

# Computer-Based Sample Test Scoring Guide Grade 6 ELA AzMERIT

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*Prepared by the Arizona Department of Education and the American Institutes for Research®*

## 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

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
1	Writing	Text Types and Purposes	W.6.2a	4

### 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.

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## Grades 6–8 Informative-Explanatory Essay Writing Guide

Purpose, Focus, and Organization	Evidence and Elaboration	Conventions
<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Strongly maintained controlling idea with little or no loosely related material</li> <li>Skillful use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas</li> <li>Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end with a satisfying introduction and conclusion</li> <li>Appropriate style and objective tone established and maintained</li> </ul>	<p>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:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Smoothly integrated, thorough, and relevant evidence, including precise references to sources</li> <li>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</li> <li>Clear and effective expression of ideas, using precise language</li> <li>Academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose</li> <li>Varied sentence structure, demonstrating language facility.</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of basic conventions. The response may include the following:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Some minor errors in usage but no patterns of errors</li> <li>Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling</li> </ul>

### 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

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
1	Reading for Informational Text	Key Ideas and Details	RI.6.2	3

### 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?

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

#### Part B

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

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

**(1 Point)** Student selected correct answer for each part.

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
2	Reading for Informational Text	Key Ideas and Details	RI.6.3	2

How does Passage 1 show the connection between the United States Marine Band and the presidency?

- ☐ Ⓐ by telling the story of why one early president decided to create the band
- ☒ Ⓑ by offering examples of important presidential events that feature the band
- ☐ Ⓒ by including statements from several presidents describing the importance of the band
- ☐ Ⓓ by offering numbers to prove that the band performs for presidents more than for other individuals

**(1 Point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
3	Reading for Informational Text	Craft and Structure	RI.6.5	2

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)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
4	Reading for Informational Text	Craft and Structure	RI.6.5	2

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)**



Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
5	Reading for Informational Text	Craft and Structure	RI.6.6	2

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.

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
6	Language	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	L.6.4a	2

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"
- ☒ "best musicians in the country"
- ☒ "oldest professional musical organization"
- ☐ "made the band noticeable"

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

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
7	Listening Comprehension (Informational)	Comprehension and Collaboration	SL.6.2	2

How do the speaker's ideas about the Marine Band in the audio differ from the ideas in Passage 1?

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

**(1 Point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
8	Reading for Informational Text	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	RI.6.7	3

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

- ☐ Ⓐ Many famous musicians got their start by playing in the Marine Band.
- ☐ Ⓑ Jefferson gave the Marine Band its nickname because of its inspiring music.
- ☒ Ⓒ The Marine Band is a source of pride for its members and for American citizens.
- ☐ Ⓓ The Marine Band spends hours rehearsing and practicing for major performances.

**(1 Point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
9	Reading for Literature	Key Ideas and Details	RL.6.1	2

**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)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
10	Reading for Literature	Craft and Structure	RL.6.4	2

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?

- ☐ Ⓐ It implies that the prairie is a dangerous place.
- ☐ Ⓑ It implies that the narrator is fearful for his life.
- ☒ Ⓒ It suggests that there is a harshness to the landscape.
- ☐ Ⓓ It suggests that bad things happen when the land is uncared for.

**(1 Point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
11	Reading for Literature	Craft and Structure	RL.6.5	3

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.

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
12	Language	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	L.6.4b	2

Based on the prefix “pre-,” what does the word predetermined mean in paragraph 4 of Passage 1?

- ☐ Ⓐ not decided
- ☐ Ⓑ decided again
- ☐ Ⓒ almost decided
- ☒ Ⓓ decided in advance

**(1 point)**



Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
13	Reading for Literature	Key Ideas and Details	RL.6.3	3

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?

- ☐ Ⓐ disappointed
- ☐ Ⓑ helpless
- ☒ Ⓒ reflective
- ☐ Ⓓ restless

### Part B

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

- ☐ Ⓐ "I took a long walk north of the town, out into the pastures . . ." (paragraph 1)
- ☐ Ⓑ "Russian thistles were blowing across the uplands and piling against the wire fences like barricades." (paragraph 1)
- ☒ Ⓒ "I had escaped from the curious depression that hangs over little towns, and my mind was full of pleasant things . . ." (paragraph 1)
- ☐ Ⓓ "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.

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
14	Language	Vocabulary Acquisition and Use	L.6.4a	2

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)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
15	Reading for Literature	Craft and Structure	RL.6.6	2

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
- ☒ Ⓑ 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)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
16	Reading for Literature	Craft and Structure	RL.6.4	2

Which quality is emphasized by the poet's use of "roam" and "play" in stanza 1 of Passage 2?

- ☐ Ⓐ disobedience
- ☐ Ⓑ forcefulness
- ☒ Ⓒ freedom
- ☐ Ⓓ humor

**(1 Point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
17	Reading for Literature	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	RL.6.9	3

Which theme is common to **both** passages?

- ☒ the love of place
- ☐ the respect for self
- ☐ the effects of change
- ☐ the influence of the past

**(1 Point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
18	Reading for Literature	Integration of Knowledge and Ideas	RL.6.9	3

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?

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

### Part B

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

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

**(1 Point)** Student selected the correct answer for each part.

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
19	Listening Comprehension (Informational)	Comprehension and Collaboration	SL.6.3	2

**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?

- ☐ Ⓐ as worried and fearful
- ☒ Ⓑ as proud and stubborn
- ☐ Ⓒ as strong and powerful
- ☐ Ⓓ as generous and giving

**(1 Point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
20	Listening Comprehension (Informational)	Comprehension and Collaboration	SL.6.2	2

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

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

**(1 Point)**



Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
21	Listening Comprehension (Informational)	Comprehension and Collaboration	SL.6.3	2

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.

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
22	Listening Comprehension (Informational)	Comprehension and Collaboration	SL.6.3	2

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.

- ☒ Other Dutch settlements were soon taken over by the British.
- ☐ Stuyvesant surrendered at 8:00 on Monday morning, September 8, 1664.
- ☒ 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.

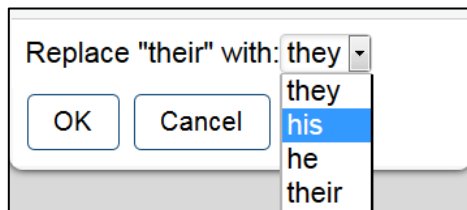
**(1 point)** Student checked both correct options.

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
23	Language	Conventions of Standard English	L.6.1c	1

**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.



Replace "their" with: they ▼

they  
his  
he  
their

OK Cancel

**(1 point)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
24	Language	Conventions of Standard English	L.6.2b	1

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.

Replace "necessary" with:

necessary

necessary

neccessary

neccessary

necesary

ancel

Replace "gloves used for safety and" with:

gloves, used for safety and

gloves, used for safety and

gloves used, for safety and

gloves used for safety, and

gloves used for safety and

**(1 point for each correct answer)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
25	Language	Conventions of Standard English	L.6.2a	1

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 rooms large, 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)**

Item Number	Strand	Cluster	Content Standard	DOK
26	Language	Conventions of Standard English	L.6.1b	1

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 **yourself** . After telling a few stories about Iceland, we turned our lights on and returned to the SUV, smiling about the incredible journey.

Replace "yourself" with:

- itself
- ourselves
- themselves
- yourself

Cancel

**(1 point)**