



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
2010**

**Grade 8
Writing**

Writing

- 1 Which sentence is punctuated correctly?
- A. Mary which part of the book did you like best?
 - B. Mary which part, of the book did you like best?
 - C. Mary which part of the book, did you like best?
 - D. Mary, which part of the book did you like best?

- 2 Which edit should be made to the sentence below?

One of the teachers are supposed to collect the permission slips for the field trip we will take on Thursday.

- A. Change *teachers* to **teacher**.
- B. Change *are* to **is**.
- C. Change *collect* to **collects**.
- D. Change *will take* to **took**.

- 3 Which word in the sentence below should be capitalized?

Citizens for Greener parks is an organization that helps people in our city plan how to use its natural resources.

- A. parks
- B. organization
- C. city
- D. natural

- 4 Where should a semicolon (;) be added to the sentence below?

I found my scarf and mittens after a great deal of searching the location of my hat was still a mystery.

- A. after *scarf*
- B. after *deal*
- C. after *searching*
- D. after *location*

- 5 How should the underlined word in the sentence below be spelled?

The brilliennt ocean lay sparkling before them.

- A. briliant
- B. brilliant
- C. brillent
- D. brillient

- 6 What is the **best** way to combine the two sentences below?

Ted finished his project for the science fair. He is hoping to advance to the state competition.

- A. Ted finished his project for the science fair, but he is hoping to advance to the state competition.
- B. Ted finished his project for the science fair, he is hoping to advance to the state competition.
- C. Ted finished his project for the science fair and Ted is hoping to advance to the state competition.
- D. Ted finished his project for the science fair and is hoping to advance to the state competition.

- 7 Which edit should be made to the sentence below?

Denver's famous Art museum is downtown, across the street from Civic Center Park.

- A. Change *Art* to **art**.
- B. Change *downtown* to **Downtown**.
- C. Change *street* to **Street**.
- D. Change *Park* to **park**.

- 8 Which of the following is a sentence fragment?

- A. Benjamin Franklin was born in Boston in 1706.
- B. The first skill that he learned was printing.
- C. Using his printing skills to support his family well.
- D. He retired from printing to spend his time inventing.

- 9 Which edit should be made to the sentence below?

After discussing the issue, the commitee asked the principal to purchase additional supplies.

- A. Change *discussing* to **discusing**.
- B. Change *commitee* to **committee**.
- C. Change *principal* to **principle**.
- D. Change *additional* to **aditional**.

- 10 Which edit should be made to the sentence below?

The museum's most famous pieces of art were displayed in it's front rooms.

- A. Change *museum's* to **museums**.
- B. Change *pieces* to **piece's**.
- C. Change *it's* to **its**.
- D. Change *rooms* to **rooms'**.

When writing responses to prompts 11, 12, and 13, remember to

- **read the prompt carefully,**
- **develop a complete response to the prompt, and**
- **proofread and edit your writing.**

Narrative

- 11** You need to write an adventure story for a class assignment. Write a paragraph that introduces and develops your main character.

Response to Literary Text

As you read these two poems, think about whether you are more like one speaker or the other. Then write a response to the prompt that follows.

Let's Talk

About new robins
who appear
before winter
is through, the blue
of sky in July.
The turtle's shell.
Don't forget to tell
me how you've been.
Let's talk
of snow on mountains.
Summers in cities.
Pages.
Postcards.
Valentines.
Good times
we've had.
How it feels
to be sad.
Let's talk
about old dogs we love.
And speaking of love,
the turtledove.
Sit tight. Let's chat
all night.
About tomorrow,
about yesterday,
about people
who go away.
Let's name rivers.
Wish on stars.
Sit closer. Let's talk.
Tell me
how you are.

—*Rebecca Kai Dotlich*

Listen

Listen
to
soft-silences
stumbling
midst
loud-rumblings

now
and
then.

Hear
powerful
poundings
of
quiet,
hushed,

yet—

momentous sounds

over
over
over

again.

—*Lee Bennett Hopkins*

- 12 Do you think you are more like the speaker in “Let’s Talk” or the speaker in “Listen”? Write a paragraph using details from one or both poems to support your response.

Persuasive Writing

- 13 Some people think that it is the responsibility of schools to teach students to save and manage money. Do you think there should be a class at school that teaches students how to save and manage money? Write a paragraph that develops **one** strong argument supporting your position.

Report

A student wrote this fact sheet about writing in ancient Rome. As you read the fact sheet, think about what a person from ancient Rome would find familiar and/or different about writing today. Then write a response to the prompt that follows.

Writing in Ancient Rome

- Romans used sticks to write rough drafts on wax-covered boards and rubbed the words away afterward
- made pens by cutting the end of a bamboo or reed stem into a point and filling the point with ink
- *papyrus* (pə pí rəss): a paper-like material made from the papyrus plant and used for writing
- before books, Romans used scrolls, sheets of papyrus sewn together and rolled out to read
- writing tools affected the shape of Roman letters:
 - hammer and chisel made angular letters
 - reed or bamboo pen made flowing letters
- invented books from sheets of papyrus sewn together to replace scrolls
- first Romans to use writing were the upper classes; eventually, most Romans were taught to read and write
- three types of Roman handwriting:
 - squared letters for inscribing monuments and buildings
 - flowing letters for writing official documents
 - plain letters for writing first drafts
- government, business, and legal documents were written in ink on papyrus so they would be permanent
- no lowercase letters; writing tools were not useful for making detailed letters
- used inks made of combinations of
 - berries, plants, and minerals
 - soot, resin, wine, and octopus ink

- 14 What would a person from ancient Rome find familiar and/or different about writing today? Select information from the fact sheet and use your own knowledge to write a report.

Before writing, consider

- *the focus/controlling idea of your report*
- *the supporting details in your report*
- *the significance of the information in your report*

A complete response to the prompt includes

- a clear purpose/focus
- coherent organization
- details/elaboration
- well-chosen language and a variety of sentence structures
- control of conventions

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