



Grade 5 English Language Arts

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

Introduction

The South Carolina Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instruction aligned with the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards (SCCCRS). This document contains a set of twenty SC READY test items that have been written to align with the 2015 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards. These items were reviewed for content and bias prior to being field tested and approved for release to the public. Where possible, each item's alignment to the 2024 SC CCR ELA Standards has been provided.

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. These items were chosen to reflect the increased rigor of assessing the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards. SC READY assesses content standards in a variety of ways. This document does not include all item types or standards.

Item Information Format

Indicator Alignment	SCCCR
Indicator Description	text from SCCCR
Answer Key	correct answer
Depth of Knowledge	cognitive demand
Estimated Difficulty	estimate based on student responses

Links

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready Standards

<https://ed.sc.gov/scdoe/assets/file/programs-services/59/documents/ELA2015SCCCRStandards.pdf>

Norman Webb's Depth-of-Knowledge for the Four Content Areas

<http://www.webbalign.org/Webbs-DOK-Levels-Summary.pdf>

1. A student made a plan for a research report. Read the plan.

Research Report Plan

Topic: mountain climbing

Audience: teacher and classmates

Purpose: to inform

Research Question: How does someone learn to become a mountain climber?

The student found several sources. Which source would most likely have information that would be useful in the student's report?

- A. a website that explains the dangers of mountain climbing
- B. a magazine that shows pictures of mountain climbers on the tallest mountains of the world
- C. an interview with the leader of a club for mountain climbers
- D. a website where people can ask questions about mountain climbing equipment

SC READY ELA Sample Item 1	Indicator Alignment	5.I.0.1.1 (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
	Indicator Description	Formulate questions to focus thinking on an idea to narrow and direct further inquiry.
	Answer Key	C
	Depth of Knowledge	2
	Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

2. A student is writing a research report about the benefits of walking for exercise. Read the sentences from the report.

Walking is one of the easiest ways to be active, and there are many benefits for those people who choose to do this activity regularly. Walking helps maintain strong bones and muscles. Going for a walk can improve concentration, helping people to focus on a task that needs to be finished. People have the opportunity to take in the sun and the beauty of the outdoors, which may boost their mood. But the best part, anyone can enjoy a nice walk—it's free!

The student found additional information about walking from several different sources. Which source would most likely provide more information to support the claim made in the paragraph?

- A. a website that explains why a healthy lifestyle should include walking
- B. a website that shares memories of a child walking with family
- C. a website that locates walking trails that are in areas nearby
- D. a website that sells books to listen to while walking outdoors

SC READY ELA Sample Item	2	Indicator Alignment	5.I.0.3.1 (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
		Indicator Description	Develop a plan of action for collecting relevant information from primary and secondary sources.
		Answer Key	A
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Low Difficulty

Use the following Sample Passage with Sample Items numbers 3 – 8.

The High Dive

Before Tim ascended the ladder to the high diving board, he felt more nervous than he had ever been in his entire life. He grabbed the front of his favorite blue and white striped baseball cap, pulled it down firmly over his ears, and then rubbed his hands together rapidly. He knew that he couldn't be cold since the temperature was almost ninety degrees and the sun looked like a fried egg in the powder blue sky. Shivering, he couldn't seem to feel the heat, thinking to himself that fear must be making him cold.

"Hey, Tim! You're going to get that hat wet!" yelled his best friend Sammy, who stood at the edge of the turquoise blue pool.

Tim grinned weakly, casually removing his hat. His younger brother Stan, who looked as frightened as Tim felt, caught it when Tim tossed it gently to him.

"Don't do it, Tim," Stan whispered. "Aren't you scared of diving from up that high?"

"Nah," Tim replied, straightening his shoulders. He saw Sammy watching them closely. "This is nothing."

"But I don't think—" Stan began. Tim stopped him from finishing his sentence. Tim knew Stan was worried, but he couldn't let his younger brother say anything embarrassing in front of the other kids.

"I know you don't," he broke in, making himself grin at Stan. "And it's time you do start to think—at least now and then."

While Stan frowned, Tim winked and nodded at his younger brother.

The small group of kids standing around them laughed, thinking that if Tim could make a joke, then everything must be all right. Only Stan was completely silent without so much as even a smile.

Tim ruffled Stan's dark hair so that it stood up in spikey pieces all over his head. Then Tim leaned over and softly whispered to Stan, "Go on home, Stan. You don't have to watch me dive."

Stan shook his head vigorously and was as still as a statue. Tim sighed. He knew then his brother would stay at the pool until it was all over.

Tim turned away, pulled his shoulders back, thrust his head up, and strutted over to the ladder, looking straight ahead. The shining aluminum felt hot as fire in the midday sun, but he grabbed the ladder firmly and put his foot on the first rung.

An enthusiastic cheer came from behind him. He was the first one! The high diving board for the pool was recently installed, and no one else had attempted it yet. They were all used to the previous diving board that they had used for years. The old board was lower, but this one was much higher and much more menacing. As Tim looked up, he thought the



ladder seemed to stretch all the way to the sky!

As Tim reached out for the ladder, he suddenly felt sick to his stomach. Last summer he had climbed a ladder similar to this one at a different pool, misjudged the distance on his dive, and hit his shoulder against the board on the way down. He could still imagine the pain of the impact. This was his first time on a diving board since that summer. Now he needed to rid himself of the intense fear that clutched at his insides.

“Way to go, Tim!” shouted Sammy. “We’re right behind you!”

“Yeah, then why are you still down there?” Tim called, forcing himself to grin down at his friends who waited at the bottom of the ladder. They all expected him to do it. Only Stan knew how terrified Tim really was.

Tim slowly and shakily kept climbing the ladder. When he finally reached the top, he stood there a moment and took a deep breath. His grandfather had taught him to do that.

Tim’s grandfather always told him that “fear is only as deep as the mind allows.” So, Tim decided that he would not allow himself to be scared. He then remembered his grandfather’s advice: “Whenever you’re afraid, breathe so deeply that your belly and lungs fill with air. Then, when you can’t take in any more air, open your mouth and push it all out. With the air will go the fear.”

In a loud gust of air, Tim released the breath he had been holding. As his muscles relaxed, Tim felt the truth of his grandfather’s words. Carefully he closed his eyes and stretched out his arms over his head, flexing his hands several times.

He allowed himself only a moment for this exercise. Then he opened his eyes, took two steps, bounced on the end of the board, and dived. As he sliced through the water beneath him, Tim cheered inwardly, “YES! YES—I conquered my fear of diving!”

When Tim surfaced, Stan was at the side of the pool, jumping up and down and shouting, “You DID it, you DID it!”

“No big deal,” Tim replied. “I just remembered what Grandpa told me.”

3. Which theme is developed through Tim’s actions at the top of the ladder?
- A. Family members must take care of one another.
 - B. Being safe is more important than taking a risk.
 - C. People can learn to control their feelings.
 - D. It is fun to spend time outdoors with friends.

SC READY ELA Sample Item

3

Indicator Alignment

2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.2.1

Indicator Description

Explain the development of an explicit or implied theme over the course of a literary text.

Answer Key

C

Depth of Knowledge

2

Estimated Difficulty

High Difficulty

4. Which **two** sentences from the passage explain why Tim decides to make the dive? Choose **two** answers.
- A. Tim grinned weakly, casually removing his hat.
 - B. He saw Sammy watching them closely.
 - C. Stan shook his head vigorously and was as still as a statue.
 - D. This was his first time on a diving board since that summer.
 - E. They all expected him to do it.

SC READY ELA Sample Item 4	Indicator Alignment	5.RL.MC.8.1a (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
	Indicator Description	Cite evidence within text to analyze two or more characters, events, or settings in a text and explain the impact on the plot.
	Answer Key	B,E
	Depth of Knowledge	2
	Estimated Difficulty	High Difficulty

5. How does Tim's relationship with his grandfather impact the plot of the passage?
- A. Because he spends a lot of time with his grandfather, Tim is able to remember everything he has been taught.
 - B. Because he pays attention to his grandfather, Tim is able to use a lesson he learned to conquer his fear.
 - C. Because he hopes to be more like his grandfather, Tim is willing to do something that scares him.
 - D. Because he wants to impress his grandfather, Tim is willing to push himself to try harder.

SC READY ELA Sample Item 5	Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.1.1
	Indicator Description	Analyze how setting, characters, and conflict impact plot development.
	Answer Key	B
	Depth of Knowledge	2
	Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

6. Read the sentence from the passage.

As Tim looked up, he thought the ladder seemed to stretch all the way to the sky!

How does the author's use of figurative language shape meaning?

- A. The language indicates that Tim feels excited about getting to the top of the ladder.
- B. The language indicates that Tim is tired from just thinking about climbing the ladder.
- C. The language indicates that Tim is curious about what is at the top of the ladder.
- D. The language indicates that Tim feels nervous about climbing the ladder.

6 SC READY ELA Sample Item	Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.1.2
	Indicator Description	Analyze how figurative language impacts meaning and contributes to the reader's experience
	Answer Key	D
	Depth of Knowledge	2
	Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

7. Read the paragraph from the passage.

Tim turned away, pulled his shoulders back, thrust his head up, and strutted over to the ladder, looking straight ahead. The shining aluminum felt hot as fire in the midday sun, but he grabbed the ladder firmly and put his foot on the first rung.

What does the author's choice of words help the reader understand about Tim? Choose **two** answers.

- A. He is brave.
- B. He is acting strangely.
- C. He is determined.
- D. He ignores his friends.
- E. He enjoys summertime.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	7	Indicator Alignment	5.RL.LCS.9.2 (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
		Indicator Description	Analyze and cite examples of how the author's choice of words and conventions combine to create mood, shape meaning, and emphasize aspects of a character or setting.
		Answer Key	A,C
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

8. How does the author's choice of point of view impact how events are described?
- A. The point of view only reveals the thoughts and feelings of Tim.
 - B. The point of view reveals the thoughts of Stan.
 - C. The point of view only reveals the thoughts and feelings of Sammy.
 - D. The point of view reveals the thoughts of Grandpa.

SC READY ELA Sample Item

8

Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.3.1a
Indicator Description	Explain how the point of view from which a story is narrated influences how events are described.
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

Use the following Sample Passage with Sample Items numbers 9 – 15.

Eating to Fight the British

Bravery was shown by many people during the Revolutionary War. In this war, American colonists fought for freedom from British rule. Although some of the best remembered heroes are men, many women were equally patriotic. They contributed to the war effort in significant ways. Many of these women provided food for soldiers, nursed the sick and wounded, and even risked their lives in the fight for freedom. One such woman was Emily Geiger.

At the time, Emily was just a teenager. She lived with her mother and father near the Broad River in South Carolina. Emily's family, like other patriots, wanted to support the fight for freedom against Britain. Emily wanted to do her part to help the colonists win the war and looked for a way that she could help. Her chance came when her father allowed the troops of Nathanael Greene, a colonial general, to camp near the family's property.

Stepping Up When Others Refuse

General Greene's soldiers had just suffered a major defeat by the British forces led by Lord Rawdon. To survive another such attack, General Greene needed help. Therefore, he wanted General Thomas Sumter and his soldiers to join him. However, he needed someone to deliver the message with his plan to General Sumter. Since the British held the land between the two groups of American troops, carrying such a message past the enemy was very dangerous. In fact, none of General Greene's men were willing to do it.

General Greene discussed this problem with one of Emily's neighbors. Unknown to them, Emily heard the conversation. Without a second thought, she asked to see the general. Quickly explaining that she had overheard his request, Emily simply said to the general, "Send me!"

According to one account of their meeting, General Greene protested, "Oh, no, child! I could not do that; it is a journey from which brave men hold back."

Emily was insistent, telling the general a young girl traveling through such territory would be far less suspicious than a man. General Greene, realizing he had no other options, consented. Quickly, he composed a letter to General Sumter outlining his plan.

As a precaution, he verbally shared its contents with Emily. In case the letter was lost or damaged, the general knew it was important that Emily remember every detail.

Falling Victim to Honest Nature

Eagerly, Emily set out on horseback. If she were stopped by British soldiers, she planned to say that she was going to visit her Uncle Jacob, who lived miles from her house. However, Emily was not accustomed to lying and, therefore, did not tell lies well. During her trip, she met a group of British scouts. When questioned about the purpose for her trip, she blushed and stammered as she told her false story. Emily's actions raised the



suspensions of the scouts. They decided that she should be searched for evidence that may prove she was a spy.

Left alone while waiting to be searched, Emily quickly tore up the letter she had. Even so, she worried that the pieces would be found. Emily could think of just one way to prevent such a discovery. Piece by piece, she ate the letter. By the time she was searched, every last scrap of the message had disappeared.

Mission Accomplished

Since no remnants of the letter were found, Emily was declared free of suspicion. Therefore, the British had to release her. Despite the frightening incident, Emily did not return home. Instead, she continued on, choosing a more roundabout route to General Sumter's camp so she would avoid capture a second time. There, she told the soldiers the full contents of General Greene's letter.

Thanks to Emily Geiger's courage and quick thinking, the forces of General Greene and General Sumter successfully joined against Lord Rawdon. As a result, the Americans were able to defeat the British army. Today, Emily Geiger is remembered as an outstanding example of the important role women played in the Revolutionary War.

9. Which sentence from the passage **best** supports the inference that General Greene was willing to do whatever was necessary to win against the British?
- A. Therefore, he wanted General Thomas Sumter and his soldiers to join him.
 - B. General Greene discussed this problem with one of Emily's neighbors.
 - C. General Greene, realizing he had no other options, consented.
 - D. Quickly, he composed a letter to General Sumter outlining his plan.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	9	Indicator Alignment	5.RI.MC.5.1 (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
		Indicator Description	Quote accurately from a text to analyze meaning in and beyond the text.
		Answer Key	C
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	High Difficulty

10. Which paragraph **best** summarizes the passage?

- A. Emily Geiger wanted to help the Americans fight the British during the Revolutionary War. Emily offered to deliver General Greene’s message past British soldiers to the American troops. After getting caught by British scouts, Emily ate the letter with the message to stop British soldiers from finding it. Emily helped the colonial army by delivering her message.
- B. Emily Geiger lived with her mother and father near the Broad River. Emily met General Greene since his troops were camped near her family’s property. Emily had a conversation with General Greene. Emily told General Greene that she wanted to deliver the important message to the American soldiers. General Greene told Emily he did not want to send her since it was so dangerous.
- C. Emily Geiger was a teenager during the Revolutionary War. She wanted to do something to help the American colonists fight against the British. General Greene had a discussion with one of Emily’s neighbors. The general asked Emily to deliver an important message to General Sumter. First, Emily rode her horse to her Uncle Jacob’s house. She was caught by the British who thought she was a spy.
- D. Emily Geiger met General Greene when his troops camped near her family’s property in South Carolina. General Greene’s soldiers had just been defeated by British forces. Emily asked General Greene if she could deliver an important message. General Greene wrote a letter to General Sumter containing the message. Emily set out riding her horse to deliver the letter. She ate the letter once she was caught.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	Indicator Alignment		2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.6.1b
	Indicator Description		Summarize a text to enhance comprehension: include a central idea and relevant supporting details for an informational text.
	10	Answer Key	A
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

11. Read the sentence from the passage.

Without a second thought, she asked to see the general.

How does the author’s use of the phrase “without a second thought” **best** help to shape the meaning of the sentence?

- A. It helps the reader understand that Emily felt angry at the British army.
- B. It helps the reader understand that Emily had a great deal of courage.
- C. It helps the reader understand that Emily knew General Greene well.
- D. It helps the reader understand that Emily looked forward to an adventure.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	11	Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.1.2
		Indicator Description	Analyze how figurative language impacts meaning and contributes to the reader's experience.
		Answer Key	B
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

12. What does the section “Mission Accomplished” help the reader understand about Emily?
- A. She was hoping to continue to work as a spy against the British until the war was over.
 - B. She remained committed to helping the Americans even after she was almost caught.
 - C. She wanted to be honored for her bravery in the fight for American freedom.
 - D. She was willing to face any danger from the British enemies.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	12	Indicator Alignment	5.RI.LCS.8.2 (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
		Indicator Description	Apply knowledge of text features in multiple sources to gain meaning or solve a problem.
		Answer Key	B
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	High Difficulty

13. Read the sentence from the passage.

As a precaution, he verbally shared its contents with Emily.

Based on the prefix “pre-,” what does the word precaution mean?

- A. something done that is the opposite of avoiding danger
- B. something done wrongly while avoiding danger
- C. something done again to avoid danger
- D. something done ahead of time to avoid danger

SC READY ELA Sample Item

13

Indicator Alignment

2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.9.1

Indicator Description

Identify and use knowledge of affixes and Greek and Latin roots to determine new and/or clarify precise meanings of words and phrases in grade-appropriate content.

Answer Key

D

Depth of Knowledge

2

Estimated Difficulty

Medium Difficulty

14. How does the text structure of the section “Stepping Up When Others Refuse” contribute to the meaning of the passage?
- A. It compares the leadership qualities of General Greene with those of General Sumter.
 - B. It describes the features of the camp that General Greene had established on land near Emily’s family.
 - C. It indicates the solution of getting a message to American troops by having Emily serve as the messenger.
 - D. It indicates the effect of the Revolutionary War was that the British believed many Americans were spies.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	14	Indicator Alignment	5.RI.LCS.11.1 (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
		Indicator Description	Apply knowledge of text structures across multiple texts to locate information and gain meaning.
		Answer Key	C
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

15. Which sentence provides the **best** evidence to support the author’s claim that women “contributed to the war effort in significant ways”?
- A. Emily’s family, like other patriots, wanted to support the fight for freedom against Britain.
 - B. In case the letter was lost or damaged, the general knew it was important that Emily remember every detail.
 - C. Since no remnants of the letter were found, Emily was declared free of suspicion.
 - D. Thanks to Emily Geiger’s courage and quick thinking, the forces of General Greene and General Sumter successfully joined against Lord Rawdon.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	15	Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.AOR.5.3
		Indicator Description	Determine an author’s argument and trace its development while identifying claims, supporting reasons, and evidence in an informational text.
		Answer Key	D
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

16. A student is writing a research report about Lewis and Clark, two explorers who led an expedition across the American West. Read the paragraph from the student's draft.

When President Thomas Jefferson finalized the Louisiana Purchase in 1803, it added over 800,000 square miles to the territory of the United States. Jefferson wanted to explore the area as soon as possible. He appointed Meriwether Lewis to lead the task. Lewis then asked William Clark to help him lead the expedition. These men had to make many preparations for the trip that would last over two years. Before leaving Missouri in May, 1804, over 40 other men had signed on to join the explorers. They began their travels by paddling up the Missouri River in three boats. Among other goals, they hoped to find a water route to the Pacific Ocean. The group that made the historic journey across the United States is known as the Corps of Discovery.

Which sentence would **best** add support to develop the underlined sentence?

- A. Lewis and Clark's expedition was later joined by a Shoshoni woman named Sacagawea who helped to guide the men.
- B. When pioneers later began to migrate to the West, they also needed to pack a lot of supplies.
- C. Camping gear, medical supplies, and mathematical instruments were just a few of the supplies that were needed.
- D. Lewis joined Clark and the rest of the group when they reached St. Charles, Missouri.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.C.2.1a
	Indicator Description	Write informative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. When writing: introduce a topic and develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, and/or quotes related to the topic.
	16 Answer Key	C
	Depth of Knowledge	2
	Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

17. A student is writing an argument for the school newsletter. Read the paragraph.

Last week, the student council asked fifth-grade students to provide suggestions for ways to improve our school. Many students said that they would like to have options available at lunch. We would like to request the addition of a salad bar and a filtered water station to our cafeteria for next school year.

Which would be the **best** concluding sentence to the paragraph?

- A. These additions would be a great start for improving our school.
- B. Most students would enjoy a fresh, healthy salad bar.
- C. This would help students make better choices.
- D. Most students need to drink more water.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	17	Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.C.1.1e
		Indicator Description	Write arguments to make a claim about a topic. When writing: provide a concluding statement or section.
		Answer Key	A
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

18. A student is writing a research report about how to get a good night's sleep. Read the draft paragraph the student wrote.

Many people have trouble sleeping, but certain plants may help them get the rest they need. One surprising example is catnip. Catnip makes kittens and cats more energetic and playful, but it is a natural way for humans to relax. Catnip is part of the mint family. The plant can be made into a delicious tea that a person can drink before heading off to bed. Another example of a calming plant is lavender. In a study, people who slept in a lavender-scented room reported a better night's sleep.

Which sentence provides the **best** conclusion for the paragraph?

- A. When people do not feel well rested, they may have more trouble getting through their day.
- B. There are other ways to relax before bed, but use of these plants may offer a simple solution for some people.
- C. Lemon and peppermint scents seem to have the opposite effect and may help wake people up in the morning.
- D. Another suggestion for better rest is to stop looking at video screens at least two hours before bedtime.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	18	Indicator Alignment	2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.C.2.1e
		Indicator Description	Write informative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. When writing: provide a concluding statement or section.
		Answer Key	B
		Depth of Knowledge	2
		Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty

19. Which underlined verb phrase is used correctly?

- A. Adrian did compete in a race next month against many other athletes.
- B. Mariana will schedule the appointment when she gets off work tomorrow.
- C. Lucia and Elena have been sending messages to each other every day last week.
- D. Dylan and Pedro will have improved their piano playing because they practiced each day.

SC READY ELA Sample Item

19

Indicator Alignment

2024 Indicator Alignment - 5.C.4.1i

Indicator Description

Write grammatically correct single and multi-paragraph compositions using a variety of sentence types and phrasing. When writing: identify and revise sentence fragments, run-on sentences, and inappropriate shifts in verb tense.

Answer Key

B

Depth of Knowledge

1

Estimated Difficulty

Medium Difficulty

20. Which sentence uses an apostrophe correctly?

- A. My mom joined a womens' basketball team last week.
- B. Learning to surf can be full of both failure and success's.
- C. The summer thunderstorm's brought much-needed water to the prairie.
- D. My neighbor's early-morning habit is to walk his dog on the nature trail.

SC READY ELA Sample Item	Indicator Alignment	5.W.L.5.2a (Does Not Align to a 2024 ELA Indicator)
	Indicator Description	Use apostrophes and quotation marks.
	20 Answer Key	D
	Depth of Knowledge	1
	Estimated Difficulty	Medium Difficulty