ILLINOIS STATE BOARD OF EDUCATION

ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS SAMPLE ITEMS

GRADE 3

Samples to Success

Sample items provide valuable insight into how students engage with different texts, tasks, and contexts, highlighting the types of opportunities they need for success in the classroom. These items offer a shared reference point for understanding proficiency expectations, complementing the assessment's role in measuring learning. By analyzing items alongside performance data, educators can gain a deeper understanding of students' strengths and areas for growth. Students thrive in environments rich with diverse materials, challenges that vary in task type, and multiple avenues for demonstrating understanding. High-quality instruction, aligned with the learning goals, is the most effective way to support students' growth and prepare them for success.
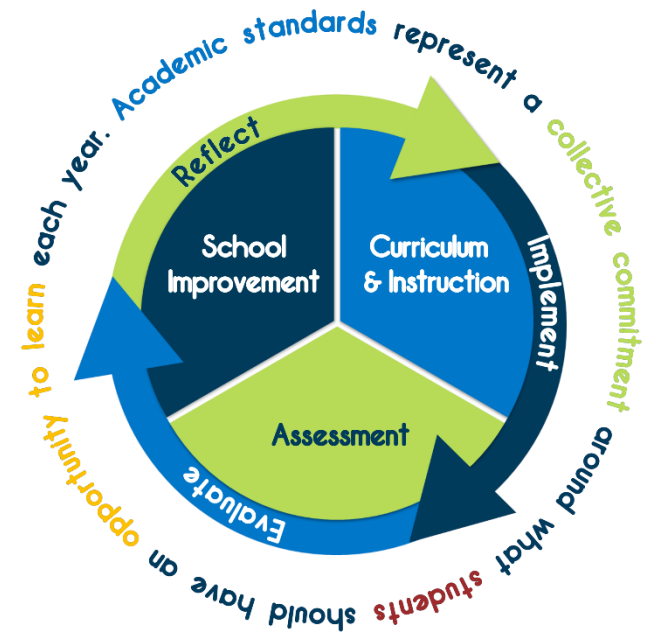
Test questions can measure a single skill or a set of knowledge and skills. The ELA test differs from other subjects in that it has fewer items overall, but each item assesses multiple skills or knowledge by asking students to demonstrate skills through performance, such as writing a response to literary or informational texts. Therefore, what differentiates the levels of performance are the degree to and quality with which a student performs.

Grade 3 – Claim 1: Reading Literary Text

1ˢᵗ Text – P. 4

2ⁿᵈ Text – P. 11

Writing Task – P. 17

Multiple items on the Illinois Assessment of Readiness (IAR) are linked to a set of texts to read, often accompanied by images or multimedia. The sample item set has two sections from a literary text and a writing task. Small screenshots and page numbers are provided to help you navigate the linked sample item set.

Each text is followed by several two-part multiple-choice items. Students must select a correct response in Part A and supporting evidence in Part B. The second text also has an item in which students correctly sequence events in a table where partial credit is possible.

Students at the **above proficient** and **proficient** levels are likely to correctly respond to most multiple-choice items and items such as the sequencing table in this sample. **Approaching proficient** students are likely to select a correct answer for Part A, but not for Part B and complete the sequencing table with some correct interactions to receive partial credit. **Below proficient** students may inaccurately respond to Part A and Part B, as well as the sequencing table.

This sample item set also contains a Literary Analysis writing task comparing two texts. Student responses are graded according to page 1 of the Literary Analysis Rubric. Literary writing tasks often contribute to a student's **Reading Comprehension** score in addition to their **Writing** score. Student writing samples and annotations are found in the Written Expression Claim section in this document.

Two-part Multiple-choice Pgs. 8-10 & 14-15	Sequencing Table P. 16	Answer Key P. 3	Written Response Scoring Rubric P. 1

1st Text – P. 4

Here we provide an informational text sample item set. The set contains two informational texts to read and several two-part multiple-choice items. Small screenshots and page numbers are provided to help you navigate the linked sample item set.

Each informational text prompt is followed by several two-part multiple-choice items that ask students to select a correct response in Part A of each item and then to select a response that supports that answer in Part B[1]. The second text prompt also contains an item in which students categorize the meaning behind sentences from the text where partial credit is possible.

Students at the **above proficient** and **proficient** levels are likely to correctly respond to most multiple-choice items and items such as the categorization table in this sample. **Approaching proficient** students are likely to select a correct answer for Part A, but not for Part B. **Below proficient** students may inaccurately or inconsistently respond to either Part A or Part B. Students at the above proficient and proficient levels are likely to correctly match all answers in the table. Approaching proficient students are likely to match one correct answer out of the three possible interactions. Below proficient students may inaccurately match all interactions.

2nd Text – P. 8

The item set also contains a Research Simulation writing task. Student responses are graded according to page 1 of the Research Simulation Task Rubric. All Research Simulation writing tasks contribute to a student's **Reading Comprehension** score in addition to their **Writing** score. Student writing samples and annotations are found in the Written Expression Claim section in this document**.**

Two-part Multiple-choice Pgs. 8-9 & 11-15	Categorization Table P. 16	Answer Key P. 3	Written Response Scoring Rubric P. 1

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[1] One item has three parts, but three-part items have since been discontinued in favor of two-part items.

1st Text – P. 4

Reading vocabulary items are found within Reading Informational and Reading Literary item sets. This released item set (the same sample set from Claim 2) contains two embedded reading passages; items; and an associated answer key, which is located at the beginning of the document. (Screenshots are included to support navigation of the linked items.)

Vocabulary items ask students to select a correct response in Part A and then to select a response that supports that answer in Part B of the item.

Students at the **above proficient** and **proficient** levels are likely to correctly respond to both parts of the vocabulary items. **Approaching proficient** students are likely to select a correct answer for Part A, but not for Part B. **Below proficient** students may inaccurately respond to Part A and Part B.

2nd Text – P. 8

Two-part Multiple-choice P. 7	Answer Key P. 3

Grade 3 – Claim 4: Written Expression

The Written Expression Claim is measured through writing tasks. This sample item contains a Narrative Writing task with a multimedia prompt. This is followed by examples of student writing at different point levels. Comparing student responses to rubric criteria allows us to see how students earn points for performance of specific skills. The IAR writing rubrics align with performance level descriptors (PLDs) by specifying how different aspects of writing correspond to these proficiency levels.

Each writing sample is followed by notes that explain the rationale for the student's **Written Expression** score according to the rubric. The samples begin with the highest-scoring example and end with the lowest-scoring example. Students at the **above proficient** and **proficient** levels are likely to earn 3 or 2 points on writing tasks. **Approaching proficient** students are likely to earn 1 point. **Below proficient** students are likely to earn 0 points for their responses.

3 Points P. 5	2 Points P. 11	1 Point P. 13	0 Points P. 19
(Notes) P. 6	**(Notes) P. 12**	**(Notes) P. 14**	**(Notes) P. 20**

Conventions Writing Rubric P.2

Sample writing tasks and student responses provide concrete examples of student writing at different levels. The IAR writing rubrics align with PLDs by specifying how different aspects of writing correspond to these proficiency levels. These released item responses contain notes that explain the rationale for student's **Conventions** score. These samples come from a variety of writing prompts; therefore, the types of responses will vary, but the conventions remain the focus of this claim. The samples begin with the highest-scoring example and end with the lowest-scoring example.

Students at the **above proficient** and **proficient** levels are likely to earn 3 or 2 points on writing tasks. **Approaching proficient** students are likely to earn 1 point. **Below proficient** students are likely to earn 0 points for their responses.

3 Points P. 6	2 Points P. 8	1 Point P. 14	0 Points P. 16
Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
P.7	**P. 9**	**P. 15**	**P. 17**
Anchor Paper 2 Score Point 3	Anchor Paper 3 Score Point 2	Anchor Paper 6 Score Point 1	Anchor Paper 7 Score Point 0