



**NEW ENGLAND
COMMON ASSESSMENT PROGRAM**

**Released Items
Support Materials 2013**

**Grade 8
Reading**

NECAP 2013 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 8 READING

7.3.2 Shows breadth of vocabulary knowledge through demonstrating understanding of word meaning and relationships by selecting appropriate words or explaining the use of words in context, including content specific vocabulary, words with multiple meanings, or precise vocabulary

Some members of the committee were shocked by the flippant remarks made at the solemn event.

- 1 What does the word flippant mean as it is used in the box?
- A. hopeless
 - B. confusing
 - C. exaggerated
 - D. disrespectful

7.2.1 Students identify the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary by using strategies to unlock meaning (e.g., knowledge of word structure, including prefixes/suffixes, base words, common roots, or word origins; or context clues; or other resources, such as, dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses; or prior knowledge)

Use the definitions below to answer the question.

trace *n* **1.** a visible mark of a person or thing once present **2.** a barely visible indication, touch **3.** a very small amount, a dash **4.** a path through the wilderness made by people or animals

- 2 What is the **best** definition of the word trace as it is used in this sentence?

The pioneers followed the trace across the mountains and settled in the valley near a blue lake.

- A. definition 1
- B. definition 2
- C. definition 3
- D. definition 4

Life on the Oregon Trail Informational Text

(The passage for these questions is located in Released Items 2013 – Grade 8 Reading.)

7.7.1 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by obtaining information from text features (e.g., table of contents, glossary, index, transition words/phrases, transitional devices, bold or italicized text, headings, subheadings, graphic organizers, charts, graphs, or illustrations)

- 3 The illustration shows that the emigrants on the Oregon Trail
- A. prepared to travel at night.
 - B. remained close together.
 - C. found the trail to be very rocky.
 - D. were often lost on the trail.

7.7.2 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by using information from the text to answer questions, to state the main/central ideas, or to provide supporting details

- 4 To avoid dust from the wagons in front of them, emigrants sometimes
- A. walked along the footpaths beside the wagon trail.
 - B. left early to get ahead of the wagon train.
 - C. wore bandanas over their mouths.
 - D. rode in the backs of the wagons.

Life on the Oregon Trail Informational Text

(The passage for these questions is located in Released Items 2013 – Grade 8 Reading.)

7.7.2 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by using information from the text to answer questions, to state the main/central ideas, or to provide supporting details

- 5 What caused the widening of the Oregon Trail?
- A. Most people walked on the main trail to avoid getting lost.
 - B. People had used the trail for many years to go east and west.
 - C. Wagon trains often passed each other on the trail.
 - D. Wagons traveled side by side on the main trail.

7.4.1 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by using information from the text to answer questions, to state the main/central ideas, or to provide supporting details

- 6 In paragraph 5, which hazard of the trip does Arabella Clemens experience?
- A. getting sick
 - B. going hungry
 - C. being injured
 - D. becoming lost

Life on the Oregon Trail Informational Text

(The passage for these questions is located in Released Items 2013 – Grade 8 Reading.)

7.8.5 Analyze and interpret informational text, citing evidence as appropriate by making inferences about causes or effects

- 7 Explain how various wagon formations helped the emigrants. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

Scoring Guide:

Score	Description
4	Response provides a thorough description of how various wagon formations helped the emigrants. Response includes relevant information from the passage.
3	Response provides a description of how various wagon formations helped the emigrants. Response includes some relevant information from the passage.
2	Response provides a partial description of how various wagon formations helped the emigrants. Response includes limited information from the passage.
1	Response is vague or minimal.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response

Training Notes:

Response may include, but is not limited to:

- fairness—the wagons rotated positions daily so that the same people would not always be exposed to heavy amounts of dust.
- defense—the wagons were corralled in a circle at night.

NECAP 2013 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 8 READING

SCORE POINT 4

7

In the short story "Life on the Oregon Trail" by Gary L. Blackwood, the author explains how different wagon formations helped the emigrants. First, whenever the emigrants had to settle in a camp for the night, they would arrange their wagons in a circle. This way they could herd their cattle in the middle, which gives them protection from animals and keeps them from escaping. Also, the emigrants could pitch tents in the center so they wouldn't have to sleep in the wagons. Another way the emigrants organized their wagons was when traveling, everyone had a spot to be in the line. People in the front had the luxury of not having dust in their face like the people at the end. To keep it fair, everyone would change their place in line daily. The person in the front would go in the back, then the next day they would be second to last, and then so on. This was fair because everyone would have the same time being in the front, as well as the back which made traveling much easier. As a result, various wagon formations helped the emigrants travel much easier than without them.

Response provides a thorough description of how various wagon formations helped the emigrants. Response includes relevant information from the passage.

7

The emigrants used many wagon formations to help them. The first formation that helped them was when they arranged in a circle for nights. This helped them because they could keep the cattle in the middle of the circle. Another formation is the train that all the wagons rode in. They would change the positions each day of the order of the wagons. This formation helped them because it was fair. Being at the back was dusty and the sand got in peoples faces, so they rotated. This way each wagon would have a turn at being in the back, and each wagon would have the opportunity to be at the front.

Response provides a description of how various wagon formations helped the emigrants. Response includes some relevant information from the passage.

NECAP 2013 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 8 READING

SCORE POINT 2

7

Various wagon formations helped the emigrants in different ways. When they were traveling, they switched the positions of the wagons. This helped to make traveling more pleasant because they all took turns eating dust and not eating dust. When they settled for the night, they formed a corral. This formation served as a herding place for oxen and a place to sleep for the emigrants.

Response provides a partial description of how various wagon formations helped the emigrants. Response includes limited information from the passage.

SCORE POINT 1

7

One wagon formation was when at night they formed a circle with the wagons. Forming a circle was very helpful, because it formed a place to herd the cattle into.

Response is vague or minimal.

NECAP 2013 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 8 READING

SCORE POINT 0

7

I think the different waggon
formations helped the emigrants by
being able to move faster
if they needed
to or so people
couldn't see them
maybe that's how the
different formations
helped them.

Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

Life on the Oregon Trail Informational Text

(The article for these questions is located in Released Items 2013 – Grade 8 Reading.)

7.2.1 Students identify the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary by using strategies to unlock meaning (e.g., knowledge of word structure, including prefixes/suffixes, base words, common roots, or word origins; or context clues; or other resources, such as, dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses; or prior knowledge)

8 In paragraph 8, the word prudent means

- A. wise.
- B. tough.
- C. dangerous.
- D. hopeful.

7.7.3 Demonstrate initial understanding of informational texts (expository and practical texts) by organizing information to show understanding (e.g., representing main/central ideas or details within text through charting, mapping, paraphrasing, summarizing, or comparing/contrasting)

9 One disadvantage of sleeping in tents was that

- A. they were smelly from being wet.
- B. wild animals could enter under the flaps.
- C. strong thunderstorms blew them over.
- D. they were difficult to put up every night.

Life on the Oregon Trail Informational Text

(The article for these questions is located in Released Items 2013 – Grade 8 Reading.)

7.2.1 Students identify the meaning of unfamiliar vocabulary by using strategies to unlock meaning (e.g., knowledge of word structure, including prefixes/suffixes, base words, common roots, or word origins; or context clues; or other resources, such as, dictionaries, glossaries, thesauruses; or prior knowledge)

- 10 In paragraph 10, the word liability means
- A. symptom.
 - B. distinction.
 - C. responsibility.
 - D. problem.

7.8.3 Analyze and interpret informational text, citing evidence as appropriate by drawing inferences about text, including author's purpose (e.g., to inform, explain, entertain, persuade) or message; or using supporting evidence to form or evaluate opinions/judgments and assertions about the central ideas that are relevant EXAMPLE (of evaluating): Given a statement (opinion, judgment, or assertions), students provide evidence from the text that this statement does/does not support the author's purpose in writing the piece.

- 11 What is the author's **most likely** purpose for writing this passage about the 1800s?
- A. to explain why so many emigrants chose to head west
 - B. to provide a detailed description of the dangers on the frontier
 - C. to provide a factual account of travel on the Oregon Trail
 - D. to describe the kinds of people who risked their lives to go west

Life on the Oregon Trail Informational Text

(The article for these questions is located in Released Items 2013 – Grade 8 Reading.)

7.8.3 Analyze and interpret informational text, citing evidence as appropriate by drawing inferences about text, including author's purpose (e.g., to inform, explain, entertain, persuade) or message; or using supporting evidence to form or evaluate opinions/judgments and assertions about the central ideas that are relevant EXAMPLE (of evaluating): Given a statement (opinion, judgment, or assertions), students provide evidence from the text that this statement does/does not support the author's purpose in writing the piece.

- 12 Explain how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the reader's understanding of the passage. Use information from the passage to support your answer.

Scoring Guide:

Score	Description
4	Response provides a thorough explanation of how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the reader's understanding of the passage. Response includes relevant information from the passage.
3	Response provides an explanation of how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the understanding of the passage. Response includes some relevant information from the passage.
2	Response provides a partial explanation of how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the understanding of the passage. Response includes limited information from the passage.
1	Response is vague or minimal.
0	Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.
Blank	No response

Training Notes:

Response may include, but is not limited to:

- an understanding about the emigrants' experiences
- how the emigrants felt
- the problems emigrants were able to overcome

12

The author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the reader's understanding of the passage in three ways. For instance, one way it contributes to the reader's understanding is how the accounts explained hardships. "At nearly the first the wind came whistling & knocked our tent into a cocked hat." The reader can understand how hard living on the Oregon Trail really was. Another way it contributes is how the accounts explained their daily life. "Crackers soda, Buckwheat Cakes cold." The reader can understand how people on the Oregon Trail lived their lives while travelling. The third way the eyewitness accounts contribute to the reader's understanding is how they thought. "Mary Ellen Todd enjoyed cracking the whip and shouting commands; she found 'a secret joy in being able to have a power that set things going.' The reader understands how different people's thoughts were. Therefore, the three most apparent ways the eyewitness accounts contribute to the reader's understanding of the passage are how the accounts explained hardships, their daily lives, and their thoughts.

Response provides a thorough explanation of how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the reader's understanding of the passage. Response includes relevant information from the passage.

12

The author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the reader's understanding of the passage because you can read about how the people felt. You can imagine in your head how hard things must have been for everybody who was there. You can also read about how they felt and what they saw and did. Like how the wagons felt uncomfortable and the motion of them made people feel sick. With the eyewitness accounts you also have a better understanding of what the Oregon trail must have been like. I could picture in my head the large circle of all the wagons when they stopped for the night. I could also picture all the people walking on the trail instead of riding in the wagons.

Response provides an explanation of how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the understanding of the passage. Response includes some relevant information from the passage.

NECAP 2013 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 8 READING

SCORE POINT 2
(EXAMPLE A)

12

Using the accounts of other people in the passage helps let the reader understand more about the living on The Oregon Trail.

Like the passage doesn't really tell you how bad the living was. So using the people as examples gives you more ideas, like that the carts were uncomfortable, damp, musty, and nauseating. That the tents were awful because they basically provided little protection.

That is why having the peopple's' accounts helps the reader understand more about the topic.

Response provides a partial explanation of how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the understanding of the passage. Response includes limited information from the passage.

NECAP 2013 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 8 READING

SCORE POINT 2
(EXAMPLE B)

12

Historic events are always best told by those historic people, in my opinion. That's why the eyewitness accounts in this passage help describe the events they went through, and create a better understanding and mental image. For example, Catherine Sager retells riding in the wagon. It wasn't easy! It was uncomfortable and nauseating. Also Dr. John Dalton explained the storms and their fierceness without much protection. Life on the Oregon trail wasn't easy, but the people on it improved our futures today.

Response provides a partial explanation of how the author's use of eyewitness accounts contributes to the understanding of the passage. Response includes limited information from the passage.

NECAP 2013 RELEASED ITEMS
GRADE 8 READING

SCORE POINT 1

12

When the author uses I witness a counts
the reader can here wat it was like
first hand for the travelers. It helps
beter understand the Struggle of the
travlers hearing it in there words because
that way you know that's wat reay
hapered.

Response is vague or minimal.

SCORE POINT 0

12

The Author Gary L. Blackwood
used eyewitnessed aCounts
Contributing my understanding by
Knowing what he means because
he names characters and it
tells you whos talking or acting.
It also gets my understanding by
the actions and dates. Also how
he uses characters names when
there speaking. So this is how
I understand the passage.

Response is totally incorrect or irrelevant.

Grade 8 Reading Released Item Information – 2013

Released Item Number	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	11	12
Content Strand ¹	WV	WV	II	II	II	II	IA	WV	II	WV	IA	IA
GLE Code	7-3	7-2	7-7	7-7	7-7	7-7	7-8	7-2	7-7	7-2	7-8	7-8
Depth of Knowledge Code	2	2	2	1	2	1	2	2	1	2	2	2
Item Type ²	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	MC	CR	MC	MC	MC	MC	CR
Answer Key	D	D	B	A	D	D		A	C	D	C	
Total Possible Points	1	1	1	1	1	1	4	1	1	1	1	4

¹Content Strand: WV = Word ID/Vocabulary, LI = Literary/Initial Understanding, LA = Literary/Analysis & Interpretation,
 II = Informational/Initial Understanding, IA = Informational/Analysis & Interpretation

²Item Type: MC = Multiple Choice, CR = Constructed Response