

# Practice Materials for Grade 6 English Language Arts

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The following reading selection, prompt, rubric, and sample student work can be used by educators with either the Student Work Analysis Protocol or the Calibration Protocol for Scoring Student Work.<sup>1</sup> In addition, since these samples have been scored and annotated, they can be used to help guide educators with aligning their scoring to these anchor samples developed by the original group of scorers. Follow the protocol(s) when using these materials.

## **Student work samples from the Rhode Island Interim Assessment English Language Arts Grade 6 Assessment**

Reading Selection: “A Harder Task than Making Bricks Without Straw”

**Prompt:** Based on Selection 2, evaluate whether Washington’s determination for students to be involved with erecting their own buildings and brickmaking proved beneficial for students. Cite textual evidence to support your answer.

**Reading Selection:**

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<sup>1</sup> Both protocols can be found on the RIDE website at [www.ride.ri.gov/EdEval-OnlineModules](http://www.ride.ri.gov/EdEval-OnlineModules)

## Selection 2

### A Harder Task Than Making Bricks Without Straw

from Booker T. Washington's *Up from Slavery*

- 1 From the very beginning, at Tuskegee, I was determined to have the students do the agricultural and domestic work, and to erect their own buildings. My plan was that while they were performing this service they would be taught the latest and best methods of labor. That way the school would get the benefit of their efforts, and the students would be taught to see not only utility in labor, but also beauty and dignity. They would be taught, in fact, how to lift labor up from mere drudgery and toil<sup>1</sup>. They would learn to love work for its own sake. My plan was not to teach them to work in the old way, but to show them how to make the forces of nature—air, water, steam, electricity, horsepower—assist them.
- 2 At first, many advised me against having the buildings erected by the students, but I was determined to stick to it. I told those who doubted the wisdom of the plan that I knew that our first buildings would not be so comfortable or so complete as buildings erected by the experienced hands of outside workmen. But in the teaching of civilization, self-help, and **self-reliance**, the erection of the buildings by the students themselves would more than make up for any lack of comfort or fine finish.
- 3 I also told those who doubted the plan that most of our students came to us in poverty, from the cabins of the cotton, sugar, and rice plantations of the South. I knew it would please these students very much to place them at once in finely constructed buildings. But I felt that it would seem more natural to teach them how to construct their own buildings. I knew mistakes would be made, but these mistakes would teach us valuable lessons for the future.
- 4 During the now nineteen years' existence of the Tuskegee school, the plan of having the buildings erected by student labor has continued. Forty buildings, counting small and large, have been built, and all except four are almost wholly the product of student labor. As an additional result, hundreds of men are now scattered throughout the South who received their knowledge of mechanics while being taught how to erect these buildings. Skill and knowledge are now handed down from one set of students to another in this way. Now, a building of any description or size can be constructed wholly by our instructors and students from the drawing of the plans to the putting in of the electric fixtures, without going off the grounds for a single workman.
- 5 Not a few times, when a new student has been led to mar the looks of some building by pencil marks or by the cuts of a pocketknife, I have heard an old student remind him: "Don't do that. That is our building. I helped put it up."

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<sup>1</sup>drudgery and toil: boring and exhausting work

- 6 In the early days of the school, I think my most trying experience was brickmaking. As soon as we got the farmwork going well, we directed our next efforts toward the industry of making bricks. We needed these to use in our own buildings, but there was also another reason for starting this industry. There was no brickyard in the town, and in addition to our own needs, there was a demand for bricks in the general market.
- 7 I had always sympathized with the “Children of Israel,”<sup>2</sup> in their task of “making bricks without straw,” but ours was the task of making bricks with no money and no experience.
- 8 In the first place, the work was hard and dirty, and it was difficult to get the students to help. When it came to brickmaking, their distaste for manual labor in connection with book education became especially apparent. It was not a pleasant task to stand in the mud pit for hours, with the mud up to the knees. More than one student became disgusted and left the school.
- 9 We tried several locations before we opened up a pit that furnished brick clay. I had always supposed that brickmaking was very simple. I soon found out by bitter experience that it required special skill and knowledge, particularly in the burning of the bricks. After a good deal of effort, we molded about 25,000 bricks, and put them into a kiln<sup>3</sup> to be burned. This kiln turned out to be a failure, because it was not properly constructed or properly burned. We began at once, however, on a second kiln. This, for some reason, also proved a failure. The failure of this kiln made it still more difficult to get the students to take any part in the work. Several of the teachers who had been trained in the industries at Hampton volunteered their services. So somehow, we succeeded in getting a third kiln ready for burning. The burning of a kiln required about a week. Toward the last part of the week, when it seemed as if we were going to have a thousand bricks or more in a few hours, in the middle of the night the kiln fell. For the third time we had failed.
- 10 The failure of this last kiln left me without a single dollar I could use to make another one. Most of the teachers advised me to abandon the effort to make bricks. In the middle of my troubles, I thought of a watch that I had. I took this watch to the city of Montgomery, which was not far away, and placed it in a pawnshop. I secured cash for it, in the amount of fifteen dollars. It was enough to renew the brickmaking experiment. I returned to Tuskegee, and, with the help of the fifteen dollars, rallied our rather discouraged forces. We began a fourth attempt to make bricks. This time, I am glad to say, we were successful. Before I got hold of any money, the time limit on my watch had expired. I have never seen it since. But I have never regretted the loss of it.

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<sup>2</sup>“Children of Israel”: Washington compares his students’ hard work to the hard work of the Jewish people as slaves in Egypt.

<sup>3</sup>kiln: a type of stove for baking clay

**Rubric:** The rubric used for this task is a holistic rubric, therefore educators will decide on an overall score for the response.

Score	Description
4	Response is accurate, complete; evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. Text references strongly and thoroughly support the task and demonstrate understanding of the text. The writing is completely articulated, focused, and demonstrates strong control of conventions; a few minor errors may be present.
3	Response is mostly accurate, somewhat complete; evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. Text references support the task and demonstrate understanding
2	Response is partially accurate, inconsistent, or flawed. It attempts to evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. Text references provided to support the task may be general, used incorrectly, or used with limited success. The writing may exhibit issues with organization, focus, and/or control of standard English grammar.
1	Response is incomplete, provides minimal understanding of the task or a minimal response to the task. Text references provided to support the task may be vague or lacking. The writing may exhibit issues with organization, focus, and/or control of standard English grammar.
0	Response is inaccurate, irrelevant, contains insufficient evidence to demonstrate understanding of the task, or the student has failed to respond to the task.
Blank	No response

**Training Notes:** The following information should be used to guide the discussion of what constitutes a proficient response on this assessment.

Response may include but is not limited to:

Yes, this action was beneficial:

- Hundreds of men received knowledge of mechanics.
- Skills and knowledge were handed down between generations of students.
- Students could design an entire building from the planning stages to completion.
- Students protected their work from other students.
- Students gained knowledge about hard work and perseverance while creating bricks.

No, this action was not beneficial:

- Some students were overworked and frustrated. There needs to be more evidence about how students felt while they accomplished these tasks.

**Student Work:** The following are samples of student work in response to this prompt. Anchor scores and annotations are included on a separate page for the facilitators use with the protocols.

**Student Work Sample A:**

Washington's determination for students to be involved with erecting their own buildings and brickmaking proved beneficial for students in many ways. First, they would learn the latest and best methods of labor. The text states *"My plan was that while they were performing this service they would be taught the latest and best methods of labor"* Meaning that while they were erecting the buildings they would have knowledge of creating buildings. Also, the people that created the buildings would stop others from making pencil marks and cuts by a pocketknife. The selection quotes *"Don't do that. That is our building. I helped put it up"* meaning that any type of vandals would be scolded by the students that built it the building. Finally, some students left the school because of the brickmaking. That didn't stop Washington from keeping his other students from learning to make bricks. Washington never gave up from helping his students in many ways.

**Educator Notes:**

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**Student Work Sample B:**

Yes Washington determination for students to be involved with erecting thier own building and brickmaking proved benefical for students. First, it was to make them learn how to love work. In the artical it says "...to lift labor up from mere drudgery and toil." Secondly, his plan wasn't to teach them to work in the old way. His plan was to show them how to make the forces of nature. this is how washingtons determination proved to be benefical for students.

**Educator Notes:**

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**Student Work Sample C:**

Washington's determination for students to be involved with erecting their own buildings and brickmaking proved beneficial for students. In Selection 2, Booker T. Washington explains that he wanted his students build their own buildings and school. "Many advised me against having the buildings erected by the students," the Selection states. Although people were saying this, Booker T. Washington proved them wrong later because his students learned from this. Also, students did not want to do anything to mess up the looks of the building, which teaches them to appreciate what they built. Also, the building taught the students to keep trying. When they kept failing at brickmaking, they kept trying until they succeeded. Lastly, the building taught students teamwork. If they hadn't done this, they might not be able to work with multiple people. Personally, I think what Booker T. Washington did was definitely beneficial for his students.

**Educator Notes:**

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**Student Work Sample D:**

Although many teachers thought it was not wise it turned out to be very beneficial as Washington thought it would be. Many were built and learned from the experience. "As an additional result, hundreds of men are now scattered throughout the South who received their knowledge of mechanics while being taught how to erect these buildings." the students learned plenty more, especially of hardwork and appreciation, for those who stayed. "More than one student became disgusted and left the school." they were especially respectful to things because they understood more of hardwork and appreciation. "Not a few times, when a new student has been led to mar the looks of some building by the cuts of a pencil or pocketknife, I have heard an old student remind him; 'Don't do that. That is our building. I helped put it up.'" Therefore the experience was beneficial and taught them many principles.

**Educator Notes:**

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**Student Work Sample E:**

No Washington should not have made those kids build but it was for a good cause and also he kids were poor and they needed shelter. For example the kids made bricks and built kids now probably could not build anything now that has to do with bricks but they cold try. Again he shouldnt have done it but it was for a good cause.

**Educator Notes:**


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**Student Work Sample F:**

Washington's determination for the students to construct their own buildings was very beneficial. They learned many things in the process of making the buildings. They learned that construction is a very hard job, and you can't just make a building in one day. They also learned things about construction, like techniques for building these buildings and making bricks. Self reliance was also taught, because they had to rely on themselves and others to build. These are just some things the students were taught, so as you can see, this was very beneficial to the students, and Washington knew this was going to help them.

**Educator Notes:**


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**Student Work Sample G:**

I do not think that the brickmaking and constructing the buildings was beneficial for the students. One reason why I think this is because they wasted their learning time. Instead of learning math or english or geography or science, they had to make bricks and construct buildings. Another reason is, what are they learning by making bricks? Is making bricks and buliding things helping them get into a good college? No. Lastly, whatever skills they do learn, how is it useful? Not all of them are gonna become constructors and brickmakers! As you can see, I do not think that making the students do this was beneficial.

**Educator Notes:**

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**Student Work Sample H:**

Washington determination for letting students erect their own buildings. He says this would help the school get the benefits of their effort and the students would be taught utility, beauty and dignity. They would also learn to love their work. Also it teaches the students how to lift labor up from drudgery and toil.

**Educator Notes:**

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**Student Work Sample I:**

I do think the student benefited from the brickmaking and erecting their own building for several reasons. One reason is the students would learn how to construct a building. "My plan was that while they were performing this service they would be taught the latest and best method of labor" (paragraph 1) A second reason is the students would learn how to make things." In the early days of school, I think my most trying experience was brickmaking" (paragraph 6) Those are why I think that the students benefited from making their school.

**Educator Notes:**

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**Facilitator Notes:** These samples of student work have been scored and annotations have been provided. See below to help guide educators with aligning their scoring to these anchor samples developed by the original group of scorers.

**Sample A****Score:** 2

This paper was viewed as being close to being scored as a “3”.

**Annotation:** Response evaluates 2 arguments with relevant details/quotes. Minor issues with conventions.

**Sample B****Score:** 1

This paper was viewed as being close to being scored as a “2”.

**Annotation:** Response cites correct evidence but explanation is minimal and flawed.

**Sample C****Score:** 2

This paper was viewed as being close to being scored as a “3”.

**Annotation:** Response attempts to evaluate arguments with limited support. Student references details from the passage but with limited success.

**Sample D****Score:** 2

**Annotation:** Response attempts to evaluate the argument/claims. Text references provided are used with limited success. Some issues with conventions.

**Sample E**

**Score:** 0

**Annotation:** Irrelevant personal opinion.

**Sample F**

**Score:** 1

This paper was viewed as being close to being scored as a “2”.

**Annotation:** Minimal response with little textual evidence. Minor errors.

**Sample G**

**Score:** 0

**Annotation:** Irrelevant personal opinion.

**Sample H**

**Score:** 1

**Annotation:** Minimal attempt to provide text references to support the argument/claim. Some issues with conventions.

**Sample I**

**Score:** 1

**Annotation:** Response contains minimal relevant information with brief supporting quote. Last part is irrelevant.