

Smarter Balanced Assessment System:
Connecting the ELA Claims
to Classroom Instruction
Grades 6-12



Connecticut State Department of Education
Fall 2014
Participant Guide



CONNECTICUT STATE DEPARTMENT OF EDUCATION



Common Core Shifts for English Language Arts/Literacy

1. Regular practice with **complex text** and its **academic language**

Rather than focusing solely on the skills of reading and writing, the Standards highlight the growing complexity of the texts students must read to be ready for the demands of college and careers. The Standards build a staircase of text complexity so that all students are ready for the demands of college- and career-level reading no later than the end of high school. Closely related to text complexity—and inextricably connected to reading comprehension—is a focus on academic vocabulary: words that appear in a variety of content areas (such as *ignite* and *commit*).

2. Reading, writing and speaking grounded in **evidence from text**, both literary and informational

The Standards place a premium on students writing to sources, i.e., using evidence from texts to present careful analyses, well-defended claims, and clear information. Rather than asking students questions they can answer solely from their prior knowledge or experience, the Standards expect students to answer questions that depend on their having read the text or texts with care. The Standards also require the cultivation of narrative writing throughout the grades, and in later grades a command of sequence and detail will be essential for effective argumentative and informational writing.

Likewise, the reading standards focus on students' ability to read carefully and grasp information, arguments, ideas and details based on text evidence. Students should be able to answer a range of *text-dependent* questions, questions in which the answers require inferences based on careful attention to the text.

3. **Building knowledge** through **content-rich nonfiction**

Building knowledge through content rich non-fiction plays an essential role in literacy and in the Standards. In K–5, fulfilling the standards requires a 50–50 balance between informational and literary reading. Informational reading primarily includes content rich non-fiction in history/social studies, science and the arts; the K–5 Standards strongly recommend that students build coherent general knowledge both within each year and across years. In 6–12, ELA classes place much greater attention to a specific category of informational text—literary nonfiction—than has been traditional. In grades 6–12, the Standards for literacy in history/social studies, science and technical subjects ensure that students can independently build knowledge in these disciplines through reading and writing.

To be clear, the Standards do require substantial attention to literature throughout K–12, as half of the required work in K–5 and the core of the work of 6–12 ELA teachers.

Document 1

“I say to you, this morning, that if you have never found something so dear and precious to you that you will die for it, then you aren’t fit to live.

You may be 38 years old, as I happen to be, and one day, some great opportunity stands before you and calls upon you to stand for some great principle, some great issue, some great cause. And you refuse to do it because you are afraid.

You refuse to do it because you want to live longer. You’re afraid that you will lose your job, or you are afraid that you will be criticized or that you will lose your popularity, or you’re afraid that somebody will stab or shoot or bomb your house. So you refuse to take a stand.

Well, you may go on and live until you are ninety, but you are just as dead at 38 as you would be at ninety.

And the cessation of breathing in your life is but the belated announcement of an earlier death of the spirit.

You died when you refused to stand up for right.

You died when you refused to stand up for truth.

You died when you refused to stand up for justice.”

Handout 3

Guiding Questions

1. What is the author's point of view?
2. What do you notice as different or unusual in the text?
3. Where do you think this is from, when was it written, and for what purpose was it written?
4. What is the central idea of the document?

Guiding Questions

1. What is the author's point of view?
2. What do you notice as different or unusual in the text?
3. Where do you think this is from, when was it written, and for what purpose was it written?
4. What is the central idea of the document?

Document 2

First they came for the Communists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Communist
Then they came for the Socialists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Socialist
Then they came for the trade unionists
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a trade unionist
Then they came for the Jews
And I did not speak out
Because I was not a Jew
Then they came for me
And there was no one left
To speak out for me.

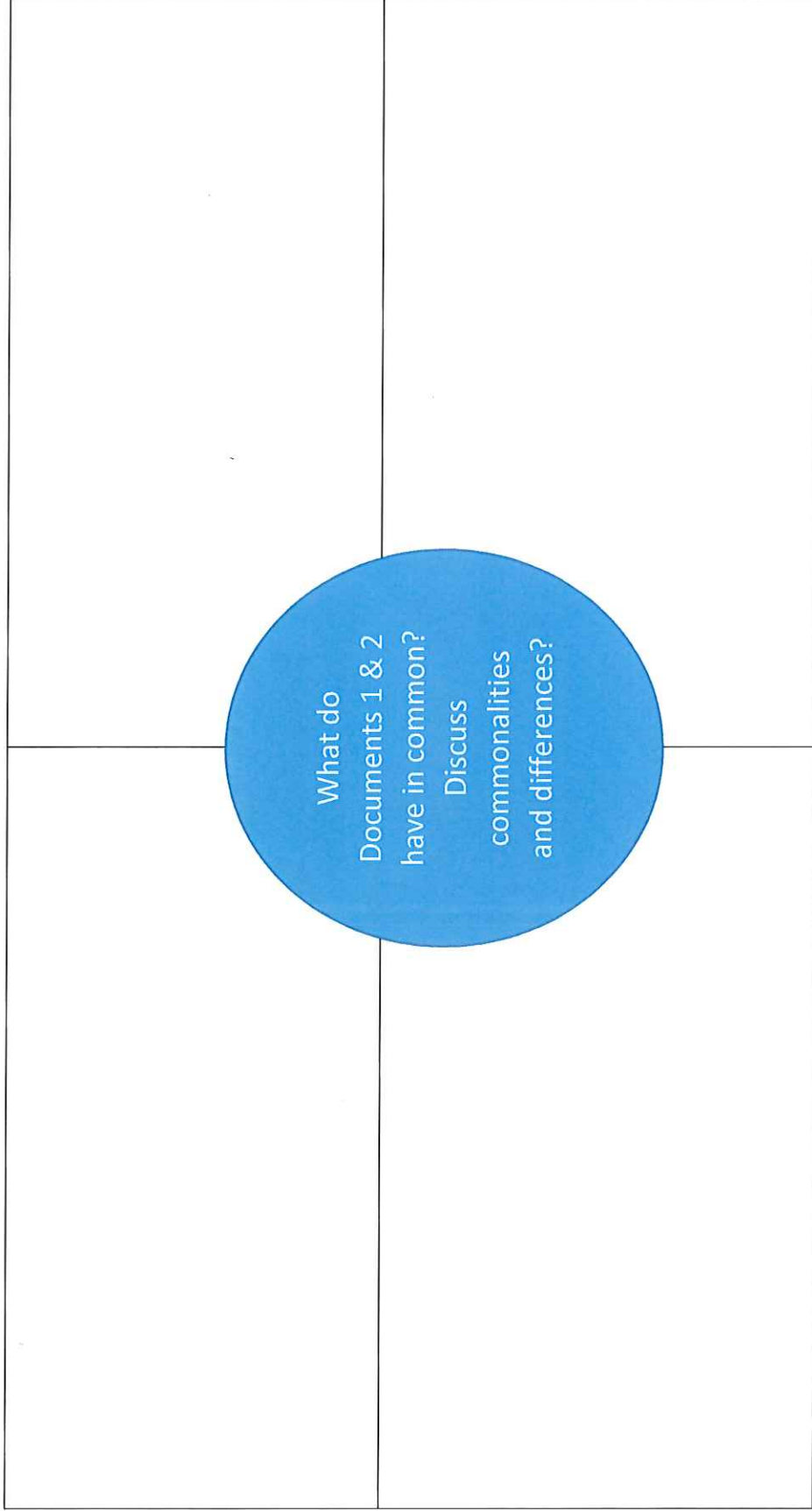
Placement Discussion Protocol

<p>Is there a theme that carries across Documents 1 and 2? If so, what is it? Use evidence from the documents to support your answer.</p>	

Bringing It Back to the Standards

Anchor Standards	Standards
Reading Standards	
Writing Standards	
Speaking and Listening	
Language Standards	

Placement Discussion Protocol



Placement Discussion Protocol

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How does the multimedia enhance your understanding of the author's message in Documents 1 and 2?

<p>1. How would you explain Civil Disobedience? Use information from the documents you just read, viewed, and listened to, as well as the group discussions to support your explanation.</p>	<p>2. Create a definition for Civil Disobedience.</p>
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Civil Disobedience

Can an individual make a difference? When should one question authority?

Notes from Thoreau:

Notes from Gandhi:

Notes from Malala:

My ideas about the texts:

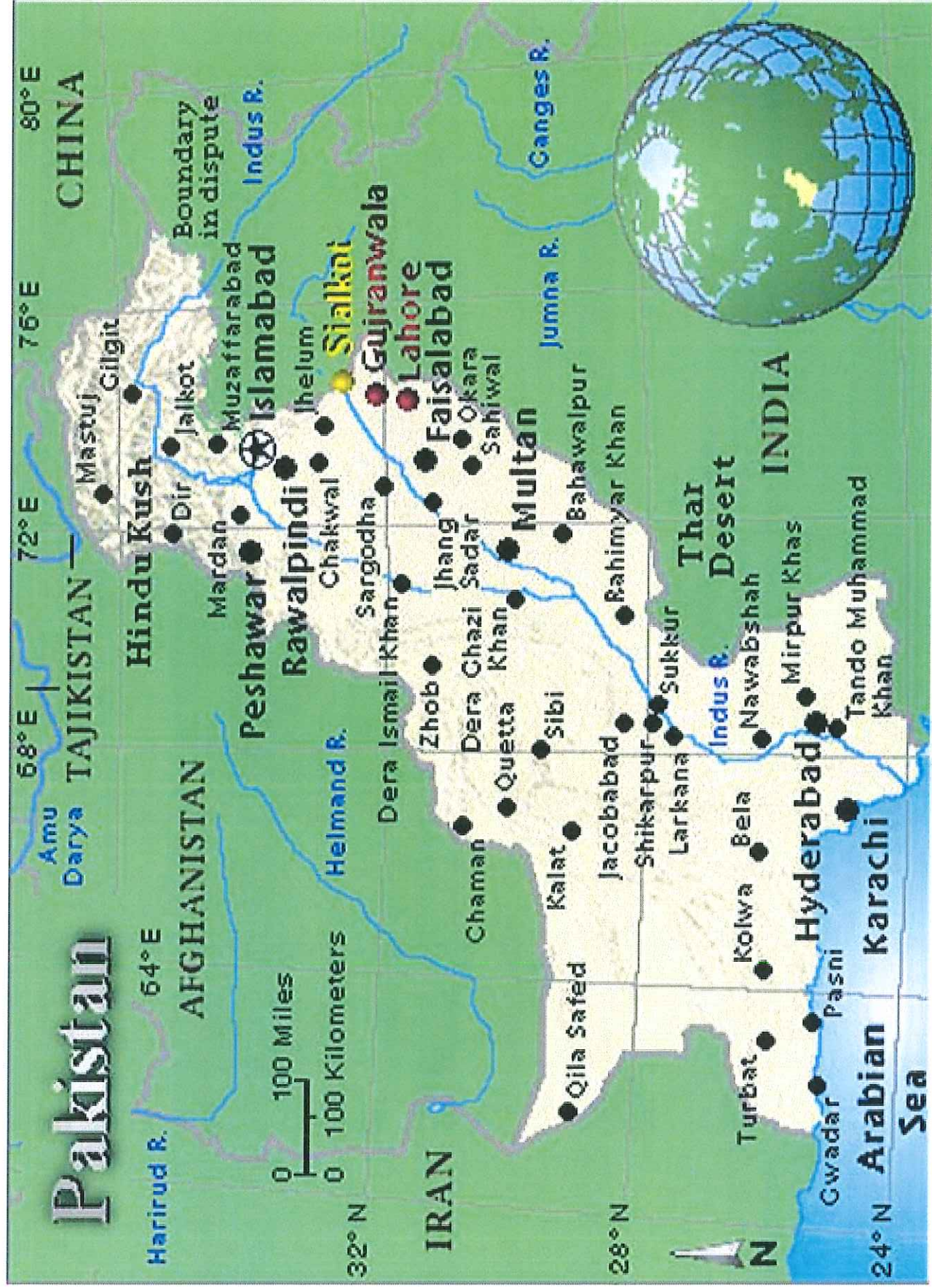
Excerpt from Thoreau's Civil Disobedience, Part 1

Civil Disobedience

Originally published as "Resistance to Civil Government"

By Henry David Thoreau - 1849 - with annotated text

“There are thousands who are *in opinion* opposed to slavery and to the war, who yet in effect do nothing to put an end to them; who, esteeming themselves children of Washington and Franklin, sit down with their hands in their pockets, and say that they know not what to do, and do nothing; who even postpone the question of freedom to the question of free-trade, and quietly read the prices-current along with the latest advices from Mexico, after dinner, and, it may be, fall asleep over them both. What is the price-current of an honest man and patriot to-day? They hesitate, and they regret, and sometimes they petition; but they do nothing in earnest and with effect. They will wait, well disposed, for others to remedy the evil, that they may no longer have it to regret.”



The Concept of Civil Disobedience

The term *civil disobedience* was first used in an essay written by Henry David Thoreau in 1849. It is originally from a philosophy dating back to ancient times when people believed in a universal and timeless “natural” or “divine” law. Literally, it means to peacefully break a law by drawing attention to a problem and influencing public opinion.

In Thoreau’s time, the American government had become powerful enough to oppress part of the population with slavery. Thoreau claimed that individuals should challenge the unjust actions of a government. His solution was to stop paying the taxes that funded unfair policies. Citizens were forced to choose between the comforts and security of an unjust system and their own personal beliefs regarding what was ethical and moral.

The next significant event in the practice of modern civil disobedience was set in motion by Mahatma Gandhi. He brought passive resistance to the world stage during the struggle for Indian independence from Britain. Gandhi was a leading Indian nationalist, theorist, and organizer. He emphasized to those who resisted British rule in India the importance of nonviolence and having the highest moral standards. He insisted that protesters refrain from using obscenities, show no anger or hatred against their oppressors, and submit to arrest peacefully.

Gandhi believed his efforts would fail if his followers used force. Similar to Thoreau’s effort, Gandhi generated support among the Indian population. They refused to cooperate with British authorities until the government was stopped. He cultivated moral standards, the mindset of civil disobedience, and the belief that people had a duty to end injustice. Gandhi expected his followers to provide alternatives to the unfair government practices through their commitment to public service.

In the 1950s and 1960s, civil disobedience evolved. Peaceful resistance, such as sit-ins and boycotts, was used to end segregation. Rosa Parks set an example by refusing to move to the back of a city bus, as required by the law segregating black and white patrons. Parks’ action sparked the successful Montgomery Bus Boycott. Martin Luther King Jr. assured members of the civil rights movement that “we shall overcome” through the timeless truth of the basic human right to freedom. Graphic images of police violence against helpless, unarmed protesters who were not fighting back helped sway public sympathies in favor of the movement. This resulted in the Civil Rights Act of 1965.

However great this victory, racial injustice lurked in the dark corners of society. Desegregation was achieved by law, but the reality of its implementation was messier and more violent. Activists like Malcolm X challenged the nonviolent methods upheld by King. He advised his followers to use “any means necessary” to defend their rights. Using violence as a means to achieve the demise of inequity became a strategy.

Handout 12

Civil disobedience was also embraced at a time when people were divided by their support for U.S. military involvement in Vietnam. With war casualties rising, greater urgency motivated activists toward less civility and more disobedience against government policies. Protesters refused to be drafted into the military or to fight, instead they burned their draft cards. They also occupied military bases and stopped military recruiters from entering high schools and universities. Lines between reasonable protest and violent rebellion blurred. For example, at Kent State University in 1970, a few symbolic gestures against the war ended in riots and destruction of property in the school and in the local community.

Such events have worked to weaken the intent of the protests. Civil disobedience is not likely to disappear. The elements of civil disobedience, either through refusal to participate or active intervention, have brought change or at least attention to issues. People continue to risk their freedom to stand against what they perceive as injustice, using courage and passion to bring issues to the attention of others and to demand change.

Civil Disobedience in Modern Times

A lone human stands defiantly before the faceless, overwhelming power of the state. His flesh and bone are no match for the frightening tanks standing before him. The world looks on, stirred by terror and pity, as tragedy unfolds. This was Tiananmen Square, China, in 1989, a scene that would become an iconic event in the history of civil disobedience. The tanks had come to disperse thousands of citizens illegally occupying the square. They had gathered to demand democratic reforms. Despite the courage and passion of the movement, it was crushed by the Chinese military, and hundreds died.

As so many before them, the Chinese citizens risked their lives and freedom for the sake of “natural” or “divine” justice above that of human laws. Seeing no way to work with the system, they publically rejected it. But the system was strong and large. Without a clear target for their energy, the people were overpowered. On that day, however, the media made their voices heard around the world. They had lost a battle but not the war, which could not be won in a day. The great success stories of civil disobedience against powerful institutions span decades, even centuries. The relentless efforts of Gandhi and the movement for Indian independence from Britain, the pressure of civil rights activists that broke the system of racial inequality in the United States—these movements are inspirations to all people seeking a way out of the darkness of oppression.

How do these movements succeed, and why do some fail? It all depends on the momentum generated by focused and continued effort. In the mid-twentieth century, U.S. civil rights activists began to focus their attention on specific businesses that supported segregation. This brought the businesses to a standstill or even bankruptcy. Activists broke laws by conducting sit-ins at segregated businesses. As protesters were arrested and removed, the press documented their plight. The violent police repression of nonviolent protesters during illegal demonstrations in Birmingham was also widely televised. Under public pressure due to these waves of demonstrations, the Johnson administration passed the Civil Rights Act of 1965.

On a smaller scale, the passage of the Americans with Disabilities Act resulted from the targeted efforts of activists toward a specific goal. Americans Disabled for Accessible Public Transit (ADAPT) sparked a movement in 1978. ADAPT organized a group of 45 citizens in wheelchairs to protest the lack of accommodations on Denver public buses. The protesters surrounded two buses, holding them hostage for over twelve hours. Traffic was brought to a halt. ADAPT had clear targets and objectives for disrupting the institutions they opposed. They staged protests at national transit conventions and against city bus systems. The media showed images of disabled protesters being dragged away to jail by police, which increased public sympathy for their agenda. In the end, the activists achieved their objectives. There was no powerful interest in this

Handout 12

case to profit from denying these rights. Otherwise, there might have been a different outcome, or at least many more years of struggle.

In colonial South Africa, for example, profitable resources and lands were at stake. It took decades of pressure, disruption, and finally revolutionary action to dismantle that system. The African National Congress (ANC) was organized in 1912, soon after military resistance to colonial invasion failed. As apartheid, an official policy of racial segregation, took hold, the people saw no choice but to break the laws they believed were unjust. The ANC united African voices, gaining its strongest momentum in the 1950s with what grew into the Defiance Campaign. Many disruptive boycotts and invasions of “European Only” areas took place. These actions were like those of the civil rights movement in the United States. In 1960, however, a massacre of nonviolent protesters by police closed the era of peaceful protests, and the ANC took up arms. Violent uprisings and workers’ strikes forced the government to seek compromises. Eventually, the country became ungovernable. The apartheid government collapsed, and in 1994, the ANC became the ruling party of South Africa.

An oppressive government gives people strong motives to risk everything in pursuit of justice. But what about an elusive target that rules in shadows? Such are the U.S. corporations responsible for the financial meltdown of 2008. Their reckless lending and investment practices cost taxpayers hundreds of millions of dollars in “bailouts.” The Occupy Wall Street movement rose to voice taxpayers’ anger, but failed to disrupt the institutions targeted. Critics of the movement point out its lack of clear goals. While staging sit-ins in financial districts across the country got media attention and public sympathy, interest in the movement faded. Had they persuaded millions of Americans to stop paying taxes, it would have brought the government to a standstill. However, this would have hurt beneficial programs.

Civil disobedience, with its triumphs and defeats, has been a tool of defense for citizens since ancient times. Either through citizen refusal to participate or by active citizen interventions, governments and policies have been shaped. At the least, these actions can force a society to examine and question its values. While some of these causes may become a shallow parade of tactics, a media circus, others continue to inspire with acts of courage and passion to bring issues to public light.

Adapted from the Connecticut Common Core Aligned Practice Assessment, 2013



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 connecticut's **re**search engine

For School Superintendents and Principals

[iCONN.org](http://www.iconn.org) – Connecticut's **re-search engine** provides all students, teachers and administrators with free online access to a wealth of essential library and information resources from trustworthy sources designed to help students succeed in school. It is freely accessible from every school or library, and from home (access from home requires a public library card). It includes:

- Over 6,600 popular and scholarly magazines and journals across all disciplines:
 - High Schools - <http://www.iconn.org/classicschool>
 - Middle Schools - <http://www.iconn.org/classicmiddleschool>
 - Elementary Schools - <http://www.iconn.org/classicelementary>
- National newspapers, such as *The New York Times* and *The Wall Street Journal*, and *The Hartford Courant*
- The Historical Hartford Courant (from its first issue in 1764 to 1922)
- History, Biography and Science Reference Centers
- Connecticut Digital Collections - historical photos, maps, manuscripts, oral histories, etc.
- Downloadable Audiobooks and eBooks
- Statewide Library Catalog - search over 400 library collections in CT

In contrast to free web search engines, iCONN.org is age-appropriate, contains no ads and no viruses, does not track what you search, and many of its articles have Lexile levels for Common Core. While being as easy to use as any commercial search engine, iCONN.org also provides powerful search tools that allow you to refine your search to get right to the results that matter most.

For the most complete information about iCONN.org, visit the [iCONN Dashboard for Educators](#) and be sure to consult your *library media specialists*.

To streamline access to iCONN.org from schools and avoid having to login, please make sure your school's IP address is [registered](#) with iCONN. If your registered IP address has changed, please [update](#) it. Students are encouraged to obtain *public library cards* so that they can access iCONN.org from home.

iCONN.org is a service of the Connecticut State Library and your local library. It is authorized and funded by the State of Connecticut with support from the Institute of Museum and Library Services. It costs the state approximately \$2 million dollars per year to provide this service. If every public, school and academic library had to acquire the same resources individually, the aggregate cost would be over \$35 million per year.

This is a great deal for Connecticut – please share this information with your teachers.

Best regards,

[William Sullivan](#)
 Administrator

9/25/2014

<http://is.gd/58TU2z>

Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric

INFORMATIONAL TEXTS

Text Title _____

Text Author _____

	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
PURPOSE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Purpose: Subtle, implied, difficult to determine; intricate, theoretical elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Purpose: Implied, but fairly easy to infer; more theoretical than concrete 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Purpose: Implied, but easy to identify based upon context or source 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Purpose: Explicitly stated; clear, concrete with a narrow focus
TEXT STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an extensive range of ideas or events are deep, intricate and often implicit or subtle; organization of the text is intricate or specialized for a particular discipline <input type="radio"/> Text Features: If used, are essential in understanding content <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, extensive, intricate, essential integrated graphics, tables, charts, etc, necessary to make meaning of text; also may provide information not otherwise conveyed in the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between an expanded range of ideas, processes or events are deeper and often implicit or subtle; organization may contain multiple pathways and may exhibit traits common to a specific discipline <input type="radio"/> Text Features: If used, greatly enhance the reader's understanding of content <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, essential integrated graphics, tables, charts, etc; may occasionally be essential to understanding the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between some ideas or events are implicit or subtle; organization is evident and generally sequential <input type="radio"/> Text Features: If used, enhance the reader's understanding of content <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, graphics mostly supplementary to understanding of the text, such as indexes, glossaries; graphs, pictures, tables, and charts directly support the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Organization of Main Ideas: Connections between ideas, processes or events are explicit and clear; organization of text is clear or chronological or easy to predict <input type="radio"/> Text Features: If used, help the reader navigate and understand content but are not essential <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, simple graphics, unnecessary to understanding the text but directly support and assist in interpreting the written text
LANGUAGE FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Subject Matter Knowledge: Extensive, perhaps specialized or even theoretical discipline-specific content knowledge; range of challenging abstract and theoretical concepts <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality: Many references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Subject Matter Knowledge: Moderate levels of discipline-specific content knowledge; some theoretical knowledge may enhance understanding; range of recognizable ideas and challenging abstract concepts <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality: Some references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday practical knowledge and some discipline-specific content knowledge; both simple and more complicated, abstract ideas <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality: A few references or allusions to other texts or outside ideas, theories, etc. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Subject Matter Knowledge: Everyday, practical knowledge; simple, concrete ideas <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality: No references or allusions to other texts, or outside ideas, theories, etc.

Text Complexity: Qualitative Measures Rubric

LITERARY TEXTS

Text Title _____ Text Author _____

	Exceedingly Complex	Very Complex	Moderately Complex	Slightly Complex
MEANING	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Meaning: Several levels and competing elements of meaning that are difficult to identify, separate, and interpret; theme is implicit or subtle, often ambiguous and revealed over the entirety of the text <input type="radio"/> Organization: Organization is intricate with regard to elements such as narrative viewpoint, time shifts, multiple characters, storylines and detail <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, minimal illustrations that support the text, or Graphics are present and are essential for understanding the meaning of the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Meaning: Several levels of meaning that may be difficult to identify or separate; theme is implicit or subtle and may be revealed over the entirety of the text <input type="radio"/> Organization: Organization may include subplots, time shifts and more complex characters <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, a few illustrations that support the text, or Graphics are present and extend the meaning of the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Meaning: More than one level of meaning with levels clearly distinguished from each other; theme is clear but may be conveyed with some subtlety <input type="radio"/> Organization: Organization may have two or more storylines and occasionally be difficult to predict <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, a range of illustrations that support selected parts of the text, or A few graphics are present that support the meaning of the text 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Meaning: One level of meaning; theme is obvious and revealed early in the text. <input type="radio"/> Organization: Organization of text is clear, chronological or easy to predict <input type="radio"/> Use of Graphics: If used, extensive illustrations that directly support and assist in interpreting the written text, or Graphics may be present but are not necessary to understanding the meaning of the text
TEXT STRUCTURE	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Dense and complex; contains abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Generally unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic language; may be ambiguous or purposefully misleading <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Mainly complex sentences often containing multiple concepts 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Complex; contains some abstract, ironic, and/or figurative language <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Somewhat complex language that is sometimes unfamiliar, archaic, subject-specific, or overly academic <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Many complex sentences with several subordinate phrases or clauses and transition words 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Largely explicit and easy to understand with some occasions for more complex meaning <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Mostly contemporary, familiar, conversational; rarely unfamiliar or overly academic <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Simple and compound sentences, with some more complex constructions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Conventionalality: Explicit, literal, straightforward, easy to understand <input type="radio"/> Vocabulary: Contemporary, familiar, conversational language <input type="radio"/> Sentence Structure: Mainly simple sentences
LANGUAGE FEATURES	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas are distinctly different from the common reader <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas are uncommon to most readers <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas portrayed are common to many readers <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: A few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas portrayed are everyday and common to most readers <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements
KNOWLEDGE DEMANDS	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas are distinctly different from the common reader <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Many references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas are uncommon to most readers <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: Some references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas portrayed are common to many readers <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: A few references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <input type="radio"/> Life Experiences: Experiences and/or ideas portrayed are everyday and common to most readers <input type="radio"/> Intertextuality and Cultural Knowledge: No references or allusions to other texts or cultural elements



Text Complexity Analysis of *Title* by Author

Text Type:

Text Description	
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Recommended Complexity Band Level	
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Quantitative Measure			
Quantitative Measure of the Text:	Range:	Associated Band Level:	

Qualitative Measures	
Text Structure:	
Language Features:	
Meaning/Purpose:	
Knowledge Demands:	



Text Complexity Analysis of *Title* by Author

Text Type:

Considerations for Reader and Task

Possible Major Instructional Areas of Focus (include 3-4 CCS Standards) for this Text:

Below are factors to consider with respect to the reader and task:

Potential Challenges this Text Poses:

Differentiation/Supports for Students:

4-Point Explanatory Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Organization/Purpose	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure, creating a sense of unity and completeness. The organization is fully sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thesis/controlling idea of a topic is clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas effective introduction and conclusion logical progression of ideas from beginning to end; strong connections between and among ideas with some syntactic variety 	<p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness. Though there may be minor flaws, they do not interfere with the overall coherence. The organization is adequately sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thesis/controlling idea of a topic is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety to clarify the relationships between and among ideas adequate introduction and conclusion adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end; adequate connections between and among ideas 	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure. Some flaws are evident, and some ideas may be loosely connected. The organization is somewhat sustained between and within paragraphs. The response may have a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thesis/controlling idea of a topic may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience inconsistent use of transitional strategies and/or little variety introduction or conclusion, if present, may be weak uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end; and/or formulaic; inconsistent or unclear connections between and among ideas 	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may be related to the topic but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> thesis/controlling idea may be confusing or ambiguous; response may be too brief or the focus may drift from the purpose and/or audience few or no transitional strategies are evident introduction and/or conclusion may be missing frequent extraneous ideas may be evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have an unclear progression 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

4-Point Explanatory Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Evidence/Elaboration	<p>The response provides thorough elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes the effective use of source material. The response clearly and effectively develops ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated, relevant, and specific clear citations or attribution to source material effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques* vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose effective, appropriate style enhances content 	<p>The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes the use of source material. The response adequately develops ideas, employing a mix of precise and more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated and relevant, yet may be general adequate use of citations or attribution to source material adequate use of some elaborative techniques* vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose generally appropriate style is evident 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes uneven or limited use of source material. The response develops ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence (facts and details) from the source material may be weakly integrated, imprecise, repetitive, vague, and/or copied weak use of citations or attribution to source material weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques*; development may consist primarily of source summary vocabulary use is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the audience and purpose inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style 	<p>The response provides minimal elaboration of the support/evidence for the thesis/controlling idea that includes little or no use of source material. The response is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence (facts and details) from the source material is minimal, irrelevant, absent, incorrectly used, or predominantly copied insufficient use of citations or attribution to source material minimal, if any, use of elaborative techniques* vocabulary is limited or ineffective for the audience and purpose little or no evidence of appropriate style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

*Elaborative techniques may include the use of personal experiences that support the thesis/controlling idea.

2-Point Explanatory Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)			
Score	2	1	0
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling
			<p>NS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

Holistic Scoring:

- Variety:** A range of errors includes sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling.
- Severity:** Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors.
- Density:** The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.

4-Point Narrative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3–8)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Organization/Purpose	<p>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is fully sustained and the focus is clear and maintained throughout:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an effective plot helps to create a sense of unity and completeness effectively establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas natural, logical sequence of events from beginning to end effective opening and closure for audience and purpose 	<p>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is adequately sustained, and the focus is adequate and generally maintained:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> an evident plot helps to create a sense of unity and completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected adequately establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* adequate use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas adequate sequence of events from beginning to end adequate opening and closure for audience and purpose 	<p>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is somewhat sustained and may have an uneven focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there may be an inconsistent plot, and/or flaws may be evident unevenly or minimally establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* uneven use of appropriate transitional strategies and/or little variety weak or uneven sequence of events opening and closure, if present, are weak 	<p>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, may be maintained but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> there is little or no discernible plot or there may just be a series of events may be brief or there is little to no attempt to establish a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view* few or no appropriate transitional strategies may be evident and may cause confusion little or no organization of an event sequence; frequent extraneous ideas and/or a major drift may be evident opening and/or closure may be missing or unsatisfactory 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

*point of view begins at grade 7

Smarter Balanced Assessment System: Connecting the ELA Claims to Classroom Instruction Grades 6-12

4-Point Narrative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3–8)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Development/Elaboration	<p>The narrative, real or imagined, provides thorough, effective elaboration using relevant details, dialogue, and/or description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> experiences, characters, setting and/or events are clearly developed connections to source materials may enhance the narrative; effective use of a variety of narrative techniques that advance the story or illustrate the experience effective use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that clearly advances the purpose effective, appropriate style enhances the narration 	<p>The narrative, real or imagined, provides adequate elaboration using details, dialogue, and/or description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> experiences, characters, setting, and/or events are adequately developed connections to source materials may contribute to the narrative adequate use of a variety of narrative techniques that generally advance the story or illustrate the experience adequate use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that generally advances the purpose generally appropriate style is evident 	<p>The narrative, real or imagined, provides uneven, cursory elaboration using partial and uneven details, dialogue, and/or description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> experiences, characters, setting, and/or events are unevenly developed connections to source materials may be ineffective, awkward, or vague but do not interfere with the narrative narrative techniques are uneven and inconsistent partial or weak use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that may not advance the purpose inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style 	<p>The narrative, real or imagined, provides minimal elaboration using few or no details, dialogue, and/or description:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> experiences, characters, setting, and/or events may be vague, lack clarity, or confusing connections to source materials, if evident, may detract from the narrative use of narrative techniques may be minimal, absent, incorrect, or irrelevant may have little or no use of sensory, concrete, or figurative language; language does not advance and may interfere with the purpose little or no evidence of appropriate style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

Smarter Balanced Assessment System: Connecting the ELA Claims to Classroom Instruction Grades 6-12

2-Point Narrative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3-8)			
Score	2	1	0
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling
			<p>NS</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

Holistic Scoring:

- Variety:** A range of errors includes sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling.
- Severity:** Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors.
- Density:** The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.



4-Point Argumentative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Organization/Purpose	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure, creating a sense of unity and completeness. The organization is fully sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim is introduced, clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas effective introduction and conclusion logical progression of ideas from beginning to end; strong connections between and among ideas with some syntactic variety alternate and opposing argument(s) are clearly acknowledged or addressed* 	<p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness. Though there may be minor flaws, they do not interfere with the overall coherence. The organization is adequately sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety to clarify relationships between and among ideas adequate introduction and conclusion adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end; adequate connections between and among ideas alternate and opposing argument(s) are adequately acknowledged or addressed* 	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure. Some flaws are evident, and some ideas may be loosely connected. The organization is somewhat sustained between and within paragraphs. The response may have a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience inconsistent use of transitional strategies and/or little variety introduction or conclusion, if present, may be weak uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end; and/or formulaic; inconsistent or unclear connections among ideas alternate and opposing argument(s) may be confusing or not acknowledged * 	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may be related to the claim but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim may be confusing or ambiguous; response may be too brief or the focus may drift from the purpose and/or audience few or no transitional strategies are evident introduction and/or conclusion may be missing frequent extraneous ideas may be evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have unclear progression alternate and opposing argument(s) may not be acknowledged * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

* acknowledging and/or addressing the opposing point of view begins at grade 7

4-Point Argumentative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Evidence/Elaboration	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) including reasoned, in-depth analysis and the effective use of source material. The response clearly and effectively develops ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated, relevant, and specific clear citations or attribution to source material effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques* vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose effective, appropriate style enhances content 	<p>The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) that includes reasoned analysis and the use of source material. The response adequately develops ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated and relevant, yet may be general adequate use of citations or attribution to source material adequate use of some elaborative techniques* vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose generally appropriate style is evident 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) that includes some reasoned analysis and partial or uneven use of source material. The response develops ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence (facts and details) from the source material may be weakly integrated, imprecise, repetitive, vague, and/or copied weak use of citations or attribution to source material weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques*; development may consist primarily of source summary or may rely on emotional appeal vocabulary use is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the audience and purpose inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style 	<p>The response provides minimal elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) that includes little or no use of source material. The response is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence (facts and details) from the source material is minimal, irrelevant, absent, incorrectly used, or predominantly copied insufficient use of citations or attribution to source material minimal, if any, use of elaborative techniques*; emotional appeal may dominate vocabulary is limited or ineffective for the audience and purpose little or no evidence of appropriate style 	<p>Insufficient (includes copied text)</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

*Elaborative techniques may include the use of personal experiences that support the argument(s).

2-Point Argumentative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)				
Score	2	1	0	NS
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

Holistic Scoring:

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- Density:** The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.



Resources for Sources for Texts

Grades 6-12

- **Newsela**
<https://newsela.com/>
Newsela is an innovative way to build reading comprehension with nonfiction that's always relevant: daily news. Updated daily with real-world news from major publications, students can participate in conversation about the most urgent topics of our time, all while becoming stronger readers.
- **National Archives**
<http://www.archives.gov/>
Explore our nation's history through documents, photos, and records. Also contains lesson plans and other classroom materials.
- **Washington Post for Kids**
<http://www.washingtonpost.com/lifestyle/kidspost/>
KidsPost features world, science, cultural, and other kinds of news in articles for kids.
- **Many Books**
<http://manybooks.net/>
Over 29,000 eBooks available for iPad, Kindle, Nook, and most other eReaders and they're all free! Students can search genre, title, language, and author for books.
- **Harvard University Library - Open Collections Program**
<http://ocp.hul.harvard.edu>
Harvard has compiled six subject-specific, web-accessible collections to support teaching and learning around the world. Collections are on a variety of subjects including immigration, women's roles in the US economy, scientific discovery, and epidemics.
- **National Science Digital Library**
<http://nsdl.org>
This website provides high quality online educational resources with current emphasis on the sciences, technology, engineering, and mathematics (STEM) disciplines.
- **Biography**
www.biography.com

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Videos and written biographies of thousands of your favorite stars, famous figures, and notorious personalities. Search people by date, nationality, life events, and what they are best known for.

- **The Reading and Writing Project**
<http://readingandwritingproject.com>
A great collection of sites for digital texts and nonfiction journals that are engaging, informative, and challenging.
- **The New York Public Library**
<http://www.nypl.org/>
Access 'research' and choose from online databases, such as Amazing Animals of the World, and Historical Newspapers, and a digital archive of historical photographs
- **American Rhetoric**
<http://www.americanrhetoric.com/>
Archives of thousands of great American speeches and public communication through the decades; includes video, audio and movie clips.
- **TED**
www.ted.com
A nonprofit organization with videos of ideas worth spreading, perfect for inspiring student written response.

Text Dependent Questions

- **Achieve the Core**
<http://achievethecore.org/page/710/text-dependent-question-resources>
On this page teachers can find tools to help write and evaluate text-dependent questions, as well as a link to lesson materials with examples of text-dependent questions included.
- **Connecticut Dream Team 2014 ELA Resources – Close Reading Plans**
http://ctcorestandards.org/?page_id=3708
The Connecticut Dream Team ELA and content-area literacy teachers created materials built from complex texts and the CT Core Standards with a focus on close reading. Their work includes an analysis of a complex text and a set of text-dependent questions designed to guide students towards a “big takeaway” in the text.

Resources to find Unit & Lesson Plans

- EngageNY

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www.engageny.org

EngageNY is dedicated to providing educators with real-time, professional learning tools and resources to provide a college- and career-ready education for all students. Here you can find downloadable curriculum for ELA and Mathematics for Pre-K through twelfth grade. These modules, units, and lessons are provided free for all educators to use and adapt. They are fully aligned with the CCSS and the instructional shifts.

- **Odell Education**

<http://odelleducation.com/literacy-curriculum>

The Developing Core Proficiencies Curriculum is an integrated set of English Language Arts/Literacy units spanning grades 6-12. Funded by the USNY Regents Research Fund, the free curriculum comprises a series of four units at each grade level that provide direct instruction on a set of literacy proficiencies at the heart of the Common Core State Standards. Each unit highlights a core literacy proficiency and provides approaches, instructional sequences, handouts, tools and texts for developing independent mastery and creative critical thinking in students. The units build in complexity to support students from reading for key details to writing fully developed arguments from text.

- **Achieve the Core**

<http://achievethecore.org>

This website is full of free content designed to help educators understand and implement the Standards. It includes practical tools designed to help students and teachers see their hard work deliver results. Achievethecore.org was created by Student Achievement Partners in the spirit of collaboration, and provides access to many tools and resources from other aligned organizations and websites.

- **America Achieves**

<http://commoncore.americaachieves.org/>

America Achieves helps communities and states leverage policy, practice and leadership to build high quality educational systems and prepare each young person for success in careers, college, and citizenship. On this site you will find annotated videos of Common Core-aligned instruction, as well as lesson plans and in many cases, student work samples for Math and English Language Arts & Literacy both elementary and secondary levels.

- **Literacy Design Collaborative**

<http://ldc.org/sample-curricula/english-language-arts>

LDC offers a variety of templates that help ELA teachers boost student engagement and master texts at their reading level (and above)! LDC templates "hardwire" Common Core Standards into module design, requiring students to use critical thinking skills to evaluate texts and improve

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their reading and writing skills. LDC also provides full units of instruction for some of the template tasks. While originally designed for secondary lessons, LDC has now expanded to include elementary examples and tasks. Sign up for LDC CoreTools to access even more curriculum.