

Reading Assessment Practice Materials Grade 11 ELA

Item #1

Read the following passage, then answer the question.

*This passage is excerpted from the book *The Hound of the Baskervilles* by Sir Arthur Conan Doyle. The excerpt begins shortly after the death of Sir Charles Baskerville, the owner of a grand estate called Baskerville Hall. Baskerville's friend, Dr. Mortimer, has just asked Detective Sherlock Holmes to investigate the mysterious circumstances surrounding Baskerville's death.*

The Hound of the Baskervilles *By Sir Arthur Conan Doyle*

Dr. Mortimer refolded his paper and replaced it in his pocket. "Those are the public facts, Mr. Holmes, in connection with the death of Sir Charles Baskerville."

"I must thank you," said Sherlock Holmes, "for calling my attention to a case which certainly presents some features of interest. I had observed some newspaper comment at the time, but I was exceedingly preoccupied by that little affair of the Vatican cameos, and in my anxiety to oblige the Pope I lost touch with several interesting English cases. This article, you say, contains all the public facts?"

"It does."

"Then let me have the private ones." He leaned back, put his fingertips together, and assumed his most impassive and judicial expression.

"In doing so," said Dr. Mortimer, who had begun to show signs of some strong emotion, "I am telling that which I have not confided to anyone. My motive for withholding it from the coroner's inquiry is that a man of science shrinks from placing himself in the public position of seeming to endorse a popular superstition. I had the further motive that Baskerville Hall, as the paper says, would certainly remain untenanted if anything were done to increase its already rather grim reputation. For both these reasons I thought that I was justified in telling rather less than I knew, since no practical good could result from it, but with you there is no reason why I should not be perfectly frank.

"The moor is very sparsely inhabited, and those who live near each other are thrown very much together. For this reason I saw a good deal of Sir Charles Baskerville. With the exception of Mr. Frankland, of Lafter Hall, and Mr. Stapleton, the naturalist, there are no other men of education within many miles. Sir Charles was a retiring man, but the chance of his illness brought us together, and a community of interests in science kept us so....

"Within the last few months it became increasingly plain to me that Sir Charles's nervous system was strained to the breaking point. He had taken this legend which I have read you exceedingly to heart—so much so that, although he would walk in his own grounds, nothing would induce him to go out upon the

moor at night. Incredible as it may appear to you, Mr. Holmes, he was honestly convinced that a dreadful fate overhung his family, and certainly the records which he was able to give of his ancestors were not encouraging. The idea of some ghastly presence constantly haunted him, and on more than one occasion he has asked me whether I had on my medical journeys at night ever seen any strange creature or heard the baying of a hound. The latter question he put to me several times, and always with a voice which vibrated with excitement.

"I can well remember driving up to his house in the evening some three weeks before the fatal event. He chanced to be at his hall door. I had descended from my gig and was standing in front of him, when I saw his eyes fix themselves over my shoulder and stare past me with an expression of the most dreadful horror. I whisked round and had just time to catch a glimpse of something which I took to be a large black calf passing at the head of the drive. So excited and alarmed was he that I was compelled to go down to the spot where the animal had been and look around for it. It was gone, however, and the incident appeared to make the worst impression upon his mind. I stayed with him all the evening, and it was on that occasion, to explain the emotion which he had shown, that he confided to my keeping that narrative which I read to you when first I came. I mention this small episode because it assumes some importance in view of the tragedy which followed, but I was convinced at the time that the matter was entirely trivial and that his excitement had no justification.

"It was at my advice that Sir Charles was about to go to London. His heart was, I knew, affected, and the constant anxiety in which he lived, however chimerical the cause of it might be, was evidently having a serious effect upon his health. I thought that a few months among the distractions of town would send him back a new man. Mr. Stapleton, a mutual friend who was much concerned at his state of health, was of the same opinion. At the last instant came this terrible catastrophe.

"On the night of Sir Charles's death, Barrymore the butler, who made the discovery, sent Perkins the groom on horseback to me, and as I was sitting up late I was able to reach Baskerville Hall within an hour of the event. I checked and corroborated all the facts which were mentioned at the inquest. I followed the footsteps down the yew alley, I saw the spot at the moor-gate where he seemed to have waited, I remarked the change in the shape of the prints after that point, I noted that there were no other footsteps save those of Barrymore on the soft gravel, and finally I carefully examined the body, which had not been touched until my arrival. Sir Charles lay on his face, his arms out, his fingers dug into the ground, and his features convulsed with some strong emotion to such an extent that I could hardly have sworn to his identity. There was certainly no physical injury of any kind. But one false statement was made by Barrymore at the inquest. He said that there were no traces upon the ground round the body. He did not observe any. But I did—some little distance off, but fresh and clear."

A. Item Prompt: *In the passage, Dr. Mortimer speaks several times of a legend surrounding the Baskerville family. Explain how the reader can tell that the legend suggests that a frightening hound haunts the family. Support your answer using details from the text.*

Item #2:

Below is a story by Ambrose Bierce published in 1913. As you read the story, consider how and when the author reveals information and then answer the question that follows.

A COLD GREETING by Ambrose Bierce

This is a story told by the late Benson Foley of San Francisco:

In the summer of 1881 I met a man named James H. Conway, a resident of Franklin, Tennessee. He was visiting San Francisco for his health, deluded man, and brought me a note of introduction from Mr. Lawrence Barting. I had known Barting as a captain in the Federal army during the civil war. At its close he had settled in Franklin, and in time became, I had reason to think, somewhat prominent as a lawyer. Barting had always seemed to me an honorable and truthful man, and the warm friendship which he expressed in his note for Mr. Conway was to me sufficient evidence that the latter was in every way worthy of my confidence and esteem. At dinner one day Conway told me that it had been solemnly agreed between him and Barting that the one who died first should, if possible, communicate with the other from beyond the grave, in some unmistakable way—just how, they had left (wisely, it seemed to me) to be decided by the deceased, according to the opportunities that his altered circumstances might present.

A few weeks after the conversation in which Mr. Conway spoke of this agreement, I met him one day, walking slowly down Montgomery Street, apparently, from his abstracted air, in deep thought. He greeted me coldly with merely a movement of the head and passed on, leaving me standing on the walk, with half-proffered hand, surprised and naturally somewhat piqued. The next day I met him again in the office of the Palace Hotel, and seeing him about to repeat the disagreeable performance of the day before, intercepted him in a doorway, with a friendly salutation, and bluntly requested an explanation of his altered manner. He hesitated a moment; then, looking me frankly in the eyes, said: "I do not think, Mr. Foley, that I have any longer a claim to your friendship, since Mr. Barting appears to have withdrawn his own from me - for what reason, I protest I do not know. If he has not already informed you he probably will do so." "But," I replied, "I have not heard from Mr. Barting." "Heard from him!" he repeated, with apparent surprise. "Why, he is here. I met him yesterday ten minutes before meeting you. I gave you exactly the same greeting that he gave me. I met him again not a quarter of an hour ago, and his manner was precisely the same: he merely bowed and passed on. I shall not soon forget your civility to me. Good morning, or—as it may please you—farewell." All this seemed to me singularly considerate and delicate behavior on the part of Mr. Conway.

As dramatic situations and literary effects are foreign to my purpose I will explain at once that Mr. Barting was dead. He had died in Nashville four days before this conversation. Calling on Mr. Conway, I apprised him of our friend's death, showing him the letters announcing it. He was visibly affected in a way that forbade me to entertain a doubt of his sincerity. "It seems incredible," he said, after a period of reflection. "I suppose I must have mistaken another man for Barting, and that man's cold greeting was

merely a stranger's civil acknowledgment of my own. I remember, indeed, that he lacked Barting's mustache." "Doubtless it was another man," I assented; and the subject was never afterward mentioned between us. But I had in my pocket a photograph of Barting, which had been enclosed in the letter from his widow. It had been taken a week before his death, and was without a mustache.

A. Item Prompt: *In the final paragraph, the author writes, "It had been taken a week before his death." Explain the irony in this statement and how it relates to the events in the story. Use details from the story to support your response.*

B. Item Prompt: *Explain the two meanings of the word "cold" in the title and how this word develops the tone of the overall story. Support your answer using details from the story.*

Item #3:

Read the following passage then answer the question.

Mending Wall by Robert Frost

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,
That sends the frozen-ground-swell under it,
And spills the upper boulders in the sun;
And makes gaps even two can pass abreast.

The work of hunters is another thing:
I have come after them and made repair
Where they have left not one stone on a stone,
But they would have the rabbit out of hiding,
To please the yelping dogs. The gaps I mean,
No one has seen them made or heard them made,
But at spring mending-time we find them there.

I let my neighbour know beyond the hill;
And on a day we meet to walk the line

And set the wall between us once again.

We keep the wall between us as we go.

To each the boulders that have fallen to each.

And some are loaves and some so nearly balls

We have to use a spell to make them balance:

“Stay where you are until our backs are turned!”

We wear our fingers rough with handling them. Oh, just another kind of out-door game,

One on a side. It comes to little more:

There where it is we do not need the wall:

He is all pine and I am apple orchard.

My apple trees will never get across

And eat the cones under his pines, I tell him.

He only says, “Good fences make good neighbours.”

Spring is the mischief in me, and I wonder

If I could put a notion in his head:

“Why do they make good neighbours? Isn't it

Where there are cows?”

But here there are no cows.

Before I built a wall I'd ask to know

What I was walling in or walling out,

And to whom I was like to give offence.

Something there is that doesn't love a wall,

That wants it down. I could say "Elves" to him,

But it's not elves exactly, and I'd rather

He said it for himself. I see him there
Bringing a stone grasped firmly by the top
In each hand, like an old-stone savage armed.
He moves in darkness as it seems to me,
Not of woods only and the shade of trees.
He will not go behind his father's saying,
And he likes having thought of it so well
He says again, "Good fences make good neighbours."

A. Item Prompt: *Explain what effect the repetition of the phrases "something there is that doesn't love a wall" and "good fences make good neighbours" has on the meaning of the poem. Support your answer using details from the poem.*

Item #4

Read the following passages and then answer the question.

Passage 1

The following excerpt comes from a speech written in 1872 by women's rights pioneer Susan B. Anthony. Anthony was arrested after attempting to vote in the 1872 presidential election. After her conviction Anthony wrote this speech to make a constitutional argument for giving women the right to vote.

Our democratic-republican government is based on the idea of the natural right of every individual member thereof to a voice and a vote in making and executing the laws. We assert the province of government to be to secure the people in the enjoyment of their inalienable right. We throw to the winds the old dogma that government can give rights. No one denies that before governments were organized each individual possessed the right to protect his own life, liberty and property. When 100 to 1,000,000 people enter into a free government, they do not barter away their natural rights; they simply pledge themselves to protect each other in the enjoyment of them through prescribed judicial and legislative tribunals. They agree to abandon the methods of brute force in the adjustment of their differences and adopt those of civilization . . . The Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the constitutions of the several States and the organic laws of the Territories, all alike propose to protect the people in the exercise of their God- given rights. Not one of them pretends to bestow rights.

All men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain inalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. To secure these, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.

Passage 2

The following excerpt comes from the Second Treatise of Government by John Locke, published in 1690.

Sect. 22. The natural liberty of man is to be free from any superior power on earth, and not to be under the will or legislative authority of man, but to have only the law of nature for his rule. The liberty of man, in society, is to be under no other legislative power, but that established, by consent, in the commonwealth; nor under the dominion of any will, or restraint of any law, but what that legislative shall enact, according to the trust put in it. Freedom then is not what Sir Robert Filmer tells us, Observations, A. 55. a liberty for every one to do what he lists, to live as he pleases, and not to be tied by any laws: but freedom of men under government is, to have a standing rule to live by, common to every one of that society, and made by the legislative power erected in it; a liberty to follow my own will in all things, where the rule prescribes not; and not to be subject to the inconstant, uncertain, unknown, arbitrary will of another man: as freedom of nature is, to be under no other restraint but the law of nature.

A. Item Prompt: *Identify the main idea of each passage and explain how Locke’s treatise supports Anthony’s argument.*

Item #5:

Below is an excerpt of an article about estuaries. Read the article and answer the question that follows.

Estuaries

Estuaries are areas of water and shoreline typically found where rivers meet the ocean. Many different types of plant and animal communities call estuaries home because their waters are brackish—a mixture of fresh water draining from the land and salty seawater. This unique combination of salt and fresh water creates a variety of habitats for the plants and animals to live in. Some common estuarine habitats are: oyster reefs, kelp forests, rocky and soft shorelines, submerged aquatic vegetation, coastal marshes, mangroves, deep water swamps, and riverine forests. With so many places to live and so many niches to fill, it is no wonder why estuaries are some of the most productive ecosystems in the world.

Importance of Estuaries

Estuaries are very important to the lives of many animal species. They are often called the “nurseries of the sea” because numerous animal species rely on estuaries for nesting and breeding. Most of the fish and shellfish eaten in the United States, including salmon, herring, and oysters, complete at least part of

their life cycles in estuaries. Besides being a source for food, humans also rely on estuaries for recreation, jobs, and even our homes. Of the 32 largest cities in the world, 22 are located on estuaries.

Estuarine Principles and Concepts

Principle 1: Estuaries are interconnected with the world ocean and with major systems and cycles on Earth.

Concepts:

- Estuaries are part of important biological, chemical, and physical cycles such as food webs, nutrient cycles, and hydrologic cycles. For example, estuarine salt marshes can sequester carbon and filter out toxic substances or nutrients from groundwater.
- Estuarine ecosystems are affected by changes in global systems and cycles such as climate and weather cycles. For example, sea level rise can inundate salt marshes, reducing the habitat available for resident species and eliminating the flood protection important to upland areas.
- Estuaries form an interface linking watersheds and oceans and receive groundwater and surface water from their entire watersheds. Estuaries are affected by air quality and precipitation from far beyond watershed boundaries.

Principle 2: Estuaries are dynamic ecosystems with tremendous variability within and between them in physical, chemical, and biological components.

Concepts:

- Estuaries have various geologic origins and morphology.
- Estuaries can change slowly over hundreds to thousands of years. For example, they are transformed by changes in sea level, precipitation and vegetation patterns within their watershed, and sediment movement.
- Estuaries can also change quickly, within hours or days. They are constantly shaped by water flowing from uplands as well as tidal cycles moving and mixing of fresh and salt water within the estuary. They can be dramatically changed by single, severe events such as a hurricane or the building of a levee.
- The dynamic nature of estuarine processes presents a challenge to the organisms living there. Organisms that reside in estuaries are adapted to the rhythm of change. For example, tides can change local sea level by several feet each day, leaving sessile organisms alternately inundated with water or exposed to air.

A. Item Prompt: *Explain why the author most likely provided general information about estuaries before the “Principles and Concepts” section. Support your answer using details from the passage.*

B. Item Prompt: *Read the sentence from the final paragraph. “The dynamic nature of estuarine processes presents a challenge to the organisms living there.” Explain what the phrase “dynamic nature” means and why it is a good way to describe estuaries. Support your response using information from the passage.*

Item #6:

Read the following passage and then answer the question.

(1) When I was young, my mother taught me one of the most important lessons I have learned in my life: never sacrifice comfort for fashion. (2) That’s not to say my mother didn’t know how to dress—but there were two things you could never accuse her of not having, even if the ones she had wouldn’t turn any heads on a fashion runway: comfortable shoes and a warm coat. (3) A puffy hat, one that covers the ears, not just the top of the head, is something even the most fashionable person should never be caught without.

(4) “A sharp pair of high heels attracts lots of attention,” she would say, pausing dramatically for effect...”and back pain.”

(5) She had a similar line about wearing chic coats during snowstorms.

(6) The philosopher Henry David Thoreau has a famous piece of advice: “Beware of all enterprises that require new clothes”—meaning, in his case, that it’s best to avoid any type of work that would require you to shop for a “professional” uniform.

(7) My mom might not have gotten many stares for her sense of style, but, as she used to say, “I’m not looking to make friends with people’s eyes.”

A. Item Stem: *Select the sentence in the passage that does not fit with the overall structure and explain why it is disruptive to the organization of the passage.*

B. Item Stem: *Select the two sentences in the text above that do not fit with the overall organization of the passage.*

Item #7:

Read this paragraph from Journey to the Center of the Earth by Jules Verne then answer the question.

But how had I left the course of the stream? For it was a terrible fact that it no longer ran at my side. Then I understood the reason of that fearful, silence, when for the last time I listened to hear if any sound from my companions could reach my ears. At the moment when I left the right road I had not noticed the absence of the stream. It is evident that at that moment a deviation had presented itself

before me, whilst the Hansbach [the stream], following the caprice of another incline, had gone with my companions away into unknown depths.

A. Item Stem: *What does the word “deviation” mean as it is used in this paragraph?*

Options:

- A. difficult choice
- B. alternative path
- C. new opportunity
- D. unexpected event

Item #8

Read the following paragraph from the passage about radon, and then answer the question.

There are several proven methods to reduce radon in your home, but the one primarily used is a vent pipe system and fan, which pulls radon from beneath the house and vents it to the outside. This system, known as a soil suction radon reduction system, does not require major changes to your home. Sealing foundation cracks and other openings makes this kind of system more effective and cost-efficient. Similar systems can also be installed in houses with crawl spaces. Radon contractors can use other mitigation methods that may also work in your home. The right system depends on the design of your home and other factors.

A. Item Stem: *What does the word “mitigation” mean as it is used in this paragraph?*

Options:

- A. activation
- B. installation
- C. alleviation
- D. preparation

Item #9:

The following excerpt comes from a writer’s first draft of a short story about two travelers.

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<http://www.smarterbalanced.org/smarter-balanced-assessments/>

(1) They reached the capital early in the morning. (2) But this can hardly be called a capital, she thought. (3) Indeed the word only loosely applied in comparison with their previous destination, with its crowds of people and scooters too many to count, following no rules as far as either of them could tell. (4) But here, in this smaller capital, they found hardly any vehicles and just a few people walking around aimlessly.

(5) "Perhaps they are all tourists," he said, though of course this was not possible.

(6) Here, there was dust instead of smog, and the sun instead of a bunch of city lights.

A. Item Prompt: *The writer wants to revise this draft to make the description more vivid and precise. Which of the possible sets of revisions below would best help the writer accomplish this goal?*

Options:

A. Change "early in the morning" to "at 7 am" (sentence 1) and "crowds of people" to "thousands of people" (sentence 3).

B. Change "following no rules" to "obeying laws neither of them could understand" (sentence 3) and "scooters too many to count" to "scooters in the thousands" (sentence 3).

C. Change "early in the morning" to "at the height of dawn" (sentence 1) and "crowds of people" to "buzz of fretted pedestrians" (sentence 3).

D. Change "in this smaller capital" to "in this so-called capital" (sentence 4) and "the sun instead of a bunch of city lights" to "the bright sun instead of bright city lights" (sentence 6).

Item #10

*The following passage is an excerpt from the novel *A Journey to the Center of the Earth* by Jules Verne. In the story, a German professor takes his nephew, Axel, and a guide into the crater of an Icelandic volcano in hopes of reaching the center of the Earth. When this excerpt begins, the trio has already been underground for several weeks and Axel has just discovered that he has become separated from his uncle and their guide.*

Lost in the Bowels of the Earth by Jules Verne

To describe my despair would be impossible. No words could tell it. I was buried alive, with the prospect before me of dying of hunger and thirst.

Mechanically I swept the ground with my hands. How dry and hard the rock seemed to me!

Reading Assessment Grade 11 ELA
Compiled by RPDP Secondary Literacy; taken from SBAC Draft Assessment Items:
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But how had I left the course of the stream? For it was a terrible fact that it no longer ran at my side. Then I understood the reason of that fearful, silence, when for the last time I listened to hear if any sound from my companions could reach my ears. At the moment when I left the right road, I had not noticed the absence of the stream. It is evident that at that moment a deviation had presented itself before me, whilst the Hansbach [the stream], following the caprice of another incline, had gone with my companions away into unknown depths.

How was I to return? There was not a trace of their footsteps or of my own, for the foot left no mark upon the granite floor. I racked my brain for a solution of this impracticable problem. One word described my position. Lost!

Lost at an immeasurable depth! Thirty leagues of rock seemed to weigh upon my shoulders with a dreadful pressure. I felt crushed.

I tried to carry back my ideas to things on the surface of the earth. I could scarcely succeed. Hamburg, the house in the Königstrasse, my poor Gräuben, all that busy world underneath which I was wandering about, was passing in rapid confusion before my terrified memory. I could revive with vivid reality all the incidents of our voyage, Iceland, M. Fridrikssen, Snæfell. I said to myself that if, in such a position as I was now in, I was fool enough to cling to one glimpse of hope, it would be madness, and that the best thing I could do was to despair.

What human power could restore me to the light of the sun by rending asunder the huge arches of rock which united over my head, buttressing each other with impregnable strength? Who could place my feet on the right path, and bring me back to my company?

"Oh, my uncle!" burst from my lips in the tone of despair.

It was my only word of reproach, for I knew how much he must be suffering in seeking me, wherever he might be.

A. Item Prompt: *For each claim, write the one sentence from the passage in its appropriate location on the chart. Sentences can be used more than once.*

Claims	Evidence
Axel believes he does not have a way to find food.	
Axel believes he will survive if he finds his uncle.	
Axel took a different path than his companions did.	
Axel is inclined to forgive his uncle.	

Item #11

Read the passage below and then answer the question.

High School and Extracurricular Activities

Some people argue that clubs and activities are a waste of time and distract students from more important academic pursuits but studies show that students involved in extracurricular activities are more likely to graduate and earn better grades than students who don't participate. It is true that academics are a high school's primary role; however, the students who are proud of their school, feel like they belong, and have activities to look forward to are the ones who care most about their grades and stay in school. Extracurricular activities, such as clubs and sports, are an essential component of any high school education. Clubs, activities, and sports teams help students stay focused, build school spirit and unity, and provide a way to make friends in the daunting high school social environment.

A. Item Stem: *This is a short argumentative article written by a student. The paragraph needs to be better organized to more clearly establish the claim. Rewrite the paragraph putting it in proper order.*

Item #12:

Below is the beginning of a student essay that needs to be corrected. Read the paragraph and then answer the question that follows.

High School and Extracurricular Activities

Extracurricular activities, such as clubs and sports, are really important for any high school education. Some people argue that clubs and activities distract students from more important academic pursuits but studies show that students involved in extracurricular activities are more likely to graduate and earn better grades than students who don't participate. Clubs, activities, and sports teams help students stay focused, build school spirit and unity, and provide a way to make friends in the daunting high school social environment (Rombakas, 1995). It is true that academics are a high school's primary role; however, the students who think their school is awesome, feel like they belong, and have activities to look forward to are the ones who care most about their grades and stay in school.

A. Item Stem: *Rewrite the underlined phrases so that each phrase maintains the language and style of the paragraph.*