



Computer-Based
Sample Test
Scoring Guide
Grade 4 ELA
Writing



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Prepared by the Arizona Department of Education*

About the Sample Test Scoring Guide

The Arizona’s Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) Sample Test Scoring Guides provide details about the items, student response types, correct responses, and related scoring considerations for AASA Sample Test items.

Within this guide, each item is presented with the following information:

- Item number
- Strand
- Cluster
- Content Standard
- Depth of Knowledge (DOK)
- Static presentation of the item
- Static presentation of student response field (when appropriate)
- Answer key, rubric or exemplar
- Applicable score point(s) for each item

The items included in this guide are representative of the kinds of items that students can expect to experience when taking the computer-based test for AASA Grade 4 ELA Writing.

Grade 4 Sample Test – Writing

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
1	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	4.W.2	4

Passages:

- *Source 1: It Is Never Too Cold for These Animals*
- *Source 2: The Ship of the Desert*
- *Source 3: Extremophiles*

Animal Superheroes

Some animals live in harsh environments.

Write a multi-paragraph informative essay explaining how some animals are able to survive in harsh environments. Use information from the sources in your essay.

Manage your time carefully so that you can do the following actions:

- Read the sources.
- Plan your response.
- Write your response.
- Revise and edit your response.

Be sure to include the following tasks:

- an introduction
- information from the sources as support
- a conclusion that is related to the information presented

Your response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Enter your response in the space provided.

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Informative-Explanatory Writing Guide

Purpose, Focus, and Organization

The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clearly stated controlling idea and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness. The response includes most of the following:

- Strongly maintained controlling idea with little or no loosely related material
- Skillful use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas
- Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end, including a satisfying introduction and conclusion

Evidence and Elaboration

The response provides thorough and convincing support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response includes most of the following:

- Relevant evidence integrated smoothly and thoroughly with references to sources
- Effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques (including but not limited to definitions, quotations, and examples), demonstrating an understanding of the topic and text
- Clear and effective expression of ideas, using precise language
- Academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose
- Varied sentence structure, demonstrating language facility

Conventions

The response demonstrates an adequate command of basic conventions. The response may include the following:

- Some minor errors in usage, but no patterns of errors
- Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling

Top Score Response

A complete response will provide an explanation for how an animal's qualities help it to survive in harsh environments.

Details from all three passages must be included.

Details and evidence may include but are not limited to:

- Animals that live in freezing temperatures have features that help them adapt to the cold:
 - An arctic fox can survive in Iceland: "Its white winter fur blends in with the ice and snow. This lets it gather food without being noticed. It even sneaks behind polar bears to pick up the food scraps they leave behind." (Source 1)
 - "Arctic foxes live in large family communities. A female may give birth to up to 15 baby foxes, called kits, at one time. These large families burrow deep beneath the snow in long tunnels, where they stay warm until summer." (Source 1)
 - A wood frog can survive in the coldest parts of Alaska: "Its hibernation period helps it use little energy to withstand the cold. When temperatures drop, the wood frog simply falls asleep and freezes. A special type of sugar, called glucose, in the tissues of the frog prevents it from freezing completely." (Source 1)
 - An emperor penguin can survive in Antarctica (the coldest place on Earth): "Its layers of body fat, as well as wind- and water-resistant feathers, help protect it from the cold." (Source 1)
 - "Emperor penguins gather in large groups. They trade places from inside to outside the cluster to prevent freezing." (Source 1)
- A camel can survive the harsh desert, where the temperatures are very hot:
 - A camel's humps store fat for energy: "Storing the fat allows camels to travel long distances when food is scarce." (Source 2)
 - "The thick, tough lips of camels make these meals easier to eat. Camels can also drink up to 30 gallons of water at a time. This helps them travel for over a week without needing to drink again." (Source 2)
 - "Luckily, camels have two rows of long, thick eyelashes to keep sand out of their eyes. They also have a third, clear eyelid that allows them to see where they are going during a sandstorm." (Source 2)
 - "Camels have thick hair that helps keep them cool in the daytime and warm at night. Their large feet help provide balance on the uneven sandy ground. The feet have thick padding on the bottom, which protects them from the heat of the desert sand." (Source 2)

Top Score Response (continued)

- Some animals are even called extremophiles because they have features that allow them to survive in extremely harsh conditions:
 - Kangaroo rats can survive in the desert heat. They drink less water than other mammals their size and they carry nuts and seeds in their cheeks to their burrows. They also sleep in a burrow beneath the hot sand. (Source 3)
 - Greenland sharks can survive in the freezing arctic waters. They swim slowly to save energy and have large bodies that help them stay warm. (Source 3)
 - Echidnas can survive wildfires and extreme heat. They can sleep for several days during a wildfire. They have a lower body temperature and metabolic rate while they are sleeping. (Source 3)

(10 Points)