

Written Response to Text Institute
Documents in Participant Packets
August 1 and 2, 2007

The reading process can be generally categorized under the following cognitive processes. The lists of skills are not necessarily unique to the indicated level, nor are they exhaustive lists. The following categories have derived from a variety of sources, all related to identifying various levels of cognitive skills required to achieve basic comprehension as well as strategic thinking.

Cognitive Skills Related to Reading

	<i>Cognitive Skills</i>	<i>Example of Skills</i>	<i>Sample Key Words</i>
Level I	<p style="text-align: center;">Identify /Recall</p> <p>Recognize basic information presented in a text</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify main ideas/facts/details • Recall and locate details • Identify genre • Identify setting • Identify definitions • Identify parts of speech • Identify functions of punctuation 	<p>Identify List Match Recognize Describe Distinguish</p>
Level II	<p style="text-align: center;">Infer/Analyze</p> <p>Understand given text(s) by making inferences and drawing conclusions related to the text(s)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand whole text/generalize (Big Picture) • Determine main idea • Interpret, make connections, visualize, form questions • Explain character's role/motives • Determine fact or opinion • Filter important information and key concepts • Determine word meaning in context 	<p>Infer Analyze Describe Interpret Determine Conclude Explain Summarize Classify Compare</p>
Level III	<p style="text-align: center;">Evaluate/Apply</p> <p>Understand multiple points of view, as well as project his/her own judgments or perspective on text(s).</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Understand another point of view • Analyze/evaluate author's purpose, style, message • Argue/defend a point of view with evidence from the text • Use reasoning to determine an outcome/prediction • Apply information from the text • Synthesize elements of text(s) in order to create a whole 	<p>Critique Evaluate Analyze Predict Agree/disagree Argue/defend Apply Synthesize Judge Compare Contrast</p>

Comparing Classroom Assessment to Large-Scale Assessment

C L A S S R O O M A S S E S S M E N T	L A R G E - S C A L E A S S E S S M E N T
Tests only small amounts of material	1 Tests all of the Learning Standards for a particular grade—a year’s worth of material
Used by a teacher to measure short-term progress of students, to adjust pacing, to identify students in need of remediation, to provide feedback to parents, to provide accountability for students, etc.	2 Used by the Commonwealth to measure annual progress of students; to measure this progress based on the Learning Standards; to report on the performance of individual students, schools, and districts; to serve as one basis of accountability for students, schools, and districts; etc.
Tests a small, familiar group of students, whose strengths, weaknesses, learning styles, experiences, cultures, backgrounds, and needs are known to the teacher; as a whole, this group of students is less heterogeneous than an entire state	3 Tests virtually all students statewide, who are markedly diverse in many ways, including: mathematical ability, reading ability, learning styles, experiences and cultures ranging from densely urban to sparsely rural and from life-long Bay Staters to recent immigrants
Tests a group of students who all have been taught by the same teacher, using the same materials	4 Tests approximately 70,000 students who have been taught by thousands of different teachers, using different curricula and materials
Assessed according to a school or district grading scale or to teacher-defined criteria and goals	5 Assessed by criteria-based performance levels that require a test to differentiate among these levels
No restrictions on item type	6 Must have multiple-choice, short-answer, and open-response items, according to an inflexible blueprint
Scoring is flexible for constructed-response items.	7 Short-answer items are all worth 1 point; open-response items are all worth 4 points.
Assessment can be designed to give an <i>overall</i> picture of student progress.	8 <i>Every</i> item must be able to discriminate sufficiently in order to be statistically valid; furthermore, the entire test must be able to discriminate at 3 cut points.
The teacher can clarify assessment questions for students. The teacher can also retract errors with little consequence	9 Clarification of questions is strictly prohibited in an MCAS administration.

Written Response Steps

- 1. Read the selection silently.**
- 2. Read the selection aloud.**
- 3. Map the story/discuss main idea.**
- 4. Identify theme, lesson, or main idea.**
- 5. Match to standard(s).**
- 6. Develop question.**
- 7. Develop scoring guidelines.**

ELA Language and Literature Scoring Guide Explanation

Constructed response items in reading are scored by readers who use item-specific scoring guides or "rubrics" to evaluate the responses. *Item-specific scoring guides* directly relate to the individual item being scored. They provide the "rules" for assigning score points for each item. An item-specific scoring guide is provided once you have chosen an item under the Item Selection tab. The guide will be displayed after the item is given, and then is always available while scoring by clicking on the button labeled "Scoring Guide".

Each of the item-specific scoring guides for ELA Language and Literature open-response items is composed of three parts.

Item-specific Scoring Guides

1. The first part is the scoring rubric, which describes the characteristics of a response at each of the score points from 0-4.
2. The second part contains the scoring guidelines, which define the terms used in the item-specific rubric, and describe the various ways in which a response can earn each of the score points. For example, while a complete and correct response to a four-point item will receive four points, responses that are partially correct in a number of different ways will receive scores of between one and three points. In addition, this section contains some general guidelines for scoring the item. These general guidelines include the following:
 - Spelling and punctuation are not considered in the scoring of an ELA language and literature item response.
 - Spelling, grammar, and punctuation are not considered in the scoring of a response.
 - The lack of an introduction or conclusion does not detract from the points a response receives.
 - Examples of acceptable/appropriate responses in the scoring guide do not represent a definitive or exhaustive list. Scorers look at responses to determine whether the text and question(s) have been read and clearly understood and the degree to which an acceptable response has been provided.
 - Extraneous information does not detract from the score a response receives.
3. The third part provides further elaboration, and consists of examples of acceptable (and sometimes unacceptable) responses.

Selection: From HENRY HIKES TO FITCHBURG by D.B. Johnson. Copyright 2000 by D.B. Johnson.

Theme: The journey is more important than the destination.

Standard 12: Fiction

Identify personality traits of characters and how their thoughts, words, and actions reveal their personalities.

Written Response Question:

In this story, the reader can tell what the characters are like through their actions. Read the sentences in the chart below about Henry and his friend. Complete the chart with examples from the story that support the sentences. Give TWO examples for each character.

(see graphic organizer)

Scoring Guidelines:

The response to this question requires the student to use examples from the story that clearly support the specified character traits. Examples supporting Henry's character can include any actions that show his love of nature and the outdoors. Examples supporting his friend's character include actions that show his industrious spirit. The examples are found in each character's journey to Fitchburg.

Examples that support Henry's enjoyment of nature:

- Presses flowers
- Crosses a swamp and finds a bird's nest
- Finds a honey tree
- Climbs a tree
- Builds a raft and paddles it upriver
- Jumps into a pond
- Picks and eats blackberries on the way

Examples that support Henry's friend is hard working:

- Sweeps the post office
- Paints a fence
- Carries water to the cows
- Carries flour to the baker
- Fills the woodbox for Mrs. Alcott
- Moves a bookcase for Mr. Emerson
- Cleans Mrs. Thoreau's chicken house

Students should complete the chart with the correct information. Students need not answer in sentence form; however, they should not be penalized if they choose to do so. Spelling is not critical, as long as the word is recognizable.

Selection: From *THE GRAPES OF WRATH* by John Steinbeck, copyright 1939, renewed copyright 1967 by John Steinbeck.

Concept: Ma Joad is the moral and emotional center of her family. Her reaction to Tom's return from prison will determine how this event impacts the family, especially Tom.

Standard 12: Fiction

12.4 Locate and analyze elements of plot and characterization and then use an understanding of these elements to determine how qualities of the central characters influence the resolution of the conflict.

Written Response Question:

In the last paragraph the author writes, "Then she knew, and her control came back, and her hand dropped." Based on the description of Ma Joad in this excerpt, explain what she knew and how that influenced her actions. Use specific information from the entire excerpt to support your answer.

Scoring Guidelines

A response that demonstrates an **insightful** understanding of the text explains that Ma Joad knew she provided her family's emotional stability **and** connects her reaction in the scene with Tom to the role she plays.

A response that demonstrates an **adequate** understanding of the text explains that Ma Joad knew her family depended on her in general **but** does not connect her reaction in the scene with Tom to the role she plays.

A response that demonstrates a **partial** understanding of the text explains literally what Ma Joad knew **and** only focuses on Tom's emotions.

A response that demonstrates a **minimal** understanding only explains literally what Ma Joad knew.

To be eligible for full credit, the response must indicate that Ma Joad knew she was the emotional key for her family.

Explanations and support may be direct quotes or accurate paraphrases. For example, "She seemed to know that if she swayed the family shook" and "her family followed whatever emotion she was feeling" are both acceptable.