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**New York State Testing Program
Grade 4 Common Core
English Language Arts Test**

Sample Student Work

September 2013



THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT / THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY
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New York State Testing Program Grade 4 Common Core English Language Arts Test

Sample Student Work

With the adoption of the New York P-12 Common Core Learning Standards (CCLS) in ELA/Literacy and Mathematics, the Board of Regents signaled a shift in both instruction and assessment. In Spring 2013, New York State administered the first set of tests designed to assess student performance in accordance with the instructional shifts and the rigor demanded by the Common Core State Standards (CCSS). To aid in the transition to new assessments, New York State released a number of resources during the 2012-2013 year, including test blueprints and specifications, sample questions, and criteria for writing assessment questions. These resources can be found at <http://www.engageny.org/common-core-assessments>.

New York State administered the first ELA/Literacy and Mathematics Common Core tests in April 2013 and is now making a portion of the questions from those tests available for review and use. These released questions will help students, families, educators and the public better understand how tests have changed to assess the instructional shifts demanded by the Common Core and to assess the rigor required to ensure that all students are on track to college and career readiness.

Understanding Sample Student Work

The released test questions include both multiple choice and constructed response questions. Constructed Response questions ask students to write a thoughtful essay in response to questions the test asks. Here, NYSED is providing student responses to a "constructed response" question we have posted on engage.

By looking at the student work, parents, teachers, and students can gain a better sense of what kind of answers earns students a better score. We can also look at this work and see what students know and are able to do at different levels. In general, students who answered well on these questions are likely to be at level 3 or 4. Similarly, students who earn fewer points on each question have a greater likelihood of being classified as a level 1 or level 2. While not guaranteed, if your student is capable of earning full credit on "constructed response" questions they will most likely be prepared to earn a level 3 or 4 on the state test.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their relationship develops
- explain how they communicate
- use details from the story to support your response



Check your writing for correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

Sitti's Secrets

by Naomi Shihab Nye

- 1 Once I went to visit my grandmother. My grandmother and I do not speak the same language. We talked through my father, as if he were a telephone, because he spoke both our languages and could translate what we said.
- 2 I called her *Sitti*, which means Grandma in Arabic. She called me *habibi*, which means darling. Her voice danced as high as the whistles of birds. Her voice giggled and whooshed like wind going around corners. She had a thousand rivers in her voice.
- 3 A few curls of dark hair peeked out of her scarf on one side, and a white curl peeked out on the other side. I wanted her to take off the scarf so I could see if her hair was striped.
- 4 Soon we had invented our own language together. Sitti pointed at my stomach to ask if I was hungry. I pointed to the door to ask if she wanted to go outside. We walked to the fields to watch men picking lentils. We admired the sky with hums and claps.
- 5 We crossed the road to buy milk from a family that kept one spotted cow. I called the cow *habibi*, and it winked at me. We thanked the cow, with whistles and clicks, for the fresh milk that we carried home in Sitti's little teapot.
- 6 Every day I played with my cousins, Fowzi, Sami, Hani, and Hendia from next door. We played marbles together in their courtyard. Their marbles were blue and green and spun through the dust like planets. We didn't need words to play marbles.
- 7 My grandmother lives on the other side of the earth. She eats cucumbers for breakfast, with yogurt and bread. She bakes the big, flat bread in a round, old oven next to her house. A fire burns in the middle.

- 8 She pats the dough between her hands and presses it out to bake on a flat black rock in the center of the oven. My father says she has been baking that bread for a hundred years.
- 9 My grandmother and I sat under her lemon tree in the afternoons, drinking lemonade with mint in it. She liked me to pick bunches of mint for her. She liked to press her nose into the mint and sniff.
- 10 Some days we stuffed little zucchini squash with rice for dinner. We sang *habibi, habibi* as we stacked them in a pan. We cracked almonds and ate apricots, called *mish-mish*, while we worked.
- 11 One day Sitti took off her scarf and shook out her hair. She washed her hair in a tub right there under the sun. Her hair surprised me by being very long. And it *was* striped! She said it got that way all by itself. I helped her brush it out while it dried. She braided it and pinned the braid up before putting on the scarf again.
- 12 I felt as if I knew a secret.
- 13 In the evenings we climbed the stairs to the roof of Sitti's house to look at the sky, smell the air, and take down the laundry. My grandmother likes to unpin the laundry in the evening so she can watch the women of the village walking back from the spring with jugs of water on their heads. She used to do that, too. My father says the women don't really need to get water from the spring anymore, but they like to. It is something from the old days they don't want to forget.
- 14 On the day my father and I had to leave, everyone cried and cried. Even my father kept blowing his nose and walking outside. I cried hard when Sitti held my head against her shoulder. My cousins gave me a sack of almonds to eat on the plane. Sitti gave me a small purse she had made. She had stitched a picture of her lemon tree onto the purse with shiny thread. She popped the almonds into my purse and pulled the drawstrings tight.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their relationship develops
- explain how they communicate
- use details from the story to support your response

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. When she first got there, they spoke through her dad because he spoke both languages. Sooner or later, they were able to have names for each other. The grandmother was called Sitti, which means grandma in Arabic. (The language the grandmother speaks.) Sitti called the visitor habibi which means darling in Arabic. Then they made their own language together! Here is an example: Sitti would point to habibi's stomach to ask if she was hungry. Habibi would point

to the door to ask Sitti if she wanted to go outside. Next, they would hang out with each other. In the afternoons, they would sit under the lemon tree together. Also, they would cook together. They stuffed little zucchinis with rice for dinner. Last but not least they would go on the roof and smell the air, look at the sky, and take down the laundry. That is how the narrator's relationship with her grandmother developed during the story.

Score Point 4 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose (*When she first got there, they spoke through her dad because he spoke both languages*). The response demonstrates insightful comprehension and analysis of the text (*Then they made their own language and they would hang out with each other*). The topic is developed with relevant, well-chosen facts from the text (*they were able to have names for each other. The grand mother was called Sitti, which means grandma in Arabic and habibi which means darling in Arabic*). Varied, relevant evidence is sustained throughout (*point to habibi's stomach; sit under the lemon tree; go on the roof and smell the air, look at the sky, and take down the laundry*). Purposeful organization is exhibited by the skillful linking of ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases (*when, sooner or later, then, an example, also, last but not least, that is how*). The response provides a concluding statement that follows from the topic and information presented (*That is how the narrator's relationship with her grandmother developed during the story*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their relationship develops
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The relationship between the grandmother and the narrator has changed since she came. Instead of having the dad translate their language they made up their own. Other than that, the narrator said, "I felt as if I knew a secret." I think that "secret" is, her grandmother's hair is surprisingly long, and her grandmother's hair was striped. To prove my statement there, the grandmother said, "It developed like that." Also, now, they have a new routine together. They both do the laundry

together, and in the afternoon, they drink lemonade with mint/le under the lemon tree. "She liked it when I picked branches of mint so she could stuff her nose in it to smell it."

The grandmother and the narrator communicate with their new language. In the story, it says, "When we piont to eachothers stomach, we ask if the others hungry. When we piont at the door, it means we are asking the other if they want to go outside."

Score Point 4 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows logically from the task and purpose (*The relationship between the grandmother and the narrator has changed*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate comprehension and analysis of the text (*now, they have a new routine*). The topic is developed with relevant, well-chosen facts and concrete details from the text (*hair is suprisingly long, and her grandmothers hair was striped and both do the laundry together*). Varied, relevant evidence is sustained throughout (*when we piont to eachothers stomach, we ask if the others hungry. When we piont at the door, it means we are asking the other if they want to go outside*). The response exhibits clear, purposeful organization, and skillfully links ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases (*insted, other than that, to prove my statement*). The language used is stylistically sophisticated (*Insted of having the dad translate*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with few errors.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their relationship develops
- explain how they communicate
- use details from the story to support your response

In the beginning of the story Habibi and Sitti spoke different language. Also during the story the narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops by Sitti and Habibi hang out more in the story because they watched and admired the the sky with hums and claps. They watched the men together picking lentils. Every afternoon Sitti and Habibi

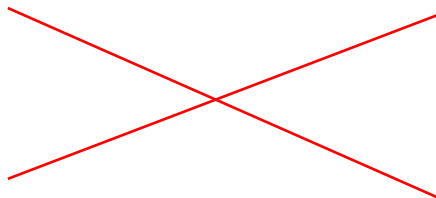
would drink lemonade with
mint.

In the story Sitti
and Habibi spoke different
languages, so they couldn't under-
stand each other. So Sitti and
Habibi made up their own
language like when one of them
are hungry they would point at each
other's stomach.

In conclusion this is
how their relationship develops
in the story and this is how they communicate.

Score Point 3 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows from the task (*In the beginning of the story Habibi and Sitti spoke different language*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate comprehension and analysis of the texts (*during the story the narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops*). The topic is developed with relevant details from the text (*they watched and admired the sky and watched the men together picking lentils*). The use of relevant evidence is sustained throughout (*drink lemonade with mint and made up their own language like when one of them are hungry they would point at each other's stomach*). The response exhibits clear organization, and links ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases (*In the beginning, also, so, in conclusion*). The language is grade-appropriate with domain-specific vocabulary (*they couldn't understand each other*). The response provides a concluding statement that follows from the topic and information presented (*In conclusion this is how their relationship develops in the story and this is how they communicate*). The response demonstrates a grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors (*begining, the the sky, could'nt*) that do not hinder comprehension.



The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their relationship develops
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A little girl and her grandmother had a very special relationship. The little girl and her grandmother made up a special language so they could communicate even though they don't speak the same language but they found a way to talk to each other. The little girl and her grandmother do a bunch of things together like go on walks, pick mint leaves off of a tree and get milk

from a cow ^{together} also a bunch of other things to. The most special thing though was ~~when~~ the little girl and her family were leaving and the grand mother gave the little girl a purse with a picture of the lemon tree on it! That's how the little girl and the grandma have a special relationship.

Score Point 3 (out of 4 points)

This response clearly introduces a topic in a manner that follows from the task and purpose (*A little girl and her grandmother had*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate comprehension and analysis of the text (*a very special relationship*). The topic is developed with relevant details from the text (*made up a special language so they could communicate even though they do'nt speak the same language and the grand mother gave the little girl a purse with a picture of the lemon tree on it and go on walks, pick mint leaves off of a tree and get milk from a cow*). The response exhibits clear organization, and links ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases (*so, but, That's how*). The response provides a concluding statement that follows from the topic and information presented (*That's how the little girl and the grandma have a special relationship*). The response demonstrates a grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors (*do'nt*) that do not hinder comprehension.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their relationship develops
- explain how they communicate
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Their relationship develops because by spending time together, they get to know each other more better. An example is that when they went to the grandmother's roof in the evening and saw ladies putting jugs of water on their heads. This shows that they have a lot of fun together, so their love for each other gets stronger by the second when their with each other.

They communicate by not talking, but making their own language →

For example, they would point at each other's stomach if they were hungry, and point to the door if they wanted to go outside.

Score Point 2 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task and purpose (*Their relationship develops*). The response demonstrates a literal comprehension of the text (*by spending time together, they get to know each other more better*). The topic is partially developed with the use of some textual evidence (*saw ladies putting jugs of water on their heads and point at each other's stomach if they were hungry*). The response exhibits clear organization, and links ideas using grade-appropriate words and phrases (*an example, this shows, so, for example*). Appropriate, domain-specific language is used inconsistently (*know each other more better*). The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors that do not hinder comprehension.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how their relationship develops
- explain how they communicate
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There relationship develops by them doing many things together. Like drinking lemonade and having mints under the lemon tree. They communicate by her father translating what her grandmother says. Or them pointing at things.

Score Point 2 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task (*There relationship develops*). The response demonstrates a literal comprehension of the text (*by them doing many things together*). The topic is partially developed with the use of some textual evidence (*drinking lemonade and having mints under the lemon tree and by her father translating what her grandmother says. Or them pointing at things*). The response exhibits some attempt at organization and inconsistently links ideas using words and phrases (*like*). Appropriate, domain-specific language is used inconsistently (*doing many things and pointing at things*). No concluding statement is provided. The response demonstrates grade-appropriate command of conventions, with occasional errors (*There*) that do not hinder comprehension.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

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- explain how they communicate
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There relationship
develops from spending time
together, Like when they made
lemonade, Went on the
roof, Played with each other,
Learned how to love
each other,

Score Point 1 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic in a manner that follows generally from the task (*There relationship devlops*). The response demonstrates little understanding of the text (*Learned how to love each other*). Ideas are developed using minimal evidence (*they made lemonade, went on the roof, played*). The response does not explain how the narrator and her grandmother communicate. This response exhibits little attempt at organization and lacks the use of linking words to connect ideas. No concluding statement is provided. This response demonstrates emerging command of conventions, with some errors (*There, devlops, Went, Played*) that may hinder comprehension.

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- explain how they communicate
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The way they communicate is from
her grils dad. Her dad can speak both
of there 1 languages.

Score Point 1 (out of 4 points)

This response introduces a topic in a manner that demonstrates a lack of comprehension of the task (*The way they communicate is from the grils dad*). The response demonstrates an attempt to use evidence, but only develops ideas with minimal support from the text (*Her dad can speak both of there languages*). The response does not explain how the narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops. This response exhibits little attempt at organization and does not provide a concluding statement. This response demonstrates emerging command of conventions, with some errors (*grils* and *there*) that may hinder comprehension.

The narrator's relationship with her grandmother develops during her visit. How does their relationship develop? How do they communicate even though they do not speak the same language? Use details from the story to support your response.

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The relationship whith her grandmother when
well and her and her grandmother get along well

10

Score Point 0 (out of 4 points)

This response demonstrates a lack of comprehension of the task. The response demonstrates an attempt to use minimal evidence (*The relationship whith her grandmother when well and her and her grandmother get along well*). The response exhibits no evidence of organization or use of linking words. This response uses imprecise language and does not provide a concluding statement. The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions, with frequent errors (*whith* and *when*) that hinder comprehension.