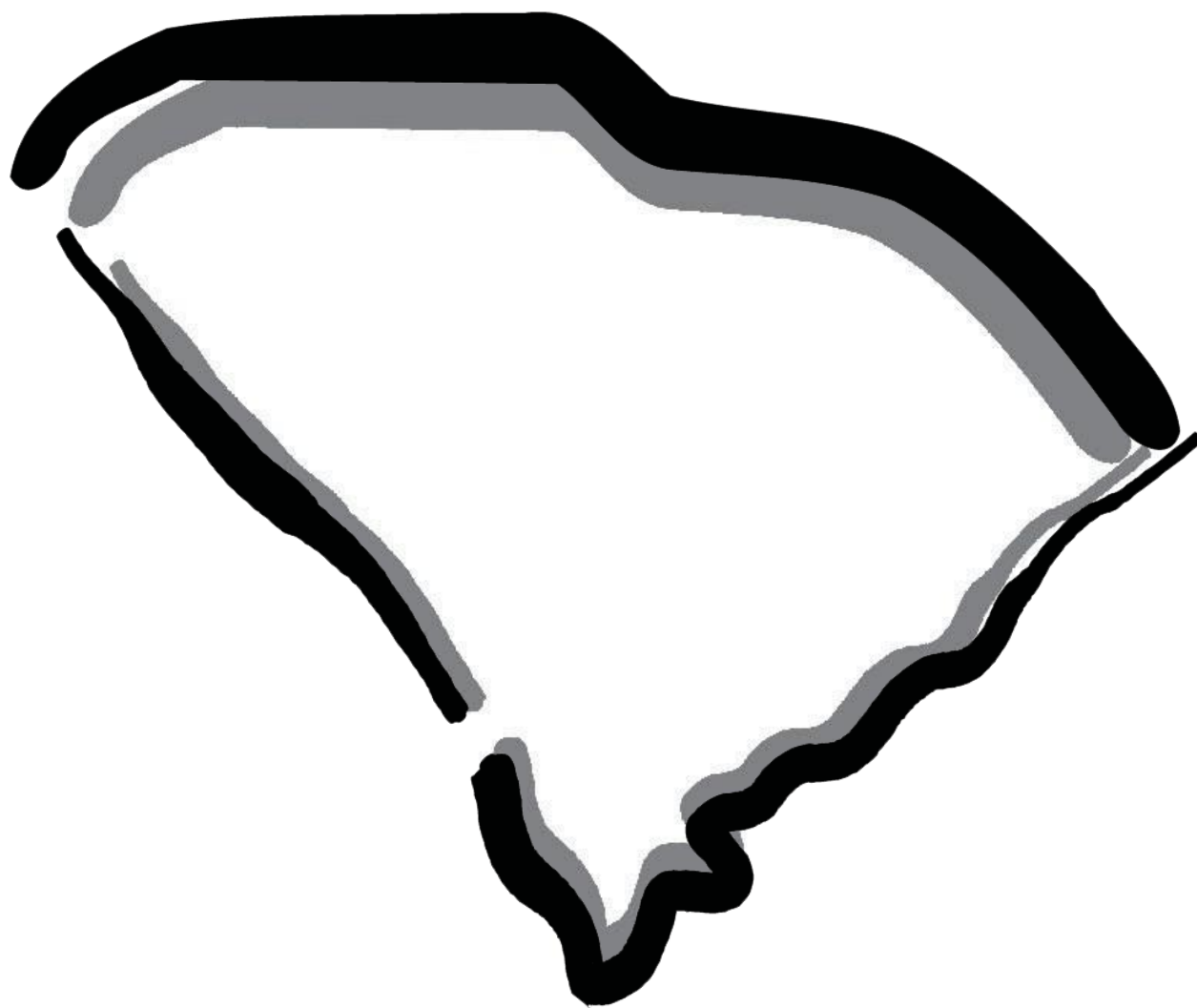


**South Carolina
End-of-Course Examination
Program**



English 2

**2015 Sample Items
Realigned to the 2024 ELA Indicators**

Introduction

The South Carolina State Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instruction aligned with the South Carolina Academic Standards. This document contains a set of twenty End-of-Course Examination Program (EOCEP) English Language Arts test items that have been written to align with the SC English Language Arts Academic Standards. These items were reviewed for content and bias prior to being field tested and approved for release to the public.

Purpose

This document is intended to be a resource for educators; it is not designed to be a practice test for students. The sample items are examples of college- and career- ready assessment items. The EOCEP assesses content standards in a variety of ways. This document does not include all item types or standards.

Item Information Format

Standard Alignment	South Carolina English Language Arts
Standard Description	text from SC English Language Arts
Answer Key	correct answer
Depth of Knowledge	cognitive demand
Estimated Difficulty	estimate based on student responses

References

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards (2015)
<https://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/file/programs-services/59/documents/ELA2015SCCCRStandards.pdf>.

Webb, Norman L. (2002). "Depth-of-Knowledge for Four Content Areas."

1. A student is writing an argumentative essay in which she claims that recycling for all cities should be required since it is good to the environment.

Which sentence **best** represents a counterclaim?

- A. Above all, mandatory recycling programs have low compliance rates due to difficulty in separating items.
- B. While comparing voluntary and mandatory recycling programs, the benefit of educating communities must not be overlooked.
- C. Although the environmental benefits of mandatory recycling are real, the costs for implementation of such recycling programs are significant.
- D. In the end, increasing property taxes and utility bills are one way that local governments pay for mandatory recycling programs.

EOCEP Sample Item 1

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.C.1.1b
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Indicator Description	Acknowledge a counterclaim...
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Answer Key	C
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Depth of Knowledge	2
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Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty
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2. A student is writing a report on Clara Josephine Schumann. The student found a source. Read the paragraph from the source.

Clara Josephine Schumann was an accomplished musician and composer of the Romantic era. She was born Clara Josephine Wieck on September 13, 1819 in Leipzig, Germany. Her father, Frederick Wieck, was a piano teacher, and her mother Marianne Wieck, was a concert pianist. Clara's father wanted Clara to excel as a musician and made sure that she received instruction in piano, violin, voice, and composition from the time she was young. Clara gave her first solo concert in 1830 at the age of 11 and included works of others plus her own compositions. By her mid-teens, Clara was quite famous throughout Europe and regularly performed concerts to sold-out audiences. After marrying fellow composer, Robert Schumann, in 1840, Clara continued performing and composing. Clara traveled to England in 1856 and was invited to play in a London Philharmonic Society concert. She returned to England many times over the next few years. Her musical interpretations were known for their depth and sensitivity and are still performed today. In 1878, Clara accepted a teaching position at the Hoch Conservatory in Frankfurt, Germany and held this position until 1892.

Which question would **best** broaden the focus of the student's report?

- A. How many musical compositions did Clara Josephine Schumann write?
- B. Why is the music Clara Josephine Schumann wrote still popular?
- C. Which musical instrument did Clara Josephine Schumann enjoy playing the most?
- D. How often did Clara Josephine Schumann perform with her husband Robert Schumann?

EOCEP Sample Item 2

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.R.1.1b
Indicator Description	Refine the scope of inquiry a relevant to the topic, purpose, and audience
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

3. A student is writing an essay about the health benefits of organic produce. Which source would most likely offer the most relevant and credible information?
- A. **www.go-organic.org**: a website that gives information on local grocery stores where consumers can purchase organic produce
 - B. **www.pacificuniversity.edu/organic**: a website that provides recent research studies conducted on the impact of organic produce on the human body
 - C. **www.grow-organic.com/blog**: a website that gives tips from one person on how to create an organic produce garden in a backyard space
 - D. **www.organic-cooking.net**: a website that provides a wide variety of recipes for all meals using organic produce from markets or personal gardens

EOCEP Sample Item 3

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.R.1.2
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Indicator Description	Analyze the credibility and relevance of sources...
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Answer Key	B
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Depth of Knowledge	2
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Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty
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4. A student is writing an essay about the benefits of online learning. Read part of the student's essay.

Online learning is a growing educational opportunity for many students. Millions of students across the United States take part in some type of digital learning. Students can learn a musical instrument, improve writing skills, or take karate classes online.

Some students in grades kindergarten through 12 are even receiving their educations digitally through full-time, online public schools. Homework, however, is still a requirement for most courses. Online classes are available any time of the day or night. Many times, students are allowed to learn at a pace that is comfortable for them. There are some definite advantages to taking courses online.

Which sentence from the essay contains the most relevant information to support the claim that there are advantages to taking online courses?

- A. Online learning is a growing educational opportunity for many students.
- B. Millions of students across the United States take part in some type of digital learning.
- C. Homework, however, is still a requirement for most courses.
- D. Online classes are available any time of the day or night.

EOCEP Sample Item 4

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.C.1.1b
Indicator Description	develop claims and counterclaims fairly and thoroughly by using the most relevant evidence...
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

The essay below needs revisions or edits. Read the essay and answer question 5.

How to Care for Goldfish

(1) I received a goldfish for my tenth birthday. (2) This delightful package also contained a small bag of white gravel and a day-glow green, spiky plant, I was eager to go to the store to select my fish. (3) I found a place with a container of bright fish moving busy. (4) Given the size of the bowl, the clerk recommended that I buy three small fish. (5) After plastic bags were filled with water from the aquarium tanks, my fish were scooped up and placed inside.

(6) After filling the bowl with water, I set the bags with the fish still in them in my large fish bowl. (7) With great deliberation, I chose two miniature goldfish and a bottom-feeder. (8) Adjusting to the temperature of the water in the bowl, I waited impatiently for the water in the bag. (9) Once the temperatures were the same, I carefully untwisted the ties on the bags to release the fish into the bowl. (10) And my carefully selected fish swam around in their new home. (11) Darting in and out of the day-glow spikes of the plant.

(12) First, the water became cloudy. (13) I made a number of mistakes when I first started caring for my fish. (14) Soon, I learned to cut back the amount of food flakes I gave them and alternated feeding days. (15) I made another mistake when I changed the water in the fish bowl allowing a fish to flop out.

5. Where is the **most** logical placement of sentence 13?
- A. immediately before sentence 12
 - B. immediately before sentence 15
 - C. immediately after sentence 15
 - D. Correct as is

EOCEP Sample Item 5

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.C.5.1
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Indicator Description	Improve writing by... revising...
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Answer Key	A
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Depth of Knowledge	2
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Estimated Difficulty	Low Difficulty
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Read the speech below and answer questions 6–10.

President William McKinley served in office from March 1897 to September 1901. While he was president, he advocated for a shipping canal that would connect the Atlantic Ocean to the Pacific Ocean. In September 1901, it was decided that the canal would be cut through the country of Panama. The canal is now known as the Panama Canal. McKinley gave the following speech at the Pan-American Exposition (a world's fair) held in Buffalo, New York, on September 5, 1901.

International Relations

President William McKinley's Speech to the People of Buffalo, New York, September 5, 1901

Ladies and Gentlemen, I am glad to be again in the City of Buffalo and exchange greetings with her people, to whose generous hospitality I am not a stranger, and with whose good will I have been repeatedly and signally honored. Expositions¹ are the timekeepers of progress. They record the world's advancement. They stimulate the energy, enterprise and intellect of the people and quicken human genius. They go into the home. They broaden and brighten the daily life of the people. They open mighty storehouses of information to the student.

The wisdom and energy of all the nations are none too great for the world's work. The success of art, science, industry and invention is an international asset and a common glory. After all, how near one to the other is every part of the world. Modern inventions have brought into close relation widely separated peoples, and made them better acquainted. Geographic and political divisions will continue to exist, but distances have been effaced.

Swift ships and fast trains are becoming cosmopolitan. They invade fields which a few years ago were impenetrable. The world's products are exchanged as never before, and with increasing transportation facilities come increasing knowledge and trade. Prices are fixed with mathematical precision by supply and demand. The world's selling prices are regulated by market and crop reports. We travel greater distances in a shorter space of time, and with more ease than was ever dreamed of by the fathers.

Isolation is no longer possible or desirable. The same important news is read, though in different languages, the same day [throughout the world]. The telegraph² keeps us advised of what is occurring everywhere, and the press foreshadows, with more or less accuracy, the plans and purposes of the nations. Market prices of products and of securities are hourly known in every commercial mart, and the investments of the people extend beyond their own national boundaries into the remotest parts of the earth. Vast transactions are conducted and international exchanges are made by the tick of the cable. Every event of interest is immediately bulletined.

The quick gathering and transmission of news, like rapid transit, are of recent origin, and are only made possible by the genius of the inventor and the courage of the investor. It took a special messenger of the government, with every facility known at the time for rapid travel, nineteen days to go from the City of Washington to New Orleans with a message to General Jackson that the war with England had ceased and a treaty of peace had been signed.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was not a mile of steam railroad on the globe. Now there are enough miles to make its circuit many times. Then there was not a line of electric telegraph; now we have vast mileage traversing all lands and all seas. No nation can be indifferent to any other. And as we are brought more and more in touch with each other, the less occasion there is for misunderstandings and the stronger the disposition, when we have differences, to adjust them in the court of arbitration, which is the noblest forum for the settlement of international disputes.

- 7 The period of exclusiveness is past. The expansion of our trade and commerce is the pressing problem. A policy of good will and friendly trade relations will prevent reprisals. Reciprocity treaties are in harmony with the spirit of the times; measures of retaliation are not. If perchance some of our tariffs are no longer needed for revenue or to encourage and protect our industries at home, why should they not be employed to extend and promote our markets abroad?
- 8 Then, too, we have inadequate steamship service. New lines of steamers have already been put in commission between the Pacific coast ports of the United States and those on the western coasts of Mexico and Central and South America. These should be followed up with direct steamship lines between the eastern coast of the United States and South American ports. One of the needs of the times is direct commercial lines from our vast fields of production to the fields of consumption that we have but barely touched.
- 9 Next in advantage to having the thing to sell is to have the convenience to carry it to the buyer. We must encourage our merchant marine. We must have more ships. These will not be profitable in a commercial sense; they will be messengers of peace and amity wherever they go.

We must build the isthmian canal³, which will unite the two oceans and give a straight line of water communication with the western coasts of Central America, South America and Mexico. The construction of a Pacific cable cannot be postponed.

In the furtherance of these objects of national interest and concern, you are performing an important part. This exposition would have touched the heart of Americans whose minds were ever alert and thought ever constant for a larger commerce and a truer fraternity of the republics of the new world. The good work will go on. It cannot be stopped. These buildings will disappear, this creation of art and beauty and industry will perish from sight, but their influence will remain.

Let us ever remember that our interest is in concord, not conflict, and that our real eminence rests in the victories of peace, not those of war. We hope that all who are represented here may be moved to higher and nobler effort for their own and the world's good, and that out of this city may come not only greater commerce and trade for us all, but, more essential than these, relations of mutual respect, confidence and friendship which will deepen and endure. Our earnest prayer is for prosperity, happiness, and peace to all our neighbors and like blessings to all the peoples and powers of earth.

¹Expositions—public exhibitions or shows

²telegraph—a machine used to transmit messages over long distances

³isthmian canal—Panama Canal

6. Read the sentences from the speech.

At the beginning of the nineteenth century there was not a mile of steam railroad on the globe. Now there are enough miles to make its circuit many times. Then there was not a line of electric telegraph; now we have vast mileage traversing all lands and all seas.

What does the word traversing mean?

- A. falling over
- B. steering around
- C. going across
- D. circling through

EOCEP Sample Item 6

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.7.1a
Indicator Description	use context to determine the meaning of words and phrases
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

7. What does McKinley hope to accomplish by repeating the ideas in paragraphs 8 and 9 of the speech?
- A. He hopes the audience will understand that steamships will eventually be replaced with other means of transportation for manufacturers to compete in a world economy.
 - B. He hopes the audience will understand the need to build a canal, which would allow more ships to carry goods to strengthen commerce.
 - C. He hopes the audience will understand that ships are the fastest way to carry various goods to different markets.
 - D. He hopes the audience will understand that shipping lines should be changed so that ships from other countries will be able to carry goods to buyers.

EOCEP Sample Item 7

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - AOR.4.1
Indicator Description	Analyze an author's... purpose in a text...author's rhetoric used to advance that... purpose
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

8. Read the sentence from the speech. Expositions are the timekeepers of progress.
- What is meant by the phrase “the timekeepers of progress”?
- A. Expositions allow inventors and artists to show their work to the world.
 - B. Cities that host expositions are more advanced than other cities.
 - C. National leaders who attend expositions are better prepared for future challenges.
 - D. Expositions showcase the most-recent innovations in science and industry.

EOCEP Sample Item 8	
Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - AOR.8.1a
Indicator Description	interpret figures of speech in context
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

9. This question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

Part A

What is a central idea of the speech?

- A. Nations that adopt technology usually avoid conflict.
- B. Nations become successful by importing more goods than they export.
- C. Nations are connected through advancements in technology.
- D. Nations that share updates on commerce have greater political divisions.

Part B

Which sentence from the speech **best** supports the answer in part A?

- A. They stimulate the energy, enterprise, and intellect of the people and quicken human genius.
- B. Modern inventions have brought into close relation widely separated peoples, and made them better acquainted.
- C. The same important news is read, though in different languages, the same day [throughout the world].
- D. A policy of good will and friendly trade relations will prevent reprisals.

EOCEP Sample Item 9

Standard Alignment

2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.2.2

Indicator Description

Analyze how the author of a historical speech... uses supporting details to develop the central idea over the course of a text.

Answer Key

C/B

Depth of Knowledge

3

Estimated Difficulty

Medium Difficulty

10. Which sentence from the speech **best** supports the inference that McKinley felt the exposition at which he was speaking would inspire progress for many years to come?
- A. They open mighty storehouses of information to the student.
 - B. The wisdom and energy of all the nations are none too great for the world's work.
 - C. In the furtherance of these objects of national interest and concern, you are performing an important part.
 - D. These buildings will disappear, this creation of art and beauty and industry will perish from sight, but their influence will remain.

EOCEP Sample Item 10

Standard Alignment	E2.RI.5.1 (Does not align with the language of the 2024 ELA Standards)
Standard Description	Cite significant textual evidence in order to articulate explicit meanings; and meanings that can be inferred from the text; identify multiple supported interpretations.
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

Read the passage below and answer questions 11–16.

Misplaced Drama

“I know they’re here. They have to be here,” Ashley said to herself in a stressed, whispered voice as she flipped through the several pieces of clothing that hung neatly backstage. Everything appeared to be there. Every shirt, every pair of pants, every dress, every hair ornament was there. On the prop table, every prop was present as well. Yet for Ashley, the reality was quite different. The truth was like a screeching tire, impossible to ignore.

It was just two months ago that Ashley had confidently accepted the position of costume manager for the school drama production. When Ms. Fitzgerald approached Ashley about the role, Ashley was flattered.

“It’s going to be a lot of work,” Ms. Fitzgerald warned. “The play takes place in 1920, so many of the costumes will need to be rented, which means that you’ll have to keep meticulous records, tracking who, what, when, and where each item is,” she said, peering over her glasses at Ashley. “Every item will need to be logged in and out, and no one is allowed to take anything home.” Ashley nodded, a mix of excitement and nervousness running through her.

“Since this position requires so much tracking,” Ms. Fitzgerald continued, “I was thinking that we may want two people to take on this role instead of just one. I know you have exceptional organizational skills, and I have confidence that you can do this job just as well as two people, but if there’s ever a time when you feel overwhelmed, please let me know. I’m trusting you to make me aware of any problems. If we lose something that we’ve rented, the drama club will be responsible for purchasing a replacement, and those types of incidentals aren’t in our budget.”

“Yes, I understand,” Ashley said assuredly.

Now, months later, remembering Ms. Fitzgerald’s words made Ashley cringe with regret and disappointment. Had she accepted Ms. Fitzgerald’s offer to share the responsibility with someone else, perhaps the situation she was in now could have been avoided. And perhaps if she had logged in every item properly during the first dress rehearsal, everything would be here now.

Ashley remembered that last Thursday’s first dress rehearsal had gone smoothly. Much of the cast and crew, including herself, were restless as they looked forward to just one more day of school before the long weekend. Ashley recalled being tired from a demanding day of classes. Instead of checking each item against her list like she usually did, she performed a mental check of each item, feeling confident that she had memorized the complete list and no longer needed to reference it. Looking back, her own arrogance had gotten the best of her.

Ashley looked at her watch. In thirty minutes students would begin arriving at the auditorium to prepare for the second dress rehearsal. Ms. Fitzgerald would also be there, pleasantly unaware of the upsetting news she was about to receive. Ashley checked her list one more time but got the same results. The long-jeweled earrings were gone.

In a matter of minutes, an ensemble of familiar sounds filled the auditorium: students talking, book-filled backpacks hitting the floor, and the noticeable creak of people walking across the wooden stage. These were the sounds that Ashley looked forward to hearing every day. Today, though, she dreaded these noises because they only meant that she was one step closer to telling Ms. Fitzgerald what had happened.

"Ashley, I want to talk to you about the costumes for our male characters." Ms. Fitzgerald's voice was firm yet pleasant, addressing Ashley. The teacher was looking down at a printed picture she held in her hands. "I think we should add a handkerchief to the pocket, like in this picture," she said, handing the paper to Ashley.

"Yes, I think that would make our characters look more authentic for the time period," Ashley replied. Ms. Fitzgerald nodded in agreement, continuing to study the picture. "Ms. Fitzgerald, I have something to tell you," Ashley said, her voice barely above the sound of a whisper. At that moment, Ms. Fitzgerald looked directly at Ashley and removed her glasses, seeming to brace herself for upsetting news. "I want to tell you that . . ."

Ashley's voice trailed off, her attention held captive by a familiar flicker just a few feet in front of her. There stood Claudia Anderson, a main character, talking to another cast member, casually wearing the earrings for which Ashley had painstakingly searched.

"The earrings!" Ashley exclaimed as she rushed to Claudia, forgetting that she had been in the middle of a conversation with Ms. Fitzgerald.

"Oh, I forgot to take them off after our last dress rehearsal. But it kind of worked out, because I was able to show my mom what they looked like," Claudia replied casually, completely oblivious to the anguish Ashley had endured just moments ago. Ashley didn't know whether to yell at Claudia for her thoughtless actions or hug her for bringing peace to a chaotic afternoon. Instead, Ashley just smiled and reminded Claudia that all rented items needed to stay at school.

Ashley turned and walked away smiling, relieved that everything had worked out. Suddenly, she realized that Ms. Fitzgerald had probably heard everything, and her moment of relief immediately turned to uneasiness as she anticipated what her drama teacher would say.

"Well," Ms. Fitzgerald said as Ashley approached her, "I think we can all breathe a sigh of relief."

"Absolutely," Ashley said, relieved by Ms. Fitzgerald's relaxed demeanor. "Also, I think the play could benefit from having two costume managers instead of one."

11. How does the author create tension in the passage?
- A. by hinting at the resolution immediately after describing the main setting
 - B. by presenting the main character as a typical school student
 - C. by creating a sense of urgency through the development of the conflict
 - D. by summarizing the relief the characters feel at the end of the passage

EOCEP Sample Item 11

Standard Alignment	E2.RL.12.1 (Does not align with the language of the 2024 ELA Standards)
Standard Description	Analyze how the relationships among structure, plot and manipulation of time create the effects of mystery, tension, or surprise citing support from the text.
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

12. This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Which statement **best** reflects a theme of the passage?

- A. Having a hard job requires a person to be organized.
- B. Having a strong work ethic eventually leads a person to success.
- C. Having good friends can usually make a person happy.
- D. Having too much confidence can cause a person to eventually fail.

Part B

Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the answer to part A?

- A. Ashley remembered that last Thursday's first dress rehearsal had gone smoothly.
- B. Much of the cast and crew, including herself, were restless as they looked forward to just one more day of school before the long weekend.
- C. Looking back, her own arrogance had gotten the best of her.
- D. Ashley turned and walked away smiling, relieved that everything had worked out.

EOCEP Sample Item 12

Standard Alignment

2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.2.1

Indicator Description

Analyze the development of universal themes across literary texts... (the 2024 Assessment Specifications document clarifies that for the E2 assessment, this may be addressed with one or more texts.)

Answer Key

D/C

Depth of Knowledge

3

Estimated Difficulty

High Difficulty

13. Which sentence **best** shows how Ashley develops over the course of the passage?
- A. “They have to be here,” Ashley said to herself in a stressed, whispered voice . . .
 - B. In a matter of minutes, an ensemble of familiar sounds filled the auditorium . . .
 - C. Ashley’s voice trailed off, her attention held captive by a familiar flicker just a few feet in front of her.
 - D. “Also, I think the play could benefit from having two costume managers instead of one.”

EOCEP Sample Item 13

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.1.1
Standard Description	Analyze how... key elements work together to enhance and deepen meaning...
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

14. What effect is created by the author's use of a flashback in the passage?
- A. The flashback emphasizes the motivation Ashley had for accepting the position of costume manager.
 - B. The flashback provides the reader with insight into the background of Ashley's internal conflict.
 - C. The flashback reminds the reader of the school setting in which the events of the plot take place.
 - D. The flashback reveals a change from third-person to first-person point of view.

EOCEP Sample Item 14

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.5.1
Indicator Description	Analyze how an author's choices how to... manipulate time, create effects...
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

15. Why does the author include Ms. Fitzgerald's perspective about the costume manager's job?
- A. to demonstrate why Ms. Fitzgerald enjoys teaching drama
 - B. to foreshadow the main conflict that Ashley will face
 - C. to explain why Ms. Fitzgerald chose a drama that takes place long ago
 - D. to provide the reason why Ashley enjoys going to dress rehearsals

EOCEP Sample Item 15

Standard Alignment	E2.RL.11.1 (Does not align with the language of the 2024 ELA Standards)
Standard Description	Analyze and provide evidence of how the author's choice of point of view, perspective, and purpose shape content, meaning, and style.
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High Difficulty

16. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Ms. Fitzgerald, I have something to tell you,” Ashley said, her voice barely above the sound of a whisper.”

How do the words “barely above the sound of a whisper” impact the tone?

- A. The words create an indifferent tone.
- B. The words suggest a humorous tone.
- C. The words create an anxious tone.
- D. The words suggest a comforting tone.

EOCEP Sample Item 16	
Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.8.1c
Indicator Description	analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

Read the passage below and answer questions 17–20.

Celebrating the Sweet Potato

The delicious and versatile sweet potato is one of the oldest vegetables known to humans. It offers excellent nutrition, can be prepared in a variety of ways, and is a centerpiece of Southern cuisine. For these reasons and more, the people of South Carolina take time each year to celebrate the virtues of this very important crop.

A Sweet History

Before Christopher Columbus arrived in what is now the United States in 1492, Native Americans cultivated the sweet potato. Columbus then introduced this tasty vegetable to Europe, where it was an immediate success. In fact, sweet potatoes were a main source of nourishment for early settlers in Jamestown, where they may have been enjoyed during the very first Thanksgiving feast. Sweet potatoes were a popular first crop for homesteaders because they were easy to grow, and they matured quickly. Even George Washington grew them on his farm at Mount Vernon. During the Civil War, when coffee was scarce, sweet potatoes were dried, ground, and brewed to make a tasty hot drink.

The popularity of the sweet potato was also shaped by a botanist named George Washington Carver, who made it his mission to help enrich the lives of others. Carver studied agriculture and nutrition and discovered that sweet potatoes were an excellent crop to grow in soil that has been worn out from growing cotton. Carver went on to invent 100 new products from sweet potatoes—flour, ink, starch, synthetic rubber, vinegar, glue for postage stamps, and hundreds of shades of textile dye—all of which increased the value of sweet potato crops.

A Step Up

In recent years, the sweet potato has been elevated to the status of a “superfood”—one that is exceptionally good for our health. The rest of the world quickly learned what the South has always known: not only are sweet potatoes good to eat, but they are also good for you. The tasty root vegetable contains high levels of beta carotene and is rich in nutrients.

Sweet potatoes thrive in the hot, damp climate of the southeast and have become a staple food in Southern cuisine. Sweet potato casserole and sweet potato pie are traditional family favorites. These treasured recipes have been passed from generation to generation, while some home cooks have enhanced recipes to include sweet potato dishes for every meal of the day. Because this vegetable can be baked, fried, mashed, boiled, grilled, and more, its culinary possibilities seem endless.

Over 260 billion pounds of sweet potatoes are produced annually, making this crop one of the most significant crops in the world. South Carolina’s farmers harvest thousands of acres of sweet potatoes a year, with Darlington County being one of the top-producing counties in the state.

A Reason to Celebrate

Bringing in the autumn harvest of sweet potatoes is cause for much celebration in the Southeast. Sweet potato festivals are much-anticipated annual events that pay homage to this seemingly humble vegetable.

More than 25,000 people descend upon Darlington's annual South Carolina Sweet Potato Festival, held the second Saturday in October. This event celebrates the impact that the sweet potato has on the economy of the area and raises funds for community service projects. Sampling delectable dishes featuring sweet potatoes is the ultimate reason to attend! The aroma of freshly baked sweet potato pie wafts through the crisp autumn air, tempting taste buds and provoking many rumbling stomachs. Entertainment and activities at the Darlington Sweet Potato Festival are myriad. Visitors can enjoy musicians, singers, dancers, gymnasts, martial arts performers, magicians, and puppeteers while browsing more than 100 vendors' exhibits.

The Lower Richland Sweet Potato Festival, held in April in Hopkins, South Carolina, began as a community event to bring people together. Activities include a magic show, a talent show, and a parade with marching bands and a drumline. The festival showcases the great benefits of sweet potatoes but does not neglect sweet treats that can be made from them. A scoop or two of sweet potato ice cream is a cool tasty treat on a warm spring day, but the crowning event at the festival is the announcement of the annual sweet potato baking contest winner.

Why are these festivals so popular? John Egerton was an independent journalist and author who roamed his native South and wrote about its traditions and history in a series of books on Southern life. He says, "Within the South itself, no other form of cultural expression, not even music, is as distinctively characteristic of the region as the spreading of a feast of native food . . . before a gathering of kin and friends. For as long as there has been a South, and people who think of themselves as Southerners, food has been central to the region's image, its personality, and its character." Over the centuries, the sweet potato has rightfully earned a prominent place among these foods that are so near and dear to the people of the South.

Sweet Potato Facts

- The sweet potato's bright orange color is due to the presence of beta-carotene. This nutrient helps maintain healthy vision and may improve respiratory health. Although more research is needed, scientists believe that beta-carotene may even protect the skin from the damaging rays of the sun.
- Simple sweet potatoes are power-packed with nutrients. One medium sweet potato provides more than 100% of the daily recommended intake of Vitamin A. This essential nutrient stimulates the production of immune cells that fight off disease and infection. It protects skin against sun damage, is vital for maintaining healthy vision, and is a powerful antioxidant.
- Sweet potatoes are a good source of Vitamin C, which helps the body's immune system; Vitamin D, which builds healthy bones and plays an important role in stabilizing mood; iron, which is essential for good energy levels as well as red and white blood cell production; and potassium, which helps regulate heartbeat and nerve signals. Sweet potatoes are loaded with fiber, which moves slowly through the digestive tract, helping people feel full longer.
- Sweet potatoes are low in calories as well as fat and are cholesterol free. They have a low glycemic index—their sugars are slowly released into the bloodstream, helping to ensure a balanced and regular source of energy.

17. Read the excerpt from the passage.

Sampling delectable dishes featuring sweet potatoes is the ultimate reason to attend! The aroma of freshly baked sweet potato pie wafts through the crisp autumn air, tempting taste buds and provoking many rumbling stomachs.

What is the meaning of the word delectable as used in the excerpt?

- A. fancy
- B. healthy
- C. tasty
- D. crispy

EOCEP Sample Item 17

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.7.1
Indicator Description	Use context to determine the meaning of words and phrases
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

18. How is the author's point of view advanced in the passage through the use of rhetoric?
- A. The author uses quotations from an expert to emphasize the scientific qualities of the sweet potato.
 - B. The author uses comparison to emphasize the similarities sweet potatoes have with other foods.
 - C. The author uses exaggeration to emphasize the popularity of sweet potatoes.
 - D. The author uses repetition of key ideas to emphasize the health benefits of the sweet potato.

EOCEP Sample Item 18

Standard Alignment	E2.RI.10.1 (Does not align with the language of the 2024 ELA Standards)
Standard Description	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose.
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High Difficulty

19. How does the use of the section “A Sweet History” support the ideas presented in the passage?
- A. by providing readers with background information on the significance of sweet potatoes
 - B. by persuading readers to study more about the various benefits of sweet potatoes
 - C. by providing readers with suggestions on how to grow sweet potatoes for use as part of a healthy diet
 - D. by persuading readers to learn more about products that are made from sweet potatoes

EOCEP Sample Item 19

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment- E2.AOR.5.2
Indicator Description	Analyze the impact of multiple text structures... (Refer to the assessment specifications about using "one or more" on the EOCEP assessment.)
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

20. How does the bulleted list titled “Sweet Potato Facts” support the ideas presented in the passage?
- A. by adding expert testimony to develop the author’s claim that sweet potatoes have endless “culinary possibilities”
 - B. by explaining the metabolic process involved in absorbing the nourishment in sweet potatoes that make them “good for our health”
 - C. by describing the scientific innovations that have made the sweet potato “one of the most significant crops in the world”
 - D. by providing evidence to verify the author’s claim that the sweet potato has acquired “the status of a ‘superfood’”

EOCEP Sample Item 20

Standard Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - E2.AOR.5.2
Indicator Description	Analyze the impact of ... the use of text features... (Refer to the assessment specifications about using "one or more" on the EOCEP assessment.)
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty