



**English Language Arts
Grade 3**

Sample Items

Introduction

The South Carolina State Department of Education provides districts and schools with tools to assist in delivering focused instruction aligned with the *2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Standards*. This document contains a set of twenty SC READY English Language Arts (ELA) Grade 3 test items that have been written to align with the *2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts 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 SC READY test assesses content standards in a variety of ways. This document does not include all item types. To see the full functionality of Technology Enhanced item types, access the Online Tools Training: <https://portal.te.drcedirect.com/SC>

Item Information Format

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item (#)	
Indicator Alignment	2024 South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Indicator
Indicator Description	text from the South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Indicator
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	correct answer
Depth of Knowledge	cognitive demand
Estimated Difficulty	estimated based on student responses

Links

Assessment Quick Links for Teachers

<https://ed.sc.gov/tests/assessment-information/quick-links-for-teachers/>

South Carolina College- and Career-Ready English Language Arts Standards

<https://www.ed.sc.gov/instruction/standards/english-language-arts/standards/>

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

<https://www.webbalign.org/dok-summary-tables>

1. Read the sentences a student wrote about drawing.

Drawing is a hobby that people can do anywhere with a pencil and paper. Drawing has many positive effects. People who draw often say drawing makes them feel good. People also say that drawing helps them learn to pay attention better. Drawing even helps people learn in school.

Which question would **best** help the student find more information about the benefits of drawing?

- A. How much does a drawing kit cost?
- B. How is drawing good for you?
- C. What is the best pencil to draw with?
- D. What do people draw?

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 1	
Indicator Alignment	R.1.1
Indicator Description	Ask and answer questions about print and non-print sources to narrow or broaden thinking about a topic for inquiry.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

2. A student is taking notes for an informative piece about beaches. The student has written down some findings.
- Visiting a beach can help people feel better.
 - Beaches provide homes for a variety of land and sea animals.
 - Some beaches have sand dunes to protect beach homes from storms.

Under which heading should the student group the findings?

- A. Best Time to Visit a Beach
- B. Things to Do at the Beach
- C. How Beaches Are Formed
- D. Benefits of Beaches

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 2	
Indicator Alignment	R.1.2
Indicator Description	Group findings from a provided print or non-print source.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

3. A student is writing a letter to the school principal. Read the paragraph from the letter.

¹ I believe our school should offer an after-school acting group. ² Acting has many benefits for students. ³ For example, student actors must memorize their lines, which teaches them responsibility. ⁴ Please consider starting an acting group for our students.

Now read the sentence that the student wrote.

Acting also allows students to be creative because they can make props for the stage.

Where should the sentence be placed in the paragraph?

- A. immediately after sentence 1
- B. immediately after sentence 2
- C. immediately after sentence 3
- D. immediately after sentence 4

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 3	
Indicator Alignment	C.1.1d
Indicator Description	Write opinion pieces about a topic. When writing: d. organize information.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High

4. A student is writing an informative piece about how ladybugs are helpful insects. Read the source the student found.

¹ Ladybugs are tiny red-and-black insects. ² They are often seen on plant leaves in people's gardens. ³ This is because ladybugs eat aphids, which are pests that eat plants. ⁴ You can attract ladybugs to your garden by planting certain flowers.

Which sentence from the source contains information that would be the most useful for the student's informative piece about how ladybugs are helpful insects?

- A. sentence 1
- B. sentence 2
- C. sentence 3
- D. sentence 4

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 4	
Indicator Alignment	C.2.1e
Indicator Description	Write informative/explanatory pieces to examine a topic and provide information. When writing: e. use and explain information from a provided source.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Low

5. A teacher asked a student to write a narrative. Read the paragraph from the student’s narrative.

¹ Last spring, my aunt and I planted a garden together. ² We put many things in it. ³ This summer, the flowers finally bloomed!

The teacher wants the student to add more details to the narrative.

Which revision of sentence 2 strengthens the student’s writing based on the teacher’s feedback?

- A. We put many plants in the soil.
- B. We planted different seeds in there.
- C. We put flowers in the dirt in the garden.
- D. We planted roses and sunflowers in the bright garden.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 5	
Indicator Alignment	C.5.1
Indicator Description	Improve writing by planning, revising, editing, and building on personal ideas and the ideas of others to strengthen writing.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Honk's Mysterious Visits

My family lives on a farm. My dad is a forest ranger, and my mom is an artist who paints signs for local businesses. She also likes to paint nature scenes.

"Adam, why don't you go outside?" Mom suggested. "There is a nice breeze, so you can fly your dragon kite in the yard. Maybe some friends will pass by."

"Okay," I said. When I walked into our yard with my kite, the only thing I saw was our neighbor's goose, Honk. The feathery white bird was a little scary. He flapped his wings and strutted around his yard like he was a king. I decided to keep my distance.

Unfortunately, Honk did not have the same plan. When he spied me and my kite, he flew in my direction. I escaped into the garage and found some sidewalk chalk to play with instead. Then, I happily drew pictures on our front driveway, where Honk could not see me.

That afternoon, Honk paid me another visit. I was standing inside my house looking out through the glass doors to the yard, watching some squirrels play in the oak trees. Suddenly, Honk flapped into our yard and marched up to the doors. He honked at me and pecked the glass with his beak.

Mom heard the noisy bird and called Ms. Lee, Honk's owner. Mom nicely asked Ms. Lee to come and fetch Honk.

"I'm sorry Honk is being a pest," Ms. Lee apologized. "Usually, his favorite place is my pond." Ms. Lee came over and scooted Honk home. She waved her arms while walking behind him.

An hour later, Honk visited our family again. He seemed happy as he danced in front of the glass doors. I slowly stepped outside to see if I could make friends with him.

In a blink, Honk's cheerful mood disappeared and he started honking at me. Ms. Lee was working in her garden. She heard Honk's yelling and raced over to rescue me.

"I do not know why Honk keeps leaving his pond," Ms. Lee said with a sigh. "I've never had this problem with him before."

That afternoon, Honk came to visit us two more times. I noticed that he always seemed happy when he arrived, but he did not like when I stepped outside. I tried taking off my hat. I even changed my bright red shirt for a plain white one. Honk still scolded me, and Ms. Lee had to herd him home each time he came over.

After dinner, Mom offered to fly my dragon kite with me. We were in the yard when Honk made yet another visit to our home. With narrowed eyes, I watched as he bowed his head and danced around in front of the glass doors.

Suddenly, my eyes caught a glimpse of another dancing goose. It was Honk's reflection. He could see himself in our glass doors. I had solved the mystery—Honk was visiting us because he was looking for a friend.

Eagerly, Mom and I went to tell Ms. Lee about my discovery.

“Honk must be lonely,” Ms. Lee said. “It is time for me to get a real friend for him.”

“Honk will like that,” I said. “He really wants some company.”

“My brother Mark has a flock of geese on his farm,” Ms. Lee said next. “Would you like to come and help me pick out a partner for Honk? You could meet Mark’s son, Tanner, too.”

Mom agreed with the plan, so I gave Ms. Lee a great big “Yes!” Honk had showed me something important. He was willing to leave his pond to make new discoveries. It was time for me to be adventurous too.

6. Which sentence **best** describes how Adam changes at the end of the passage?
- A. He realizes that geese are interesting animals.
 - B. He realizes that animals require a lot of attention.
 - C. He realizes that Ms. Lee is a good friend.
 - D. He realizes that Honk is not scary after all.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 6	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.1.1
Indicator Description	Explain how one or more characters develop throughout the plot.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

7. Read the sentence from the passage.

He flapped his wings and strutted around his yard like he was a king.

Why does the author use the words “like he was a king” to describe Honk?

- A. to suggest that Honk is a very large goose
- B. to suggest that Honk is the boss of his yard
- C. to suggest that Honk is wearing a crown
- D. to suggest that Honk likes to go new places

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 7	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.1.2
Indicator Description	Identify and explain the purpose of forms of figurative language to include metaphor, hyperbole, and idioms.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

8. A theme of the passage is that solving a problem requires creative thinking.

How is the theme developed in the passage?

- A. by showing the different ways Adam tries to be friends with Honk
- B. by showing the way Ms. Lee treats Honk
- C. by showing how Adam and Mom help Ms. Lee
- D. by showing how Mom and Ms. Lee get a new friend for Honk

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 8	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.2.1
Indicator Description	Identify and explain an explicit theme in a literary text and how it is developed by key details.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

9. How is Adam’s perspective of Honk different from Ms. Lee’s perspective of Honk?
- A. Adam is curious about Honk’s visits, while Ms. Lee is confused about why Honk keeps leaving the pond.
 - B. Adam thinks Honk is friendly, while Ms. Lee thinks Honk is angry.
 - C. Adam wants to help take care of Honk, while Ms. Lee prefers to take care of Honk by herself.
 - D. Adam wants Honk to be his pet, while Ms. Lee wants Honk to stay in the pond.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 9	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.3.1
Indicator Description	Determine and explain the differences between the perspectives of the characters and/or between the characters and the reader.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High

10. Read the paragraph from the passage.

That afternoon, Honk came to visit us two more times. I noticed that he always seemed happy when he arrived, but he did not like when I stepped outside. I tried taking off my hat. I even changed my bright red shirt for a plain white one. Honk still scolded me, and Ms. Lee had to herd him home each time he came over.

Why is this paragraph important to the overall structure of the passage?

- A. It shows how Adam's and Ms. Lee's feelings for Honk are different.
- B. It shows the setting of Honk's favorite place.
- C. It reveals Adam's and Honk's inner thoughts.
- D. It reveals some important clues about Honk's actions.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 10	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.5.1
Indicator Description	Explain how sections of literary text (e.g., paragraphs, chapters, scenes, and stanzas) build on one another and contribute to the overall structure.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

11. Read the sentences from the passage.

He could see himself in our glass doors. I had solved the mystery—Honk was visiting us because he was looking for a friend.

Why are the sentences important to the structure of the passage?

- A. They suggest that Honk’s behavior has changed.
- B. They describe the main problem in the passage.
- C. They explain the reason for Honk’s behavior.
- D. They show that Adam’s view of Honk has changed.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 11	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.5.1
Indicator Description	Explain how sections of literary text (e.g., paragraphs, chapters, scenes, and stanzas) build on one another and contribute to the overall structure.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High

12. Which paragraph **best** summarizes the passage?
- A. Honk is a feathery white goose. When he flies into Adam’s yard, the goose looks scary. Adam then goes into the garage and gets sidewalk chalk. He draws pictures on his driveway where Honk cannot see him. Honk visits Adam again and again.
 - B. Honk starts visiting Adam’s home. Honk is always happy when he first arrives but gets upset later. Honk’s owner keeps coming to get him. Adam sees why Honk keeps coming over. Honk thinks his reflection is another goose. Honk’s owner decides to get him a friend.
 - C. Adam has a neighbor named Ms. Lee who owns a goose named Honk. Honk often flies into Adam’s yard. The goose starts honking a lot whenever Adam comes outside. Adam tries to be nice to the goose, but the goose still scolds him.
 - D. Ms. Lee has a goose named Honk. She decides that Honk needs another goose to be his friend. She asks Adam to come to her brother Mark’s farm with her. Adam can also meet Mark’s son, Tanner. Mom agrees that Adam can go.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 12	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.6.1a
Indicator Description	Summarize a text to enhance comprehension: a. include plot, theme, and key details for a literary text.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

13. Read the sentence from the passage.

“Usually, his favorite place is my pond.”

Based on the suffix “-ly,” what does the word “usually” mean?

- A. less usual
- B. in a usual way
- C. not usual
- D. made in a usual way

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 13	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.9.1
Indicator Description	Identify and use derivational morphemes, prefixes, suffixes, and phonic patterns to determine the meaning of words in grade-level content.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

Walking in Silence

Going for a walk is one of the best ways to keep your mind and body healthy. You exercise and strengthen your muscles. You breathe more deeply. Your heart beats faster. You get a chance to think and relax.

Some people who take regular walks bring their phones with them. Sometimes they talk to friends and family on the phone or send them text messages. Other times they listen to music as they walk. While these activities are common, some experts believe that walking in silence is healthier.

Silent walking, as it is now called, is nothing new. People have been doing this for hundreds of years. Recently, however, silent walking and its effects have almost disappeared.

Turning Off the Noise and Focusing on Yourself

A few years ago, a woman was told by her doctor that she should take a walk for thirty minutes every day. The doctor also challenged the woman to walk in silence. She should walk without a phone or music to listen to. She shouldn't walk with someone else or even a pet.

It was hard. She said that for the first two minutes of walking, she had no idea what to do with herself. As she said, "It was just me, myself, and I." After a few minutes, she relaxed a little. Because she had no distractions, she could finally focus on her thoughts and reflections. She could also pay far more attention to everything around her. She could hear, smell, and see things that she likely would have missed if she had been distracted by her phone.

When she got back home, she went online and described what her walk had been like. She described how silent walking caused her to focus on things she would normally ignore. Word spread, and soon a new trend started.

Silent Walking Affects Your Senses

Taking a walk in nature is a great way to practice a silent walk. You might hear a bird's song or the chittering of a squirrel. You might smell flowers, see a spiderweb, or feel the breeze in your hair or sunshine on your skin. Silent walking causes your senses to feel all the amazing things in nature.

You can take a silent walk in the city, too. If you use your senses, you might hear people talking, smell fresh-baked bread from a nearby bakery, or see an amazing bike riding by. Silent walking even makes you safer. Without music, calls, or conversations to distract you, you can pay better attention to crossing the street or noticing traffic lights.

Better Imagination

One of the best parts of silent walking is that you can practice using your imagination. Instead of being distracted by other things, you can go into your mind and see what is there. You can think of a story you would like to read or write. You can make plans for spending time with a friend. You might be surprised what your imagination creates.

Next time you get ready to go for a walk,

1. put on your most comfortable shoes,
2. grab a jacket,
3. be sure to bring an adult with you,
4. turn off any cell phones,
5. leave the headphones or earbuds at home, and
6. go outside with nothing more than your thoughts and your senses.

See what you can hear, see, and smell in your world. But shhh! Wait until you are back home to talk about it.

Top Distractions When Walking
Talking on the phone
Sending and receiving texts
Listening to music or a podcast
Talking to other people

14. Which sentence from the passage helps develop the central idea that silent walking can help you be more creative?
- A. When she got back home, she went online and described what her walk had been like.
 - B. You can take a silent walk in the city, too.
 - C. Without music, calls, or conversations to distract you, you can pay better attention to crossing the street or noticing traffic lights.
 - D. You can think of a story you would like to read or write.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 14	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.2.2
Indicator Description	Determine and explain a stated central idea and supporting details in an informational text.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High

15. Why did the author most likely write the passage?
- A. to convince people to try silent walking
 - B. to list some different places to take silent walks
 - C. to explain the challenges of silent walking
 - D. to compare silent walking to walking with a phone

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 15	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.4.1
Indicator Description	Determine and explain an author’s purpose (e.g., what an author wants to answer, explain, or describe); identify an author’s perspective on a topic.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

16. Which sentence from the passage **best** shows that the author likes nature?
- A. Going for a walk is one of the best ways to keep your mind and body healthy.
 - B. A few years ago, a woman was told by her doctor that she should take a walk for thirty minutes every day.
 - C. You might smell flowers, see a spiderweb, or feel the breeze in your hair or sunshine on your skin.
 - D. See what you can hear, see, and smell in your world.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 16	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.4.1
Indicator Description	Determine and explain an author’s purpose (e.g., what an author wants to answer, explain, or describe); identify an author’s perspective on a topic.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

17. How does the numbered list add meaning to the passage?
- A. It suggests to readers that a silent walk can be tiring.
 - B. It guides readers through important steps for taking a silent walk.
 - C. It shows readers why a silent walk can be ruined by a cell phone.
 - D. It tells readers what sights and sounds to look for during a silent walk.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 17	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.5.2
Indicator Description	Explain how basic text features contribute to meaning in an informational text; identify the text structures of description/list and/or cause and effect.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

18. Which idea from the passage **best** supports the author’s claim that silent walking is good for your health?
- A. Taking a silent walk involves leaving one’s phone at home.
 - B. People can take silent walks in nature or in a city.
 - C. People have taken silent walks for hundreds of years.
 - D. A woman’s doctor told her to take a silent walk every day.

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 18	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.5.3
Indicator Description	Identify an author’s claim, and explain how an author uses reasons to support that claim in an informational text.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High

19. Read the dictionary entry.

regular (REG-yuh-ler) *adj.* **1.** average; normal **2.** with no holes or gaps **3.** happening over and over **4.** behaving in an accepted way

Read the sentence from the passage.

Some people who take regular walks bring their phones with them.

Which dictionary definition **best** matches the meaning of regular as it is used in the sentence?

- A. definition 1
- B. definition 2
- C. definition 3
- D. definition 4

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 19	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.7.1c
Indicator Description	Determine or clarify the meaning of known and unknown words and phrases, choosing from an array of strategies: c. consult print and digital reference materials to find the pronunciation, part of speech, and to determine or clarify the precise meaning of words and phrases.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High

20. Read the sentences from the passage.

After a few minutes, she relaxed a little. Because she had no distractions, she could finally focus on her thoughts and reflections.

Based on the synonym thoughts, what does reflections mean as it is used in the sentence?

- A. facts
- B. ideas
- C. images
- D. senses

SC READY ELA Grade 3 Sample Item 20	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.8.1c
Indicator Description	Determine an author’s use of words and phrases in grade-level literary, informational, and multimedia texts: c. determine relationships between words (e.g., synonyms and antonyms) to better understand each of the words.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High