following examples of **incomplete thinking** and **complete thinking**, keep in mind the writer’s goals. In the following table, you can see how the writer considered a few key questions from the checklist:
<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Key Question</th>
<th>Answer</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>What is my purpose for writing?</td>
<td>To convince the school to build a new parking lot</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Who is my audience?</td>
<td>Principal and superintendent of schools</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>How will I appeal to my reader’s sense of emotion/logic/ethics?</td>
<td>Logic: give examples of people being late to school because buses and cars share the same parking lot, causing confusion and delay</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What rhetorical devices can I use?</td>
<td>Repetition: repeat the word time</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Will there be a counter argument in my argument?</td>
<td>The counter argument is that a new lot would cost too much. I will provide some fundraising ideas in my essay to rebut this</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>What do I want to persuade my audience to do as a result of reading my argument?</td>
<td>Grant permission for the lot and the first fundraiser</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

The writer’s first attempt is an example of **Incomplete Thinking**:

Every morning when we come to school, the buses seem to be a little later than the day before. We have a growing crisis on our hands. This school needs a new parking lot to relieve the congestion between the buses and parents dropping off students. If we can’t get to school on time simply because of the parking situation, then we have a serious problem. You may say the expense of a new parking lot is too high, but we can raise the money for this one-time cost without it having to go into the school budget. Please consider this sensible and important plea.

The writer presented his case, appealed to the principal’s sense of logic, and presented a counter argument. However, the writer planned to use repetition as a rhetorical device to strengthen his argument, but forgot to incorporate it into his writing. He will need to use a different tone in his writing for the rhetorical device to sound natural.

Before revising his argument and adding persuasive techniques, the writer takes a moment to pause and jot down a few notes about his next steps:

> If I want to add the phrase “the time is now” a couple times for effect, I need to make it sound natural. That means my tone should match the urgency of that phrase. I will revise the text to make it clear that an additional parking lot is even more desperate of a need than I did in the first draft.

The writer’s second attempt is an example of **Complete Thinking**:

I was late to school again this morning. My bus could not get into the parking lot—again—because of all of the parents dropping off their kids. The time is now for a new parking lot. Every morning when we come to school, the buses seem to be a little later than the day
before. We have a growing crisis on our hands. If students can’t get to school on time simply because of the parking situation, then it’s clear to see; the time is now. You may say the expense for a new parking lot is too high, but we can raise the money for this one-time cost without it having to go into the school budget. Please consider this sensible and important plea. It is now time to fix this.

By trying a different approach, the writer is able to communicate that something needs to be done about the problem—now. The writer uses the word “time” and “now” throughout the speech, which is an example of repetition, a rhetorical device.

Your Turn 1

Student Directions: The following statements are the first lines of argumentative texts. To complete the table, sort them into the different techniques each writer uses.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Appeal to Emotion</th>
<th>“Save Memorial Day for remembering and honoring those who never had the chance to become veterans,” Melinda said. “This one day a year is all they and their loved ones have left.” From “In Memoriam: Why Is Memorial Day Important to Americans?”</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Logic</td>
<td>“When you’re bored on your phone, you’re just sitting with your own thoughts,” 17-year-old Maxine Marcus told The Daily Beast. “You’re on it, but it’s just an action so your brain still goes wherever it wants to go. You get bored and you start thinking and daydreaming.” From “Bored Silly: How Beneficial Is Boredom?”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Appeal to Ethics</td>
<td>“As the amount of time spent gaming went up, the quality of relationships went down (Hadfield). People need family and friends as the foundation of their life. Gaming damages this foundation.” From “Gaming Does Not Promote Positive Communication.”</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Rhetorical Devices</td>
<td>“And ain’t I a woman? I can work as much and eat as much as a man, when I could get it—and bear the lash as well! And ain’t I a woman?” From “Speech to the Ohio Women’s Conference: Ain’t I a Woman?”</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEKS: 9.1(C), 9.9(B)(ii), 9.10(C)
Your Turn 2

**Student Directions:** Read the following excerpt, which was taken from the first draft of a writer’s persuasive argument. As you read, note areas of possible revision. Then, read each question and choose the best revision.

**Persuasive Argument: First Draft**

1. “Why It’s Time to Redecorate”
2. Just look at that old sofa. Or look away, is more like it. Do you ever look around your living room and wonder how you can spend so much time living in an uninspired space?
3. Think about redecorating to boost your mood, care for your home, and maybe even inspire you.
4. No one likes to be presented with shabby, old furniture when welcomed into someone’s home. Just a little TLC and fresh new pieces will change the face of your living room.
5. It can be as simple as some new wall hangings or throw pillows. Try it, you’ll feel great!

**Question 1:** Which of the following revisions can the writer make to appeal to the reader’s sense of logic?
   A. There are great opportunities to choose from the latest designs.
   B. Most stores have furniture and home decor sales regularly.

**Question 2:** The writer would like to change sentence 3 so that it is a statement instead of a question. Which is the most effective revision to make?
   A. There’s no reason that a room you spend so much time in should be so uninspiring.
   B. Most people spend too much time in living rooms and should decorate them.

**Question 3:** The writer would like to add a counter argument. Where is the most effective place to add a counter argument?
   A. After sentence 4
   B. After sentence 6

**Question 4:** What kind of appeal does the writer use most often?
   A. Appeal to emotion
   B. Appeal to ethics

**TEKS:** 9.1(C), 9.9(B)(ii), 9.10(C)
Write

Prompt: Using the writer’s ideas below, draft an argumentative text that achieves the writer’s goals and uses persuasive techniques. You may refer to the steps in the Checklist section as a guide while you write your argument.

*I am writing an argument about the most important thing that people should consider when choosing a friend. The text should appeal to the reader’s sense of ethics more than emotions or logic, and a counter argument should be made and addressed. I will include a rhetorical device and make all of the writing clear as to who my audience will be and what they should consider when choosing a friend.*

Rubric

**PERSUASIVE TECHNIQUES**

**Score 4:** The writer clearly presents the argument, which achieves the writer’s goals and appeals to the reader’s sense of ethics.

**Score 3:** The writer presents a sufficient argument, which allows for a clear appeal to ethics.

**Score 2:** The writer presents some ideas and appeals to ethics, but the argument is incomplete.

**Score 1:** The writer attempts to make an argument and appeal, but it is unsuccessful or missing details.

**TEKS:** 9.1(C), 9.9(B)(ii), 9.10(C)

Peer Critiques

**Review Instructions:** Read your peer’s assignment. As you read, focus on the technique the writer used to catch the reader’s attention and present information. Consider these questions (you don’t have to answer all of them):

- ✔ What techniques does the writer use to appeal to the reader’s sense of ethics?
- ✔ Does the writer make it clear who his or her audience is? How do the arguments and counter arguments show this?
- ✔ What does the writer do well in this response? What does the writer need to work on?

Remember that your comments are most useful when they are constructive.
REVIEWS REQUESTED: 2

5 END-OF-UNIT ASSESSMENT

At the end of every instructional unit, time has been allotted to assess students’ mastery of key reading, writing, and revising and editing skills taught during the unit. This is an opportunity for teachers and students to gather summative data on the outcome of student learning in relation to student progress through the TEKS-aligned curriculum.

Each End-of-Unit summative assessment contains four reading passages with questions covering all skills and TEKS addressed in the unit’s instruction. Extra focus is given to standards covered on state assessments. Sample student passages are included to assess student performance on revising and editing standards, and a writing prompt asks students to compose a response in the writing form explored within the unit.

The digital version of the End-of-Unit Assessments can be assigned from the Assess tab inside your StudySync account. The paper-based version of the assessment can be printed from the same location. See below for an overview of the skills assessed in each End-of-Unit Assessment for Grade 9.

A sample of the End of Unit - Unit 1 assessment is available in this Assessment Sampler.

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### Unit 6 End-of-Unit Assessment: Tested Skills

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<tr>
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<td>Theme 9.6(A)</td>
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</tbody>
</table>
LORENE WAS ASSIGNED BY HER ENGLISH TEACHER TO WRITE A STORY ABOUT WHAT IT MEANS TO BELONG. SHE WOULD LIKE YOU TO READ HER STORY AND SUGGEST ANY REVISIONS SHE SHOULD MAKE. WHEN YOU FINISH READING, ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW.

Outsider

1 Theresa was busy laboring over her algebra homework in the school auditorium when she suddenly heard shrieking from behind the stage. 2 She barely glanced up because she knew it was just one of the actors again, dramatically rehearsing his part. Every morning before school started, Theresa waited here while her best friend, Lilybeth, and the other student thespians prepared for their upcoming play.

4 Theresa envied the way the club members encouraged and supported each other, united in their common goal of putting on the play. 6 The actors were so over-the-top, so entertaining, that Theresa longed to be a part of the group. 6 Lilybeth encouraged her to join Drama Club but Theresa wasn’t about to set foot on a stage, and she couldn’t sew, draw, or paint, so she knew she’d be useless creating wardrobes or sets.

7 Finally, a second shriek echoed through the auditorium, causing the drama coach to throw down his script in exasperation. 8 “Will someone please go investigate?” 9 He pointed at Theresa, the only person not on stage with him. 10 “You, go.”

11 Theresa raised her eyebrows in surprise but hurried down the aisle and up the steps on the side of the stage. 12 She’d been there with Lilybeth before, so Theresa knew to be cautious as she skirted around all the debris that filled the wings.

13 Theresa didn’t hurry until she heard moaning, and she realized that someone could actually be in trouble back there. 14 After ducking around a wardrobe rack, she was surprised to find Alejandro struggling to support a fake wall.

15 “Help!” he yelled as Theresa approached. 16 “If it falls, weeks of work will be destroyed.”

17 Theresa rushed to help him thrust the board back into a standing position. 18 The massive object attached to it clattered to the floor.

19 Alejandro knelt, and he moaned and held the broken frame. 20 “The show can’t go on without this portrait for the detective to fall in love with.”

21 Theresa rolled her eyes at his histrionics. 22 “The frame was obviously too heavy for the wallboard, and look,” Theresa peered over his shoulder, “you should have utilized anchors and screws instead of that flimsy picture hanger. 23 Use a lightweight wood for your frame, balsa maybe, and paint it to look extravagant.”
Lilybeth and other kids gathered around as Alejandro exclaimed, “We’ve been so overwhelmed since Malcolm abandoned us, but Theresa knows about screws and anchors and things.”

Everyone applauded and began patting her on the back.

Theresa grinned shyly and protested, “Don’t be ridiculous, everyone knows that stuff.”

“We don’t,” Lilybeth said, giving her a hug. “We really need your expertise, Theresa. Welcome to Drama Club!”

Question 1: Which of these ideas could best follow and support sentence 4?

A. She enjoyed watching her friend play the part of the missing woman’s friend.
B. The drama coach kept them focused and made sure they were rehearsed so that they would have a good performance.
C. She yearned to discover a community of friends that would make her feel part of something important like that.
D. One boy made everyone laugh with his inability to remember his lines.

TEKS: 9.9(C)

Question 2: Lorene has not used the most effective transition in sentence 7. Which of the following should replace Finally in this sentence?

A. Soon
B. Instead
C. Although
D. However

TEKS: 9.9(C)

Question 3: How can Lorene improve the clarity of sentence 12?

A. Change She’d to She had
B. Change there to backstage
C. Change cautious to careful
D. Change debris to dirt

TEKS: 9.9(C)
Question 4: What is the most effective way to improve the clarity of sentence 18?

A. Remove massive
B. Change object to picture frame
C. Change attached to fastened
D. Remove clattered

TEKS: 9.9(C)

Question 5: What is the most effective revision to make in sentence 19?

A. Alejandro knelt, moaning.
B. Moaning, Alejandro knelt cradling the broken frame.
C. Alejandro dropped to his hands and knees.
D. Alejandro dropped to his knees, moaning and cradling the broken frame.

TEKS: 9.9(C)

JAVIER WROTE THE FOLLOWING STORY ABOUT SUPPORTING A TEAMMATE. HE WOULD LIKE YOU TO READ HIS PAPER AND THINK ABOUT ANY CORRECTIONS HE NEEDS TO MAKE. WHEN YOU FINISH READING, ANSWER THE QUESTIONS THAT FOLLOW.

Teammates

1 Today was May 13, 1947, Mathias’s birthday, and to celebrate we were going to Crosley Field to see my home team, the Cincinnati Reds, pulverize the Brooklyn Dodgers.

2 Mathias had moved here to Cincinnati from New York, so we were having a civil debate, otherwise known as a battle to the death, about who would win the game today. 3 Mathias was so obsessed with the Dodgers that he was a true fanatic I guess I shouldn’t talk since I was positive the Reds were the best baseball team in the world.

4 “The Dodgers will annihilate the Reds,” Mathias insisted, but then he scowled and leaned close. 5 “I’m apprehensive, though.”

6 “Of course you are,” I whooped. 7 This 1947 season belonged to the Cincinnati Reds, and we were going to obliterate the competition and win the World Series.

8 “No, not about winning, since I’m confident in my Dodgers,” Mathias said, squinting around like he was afraid someone would overhear. 9 “But in other cities, the Dodgers’ rookie, Jackie Robinson, has been harassed by the crowds, and I’d hate to see that happen here.”

10 I’d heard about Robinson, the Dodgers’ first baseman. 11 He played in the Negro Leagues and is the first African American to play in the major leagues. 12 Some fans were displeased and had been hurling racial slurs from the stands.
“Don’t worry,” I reassured Mathias. “Sure, we’ll ridicule the Dodgers because they’re the opponents, but nobody’s going to jeer at Robinson because of the color of his skin.”

Mathias appeared relieved and we settled into our bleacher seats, returning to our argument about who would emerge victorious today.

The Dodgers entered the field to warm up, it turned out I was sadly mistaken.

People in the stands, my fellow Cincinnati fans, shouted insults at Robinson, and I’d never felt more ashamed. Mathias stiffened and I sat immobilized, stunned at what was happening.

Down on the field, Robinson kept warming up, ignoring the mocking abuse directed at him.

“Can’t they just let the guy play?” I muttered.

And then the captain of the Dodgers team, Pee Wee Reese, an All-Star player, walked across the entire field to Robinson, put his arm around Robinson’s shoulders and faced the crowd. Reese didn’t say anything, just stood there, staring at the hecklers, until gradually the catcalls died away.

The Reds won the game, but it didn’t matter to either of us. Mathias and I had seen something more momentous than a baseball game that day.

We’d seen Reese stand by his teammate in a gesture of support and solidarity, in a triumphant moment for both baseball and all Americans.

**Question 1:** What is the correct way to write sentence 3?

A. Mathias was so obsessed with the Dodgers, that he was a true fanatic, I guess I shouldn’t talk, since I was positive the Reds were the best baseball team in the world.

B. Mathias was so obsessed with the Dodgers and that he was a true fanatic, I guess I shouldn’t talk since I was positive the Reds were the best baseball team in the world.

C. Mathias was so obsessed with the Dodgers that he was a true fanatic; I guess I shouldn’t talk since I was positive the Reds were the best baseball team in the world.

D. Mathias was so obsessed with the Dodgers. A true fanatic. I guess I shouldn’t talk since I was positive the Reds were the best baseball team in the world.

**TEKS:** 9.9(D)(i)

**Question 2:** What change should be made in sentence 8?

A. Change the comma after winning to a semicolon

B. Change confadent to confident

C. Delete the comma after Dodgers

D. Change squinting to squinted

**TEKS:** 9.9(D)(vi)
Question 3: What change, if any, needs to be made in sentence 11?

A. Insert a comma after Leagues
B. Change is to was
C. Capitalize first
D. Change American to american

TEKS: 9.9(D)(ii)

Question 4: How should sentence 16 be changed?

A. Insert a comma after field
B. Insert a period after field
C. Delete the comma after up
D. Change the comma after up to and

TEKS: 9.9(D)(ii)

Question 5: What, if any, change should be made in sentence 20?

A. Change unfair to unfare
B. Change injustise to injustice
C. Change really to realy
D. No change should be made to sentence 20.

TEKS: 9.9(D)(ii)

READ THE SELECTION AND CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER TO EACH QUESTION.

A Fish Out of Water

1. The Tanakas had recently emigrated to San Francisco from a tiny fishing hamlet located on the Pacific coast of Japan. How ironic, thought Haru, that he had lived all his life near the Pacific Ocean, and now, thousands of miles away, he was still living by the Pacific Ocean. But life on this side of the ocean was a stark contrast to his former existence as the son of a fisher.

2. Haru didn’t know if he’d ever get used to this new place. His parents had chosen to settle in the Fillmore neighborhood, which consisted mostly of stick-style Victorian houses. Haru learned that these houses were called “stick-style” because of the decorative trim, or stick work, that was applied to the exterior of the house. Owners of the Victorian houses had divided many of the buildings into apartments, and it was in one of those apartments that the Tanakas now lived. Haru thought his new home was nice, but it was so much larger than the small wood plank house in which he had grown up—just thinking about it made him desperately want to return to his familiar life.
Often, he reminisced about what it had been like back in Japan: how he and his father would awake before dawn to fish, how they would walk down to their funaya—the storeroom where they kept their fishing boat and where they dried fish and repaired their nets—and then spend all day fishing. It was grueling work, but Haru enjoyed being out on the ocean in the fresh air.

Everything had changed though. The industrialization of the Japanese fishing industry had driven many traditional fishing communities out of business, including his own. So, his father and mother had decided to move the family to America in hopes of a more prosperous life. Haru, unwilling to leave his friends and relatives, protested vehemently, but it had done no good.

Even though his father had joined a fishing company in San Francisco, Haru was not allowed to go with him. His father and mother wanted him to get an education so that he wouldn’t have to work so hard when he became a grown man.

But Haru felt like a fish out of water. Life back home had been simple and quiet, although he had to admit, sometimes monotonous—every day was the same: get up early, go fishing all day, and return home in the evening. And San Francisco was the exact opposite: busy and noisy. So far, Haru wasn’t sure if he liked busy and noisy.

One day, soon after moving into the Fillmore area, Haru decided to explore his new neighborhood. On this first expedition, he simply observed everything. It was overwhelming—practically on every corner there was a grocery and dry goods store or a small business such as a tailor shop, photo studio, or watch repair shop. In the industrial part of town, he discovered livery stables, lumber and coal dealers, and even an abandoned cable car barn, and along Fillmore Street, there were churches and synagogues, theaters, bakeries, laundries, and breweries. Several streetcar and cable car lines crisscrossed the neighborhood, which he would ride someday he told himself. Thereafter, every day after school, he continued exploring, and the more he poked around, the more he began to understand and like this strange world.

There was one more thing that helped Haru feel more comfortable—at school, he had recently become friends with another boy, Kinji, who had also emigrated from Japan and for the same reasons Haru had, so Kinji understood what it was like to be a fish out of water. Kinji lived in an apartment just a few houses down the street from Haru. Every day after school, together, the two boys found new places to investigate. Haru knew he would never forget his home back in Japan, but he believed that someday this new place would also seem like home. Perhaps he would not always be a fish out of water, after all.
**Question 1:** Read these sentences from paragraph 2.

Haru didn’t know if he’d ever get used to this new place. His parents had chosen to settle in the Fillmore neighborhood, which consisted mostly of stick-style Victorian houses. . . . Haru thought his new home was nice, but it was so much larger than the small wood plank house in which he had grown up—just thinking about it made him desperately want to return to his familiar life.

What tone is created in this part of the passage?

A. Confused
B. Despairing
C. Panicked
D. Skeptical

**TEKS:** 9.8(F)

**Question 2:** In paragraph 3, the word *reminisced* means —

A. learned
B. thought
C. claimed
D. became

**TEKS:** 9.2(B)

**Question 3:** The detailed description of Haru’s new neighborhood in paragraph 7 is important because it —

A. provides reasons why the Tanakas chose that particular neighborhood
B. signifies the moment in which Haru realizes he must accept his new life
C. demonstrates that a person can adapt to significant changes
D. shows that it is better to accept one’s situation than to give up

**TEKS:** 9.6(D)

**Question 4:** Read this sentence from paragraph 7.

Thereafter, every day after school, he continued exploring, and the more he poked around, the more he began to understand and like this strange world.

This sentence implies that Haru —

A. appreciates the uniqueness of his new home
B. likes San Francisco more than his village in Japan
C. seeks to learn more about American customs
D. has become an expert on his new neighborhood

**TEKS:** 9.6(D)
Question 5: The author most likely includes the events in paragraphs 7 and 8 to develop the theme of —

A. showing courage during difficult times  
B. finding a way to control your destiny  
C. accepting that change is inevitable  
D. making the best of a difficult situation

TEKS: 9.6(A)

Question 6: Complete the chart. Drag and drop the correct quotation that best reveals each of Haru’s character traits.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Haru’s Character Trait</th>
<th>Quotation That Reveals This Character Trait</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>Prefers tranquility to commotion</td>
<td>So far, Haru wasn’t sure if he liked busy and noisy.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Able to be open-minded</td>
<td>Haru knew he would never forget his home back in Japan, but he believed that someday this new place would also seem like home.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Wants to keep things the way they are</td>
<td>Haru, unwilling to leave his friends and relatives, protested vehemently, but it had done no good.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Enjoys being outdoors rather than indoors</td>
<td>It was grueling work, but Haru enjoyed being out on the ocean in the fresh air.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

TEKS: 9.6(B)

READ THE SELECTION AND CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER TO EACH QUESTION.

Friendship 101

1 Devon hurried down the hall and hoped he wasn’t too late to miss meeting up with his friends. As he rounded the corner, he could see Zoe waving and Jonah smirking at him with his typical grin.

2 “Sorry I’m late, but Mrs. Boyle kept me after to class to go over a literary project I’m working on,” explained Devon as he stopped to catch his breath.

3 “Sounds like a blast, man,” quipped Jonah, “but we should go before we’re too late to get the club we want.”

4 As the three friends walked down the school hallway, Devon was struck by how lucky they were to have remained close since the fifth grade. A memory suddenly came to mind of the time that they all wore the same shirts for two weeks straight, and he chuckled to himself at how ridiculous they looked.
When they arrived at the common area, it was filled with elaborate welcome tables for various clubs, all with the same purpose—to entice students to sign up. Zoe grabbed Devon's arm as she dashed to join the large group gathered around the spirit club table. Spirit club was popular because students decorated the school before sports events and dances, and they hosted a large party every year.

“What are we waiting for, guys? Let's join!” exclaimed Zoe as she excitedly signed her name to the sheet. Jonah followed suit, but Devon noticed that the club met the same day as poetry club.

“I was planning to look at some of the other clubs before I made up my mind. Mrs. Boyle thought I might enjoy poetry club,” explained Devon.

Jonah looked up from signing his name, “Sure, poetry club is cool and all, but you can’t break up the three musketeers!”

Devon laughed off Jonah’s comment and thought about how doing something he loved by joining poetry club might ruin the best friendships he’d ever known. He didn’t want to disappoint Jonah and Zoe or feel left out, so he reluctantly signed his name, too.

Over the next few weeks, Devon barely made time for Zoe and Jonah, and he often came up with excuses to avoid sitting with them at lunch. Zoe wondered if they had done something to upset him or make him angry. One day after math class, she noticed Devon’s notebook on his desk. As she picked up the notebook, a notice for a slam poetry contest for poetry club members slipped out. Without thinking, Zoe flipped through Devon’s notebook and realized that the pages were filled with dozens of poems he had written.

That afternoon, Devon answered his front door and his two friends stood smiling on his porch.

“Roses are red, violets are blue, we wish we could write poetry as well as you!” they recited in unison.

Both apologized for making Devon feel obligated to join spirit club, and they offered to cheer him on in the poetry contest. Devon smiled and breathed a huge sigh. It was a relief to know that exploring different interests didn’t mean having to say goodbye to great friends.

**Question 1:** Read paragraph 3. In this paragraph, the author depicts Jonah as —

A. enthusiastic
B. sarcastic
C. secretive
D. understanding

**TEKS:** 9.6(B)
Question 2: In paragraph 6, the use of the phrases “what are we waiting for,” “exclaimed Zoe,” and “excitedly signed” creates a tone that is —

A. animated
B. persuasive
C. uneasy
D. witty

TEKS: 9.8(F)

Question 3: Read this sentence from paragraph 7.

“I was planning to look at some of the other clubs before I made up my mind.”

This sentence helps the reader know that the word entice in paragraph 5 means —

A. feel annoyance or anger
B. cause someone to beware
C. ask for something in a serious way
D. attract by showing something appealing

TEKS: 9.2(B)

Question 4: Read this sentence from paragraph 9.

Devon laughed off Jonah’s comment and thought about how doing something he loved by joining poetry club might ruin the best friendships he’d ever known.

Complete the sentence below based on the sentence from paragraph 9. Drag and drop the word and phrases into the correct sections of the sentence.

The sentence from paragraph 9 includes **irony** because it presents **two ideas** that show the difference between **what is expected and what actually occurs**.

TEKS: 9.8(E)

Question 5: Which sentence best explains Devon’s reason for joining spirit club instead of poetry club?

A. Spirit club was popular because students decorated the school before sports events and dances, and they hosted a large party every year.
B. Jonah followed suit, but Devon noticed that the club met the same day as poetry club.
C. He didn’t want to disappoint Jonah and Zoe or feel left out, so he reluctantly signed his name, too.
D. Over the next few weeks, Devon barely made time for Zoe and Jonah, and he often came up with excuses to avoid sitting with them at lunch.

TEKS: 9.5(C)
Question 6: What major theme is explored in the story?

A. Trying to fit in is a good way to find acceptance.
B. Memories remind us of the important things in life.
C. The best friendships can get off to difficult starts.
D. Friendship means supporting each other's goals.

TEKS: 9.6(A)

READ THE SELECTION AND CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER TO EACH QUESTION.

Revolutionary Child

1 Sarah’s eyes welled with tears as she watched her three older brothers walk away from home. As they slowly faded from view, she hoped with all her heart that they would stay safe, but she was also heavy with guilt as jealousy bubbled inside of her. “I wanted to help fight for our freedom!” spat Sarah as she brusquely wiped her eyes and kicked the pebbles at her feet. But Sarah’s parents had forbade her to go with her brothers and refused to discuss it further.

2 As time passed, Sarah longed for her brothers’ company, especially her closest brother, Samuel. Without Samuel to share secrets with, Sarah felt alone in the crowd of her younger siblings. Sarah and Samuel had done almost everything together, so she was even more envious that he was allowed to join the Revolution without her. It didn’t seem fair that because her brothers were slightly older, they would share great tales of bravery and a newfound camaraderie that no longer could include Sarah. When they returned, she would have nothing to regale them with except boring town-related gossip.

3 Toward the end of June, there were whisperings that General Washington was marching the Continental Army to New York City to attack the British army. One hot, humid morning soon after, Sarah’s mother asked her to take some fresh eggs over to a neighboring farm in nearby Freehold. The heat was brutal, but Sarah was glad of the chore because the long walk gave her time to herself. Later, as she stepped over a spring, she came upon a woman hurriedly filling containers with water.

4 “It looks like you could use some help. Is there a fire nearby?” inquired Sarah.

5 “I would greatly appreciate your help, and so would General Washington, I suppose,” remarked the woman as she handed Sarah a pitcher.

6 Overcome with excitement at the mention of Washington’s name, Sarah decided to abandon her task and help the woman with hers instead.

7 “My name is Mary Hayes, but all the men call me Molly Pitcher. My husband is on the battlefield suffering with the rest of the Continental Army. We will lose the battle if we cannot keep the men cool in this heat, so will you help me carry pitchers of water to our army?” asked Mary.
8 Sarah knew this was finally her chance to play a part in the Revolution, and she happily agreed. As they moved closer to the battlefield, she jumped at the sounds of gunfire, but Mary never flinched. Sarah followed Mary’s lead and quickly got to work passing out water to the thirsty, overheated men. As the day wore on, she felt hot and exhausted, but she never stopped working. She noticed three soldiers who had not yet been offered water sitting near some trees, and as she approached them, the youngest of the three looked up and smiled as he recognized his sister. Sarah ran as fast as she could into her brother’s arms.

9 “I knew you’d find a way to join the Revolution,” laughed Samuel.

Question 1: Read these sentences from paragraph 1.

As they slowly faded from view, she hoped with all her heart that they would stay safe, but she was also heavy with guilt as jealousy bubbled inside of her. “I wanted to help fight for our freedom!” spat Sarah as she brusquely wiped her eyes and kicked the pebbles at her feet.

What overall tone is created in this part of the passage?

A. Apologetic
B. Resentful
C. Depressing
D. Enthusiastic

TEKS: 9.8(F)

Question 2: The author uses the term “alone in the crowd” in paragraph 2 to convey —

A. Sarah’s sense of loneliness without Samuel
B. the pressure that Sarah feels to fit in with her siblings
C. Sarah’s sense of jealousy toward Samuel’s adventures
D. the contrast between Sarah’s older and younger siblings

TEKS: 9.8(E)

Question 3: Which sentence suggests that Sarah worries about her relationship with her older brothers?

A. Sarah’s eyes welled with tears as she watched her three older brothers walk away from home.
B. As they slowly faded from view, she hoped with all her heart that they would stay safe, but she was also heavy with guilt as jealousy bubbled inside of her.
C. As time passed, Sarah longed for her brothers’ company, especially her closest brother, Samuel.
D. It didn’t seem fair that because her brothers were slightly older, they would share great tales of bravery and a newfound camaraderie that no longer could include Sarah.

TEKS: 9.5(C)
**Question 4:** Which quotation provides the best evidence that the story takes place in a rural setting?

A. Sarah and Samuel had done almost everything together, so she was even more envious that he was allowed to join the Revolution without her.
B. Toward the end of June, there were whisperings that General Washington was marching the Continental Army to New York City to attack the British army.
C. One hot, humid morning soon after, Sarah's mother asked her to take some fresh eggs over to a neighboring farm in nearby Freehold.
D. The heat was brutal, but Sarah was glad of the chore because the long walk gave her time to herself.

**TEKS:** 9.6(D)

**Question 5:** The description of Mary Hayes in paragraphs 7 and 8 implies that she —

A. thinks Sarah is too young to help
B. has been on a battlefield before
C. realizes how important the Revolution is to Sarah
D. believes her husband will not make it through the battle

**TEKS:** 9.5(G)

**Question 6:** What do Samuel’s actions and words in paragraphs 8 and 9 reveal about his relationship with his sister?

A. He is surprised by her desire to help with the battle.
B. He is frustrated by her need to be included among the brothers.
C. He is amused at her unwillingness to protect herself from danger.
D. He is content that she finally found a way to get what she wanted.

**TEKS:** 9.6(B)

**Question 7:** Write your answer below.

Devon from “Friendship 101” and Sarah from “Revolutionary Child” both have a need to belong. How do they differ in the way they react to this need?

Devon and Sarah both have a need to belong with the people they care about. Devon joins spirit club instead of the club he really cares about in order to fit in with his friends, Jonah and Zoe. He then becomes angry with his friends for making him feel like he needs to hide his true feelings about poetry club in order to belong. Sarah wants to join her brothers who are leaving to fight in the American Revolution because she wants to fight for freedom, but she also wants to feel included in her brothers' camaraderie. While Sarah is resentful of her brothers’ chance to fight and the togetherness they will have, she never hides her true feelings the way Devon does, nor does she get angry with her brothers.

**TEKS:** 9.5(B), 9.5(F)
Question 8: Write your answer below.

Both “Friendship 101” and “Revolutionary Child” include characters that want something very important to them. How do Devon and Sarah differ in the way they handle trying to get what they want? Include one reference from each story to support your response.

Devon and Sarah react differently when faced with decisions about getting what they want. Devon considers the consequences, while Sarah simply acts. Devon’s friends make him feel bad for wanting to join poetry club, but instead of doing what he wants, Devon joins a different club because “he didn’t want to disappoint them or feel left out.” When Sarah’s parents prevent her from joining her brothers in the Revolution, she is initially jealous and resentful. Later when she is given the chance to help out, “Sarah decided to abandon her task and help the woman with hers instead.” Sarah jumps at the chance to be part of the Revolution without thinking about any consequences she may later face from her parents or the battle itself.

TEKS: 9.5(B), 9.5(F)

READ THE SELECTION AND CHOOSE THE BEST ANSWER TO EACH QUESTION.

La Quinceañera

1 The long-awaited day had finally arrived—Sophia’s fifteenth birthday, and her quinceañera celebration—a time for family and friends to mark her passage from childhood to adulthood. The Rosales family had decided to hold the festivities in their backyard instead of the customary ballroom to save money—a fiesta de quince años can be quite expensive.

2 Señora Rosales put her arm around her daughter and said, “What a perfect day for a fiesta, mi hija. We couldn’t have asked for better weather.” It is perfect, thought Sophia as she glanced around the backyard—everyone seemed to be having a good time chatting amongst themselves, that is, everyone except Alejandra, her fourteen-year-old sister who was sulking at a table alone.

3 “Hey, hermanita, why the sad face? What’s wrong?” Sophia called to her sister as she walked over. “Why aren’t you hanging out with your friends? They’ve been asking about you.”

4 “Nothing’s wrong,” Alejandra replied sullenly. “I just don’t feel like socializing right now.”

5 Leaning over, Sophia whispered in her sister’s ear, “Well, I hope you will feel like joining us soon. The dancing is about to begin, and I don’t think anybody will want to dance with you with that expression on your face.” Giving Alejandra a hug and a kiss, Sophia returned to her friends.

6 Watching her sister mingle with the crowd, Alejandra thought, “She looks so radiant and so happy, as she should, so why do I feel so miserable? I know Sophia loves me,
but I feel so left out. I worked just as hard planning this party as everyone else, and no one seems very appreciative.”

7 It was time for the dancing to begin, and the first dance, which symbolized that her father was the first man in her life, belonged to Sophia and her papa. But first, the flat shoes she was wearing needed to be replaced with a pair of heels, signifying her entrance into society as an adult woman. Together, Sophia’s mother and father performed the ritual—her mother removed the flats from Sophia’s feet and her father slipped the pair of heels onto her feet. Then, father and daughter danced deftly around the patio to a song that Sophia’s father had often sung to her when she was little.

8 Although she knew she shouldn’t feel this way, Alejandra felt even more miserable. She despised herself for being so petty, but she and her father had a special song, too, and she couldn’t get over her feelings of sadness knowing that tonight she wouldn’t get to share it with him.

9 Then it was time for Sophia’s court, which consisted of fourteen damas and fourteen chambelanes—each pair representing a year in Sophia’s life—to take part in a traditional waltz with her. Sophia beckoned Alejandra, who was one of the damas, over to the “dance floor.” Alejandra reluctantly joined her escort, performing the choreographed steps from memory but not from her heart.

10 After the dances, Sophia’s father and mother led the guests in a toast to their daughter. Each parent spoke poignantly about Sophia’s first years as a baby and toddler, her years growing up, their hopes for her future, and their never-ending love for her.

11 Sophia participated in several other quinceañera traditions, such as the candle lighting ceremony in which she presented a candle to fifteen people, including her parents, siblings, relatives, and friends, to honor them and express how important they were to her.

12 The last ceremony of Sophia’s fiesta de quince años was the presentation of the quinceañera doll. As was the custom in her family, Sophia received her ultima muñeca from her father. It was a beautiful porcelain doll and it even wore a dress that closely matched Sophia’s dress. As Sophia’s father presented the doll to Sophia, he said, “This doll represents your transition into adulthood. With this last doll, you will leave behind toys and being a child, and in turn, you will take on new roles and new interests, become independent, and assume responsibility.” With tears in her eyes, Sophia accepted the doll and hugged her father tightly.

13 Turning to face the crowd, Sophia announced, “I know you all are dying to eat some of that disgusting delicious food we’ve been smelling, but there’s one last thing I want to say. Alejandra, will you please come over here?” With her head down, Alejandra
walked slowly over and stood by Sophia. Gently lifting Alejandra’s chin up, Sophia said, “Chica, do you know that you are the most important person in my life—well, besides Mom and Dad, of course—and that I love you so much that words can’t even express how much. I’m growing up, but my love for you will never change.” Then, Sophia and Alejandra hugged, and all the resentment Alejandra had been harboring during the fiesta melted away.

“How silly,” laughed Alejandra. “I was jealous of all the attention you were getting, Sophia, and now, all eyes are on me.”

**Question 1:** Read this sentence from paragraph 2.

*It is perfect, thought Sophia as she glanced around the backyard—everyone seemed to be having a good time chatting amongst themselves, that is, everyone except Alejandra, her fourteen-year-old sister who was sulking at a table alone.*

This sentence helps the reader know that the word *sullenly* in paragraph 4 means —

A. in a hostile or vicious way  
B. gloomily or resentfully  
C. in a tired or weary way  
D. fervently or earnestly  

**TEKS:** 9.2(B)

**Question 2:** Read these sentences from paragraphs 3 and 5.

“Hey, *hermanita*, why the sad face? What’s wrong?” Sophia called to her sister as she walked over. “Why aren’t you hanging out with your friends? They’ve been asking about you.” (paragraph 3) Leaning over, Sophia whispered in her sister’s ear, “Well, I hope you will feel like joining us soon. The dancing is about to begin, and I don’t think anybody will want to dance with you with that expression on your face.” (paragraph 5)

In these sentences, the author depicts Sophia as —

A. inattentive  
B. judgmental  
C. perceptive  
D. overbearing  

**TEKS:** 9.6(B)

**Question 3:** Read this story a student wrote about a fishing experience and answer the question that follows.

1 I can still remember the first time I went fishing with my uncle.  
2 After we’d sat in the boat for an eternity, I felt a tug on my line.  
3 My uncle helped me reel it in, and I held up a scaly, dripping walleye on my line.  
4 My uncle said I could decide what to do with it.  
5 I could tell that the fish
wanted to be free, so I decided to let it go. I felt good when the fish swam away. Which sentence should the student substitute for the sixth sentence to best convey a clear, vivid picture of the experience?

A. As the fish quickly swam away, I felt like I had done something really good to help it.
B. It felt especially good to watch the fish go back into its home in the beautiful lake and be free again.
C. Contentment washed over me as we watched its silvery body disappear into the dark depths of the lake.
D. The fish happily swam away from the boat back into the lake, and I was happy that it was free to live its life.

**TEKS**: 9.10(A)

**Question 4**: The setting contributes to the story’s meaning by showing that —

A. Sophia and Alejandra’s parents are stingy with their money
B. the Rosales family prefers simple settings over fancy settings
C. the Rosales family cares more about family than making a big impression
D. Sophia and Alejandra’s parents think a ballroom is a waste of money

**TEKS**: 9.6(D)

**Question 5**: Read this quotation from paragraph 8.

She despised herself for being so petty, but she and her father had a special song, too, and she couldn’t get over her feelings of sadness knowing that tonight she wouldn’t get to share it with him. The tone of this quotation can be described as —

A. baffled
B. disgusted
C. offended
D. petulant

**TEKS**: 9.8(F)

**Question 5**: Which excerpt from the story contains language that conveys a sentimental tone?

A. But first, the flat shoes she was wearing needed to be replaced with a pair of heels, signifying her entrance into society as an adult woman.
B. Each parent spoke poignantly about Sophia’s first years as a baby and toddler, her years growing up, their hopes for her future, and their never-ending love for her.
C. As Sophia’s father presented the doll to Sophia, he said, “This doll represents your transition into adulthood. With this last doll, you will leave behind toys and being a child, and in turn, you will take on new roles and new interests, become independent, and assume responsibility.”
D. Then, Sophia and Alejandra hugged, and all the resentment Alejandra had been harboring during the fiesta melted away.

**TEKS**: 9.8(F)
Question 6: How is Alejandra different from Sophia?
   A. Alejandra is serious while Sophia is vain.
   B. Alejandra is unrefined while Sophia is gracious.
   C. Alejandra is irresponsible while Sophia is dependable.
   D. Alejandra is self-centered while Sophia is thoughtful.

   TEKS: 9.6(B)

Question 7: Which excerpt contains an example of an oxymoron?
   A. “Hey, hermanita, why the sad face? What’s wrong?” Sophia called to her sister as she walked over.
   B. Alejandra reluctantly joined her escort, performing the choreographed steps from memory but not from her heart.
   C. Turning to face the crowd, Sophia announced, “I know you all are dying to eat some of that disgustingly delicious food we’ve been smelling, but there’s one last thing I want to say.”
   D. “How silly,” laughed Alejandra. “I was jealous of all the attention you were getting, Sophia, and now, all eyes are on me.”

   TEKS: 9.8(E)

Question 8: In paragraph 13, the word harboring means —
   A. having
   B. protecting
   C. cherishing
   D. welcoming

   TEKS: 9.2(B)

Question 9: Read this dialogue from paragraph 14.
   “How silly,” laughed Alejandra. “I was jealous of all the attention you were getting, Sophia, and now, all eyes are on me.”

   How is irony demonstrated in this dialogue?
   A. It highlights Alejandra’s flawed character traits.
   B. It shows that what had upset Alejandra earlier is now what is happening to her.
   C. It brings closure to the problem that Sophia was getting too much attention.
   D. It shows that Alejandra can make a bad situation better.

   TEKS: 9.8(E)
Question 10: What major theme is explored in the story?

A. Sometimes people can be insensitive to the needs of others.
B. One should always put the needs of others above their own needs.
C. One should always consider their own needs first before others.
D. Sometimes it is important to put the needs of others above your own.

TEKS: 9.6(A)

Writing Prompt

READ THE INFORMATION BELOW.

The Beatles, a British rock band from the 1960s, had a hit song about lonely people searching for a sense of belonging. Today, psychologists agree that having a sense of belonging is a fundamental human need. People fill this need in many ways. They may belong to a family, a circle of friends, or a place of worship. They may also feel a sense of belonging to a team, club, or other group.

Think carefully about how the human need to belong has impacted your own life in positive and/or negative ways.

Write a narrative describing a personal experience you had that was related to your need to belong to something.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your central idea
- choose your words carefully
- organize and develop your ideas effectively
- edit your writing for grammar, mechanics, and spelling

I noticed my own need to belong when I found myself at a new school where I knew no one. It was a super uncomfortable and lonely feeling to be on my own, without my group of friends. To find a sense of belonging, I had to make myself even more uncomfortable by joining my school’s basketball team, but it was worth it because being part of a team helped me to feel at home in my new school.

Four years ago, my family moved to Austin from Houston and I started in a brand new school in the middle of the school year. On my first day, as I sat in a classroom filled with strange faces and listened to the sound of my new teacher’s voice, I panicked. I didn’t belong! Things got worse at recess where kids clustered in groups, laughed together, and chased each other. Then, at lunch, I felt like everyone was staring at me as I sat all alone eating my peanut-butter sandwich. I kept my eyes down and pretended I didn’t care but I felt so miserable that I could barely choke down my lunch.

“Join the basketball team!” my Dad said when I told him how I felt.
“You love basketball and you’re so good at it,” my Mom added.

My parents were trying to be helpful but I refused their advise. Sure, I used to love basketball but that was when I played with kids I had known my whole life. The humiliation of being the new kid at school was bad enough. I didn’t want to be the new kid on the team too.

Finally after two lonely months at school I signed up for the team. Immediately, the coach’s firm handshake reassured me. “We’re so happy to have you here, Lizzie,” she said.

Before practice, the Coach introduced me to each team-member individually. After practice, one of my teammates—a tall bubbly girl with red pigtails named Hannah—invited me to her house. We have been best friends ever since.

Today, I am happy to say that I belong. Making the effort to join the basketball team was one of the hardest thing I ever did but my discomfort was not long lasting. After I joined the team, my feelings of loneliness were quickly gone.

EXPLANATION: Score Point 4

In this accomplished personal narrative, the writer begins by stating a central idea: “To find a sense of belonging, I had to make myself even more uncomfortable by joining my school’s basketball team, but it was worth it because being part of a team helped me to feel at home in my new school.” She then goes on to tell her story, organizing it chronologically. The writer’s skilled use of transitional phrases makes the narrative flow smoothly and successfully orients the reader in both time and place. The narrative is engaging due to the writer’s use of vivid details, for example: “kids clustered in groups, laughed together, and chased each other,” and “I sat all alone eating my peanut-butter sandwich.” Her selective use of dialogue (Mom, Dad, and the coach) keeps the narrative fresh and engaging. The conclusion expands on the original main idea and provides a strong sense of closure for the narrative.

TEKS: 9.10(B)
TEST PREPARATION AND PRACTICE

At every grade-level, teachers have the opportunity to prepare students for standardized testing by teaching Test Preparation Skill Lessons, and by assessing student’s preparedness for state testing through the Test Preparation Assessments. With these tools, students and teachers have multiple opportunities to ensure mastery of skills, and to practice application of those skills in a testing environment.

These tests are aligned with Texas testing blueprints in terms of assessed standards, item presentation, passage presentation, number of assessment items, and focus of the written composition.

The digital version of the assessment can be assigned from the Assess tab in your StudySync account. The paper-based version of the assessment can be printed from the same location. See below for an overview of the Test Preparation Skill Lessons and Assessments for Grade 9.

The Grade 9 Test Preparation and Practice Book, which contains a print version of the Test Preparation Skill Lessons and Test Preparation Assessments, is available in this StudySync Sampler Box.

Test Preparation Skills Lessons

- Arguments and Claims
- Identify Audience and Purpose
- Author’s Purpose and Message
- Author’s Purpose and Text Structure
- Character, Setting, Plot
- Context Clues
- Diction and Syntax
- Editing
- Elements of Informational Text
- Evidence and Counterarguments
- Foreign Words and Phrases
- Language, Style, and Audience
- Literary Devices
- Make Complex Inferences
- Make Connections - Compare and Contrast
- Print and Graphic Features
- Revising
- Rhetoric
- Text Structure and Organizational Design
- Theme

Test Preparation Assessments

- State Test Preparation - Grade 9 - Form 1
- State Test Preparation - Grade 9 - Form 2
- State Test Preparation - Grade 9 - Form 3