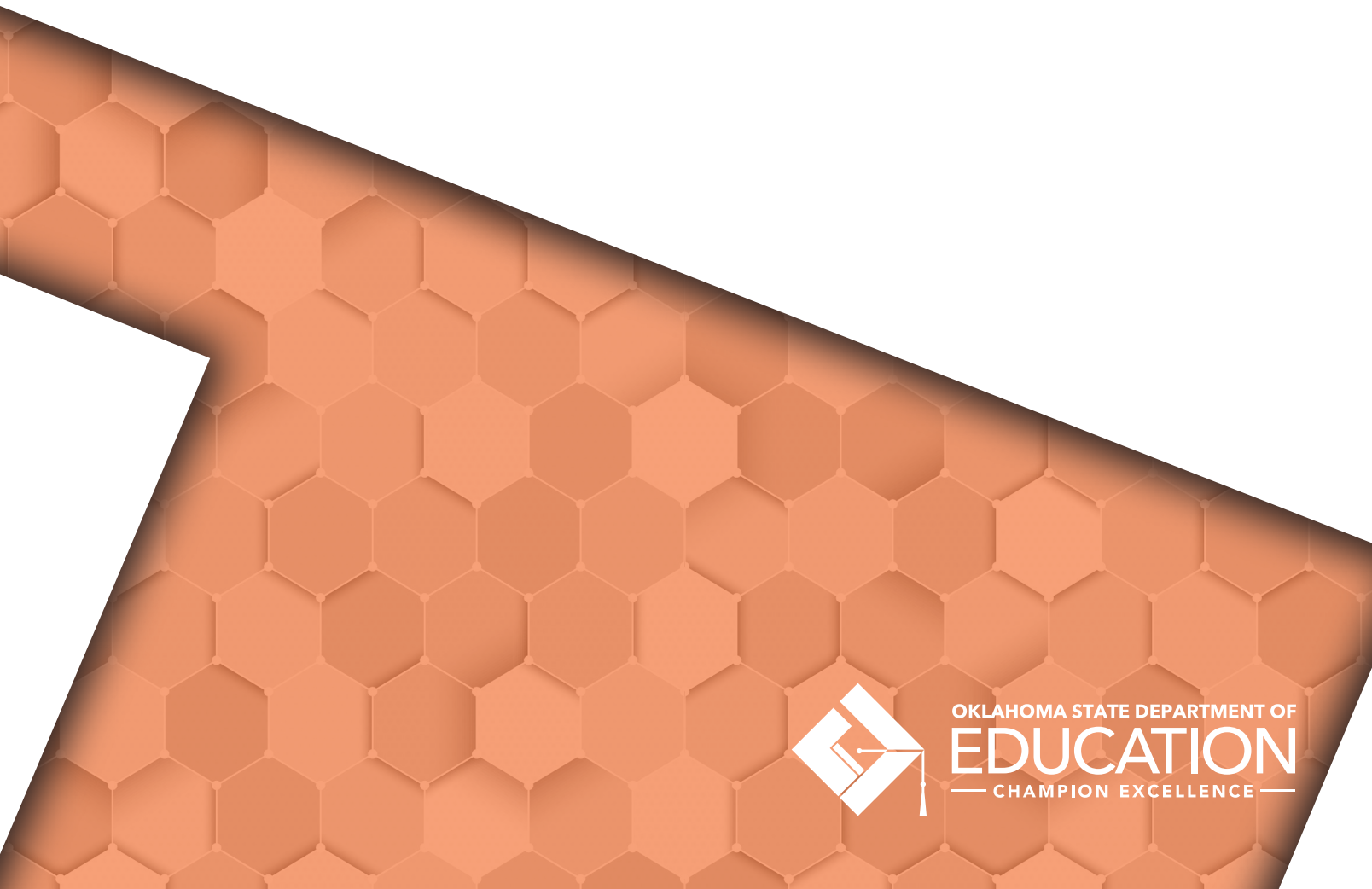
OKLAHOMA SCHOOL TESTING PROGRAM

TEST BLUEPRINT AND ITEM SPECIFICATIONS ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS

2016-2017 GRADE 8



OKLAHOMA STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION
CHAMPION EXCELLENCE

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OKLAHOMA SCHOOL TESTING PROGRAM TEST AND ITEM SPECIFICATIONS

Grade 8 English Language Arts

Purpose

The purpose of the Grade 8 test is to measure Oklahoma students' levels of proficiency over the Oklahoma Academic Standards. Students are required to respond to a variety of items that assess identified content standards outlined in the Grade 8 Test Blueprint.

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Test Structure, Format, and Scoring

The Grade 8 English Language Arts operational test is administered in three sections over the course of two or three sessions. The first section of the test consists of one operational written response. The second and third sections of the test each consist of approximately 25 operational items and 5 field-test items. Sections 2 and 3 are to be administered in one day or consecutive days.

Each multiple-choice item is scored as correct or incorrect. Only operational multiple-choice and one written-response item contribute to the total test score. Thus, for example, if a test contained 51 operational items and 10 field-test items, only those 51 operational items (not the field-test items) would contribute to a student's scaled score.

The student's raw score is converted to a scaled score using the number correct scoring method.

The Grade 8 writing section will be administered online. Students will have an 800 maximum word count for which to enter their written response.

Test Alignment with Oklahoma Academic Standards

Criteria for Aligning the Test with the Oklahoma Academic Standards Content Standards
1. Categorical Concurrence The test is constructed so that there are at least six items measuring each OAS 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. Range-of-Knowledge Correspondence The test is constructed so that each OAS standard has at least one corresponding assessment item.
3. Source of Challenge Each test item is constructed in such a way that the major cognitive demand comes directly from the targeted OAS standard being assessed, not from specialized knowledge or cultural background that the test-taker may bring to the testing situation.

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OKLAHOMA SCHOOL TESTING PROGRAM

TEST BLUEPRINT ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS
2016-2017 GRADE 8

This blueprint describes the content and structure of an assessment and defines the ideal number of test items by standard of the Oklahoma Academic Standards (OAS).

IDEAL PERCENTAGE OF MC ITEMS	IDEAL NUMBER OF ITEMS	STANDARDS
28%	14	**STANDARD 2: READING AND WRITING PROCESS** Students will use a variety of recursive reading and writing processes.
28%	14	**STANDARD 3: CRITICAL READING AND WRITING** Students will apply critical thinking skills to reading and writing.
16%	8	**STANDARD 4: VOCABULARY** Students will expand their working vocabularies to effectively communicate and understand texts.
14%	7	**STANDARD 5: LANGUAGE** Students will apply knowledge of grammar and rhetorical style to reading and writing.
14%	7	**STANDARD 6: RESEARCH** Students will engage in inquiry to acquire, refine, and share knowledge.
88% OF OVERALL SCORE	50 MC ITEMS	
12% OF OVERALL SCORE	1 PROMPT 7 POINTS	**WRITING SECTION** Standard 2: Reading and Writing Process Standard 3: Critical Reading and Writing Standard 4: Vocabulary Standard 5: Language Standard 6: Research Standard 8: Independent Reading and Writing
100%	51 ITEMS 57 POINTS	TOTAL

*Standard 8: Independent Reading and Writing is assessed throughout the test and dually aligned to each standard.
Please note this blueprint does not include items that may be field-tested.
A minimum of 6 items is required to report a standard.

Depth-of-Knowledge Assessed by Test Items

The Grade 8 test will approximately reflect the following "depth-of-knowledge (DOK)" distribution of items:

Depth-of-Knowledge	Percent of Items
Level 1—Recall	5–10%
Level 2—Skill/Concept	60–75%
Level 3—Strategic Thinking	20–30%
Level 4—Extended Thinking*	

DOK Ranges are based on the DOK of the new OAS standards. The standards increase grade-level expectations, increase rigor, and set the expectation for students to be college- and career-ready.

Reading

- **Level 1** requires students to recall, observe, question, or represent facts or simple skills or abilities. It requires only surface understanding of text, often verbatim recall. Level 1 activities include supporting ideas by reference to details in the text; using a dictionary to find meaning; identifying figurative language in a passage; and identifying the correct spelling or meaning of words.
- **Level 2** requires processing beyond recall and observation; requires both comprehension and subsequent processing of text; and involves ordering and classifying text, as well as identifying patterns, relationships, and main points. Level 2 activities include using context to identify unfamiliar words; predicting logical outcomes; identifying and summarizing main points; applying knowledge of conventions of Standard American English; composing accurate summaries; and making 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; and requires students to support positions using prior knowledge and to manipulate themes across passages. Level 3 activities include determining the effect of the author's purpose on text elements; summarizing information from multiple sources; critically analyzing literature; composing focused, organized, coherent, purposeful prose; and making explanatory and descriptive inferences and interpretations across an entire passage.
- **Level 4** may require extended higher order processing; may involve taking information from one text/passage and applying this information to a new task; and may require generating hypotheses and performing complex analyses and connections among texts. Level 4 activities may include analyzing and synthesizing information from multiple sources; examining and explaining alternative perspectives across sources; creating compositions that synthesize, analyze, and evaluate; and describing and illustrating common themes across a variety of texts.

*One extended written response requiring synthesis, analysis, and evaluation

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Writing/Grammar/Usage and Mechanics

- **Level 1** requires students to write and speak using Standard English conventions, including appropriate grammar, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling.
- **Level 2** requires students to be able to connect ideas in writing, construct compound sentences, and use organizational strategies in written work.
- **Level 3** requires that students develop compositions that include multiple paragraphs and may include complex sentence structure and demonstrate some synthesis and analysis.
- **Level 4** requires that students write multi-paragraph compositions that demonstrate synthesis and analysis of complex ideas or themes.

Note: These descriptions are taken from Review Background Information and Instructions, Standards and Assessment Alignment Analysis, CCSSO TILSA Alignment Study, May 21–24, 2001, Version 2.0. For an extended description of each depth-of-knowledge level, see the web site at http://facstaff.wcer.wisc.edu/normw/TILSA/INFO and INSTR Align Anal 513.pdf

Universal 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 Grade 8 tests, modifications have been made to some items to simplify and clarify instructions as well as to provide maximum readability, comprehensibility, and legibility. This includes such things as reducing the language load in content areas other than Language Arts, increasing the font size, displaying fewer items per page, and boxing the items to assist visual focus.

Online Administration

Test questions will be presented one at a time.

The stimulus and question will appear on the screen at the same time.

Answers may be selected by using the mouse to click on the radio button to the left of the answer choice.

Navigation buttons appear at the bottom of the page for each question. For longer items, a scroll bar will appear on the right-hand side of the window to allow scrolling through the answer choices.

Students will be able to use scratch paper for all online assessments. This paper must be taken up and destroyed by the test administrator immediately following the test. The test administrator must not look at what the student has written on the scratch paper.

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Testing Schedules

This section appears in all of the test specification documents and is provided to give the reader a general sense of the overall testing program at this particular grade level.

Each Grade 8 test is meant to be administered in two sessions within one day or consecutive days with the exception of Grade 8 English Language Arts, which will be administered in three sessions over two or three days. Estimated time for scheduling is given in the table below.

Day 1 OR Day 3 Grade 8 English Language Arts Writing Test Time Schedule	
Distributing Grade 8 English Language Arts Test login information and reading directions	Approximately 20 minutes
Administering Section 1 Writing	55 minutes
Total:	Approximately 75 minutes

Day 1 OR Day 1 and Day 2 OR Day 2 OR Day 2 and Day 3 Grade 8 English Language Arts Online Test Time Schedule	
Distributing login information	Approximately 5 minutes
Test instructions/tutorial and reviewing sample items	Approximately 15 minutes
Total:	Approximately 20 minutes
Administering Section 2 of the Grade 8 English Language Arts Online Test	Approximately 40 minutes
Administering Section 3 of the Grade 8 English Language Arts Online Test	Approximately 40 minutes

Multiple-Choice Item Guidelines

- All items must clearly indicate what is expected in a response and direct students how to focus their responses and will be written at a reading level appropriate for a Grade 8 English Language Arts audience.
- Each multiple-choice item will have a stem (question or incomplete statement that is completed by the correct answer choice) and four answer (or completion) options—the correct answer and three distractors. Distractors will be developed based on the types of errors students are most likely to make. Items may contain graphical elements and/or text extracts.
- Each multiple-choice item stem asks a question or poses a clear problem so that students will know what to do before looking at the answer choices. Students should not need to read all answer choices before knowing what is expected.
- All stems will be positively worded—avoiding the use of the word not. If a negative is required, the format will be "All of the following . . . except."

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Stimulus Materials

Stimulus materials are the tables, charts, graphs, passages, and illustrations students must use in order to respond to items. The following characteristics are necessary for stimulus materials:

1. A stimulus that gives information must precede a question or a set of questions.
2. When students are given information to evaluate, they should know the research question and the purpose of the research.
3. Passages, graphics, tables, etc., will provide sufficient information for assessment of multiple standards.
4. Stimulus materials for a set of items may be a combination of multiple stimuli.
5. Information in stimulus materials will be real examples of what students would encounter in or beyond school.
6. For conceptual items, stimulus materials will be necessary but not conceptually sufficient for student response.

Readability

The selected reading passages will be at the appropriate grade level. The readability level of all passages is evaluated using three recognized readability formulas. The formulas chosen for each grade vary according to the purpose for which the formula was developed. Appropriate readability formulas for Grade 8 English Language Arts include the Flesch-Kincaid Rating, the Dale-Chall Readability Rating, or any other formulas considered reliable.

In addition, sentence structure, length, vocabulary, content, visuals, and organization are reviewed when selecting appropriate grade level passages. The teacher committee that reviews passages provides the final decisions in regards to the readability of a passage.

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General Considerations—Oklahoma School Testing Program

1. Items deal with issues and details that are of consequence in the stimulus and central to students' understanding and interpretation of the stimulus.
2. Test items are varied and address all OAS standards listed in the Test Blueprint.
3. To the greatest extent possible, no item or response choice clues the answer to any other item.
4. All items reviewed and approved by the Oklahoma Item Review Committee are assigned an OAS standard. The Test Blueprints and score reports reflect the degree to which each OAS standard is represented on the test.
5. Test items are tied closely and particularly to the stimuli from which they derive, so that the impact of outside (prior) knowledge, while never wholly avoidable, is minimized.
6. Each multiple-choice item contains a question and four answer options, only one of which is correct. Correct answers will be approximately equally distributed among A, B, C, and D responses.
7. Distractors adopt the language and sense of the material in the stimuli so that students must think their way to the correct answer rather than simply identify incorrect responses by virtue of a distractor's obviously inappropriate nature.
8. Distractors should always be plausible (but, of course, incorrect) in the context of the stimulus.
9. Order of presentation of item types is dictated by logic (chronologically, spatially, etc.).
10. Items are worded precisely and clearly. The better focused an item, the more reliable and fair it is certain to be, and the more likely all students will understand it in the same way.
11. The range of items measuring an OAS standard consisting of more than one skill will provide a balanced representation of those skills.
12. Items should be focused on what all students should know and be able to do as they complete their Grade 8 coursework.
13. The responses "Both of the above," "All of the above," "None of the above," and "Neither of the above" will not be used.
14. The material presented is balanced, culturally diverse, well written, and of interest to Grade 8 test level students. The stimuli and items are fairly presented in order to gain a true picture of students' skills.
15. Across all forms, a balance of gender and active/passive roles by gender is maintained.
16. Forms attempt to represent the ethnic diversity of Oklahoma students.
17. No resource materials or calculators may be used by students during the test. Use of scratch paper is allowed on the test but should be taken up and destroyed at the end of the test.
18. The stimuli avoid subject matter that might prompt emotional distress on the part of the students.
19. Permission to use stimuli from copyrighted material is obtained as necessary by testing vendor.

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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.

In summary, Grade 8 English Language Arts test items ask questions that address issues of importance in a text; require students to demonstrate comprehension of and knowledge about literary genres; require students to demonstrate knowledge of grammar, usage, and mechanics; and are consequential, concise, focused, and fair.

Written responses receive two types of scores: an overall composite score and a series of analytic scores for specific writing skills. The overall composite score reflects how well the student can integrate writing techniques to produce a good essay. The five analytic scores each focus on a specific aspect of the student's writing.

Responses that do not meet certain criteria cannot be scored. A zero overall score is given to responses that fall into the following categories:

- No response or just a restatement of the task
- Response in a language other than English
- Response that is illegible or incomprehensible
- Response that is off the topic of the writing task.

Considerations Specific to the Grade 8 English Language Arts Test

Each 8th-grade-level reading passage will contain identifiable key concepts with relevant supporting details. Passages will be appropriate for determining the purpose for reading, analyzing character traits, compare/contrast, problem/solution, interpretation, analysis, drawing conclusions, making an inference, being conducive for vocabulary analogies, and relevant reading tasks as defined by the Oklahoma Academic Standards for 8th grade.

The passages will be well written and include a variety of sentence types and lengths. They may include dialogue, will reflect Oklahoma's cultural diversity, and will possess sufficient structural integrity to allow them to be self-contained. Literary passages will reflect genres studied at the 8th-grade level, including essay, short story, novel, drama, narrative, and lyric poetry.

A test form will contain at least two reading selections 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.

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The majority of the selections used for the Grade 8 test will include authentic literature; a portion may be selected from commissioned works. Selections should not exceed 900 words. Each reading passage will generate approximately five to seven multiple-choice questions from the Oklahoma Academic Standards, including vocabulary, comprehension, literature, and research and information. Each grammar passage will generate approximately seven multiple-choice questions from the OAS standards, including Standard English grammar, mechanics, and usage. Each writing prompt will allow students the opportunity to demonstrate writing skills.

Grade	Word Count*	Authentic Literary Selections	Expository Selections (1 task-oriented/functional)
3	200–600	3–6	3–5
4	200–600	4–6	3–5
5	300–700	4–6	4–6
6	300–700	4–6	4–6
7	500–900	4–6	4–6
8	500–900	4–6	4–6

*Paired passages can have a total word count 1.5 times the highest word count for that grade.

It is necessary to create test items that are reliable, fair, and targeted to the OAS standards listed on the following pages. There are some 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, objectives, and skills.
2. Test items that assess each standard will not be limited to one particular type of response format.
3. Test questions focus on authentic content that Grade 8 test-level students can relate to and understand.
4. Test items are worded precisely and clearly. The better focused an item, the more reliable and fair it is likely to be, and the more likely all students will understand what is required of them.
5. All items are reviewed to eliminate language that shows bias or that would otherwise likely disadvantage a particular group of students. 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.
6. With paired passages, items for each passage will follow the passage for which the items are written. The items that require comparisons and connections between passages will appear after both passages.

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Overview of Item Specifications

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

- OAS Standard
- OAS Objective
- Item Specifications
    a. Emphasis
    b. Format
    c. Content Limits
    d. Distractor Domain
    e. Sample Test Items

The headings "OAS Standard" and "OAS Objective" state the standard and objective being measured as found in the English Language Arts section of the Oklahoma Academic Standards document.

For each objective, the information under the heading "Item Specifications" highlights important points about a test item's emphasis, format, content limits, and distractor domain. Sample test items are provided with each standard to illustrate these specifications. 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 standard as the primary concept.

Note: With the exception of content limits, the Item Specifications offer suggestions of what might be included and do not provide an exhaustive list of what can be included. For this reason, Item Specifications are only meant to be a supplemental resource for classroom instruction.

In addition, the sample test items are not intended to be definitive in nature or construction—the stimuli and the test items that follow them may differ from test form to test form, as may their presentations. Sample test items are not intended to predict a student's performance on the actual test, but rather to allow students to familiarize themselves with the item types and formats that they may see on the test.

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PASSAGES

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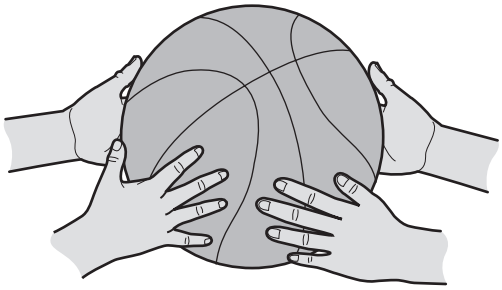
Read this passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

Lifelong Friends



1 Megan's family moved in down the street the summer of our third grade year. I can still remember the feeling of excitement when Mr. Jackson, our next door neighbor, mentioned to my dad that the new family had a girl my age. I was thrilled. I was looking forward to having a best friend!

2 We became inseparable almost immediately, spending every waking moment together. All of my expectations for the potential friendship turned out just as I had anticipated. The first day of school that August was a bit of a disappointment for us when we were not in the same class, but we both eventually came to the realization that it was actually in our best interest, for we would most certainly have too much fun if we were in the same class together. It is unbelievable that five years have passed since then.

3 Megan has a basketball net on her garage, and throughout the years, we have spent countless hours shooting baskets. We both actually became pretty good, and in sixth grade decided to try out for our school's basketball team. We both made the team and became starters, thriving on the support we gave one another. When one of us had a disappointing game, the other provided an encouraging pep talk.

4 We started eighth grade last August, and at the onset of the season, Coach called all of the starters into his office to discuss the added pressure that would be thrust upon us this year. With high school quickly approaching and coaches scrutinizing our every move on the court, there would be a lot of added pressure. He asked Megan and me to wait around after everyone else left. After the locker room had cleared, he told us that a number of high school coaches were talking about the two of us, and how we both seemed to be really strong candidates for the middle school all-city team. We left his office feeling self-assured, reveling at the possibility of both of us being selected for the honor.

5 "One thing for sure, though," Megan said in a suddenly sobering tone, "let's not let this opportunity come between us."

6 "What do you mean?" I questioned.

7 "Well, I know that we're both pretty confident about being selected," Megan said, "but what if one of us makes it, and the other doesn't?"

8 "No way," I said. "That's not going to happen," I insisted, squashing the idea before it could grow.

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9 Well, the season marched on at a swift pace, and we alternated being the standout of each game. But then, things changed. Megan had three outstanding games in a row. Coach called me aside and told me to relax because he thought I was putting too much pressure on myself and was forcing too many of my shots. But the more I tried to relax, the worse I played.

10 It was my worst fear, but unexpectedly, things started to change between Megan and me. The friendly competition we once enjoyed transformed into a rivalry. By the end of the season, Megan and I were barely acknowledging each other.

11 The announcement of the middle school all-city team came about a week after the conclusion of the season, and as I anticipated, Megan made the team, and I did not. I struggled to utter a sincere "Congratulations."

12 The end of the school year brought the beginning of an unsettling summer. Our faltering friendship found me with plenty of time on my hands. By the beginning of July, I had recurring thoughts about how foolish I had been to let pettiness and jealousy seep into our friendship. I struggled with the thought of apologizing to Megan, but pride and embarrassment hindered me from doing the admirable thing.

13 Megan must possess psychic powers because, not a week later, the doorbell rang and Mom called out, "It's Megan." I struggled with the thought of facing the inevitable.

14 "Hey," Megan struggled to say, but continued, "how's it going?"

15 "I'm hanging in there," I replied.

16 There was an awkward moment of silence when I finally uttered, "Listen, Megan, I was wrong to let jealousy interfere with our friendship. I know it's a lot to ask for you to accept my apology, but I'm really sorry."

17 "No problem," Megan responded. "I was getting pretty conceited with all of the attention I was getting."

18 "I sure learned a valuable lesson from all of this," I said. "Nothing is worth jeopardizing a friendship like ours."

19 "You're right about that," she said. "Let's go shoot some baskets."

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Read this passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

Ice Cube On a Wire

1 When the pressure's on, ice can get a grip.

2 For this activity you need a thin, strong wire about two feet long. You can find a good one by carefully unraveling a strand from the bundle of thin wires used to make a thicker wire for hanging up a picture frame.

3 Using this wire and two sticks or pencils, make a one-foot-long wire with a handle at each end. To do it, wind one end of the wire around one stick. Then twist the short end of the wire around the longer end to hold it tightly to the pencil. Repeat these steps to attach the opposite end of the wire to the other stick.

4 Place an ice cube on top of a tin can. Holding one of the pencils in each hand, press the wire down across the top of the ice cube.

5 Now comes the only tricky part. You must keep pressing down steadily and firmly—but not so hard that you break the wire. Slowly, the wire will sink into the ice.

6 It is strange to think that you can cut into ice with a wire. But if you look carefully, you will see that you are not cutting the ice cube into two pieces. The wire ends up threaded right through the ice.

How It Works

7 Like heat, pressure can prevent water from freezing into ice. Pressure can also melt ice.

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8 If you force a fine wire down hard enough against ice, the pressure underneath the wire can be great enough to melt the ice. As the wire sinks, the water freezes again above the wire.

9 A thick wire doesn't work. A person would have to press down very hard to create enough pressure under a large wire.

10 To create an interesting effect, use ten-pound nylon fishing line instead of wire. Fishing line is harder to press into the ice, but it can be more fun because the fishing line is almost invisible in dim light.

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A student wrote a report on a historic home. Read the first part of the report, think about what revisions you would make, and then answer the questions.

The Mount Laurel Home and Estate—Part 1

The Mount Laurel Home and Estate was built in 1780 and was the primary residence for the Robert Clayton family for several generations. In 1927, the home and grounds were placed on the historical register and donated to the public.

Last year, the home was restored and opened for tours.

About Robert Clayton

Robert Clayton (1742–1793) was an American colonist in Massachusetts. Although he was only marginally involved in early American politics. Robert Clayton was a contemporary of the Founding Fathers. And reportedly once dined with George and Martha Washington. Excused from serving in the Revolutionary War because of health problems, Clayton earned his wealth through trading. He married Mary Culpepper in 1770, and together they raised five sons and three daughters. He died of pneumonia at the age of 51.

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Read the next part of the report, think about what revisions you would make, and then answer the questions.

The Mount Laurel Home and Estate—Part 2

About the Mount Laurel Home and Estate

The Mount Laurel Home and Estate includes five structures: the main house, the kitchen, the icehouse, the barn, and the blacksmith shed. The division of the kitchen from the main house was common at the time because of the risk of fire.

The grounds of the estatecovers approximately 250 acres. The gardens, the barn, and the blacksmith's shed are maintained as they were during Clayton's lifetime. Visitors can talk with a blacksmith as he works and see live animals in the barn.

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STANDARDS & SAMPLE ITEMS

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STANDARD 2—READING AND WRITING PROCESS

OAS STANDARD

- Students will use a variety of recursive reading and writing processes.
- Reading— Students will read and comprehend increasingly complex literary and informational texts.
- Writing— Students will develop and strengthen writing by engaging in a recursive process that includes prewriting, drafting, revising, editing, and publishing.

OAS OBJECTIVES

8.2.R.1	Students will summarize and paraphrase ideas, while maintaining meaning and a logical sequence of events, within and between texts.
8.2.R.2	Students will analyze details in literary and nonfiction/informational texts to evaluate patterns of genres.
8.2.R.3	Students will generalize main ideas with supporting details in a text.
8.2.W.1	Students will apply components of a recursive writing process for multiple purposes to create a focused, organized, and coherent piece of writing.
8.2.W.2	Students will plan *(e.g., outline)* and prewrite a first draft as necessary.
8.2.W.3	Students will develop drafts by choosing an organizational structure *(e.g., description, compare / contrast, sequential, problem / solution, cause / effect, etc.)* and building on ideas in multi-paragraph essays.
8.2.W.4	Students will edit and revise multiple drafts for organization, transitions to improve coherence and meaning, sentence variety, and use of consistent point of view.
8.2.W.5	Students will use resources to find correct spellings of words *(e.g., word wall, vocabulary notebook, print and electronic dictionaries, and spell-check)*.

ITEM SPECIFICATIONS

Emphasis:

- Items will require students to attain meaning and comprehend core ideas from increasingly complex texts and to apply the recursive writing process to their own independent writing.

Format:

- Students will be asked to demonstrate this ability based on a reading selection followed by multiple-choice items.

Content Limits:

- The reading selections will be on grade level and may be any one of the following types: informational/expository, narrative, or poetry.
- Words being tested will be at grade level.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices will be plausible, yet incorrect, and may include incorrect meanings of words.

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From "Life-Long Friends"

1 **How can the reader tell that the selection is a short story?**

A It describes different times and places.

B It features a plot and fictional characters.

C It includes relatable thoughts and feelings.

D It has an interesting and original main idea.

Correct Response: B
Depth-of-Knowledge: 2

From "Ice Cube On a Wire"

2 **This selection is <u>mainly</u> about**

A a surprising fact about wires.

B an entertaining science activity.

C a lesson in temperature changes.

D an experiment showing how ice forms.

Correct Response: B
Depth-of-Knowledge: 2

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STANDARD 3—CRITICAL READING AND WRITING

OAS STANDARD

- Students will apply critical thinking skills to reading and writing.
- Reading—Students will comprehend, interpret, evaluate, and respond to a variety of complex texts of all literary and informational genres from a variety of historical, cultural, ethnic, and global perspectives.
- Writing— Students will write for varied purposes and audiences in all modes, using fully developed ideas, strong organization, well-chosen words, fluent sentences, and appropriate voice.

OAS OBJECTIVES

8.3.R.1 Students will analyze works written on the same topic and compare the methods the authors use to achieve similar or different purposes and include support using textual evidence.

8.3.R.2 Students will evaluate points of view and perspectives and describe how this affects grade-level literary and/or informational text.

8.3.R.3 Students will analyze how authors use key literary elements to contribute to the meaning of a text:

- setting
- plot
- characters *(i.e., protagonist, antagonist)*
- characterization
- theme
- conflict *(i.e., internal and external)*

8.3.R.4 Students will evaluate literary devices to support interpretations of literary texts:

- simile
- metaphor
- personification
- onomatopoeia
- hyperbole
- imagery
- tone
- symbolism
- irony

8.3.R.5 Students will evaluate textual evidence to determine whether a claim is substantiated or unsubstantiated.

8.3.R.6 Students will analyze the structures of texts *(e.g., compare/contrast, problem/solution, cause/effect, claims/evidence)* and content by making complex inferences about texts to draw logical conclusions from textual evidence.

8.3.R.7 Students will make connections *(e.g., thematic links, literary analysis)* between and across multiple texts and provide textual evidence to support their inferences.

Narrative

8.3.W.1 Students will write narratives incorporating characters, plot *(i.e., flashback and foreshadowing)*, setting, point of view, conflict, dialogue, and sensory details.

Informative

8.3.W.2 Students will compose essays and reports about topics, incorporating evidence *(e.g., specific facts, examples, details)* and maintaining an organized structure and a formal style.

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STANDARD 3—CRITICAL READING AND WRITING continued

OAS OBJECTIVES

Argument – Grade Level Focus

8.3.W.3 Students will introduce a claim, recognize at least one claim from an opposing viewpoint, and organize reasons and evidences, using credible sources.

8.3.W.4 Students will show relationships among the claim, reasons, and evidence and include a conclusion that follows logically from the information presented.

ITEM SPECIFICATIONS

Emphasis:

- Items will require students to apply critical thinking skills when reading diverse and complex texts and to write in all modes (narrative, informative, and argument) for various audiences and purposes using refined composition skills.

Format:

- Students will be asked to demonstrate the ability to apply critical thinking skills based on a reading selection followed by multiple-choice items. Students will be asked to demonstrate the ability to write by producing multi-paragraph essays in response to mode-specific writing prompts.

Content Limits:

- The reading selections will be on grade level and may be any one of the following types: informational/expository, narrative, or poetry.
- Words being tested will be at grade level.
- Passage-based constructed response writing should be based on the writing modes in the standard: Narrative, Informative, and Argument.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices will be plausible, yet incorrect, and may include incorrect meanings of words.

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From "Ice Cube On a Wire"

3 **Which sentence is an opinion?**

A "For this activity you need a thin, strong wire about two feet long."

B "Now comes the only tricky part."

C "Like heat, pressure can prevent water from freezing into ice."

D "Pressure can also melt ice."

Correct Response: B
Depth-of-Knowledge: 2

From "Life-Long Friends"

4 **Which sentence states the main theme of the passage?**

A Sports should not control your life.

B Best friends share common interests.

C Do not let fears determine your actions.

D Jealousy can ruin the best of friendships.

Correct Response: D
Depth-of-Knowledge: 2

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STANDARD 4—VOCABULARY

OAS STANDARD

- Students will expand their working vocabularies to effectively communicate and understand texts.
- Reading—Students will expand academic, domain-appropriate, grade-level vocabularies through reading, word study, and class discussion.
- Writing—Students will apply knowledge of vocabularies to communicate by using descriptive, academic, and domain-appropriate abstract and concrete words in their writing.

OAS OBJECTIVES

8.4.R.1 Students will increase knowledge of academic, domain-appropriate, grade-level vocabulary to infer meaning of grade-level text.

8.4.R.2 Students will use word parts *(e.g., affixes, Greek and Latin roots, stems)* to define and determine the meaning of increasingly complex words.

8.4.R.3 Students will use context clues to determine or clarify the meaning of words or distinguish among multiple-meaning words.

8.4.R.4 Students will infer the relationships among words with multiple meanings and recognize the connotation and denotation of words.

8.4.R.5 Students will use a dictionary, glossary, or a thesaurus *(print and/or electronic)* to determine or clarify the meanings, syllabication, pronunciation, synonyms, and parts of speech of words.

8.4.W.1 Students will use domain-appropriate vocabulary to communicate ideas in writing clearly.

8.4.W.2 Students will select appropriate language to create a specific effect according to purpose in writing.

ITEM SPECIFICATIONS

Emphasis:

- Items will require students to demonstrate their understanding of domain-appropriate and grade-level vocabulary in complex texts and to apply their vocabulary skills in their independent writing.

Format:

- Students will be asked to demonstrate this ability based on a reading selection followed by multiple-choice items.

Content Limits:

- The reading selections will be on grade level and may be any one of the following types: informational/expository, narrative, or poetry.
- Words being tested will be at grade level.
- Vocabulary test items will contain context clues. Vocabulary test items will include inferential questions.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices will be plausible, yet incorrect, and may include incorrect meanings of words.

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From "Lifelong Friends"

5 **In paragraph 4, the word <u>scrutinizing</u> means**

A unfairly judging.

B closely watching.

C quietly criticizing.

D passionately cheering.

Correct Response: B
Depth-of-Knowledge: 2

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STANDARD 5—LANGUAGE

OAS STANDARD

- Students will apply knowledge of grammar and rhetorical style to reading and writing.
- Reading—Students will apply knowledge of grammar and rhetorical style to analyze and evaluate a variety of texts.
- Writing—Students will demonstrate command of Standard English grammar, mechanics, and usage through writing and other modes of communication.

OAS OBJECTIVES

8.5.R.1	Students will recognize the use of verbals *(e.g., gerunds, participles, infinitives)* and clauses.
8.5.R.2	Students will recognize the use of active and passive voice.
8.5.R.3	Students will recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in verb tense.
8.5.R.4	Students will recognize the subject and verb agreement, and correct as necessary.
8.5.W.1	Students will write using correct mechanics with a focus on commas, apostrophes, quotation marks, colons, and semi-colons.
8.5.W.2	Students will compose simple, compound, complex, and compound-complex sentences and questions to signal differing relationships among ideas.
8.5.W.3	Students will use verbals *(e.g., gerunds, participles, infinitives)* in writing.
8.5.W.4	Students will form and use verbs in the active and passive voice.
8.5.W.5	Students will form and use verbs in the indicative, imperative, interrogative, conditional, and subjunctive mood.

ITEM SPECIFICATIONS

Emphasis:

- Items will require students to recognize and apply appropriate grammar and rhetorical style in texts and to apply correct usage of Standard English in their independent writing.

Format:

- Students will be asked to demonstrate this ability based on an informative/expository selection with embedded errors followed by multiple-choice items.

Content Limits:

- The reading selections will be on grade-level informative /expository selections.
- Test items requiring students to correct the mechanics of sentences and paragraphs should be at grade-level or below so that the focus is on the language use rather than reading comprehension.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices will be plausible, yet incorrect, and will be typical of the types of errors students are most likely to make.

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From "The Mount Laurel Home and Estate"

6 **What change, if any, should be made to the sentences in lines 7–9?**

A Although he was only marginally involved in early American politics, and he was a contemporary of the Founding Fathers. And reportedly once dined with George and Martha Washington.

B Although only marginally involved in early American politics. Clayton was a contemporary of the Founding Fathers, and he reportedly once dined with George and Martha Washington.

C Although only marginally involved in early American politics, Clayton was a contemporary of the Founding Fathers, and he reportedly once dined with George and Martha Washington.

D No change

Correct Response: C
Depth-of-Knowledge: 2

From "The Mount Laurel Home and Estate"

7 **What change, if any, should be made to covers in line 16?**

A cover

B covered

C covering

D No change

Correct Response: A
Depth-of-Knowledge: 1

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STANDARD 6—RESEARCH

OAS STANDARD

- Students will engage in inquiry to acquire, refine, and share knowledge.
- Reading—Students will comprehend, evaluate, and synthesize resources to acquire and refine knowledge.
- Writing—Students will summarize and paraphrase, integrate evidence, and cite sources to create reports, projects, papers, texts, and presentations for multiple purposes.

OAS OBJECTIVES

8.6.R.1	Students will use their own viable research questions and well-developed thesis statements to find information about a specific topic.
8.6.R.2	Students will follow ethical and legal guidelines for finding and recording information from a variety of primary and secondary sources *(e.g., print and digital)*.
8.6.R.3	Students will determine the relevance, reliability, and validity of the information gathered.
8.6.W.1	Students will write research papers and/or texts independently over extended periods of time *(e.g., time for research, reflection, and revision)* and for shorter timeframes *(e.g., a single sitting or a day or two)*.
8.6.W.2	Students will refine and formulate a viable research question and report findings clearly and concisely, using a well-developed thesis statement.
8.6.W.3	Students will quote, paraphrase, and summarize findings following an appropriate citation style *(e.g., MLA, APA, etc.)* and avoiding plagiarism.
8.6.W.4	Students will summarize and present information in a report.

ITEM SPECIFICATIONS

Emphasis:

- Items will require students to analyze and evaluate information from a variety of sources and to synthesize and integrate information and cite sources in their independent reports and projects.

Format:

- Students will be asked to demonstrate this ability based on a reading selection followed by multiple-choice items.

Content Limits:

- The reading selections will be on grade level and may be any one of the following types: informational/expository, narrative, or poetry. Some selections will be informative/expository selections with embedded errors and citation guides.
- Select-response items will include only pertinent information about the citation rules for students to use in order to answer the questions. Extended writing tasks will not show preference to a specific citation format.

Distractor Domain:

- Incorrect answer choices will be plausible, yet incorrect, and may include incorrect meanings of words.

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From "Ice Cube On a Wire"

8 **Which would be the best way to test the accuracy of this information?**

A ask a teacher

B do the activity

C search the Internet

D read about it in a book

Correct Response: B
Depth-of-Knowledge: 2

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Oklahoma Academic Standards— Grade 8 Writing Rubric 2016–2017

Each piece of student writing is given five analytic scores that focus on specific writing skills. These ratings range from 4 (the highest score) to 1 (the lowest score). Taken together, these scores provide a profile of the specific strengths and weaknesses of a student's writing. The following are the actual scoring rubrics used to assign the five analytic scores.

*OAS objectives are annotated for each trait. Where no specific objective is listed (i.e. 8.3.W), the whole strand is intended.

Score	Ideas and Development—30%
4	• The content is well suited for the audience, task/purpose, and mode (8.3.W) • The focus is consistent and maintained (8.2.W.1) • Ideas are fully developed and elaborated using details, examples, reasons, or evidence (8.3.W.1-4) • The writing expresses a consistent perspective throughout the composition (8.2.W.4) • For Argument: at least one counterclaim is evident (8.3.W.3)
3	• The content is adequate for the audience, task/purpose, and mode • The focus is evident but may lack clarity • Ideas are developed using some details, examples, reasons, and/or evidence • The writing sustains the point of view throughout most of the composition
2	• The content is inconsistent with the audience, task/purpose, and mode • The focus may be unclear or leave the reader with questions and making inferences • Ideas are minimally developed with few details • May simply be a list of ideas • The writing has difficulty expressing or maintaining a perspective
1	• The content is irrelevant to the audience, task/purpose, and mode • The focus may be confusing or missing • Ideas lack development or may be repetitive • The writing lacks perspective

Score	Organization, Unity, and Coherence—25%
4	• Introduction engages the reader (8.3.W) • Sustained and coherent focus (8.2.W.1) • Logical and appropriate sequencing balanced with smooth, effective transitions to signal differing relationships among ideas (8.5.W.2) • Order and structure are strong and move the reader through the text (8.2.W.3) • Conclusion follows logically from the information presented and supports the body of writing (8.3.W, 8.3.W.4)
3	• Evident introduction • Adequate focus; stays on topic with little digression • Adequate sequencing using limited but effective transitions • Order and structure are present • Conclusion is appropriate
2	• May lack clear organizational structure • Weak evidence of unity • Little or limited sequencing and/or transitions • Details may be randomly placed • Conclusion may be inappropriate or ineffective
1	• Lacks logical direction • No evidence of organizational structure

Score	Word Choice—15%
4	• Appropriate word choice that conveys the correct meaning and appeals to the audience in an interesting, precise, and natural way (8.4.W.1-2) • The writing may be characterized by, but not limited to (8.4.W.1-2), o Lively verbs o Vivid nouns o Imaginative adjectives o Figurative language o Dialogue • No vague, overused, repetitive language is used (a lot, greatly, very, really) (8.4.W.1-2) • Effective words that evoke strong images such as descriptive language (8.4.W.2) • Communicates by using academic and/or domain-appropriate words (8.4.W.1)
3	• Words generally convey the intended message • The writing includes a variety of words that are appropriate but do not necessarily energize the writing • The writing may be characterized by o Some use of lively verbs, vivid nouns and imaginative adjectives o Attempts at figurative language o Few vague, overused, and repetitive words
2	• Word choice lacks precision and variety or may be inappropriate to the audience and purpose • May be ineffective, simplistic, and/or vague • Relies on overused or vague language (a lot, great, very, really) • Few attempts at figurative language and/or dialogue • Word choice is unimaginative and colorless with images that are unclear or absent
1	• Word choice indicates an extremely limited or inaccurate vocabulary • No attempts at figurative language • General, vague words that fail to communicate meaning • Text may be too short to demonstrate variety

Score	Sentences and Paragraphs—15%
4	• Writing clearly demonstrates appropriate sentence structure (8.5.W.2) • Sentences are appropriately constructed and structured with few or no run-on or fragment errors (8.5.W.2) • Writing has a rich variety of sentence structure, types, and lengths (8.2.W.4, 8.5.W.2) • Ideas are organized into paragraphs that blend into larger text (8.2.W.1,3-4) • Writing shows evidence of appropriate paragraphing (8.2.W.1,3)
3	• Writing adequately demonstrates appropriate sentence structure • Writing may contain a small number of run-on or fragment errors that do not interfere with fluency • Writing has adequate variety of sentence structure • Ideas are organized into paragraphs
2	• Writing demonstrates lack of control in sentence structure • Writing contains errors such as run-ons and fragments that interfere with fluency • Writing has limited variety of sentence structure • Writing may show little or no attempt at paragraphing
1	• Writing demonstrates inappropriate sentence structure • Writing contains many errors in structure (run-ons, fragments) • Writing has no variety in structure • Writing displays no attempt at paragraphing • Text may be too short to demonstrate use of sentences or paragraphs

Score	Grammar, Usage, and Mechanics—15%

4	• The writing demonstrates appropriate use of correct (8.5.W)
	  ○ Spelling
	  ○ Punctuation
	  ○ Capitalization
	  ○ Grammar
	  ○ Usage (e.g. correct usage of homonyms, correct usage of subjects and indirect objects, correct use of pronouns)
	• Errors are minor and do not affect readability

3	• The writing demonstrates adequate use of correct
	  ○ Spelling
	  ○ Punctuation
	  ○ Capitalization
	  ○ Grammar
	  ○ Usage
	• Errors are noticeable but do not significantly affect readability

2	• The writing demonstrates limited use of correct
	  ○ Spelling
	  ○ Punctuation
	  ○ Capitalization
	  ○ Grammar
	  ○ Usage
	• Errors are distracting and may interfere with readability

1	• The writing demonstrates minimal use of correct
	  ○ Spelling
	  ○ Punctuation
	  ○ Capitalization
	  ○ Grammar
	  ○ Usage
	• Errors are numerous and severely impede readability

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