About the Sample Test Scoring Guide

The AzMERIT Sample Test Scoring Guides provide details about the items, student response types, correct responses, and related scoring considerations for AzMERIT 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 AzMERIT Grade 6 ELA.
Grade 6 ELA–Writing Sample Test

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<td>Writing</td>
<td>Text Types and Purposes</td>
<td>W.6.2a</td>
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Passage(s):

- Used Materials, New Art
- Andy Goldsworthy—Sculpting Earth Art
- Thinking BIG and Little

Your art teacher has asked that you write a paper about a specific kind of art. Write an explanatory essay about art created from found or recycled items. Your essay must be based on ideas and information that can be found in the “Art from Found Items” passage set.

Manage your time carefully so that you can
- read the passages;
- plan your response;
- write your response; and
- revise and edit your response.

Be sure to
- use evidence from multiple sources; and
- avoid overly relying on one source.

Your response should be in the form of a multiparagraph essay. Write your response in the space provided.
Grades 6–8 Informative-Explanatory Essay Writing Guide

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Purpose, Focus, and Organization</th>
<th>Evidence and Elaboration</th>
<th>Conventions</th>
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<tbody>
<tr>
<td>The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear controlling idea and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness. The response includes most of the following:</td>
<td>The response provides thorough and convincing support, citing 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:</td>
<td>The response demonstrates an adequate command of basic conventions. The response may include the following:</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Strongly maintained controlling idea with little or no loosely related material</td>
<td>• Smoothly integrated, thorough, and relevant evidence, including precise references to sources</td>
<td>• Some minor errors in usage but no patterns of errors</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Skillful use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas</td>
<td>• 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</td>
<td>• Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end with a satisfying introduction and conclusion</td>
<td>• Clear and effective expression of ideas, using precise language</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>• Appropriate style and objective tone established and maintained</td>
<td>• Academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>• Varied sentence structure, demonstrating language facility.</td>
<td></td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

References and Citations

When referring to evidence and information from passages, students should use paraphrasing and short quotations. To credit sources, students should use informal, in-text citations (e.g., MLA author or title tags).
Grade 6 ELA–Reading Sample Test

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<td>Key Ideas and Details</td>
<td>RI.6.2</td>
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</tbody>
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Passage(s):

- *The President’s Own*
- *Colonel Michael J. Colburn Talks About Inauguration* (listening passage)

The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A**

What is a central idea of Passage 1?

A. The Marine Band is famous because of its nickname.
B. The Marine Band is the most popular band in the United States.
C. The Marine Band is a notable part of American musical history.
D. The Marine Band plays for major events throughout the country.

**Part B**

Which detail from Passage 1 supports the answer in Part A?

A. “It is the oldest professional musical organization in the United States.” (paragraph 1)
B. “Sousa composed many popular songs, especially marches, earning the nickname, ‘The March King.’” (paragraph 2)
C. “The band or portions of the band give more than 700 performances every year.” (paragraph 3)
D. “The band also performs for schools and communities across the nation.” (paragraph 3)

(1 Point) Student selected correct answer for each part.
How does Passage 1 show the connection between the United States Marine Band and the presidency?

A) by telling the story of why one early president decided to create the band

B) by offering examples of important presidential events that feature the band

C) by including statements from several presidents describing the importance of the band

D) by offering numbers to prove that the band performs for presidents more than for other individuals

(1 Point)
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Spring 2019

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<td>Reading for Informational Text</td>
<td>Key Ideas and Details</td>
<td>RI.6.3</td>
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</tr>
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</table>

Read Passage 1. Then, click the boxes to show the contribution that each president made to the United States Marine Band.

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th></th>
<th>John Adams</th>
<th>Thomas Jefferson</th>
<th>Ronald Reagan</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>declared one of the band’s songs a national march</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>✓</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>gave the band recognition and a nickname</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>signed an act to form the band</td>
<td>✓</td>
<td>☐</td>
<td>☐</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

(1 Point) Student selected the correct president for each contribution listed in the table.
According to Passage 1, the United States Marine Band grew in size and popularity when **Sousa became its leader**.

(1 Point) Student selected “Sousa became its leader” from the dropdown.
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<td>Reading for Informational Text</td>
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Read the sentences from Passage 1.

“The band began as only drums and fifes (an instrument like a flute). Today, the band is a full orchestra with some of the best musicians in the country.” (paragraph 1)

Why did the author include these sentences in the passage?

- to demonstrate that the band has changed and expanded over time
- to point out that the original band had trouble finding enough instruments
- to describe how musicians in the band learned to perform with new instruments
- to suggest that the musicians in the band today are better than they were in the past

(1 Point)
<table>
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<tr>
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<td>Craft and Structure</td>
<td>RI.6.5</td>
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</table>

How does paragraph 3 add to the information about the United States Marine band in Passage 1?

- by explaining why the band plays the particular music it plays
- by describing when John Philip Sousa reached his peak of popularity
- by highlighting why the band is seen as a benefit to the nation in present times
- by giving examples that show why John Philip Sousa was the most popular leader

(1 Point)
The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A**

What is the author’s purpose in Passage 1?

- to describe the development of the Marine Band to readers
- to inform readers about where the Marine Band plays its shows
- to convince readers that leadership is important to the Marine Band
- to explain to readers how the Marine Band plans for each musical performance

**Part B**

How does the author support the purpose identified in Part A?

- by sharing the patriotic songs the band prefers to play
- by detailing the growth of the band throughout the years
- by listing events that the band attends over the course of a year
- by comparing one past leader of the band to more recent directors

(1 Point) Student selected correct answer for each part.
Read this sentence from Passage 1.

“Today, the band is one of the most **prestigious** in the country.” (paragraph 3)

Which **two** phrases from paragraph 1 provide clues to the meaning of the word **prestigious**?

- [ ] “only drums and fifes”
- [ ] “a full orchestra”
- [x] “best musicians in the country”
- [x] “oldest professional musical organization”
- [ ] “made the band noticeable”

(1 Point) Student checked both correct options.
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How do the speaker’s ideas about the Marine Band in the audio differ from the ideas in Passage 1?

A. The speaker highlights how well respected the Marine Band is.
B. The speaker highlights different band leaders in Marine Band history.
C. The speaker describes the feeling of being part of Marine Band tradition.
D. The speaker describes the influence of recent presidents on the Marine Band.

(1 Point)
What conclusion can a reader draw using information in both Passage 1 and the audio?

A. Many famous musicians got their start by playing in the Marine Band.

B. Jefferson gave the Marine Band its nickname because of its inspiring music.

C. The Marine Band is a source of pride for its members and for American citizens.

D. The Marine Band spends hours rehearsing and practicing for major performances.

(1 Point)
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<td>RL.6.1</td>
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Passage(s):

- from *My Antonia*
- *Home on the Range*

Select the excerpt from paragraph 2 in Passage 1 that supports the idea that modern changes have come to the prairie.

2. As I wandered over those rough pastures, I had the good luck to stumble upon a bit of the first road that went from Black Hawk out to the north country; to my grandfather’s farm, then on to the Shimerdas’ and to the Norwegian settlement. Everywhere else it had been ploughed under when the highways were surveyed; this half-mile or so within the pasture fence was all that was left of that old road which used to run like a wild thing across the open prairie, clinging to the high places and circling and doubling like a rabbit before the hounds.

(1 Point)
In paragraph 3 of Passage 1, what is the impact of the phrase “gashes torn by a grizzly’s claws” on the meaning of the passage?

A. It implies that the prairie is a dangerous place.

B. It implies that the narrator is fearful for his life.

C. It suggests that there is a harshness to the landscape.

D. It suggests that bad things happen when the land is uncared for.

(1 Point)
Read this excerpt from Passage 1.

“I had the sense of coming home to myself, and of having found out what a little circle man’s experience is. For Antonia and for me, this had been the road of Destiny; had taken us to those early accidents of fortune which predetermined for us all that we can ever be. Now I understood that the same road was to bring us together again.” (paragraph 4)

What is the narrator saying about people’s connection to the past?

Type your answer in the space provided.

(1 point)

Student response included one or more of the following:

- People are defined by the past.
- Our futures are determined by the past.
- The past and future are closely related.
Based on the prefix "pre-," what does the word predetermined mean in paragraph 4 of Passage 1?

A  not decided
B  decided again
C  almost decided
D  decided in advance

(1 point)
The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A**

How does the narrator in Passage 1 feel during his prairie walk?

- A. disappointed
- B. helpless
- C. reflective
- D. restless

**Part B**

Which sentence from Passage 1 supports the answer in Part A?

- A. “I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures . . .” (paragraph 1)
- B. “Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades.” (paragraph 1)
- C. “I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things . . .” (paragraph 1)
- D. “The rains had made channels of the wheel-ruts and washed them so deeply that the sod had never healed over them.” (paragraph 3)

(1 Point) Student selected the correct answer for each part.
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In paragraph 4 of Passage 1, what is the impact of the phrase “accidents of fortune” on the meaning of the passage?

- It suggests that few events in life can be planned.
- It suggests that fate plays an important role in life.
- It suggests that good results can come from bad events.
- It suggests that people often make thoughtless decisions.

(1 Point)
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In Passage 1, what does the first person point of view reveal that an objective point of view could not?

- [ ] the location of the grandfather’s farm
- [x] the narrator’s depth of feeling toward Antonia
- [ ] the types of flowers blooming in the landscape
- [ ] the changes made by the construction of a new road

(1 Point)
Which quality is emphasized by the poet’s use of “roam” and “play” in stanza 1 of Passage 2?

A. disobedience  
B. forcefulness  
C. freedom  
D. humor

(1 Point)
(1 Point)
The following question has two parts. First, answer part A. Then, answer part B.

**Part A**

Which aspect of the landscape is described in Passage 2, but not in Passage 1?

- A the wind
- B the wildlife
- C the clear sky
- D the plant growth

**Part B**

Which line from Passage 2 supports the answer in Part A?

- A “And the skies are not cloudy all day.”
- B “The breezes so balmy and light”
- C “Oh, I love these wild flowers”
- D “And I love the white rocks and the antelope flocks”

(1 Point) Student selected the correct answer for each part.
Passage(s):

- Peter Stuyvesant and New Amsterdam
- from This Country of Ours (listening passage)

How do both the author of Passage 1 and the speaker in the audio characterize Stuyvesant?

A. as worried and fearful
B. as proud and stubborn
C. as strong and powerful
D. as generous and giving

(1 Point)
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What new information does the audio contribute to the topic discussed in Passage 1?

A. The audio explains who Stuyvesant was.
B. The audio describes what happened after Stuyvesant yielded.
C. The audio explains the difference between New Amsterdam and New York.
D. The audio describes how Governor Bradford claimed ownership of Manhattan.

(1 Point)
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In the audio, the speaker suggests that New Amsterdam’s surrender was unavoidable. Select **two** details from the audio that support this claim.

- (✓) “This letter was signed by all the most important people of the town.”
- (✓) “With every one against him he could hold out no longer.”
- (☐) “With colours flying and drums beating they marched down to the riverside where a ship awaited them . . .”
- (☐) “Then the Dutch flag was hauled down, the British flag was hoisted in its place . . .”
- (☐) “A few weeks later every other Dutch settlement had yielded to the British.”

**(1 Point)** Student checked both correct options.
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**Spring 2019**

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The speaker in the audio suggests that Dutch power in the New World came to an abrupt end. Select **two** details from the audio that support this idea.

- [x] Other Dutch settlements were soon taken over by the British.
- [ ] Stuyvesant surrendered at 8:00 on Monday morning, September 8, 1664.
- [x] A change of flags indicated the transfer of control from the Dutch to the English.
- [ ] The Dutch quickly came to favor the idea of Stuyvesant’s surrender to the English.
- [ ] The names of several Dutch settlements were changed to honor members of the British nobility.

**1 point** Student checked both correct options.
Passage(s):

- *Caving in Iceland* (editing task)

There was light snow falling as we dressed in our layers of warm winter clothes. We had traveled many miles to Iceland and were preparing to hike through the lava tubes of Leidarendi Cave. We could feel the excitement in the air as we walked outside and were greeted by our guide and their gigantic SUV.

(1 point)
Our first priority was to prepare all of the **necessary** gear. We were given helmets to protect us and head lamps to provide light in the tunnels. Next, we pulled ice cleats over our boots to improve traction when walking over ice. We also put on thick, rubbery **gloves used for safety and** to help us grip rocks. Finally, we were ready to begin the hike.

(1 point for each correct answer)
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<td>L.6.2a</td>
<td>1</td>
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The entrance to the cave was hidden under four feet of snow! We dug a hole and slithered down into the lava tubes. We were glad for all of the protective gear. Parts of the caves were big enough to stand in. Other places in the caves were so narrow that we had to crawl.

Replace "rooms large, enough" with:
- rooms large enough
- rooms large enough
- rooms large enough
- rooms, large enough
- rooms large, enough

(1 point)
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Finally, we reached the end. We sat down on a rock and turned off our head lamps. As the lights went out, we were surrounded by complete darkness. Sitting in the darkness was just as amazing as the cave itself. After telling a few stories about Iceland, we turned our lights on and returned to the SUV, smiling about the incredible journey.

(1 point)