

**OKLAHOMA SCHOOL TESTING PROGRAM
OKLAHOMA MODIFIED ALTERNATE
ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

Test and Item Specifications

Reading
Grade 8



2011–2012 Edition

Oklahoma State Department of Education
Oklahoma City, Oklahoma

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OKLAHOMA MODIFIED ALTERNATE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM

TEST AND ITEM SPECIFICATIONS

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Purpose

The purpose of the Grade 8 Reading Test is to measure Oklahoma students' level of proficiency. On this test, students are required to respond to a variety of items linked to the eighth-grade reading content standards identified in the *Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS)*. All Reading test forms will assess the identified standards and objectives listed below. The following standards and objectives are intended to summarize the knowledge as identified in *PASS*.

<i>PASS</i> Content Standards and Objectives
Vocabulary <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Words in Context (1.1) • Word Origins (1.2) • Idioms and Comparisons (1.3)
Comprehension/Critical Literacy <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literal Understanding (3.1) • Inferences and Interpretation (3.2) • Summary and Generalization (3.3) • Analysis and Evaluation (3.4)
Literature <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Literary Genres (4.1) • Literary Elements (4.2) • Figurative Language and Sound Devices (4.3)
Research and Information <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessing Information (5.1) • Interpreting Information (5.2)



General Considerations

Each eighth-grade-level passage will contain identifiable key concepts with relevant supporting details. Each passage will be appropriate for determining the purpose for reading, analyzing character traits, compare/contrast, problem/solution, interpretation, application, analysis, synthesis, drawing conclusions, making an inference, be conducive for vocabulary analogies, and relevant reading tasks as defined by the *Priority Academic Student Skills (PASS)* for eighth-grade reading.

The passages will be well written, have a variety of sentence types and lengths, may include dialogue, reflect Oklahoma's cultural diversity, and possess sufficient structural integrity to allow them to be self-contained. Reading passages will reflect a balance of genres from narrative and expository texts.

The test form will contain at least one set of paired passages that will allow students to make comparisons and connections between texts.

All passages will be reviewed to eliminate cultural or other forms of bias that might disadvantage any group(s) of students. The passages will avoid subject matter that might prompt emotional distress. Permission to use selections from copyrighted material will be obtained as necessary.

The majority of the selections used for the reading test will include authentic literature; a minor portion may be selected from commissioned works. The reading test form will include two to three authentic literary selections of 500 to 900 words, and two to three expository selections, one of which will be functional. Each passage will generate six to ten multiple-choice questions from various *PASS* standards, including vocabulary meaning, summarizing text, and identifying literary elements.

The test questions will include items reflecting the eighth-grade objectives such as: evaluation levels of critical thinking/problem solving and summative comprehension tasks.

It is necessary to create test items that are reliable, fair, and targeted to the *PASS* standards listed on the following pages. There are some general considerations and procedures for effective item development. These considerations include, but are not limited to, the following:

1. Each test form contains items assessing all standards and objectives listed in the Test Blueprint for eighth-grade reading.
2. Test items attempt to focus on content that is authentic and that eighth-grade students can relate to and understand.
3. Test items are worded precisely and clearly.
4. All items are reviewed to eliminate language that shows bias or is otherwise likely to disadvantage a particular group of students. That is, items do not display unfair representations of gender, race, ethnicity, disability, culture, or religion; nor do items contain elements that are offensive to any such groups.
5. All answer choices in multiple-choice items (the key and all distractors) are similar in length and in syntax. Students should not be able to rule out a wrong answer or identify a correct response solely because it looks or sounds different from the other answer choices. Distractors

are created so that students reason their way to the correct answer rather than simply identify incorrect responses because of a distractor's obviously inappropriate nature. Distractors should always be plausible (but incorrect) in the context of the item stem. Correct responses are approximately equally distributed among A's, B's, and C's.

Universal Test Design Considerations

Universal design, as applied to assessments, is a concept that allows the widest possible range of students to participate in assessments and may even reduce the need for accommodations and alternative assessments by expanding access to the tests themselves. In the Oklahoma Modified Alternate Assessment Program, modifications have been made to some items that simplify and clarify instructions, and provide maximum readability, comprehensibility, and legibility. This includes such things as reduction of language load in content areas other than Reading, increased font size, fewer items per page, and boxed items to assist visual focus.

Universal Modifications

- Minimize the number of questions on the page (limit to 2 or 3).
- Use a larger font size.
- Provide only three answer options instead of four.
- Highlight the main points in the question or passage by underlining and using boldface.
- Allow for the same accommodations as in the standard assessment.
- Avoid questions that require students to select the better/best answer.
- Be consistent in wording of directions across grades and subjects.
- Minimize the use of pronouns and prepositional phrases.
- Avoid the use of multiple-meaning words and words that can function as more than part of speech.
- Enlarge art when possible.
- Simplify art when possible, (i.e. removing unnecessary labels, use less gray scale, use thicker lines when outlining, etc.).
- Box informational text in an item.
- Bullet information when possible (e.g. bullet detailed information or processes).
- Reduce reading load of stem, stimuli, and answer options when possible.
- Use Verdana font.
- Revise answer options to address parallelism and minimize outliers.

Reading Passages and Items

- Display passages in a one-column format.
- Break passages into smaller portions.
- Place the questions that pertain to the smaller portion underneath or on a page facing that section.
- Add a word bank as needed for grades 3–5.
- Use footnotes for grades 6–8 and English II.
- Put items in order of appearance in the passage.
- Delete extraneous information including irrelevant material and unnecessary words in items or graphics (e.g. remove “most likely”).
- Delete one part of a compound answer choice when possible.
- Change passive voice to active voice when appropriate.
- Eliminate answer choices that give students the option of making no changes to the item.
- Direct student attention to graphics.
- Simplify visual complexity of graphics.

Below is an example of an OCCT item followed by a modified version of the item. The modified version of the item was created using the modification list on pages 5 and 6.

Non-Modified OCCT PASS Sample Test Item:

Which word best describes how Bobby felt at the end of the passage?

- A** ashamed
- B** envious
- C** content
- D** calm

Modified OMAAP PASS Sample Test Item:

At the end of the story, Bobby feels

- (A)** ashamed.
- (B)** content.
- (C)** jealous.

Multiple-Choice Item Rules

- All items clearly indicate what is expected in a response and help students focus on their response.
- Each multiple-choice item has a stem (question, statement, or incomplete statement and/or graphic component) and three answer (or completion) options, only one of which is correct.
- Multiple-choice item stems present a complete problem so that students know what to do before looking at the answer choices; students should not need to read all answer choices before knowing what is expected.

In summary, reading-test items ask questions that address issues of importance in a text, and the questions are consequential, concise, focused, and fair.

All items developed using these specifications are reviewed by Oklahoma educators and approved by the Oklahoma State department of Education. The distribution of newly developed or modified items is based on content and process alignment, difficulty, cognitive ability, percentage of art/graphics, and grade level appropriateness as determined by an annual Item Development Plan approved by the Oklahoma State Department of Education.

Test Structure, Format, and Scoring

The test will consist of 40 operational multiple-choice items, which will be written at a eighth-grade reading level and will include three responses from which to choose: the correct answer and two distractors.

Each multiple-choice item is scored as correct or incorrect. The student's raw score is converted to a scaled score using the number-correct method.

Content Assessment	Total Items	Total Operational Items*	Total Field Test Items
Reading Grade 8	51	43	8

*Operational items may be dropped from total item counts due to student performance data.

Test Alignment with PASS

Criteria for Aligning the Test with the <i>PASS</i> Standards and Objectives	
1. Categorical Concurrence	The test is constructed so that there are at least six items measuring each <i>PASS</i> standard, with the content category consistent with the related standard. The number of items, six, is based on estimating the number of items that could produce a reasonably reliable estimate of a student's mastery of the content measured.
2. Depth of Knowledge Consistency	The test is constructed using items from a variety of Depth of Knowledge levels that are consistent with the processes students need in order to demonstrate proficiency for each <i>PASS</i> objective.
3. Range of Knowledge Correspondence	The test is constructed so that at least 50% of the objectives for a <i>PASS</i> standard are assessed.
4. Balance of Representation	The test is constructed according to the Test Blueprint, which reflects the degree of representation given on the test to each <i>PASS</i> standard and objective in terms of the percent of total test items measuring each standard and the number of test items measuring each objective.
5. Source of Challenge	Each test item is constructed in such a way that the major cognitive demand comes directly from the targeted <i>PASS</i> skill or concept being assessed, not from specialized knowledge or cultural background that the test-taker may bring to the testing situation.

**Oklahoma School Testing Program
Oklahoma Modified Alternate Assessment Program
Grade 8 Reading
Test Blueprint
School Year 2010–2011**

The Test Blueprint reflects the degree to which each *PASS* standard and objective is represented on the test. The overall distribution of operational items in a test form is intended to look as follows:

<i>PASS</i> Standards & Objectives	Ideal Number of Items	Ideal ¹ Percentage of Items
Vocabulary (1.0)	6–7	14%–16%
Words in Context (1.1)	2–3	
Word Origins (1.2)	0–1	
Idioms and Comparisons (1.3)	2–3	
Comprehension/Critical Literacy (3.0)	16–18	37%–42%
Literal Understanding (3.1)	3–4	
Inferences and Interpretation (3.2)	4–5	
Summary and Generalization (3.3)	4–5	
Analysis and Evaluation (3.4)	4–5	
Literature (4.0)	11–13	26%–30%
Literary Genres (4.1)	3–4	
Literary Elements (4.2)	5–6	
Figurative Language/Sound Devices (4.3)	3–4	
Research and Information (5.0)	6–7	14%–16%
Accessing Information (5.1)	3–4	
Interpreting Information (5.2)	3–4	
Total Test	40–43²	100%

¹ Percentages are approximations and may result in a sum other than 100 due to rounding.

² The actual number of items scored for a student may be slightly lower pending a review of item statistics.

- Student performance on the multiple-choice test will be reported at the standard level. A minimum of 6 items is required to report a standard. While the actual numbers of items on the test may not match the blueprint exactly, each future test will move toward closer alignment with the ideal blueprint.

Overview of Item Specifications

For each *PASS* standard, item specifications are organized under the following headings:

- *PASS* Standard and *PASS* Objective
- Item Specifications
 - a. Emphasis
 - b. Stimulus Attributes
 - c. Format
 - d. Content Limits
 - e. Distractor Domain
 - f. Sample Items

The headings “*PASS* Standard” and “*PASS* Objective” state the standard and objective being measured as found in the reading section of the *PASS* document.

The heading “Item Specifications” highlights important points about the item’s emphasis, stimulus attributes, format, content limits, and distractor domain. Although it is sometimes possible to score single items for more than one concept, all items in these tests are written to address a single content standard as the primary concept.

All items will assess objectives using only depth-of-knowledge levels 1, 2, or 3. Descriptions of the depth-of-knowledge levels for Reading Grade 8 are as follows:

Reading/Literature

Level 1 requires students to recall, observe, question, or represent facts or simple skills or abilities. Requires only surface understanding of text, often verbatim recall.

Examples:

- Support ideas by reference to details in text.
- Use dictionary to find meaning.
- Identify figurative language in passage.
- Identify correct spelling or meaning of words.

Level 2 requires processing beyond recall and observation. Requires both comprehension and subsequent processing of text. Involves ordering and classifying text, as well as identifying patterns, relationships, and main points.

Examples:

- Use context to identify unfamiliar words.
- Predict logical outcome.
- Identify and summarize main points.
- Apply knowledge of conventions of Standard American English.
- Compose accurate summaries.
- Make general inferences and predictions for a portion of a text.

Level 3 requires students to go beyond the text. Requires students to explain, generalize, and connect ideas. Involves inferencing, prediction, elaboration, and summary. Requires students to support positions using prior knowledge and to manipulate themes across passages.

Examples:

- Determine effect of author’s purpose on text elements.
- Summarize information from multiple sources.
- Critically analyze literature.
- Compose focused, organized, coherent, purposeful prose.
- Make explanatory and descriptive inferences and interpretations across an entire passage.

Depth of Knowledge Assessed by Test Items

The test will approximately reflect the following depth of knowledge distribution of items:

Depth of Knowledge	Percentage of Items
Level 1—Recall	20–25%
Level 2—Basic Reasoning	60–65%
Level 3—Complex and Extended Reasoning	10–15%

This is the ideal depth of knowledge distribution of items. There may be slight differences in the actual distribution of the upcoming testing session.

Note about the Item Specifications and Sample Items:

With the exception of content limits, the item specifications give suggestions of what might be included and do not give an exhaustive list of what can be included.

These sample test items are not intended to be definitive in nature or construction, as the stimuli and test items may differ from one test form to another, as may their presentation.

PRIORITY ACADEMIC STUDENT SKILLS (PASS)**Grade 8****Reading**

Asterisks (*) have been used to identify standards and objectives that are not assessed by the Oklahoma School Testing Program (OSTP) in the original *PASS* curriculum.

Reading/Literature: The student will apply a wide range of strategies to comprehend, interpret, evaluate, appreciate, and respond to a wide variety of texts.

Standard 1: Vocabulary—The student will expand vocabulary through word study, literature, and class discussion.

Use a knowledge of word parts and word relationships, as well as context clues (the meaning of the text around a word), to determine the meaning of specialized vocabulary and to understand the precise meaning of grade-level-appropriate words.

1. Words in Context— Verify the meaning of a word in its context, even when its meaning is not directly stated, through the use of definitions, restatement, example, comparison, or contrast.
2. Word Origins— Recognize and analyze the influence of historical events on English word meaning and vocabulary expansion.

Example: Identify how the early influences of Spanish explorers in North America impacted American English vocabulary by adding words such as *lasso*, *tortilla*, and *patio* and investigate why these particular words were adopted from the Spanish.

3. Idioms and Comparisons—Analyze idioms and comparisons, such as analogies, metaphors, and similes, to infer the literal and figurative meanings of phrases.
 - a. Idioms: expressions that cannot be understood just by knowing the meanings of the words in the expression, such as *Rush hour traffic moves at a snail's pace* or *as plain as day*.
 - b. Analogies: comparisons of the similar aspects of two different things.
 - c. Metaphors: implies comparisons, such as *The cup of hot tea was the best medicine for my cold*.
 - d. Similes: comparisons that use *like* or *as*, such as *The ice was smooth as glass before the skaters entered the rink*.

***Standard 2: Fluency—The student will identify words rapidly so that attention is directed at the meaning of the text.**

1. Read regularly in independent-level materials (texts in which no more than 1 in 20 words is difficult for the reader) fluently and accurately, and with appropriate time, change in voice, and expression.
2. Read regularly in instructional-level materials that are challenging but manageable (text in which no more than approximately 1 in 10 words is difficult for the reader; a “typical” eighth grader reads 150 words per minute).
3. Increase reading speed and comprehension through daily, independent reading.
4. Use punctuation as a cue for pausing and characterization while reading.

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

Read and understand grade-level-appropriate material. Describe and connect the essential ideas, arguments, and perspectives of the text by using a knowledge of text structure, organization, and purpose. At Grade 8, in addition to regular classroom reading, read a variety of grade-level-appropriate narrative (story) and expository (informational and technical) texts, including classic and contemporary literature, poetry, magazines, newspapers, reference materials, and online information.

1. Literal Understanding
 - a. Apply prereading strategies when reading both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level.
 - Determine the purpose for reading such as to be informed, entertained, persuaded, or to understand.
 - Preview the text and use prior knowledge and experience to make connections to text.
 - b. Show understanding by asking questions and supporting answers with literal information from text.
2. Inferences and Interpretation
 - a. Make inferences and draw conclusions supported by text evidence and student experiences.
 - b. Connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues across texts.
Example: Use graphic organizer to show comparisons.

3. Summary and Generalization
 - a. Determine the main (or major) idea and how those ideas are supported with specific details.
 - b. Paraphrase and summarize text to recall, inform, or organize ideas.
4. Analysis and Evaluation
 - a. Distinguish between stated fact, reasoned judgment, and opinion in various texts.
 - b. Use text's structure or progression of ideas, such as cause and effect or chronology (sequential order).
 - c. Compare/contrast to determine similarities and differences in treatment, scope, or organization.
 - d. Problem/solution—offer observations, make connections, react, speculate, interpret, and raise questions in response to text.
 - e. Analyze character traits, conflicts, motivations, points of view, and changes that occur within the story.
 - f. Analyze the structural elements of the plot, subplot, and climax, and explain the way in which conflicts are or are not resolved.
5. *Monitoring and Correction Strategies
 - a. Monitor the understanding of text and use correcting strategies, such as rereading a portion, using reference aids, or searching for content when needed.
 - b. Make, confirm, and revise predictions when reading.
 - c. Adjust reading rate and determine appropriate strategies to match the purpose, difficulty, and characteristics of the text.

Standard 4: Literature—The student will read, construct meaning, and respond to a wide variety of literary forms.

Read and respond to grade-level-appropriate historically or culturally significant works of literature that reflect and enhance a study of history and social science. Clarify the ideas and connect them to other literary works. Participate productively in self-directed work teams to create observable products.

1. Literary Genres—The student will demonstrate a knowledge of and an appreciation for various forms of literature.
 - a. Analyze the characteristics of genres, including short story, novel, drama, poetry, nonfiction, historical fiction, and informational texts.

- b. Identify and distinguish characteristics of subgenres, including autobiography, biography, fable, folk tale, mystery, myth, limericks, tall tales, and plays.
2. Literary Elements—Demonstrate knowledge of literary elements and techniques and how they affect the development of a literary work.
 - a. Analyze and explain elements of fiction, including plot, conflict, character, mood, setting, theme, point of view, and author’s purpose.
 - b. Identify and explain various points of view and how they affect a story’s interpretation.
3. Figurative Language and Sound Devices—Identify figurative language and sound devices and analyze how they affect the development of a literary work.
 - a. Identify and explain the use of figurative language in literary works to convey mood, images, and meaning, including metaphor, personification, and simile.
 - b. Identify and explain the use of sound devices in literary works to convey mood, images, and meaning, including alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhyme.
 - c. Identify and interpret literary devices such as flashback, foreshadowing, symbolism, and imagery.
4. *Literary Works—The student will read and respond to historically and culturally significant works of literature.
 - a. Analyze and evaluate works of literature and the historical context in which they were written.
 - b. Analyze and determine distinctive and common characteristics of literature from various cultures to broaden cultural awareness.
 - c. Compare similar characters, settings, and themes from varied literary traditions that cross cultures.

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

1. Accessing Information—Select the best source for a given purpose, locate information relevant to research questioning.
 - a. Access information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including electronic text, experts, and prime resources, to locate information relevant to research questioning.
 - b. Use text organizers, including headings, graphic features (e.g., boldface, italic type), and tables of contents, to locate and organize information.
 - c. Use organizational strategies to learn and recall important ideas from texts, such as preview, questions, reread, and record, as an aid to comprehend increasingly difficult content material.

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- d. Note instances of persuasion, propaganda, and faulty reasoning in text.
2. Interpreting Information—Analyze and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
 - a. Record, organize, and display relevant information from multiple sources in systematic ways (e.g., outlines, timelines, graphic organizers, or note cards).
 - b. Analyze and paraphrase or summarize information from a variety of sources into a research paper.
 - c. Identify and credit the sources used to gain information (e.g., bibliographies, footnotes, appendices).
 - d. Identify and apply test-taking strategies by answering different types and levels of questions, such as open-ended, literal, and interpretive as well as test-like questions, such as multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer.
 - e. Interpret and use graphic sources of information such as maps, graphs, timelines, or tables to address research questions.

*Reading Passages***Summer Time**

- 1 Bobby stared out the window as the bus bounced down the bumpy dirt road. Summer was here, and that meant a two-month stay in the country to live with his grandfather, helping him on his farm. Bobby had dreaded this trip all year. Most of his friends were looking forward to going to the pool and playing baseball, but all Bobby had to look forward to was picking squash and sweating in the corn fields. What could he possibly enjoy about a summer in the country?
- 2 He woke up on his first morning in the old creaky house to the sight of a daddy-longleg spider scuttling across his ceiling. He groaned and got up to walk to the back porch. The morning sun peeked over the horizon. A gentle mist was a blanket rising from a little creek and covering the nearby fields. As the sun rose Bobby could hear the crickets chirping and an orchestra of sounds from other insects as they began their rising and falling hum.
- 3 He stood for a while, looking at the rabbits running through the garden, and heard his grandfather limp up behind him and say, "Right pretty sight, isn't it, son?" Bobby was surprised to hear his grandfather noticing the beauty of the morning. He was a gruff man and lived alone out on the farm. His grandfather took a deep breath, smiled, and said, "Well, we'd better get to it—it's gonna be a scorcher today."

Part 2

- 4 They walked out to the garden with their baskets. The damp earth made black crescents under Bobby's fingernails as he worked, the damp scent filling his nose. His grandfather was happily whistling a song out of tune, and again Bobby paused to wonder at his grandfather's enthusiasm for something considered a chore by most people.

Continue reading "Summer Time"

5 Later that afternoon, after a lunch of sandwiches, his grandfather turned to him and asked, “You ever been fishing?” When Bobby shook his head, his grandfather walked off to the shed that stood hunched in the shadow of the big oak tree and pulled out two rods and reels and a tackle box. He motioned at Bobby to follow him, and they walked out into the field, down a hill, and to the stream Bobby had noticed earlier.

6 His grandfather sat down on a boulder and showed Bobby how to bait his line. They sat in companionable silence, with Bobby feeling as though he had met his grandfather for the first time. His grandfather obviously loved his life in the country. Bobby knew his friends were sitting next to the pool, laughing and joking, with music blaring and the clear blue chlorinated water shining below them—while his own feet dangled in a creek bed full of brown water with red clay silt¹. He expected to feel jealous, but somehow, with the warm sunlight on his back and the chirping of the birds around him, he didn’t. In fact, he was beginning to think this might be a better place to be after all. And he smiled into the water, relaxing into his new experience of summer.

¹*silt*—fine particles

In a Class of Their Own

- 1 Animals are classified into two main categories: vertebrates and invertebrates. Within each category, animals are further classified by their various characteristics. Animal groups that are vertebrates are fish, amphibians, reptiles, birds, mammals, marsupials, primates, rodents, cetaceans (whales and dolphins), and others, such as seals. While these animal groups classify a majority of vertebrates, they do not classify all vertebrates. There are two vertebrates native to Australia that scientists initially had trouble classifying. These two are the duckbilled platypus and the echidna (i-'kid-nə).

Their Features and Habits

- 2 Platypuses and echidnas are similar in several ways. They both have traits that are purely distinctive of mammals. They are covered with hair, have milk glands to nurse their young, and have large brains. They also have traits that are purely distinctive of reptiles. They lay eggs, and their body temperatures change based upon their surroundings. While platypuses and echidnas share these traits, they differ from one another in other important ways.
- 3 Platypuses live near streams, rivers, and lakes where their unique bodies benefit them. Platypuses have a bill, or beak, that enables them to find crayfish, shrimp, tadpoles, and fish to eat. They also have webbed feet with claws that allow them to swim while in the water and to walk and burrow holes while on land. In addition, platypuses have large, flat tails similar to a beaver's that allow the platypus to store food like camels do in their humps.
- 4 Echidnas live on land near rocks, hollow logs, or the roots of trees where their unique bodies benefit them. Echidnas have elongated snouts that enable them to break up logs and insect mounds in order to find termites to eat. They also have short, stocky limbs with clawed feet, allowing them to dig holes and search for food. In addition, echidnas have spines covering their bodies that protect them from predators, as do porcupines and hedgehogs.

Continue reading "In a Class of Their Own"

Part 2

Caring for Their Young

- 5 The female platypus digs a hole to nest her young. Inside the hole, she places vegetation to secure her eggs. Before she lays her eggs, she will close any access to the nesting hole to protect the eggs from predators and to provide a stable temperature for the eggs to hatch. She will lay one to three eggs and incubate them by curling her warm body around them. Once the eggs hatch, the young platypuses are nursed by their mother's milk for approximately three to four months. After this time, the young platypuses are ready to explore the water and land of the outside world.
- 6 The female echidna develops a simple pouch to carry her young. This pouch is where she will lay a single egg. Within ten days this single egg will hatch; however, the young echidna will stay in its mother's pouch for another three months. After this time, the young echidna will have developed its spikes and left its mother's pouch, but it will still nurse from its mother's milk for several more months. During this nursing period, the young echidna will begin to eat the termites and ants that will soon become its sole diet.

Part 3

Their Discovery and Classification

- 7 Platypus specimens were first brought to England from Australia in the late 1700s to early 1800s. Scientists were unsure how to classify this new animal, and many believed the animal to be a fraud. It took almost a century before scientists were able to agree that the platypus was indeed a mammal. The feature that settled the debate over classifying the platypus is the fact that platypus young are nursed by their mother's milk, a trait unique to mammals. Because echidna young are also nursed by their mother's milk, they too are classified as mammals.
- 8 However, platypuses and echidnas are a special order of mammal known as "monotremes." Monotremes (*'mä-nə-trēms*) differ from other mammals in that monotremes lay eggs like birds or reptiles do. They are also found only in Australia and New Guinea. Because of their uniqueness, platypuses and echidnas are in a class all by themselves.

Oklahoma's Smoky Mountains

- 1 Cool mountain breezes sift through the pine trees, filling the air with their natural perfume. Somewhere a bird sings in a tree, a squirrel chatters, and off in the distance, you can hear the soothing sound of rushing water. It has been called one of the most beautiful spots in the country. The Smokies. Tennessee? No, Oklahoma!
- 2 Chances are, most people have heard of the Great Smoky Mountains National Park in Tennessee where the mountains stretch for hundreds of miles in any direction. Thousands of people travel to the Smokies each year, staying in lodges, cabins, or camping in tents. By contrast, few people outside of Oklahoma have heard of the "Little Smoky Mountains" in Beaver Bend State Park.
- 3 Located in the southeastern portion of the state, the beauty of the Little Smoky Mountains even surprises long time residents of the region. Although the mountains cover several thousand acres, they are far smaller than those in Tennessee. However, it has an important impact on the area, largely due to the Mountain Fork River. This river snakes through the park in such a twisting way that it almost curves back into itself at one point. When rivers circle around, they create what is known as an "oxbow," a kind of u-shaped circle of water adjoining the riverbank.
- 4 The river provides a superb home for the trout that thrive in cool, mountain rivers. Most fishermen use "flies" to catch the trout. Flies are artificial "bait" that resemble the real food favored by trout. Often, flies are made with small bird feathers and they can be quite colorful. For those who have never fly fished, the park offers a fly-fishing clinic that will teach beginners everything they need to know.
- 5 Perhaps a person prefers lake fishing for bass? The park offers this, too, in a reservoir named "Broken Bow Lake." The reservoir covers several thousand acres, and has many superb spots for fishing from the bank or from a boat. However, the bass of Broken Bow Lake are not easily caught and are skilled at stealing the bait off a hook.

Continue reading "Oklahoma's Smoky Mountains"

Many fishermen have planned to catch their supper only to find that they have served hors d'oeuvre¹ for the bass, instead. Although the fish may have escaped, the view of the lake, shimmering like multi-colored diamonds at sunset, makes the trip worthwhile.

Part 2

- 6 Built directly on the shore of the lake is Broken Bow Lodge, a rustic hunting lodge with numerous rooms. The lodge was constructed of native cedar and built to resemble the traditional cabin style structure so typical of mountain lodges. So well does it blend in with the natural surroundings, the lodge seems to have grown into its position on the bank. If something even more isolated and rustic is preferred, dozens of cabins dot the park. For those who choose to sleep in tents, the park also features numerous camping sites.
- 7 The Little Smokies also feature a wide variety of recreational activities other than fishing. A trip to the park would not be complete without a hike on some of the parks trails, ranging from easy to rugged. The Little Smokies have mountain bike trails, jogging trails, and backpacking trails. Of course, for those with less of a desire for roughing it, the park offers swimming areas, volleyball fields, and even tennis courts.
- 8 The real attraction is the natural landscape that surrounds visitors to the Little Smoky Mountains. If you listen, you might hear a trout leaping from the water to catch a mayfly, or you might see a bald eagle soaring high above the lake, watching with its keen eyes. The shimmering water, the fresh mountain air, and the sunlight filtering through the tall trees create a paradise. The Little Smoky Mountains might have a larger namesake in Tennessee, but Oklahoma's gem is absolutely unique.

¹*Hors d' oeuvres* (or *dürv*)—an appetizer served before a meal

A New Me

- 1 I sit in the chair, like an oversized doll,
And the hairstylist waves her hand.
"It'll be so cute!
You'll look so fashionable!"
- 5 And her scissors gleam like headlights at night.
I open my mouth
To protest her plans,
To say, "No way!"
But the words don't come out.
- 10 Instead a weak smile cautiously appears,
The type that doesn't show your teeth,
And my shoulders drop under the weight of
Her determined sales pitch while I nod like a puppet.
- 15 The scissors furiously flash and fly, and I see my hair
-My waist length brown hair-
My hair
Floating to the ground
Like feathers spinning to earth.
A carpet of my identity lying under my feet
- 20 To be swept away.
- When she is done, she whisks away the cape and
Spins me in my seat to see a stranger
Looking back at me.
A girl with bigger eyes than I used to have.
- 25 And I have to agree, it's not so bad.
In fact, it looks quite nice.
So I embrace the stranger,
My reflection,
Liking the new me

Continue reading "Camping in the Cold"

- 30 No longer will my hair hang in long ponytails with ribbons,
Or curl down my back on the first day of school.
Now it will flip up at my shoulders in the newest style
With daring fringes that make it swing and bounce.
No more overalls and sneakers.
- 35 My new hair cries out for a change
And my mother's lips quiver
As our eyes meet in the mirror.
I cannot go back now.
It's done.
- 40 I welcome the new me and say thank you politely,
And as I walk out, I practice giving my hair a flip with my hand.

It floats back lightly and I begin to smile, the real kind that shows
my teeth,
thinking, "Yes. It will do."

Traveling Around with Meagan

*After Almost 50 Years, Plant Lover
Polly Hill Creates Garden Masterpiece*

- 1 **Martha’s Vineyard, Massachusetts**—Planted on a small section of land near the coast of Massachusetts, over 2,000 different kinds of trees and plants can be found. It is a place of towering trees with dark green bushes that dance in the Massachusetts sunlight. Green, red, pink, and yellow blossoms blow freely in the wind. Polly Hill created this brilliant sea of color.
- 2 Many people plant small gardens in their yard, but Polly Hill decided to cultivate half an island. For almost 50 years she worked to create a 20-acre paradise from what was once a family sheep farm. Her garden of trees, shrubs, and flowers is called an arboretum and is located on an island named Martha’s Vineyard.
- 3 Hill was approximately 50 years old when she took over the land from her parents. She had previously worked with plants in large gardens. This time, however, she decided to plant things to make her own corner of the island more beautiful. One of her first decisions was to use seeds instead of cuttings or small baby plants. She decided to grow everything from seeds.

Part 2

- 4 She began planting the seeds in the rich soil and kept accurate records on how well each seed grew. While some seeds did well, others never grew into plants. Hill kept written notes about each seed. “The importance of the seed you select is obvious. The plant is only as good as the seed. As time passed many of the seeds grew into beautiful plants, and Hill continued to record the history of each one. Many of Hill’s friends learned about her plan and sent her seeds from faraway places. She became one of the first horticulturalists (gardeners) to use a computer to document her notes about the various plants.

Continue reading “Traveling Around with Meagan”

- 5 Of course it was difficult to grow everything from seeds. Sometimes it took years and years for a seed to start sprouting. However, Hill found that the trees and plants that did grow from her seeds were very strong and did not have problems adjusting to the weather on the island.
- 6 Hill came up with her own ideas about where to plant her trees and flowers. Part of the original home, barn, hand-dug well, and some stonewalls still existed. To get the look she wanted, these old structures were incorporated into the garden's pattern. "I didn't know a lot about design, but I had these crumbling walls and aged buildings and that became the design. All you need to do is clean off the walls and decide what to do next." Hill's seeds have since become large trees and flowering bushes. The arboretum has pathways edged with plants and small bushes, while vines and trees grow to form shady tunnels.
- 7 In 1998, the garden officially became the Polly Hill Arboretum and is famous worldwide. "The basic fact is that I wanted to do it for love of the land," says Hill at the wheel of the golf cart she uses to get around the huge garden. "There was nothing of interest growing here. It was my land to cope with, and I had to do well by it." A helpful staff and numerous volunteers help Hill maintain the garden, although she still supervises growing new plants from seeds and draws inspiration from the beauty around her.
- 8 Visitors are allowed daily to enjoy the results of Hill's labor. After all, a gardener makes a garden not only for himself but also to give beauty to others. "I hope other people find it beautiful and restful and it does something for their souls the way it's done something for my soul," states Hill.

PASS Standard:

Standard 1: Vocabulary—The student will expand vocabulary through word study, literature, and class discussion.

PASS Objective:

1. Words in Context—Verify the meaning of a word in its context, even when its meaning is not directly stated, through the use of definitions, restatement, example, comparison, or contrast.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify and clarify word meaning of specialized terms and words with multiple meanings.
- Use context, syntax, and structural analysis.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selection containing the vocabulary words (in the form of a word, phrase, or expression) must have sufficient clues for the reader to determine their meanings when using a variety of strategies.
- Poetry, narrative, expository, and functional texts are used.

Format:

- Items require the student to identify the meaning of specific technical and specialized terms using word analysis, context clues, definition, restatement, example, or comparison/contrast.
- To provide context, items may direct the student to the appropriate part of the text.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are plausible yet inaccurate meanings of the tested word or phrase.
- Distractors may be based on the use of a word or words that sound or look like the vocabulary word, but do not have the same meaning.

Modified PASS 1.1 Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: B

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 3

However, platypuses and echidnas are a special order of mammal known as “monotremes.”

In this sentence from paragraph 8, what does the word order mean?

- (A)** rule
- (B)** group
- (C)** purchase

PASS Standard:

Standard 1: Vocabulary—The student will expand vocabulary through word study, literature, and class discussion.

PASS Objective:

2. Word Origins—Recognize and analyze the influence of historical events on English word meaning and vocabulary expansion.

Example: Identify how the early influences of Spanish explorers in North America impacted American English vocabulary by adding words such as *lasso*, *tortilla*, and *patio* and investigate why these particular words were adopted from the Spanish.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify word origins.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include words or phrases which contain multiple affixes and/or root words.
- Test items may include a simulated dictionary entry using introductory etymologies.

Content Limits:

- The selection containing the vocabulary (in the form of a word, phrase, or expression) must have sufficient context clues for the reader to determine its meaning.
- Narrative and expository texts are used.

Format:

- Items require students to recognize familiar or frequently used foreign words or word parts to assess word origins.
- Items require the student to identify the origin or meaning of the word from context clues and constructed meaning.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are plausible but inaccurate meanings of the tested word or phrase.
- Distractors may be based on the use of the word or words that sound or look like the vocabulary word but do not have the same meaning.

Modified PASS 1.2 Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: B

From “Oklahoma’s Smoky Mountains,” Part 1

Read these sentences.

However, the bass of Broken Bow Lake are not easily caught and are skilled at stealing the bait off a hook. Many fishermen have planned to catch their supper only to find that they have served hors d’oeuvre¹ for the bass, instead.

Which word helps explain that hors d’oeuvre refers to food?

- (A)** caught
- (B)** skilled
- (C)** served

PASS Standard:

Standard 1: Vocabulary—The student will expand vocabulary through word study, literature, and class discussion.

PASS Objective:

3. Idioms and Comparisons—Identify idioms and comparisons, such as analogies, metaphors, and similes, to infer the literal and figurative meanings of phrases.
 - a. Idioms: expressions that cannot be understood just by knowing the meanings of the words in the expression, such as *Rush hour traffic moves at a snail's pace* or *as plain as day*.
 - b. Analogies: comparisons of the similar aspects of two different things.
 - c. Metaphors: implies comparisons, such as *The cup of hot tea was the best medicine for my cold*.
 - d. Similes: comparisons that use *like* or *as*, such as *The ice was as smooth as glass before the skaters entered the rink*.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Analyze meaning of idioms.
- Identify and interpret figurative language.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Narrative and expository texts containing figurative language are used.

Format:

- Items require the student to show an understanding of the author's technique by selecting the meaning that best conveys the intended meaning of the target word or phrase based on the context.
- Items may direct the student to the appropriate part of the text.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are plausible but illogical or literal interpretations based on the context.

Modified PASS 1.3a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “Summer Time,” Part 1

His grandfather took a deep breath, smiled, and said, “Well, we’d better get to it—it’s gonna be a scorcher today.”

The idiom a scorcher means

- (A)** a very bad day.
- (B)** a very fast day.
- (C)** a very hot day.

Modified PASS 1.3c Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “Summer Time,” Part 1

As the sun rose Bobby could hear the crickets chirping and an orchestra of sounds from other insects as they began their rising and falling hum.

The metaphor orchestra of sounds refers to

- (A)** the mist covering the fields.
- (B)** the sun rising over the horizon.
- (C)** the noises made by the insects.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

1. Literal Understanding
 - a. Apply prereading strategies when reading both fiction and nonfiction that is appropriately designed for grade level.
 - Determine the purpose for reading such as to be informed, entertained, persuaded, or to understand.
 - Preview the material and use prior knowledge and experience to make connections to text.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Determine the purpose for reading appropriately modified text.
- Use prereading strategies to make connections to text.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- The selection must allow for the reader to determine the purpose of the reading passage.
- The stimulus must permit the reader to use pre-reading strategies to select the best response; the stimulus should contain a graphic similar to a book cover or book jacket, a short teaser or “book blurb,” and a title.
- Narrative, expository, and functional texts are used.

Format:

- Items require students to determine the purpose of the selection in order to understand the overall meaning of the passage.
- Items require students to use graphic stimuli as well as brief summaries or commentaries to predict the likely content of the text.
- Students may be required to recognize what specific knowledge or information is needed in order to understand the text.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are plausible yet unrelated to the true purpose of the selection.
- Distractors are illogical conclusions that could be drawn from the preview material.

Modified PASS 3.1a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 3**The purpose for reading this passage is**

- Ⓐ to be shown how common echidnas and platypuses are.
- Ⓑ to be persuaded to protect echidnas and platypuses.
- Ⓒ to be informed about echidnas and platypuses.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

1. Literal Understanding
 - b. Show understanding by asking questions and supporting answers with literal information from text.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Comprehend appropriately modified fiction and nonfiction texts.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Narrative and expository texts are used.
- Use verbatim or wording close to that found in the reading selections.

Format:

- Literal understanding of phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are a misunderstanding of phrases, sentences, and/or wording found in the selection.

Modified PASS 3.1b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 1

Correct Answer: A

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 3

In paragraph 7, why did scientists classify platypuses as mammals?

- A** They produce milk.
- B** They have large brains.
- C** They are covered with hair.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

2. Inferences and Interpretation
 - a. Make inferences and draw conclusions supported by text evidence and student experiences.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Make inferences and draw conclusions.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Poetry, narrative, and expository texts are used.
- Selections must contain sufficient clues of a significant idea that is not directly stated that allows for an inference or a conclusion to be made.

Format:

- Items require the student to use key concepts, make logical connections between these concepts, and arrive at a plausible conclusion based on that evidence.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are illogical or unsubstantiated inferences or conclusions or explicit information from the text that does not answer the question.

Modified PASS 3.2a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Summer Time,” Part 2

In paragraph 5, it is reasonable to conclude that Bobby will

- Ⓐ enjoy his time in the country.
- Ⓑ spend next summer at home.
- Ⓒ feel jealous of his friends at the pool.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

2. Inferences and Interpretation
 - b. Connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues across texts.
Example: Use graphic organizer to show comparisons.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Connect, compare, and contrast ideas, themes, and issues within a text.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- The selection must contain sufficient information to identify and analyze connections (e.g., cause and effect) within a text; two selections from a single text may be paired to give opportunities to make connections within a text (e.g., comparison/contrast).
- Poetry, narrative, informational, and functional texts are used.

Format:

- Items require the students to make connections within a text by finding key concepts to support ideas or issues.
- Items require the students to compare/contrast ideas.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) contain information that is not supported by the passage.

Modified PASS 3.2b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 1

How are echidnas and platypuses alike?

- Ⓐ Both lay eggs.
- Ⓑ Both eat termites.
- Ⓒ Both live near water.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

3. Summary and Generalization
 - a. Determine the main (or major) idea and how that idea is supported with specific details.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Recognize the main idea using details from appropriately modified texts.
- Recognize relevant details that support the main idea.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selections must contain a main idea/key concept (stated or implied).
- Selections must contain a main idea or key concept that is supported by details.
- Poetry, narrative, or expository texts are used.

Format:

- Items require students to determine the main idea using information from the selection that is clearly supported by the significant details included in the selection.
- Given a selection and a statement of the key concept(s) or main idea, the student is asked to select the relevant detail(s) that support or define the idea, issue, or problem.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) paraphrase information from the text that does not represent key concepts, or paraphrase implied information that does not represent key concepts, or paraphrase minor details from the text.
- Distractors for items in which the correct answer is a relevant supporting detail include details that are irrelevant to the key concept or main idea and/or information that is related to the key concept but not included in the text.
- Distractors for items in which the correct answer requires the identification of irrelevant information include details that are relevant to the given key concept.

Modified PASS 3.3a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: B

From “A New Me”

What is the main idea of this poem?

- Ⓐ A girl chooses to cut her long hair.
- Ⓑ A girl gets a haircut that changes how she sees herself.
- Ⓒ A girl disagrees with her mother about getting a new haircut.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

3. Summary and Generalization
 - b. Paraphrase and summarize text to recall, inform, or organize ideas.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Paraphrase information from modified text.
- Summarize information from modified text.
- Organize information from modified text.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Poetry, narrative, or informational texts are used.
- Selections must be substantive enough to allow for the type of summary called for in the item.

Format:

- Given an incomplete outline, web, cluster, concept map, or graphic organizer, the student selects relevant key concept details to complete the summary.
- Items require the student to identify the word or sentence, facts, ideas, or characteristics that are the most or least important to a summary of the selection.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) include extraneous or irrelevant information from the text, irrelevant information implicit in the text, or focus on minor details.

Modified PASS 3.3b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Summer Time,” Part 2

Which statement would be important to include in a summary of the passage?

- Ⓐ Bobby and his grandfather enjoyed fishing together.
- Ⓑ Bobby woke up to see a big spider on his ceiling.
- Ⓒ Bobby’s grandfather whistled a song out of tune.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

4. Analysis and Evaluation
 - a. Distinguish between stated fact, reasoned judgment, and opinion in various texts.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Determine fact, reasoned judgment, and opinion in modified texts.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selections must contain sufficient clues for the reader to distinguish between fact, reasoned judgment, or opinion.
- Poetry, narrative, expository, or functional texts are used.

Format:

- Items clearly state the requirement that students use evidence from the text to determine if a statement is a fact, reasoned judgment, or an opinion.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are plausible yet illogical or unsubstantiated facts, reasoned judgments, or opinions that are not supported by the text nor answer the question.

Modified PASS 3.4a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Oklahoma’s Smoky Mountains,” Part 2

Which statement is a fact?

- Ⓐ Many people visit the state park every year.
- Ⓑ This park is one of the loveliest in the country.
- Ⓒ The lodge, built of cedar, is the best place to stay.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

4. Analysis and Evaluation
 - b. Use text’s structure or progression of ideas, such as cause and effect or chronology (sequential order).

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Understand relationships (e.g., cause/effect, sequential order).
- Use text structure to determine cause/effect and sequential order of events in a modified text.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Narrative and expository texts are used.
- Selections must contain sufficient information for the reader to interpret and analyze relationships among elements such as characters, settings, or events.

Format:

- Items that assess sequential order require the student to use author’s cues for sequencing events and actions.
- Items assess key concepts, both stated and implied.
- Items that assess cause/effect require the student to recognize what precipitated a given event or action.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are logical causes or sequences based on literal information or information implied in the text.

Modified PASS 3.4b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Traveling Around with Meagan,” Part 1

Why did Hill begin planting her garden?

- Ⓐ to do something useful with her land
- Ⓑ to use all the seeds people had sent to her
- Ⓒ to grow flowers so that she could sell them

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

4. Analysis and Evaluation
 - c. Compare/contrast to determine similarities and differences in treatment, scope, or organization.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Understand compare/contrast relationships presented in a modified text.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Poetry, narrative, and expository texts are used.
- Selections must contain sufficient information for the reader to interpret and analyze relationships among elements, such as characters, settings, or events.

Format:

- Items assess key concepts, both stated and implied.
- Items that assess compare/contrast require the student to recognize similarities and differences in point of view on a given topic or compare and contrast actions or motives.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are logical comparisons based on literal information or information implied in the text.

Modified PASS 3.4c Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “Traveling Around with Meagan,” Part 1

In paragraph 2, why is Hill’s garden compared to other gardens?

- Ⓐ to show the different colors represented in their gardens
- Ⓑ to show the time and effort many people put into their gardens
- Ⓒ to show the size and amount of work put into both types of gardens

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

4. Analysis and Evaluation
 - d. Problem/solution—offer observations, make connections, react, speculate, interpret, and raise questions in response to text.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Understand problem/solution relationships presented in a modified text.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Narrative and expository texts are used.
- Selections must contain sufficient information for the reader to interpret and analyze relationships among elements, such as characters, settings, or events.

Format:

- Items assess key concepts, both stated and implied.
- Items that assess problem/solution require the student to identify either a problem or an actual or plausible solution explicitly stated in the text or that can logically be inferred from the text.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are logical problems or solutions, based on literal information or information implied in the text.

Modified PASS 3.4d Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 3

Echidnas and platypuses are difficult to classify because

- Ⓐ they are comfortable both on land and in the water.
- Ⓑ they have snouts that are shaped like the bill of a bird.
- Ⓒ they have characteristics of birds, reptiles, and mammals.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

4. Analysis and Evaluation.
 - e. Analyze character traits, conflicts, motivations, points of view, and changes that occur within the story.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify and analyze characters (traits, conflicts, motivations, points of view, and changes occurring within a story) in a modified text.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selections are narratives that include characters with traits expressed by dialogue, action, description, thoughts, words, and speech patterns.
- Selections are on grade-level and content appropriate for eighth-grade students.

Format:

- Items focus on the thoughts and actions of characters that develop the character throughout the selection.
- Items focus on the author's descriptions of the character.
- Items focus on other characters' thoughts, words, and actions.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are logical problems or solutions based on literal information or information implied in the text.
- Distractors are plausible yet illogical or unsubstantiated facts, reasoned judgments, or opinions that are neither supported by the text nor answer the question.

Modified PASS 3.4e Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: B

From “Summer Time,” Part 2

At the end of the story, Bobby feels

- Ⓐ ashamed.
- Ⓑ satisfied.
- Ⓒ jealous.

PASS Standard:

Standard 3: Comprehension—The student will interact with the words and concepts in the text to construct an appropriate meaning.

PASS Objective:

4. Analysis and Evaluation
 - f. Analyze the structural elements of the plot, subplot, and climax, and explain the way in which conflicts are or are not resolved.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Plot
- Climax

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selections are on grade-level and content appropriate for eighth-grade students.
- Selections must have the literary elements that students are expected to identify.
- Narrative texts that contain clear literary elements (plot, climax, and conflicts) are used.

Format:

- Items focus on use of story structures and literary elements.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) may be illogical or unsubstantiated examples that may give explicit information from the text that does not answer the question or may show confusion of the plot.

Modified PASS 3.4f Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “A New Me”

The conflict of having a new hairstyle is resolved when the girl

- Ⓐ begins to like her new look.
- Ⓑ lets her mother convince her that it looks fine.
- Ⓒ wants to show her friends her new appearance.

PASS Standard:

Standard 4: Literature—The student will read, construct meaning, and respond to a wide variety of literary forms.

PASS Objective:

1. Literary Genres—The student will demonstrate a knowledge of and an appreciation for various forms of literature.
 - a. Analyze the characteristics of genres, including short story, novel, drama, lyric poetry, nonfiction, historical fiction, and informational texts.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify and examine the characteristics of various literary forms (short story, novel, drama, lyric poetry, nonfiction, historical fiction, and informational texts).

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selections must contain sufficient information for the reader to identify and analyze the characteristics of a variety of genres.
- Selections are short story, novel, drama, lyric poetry, nonfiction, historical fiction, or informational texts.

Format:

- Items require students to analyze the characteristics of certain literary forms as portrayed in the selection presented.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) present illogical or unsubstantiated information related to the text or forms of literature other than that of the selection being used.

Modified PASS 4.1a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “Summer Time,” Part 2

“Summer Time” is a short story and not an essay because it has a

- A** conclusion.
- B** main idea.
- C** plot.

PASS Standard:

Standard 4: Literature—The student will read, construct meaning, and respond to a wide variety of literary forms.

PASS Objective:

1. Literary Genres—The student will demonstrate a knowledge of and an appreciation for various forms of literature.
 - b. Identify and distinguish characteristics of subgenres, including autobiography, biography, fable, folk tale, mystery, myth, limericks, tall tales, and plays.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify and determine characteristics of various subgenres (e.g., autobiography, biography, fable, folk tale, mystery, myth, limericks, tall tales, and plays).

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selections must contain sufficient information for the reader to identify and analyze the characteristics of a variety of subgenres.
- Selections are subgenres, including autobiography, biography, fable, folk tale, mystery, myth, limericks, tall tales, and plays.

Format:

- Items require students to analyze the characteristics of certain literary forms as portrayed in the selection presented.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) present illogical or unsubstantiated information related to the text or forms of literature other than that of the selection being used.

Modified PASS 4.1b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 3

This passage is nonfiction because it

- Ⓐ uses facts to explain a topic.
- Ⓑ makes comparisons to animals.
- Ⓒ does not include various settings.

PASS Standard:

Standard 4: Literature—The student will read, construct meaning, and respond to a wide variety of literary forms.

PASS Objective:

2. Literary Elements—Demonstrate knowledge of literary elements and techniques and how they affect the development of a literary work.
 - a. Analyze and explain elements of fiction including plot, conflict, character, mood, setting, theme, point of view, and author’s purpose.
 - b. Identify and explain various points of view and how they affect a story’s interpretation.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Plot
- Resolution
- Conflict
- Character
- Mood
- Setting
- Theme
- Point of view
- Author’s purpose

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Selections are at grade-level and content appropriate for eighth-grade students.
- Selections must have the literary elements that students are expected to identify.
- Narrative texts that contain clear literary elements (goal, plot, conflict, character, mood, setting, theme, point of view, and author’s purpose) are used.

Format:

- Items require the student to show an understanding of the author’s technique and focus on use of story structures and literary elements (point of view).

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) may be illogical or unsubstantiated examples that give explicit information from the text that does not answer the question or may show confusion of the plot.

Modified PASS 4.2a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Traveling Around with Meagan,” Part 2

From this passage the reader can learn that

- Ⓐ hard work is rewarding.
- Ⓑ honesty is important.
- Ⓒ happiness is worthwhile.

PASS Standard:

Standard 4: Literature—The student will read, construct meaning, and respond to a wide variety of literary forms.

PASS Objective:

3. Figurative Language and Sound Devices—Identify figurative language and sound devices and analyze how they affect the development of a literary work.
 - a. Identify and explain the use of figurative language in literary works to convey mood, images, and meaning, including metaphor, personification, and simile.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify figurative language (including metaphor, personification, and simile).
- Explain figurative language (e.g., mood, images, and meaning).

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Poetry, narrative, and expository texts containing figurative language are used.

Format:

- Items require the student to show an understanding of the author’s technique by selecting the word or phrase that best conveys the meaning of the target word or phrase based on the context identifying the technique that the author is using.
- Items may direct the student to the appropriate part of the text.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are plausible but illogical or literal interpretations based on the context.

Modified PASS 4.3a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “A New Me”

Which phrase is an example of personification?

- Ⓐ When she is done, she whisks away the cape
- Ⓑ A girl with bigger eyes than I used to have
- Ⓒ My new hair cries out for a change

PASS Standard:

Standard 4: Literature—The student will read, construct meaning, and respond to a wide variety of literary forms.

PASS Objective:

3. Figurative Language and Sound Devices—Identify figurative language and sound devices and analyze how they affect the development of a literary work.
 - b. Identify and explain the use of sound devices in literary works to convey mood, images, and meaning, including alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhyme.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Interpret sound devices in poetry and other literary works (e.g., alliteration, onomatopoeia, and rhyme).

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Poems and literary works must contain sufficient sound and literary devices for the reader to identify.

Format:

- Items require the student to make connections between literal and figurative terminology.
- Items require the student to show an understanding of the author’s technique by selecting the word or phrase that best conveys the meaning of the target word or phrase based on the context identifying the technique that the author is using.
- Items may direct the student to the appropriate part of the text.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) may be illogical or unsubstantiated terminology that is not connected to the selection.
- Distractors may give explicit information from the text that does not answer the question.
- Distractors may show confusion of figurative language terminology or use literal meanings.

Modified PASS 4.3b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 1

Correct Answer: C

From “A New Me”

“The scissors furiously flash and fly” is an example of

- A** rhyme.
- B** a simile.
- C** alliteration.

PASS Standard:

Standard 4: Literature—The student will read, construct meaning, and respond to a wide variety of literary forms.

PASS Objective:

3. Figurative Language and Sound Devices – Identify figurative language and sound devices and analyze how they affect the development of a literary work.
 - c. Identify and interpret literary devices, such as flashback, foreshadowing, symbolism, and imagery.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify literary devices in text (e.g., flashback, foreshadowing, symbolism, and imagery).

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Literary works must contain sufficient literary devices for the reader to identify.

Format:

- Items require the student to make connections between literal and figurative terminology.
- Items require the student to show an understanding of the author’s technique by selecting the word or phrase that best conveys the meaning of the target word or phrase based on the context identifying the technique that the author is using.
- Items may direct the student to the appropriate part of the text.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) may be illogical or unsubstantiated terminology that is not connected to the selection.
- Distractors may give explicit information from the text that does not answer the question.
- Distractors may show confusion of figurative language terminology or use literal meanings.

Modified PASS 4.3c Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From "A New Me"

Read these lines.**Instead a weak smile cautiously appears,
The type that doesn't show your teeth,****A smile that "doesn't show your teeth" means the smile is**

- A** fake.
- B** guilty.
- C** secretive.

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

1. Accessing Information—Select the best source for a given purpose, locate information relevant to research questioning.
 - a. Access information from a variety of primary and secondary sources, including electronic text, experts, and prime resources, to locate information relevant to research questioning.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Use informational resources.
- Understand the purpose of primary and secondary sources.
- Locate information using informational resources.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Expository and functional texts are used.

Format:

- Given an informational source, the student selects the type of information found in that source.
- Items require the student to identify a plausible source of the reading selection or an appropriate source of additional information on the respective topic.
- Sources used are familiar to eighth-grade students.
- Correct answers are appropriate for the type of information required (e.g., trade books, almanacs, atlases, encyclopedias, dictionaries, thesauruses, magazines, and newspapers).
- Correct answers also may be such sources as films or places to visit (e.g., historic sites and museums).

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are sources familiar to eighth-grade students but not appropriate for the information sought.

Modified PASS 5.1a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: C

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 2

Which resource would help a student find specific information about how echidnas raise their young?

- Ⓐ a book, Field Guide to Unique Animals
- Ⓑ a travel guide, Australia’s Famous Animals
- Ⓒ an encyclopedia entry, “Echidnas and Their Ways”

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

1. Accessing Information—Select the best source for a given purpose, locate information relevant to research questioning.
 - b. Use text organizers, including headings, graphic features (e.g., boldface, italic type), and tables of contents, to locate and organize information.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Use text organizers.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include headings, graphic features, table of contents, phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- The selection must be substantive enough to allow for the type of text organizer called for in the item (headings, graphic features, table of contents).
- Narrative and expository texts are used.

Format:

- Items require the student to identify the word or sentence, fact, idea, or characteristic that is most or least important to a text organizer in the selection.
- Items require the student to use a particular adjunct aid or text feature (e.g., headings, questions at end of selection, pictures, captions, illustrations, author’s margin notes, bold-faced print, maps, graphs, etc.).

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) include, but are not limited to, plausible but ineffective text organizers for a particular text.
- Distractors are extraneous or irrelevant information from the text or implied by the text.

Modified PASS 5.1b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 1

Correct Answer: A

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 3

The author draws attention to important points by using

- A** bold headings.
- B** italicized words.
- C** short paragraphs.

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

1. Accessing Information—Select the best source for a given purpose, locate information relevant to research questioning.
 - c. Use organizational strategies to learn and recall important ideas from texts, such as preview, questions, reread, and record, as an aid to comprehend increasingly difficult content material.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Use organizational strategies.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- The selection must be substantive enough to allow for the type of study strategy called for in the item.
- Narrative and expository texts are used.

Format:

- Given an incomplete outline, web, standard, or map, the student selects relevant key concept details to complete the summary.
- Items require the student to identify the word or sentence, fact, idea, or characteristic that is most important in the selection.
- Items require the student to use a organizational strategy to comprehend content material.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) include, but are not limited to, plausible but ineffective text organizers for a particular text.
- Distractors are extraneous or irrelevant information from the text or implied by the text.

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

1. Accessing Information—Select the best source for a given purpose, locate information relevant to research questioning.
 - d. Note instances of persuasion, propaganda, and faulty reasoning in text.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Evaluate author’s presentation of ideas and issues.
- Recognize persuasion, propaganda, and faulty reasoning.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Narrative texts are used.
- Expository and functional texts, such as consumer materials, editorials, magazine and newspaper articles, speeches, speech excerpts, school or college brochures, and advertisements, are used.
- Selections must be substantive enough to allow a student to identify persuasion, propaganda, and faulty reasoning within the text.

Format:

- Items require the student to recognize persuasive language and techniques, fallacies in arguments, and statements of bias.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are illogical interpretations of persuasive language and techniques and faulty analysis of arguments and bias.

Modified PASS 5.1d Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Oklahoma’s Smoky Mountains,” Part 2

The author tries to persuade people to visit the park by

- Ⓐ listing a variety of activities available.
- Ⓑ discussing where hiking trails begin.
- Ⓒ comparing the various camping facilities.

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

2. Interpreting Information—Analyze and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
 - a. Record, organize, and display relevant information from multiple sources in systematic ways (e.g., outlines, timelines, graphic organizers, or note cards).

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Use note cards, charts, outlines, and graphs.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- The selection must be substantive enough to allow for the type of study strategy called for in the item (note cards, charts, outlines, graphs).
- Narrative and expository texts are used.

Format:

- Given an incomplete outline, web, standard, or map, the student selects relevant key concept details to complete the summary.
- Items require the student to identify the word or sentence, fact, idea, or characteristic that is most or least important to a summary of the selection.
- Items require the student to use a particular adjunct aid or text feature (e.g., headings, questions at end of selection, pictures, captions, illustrations, author’s margin notes, bold-faced print, maps, graphs, etc.).

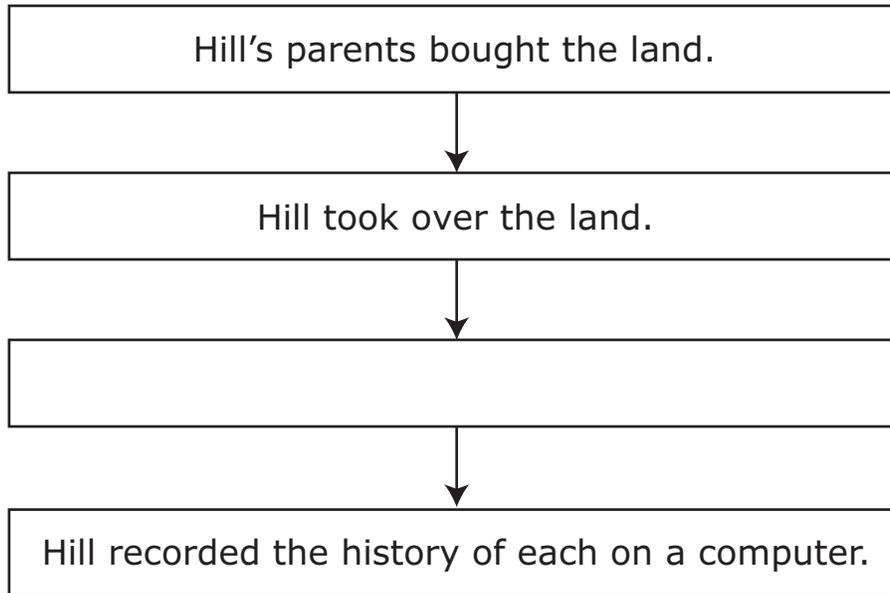
Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) include, but are not limited to, plausible but ineffective strategies for a particular text.
- Distractors are extraneous or irrelevant information from the text or implied by the text.

Modified PASS 5.2a Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Traveling Around with Meagan,” Part 2**Read the flow chart.****Which event belongs in the empty box?**

- Ⓐ Hill planted many seeds.
- Ⓑ Hill's garden attracted many visitors.
- Ⓒ Hill's garden was full of many colors.

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

2. Interpreting Information—Analyze and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
 - b. Analyze and paraphrase or summarize information from a variety of sources into a research paper.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Make connections between sources.
- Analyze and paraphrase information.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- The selections must contain sufficient information for the student to make connections between the texts.
- Expository texts are used.

Format:

- Items require the student to analyze, synthesize, evaluate, and paraphrase information from multiple sources.
- Items require students to make a connection between texts.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are plausible but ineffective comparisons between texts and have incorrect information related to the sources in question.

Modified PASS 5.2b Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “Oklahoma’s Smoky Mountains,” Part 2

Which idea should be included in a summary about the Smoky Mountains?

- A** Fish often steal bait off the hooks.
- B** Flies are artificial bait made of feathers.
- C** A lake and a river provide superb fishing.

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

2. Interpreting Information—Analyze and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
 - c. Identify and credit the sources used to gain information (e.g., bibliographies, footnotes, appendices).

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Identify reference sources.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include phrases, sentences, and/or wording from the selection.

Content Limits:

- The selection must be substantive enough to allow the student to be able to identify and credit reference sources.

Format:

- Items require students to choose the appropriate text feature that identifies the reference source of the text.

Distractor Domain:

- For citation items, incorrect answer choices (distractors) are examples of sources related to the topic with plausible but incorrectly cited information that students relate to the text.
- Distractors are examples of sources unrelated to the task yet containing plausible information generally related to the text.

Modified PASS 5.2c Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: A

From “In a Class of Their Own,” Part 1

What would add useful information to this passage?

- Ⓐ a scientist’s footnotes
- Ⓑ a zookeeper’s daily schedule
- Ⓒ an animal trainer’s bibliography

PASS Standard:

Standard 5: Research and Information—The student will conduct research and organize information.

PASS Objective:

2. Interpreting Information—Analyze and evaluate information from a variety of sources.
 - d. Identify and apply test-taking strategies by answering different types and levels of questions, such as open-ended, literal, and interpretive as well as test-like questions, such as multiple-choice, true/false, and short answer.
 - e. Interpret and use graphic sources of information, such as maps, graphs, timelines, or tables, to address research questions.

Item Specifications:**Emphasis:**

- Use informational resources.
- Identify and apply test-taking strategies.
- Use graphic sources to address research questions.

Stimulus Attributes:

- Test items may include maps, graphs, time lines, and/or tables from the selection.

Content Limits:

- Expository and functional texts are used.

Format:

- Given an informational source, the student selects the type of information found in that source.
- Sources used are familiar to eighth-grade students.
- Correct answers are appropriate for the type of information required (e.g., maps, graphs, timelines, and/or tables).

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices (distractors) are sources familiar to eighth-grade students but not appropriate for the information sought.

Modified PASS 5.2d Sample Test Item:

Depth of Knowledge: 2

Correct Answer: B

From “Oklahoma’s Smoky Mountains,” Part 2

Read the chart.**Oklahoma Hiking Trails Review
Little Smoky Mountains**

Trail	Description	Length
Horsethief Spring Trail	Follows the route used by horse thieves in the 1800s; beautiful scenery; crosses several streams	11.2 miles
Heavener Runestone Trails	Trails leads to a rock with writing believed to have been made by Vikings; two easy trails	2.5 miles
David L. Boren Trail	Excellent backpacking trail from low water dam; many campsites available	26 miles

Using the chart, which trail should a family with young children follow?

- Ⓐ Horsethief Spring Trail
- Ⓑ Heavener Runestone Trails
- Ⓒ David L. Boren Trail