

Grade 11 Literature Mini-Assessment

“Luck” by Mark Twain

This grade 11 mini-assessment is based on the short story “Luck” by Mark Twain. This text is considered to be a text worthy of students’ time to read and also meets the expectations for text complexity at grade 11. Assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will employ quality, complex texts such as this one.

Questions aligned to the CCSS should be worthy of students’ time to answer and therefore do not focus on minor points of the texts. Questions also may address several standards within the same question because complex texts tend to yield rich assessment questions that call for deep analysis. In this mini-assessment there are seven selected-response questions and two paper/pencil equivalent of technology-enhanced items that address the Reading Standards listed below. There is also one an optional constructed-response item, which is aligned to both the Reading, Writing, and Language Standards.

We encourage educators to give students the time that they need to read closely and write to the source. While we know that it is helpful to have students complete the mini-assessment in one class period, we encourage educators to allow additional time as necessary.

*Note for teachers of English Language Learners (ELLs): This assessment is designed to measure students’ ability to read and write in English. Therefore, educators will not see the level of scaffolding typically used in instructional materials to support ELLs—these would interfere with the ability to understand their mastery of these skills. If ELL students are receiving instruction in grade-level ELA content, they should be given access to unaltered practice assessment items to gauge their progress. Passages and items should not be modified; however, **additional information about accommodations you may consider when administering this assessment to ELLs is available in the teacher section of this resource.***

The questions align to the following standards:

RL.11-12.1	Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text, including determining where the text leaves matters uncertain.
RL.11-12.2	Determine two or more themes or central ideas of a text and analyze their development over the course of the text, including how they interact and build on one another to produce a complex account; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.11-12.3	Analyze the impact of the author’s choices regarding how to develop and relate elements of a story or drama (e.g., where a story is set, how the action is ordered, how the characters are introduced and developed).
RL.11-12.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in the text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of specific word choices on meaning and tone, including words with multiple meanings or language that is particularly fresh, engaging, or beautiful. (Include Shakespeare as well as other authors.)

RL.11-12.5	Analyze how an author's choices concerning how to structure specific parts of a text (e.g., the choice of where to begin or end a story, the choice to provide a comedic or tragic resolution) contribute to its overall structure and meaning as well as its aesthetic impact.
RL.11-12.6	Analyze a case in which grasping a point of view requires distinguishing what is directly stated in a text from what is really meant (e.g., satire, sarcasm, irony, or understatement).
W.11-12.1	Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence.
W.11-12.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
W.11-12.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
L.11-12.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.11-12.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
L.11-12.3	Apply knowledge of language and how it functions in different contexts, to make more effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

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The assessment questions in this document align with the CCSS and reflect the instructional shifts implied by the standards. To learn more about these topics, please go to the following link:

www.achievethecore.org

Grade 11 Mini-Assessment – “Luck”

Today you will read the short story “Luck” by Mark Twain. You will then answer several questions based on the text. I will be happy to answer questions about the directions, but I will not help you with the answers to any questions. You will notice as you answer the questions that some of the questions have two parts. You should answer Part A of the question before you answer Part B, but you may go back to Part A if you wish.

Take as long as you need to read and answer the questions. If you do not finish when class ends, come see me to discuss when you may have additional time.

Now read the passage and answer the questions. I encourage you to write notes in the margin as you read the passage.

“Luck” by Mark Twain

- 1 [NOTE.—This is not a fancy sketch. I got it from a clergyman who was an instructor at the Woolwich military school forty years ago, and who vouched for its truth. —M.T.]
- 2 It was at a banquet in London in honor of one of the two or three prominent illustrious English military names of this generation. For reasons which will presently appear, I will withhold his real name and titles, and call him Lieutenant-General Lord Arthur Scoresby, V.C., K.C.B., etc., etc., etc. What a fascination there is in a renowned name! There sat the man, in actual flesh, whom I had heard of so many thousands of times since that day, thirty years before, when his name shot suddenly to the zenith from a Crimean battle-field, to remain forever celebrated.
- 3 It was food and drink to me to look, and look, and look at that demigod; scanning, searching, noting: the quietness, the reserve, the noble gravity of his countenance; the simple honesty that expressed itself all over him; the sweet unconsciousness of his greatness—unconsciousness of the hundreds of admiring eyes fastened upon him, unconsciousness of the deep, loving, sincere worship welling out of the breasts of those people and flowing toward him.
- 4 The clergyman at my left was an old acquaintance of mine—clergyman now, but had spent the first half of his life in the camp and field, and as an instructor in the military school at Woolwich. Just at the moment I have been talking about, a veiled and singular light glimmered in his eyes, and he leaned down and muttered confidentially to me--indicating the hero of the banquet with a gesture,—'Privately—his glory is an accident --just a product of incredible luck.'
- 5 This verdict was a great surprise to me. If its subject had been Napoleon, or Socrates, or Solomon, my astonishment could not have been greater.

- 6 Some days later came the explanation of this strange remark, and this is what the Reverend told me.
- 7 About forty years ago I was an instructor in the military academy at Woolwich. I was present in one of the sections when young Scoresby underwent his preliminary examination. I was touched to the quick with pity; for the rest of the class answered up brightly and handsomely, while he—why, dear me, he didn't know anything, so to speak. He was evidently good, and sweet, and lovable, and guileless; and so it was exceedingly painful to see him stand there, as serene as a graven image, and deliver himself of answers which were veritably miraculous for stupidity and ignorance. All the compassion in me was aroused in his behalf. I said to myself, when he comes to be examined again, he will be flung over, of course; so it will be simple a harmless act of charity to ease his fall as much as I can.
- 8 I took him aside, and found that he knew a little of Caesar's history; and as he didn't know anything else, I went to work and drilled him like a galley-slave on a certain line of stock questions concerning Caesar which I knew would be used. If you'll believe me, he went through with flying colors on examination day! He went through on that purely superficial 'cram', and got compliments, too, while others, who knew a thousand times more than he, got plucked. By some strangely lucky accident—an accident not likely to happen twice in a century—he was asked no question outside of the narrow limits of his drill.
- 9 It was stupefying. Well, although through his course I stood by him, with something of the sentiment which a mother feels for a child; and he always saved himself—just by miracle, apparently.
- 10 Now of course the thing that would expose him and kill him at last was mathematics. I resolved to make his death as easy as I could; so I drilled him and crammed him, and crammed him and drilled him, just on the line of questions which the examiner would be most likely to use, and then launched him on his fate. Well, sir, try to conceive of the result: to my consternation, he took the first prize! And with it he got a perfect ovation in the way of compliments.
- 11 Sleep! There was no more sleep for me for a week. My conscience tortured me day and night. What I had done I had done purely through charity, and only to ease the poor youth's fall—I never had dreamed of any such preposterous result as the thing that had happened. I felt as guilty and miserable as the creator of Frankenstein. Here was a wooden-head whom I had put in the way of glittering promotions and prodigious responsibilities, and but one thing could happen: he and his responsibilities would all go to ruin together at the first opportunity.
- 12 The Crimean war had just broken out. Of course there had to be a war, I said to myself: we couldn't have peace and give this donkey a chance to die before he is found out. I waited for the earthquake. It came. And it made me reel when it did come. He was actually appointed to a captaincy in a marching regiment! Better men grow old and gray in the service before they climb to a sublimity like that. And who could ever have foreseen that they would go and put such a load of responsibility on such green and inadequate shoulders? I could just barely have stood it if they had made him an ensign; but a captain—think of it! I thought my hair would turn white.
- 13 Consider what I did—I who so loved repose and inaction. I said to myself, I am responsible to the country for this, and I must go along with him and protect the country against him as far as I can. So I took my poor little capital that I had saved up through years of work and grinding economy, and went with a sigh and bought an ensignship in his regiment, and away we went to the field.

- 14 And there—oh dear, it was awful. Blunders? Why, he never did anything but blunder. But, you see, nobody was in the fellow's secret—everybody had him focused wrong, and necessarily misinterpreted his performance every time—consequently they took his idiotic blunders for inspirations of genius; they did honestly! His mildest blunders were enough to make a man in his right mind cry; and they did make me cry—and rage and rave too, privately. And the thing that kept me always in a sweat of apprehension was the fact that every fresh blunder he made increased the luster of his reputation! I kept saying to myself, he'll get so high that when discovery does finally come it will be like the sun falling out of the sky.
- 15 He went right along up, from grade to grade, over the dead bodies of his superiors, until at last, in the hottest moment of the battle of... down went our colonel, and my heart jumped into my mouth, for Scoresby was next in rank! Now for it, said I; we'll all land in Sheol¹ in ten minutes, sure.
- 16 The battle was awfully hot; the allies were steadily giving way all over the field. Our regiment occupied a position that was vital; a blunder now must be destruction. At this critical moment, what does this immortal fool do but detach the regiment from its place and order a charge over a neighboring hill where there wasn't a suggestion of an enemy! 'There you go!' I said to myself; 'this is the end at last.'
- 17 And away we did go, and were over the shoulder of the hill before the insane movement could be discovered and stopped. And what did we find? An entire and unsuspected Russian army in reserve! And what happened? We were eaten up? That is necessarily what would have happened in ninety-nine cases out of a hundred. But no; those Russians argued that no single regiment would come browsing around there at such a time. It must be the entire English army, and that the sly Russian game was detected and blocked; so they turned tail, and away they went, pell-mell, over the hill and down into the field, in wild confusion, and we after them; they themselves broke the solid Russia centre in the field, and tore through, and in no time there was the most tremendous rout you ever saw, and the defeat of the allies was turned into a sweeping and splendid victory! Marshal Canrobert looked on, dizzy with astonishment, admiration, and delight; and sent right off for Scoresby, and hugged him, and decorated him on the field in presence of all the armies!
- 18 And what was Scoresby's blunder that time? Merely the mistaking his right hand for his left—that was all. An order had come to him to fall back and support our right; and instead he fell forward and went over the hill to the left. But the name he won that day as a marvelous military genius filled the world with his glory, and that glory will never fade while history books last.
- 19 He is just as good and sweet and lovable and unpretending as a man can be, but he doesn't know enough to come in when it rains. He has been pursued, day by day and year by year, by a most phenomenal and astonishing luckiness. He has been a shining soldier in all our wars for half a generation; he has littered his military life with blunders, and yet has never committed one that didn't make him a knight or a baronet or a lord or something. Look at his breast; why, he is just clothed in domestic and foreign decorations. Well, sir, every one of them is a record of some shouting stupidity or other; and, taken together, they are proof that the very best thing in all this world that can befall a man is to be born lucky.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

¹ The place of the dead

QUESTIONS:

1. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: From the list below, which two sentences below represent themes that are present in “Luck?”

- A. Chance plays a bigger role in success than intelligence or hard work.
- B. War is place for seemingly unintelligent people to rise above their expectations.
- C. Kind people may act in ways that others would describe as foolish.
- D. Knowledge of past events makes one a capable leader.
- E. Helping others is more important than finding personal success.
- F. A person’s reputation can eclipse their true identity.

Part B: Choose two excerpts from the passage that provide support for the answers to Part A.

- A. “He was evidently good, and sweet, and lovable, and guileless; and so it was exceedingly painful to see him stand there, as serene as a graven image, and deliver himself of answers.”
- B. “I went to work and drilled him like a galley-slave on a certain line of stock questions concerning Caesar which I knew would be used.”
- C. “So I took my poor little capital that I had saved up through years of work and grinding economy, and went with a sigh and bought an ensignship in his regiment.”
- D. “. . .everybody had him focused wrong, and necessarily misinterpreted his performance every time.”
- E. “. . . in the hottest moment of the battle of...down went our colonel, and my heart jumped into my mouth, for Scoresby was next in rank!”
- F. “. . . taken together, they are proof that the very best thing in all this world that can befall a man is to be born lucky.”

2. In the passage, the Reverend takes two actions that, more than any others, propel the plot forward in an unexpected way. Fill in the chart below by choosing an explanation for the cited actions taken by the Reverend, as well as the unexpected result of the actions from the lists. You will not use all of the elements from each list.

Significant Action Taken by Reverend	Reverend's Justification for His Action	Unexpected Result of the Reverend's Action
1. He drills Scoresby before exams.		
2. He joins the regiment Scoresby leads.		
	<p>Possible Quotations Showing the Reverend's Justification for his Action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "it will be simple, a harmless act of charity to ease his fall" • "There was no more sleep for me for a week" • "The Crimean War had just broken out" • "Better men grow old and gray in the service before they climb to a sublimity like that" • "I am responsible to the country for this, and I must go along with him and protect the country against him" • "Why, he never did anything but blunder" 	<p>Possible Quotations Showing the Results of the Reverend's Action.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • "...and he always saved himself—just by miracle, apparently." • "I felt as guilty and miserable as the creator of Frankenstein" • "The Crimean War had just broken out" • "he was actually appointed to a captaincy in a marching regiment" • "the thing that kept me always in a sweat of apprehension was the fact that every fresh blunder that he made increased the luster of his reputation!" • "He went right up, from grade to grade" • "in no time there was the most tremendous rout you ever saw, and the defeat of the allies was turned into a sweeping and splendid victory!"

3. This item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: Choosing from paragraphs 12 through 17, draw a circle around the two paragraphs in which the author most strongly contrasts the Reverend's opinion of Scoresby with others opinions' of Scoresby.

Part B: How does the fact that no one else appears to share the Reverend's opinion of Scoresby influence the reader's understanding of both characters?

- A. It suggests the possibility that the Reverend may have underestimated Scoresby's worth.
- B. It emphasizes the likelihood that the Reverend will have to continue to come to Scoresby's aid.
- C. It foreshadows the fact that Scoresby will be honored because of all of the Reverend's help.
- D. It supports the idea that Scoresby owes all of his success to the Reverend.

4. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: What does the word superficial mean as it is used in Paragraph 8 of the passage?

- A. frivolous and uncritical
- B. external and obvious
- C. insubstantial and shallow
- D. unimportant and insignificant

Part B: Which phrase from Paragraph 8 helps the reader interpret the meaning of superficial as it is being used in the paragraph?

- A. "and he didn't know anything else"
- B. "went to work and drilled him"
- C. "questions concerning Caesar"
- D. "the narrow limits of his drill"

5. How does the melodramatic tone impact the meaning of the passage?

- A. It indicates that the author does not believe the story is true.
- B. It allows the author to illustrate his philosophy on life.
- C. It creates in the reader an excitement about Scoresby defying the odds and becoming successful.
- D. It signifies to the reader that the Reverend's recounting of the tale may not be quite accurate.

6. Which two things does the author accomplish by waiting to begin the Reverend's narration of his interactions with Scoresby until Paragraph 7?

- A. He establishes the discomfort the author feels toward the Reverend.
- B. He details the actions that led Scoresby to become an important figure in English society.
- C. He establishes the idea that Scoresby may be someone who deserves honor.
- D. He reveals important background information about the Reverend.
- E. He introduces some mystery about Scoresby's history.
- F. He indicates his unshakable faith in the Reverend's opinion.

7. How do the Reverend's claims about Scoresby in paragraphs 7, 14, and 18 affect the reader's understanding of Paragraph 3?

- A. They allow the reader to question whether Scoresby is modest or merely unobservant.
- B. They help the reader feel the Reverend's anger Scoresby has received so many rewards.
- C. They invite the reader to agree with the idea that the public needs heroes whether they are worthy or not.
- D. They show the reader that the author was most likely being sarcastic in expressing admiration for Scoresby.

8. This question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: In paragraph 13, the Reverend claims that he is someone who so loves "repose and inaction." Which detail contradicts his claim?

- A. his key role in an important battle
- B. his multiple attempts to ruin Scoresby's reputation
- C. his constant drive to influence the outcome of Scoresby's exams
- D. His previous employment at a military school

Part B: What does the answer to Part A suggest about the Reverend's character?

- A. He does not let personal feelings interfere with duty.
- B. He lacks a true awareness of his own motives.
- C. He feels his country could have avoided war.
- D. He is waiting for a chance to expose Scoresby.

9. Throughout the story, the Reverend often subtly criticizes Scoresby. Complete the table below by writing the two different ways each quotation could be interpreted. You will not use all of the possible interpretations.

Quote	Positive Interpretation	Negative Interpretation
<p>“Well, although through his course I stood by him, with something of the sentiment which a mother feels for a child; and he always saved himself— just by miracle, apparently”</p>		
<p>“Of course there had to be a war, I said to myself: we couldn’t have peace and give this donkey a chance to die before he is found out.”</p>		
<p>“He is just as good and sweet and loving and unpretending as a man can be, but he doesn’t know enough to come in when it rains.”</p>		
	<p>Possible Positive Interpretations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The reverend has come to love Scoresby, and is constantly pleased with his successes. • The Reverend believes Scoresby to be a loveable fool. • The Reverend cares for Scoresby and is pleased that he continues to save himself. • The Reverend wants to protect Scoresby from harm that may befall him from his undeserved success • The Reverend expects others to understand how kind and caring Scoresby is. 	<p>Possible Negative Interpretations</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Reverend resents Scoresby for his seemingly unearned position in the army. • The Reverend is constantly surprised when others expect Scoresby to do well, because he knows Scoresby will fail. • The Reverend looks down on Scoresby and feels superior to him. • The Reverend is jealous of the role Scoresby will play in the army. • The Reverend believes Scoresby to be to unintelligent to do anything right.

Information for Teachers: Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of the Text

Regular practice with complex texts is necessary to prepare students for college and career readiness, as outlined in Reading Standard 10. The text for this mini-assessment has been placed at grade 11, and the process used to determine this grade level placement is described below. “Appendix A of the Common Core” and the “Supplement to Appendix A: New Research on Text Complexity” lay out a research-based process for selecting complex texts.

1. Place a text or excerpt within a **grade band** based on at least one² quantitative measure according to the research-based conversion table provided in the Supplement to Appendix A: New Research on Text Complexity (www.corestandards.org/resources).
2. Place a text or excerpt at a **grade-level** based on a qualitative analysis.

Quantitative Analysis		
“Luck” by Mark Twain	Quantitative Measure #1	Quantitative Measure #2
	Reading Maturity: 10.9	Lexile: 1000

After gathering the quantitative measures, the next step is to place the quantitative scores in the Conversion Table found in the Supplement to Appendix A (www.corestandards.org/resources) and determine the **grade band** of the text. **Note that literary texts at the high school level are sometimes more complex than indicated by quantitative ratings.**

Figure 1 reproduces the conversion table from the Supplement to Appendix A, showing how the initial results from the Reading Maturity and the Flesch-Kincaid were converted to grade bands.

Figure 1: Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges from Multiple Measures⁷

Common Core Band	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power [®]	Flesch-Kincaid [§]	The Lexile Framework [®]	Reading Maturity	SourceRater
2 nd – 3 rd	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13	0.05 – 2.48
4 th – 5 th	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92	0.84 – 5.75
6 th – 8 th	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57	4.11 – 10.66
9 th – 10 th	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81	9.02 – 13.93
11 th – CCR	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.2	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00	12.30 – 14.50

² For higher-stakes tests, it is recommended that two corresponding text complexity measures be used to place a text in a grade band. When two measures are used, both placing the text in the same **band**, the results provide additional assurance that the text selected is appropriate for the band.

To find the **grade-level** of the text within the designated grade-band, engage in a systematic analysis of the characteristics of the text. The characteristics that should be analyzed during a qualitative analysis can be found in Appendix A of the CCSS. (www.corestandards.org)

Qualitative Analysis	“Luck”	Where to place within the band?					
Category	Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band	Too Low	Early-mid 11	Mid-end 11	Early-mid 12	End 12	NOT suited to band
Structure (both story structure or form of piece)	This short story begins with a note from the author, speaking directly to the reader. He then recounts an evening in his past during which an acquaintance retells events from 40 years prior. These shifts in point of view, narrator, and time are exceedingly complex, and students must recognize each element to comprehend the story.						
Language Clarity and Conventions	This story includes many complex sentences, often containing multiple ideas. The language is fairly complex (<i>countenance, guileless, prodigious</i>); however, context clues provide all information necessary for comprehension. The conventionality is fairly complex, with the clergyman narrator providing irony throughout the text.						
Knowledge Demands (life, content, cultural/literary)	This excerpt explores multiple themes and describes experiences with varying layers of complexity. Some knowledge of military schools and military in general would be beneficial; however, the information needed to answer the questions lies within the four corners of the text.						
Levels of Meaning (chiefly literary)/ Purpose (chiefly informational)	There are multiple themes in this text, including: Chance plays a large role in life; a person’s reputation can differ from their true identity; and it is important to consider the source of surprising information. Due to its multiple themes, this text is considered complex.						
Overall placement: Grade 11	The multiple themes, organizational structure, and complex sentence structure make this text most appropriate for grade 11.						

Question Annotations & Correct Answer and Distractor Rationales

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options
1 Part A	A, F	RL.11–12.2, RL.11–12.1	<p>A. This is a correct answer. Scoresby owes his decorated military career to befriending the right person at the right time and lucky coincidences.</p> <p>B. Although Scoresby exceeds the clergyman’s expectations in battle, Scoresby’s lucky breaks and seemingly unearned reputation are the themes of this story.</p> <p>C. Although both Scoresby and the clergyman are kind, and at least at times, foolish people, the story’s themes relate to the role of chance in life and false reputations.</p> <p>D. Although Scoresby finds success as a military leader, the success is based on good fortune rather than his knowledge of past events.</p> <p>E. Although the reverend helping Scoresby plays an important role in the story, there is no implication he prioritized that help over his personal success.</p> <p>F. This is a correct answer. Scoresby’s reputation is not based on his true abilities.</p>
1 Part B	D, F		<p>A. This sentence highlights Scoresby’s sweet, but clueless, nature rather than his good fortune or false reputation.</p> <p>B. This sentence describes how the clergyman helped Scoresby overcome some of his shortfalls, not how Scoresby benefited from good fortune.</p> <p>C. This sentence shows how the clergyman felt obligated to help shield Scoresby from himself, not that Scoresby’s true identity was overshadowed by a false reputation or chance.</p> <p>D. This is a correct answer. This sentence emphasizes how others viewed Scoresby in a favorable light, even though evidence suggests he didn’t deserve that admiration.</p> <p>E. This sentence brings the story’s conflict to the penultimate, not that Scoresby’s true identity was overshadowed by a false reputation or chance.</p> <p>F. This is a correct answer. The last sentence of this story emphasizes the themes of chance and undeserved favor.</p>

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options		
2	See right column.	RL.11–12.3, RL.11–12.1	Reverend’s Explanation for His Action	Result of Action that Surprises Reverend	Rationale
			“it will be simple, a harmless act of charity to ease his fall”	“...and he always saved himself—just by miracle, apparently.”	The clergyman’s initial acts of charity allow Scoresby to remain in the military, even though he does not deserve to.
			“I am responsible to the country for this, and I must go along with him and protect the country against him”	“the thing that kept me always in a sweat of apprehension was the fact that every fresh blunder that he made increased the luster of his reputation!”	The clergyman’s move to join Scoresby’s unit gives him a front row seat to Scoresby’s blunders, and resulting accolades.
3 Part A	Paragraph 12, Paragraph 14	RL.11–12.3, RL.11–12.6, RL.11–12.1	Paragraph 12: In this paragraph, the clergyman hopes that Scoresby will die to avoid blunders during the Crimean war; instead, Scoresby is appointed as captain. Paragraph 14: In this paragraph, the clergyman cried and raged and raved over Scoresby’s blunders, but “every fresh blunder he made increased the luster of his reputation!”		
3 Part B	A		<p>A. This is the correct answer. Given that the Reverend is the only person who doubts Scoresby’s worth, the reader may begin to doubt the clergyman’s assessment.</p> <p>B. Although the clergyman has known Scoresby for over 40 years, he only recounts two times when he feels he has come to Scoresby’s rescue.</p> <p>C. Although Scoresby has gained honors, it is only indirectly related to the Reverend’s help.</p> <p>D. Although Scoresby did not earn his success, he owes it to luck rather than the clergyman.</p>		

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options
4 Part A	C	RL.11–12.4, RL.11–12.1	<p>A. “Frivolous and uncritical” describe the critiques Scoresby receives from those other than the Reverend, not their “superficial ‘cram’ session.</p> <p>B. “External and obvious” describe the clergyman’s belief in Scoresby’s shortcomings rather than how Scoresby studied for his exam.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. “Insubstantial and shallow” explain the depth and quality of Scoresby’s review session with the Reverend.</p> <p>D. “Unimportant and insignificant” describe Scoresby’s limited military knowledge, not how he studied for his exam.</p>
4 Part B	A		<p>A. This is the correct answer. “And he didn’t know anything else” besides a bit about Caesar’s history shows that Scoresby’s knowledge was limited and insubstantial.</p> <p>B. “Went to work and drilled him” describes how the clergyman helped Scoresby prepare for the test, not the quality of the “cram.”</p> <p>C. “Questions concerning Caesar” refers to the area on which the Reverend focused his review, not the quality of the “cram.”</p> <p>D. “The narrow limits of his drill” describes Scoresby’s small knowledge of Caesar.</p>
5	D	RL.11–12.3, RL.11–12.1	<p>A. Although the reader may not believe some aspects of the story, it is the Reverend’s recounting of the tale that the reader doubts, not that the story is untrue.</p> <p>B. It is the Reverend who is probably melodramatic, rather than the author.</p> <p>C. The melodramatic tone reflects the Reverend’s recounting of the tale, not feelings of excitement toward Scoresby’s accomplishments.</p> <p>D. This is the correct answer. Because the Reverend is the only person who doubts Scoresby’s abilities, the reader must wonder if it is the Reverend’s perceptions that are lacking.</p>
6	C, E	RL.11–12.5, RL.11–12.1	<p>A. Although the author may doubt the Reverend’s assessment of Scoresby, he does not feel discomfort toward the clergyman.</p> <p>B. Although the author details Scoresby’s actions, he does so later in the story.</p> <p>C. This is a correct answer. Several of the first seven paragraphs are dedicated to the author’s praise of Scoresby.</p> <p>D. Although the author reveals some background information on the Reverend, the first seven paragraphs are dedicated to Scoresby.</p> <p>E. This is a correct answer. In paragraph 2, the author writes, “For reasons which will presently appear, I will withhold his real name and titles”.</p> <p>F. In paragraph five, the author seems to doubt the Reverend’s belief, saying “This verdict was a great surprise to me.”</p>

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options
7	A	RL.11–12.5, RL.11–12.1	<p>A. This is the correct answer. In these paragraphs, the Reverend recounts flaws that seem unaligned with Scoresby’s many accolades.</p> <p>B. Although the clergyman felt anger toward Scoresby, his anger was only mentioned in paragraph 14.</p> <p>C. Neither the author nor the Reverend suggest that heroes should be valued if they do not deserve to be.</p> <p>D. The author’s admiration for Scoresby rings true; it is only the Reverend who doubts Scoresby’s value.</p>
8 Part A	C	RL.11–12.6, RL.11–12.1, RL.11–12.3	<p>A. It is Scoresby, not the Reverend, who plays an important role in the Crimean War.</p> <p>B. Although the Reverend does not believe Scoresby deserves his awards, he does not try to ruin his reputation, other than quietly disparaging him to the author.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. For someone who enjoys resting, he inserts himself into Scoresby’s training multiple times.</p> <p>D. Although the Reverend is employed at a military school, this detail alone does not counter indicate his statement about enjoying rest.</p>
8 Part B	B		<p>A. The Reverend’s enlistment in Scoresby’s unit indicates that the Reverend’s personal feelings do affect his sense of duty.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. The clergyman says one thing, but does another.</p> <p>C. The clergyman does not reveal his personal feelings about the war, only Scoresby.</p> <p>D. Although the Reverend shares his doubts about Scoresby with the author, he does not indicate that he will share them with anyone else.</p>

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options			
			Key		Rationale	
9	See right column	RL.11–12.6, RL.11–12.1	“Well, although through his course I stood by him, with something of the sentiment which a mother feels for a child; and he always saved himself— just by miracle, apparently”	The reverend cares for Scoresby and is pleased that he continues to save himself.	The Reverend looks down on Scoresby and feels superior to him.	Although the Reverend seems to have affection for Scoresby like “a mother feels for a child”, “just by a miracle, apparently” indicates that the clergyman believes Scoresby is lucky, rather than deserving.
			“Of course there had to be a war, I said to myself: we couldn’t have peace and give this donkey a chance to die before he is found out.”	The reverend wants to protect Scoresby from harm that may befall him from his undeserved success.	The Reverend resents Scoresby for his seemingly unearned position in the army.	Although the Reverend wants to keep Scoresby from going to war, he insults him by calling him a “donkey” and suggests that his shortcomings will be “found out.”
			“He is just as good and sweet and loving and unpretending as a man can be, but he doesn’t know enough to come in when it rains.”	The reverend believes Scoresby to be a loveable fool.	The Reverend believes Scoresby to be too unintelligent to do anything right.	Although the Reverend lists positive traits of Scoresby, he also suggests that he is dumb and undeserving of his success.
10	See right column.	W.11–12.1, W.11-12.4, W.11–12.9, RL.11–12.6, RL.11–12.2, RL.11–12.1, L.11-12.1, L.11-12.2, L.11-12.3	<p>An essay that takes the position that luck was the most important element of Scoresby’s success would cite:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoresby was only asked questions that he had been drilled on • Scoresby advanced in the military because those in front of him died • Scoresby guessed wrong, and luckily found the Russian army, which allowed him to help win the battle <p>An essay that argues that other elements were more important to Scoresby’s success would cite:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Scoresby was willing to be drilled “like a galley slave,” so he worked hard • Scoresby was willing to accept the help of the reverend to get through school • Scoresby “always saved himself,” so he seems to have an instinct for survival which could be interpreted to be intelligence • Scoresby found the Russian army. What the Reverend perceives as mixing up his right hand from his left could have actually been instinct and knowledge of his surroundings. 			

Using the Mini-Assessments with English Language Learners (ELLs)

Mini-Assessment Design and English Language Learners

Each mini-assessment is designed using the best practices of test design. English Language Learners will benefit from the opportunity to independently practice answering questions about grade-level complex texts.

Prior to delivering the mini-assessment, teachers should read through each item. If there is language in the question stems specific to the standards (e.g., plot, theme, point of view), make sure that students have been introduced to these concepts prior to taking the assessment. Teachers should not pre-teach specific vocabulary words tested in the assessment (e.g., words students are asked to define) and should only pre-teach language that would impede students from understanding what the question is asking.

The mini-assessments attend to the needs of all learners, and ELLs specifically, by including texts that:

- *Are brief and engaging:* Texts vary in length, but no individual text is more than three pages long.
- *Embed student-friendly definitions:* Footnotes are included for technical terms or words that are above grade level when those words are not surrounded by context that would help students determine meaning.

Informational text sets, such as those included in the mini-assessment, specifically attend to the needs of ELLs by:

- *Building student knowledge:* Mini-assessments often include multiple texts or stimuli on the same topic:
 - For sets with two texts or stimuli, the first text is generally broader, providing a foundation in the content and introducing key vocabulary, and the second text provides more detail or contrast on the same topic. This allows ELLs to dig into the features of the passage being assessed rather than being inundated with dissimilar content and vocabulary.
 - For sets with more than two texts or stimuli, there is an “anchor” text that provides introductory information on the topic.
- *Containing ideas that lend themselves to discussion from a variety of perspectives:* Often these pairs or sets of texts present multiple perspectives on the same topic.

The mini-assessments attend to the needs of all learners, and ELLs specifically, by including questions that:

- *Feature a variety of academic words:*
 - Each mini-assessment contains at least one vocabulary item. Items assessing vocabulary test one of the following:
 - The meaning of Tier 2 academic words in context.
 - The meaning of a figurative word/phrase in context.
 - The impact of word choice on meaning and/or tone.
 - MOST vocabulary items test Tier 2 words.
 - All tested words are chosen because:
 - They are central to the meaning of the text.
 - They are surrounded by sufficient context to allow students to determine meaning.
- *Highlight “juicy” sentences that feature grade-appropriate complex structures, vocabulary, and language features:* Most mini-assessments include at least one item assessing Reading for Literature or Reading: Informational text standard 5. These items point students to analyze the structure of the text. While standard 5 items specifically focus on the structure of the text, other items require the analysis of language features, vocabulary, and relationships between ideas, all of which build student understanding of texts.
- *Provide graphic organizers to help students capture and reflect on new knowledge:* Most mini-assessments include at least one item mimicking a “technology enhanced item.” These items include things like tables and charts.
- *Provide writing activities that allow students to use new vocabulary and demonstrate knowledge of new concepts:* Most mini-assessments include an optional writing prompt that allows students to write about the text(s).

Administration Guidelines for ELLs

When assessing ELL students, appropriate accommodations may be considered. Modifications to the assessment itself should not be made. According to the *Accommodations Manual: How to Select, Administer, and Evaluate Use of Accommodations for Instruction and Assessment of English Language Learners, First Edition*:

- “Modifications refer to practices or materials that change, lower, or reduce state-required learning expectations. Modifications may change the underlying construct of an assessment.”
- “Accommodations are accessibility supports [that] do not reduce learning expectations. They meet specific needs of students in instruction and assessment and enable educators to know that measures of a student’s work produce valid results.”

Teachers **may** choose to make accommodations that meet the unique needs of ELLs. Prior to delivering any practice assessment, especially if the mini-assessment is to be used in a more formal setting (e.g., as part of a district benchmark assessment), teachers should research what accommodations will be available to students during their state’s summative assessment. For example, some states allow ELLs to use a bilingual dictionary during an assessment; other states do not allow this. Ensure your ELLs are practicing with the accommodations they can expect to see on the summative. Some examples of appropriate accommodations include:

- Reading the directions aloud to students multiple times.
- Providing student directions in student native language.
- Allowing students additional time to complete the mini-assessments.
- Exposing students to item types prior to the assessment.
- Reading the scoring expectations for the writing prompt aloud to students.

Because the goal of literacy mini-assessments is to measure grade-level literacy as students progress toward college- and career-readiness, teachers must be careful **not** to make modifications that may be commonly used in classroom instruction. Examples of modifications that should **not** be used include:

- Reading passages aloud for students.
- Adding student glossaries of unfamiliar terms.
- Pre-teaching tested vocabulary words.

In any testing setting, teachers must be careful to choose accommodations that suit the needs of each individual student.

Additional Resources for Assessment and CCSS

Shift 1 – Complexity: *Regular practice with complex text and its academic language*

- See Appendix B for examples of informational and literary complex texts:
http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf
- See the Text Complexity Collection on www.achievethecore.org

Shift 2 – Evidence: *Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational*

- See Close Reading Exemplars for ways to engage students in close reading on
<http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools/close-reading-exemplars>
- See the Basal Alignment Project for examples of text-dependent questions:
<http://www.achievethecore.org/basal-alignment-project>

Shift 3 – Knowledge: *Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction*

- See Appendix B for examples of informational and literary complex texts:
http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

Sample Scoring Rubric for Text-Based Writing

Prompts: [http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Scoring Rubric for Text-Based Writing Prompts.pdf](http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Scoring_Rubric_for_Text-Based_Writing_Prompts.pdf)