



**English Language Arts
Grade 5**

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 5 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 5 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	Drag and Drop, Highlighting, Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR), 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. A student is writing about learning to play an instrument.

Which information would be **best** for the student to include in an informative text about the benefits of learning to play an instrument?

- A. Learning to play an instrument can help people feel less stressed.
- B. It usually takes a long time to learn how to play an instrument well.
- C. People often learn to play the piano before learning to play other instruments.
- D. Music teachers recommend practicing every day when learning to play an instrument.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 1	
Indicator Alignment	R.1.3
Indicator Description	Determine which information is relevant to the topic.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

2. A student is taking notes for an informative text about the telephone. Drag into the chart the **two** notes the student should include in the section titled “Modern Effects of the Telephone.”

Modern Effects of the Telephone

Phone companies have always provided services that people are willing to pay for.

The future of phones is going to be very interesting.

In addition to audio calls, newer cell phones have allowed people to make video calls, too.

Today, millions of people rely on cell phones to do business.

Key:

Modern Effects of the Telephone
In addition to audio calls, newer cell phones have allowed people to make video calls, too.
Today, millions of people rely on cell phones to do business.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 2	
Indicator Alignment	R.1.4
Indicator Description	Logically group related findings.
Item Type	Drag and Drop
Answer Key	“In addition. . .” and “Today. . .”
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

3. A student is writing a narrative. Read the paragraph the student wrote.

¹ Parker's eyes flew open—he had overslept! ² Throwing off his covers, he ran to brush his teeth and hair. ³ He got dressed at the speed of light and grabbed a banana and his backpack from the kitchen table. ⁴ Running as speedily as he could, Parker could see that the big yellow bus was only a few more strides away.

Read the sentence.

Parker charged through the front door, raced outside, and sprinted down the sidewalk.

Where should the sentence be placed in the paragraph to **best** develop the plot of the narrative?

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

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 3	
Indicator Alignment	C.3.1c
Indicator Description	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences. When writing: c. establish a plot structure.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Low

4. A student is writing an informative text about the duties of various positions in government. Read the paragraph from the student’s writing.

_____ The governor of a state is usually seen as the leader of all government in that state. The governor is responsible for making sure the state and all cities in it function properly according to the law. A city mayor, on the other hand, is responsible for a specific city. The mayor makes sure the city follows the law. Both jobs require leadership, but they focus on different areas.

Which sentence would **best** introduce the topic of the informative text?

- A. Governors are usually in charge of their state for four years.
- B. Governors and mayors are voted into their jobs by local people.
- C. One job a mayor does is make sure the city is clean and safe.
- D. The jobs of governor and mayor involve different tasks and responsibilities.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 4	
Indicator Alignment	C.2.1a
Indicator Description	Write informative texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. When writing: a. introduce a topic and develop the topic with facts, definitions, details, and/or quotes related to the topic.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Low

5. A student is writing a narrative. Read the paragraph from the student's narrative.

Carlos felt a tap on his shoulder. _____ "Hey, I heard you're thinking of entering the science competition. Would you want to be partners?" Lee asked.

Which sentence should go on the blank line to **best** introduce a new character named Lee?

- A. Carlos turned around and saw a boy.
- B. A boy named Lee was standing in the hall.
- C. Turning around, Carlos saw someone standing there.
- D. Lee, a tall fifth grader with brown hair, stood behind him.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 5	
Indicator Alignment	C.3.1b
Indicator Description	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences. When writing: b. introduce a narrator and characters.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

6. Read the paragraph. Then, select the **two** underlined words that should be revised to correct errors in the paragraph.

My garden have many types of flowers. The rosebush, with its dewdrops, smell delightful. A row of tulips creates a border all around. My family loves walking in my garden.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 6	
Indicator Alignment	C.4.1h
Indicator Description	Write grammatically correct single and multi-paragraph compositions using a variety of sentence types and phrasing. When writing: h. use correct subject-verb and pronoun-antecedent agreement.
Item Type	Highlighting
Answer Key	have; smell
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

Read the passage. Then answer the questions.

The Covered Wagon Route

“All right, class,” Mr. DeLuca said. “We’ve spent weeks studying the lives of people who traveled across the United States in covered wagons. Now that you’re here at Pioneer Park, it’s time to experience the journey for yourselves.”

Nearly everything in Pioneer Park resembled the time period of the mid-1800s. Even the staff members were dressed like pioneers. The main attraction, however, was the covered wagon route. Teams of students would be competing in a wagon race. Ben, Tilly, Franklin, and Jess would be together on the blue team. Except for the view of the paved parking lot far in the distance, they could almost imagine that they were in the land of the pioneers.

“Everybody put on your rubber boots!” Mr. DeLuca said. There would be water at the end of the route. “There are some extra pairs here if anyone needs them.”

Mr. DeLuca called the names of the students taking part in the first race, and the blue team approached their wagon. It looked similar to the wagons they had seen in books and movies except much smaller.

Franklin and Tilly would be pulling the wagon along from the front; meanwhile, Ben and Jess would be pushing the back end. All four had to be aware of the wagon cover that went above their heads. Franklin and Tilly readied themselves, grasping the T-shaped handlebars.

“The first stop of the course will be collecting supplies at the mercantile, the pioneers’ store,” Mr. DeLuca said. Once the green and yellow teams were also in place, he blew a whistle, and the race began.

Each team headed to the mercantile, which was in a long wooden stand not far from the starting line. Jess took the list of required supplies out of her pocket and began to read.

“First are flour, sugar, and cornmeal!” Jess said. Her teammates ran to the stand and began grabbing the packages labeled for each type of food, though the bags contained sand instead of real food.

“Next are frying pan, shovel, and water barrel!” shouted Jess. As the blue team loaded each item into their wagon, Jess checked it off their list. The list contained 25 items in total. The team organized them to balance the weight of the wagon. Once they had loaded all the items on their list, Ben closed the two gates at the back of the wagon and slid the chain in place to secure it.

The team began pulling and guiding the wagon along a flat, dusty trail. The first several minutes felt fairly easy, but then the ground began to rise beneath them and they had to climb. At the top of the hill, Franklin adjusted his hold and dug in his heels to keep control of the wagon on the descent. Ben and Jess held tightly onto the back end of the wagon.

As soon as they reached the bottom, the wagon jiggled and swayed as the wheels hit rocks on the trail. They tightened their grips and kept up their speed. Soon they passed the yellow team, who were attempting to untangle their wagon cover from some jagged tree branches hanging overhead.

“Mud!” shouted Jess a few minutes later. The blue team quickened their pace, hoping not to get stuck. The uneven terrain was making movement more difficult.

“Here’s the creek!” announced Franklin, amazed that the green team was already crossing up ahead, but it soon became clear that the green team was stuck. Their water barrel tumbled into the creek and began to float away. A green team member slogged after it.

“Remember what Mr. DeLuca said about crossing water?” Franklin reminded the team. “Carrying our supplies separately can make the wagon lighter and easier to move.”

“And everything won’t fall into the creek!” Ben said. “Jess, you hold onto the wagon to keep it from rolling while the rest of us deal with the supplies.”

Tilly, Ben, and Franklin took armfuls of supplies out of the wagon and carried them across the creek, resting them on a grassy area on the other side. It took several trips, but the extra time and care paid off when the blue team pushed their empty wagon across with ease. Ben felt sorry for the still-struggling green team.

The blue team had renewed energy as they reloaded the wagon. They spied the finish line across the smooth, open field ahead.

“Push!” Jess said, and they rolled along as quickly as they could. The yellow team was not too far behind.

“I think we’re going to win!” Tilly said happily. The blue team rolled even faster. As they crossed the finish line, they raised their arms in victory.

“Great work, all!” Mr. DeLuca said. “I’ll bet you’re tired.”

“And hungry,” Franklin said. “What’s for lunch? Biscuits and beans, like the pioneers ate?”

Mr. DeLuca laughed. “No, it’s cheese pizza!”

“Woohoo!” Jess cheered. The team had enjoyed traveling through the 1800s, but they were happy to be back in modern times.

7. How does the story taking place on the covered wagon route affect the plot of the story?
- A. The trail, hills, and river add a sense of surprise to the passage.
 - B. The trail, hills, and river create obstacles the characters must overcome.
 - C. The trail, hills, and river show the beauty and power of nature.
 - D. The trail, hills, and river cause the characters to become very tired.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 7	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.1.1
Indicator Description	Analyze how setting, characters, and conflict impact plot development.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Low

8. How do Franklin's actions affect the plot of the story?
- A. His strength helps his team pull the wagon forward.
 - B. His suggestion helps his team safely cross the river.
 - C. He carries armfuls of supplies across the river.
 - D. He tells Mr. DeLuca that everyone is getting hungry.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 8	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.1.1
Indicator Description	Analyze how setting, characters, and conflict impact plot development.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

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

Part A

Which sentence **best** states a theme of the passage?

- A. Take the time to do tasks properly.
- B. Pioneer people faced hard challenges.
- C. Everyone makes some mistakes.
- D. Spending time with friends is rewarding.

Part B

How is the theme in part A **best** developed over the course of the passage?

- A. by describing the covered wagon route the teams follow
- B. by revealing some of the supplies pioneer people used
- C. by describing how the blue team solves problems together
- D. by emphasizing the problems some teams experience

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 9	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.2.1
Indicator Description	Explain the development of an explicit or implied theme over the course of a literary text.
Item Type	Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR)
Answer Key	A / C
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High

10. How does the point of view in the passage influence how events are described?
- A. It explains the inner thoughts of each character during the race.
 - B. It helps the reader better understand how pioneers traveled.
 - C. It explains the jobs all the characters perform during the race.
 - D. It helps the reader better understand the role of the teacher.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 10	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.3.1a
Indicator Description	Explain how the point of view from which a story is narrated influences how events are described.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High

11. How do the first two paragraphs of the passage **best** add to its overall structure?
- A. They introduce the setting and main characters.
 - B. They suggest the theme of the passage.
 - C. They add a feeling of suspense and mystery to the passage.
 - D. They add to the conflict in the passage.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 11	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.5.1
Indicator Description	Explain how a sequence of paragraphs, chapters, scenes, or stanzas fit together to provide the overall structure of a narrative, drama, or poem.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	A
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

12. Read the sentence from the passage.

The uneven terrain was making movement more difficult.

What does the word terrain mean as it is used in the sentence?

- A. thick bushes
- B. stretch of land
- C. curving road
- D. piles of rock

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 12	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.7.1a
Indicator Description	Determine or clarify the meaning of known, unknown, and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing from an array of strategies: a. use context clues (e.g., definitions, examples, restatements) to determine the meaning of words and phrases.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

13. Read the sentence from the passage.

“The first stop of the course will be collecting supplies at the mercantile, the pioneers’ store,” Mr. DeLuca said.

Which word in the sentence helps the reader understand the meaning of mercantile?

- A. stop
- B. course
- C. supplies
- D. store

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 13	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.8.1b
Indicator Description	Determine an author’s use of figurative and technical language in literary, informational, and multimedia texts: b. demonstrate knowledge of relationships between particular words (e.g., synonyms, antonyms, homographs) to better understand each of the words.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Low

Read the passages. Then answer the questions.

National Cherry Festival

The Beginning

Throughout history, farmers from many cultures have said a blessing over their crops at planting time. In mid-May 1910, the community of Traverse City, Michigan, gathered in a cherry orchard and held the first “Blessing of the Blossoms.” Cherries grow well in this region due to the soil and weather, so the fruit was a big source of income for the town.

A Festival Is Born

As years passed, the cherry farmers invited their friends from other towns to join them. They held games and had a picnic for the families. In 1925, local businesses wanted to help. Stores sold cherry products made by local cooks—and not just pies and jams. People used their imaginations and made barbecue sauces, ice cream, and even sausage. Shoppers loved it! There was even a pageant where the first Cherry Queen was crowned. The day formally became a festival.

Growth Through the Years

Traverse City added new events each year, bringing more and more people from all over the state. By 1930, the festival had grown into a three-day event. The festival was now so popular that the state of Michigan formally declared it a national celebration in 1931.

In 1964, the event lasted five days and also moved to the week of July 6. Children were out of school, so more families could come. In 1968, the festival grew to seven days, a full week. The Cherry Royale Parade, with bands and floats, was a main event. Amusement park rides were even set up downtown. In 1978, the air show by the U.S. Air Force Thunderbirds drew large crowds. People everywhere joined in the fun, too, including several U.S. presidents. Residents of Traverse City filled their front porches and yards with cherry decorations.

Today

The current cherry festival draws 500,000 people each year. Over 150 events are held, most of which are free. Concerts, parades, races, and contests make a fun-filled week for the entire family. And, of course, there’s always the delicious food made from cherries.

Cherry-Filled Days

Trees covered the hills surrounding Traverse City, Michigan. At first, it looked like someone had decorated them with little red holiday ornaments. But as I got closer, I could see that the trees were covered in bright red cherries. Even the orchards were celebrating the National Cherry Festival.

There was so much to do during the week. I decided to start with the Very Cherry Porch Parade. Homeowners all over the city decorated their yards and porches with cherry decorations. Red banners and balloons hung from railings. I even saw a six-foot Grinch holding a cherry pie!

The downtown area looked and smelled like a fair. I had never seen so many food items made from cherries! The cherry salsa was spicy and sweet at the same time. Chicken roasted over a charcoal grill was covered in cherry barbecue sauce. The pie-eating contest was so much fun to watch. People held their hands behind their backs and dived face-first into a cherry pie. The Cherry Queen wandered through the crowd, shaking hands with people. Children giggled as they played games, and the music from the carousel filled the air.

In the afternoon, I joined the crowd gathered along Traverse Bay to watch the air show. Six supersonic jets zipped through the sky, rolling and spinning and flying in formation. I had never seen the Blue Angels show. Their stunts made my heart soar!

The next day, I watched the Cherry Royale Parade. Over 180 floats, bands, and cars drove through town along the waterfront. Every float was decorated with, of course, a cherry theme. And people tossed necklaces made from plastic cherries into the crowd.

In the afternoon, I went to the Ultimate Air Dogs competition. I watched the 75-to-100-pound division. Dogs launched off the dock into the bay to retrieve a plastic bone. The dog who jumped the farthest in the air won. A golden retriever took first place, receiving a blue ribbon and a big dog cookie shaped like a cherry.

That night, fireworks exploded over the bay. The colors dancing on the water made it look like two shows in one. There's much more to see and do tomorrow. I think I'll try a cherry sausage sandwich!

14. Which central idea is developed by listing the dates of various festival changes over the course of “National Cherry Festival”?
- A. The National Cherry Festival is a special event for the people of Traverse City.
 - B. The National Cherry Festival has become a major celebration over the years.
 - C. The National Cherry Festival attracts many different people, including presidents.
 - D. The National Cherry Festival has found interesting ways to celebrate cherries.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 14	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.2.2
Indicator Description	Explain the development of a stated or implied central idea over the course of an informational text.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

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

Part A

Which statement is a central idea of “Cherry-Filled Days”?

- A. The National Cherry Festival welcomes many visitors each year.
- B. The National Cherry Festival takes place in Traverse City.
- C. The National Cherry Festival shows the value of cherries.
- D. The National Cherry Festival is an event that is exciting to attend.

Part B

How is the central idea in part A **best** developed over the course of the passage?

- A. by giving examples of various activities at the festival
- B. by listing food items that are made from cherries
- C. by describing the appearance of cherry orchards in the city
- D. by describing how the festival uses decorations to greet people

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 15	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.2.2
Indicator Description	Explain the development of a stated or implied central idea over the course of an informational text.
Item Type	Evidence-Based Selected-Response (EBSR)
Answer Key	D / A
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High

16. How does the primary account of “Cherry-Filled Days” differ from the secondary account of “National Cherry Festival”?
- A. Only “Cherry-Filled Days” provides information on how people support the festival.
 - B. Only “Cherry-Filled Days” describes the experience of watching some of the events at the festival.
 - C. Only “Cherry-Filled Days” provides information about who organizes the various events at the festival.
 - D. Only “Cherry-Filled Days” uses details to explain why the festival is important.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 16	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.4.1
Indicator Description	Compare and contrast a primary account and a secondary account of the same event or topic, while identifying how the different perspectives impact the content of the text.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	B
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	Medium

17. How do the headings **best** contribute to the overall meaning of “National Cherry Festival”?
- A. They highlight reasons why people attend the festival.
 - B. They describe how the festival has operated over the years.
 - C. They list different opinions about the festival.
 - D. They sequence key moments in the festival’s history.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 17	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.5.2
Indicator Description	Compare and contrast how text features and/or structures contribute to the overall meaning in two or more informational texts.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	D
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	High

18. How do the text structures of “National Cherry Festival” and “Cherry-Filled Days” contribute to the overall meaning of the passages?
- A. Both passages use the cause and effect structure to show how the festival impacts the community of Traverse City.
 - B. Both passages use the compare and contrast structure to show how the festival activities differ from one another.
 - C. Both passages use the chronological structure to organize information about the festival in the order that the events occurred.
 - D. Both passages use the description structure to list key events that take place during the festival.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 18	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.5.2
Indicator Description	Compare and contrast how text features and/or structures contribute to the overall meaning in two or more informational texts.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High

19. Read the summary of “National Cherry Festival.” Then, drag the **two** sentences that **best** complete the summary onto the blank lines.

Summary of “National Cherry Festival”
1. One spring, the community of Traverse City, Michigan, began blessing their cherry blossoms.
2. People and businesses turned the blessing into a festival with fun activities.
3.
4.
5. The cherry festival continues to attract huge crowds each year.

The cherry fruit was a big source of income for the town.

The festival was declared a national celebration.

The festival kept adding more activities and lengthening its time period.

The Cherry Royale Parade, with bands and floats, became a main event.

Key:

Summary of “National Cherry Festival”
1. One spring, the community of Traverse City, Michigan, began blessing their cherry blossoms.
2. People and businesses turned the blessing into a festival with fun activities.
3. The festival was declared a national celebration.
4. The festival kept adding more activities and lengthening its time period.
5. The cherry festival continues to attract huge crowds each year.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 19	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.6.1b
Indicator Description	Summarize a text to enhance comprehension: b. include a central idea and relevant supporting details for an informational text.
Item Type	Drag and Drop
Answer Key	Line 3: “The festival was declared. . .” Line 4: “The festival kept adding. . .”
Depth of Knowledge	3
Estimated Difficulty	High

20. Read the sentence from “Cherry-Filled Days.”

The colors dancing on the water made it look like two shows in one.

What does the phrase “the colors dancing” mean in the sentence?

- A. The fireworks’ lights first appeared in the sky and then disappeared in the bay.
- B. The fireworks’ lights helped attract people to the location near the bay.
- C. The fireworks’ lights reflected brightly on the surface of the bay.
- D. The fireworks’ lights glowed brightly on the bay for a long time.

SC READY ELA Grade 5 Sample Item 20	
Indicator Alignment	AOR.8.1a
Indicator Description	Determine an author’s use of figurative and technical language in literary, informational, and multimedia texts: a. recognize and explain the meaning of figurative language, including similes and metaphors, in context.
Item Type	Selected Response
Answer Key	C
Depth of Knowledge	2
Estimated Difficulty	Low