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DEPARTMENT OF  
EDUCATION

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# Oregon English Language Arts Assessment

**ELA PT Scoring Guide  
Grade 6 Sample Test**

8/15/2018



## Student Directions

### Hiking in the Grand Canyon Narrative Performance Task

#### Task:

Your school writing club is holding a short story contest about “The Great Outdoors.” You have often thought about hiking and you wonder what it would be like to hike in Grand Canyon National Park. You decide to do more research about hiking in Grand Canyon National Park. As part of your initial research, you find four sources about the Grand Canyon and hiking.

After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly skim the sources and the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully so you will have the information you will need to answer the questions and finalize your research. You may click on the Global Notes button to take notes on the information you find in the sources as you read. You may also use scratch paper to take notes.

In Part 2, you will write a story on a topic related to the sources.

#### Directions for Beginning:

You will now examine several sources. You can re-examine any of the sources as often as you like.

#### Research Questions:

After examining the research sources, use the rest of the time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the information you have read and viewed, which should help you write your story.

You may click on the Global Notes button or refer back to your scratch paper to review your notes when you think it would be helpful. Answer the questions in the spaces below the items.

Both the Global Notes on the computer and your written notes on scratch paper will be available to you in Part 1 and Part 2 of the performance task.

**Part 1****Sources for Performance Task:****Source #1**

This article from *Appleseeds* magazine is about the formation of the Grand Canyon.

**The Three “R”s of Folding Time  
Grand Canyon Style**  
by Leigh Anderson

There is a place—like no other in the world—where time seems to fold in on itself. Where the past meets the here-and-now, mountains meet oceans, beauty meets danger, and discovery meets mystery. This place is the Grand Canyon.

The Grand Canyon is 277 river miles long. At certain points, it’s more than a mile deep and as much as 18 miles wide. Going 50 miles per hour, it would take over five hours to drive its entire length! At such speed, you’d hardly see any of what makes the canyon truly grand: dazzling, glittering colors; fossils and wildlife; a great river snaking through . . . rock; and many-layered canyon walls giving glimpses of Earth’s history.

Geologists<sup>1</sup> have many, different . . . [ideas] about how and when the Grand Canyon was formed. The story of the canyon’s beginnings is like a jigsaw puzzle with many pieces missing. There are a few things geologists do agree on. We’ll call them the three “R”s: Rocks, River, and ‘Rosion (actually, Erosion,<sup>2</sup> but we’re going to cheat a bit!).

**Rocks**

The Grand Canyon’s walls are made up mainly of three types of rock: limestone, sandstone, and shale. Over . . . [thousands of] years, the rock built up layer by layer. Each new layer of rock pressed down on the layers beneath it. Then the Colorado River began to cut through these layers like a knife, exposing them for us to see. At the Grand Canyon today, 18 or more layers of Earth’s history are laid out for us to see. We can see backward in time! The rocks near the top of the canyon are . . . [very] old, but those toward the bottom of the canyon are . . . [thought to be over six times older]. What an amazing place for scientists to study the history of Earth.

Limestone, sandstone, and shale: Each of these types of rock was formed in a different way. Limestone is made from the fossilized skeletons of tiny organisms that lived in ancient seas. (Fossils are the super hard remains of plants or animals . . .) Sandstone is actually sand, pressed so hard over . . . [thousands of] years that it stuck together into rock. And shale is basically mud, left over from the bottoms of ancient lakes and marshes. Some rock is softer, some is harder, and they erode at different rates. When a layer of hard rock is on top of a layer of softer rock, amazing cliffs are created. . . .

## **River**

Without the Colorado River, there would be no Grand Canyon. The river flows southwest from the Rocky Mountains to the Gulf of California, crossing through an area called the Colorado Plateau. As it flows, the river crosses Colorado, Utah, Arizona, and Nevada before flowing into Mexico and the Gulf. But the ancient Colorado was not the same river we know today. In fact, long ago it was probably more than one river. When those ancient rivers joined, the newly formed Colorado began flowing southwest. It bucked over dangerous rapids and frothed like chocolate milk in a blender as it carried mountains of dirt downstream. Like sandpaper repeatedly rubbing the same piece of wood, the fast-moving, sand-filled water slowly carved a groove in the rock beneath it.

But the Colorado River didn't carve the canyon by itself. As ancient glaciers melted, the river and its tributaries<sup>3</sup> flooded again and again. The floods cleared away the sand, gravel, and other sediment at the bottom of the river. Then, rocks and boulders, which had tumbled into the river, were able to grind and scrape the bedrock at the river's bottom, further deepening the canyon.

As water moves through the canyon, it flows "downhill," dropping in elevation. This makes the water flow faster, with more power to carve out the rock. Also, long ago, the land around the Colorado River began to rise bit by bit, bubbling upward like a giant blister. Known as uplift, this process continued over . . . [many] years. Uplift helped form the canyon we know today.

## **What Do You Think? The Colorado River Today**

Today, the Glen Canyon and Hoover Dams tightly control the Colorado River. The river now runs more slowly. Floods no longer sweep away the sediment at the bottom of the river. The river-bottom sediment is 75 feet deep in some places! Because of the slower water and the thick "blanket" of sediment, the carving of the canyon has slowed down. . . .

## **'Rosion**

When rain falls on rocks, water seeps into the cracks in the rock. When the weather gets cold and that water freezes, it expands, or gets bigger. Over and over, water freezes and expands in the cracks. And slowly, the rock splits apart. Pieces of broken rock (from tiny to huge) fall into the canyon below. As they fall, they might hit another rock and send it tumbling too. When they finally reach bottom, some rocks are carried away by the Colorado. Others remain where they landed.

Heavy rains send great slabs of sediment, mud, and rock crashing down cliff faces, widening the canyon and carving new shapes into the giant red walls. The Colorado's tributaries are busy, too, carving smaller side canyons. Sometimes these side canyons erode into each other, further widening the canyon. This is all part of the process of rocks, river, and 'rosion that makes this canyon so GRAND!

<sup>1</sup>geologists: people who study rocks, minerals, and soils of the earth or a particular area

<sup>2</sup>erosion: a process by which rock, soil, or sand is gradually worn away by water, wind, or ice

<sup>3</sup>tributaries: smaller rivers and streams that flow into a larger river

The Three "R"s of Folding Time Grand Canyon Style by Leigh Anderson.  
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## **Source #2**

This article from *Appleseeds* magazine is about how to take a nature walk. The article talks about John Muir, a man who loved nature and encouraged leaders to preserve land in the United States so people could enjoy its natural beauty for many years. The article explains what John Muir did on a nature hike. One place that he loved to explore was the land that is now known as Yosemite National Park.

### **Follow in Muir's Footsteps—Take a Nature Walk** by Michelle Schaub

"In every walk with nature, one receives far more than he seeks."  
—John Muir

From the steamy swamps of Florida to the icy glaciers of Alaska, John Muir loved exploring wild places. Wherever he went, he carried a notebook to describe the wonders he discovered. You don't have to walk a thousand miles to follow in Muir's footsteps. You can connect with nature by taking a simple walk and recording your observations in a journal.

**Just follow these steps:**

1. **Pick a "wild" place**—A nature trail, arboretum (a place where you can see special trees), park, or even your own back yard.
2. **Bring a notebook**—Large enough to fit your writings and drawings but small enough to carry comfortably.
3. **Pack a snack**—While John Muir brought only tea and bread on some of his journeys, you might want to pack a tastier treat. Just remember not to litter.
4. **Be alert**—Let the sights, sounds, smells, and textures of nature fill your senses.
5. **Look high and low**—Notice the big picture, like landscapes and trees, but also the little details, like flower petals and insect wings.
6. **Write it down**—Use plenty of description to record your observations. Add your thoughts, feelings, and questions. Don't forget to put the date, time, and location on each entry.
7. **Add drawings**—Muir filled his journals with sketches of the plants and animals he encountered. Sketching will help you focus on details you might otherwise miss.
8. **Collect plants**—Try pressing flowers and leaves between the pages of your journal, just like Muir did!
9. **Take pictures**—If you can't collect plants where you are hiking, take pictures and tape them into your journal instead.
10. **Learn more**—Did you observe something on your walk that sparked your interest? A bird's feather? A strange fungus? Use the descriptions and drawings in your journal to look up more information.

Next time you take a walk in a wild place, you'll be a keen nature observer!

Follow in Muir's Footsteps—Take a Nature Walk by Michelle Schaub.

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## Source #3

This article from *Appleseeds* magazine is about hiking in the Grand Canyon.

### Take a Hike!

by Kathiann M. Kowalski

Each year, more than 250 hikers need assistance at the Grand Canyon. If you plan ahead and use safety smarts, you can avoid becoming number 251! And you can have a great hiking adventure.

#### The Lay of the Land

- Know what to expect. The Grand Canyon is like “an upside-down mountain,” notes National Park Service Ranger Marc Yeston. Hiking down is much easier than climbing out. The park’s website suggests allowing twice as long to climb up as it took to go down.
- Be realistic about your abilities. Start with short hikes. DON’T try hiking all the way down the Grand Canyon and back in one day.
- Get trail maps and read rules. Day hikes in the canyon require no permits, but overnight hikes do. Some trails have bathrooms and water during parts of the year.
- Kids: Always hike with an adult.
- Tell friends or family members about your plans.

“Know what the weather is going to be like,” says Ranger Yeston. Then prepare for the worst. Carry extra clothes and flashlights in case it’s dark when you return.

“People hike every day of the year,” notes Ranger Yeston, but each season brings special risks. Ice is a danger in winter. In the summer, temperatures at the bottom of the canyon can soar to 115° F! When it’s hot, smart hikers travel before dawn or after sunset during the cooler times of day. Spring and fall have warm, pleasant days, but nights get frigid. And storms can crop up any time, in any season.

#### On the Trail—Do’s and Don’ts

- **Don’t** hike alone. **Do** use common sense and safety smarts. Avoid the trail edges.
- **Do** carry plenty of food, water, and salty snacks. They provide energy and replace water and salts lost through sweat. Enough water can make the difference between an enjoyable experience and a dangerous situation.
- **Do** rest often in the shade.

- **Do** wear good, comfortable hiking shoes and socks.
- **Do** carry hiking poles if you can, especially in steep spots.
- **Do** watch out for wild animals. If you are lucky enough to encounter one, **don't** feed or try to touch it.
- **Do** remember that mules use hiking trails too. To avoid accidents, wait quietly on the inner side of the trail until they pass.
- **Don't** litter. **Do** respect the environment and carry out all trash. Then everyone can enjoy nature's beauty!

Take a Hike! by Kathiann M. Kowalski. Copyright © 2008 by Carus Publishing Company. Reprinted by Carus Publishing Company.

#### Source #4

This article from *Appleseeds* magazine is about preserving the Grand Canyon.

### How to Be a Green Traveler by Katherine Swarts

Every year, between four and five million tourists visit Grand Canyon National Park. Even with 1.2 million acres to explore, all those people strain the park's ecosystem.<sup>1</sup> Many overlooks and trails have been badly eroded by millions of feet. Winds bring smog from cities. Planes cause noise pollution. Dams on the Colorado River slow the flow of the water, causing many unnatural changes.

When you visit the Grand Canyon, you won't be able to solve these problems. But there are a lot of things you can do to be sure you don't make them worse.

- Never feed or try to touch wild animals, no matter how cute they might be. Human food is not good for wild animals, and too much of it can make animals dependent on people.
- Never pick plants or collect rocks. Many are rare or delicate. It's also against the law!
- Ask your parents to leave the car in Williams, Arizona. From there, you can take the Grand Canyon Railway to the South Rim.
- Stay on well-traveled trails. Never take shortcuts—they damage the land

by contributing to erosion. And some rare plants can take a hundred years to recover from being stepped on! Shortcuts can also lead you into dangerous places.

- Use recycling bins and litter cans. At the North Rim and other areas with few bins, take along bags to carry your trash out. Never toss anything on the ground, not even an apple core.
- If you're lucky enough to encounter a California condor—one of the biggest and rarest birds on Earth—stay at least a hundred yards away. And tell park rangers about any condors you see. That helps scientists keep track of the birds.
- Don't use more water than you need. This is your chance to go without a bath! (Remember to *drink* lots of water though.)
- Don't drive anywhere you can walk—or take the free shuttle buses.
- If you want to do something big for the park, ask visitor services about the Junior Ranger Program or Habitat Restoration Program.
- If you see other visitors doing things that hurt the park, speak up in a friendly way. Remind them that it takes everyone's efforts to keep the Grand Canyon beautiful.

<sup>1</sup>ecosystem: a group of plants and animals and the environment they live in

How to Be a Green Traveler by Katherine Swarts. Copyright © 2008 by Carus Publishing Company. Reprinted by permission of Carus Publishing Company.

Item	Grade	Claim	Target	DOK	Item Standard	Evidence Statement
1	6	4	4	3	W-8	The student will select evidence to support opinions, ideas, or analyses based on evidence collected and analyzed.

**107121**



Click on the boxes to show the idea(s) that each source supports. Some sources may have more than one box selected.

	<b>Source #1: The Three "R"s of Folding Time Grand Canyon Style</b>	<b>Source #2: Follow in Muir's Footsteps—Take a Nature Walk</b>	<b>Source #3: Take a Hike!</b>	<b>Source #4: How to Be a Green Traveler</b>
<b>It is a good idea to bring food when you hike.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Try to conserve water while you are in the park.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>
<b>Primarily, three types of rock make up the Grand Canyon.</b>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>	<input type="checkbox"/>

**Key Elements:**

It is a good idea to bring food when you hike.

1. Source #2
2. Source #3

Try to conserve water while you are in the park.

1. Source #4

Primarily, three types of rock make up the Grand Canyon.

## 1. Source #1

**Rubric:**

(1 point) 4 cells completed correctly

(0 points) Fewer than X cells completed correctly, any cell incorrect, or blank.

Item	Grade	Claim	Target	DOK	Item Standard	Evidence Statement
1	6	2	2	4	W-3	The student will write full narrative texts using a complete writing process demonstrating narrative strategies, text structures, and transitional strategies for coherence, closure, and author’s craft—all appropriate to purpose (style or point of view in a short story).

**105676**



## Student Directions

### Hiking in the Grand Canyon Narrative Performance Task

#### Part 2

You will now review your notes and sources, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your writing. You may use your notes and refer to the sources. Now read your assignment and the information about how your writing will be scored; then begin your work.

#### Your Assignment:

Your school writing club is creating an online magazine that is a collection of fictional stories about “The Great Outdoors.” You choose to write a story that is several paragraphs long to include in the online magazine. For your story, imagine that you are hiking in Grand Canyon National Park. In your story tell about an exciting adventure that you have during your hike.

The online magazine will be read by parents, teachers, and the other students in your school. When writing your story, find ways to use information and details from the sources to improve your story. Make sure

you develop your character(s), the setting, and the plot. Use details, dialogue, and description where appropriate.

## **Narrative Story Scoring:**

Your story will be scored using the following:

- 1. Organization/purpose:** How effective was your plot, and did you maintain a logical sequence of events from beginning to end? How well did you establish and develop a setting, narrative, characters, and point of view? How well did you use a variety of transitions? How effective were your opening and closing for your audience and purpose?
- 2. Development/elaboration:** How well did you develop your narrative using description, details, dialogue? How well did you use relevant details or information from the sources in your story?
- 3. Conventions:** How well did you follow the rules of grammar usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

**Now begin work on your story.** Manage your time carefully so that you can

- plan your multi-paragraph story.
- write your multi-paragraph story.
- revise and edit the final draft of your multi-paragraph story.

Word-processing tools and spell check are available to you.

For Part 2, you are being asked to write a story that is several paragraphs long, so please be as thorough as possible. Type your response in the space provided. The box will expand as you type.

Remember to check your notes and your prewriting/planning as you write and then revise and edit your story.

4-Point Narrative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3–8)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
<b>Organization/Purpose</b>	<p><b>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is fully sustained and the focus is clear and maintained throughout:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an effective plot helps to create a sense of unity and completeness</li> <li>• effectively establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view*</li> <li>• consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas; strong connection between and among ideas</li> <li>• natural, logical sequence of events from beginning to end</li> <li>• effective opening and closure for audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p><b>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is adequately sustained, and the focus is adequate and generally maintained:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• an evident plot helps to create a sense of unity and completeness, though there may be minor flaws and some ideas may be loosely connected</li> <li>• adequately establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view*</li> <li>• adequate use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas</li> <li>• adequate sequence of events from beginning to end</li> <li>• adequate opening and closure for audience and purpose</li> </ul>	<p><b>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, is somewhat sustained and may have an uneven focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there may be an inconsistent plot, and/or flaws may be evident</li> <li>• unevenly or minimally establishes a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view*</li> <li>• uneven use of appropriate transitional strategies and/or little variety</li> <li>• weak or uneven sequence of events</li> <li>• opening and closure, if present, are weak</li> </ul>	<p><b>The organization of the narrative, real or imagined, may be maintained but may provide little or no focus:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• there is little or no discernible plot or there may just be a series of events</li> <li>• may be brief or there is little to no attempt to establish a setting, narrator/characters, and/or point of view*</li> <li>• few or no appropriate transitional strategies may be evident and may cause confusion</li> <li>• little or no organization of an event sequence; frequent extraneous ideas and/or a major drift may be evident</li> <li>• opening and/or closure may be missing or unsatisfactory</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Insufficient (includes copied text)</li> <li>• In a language other than English</li> <li>• Off-topic</li> <li>• Off-purpose</li> </ul>

\*point of view begins at grade 7

**4-Point  
Narrative  
Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3–8)**

Score	4	3	2	1	NS
<b>Development/Elaboration</b>	<p><b>The narrative, real or imagined, provides thorough, effective elaboration using relevant details, dialogue, and/or description:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>experiences, characters, setting and/or events are clearly developed</li> <li>connections to source materials may enhance the narrative</li> <li>effective use of a variety of narrative techniques that advance the story or illustrate the experience</li> <li>effective use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that clearly advances the purpose</li> <li>effective, appropriate style enhances the narration</li> </ul>	<p><b>The narrative, real or imagined, provides adequate elaboration using details, dialogue, and/or description:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>experiences, characters, setting, and/or events are adequately developed</li> <li>connections to source materials may contribute to the narrative</li> <li>adequate use of a variety of narrative techniques that generally advance the story or illustrate the experience</li> <li>adequate use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that generally advances the purpose</li> <li>generally appropriate style is evident</li> </ul>	<p><b>The narrative, real or imagined, provides uneven, cursory elaboration using partial and uneven details, dialogue, and/or description:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>experiences, characters, setting, and/or events are unevenly developed</li> <li>connections to source materials may be ineffective, awkward, or vague but do not interfere with the narrative</li> <li>narrative techniques are uneven and inconsistent</li> <li>partial or weak use of sensory, concrete, and figurative language that may not advance the purpose</li> <li>inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style</li> </ul>	<p><b>The narrative, real or imagined, provides minimal elaboration using few or no details, dialogue, and/or description:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>experiences, characters, setting, and/or events may be vague, lack clarity, or confusing</li> <li>connections to source materials, if evident, may detract from the narrative</li> <li>use of narrative techniques may be minimal, absent, incorrect, or irrelevant</li> <li>may have little or no use of sensory, concrete, or figurative language; language does not advance and may interfere with the purpose</li> <li>little or no evidence of appropriate style</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient (includes copied text)</li> <li>In a language other than English</li> <li>Off-topic</li> <li>Off-purpose</li> </ul>

2-Point Narrative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 3-8)				
Score	2	1	0	NS
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling</li> </ul>	<p>The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling</li> </ul>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>Insufficient (includes copied text)</li> <li>In a language other than English</li> <li>Off-topic</li> <li>Off-purpose</li> </ul>

**Holistic Scoring:**

- **Variety:** A range of errors includes sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling
- **Severity:** Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors.
- **Density:** The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.