



ELA Item Specifications

GRADE 6



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Introduction

Arizona's Academic Standards Assessment (AASA) the statewide achievement test for Arizona students in Grades 3–8. AASA assesses the Arizona English Language Arts Standards and Arizona Mathematics Standards adopted by the Arizona State Board of Education in December 2016. AASA will inform students, teachers, and parents about preparedness for college and careers upon graduating from high school. AASA tests are computer based, meaning that they can better assess students' critical thinking skills and provide them with opportunities to demonstrate a deeper understanding of the materials. Computer-based testing also allows for the use of a variety of innovative item types.

During the item-development process, all AASA items are written in accordance with the Item Specifications and are reviewed and approved by a committee of Arizona educators to confirm alignment and appropriateness for inclusion in the test. AASA items are generally representative of Arizona's geographic regions and culturally diverse population. Items are reviewed for the following kinds of bias: gender, racial, ethnic, linguistic, religious, geographic, and socioeconomic. Item reviews also include consideration of issues related to individuals with disabilities. Arizona community members also have an opportunity to review items for issues of potential concern to members of the community at large. Reviewers are asked to consider the variety of cultural, regional, philosophical, political, and religious backgrounds throughout Arizona, and then to determine whether the subject matter will be acceptable to Arizona students, families, and other members of Arizona communities.

This *AASA Item Specifications* is a resource document that defines the content and format of the test and test items for item writers and reviewers. The document indicates the alignment of items with the Arizona English Language Arts Standards. It also serves to provide all stakeholders with information about the scope and function of assessment items. This document can also serve to assist educators to understand how assessment items are developed in alignment with the standards for English language arts. These item specifications for AASA are intended to provide information regarding standards, item formats and response types. The descriptions of blueprints and depth of knowledge in this document are meant to provide an overview of the test. Item specifications are meant for the purposes of assessment, not instruction. They are not intended to be tools for instruction or the basis for curricula. AASA has a test blueprint that was developed by Arizona and is different from any other state or consortium test blueprint.

The AASA ELA test will have a Writing part and a Reading Part 1 and Part 2 for all grade levels. Each writing test will have one or more passages that relate to a prompt. Students will create a written response to the prompt. Students will not answer comprehension questions about the prompt. The ELA standard-level item specifications provide information about the development of items aligned to the Reading Standards. AASA is designed to reflect the importance of using evidence and reading complex texts outlined in the Arizona English Language Arts Standards. Any item specifications that are absent for standards listed in this document may be under development. This document does not endorse the exclusion of the instruction of any grade-level content standards.

Item Development Process

AASA items go through a rigorous review before they are operational. When an item is “operational” it means it is used to determine a student’s score on the assessment. This is a description of the process every item must go through before it is operational on AASA.



Sample tests are available online for the ELA portion of AASA. To access the AASA Sample Tests, go to: <https://home.testnav.com/>, click on “Arizona”, then click on “Mic Check and Sample Tests”.

Test Construction Guidelines

The construction of the AASA assessment is guided by the depth and rigor of the Arizona English Language Arts Standards. Items are created to address key components of the standards and assess a range of important skills. The AASA blueprint provides an overview of the distribution of items on the AASA according to the standards. Further, the AASA blueprint outlines the Depth of Knowledge distribution of items.

Blueprint

The AASA blueprint details specific information regarding the strands tested at each grade level. The blueprint outlines the percentage of points aligned to each strand.

Grades 6-8 Reporting Category	Min.	Max.
Reading Standards for Literature	24%	31%
Reading Standards for Informational Text	30%	38%
<i>Reading for Informational Text</i>	30%	25%
<i>Listening Comprehension</i>	0%	13%
Writing and Language	30%	38%
<i>Writing</i>	17%	19%
<i>Language</i>	13%	19%

Listening Standards will only be assessed on the computer-based assessment.

Depth of Knowledge (DOK)

DOK refers to the level of rigor or sophistication of the task in a given item designed to reflect the complexity of the Arizona English Language Arts Standards. Items at DOK level 1 focus on basic tasks such as correcting grammatical and spelling errors, defining terms, and locating details or facts in texts. Items at DOK level 2 require a greater degree of engagement and cognitive processing than items at DOK level 1. They may require students to show relationships or identify examples, use context to identify meaning, identify structures or features of texts, or distinguish between facts and opinions. Items at DOK level 3 feature higher-order cognitive tasks that assess students' capacities to read complex texts and think abstractly. They focus on critical thinking, developing and assessing logical arguments, making inferences, and citing evidence to support claims or conclusions. Finally, items at DOK level 4 require creativity, extensive planning, and/or sophisticated reasoning in the composition and organization of written essays. This information is not intended to provide an in-depth description of DOK, but rather a guide to the application of DOK for AASA.

Percentage of Points by Depth of Knowledge (DOK) Level				
Grade 6	DOK Level 1	DOK Level 2	DOK Level 3	DOK Level 4
	10%–20%	50%–60%	15%–25%	17%–19%

For more information on DOK, please visit <https://www.azed.gov/assessment/aasa>.

Item Formats

The AASA assessments are composed of item formats that include traditional multiple-choice items (MC), multiple-select items (MS), evidence-based select response two-part items (EBSR), and technology-enhanced items (TEI).

TEIs are computer-delivered response items that require students to interact with test content to select, construct, and/or support their responses. TEIs are better able to assess a deeper level of understanding.

Currently, there are six types of TEIs that may appear on the ELA Grade 6 computer-based assessment for AASA:

- Inline choice (IC)
- Gap Match / Gap Match Table (GM/GMT)
- Match – Table Grid (MTG)
- Hot Text (HT)
- Short Constructed Response (SCR)
- Writing Prompt (WP)

For paper-based assessments (including those for students with an IEP or 504 plan that specifies a paper-based accommodation), TEIs will be modified so that they can be scanned and scored electronically or hand scored.

See the table below for a description of each item type. In addition, for examples of each response item format described, see the AASA Sample Tests. To access the AASA Sample Tests, go to:

<https://home.testnav.com/>, click on “Arizona”, then click on “Mic Check and Sample Tests”.

Item Type	Description
Multiple Choice (MC)	The student is directed to select one correct answer from among 4 options.
Multiple-Select (MS)	The student is directed to select all of the correct answers from among a number of options. These items are different from multiple-choice items, which allow the student to select only one correct answer. These items appear in the online and paper-based assessments.
Evidence-Based Selected Response (EBSR)	Multiple Choice/Multiple Select Format: The student is directed to answer a “Part A” multiple-choice item based on a passage and is then asked to provide evidence in support of that answer by completing another “Part B” Multiple Choice item or a “Part B” Multi-Select item (see below). Multiple Choice/TE Format: The student is directed to answer a “Part A” multiple-choice item based on a passage and is then asked to provide evidence in support of that answer by completing a “Part B” TEI (see below).

Inline Choice (IC)	The student clicks a box which reveals a drop-down menu containing options. The student then selects the correct word or phrase from the drop-down menu. For paper-based assessments, the item is modified so that it can be scanned and scored electronically. The student fills in a circle to indicate the correct word or phrase.
Gap Match / Gap Match Table (GM/GMT)	Gap Match: Certain numbers, words, phrases, or sentences may be designated “draggable” in this item type. The student can then click on the option, hold down the mouse button, and drag it to a graphic or other format. Gap Match Table: Same as above except the drop zone is in a table format. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.
Match – Table Grid (MTG)	The student checks a box to indicate if information from a column header matches information from a row. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.
Hot Text (HT)	Excerpted sentences from the text are presented in this item type. Certain words, phrases, or sentences are highlighted. This indicates that the text is selectable (“hot”). The student can then click on an option to select it. For paper-based assessments, a “selectable” hot text item is modified so that it can be scanned and scored electronically. In this version, the student fills in a circle to indicate a selection.
Short Constructed Response (SCR)	The student uses the keyboard to enter a response into a text field. These items can usually be answered in a sentence or two. For paper-based assessments, this item type may be replaced with another item type that assesses the same standard and can be scanned and scored electronically.
Writing Prompt (WP)	These items may require the student to use features of an online word processor. The student can perform various tasks within the online word processor such as bold text, use bullet points, underline, etc.

Stimulus Guidelines

Stimuli comprise a broad category of materials that can be used to measure student knowledge. A stimulus is usually a reading passage or set of reading passages but can also be accompanied by other sources. Every question is associated with one or more stimuli. Currently, there are three types of stimuli for AASA: stimuli for reading passages, stimuli for editing tasks, and stimuli for listening.

Every stimulus associated with AASA has been approved by a committee of Arizona educators. Each stimulus has an associated Measurement of Complexity which analyzes its complexity according to the Arizona English Language Arts Standards.

Reading Passage stimuli will consist of one or more text passages. The passages may be informational or literary and will cover a variety of topics. Passages may be accompanied by multimedia features, including audio presentations, slideshows, or graphical elements. The word count listed below is only a guideline for passage length. Passages can be longer or shorter than the range depending on other measures of text complexity. The complexity of the passages should be appropriate for the grade level of the test-taker.

Acceptable Word Count Ranges by Grade Level	
3	100–700
4	100–900
5	200–1000
6	200–1100
7	300–1100
8	350–1200

Editing Task stimuli will consist of a two- to four-paragraph passage with three to five grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. The first sentence in the passage will not include errors. Students will read the passage and answer questions about the grammar, spelling, and punctuation errors. The word(s) or phrases to be edited will be indicated by an underline in the passage. The correction of each error will be worth 1 point.

Acceptable Word Count Ranges by Grade Band	
Grade Band	Word Count Range
3–5	100–200
6–8	200–250

Listening Stimuli will contain two or more components on the same topic: a reading passage or passage set followed by an audio presentation. Stimulus topics range from everyday life to current events, literature, poetry, art, music, physical education, health, mathematics, science, technical subjects, or social studies. The reading component of the stimulus can include informational graphics, tables, charts, or graphs.

Listening Timing		Passage Word Counts	
Grade Level	Minutes	Grade Level	Words
3	0.75–2.0	3	200–250
4	0.75–2.0	4	200–250
5	0.75–2.0	5	250–300
6	0.75–2.0	6	250–300
7	0.75–2.0	7	300–350
8	0.75–2.0	8	300–350

Writing stimuli will include a prompt that is related to one or more passages. Students will create a written response to the prompt. Students will not answer comprehension questions about the prompt. Scratch paper is permitted on both the computer-based test (CBT) and paper-based test (PBT) in order for students to compose a rough draft prior to formulating a “final” copy in the paper booklet or in the word processing area on the computer.

CBT— On the CBT students will have access to one or more passages that relate to a prompt, an electronic version of the Writing Guide and a word processing area to type their “final” response. On the CBT, students will have access to and be able to reference the appropriate Writing Guide.

PBT— On the PBT students will have access to one or more passages that relate to a prompt, a print copy of the Writing Guide and a “final” copy area to write their response. The Writing Guide will also appear after the writing prompt and before the final copy area on the PBT. On the PBT, there will be three final copy pages with a line spacing of .375” for grades 3 and 4 (wide ruled) and .3” for grades 5–11 (college ruled).

Arizona English Language Arts Standards

Reading Standards for Literature

Key Ideas and Details

6.RL.1– Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

6.RL.2– Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

6. RL.3– Describe how a particular story’s or drama’s plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.

Craft and Structure

6.RL.4– Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.

6.RL.5– Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.

6.RL.6– Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

6.RL.7– Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.

6.RL.8– (Not applicable to literature)

6.RL.9– Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

6.RL.10– By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend literature, including stories, dramas, and poetry, in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 6.

Reading Standards for Informational Text

Key Ideas and Details

6.RI.1– Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

6.RI.2– Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

6.RI.3– Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).

Craft and Structure

6.RI.4– Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.

6.RI.5– Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

6.RI.6– Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.

Integration of Knowledge and Ideas

6.RI.7– Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.

6.RI.8– Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

6.RI.9– Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another author.

Range of Reading and Level of Text Complexity

6.RI.10– By the end of the year, proficiently and independently read and comprehend informational texts and nonfiction in a text complexity range determined by qualitative and quantitative measures appropriate to grade 6.

Standards for Speaking and Listening

Comprehension and Collaboration

6.SL.2– Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

6.SL.3– Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.

Standards for Language

Conventions of Standard English

6.L.1– Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.

- a. Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive).
- b. Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves).
- c. Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.
- d. Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
- e. Recognize variations from Standard English in their own and others’ writing and speaking, and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.

6.L.2– Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.

- a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements.
- b. Use correct spelling.

Vocabulary Acquisition and Use

6.L.4– Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on *grade 6 reading and content*, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies.

- a. Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible).
- b. Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word’s position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.
- c. Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech.
- d. Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.

6.L.5– Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings.

- a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context.
- b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words.
- c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, unwasteful, thrifty).

Standards for Writing

Text Types and Purposes

6.W.1– Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence

- a. Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly.
- b. Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text.
- c. Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons.
- d. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- e. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.

6.W.2– Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content.

- a. Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension.
- b. Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples.
- c. Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts.
- d. Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.
- e. Establish and maintain a formal style.
- f. Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.

Grade 6 ELA Item Specifications

Reading Literature

AZ.ELA.6.RL.1

Content Standard	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask for text-based evidence to support what is directly stated in the text. Items may ask the student to find evidence to support an inference made by the item writer, or by the student.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Identify support for a statement in the text where both the statement and support are explicit. Provide text-based support for an inference drawn from the text. The item writer may or may not provide the inference for the student.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Refers to the text generally to support analysis of what the text says explicitly.	Identifies textual evidence that supports analysis of what the text says explicitly.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Cites textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Applies strong textual evidence in supporting a complex inference or analysis of the text.

AZ.ELA.6.RL.2

Content Standard	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to determine a theme or central idea and how it is conveyed through key details. Themes or central ideas may be explicitly or implicitly stated in the text. The item should focus on specific details used to convey theme or central idea and not the manner in which the author handles them.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Determine a theme or central idea that is explicitly or implicitly stated. Provide details that convey the theme or central idea of a text. The item writer may or may not provide the student with the theme. Determine a theme or central idea of text and determine how specific details from the text contribute to how it is conveyed. Summarize the text objectively.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Hot Text • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies a theme or central idea of a text; provides a basic list of events in a text.	Identifies a theme or central idea of a text; provides a simple summary of a text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Determines a theme or central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provides a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	Evaluates themes or central ideas in regard to major/minor themes and how they are conveyed through particular details; provides a comprehensive summary of a text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

AZ.ELA.6.RL.3

Content Standard	Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to use details from the text to explain how a character responds as the plot unfolds. Items may ask for support that is directly stated in the text or ask students to draw inferences. Items should not ask general questions about plot and character.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Interpret details from the text to make or support an inference about plot or character development. The item writer may or may not provide the student with the inference. Determine how a character responds to key events in a story's plot. The item writer may or may not provide the student with key events. Make connections between character development and plot development using explicit or implicit details from the text.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text • Short Constructed Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies a basic plot of a particular story or drama and recognizes that the characters change during the story.	Describes how the plot of a particular story or drama unfolds and how the characters change overall.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Describes how the plot of a particular story or drama unfolds in a series of episodes, as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward a resolution.	Analyzes how the plot of a particular story or drama unfolds in a series of episodes, as well as how the responses and changes of complex characters contribute to the plot as it moves toward a resolution.

AZ.ELA.6.RL.4

Content Standard	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to use the text to determine the meanings of words and phrases. Items should ask students to consider literal and figurative meanings of words. Items should focus on how the words or phrases function within a passage and may require the student to analyze the impact of word choice on the text. Items should focus on words and phrases that are central to the meaning of text.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Determine the meaning of words or phrases by using context clues that are either explicitly or implicitly stated in the text. Analyze the impact of the author's word choice on meaning or tone. Determine the meaning of words or phrases and analyze the impact of the words on the meaning or tone of the text.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies the literal meaning of simple words and phrases as they are used in a text.	Distinguishes between literal, figurative, and connotative meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text; identifies the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyzes the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.	Analyzes the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings, and assesses their effectiveness; evaluates the impact of specific word choice on meaning and tone.

AZ.ELA.6.RL.5

Content Standard	Analyze how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to analyze the purpose of specific sentences, scenes, or stanzas. Items may ask students to consider the effect of a particular sentence, scene, or stanza on the overall structure and meaning. Items should focus on how specific structural elements create a comprehensive picture of the theme, setting, or plot.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Analyze and explain how a specific element contributes to overall structure and development of the theme, setting, or plot. The item writer can provide the part of the text to be analyzed.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza that contributes to the overall structure of a text.	Describes how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza contributes to the overall structure and development of a text.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Analyzes how a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot.	Articulates why the author includes a particular sentence, chapter, scene, or stanza, and analyzes how it affects the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the theme, setting, or plot throughout the text.

AZ.ELA.6.RL.6

Content Standard	Explain how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to explain the strategies the author uses to develop the point of view of the narrator or speaker. Items should not exclusively ask the student to identify the narrator's or speaker's point of view.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Determine which details from the text support the development of point of view. Explain how the author develops point of view using details from the text. The item writer may or may not provide the student with the point of view.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.	Describes the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Explains how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text.	Analyzes how an author develops the point of view of the narrator or speaker in a text, citing evidence to support the analysis.

AZ.ELA.6.RL.7

Content Standard	Compare and contrast the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what they "see" and "hear" when reading the text to what they perceive when they listen or watch.
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to describe similarities and differences between reading a text and an audio or video version of that text. Items should focus on what students see, hear, or perceive. Items should not ask about one literary text and should be used with a pairing of a text with an audio or video version of that text.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Identify similarities and/or differences between reading a text and listening to or viewing an audio or video version. Determine which details from the text indicate a similarity and/or difference between a text and its audio or video version. Explain the similarities and differences between reading a text and listening to or viewing an audio or video version.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text • Short Constructed Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Determines the similarities in the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem and listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text.	Compares and contrasts the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Compares and contrasts the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text, including contrasting what he or she "sees" and "hears" when reading the text with what he or she perceives when listening or watching.	Compares and contrasts, then analyzes, the experience of reading a story, drama, or poem to listening to or viewing an audio, video, or live version of the text. Analyzes what he or she "sees" and "hears" when reading the text compared to what he or she perceives when listening or watching.

AZ.ELA.6.RL.9

Content Standard	Compare and contrast texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to analyze similarities and differences in how texts approach the similar themes or topics. Items may require students to use key details to explain how texts are similar or different in their approach. Items should not simply ask students to identify common themes or topics. Items should be developed with text sets from different genres.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Find or explain evidence that shows how two stories present, treat, or develop similar themes or topics. The item writer may or may not provide the student with the themes or topics. Analyze the similarities and differences in how two stories present, treat, or develop similar themes or topics. The item writer may or may not provide the student with the themes or topics.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text • Short Constructed Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies various textual elements in different forms or genres with similar themes or topics.	Determines differing textual elements in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) with similar themes or topics.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Compares and contrasts texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.	Compares, contrasts, and analyzes/evaluates texts in different forms or genres (e.g., stories and poems; historical novels and fantasy stories) in terms of their approaches to similar themes and topics.

Reading Informational Texts

AZ.ELA.6.RI.1

Content Standard	Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask for text-based evidence to support what is directly stated in the text. Items may ask the student to find evidence to support an inference made by the item writer, or by the student.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Identify support for a statement in the text where both the statement and support are explicit. Provide text-based support for an inference drawn from the text. The item writer may or may not provide the inference for the student.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Refers to the text generally to support analysis of what the text says explicitly.	Identifies textual evidence that supports analysis of what the text says explicitly.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Cites textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.	Applies strong textual evidence in supporting a complex inference or analysis of the text.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.2

Content Standard	Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to determine a central idea and how it is conveyed through key details. Central ideas may be explicitly or implicitly stated in the text. The item should focus on specific details used to convey the central idea and not the manner in which the author handles them.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Determine a central idea that is explicitly or implicitly stated. Provide details that convey the central idea of a text. The item writer may or may not provide the student with the central idea. Determine a central idea of text and determine how specific details from the text contribute to how it is conveyed. Summarize the text objectively.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies a central idea of a text; provides a basic list of events in a text.	Identifies a central idea of a text; provides a simple summary of a text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Determines a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provides a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.	Evaluates central ideas and how they are conveyed through particular details; provides a comprehensive summary of a text distinct from personal opinions or judgments.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.3

Content Standard	Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to use details from the text to explain how an individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, or elaborated in the text. Items should focus on individuals, events, or ideas that are central to the meaning of the text. Items may ask for support that is directly stated in the text or ask students to draw inferences. Items should not ask general questions about events, individuals, or ideas.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Determine which details from the text illustrate how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated. Explain how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, or elaborated in the text using explicit or implicit details from the text.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text • Short Constructed Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced and illustrated in a text.	Explains how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Analyzes in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes).	Analyzes in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and developed in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes) and analyzes relationships among key individuals, events, or ideas.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.4

Content Standard	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to use the text to determine the meanings of words and phrases. Items should ask students to consider literal and figurative meanings of words. Items should focus on words and phrases that are central to the meaning of text.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Determine the meaning of words or phrases by using context clues that are either explicitly or implicitly stated in the text.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies the literal meaning of simple words and phrases as they are used in a text.	Distinguishes between some literal, figurative, and connotative meanings of words and phrases as they are used in a text.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Determines the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings.	Analyzes the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; evaluates the impact of specific word choice.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.5

Content Standard	Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to analyze the purpose of specific sentences, paragraphs, chapters, or sections. Items may ask students to consider the effect of a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section on the overall structure and meaning. Items should focus on how specific structural elements work together and/or help to develop ideas.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Determine how a specific element contributes to overall structure and development of the text's ideas where the purpose of the element is explicit. Analyze and explain how a specific element contributes to overall structure and development of the text's ideas. The item writer can provide the part of the text to be analyzed.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Locates a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section that contributes to the development of the key ideas of a text.	Explains how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section contributes to the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Analyzes how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.	Articulates why the author uses a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section, and analyzes how it affects the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.6

Content Standard	Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to determine or identify the author's point of view or purpose in a text. Items also may ask the student to explain the strategies the author uses to convey purpose or point of view.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Determine the author's point of view or purpose. Determine which details from the text support the development of point of view or purpose. Explain how the author conveys point of view or purpose using details from the text. The item writer may or may not provide the student with the point of view.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text • Short Constructed Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies an author's explicit point of view or purpose in a text.	Identifies an author's point of view or purpose in a text and identifies an example of where it is conveyed in the text.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Determines an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explains how it is conveyed in the text.	Analyzes an author's point of view and purpose in a text; provides textual evidence to show how the author's point of view and purpose are conveyed in the text.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.7

Content Standard	Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask students to integrate information presented in different formats in order to develop or support inferences drawn from the text. Items should require students to use information from the text as well as information presented in a different format. Items should be developed to passages that make meaningful use of information presented in non-written (e.g., visual, quantitative, graphic) form.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Integrate information presented in non-written and written format in order to make or support an inference.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Short Constructed Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies key information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words.	Integrates information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to show a partially developed understanding of a topic or issue.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Integrates information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue.	Evaluates and synthesizes information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a comprehensive understanding of a topic or issue.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.8

Content Standard	Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to trace or evaluate the argument or claims in a section of the text or throughout the entire text. Items may focus on distinguishing arguments or claims that are supported with evidence from those that are not. Items should not exclusively ask the student to identify the argument or claims in a text.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Select textual evidence to trace an argument or claim in the text. The item writer may or may not provide the argument to be traced. Determine which claims in a text are supported by reasoning or evidence.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies specific claims, reasoning, and evidence in a text.	Determines the argument and specific claims, reasoning, and evidence in a text.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Traces and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	Traces and evaluates the argument and specific claims in a text, analyzing how the reasoning and evidence support or do not support the claim.

AZ.ELA.6.RI.9

Content Standard	Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another author.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to analyze similarities and differences in how authors present ideas or events. Items may require students to use key details to explain how authors are similar or different in their approach. Items should not simply ask students to identify common events. Items should be developed with multiple texts focusing on the same events or ideas.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Determine similarities and differences in two authors' presentation of the same events using explicit details in the text. Determine similarities and differences in two authors' presentation of the same events using implicit details in the text.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response • Inline Choice • Gap Match / Gap Match Table • Match – Table Grid • Hot Text • Short Constructed Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies explicit similarities or differences between two authors' presentations of events.	Compares and contrasts the ways in which two authors present events differently.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Compares and contrasts one author's presentation of events with that of another.	Compares and contrasts one author's presentation of events with that of another; evaluates the effect and impact of the different presentations.

Listening

AZ.ELA.6.SL.2

Content Standard	Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, and orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.	
Stimuli Type	Listening Stimuli	
Content Limits	Items may ask students to interpret information presented in audio or visual form. Students may also be asked to explain how this information helps develop an understanding of the stimulus' topic or message.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Interpret information presented in audio or visual form. Interpret information presented in audio or visual form and explain how that information is used to develop the stimulus topic or message.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Recalls information presented in diverse media and formats and identifies a topic, text, or issue under study.	Recalls information presented in diverse media and formats and describes details related to a topic, text, or issue under study.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Interprets information presented in diverse media and formats and explains how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.	Interprets and evaluates information presented in diverse media and formats and explains how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study.

AZ.ELA.6.SL.3

Content Standard	Delineate a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	
Stimuli Type	Listening Stimuli	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to trace an argument in an audio stimulus. Items may focus on distinguishing arguments or claims that are supported with evidence from those that are not. Items should not exclusively ask the student to identify the argument or claims in a text.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Select evidence to trace an argument or claim in the stimulus. The item writer may or may not provide the argument to be traced. Determine which claims in a stimulus are supported by reasoning or evidence.		• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select • Evidence-based Selected Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Identifies a speaker's argument and specific claims.	Identifies a speaker's argument and specific claims and recognizes that some claims are not supported by reasons and evidence.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Delineates a speaker's argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not.	Delineates a speaker's argument and specific claims, critiquing claims and evaluating whether or not they are supported by reasons and evidence.

Language

AZ.ELA.6.L.1

Content Standard	Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. - Ensure that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive). - Use intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves). - Recognize and correct inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. - Recognize and correct vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents). - Recognize variations from Standard English in their own and others' writing and speaking and identify and use strategies to improve expression in conventional language.
Stimuli Type	Editing Task
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to evaluate and correct errors which focus on grammar and usage. Items should assess on-grade-level errors; however, once a Language Standard is introduced, grade-appropriate items may be written to assess continued mastery of standard conventions of English.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Apply rules of standard English grammar and usage.	- Multiple Choice - Evidence-Based Select Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Demonstrates some understanding of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: - can sometimes identify pronouns in the proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive) and inconsistently uses them. - sometimes uses intensive pronouns (myself, ourselves). - sometimes recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. - inconsistently recognizes and corrects vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).	Demonstrates understanding of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: - identifies pronouns in the proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive) and generally ensures they are used appropriately. - generally uses intensive pronouns (myself, ourselves). - generally recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person. - generally recognizes and corrects vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Demonstrates command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: - ensures that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive). - uses intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves). - recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.	Demonstrates strong command of the conventions of Standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking: - consistently ensures that pronouns are in the proper case (subjective, objective, and possessive). - uses intensive pronouns (e.g., myself, ourselves). - recognizes and corrects inappropriate shifts in pronoun number and person.

d. recognizes and corrects vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).	d. recognizes and corrects vague pronouns (i.e., ones with unclear or ambiguous antecedents).
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AZ.ELA.6.L.2

Content Standard	Demonstrate command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. a. Use punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. b. Use correct spelling.
Stimuli Type	Editing Task
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to evaluate and correct errors which focus on punctuation and spelling. Items should assess on-grade-level errors; however, once a Language Standard is introduced, grade-appropriate items may be written to assess continued mastery of standard conventions of English.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
Apply rules of standard English punctuation and spelling.	- Multiple Choice - Evidence-Based Select Response

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Demonstrates basic understanding of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. inconsistently uses punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. b. spells below-grade-level words correctly.	Demonstrates understanding of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. generally uses punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. b. spells most grade-level words correctly.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Demonstrates command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. uses punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. b. spells grade-level words correctly.	Demonstrates strong command of the conventions of Standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing: a. uses punctuation (commas, parentheses, dashes) to set off nonrestrictive/parenthetical elements. b. spells grade-level words correctly.

Content Standard	Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases based on grade 6 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. - Use common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible). - Use context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. - Consult reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. - Verify the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage	
Content Limits	Items may ask students to use contextual clues or Greek and Latin affixes and roots to determine the meaning of a word. Items should not exclusively ask the student to determine the meanings of basic, everyday words and phrases that commonly appear in spoken language.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Determine the meaning of a word using common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes or roots. Determine the meaning of multiple-meaning words or phrases by using context clues that are either explicitly or implicitly stated in the text.		- Multiple Choice - Multiple Select - Evidence-based Selected Response - Hot Text

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Inconsistently determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from at least one strategy: a. uses below-grade Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible). b. uses context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a straightforward word or phrase. c. consults reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. verifies the preliminary determination of the meaning of a below-grade word or phrase.	Determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from one or more strategies: a. uses common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible). b. uses context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. c. consults reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. verifies the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. uses common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible). b. uses context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. c. consults reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. verifies the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.	Authoritatively determines or clarifies the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning words and phrases, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies: a. uses common, grade-appropriate Greek or Latin affixes and roots as clues to the meaning of a word (e.g., audience, auditory, audible). b. uses context (e.g., the overall meaning of a sentence or paragraph; a word's position or function in a sentence) as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase. c. consults reference materials (e.g., dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses), both print and digital, to find the pronunciation of a word or determine or clarify its precise meaning or its part of speech. d. verifies the preliminary determination of the meaning of a word or phrase.

AZ.ELA.6.L.5

Content Standard	Demonstrate understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings. a. Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. b. Use the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. Distinguish among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).
Stimuli Type	Reading Passage
Content Limits	Items may ask students to interpret figures of speech in context. Items may ask students to relate words to one another. Items may ask students to distinguish the connotations of words with similar meanings. Items should not exclusively ask the student to determine the meanings of basic, everyday words and phrases that commonly appear in spoken language.
Task Demand	Common Item Formats
• Interpret figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. • Use relationships between specific words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to help interpret their meaning • Distinguish among the connotations of words with similar definitions.	• Multiple Choice • Multiple Select

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Demonstrates limited understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings: a. inconsistently recognizes figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. b. inconsistently uses the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. inconsistently recognizes the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).	Demonstrates basic understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings: a. recognizes figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. b. generally uses the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. recognizes the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Demonstrates understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings: a. interprets figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. b. uses the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. distinguishes among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).	Demonstrates deep understanding of figurative language, word relationships, and nuances in word meanings: a. interprets figures of speech (e.g., personification) in context. b. uses the relationship between particular words (e.g., cause/effect, part/whole, item/category) to better understand each of the words. c. distinguishes among the connotations (associations) of words with similar denotations (definitions) (e.g., stingy, scrimping, economical, un wasteful, thrifty).

Writing

AZ.ELA.6.W.1

Content Standard	Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. - Introduce claim(s) and organize the reasons and evidence clearly. - Support claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. - Use words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. - Establish and maintain a formal style. - Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.
Stimuli Type	Reading Passages (may be informational, argumentative, or literary)
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to read multiple passages associated with a single topic and respond to a writing prompt in which they will use evidence from the sources to support an argumentative essay.
Task Demand	
Common Item Formats	
Directions Templates Write a multi-paragraph argumentative essay . . . 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: - Include a claim. - Address counterclaims. - Use evidence from multiple sources. - Avoid overly relying on one source. Your response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Enter your response in the space provided.	Writing Prompt

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Writes arguments to support claims: - introduces claim(s). - supports claim(s) with reasons, using sources or non-textual evidence and demonstrating a basic understanding of the topic or text. - uses words, phrases, and clauses to state the claim(s) and reasons. - uses an informal style. - provides a concluding statement or section that illogically follows from the argument presented.	Writes arguments to support claims with clear reasons and evidence: - introduces claim(s) and organizes the reasons and evidence with purpose. - supports claim(s) with reasons and evidence, using appropriate sources and demonstrating a general understanding of the topic or text. - uses words, phrases, and clauses to state the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. - establishes a formal style but does not consistently maintain it. - provides a concluding statement or section that partially follows from the argument presented.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Writes arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence: - introduces claim(s) and organizes the reasons and evidence clearly. - supports claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating an understanding of the topic or text. - uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. - establishes and maintains a formal style. - provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the argument presented.	Writes arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence: - introduces solid claim(s) and organizes the reasons and evidence clearly and logically. - supports claim(s) with clear reasons and relevant evidence, using credible sources and demonstrating a thorough understanding of the topic or text. - uses words, phrases, and clauses to clarify and elaborate on the relationships among claim(s) and reasons. - establishes and maintains a formal style. - provides a well-developed concluding section that clearly and logically follows from the argument presented.

Content Standard	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content. - Introduce a topic; organize ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; include formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables), and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. - Develop the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. - Use appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. - Use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. - Establish and maintain a formal style. - Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.	
Stimuli Type	Reading Passages (may be informational, argumentative, or literary)	
Content Limits	Items may ask the student to read multiple passages associated with a single topic and respond to a writing prompt in which they will use evidence from the sources to support their informative essay.	
Task Demand		Common Item Formats
Directions Templates Write a multi-paragraph informational essay . . . 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: - Use evidence from multiple sources. - Avoid overly relying on one source. Your response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Enter your response in the space provided.		Writing Prompt

Performance Level Descriptors

Minimally Proficient	Partially Proficient
Writes informative/explanatory texts to restate a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection and organization of content: a. partially introduces a topic; organizes ideas, concepts, and information, but inconsistently applies strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect. b. develops the topic with facts. c. uses basic transitions to connect ideas and concepts. d. uses some domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. uses an informal style. f. provides a concluding statement or section that illogically follows from the information or explanation presented.	Writes informative/explanatory texts to explain a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection and organization of relevant content: a. introduces a topic; organizes ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; includes formatting (e.g., headings), graphics (e.g., charts, tables) when useful to aiding comprehension. b. develops the topic with facts, definitions, details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. uses appropriate transitions to connect ideas and concepts. d. uses some precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. establishes a formal style but does not consistently maintain it. f. provides a basic concluding statement or section that partially follows from the information or explanation presented.
Proficient	Highly Proficient
Writes informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content: a. introduces a topic; organizes ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; includes formatting (e.g., headings) and graphics (e.g., charts, tables) and multimedia when useful to aiding comprehension. b. develops the topic with relevant facts, definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples. c. uses appropriate transitions to clarify the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. e. establishes and maintains a formal style. f. provides a concluding statement or section that follows from the information or explanation presented.	Writes informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas, concepts, and information through the selection, organization, and analysis of relevant content: a. clearly introduces a topic; logically organizes ideas, concepts, and information, using strategies such as definition, classification, comparison/contrast, and cause/effect; includes formatting (e.g., headings) and graphics (e.g., charts, tables) in a way that enhances the explanation. b. develops the topic with significant facts, definitions, concrete details, insightful quotations, or other information and examples. c. uses appropriate transitions to clarify and elaborate on the relationships among ideas and concepts. d. uses precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to enhance the explanation of the topic. e. establishes and maintains a formal style. f. provides a well-developed concluding statement or section that clearly and logically follows from the information or explanation presented.