

## Grade 11 Informational Text Mini-Assessment

### Excerpt from “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?”

This grade 11 mini-assessment is based on an excerpt (733 words) from an 1873 speech titled “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?” by Susan B. Anthony. 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 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. Often, several standards may be addressed within the same question because complex texts tend to yield rich assessment questions that call for deep analysis. In this mini-assessment there are multiple-choice questions that address the Reading Standards below. There is also one constructed-response question that addresses 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:

<b>RI.11-12.1</b>	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.
<b>RI.11-12.2</b>	Determine two or more 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 provide a complex analysis; provide an objective summary of the text.
<b>RI.11-12.3</b>	Analyze a complex set of ideas or sequence of events and explain how specific individuals, ideas, or events interact and develop over the course of the text.
<b>RI.11-12.4</b>	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings; analyze how an author uses and refines the meaning of a key term or terms over the course of a text (e.g., how Madison defines faction in <i>Federalist No. 10</i> ).
<b>RI.11-12.5</b>	Analyze and evaluate the effectiveness of the structure an author uses in his or her exposition or argument, including whether the structure makes points clear, convincing, and engaging.
<b>RI.11-12.6</b>	Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text in which the rhetoric is particularly effective, analyzing how style and content contribute to the power, persuasiveness, or beauty of the text.

<b>RI.11-12.8</b>	Delineate and evaluate the reasoning in seminal U.S. texts, including the application of constitutional principles and use of legal reasoning (e.g., in U.S. Supreme Court majority opinions and dissents) and the premises, purposes, and arguments in works of public advocacy (e.g., <i>The Federalist</i> , presidential addresses).
<b>W.11-12.2</b>	Write informative/explanatory texts to examine and convey complex ideas, concepts, and information clearly and accurately through the effective selection, organization, and analysis of content.
<b>W.11-12.4</b>	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
<b>W.11-12.9</b>	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
<b>L.11-12.1</b>	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
<b>L.11-12.2</b>	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
<b>L.11-12.3</b>	Apply knowledge of language to understand how language functions in different contexts, to make effective choices for meaning or style, and to comprehend more fully when reading or listening.

# Contents

<b>Grade 11 Mini-Assessment – Excerpt from “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?” <u>Print for students</u>.....</b>	<b>4</b>
<b>Information for Teachers: Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of the Text .....</b>	<b>11</b>
<b>Question Annotations: Correct Answers and Distractor Rationales.....</b>	<b>13</b>
<b>Using the Mini-Assessments with English Language Learners.....</b>	<b>17</b>
<b>Additional Resources for Assessment and CCSS Implementation.....</b>	<b>20</b>

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](http://www.achievethecore.org)

## **Grade 11 Mini-Assessment – Excerpt from “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?” by Susan B. Anthony**

Today you will read an excerpt from a speech titled “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?” The speech was given in 1873 by Susan B. Anthony, a famous American civil rights leader. 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 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. Note that each paragraph has a number, and some of the questions may refer to paragraphs by their numbers.

### **Excerpt from “Is it a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?”**

---Susan B. Anthony

- (1) Friends and Fellow-citizens: I stand before you tonight, under indictment for the alleged crime of having voted at the last Presidential election, without having a lawful right to vote. It shall be my work this evening to prove to you that in thus voting, I not only committed no crime, but, instead, simply exercised my citizen's right, guaranteed to me and all United States citizens by the National Constitution, beyond the power of any State to deny.
- (2) Our democratic-republican government is based on the idea of the natural right of every individual member thereof to a voice and a vote in making and executing the laws. We assert the province of government to be to secure the people in the enjoyment of their unalienable rights. We throw to the winds the old dogma that governments can give rights. Before governments were organized, no one denies that each individual possessed the right to protect his own life, liberty and property. And when 100 or 1,000,000 people enter into a free government, they do not barter away their natural rights; they simply pledge themselves to protect each other in the enjoyment of them, through prescribed judicial and legislative tribunals. They agree to abandon the methods of brute force in the adjustment of their differences, and adopt those of civilization.
- (3) Nor can you find a word in any of the grand documents left us by the fathers that assumes for government the power to create or to confer rights. The Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the constitutions of the several states and the organic laws of the territories, all alike propose to protect the people in the exercise of their God-given rights. Not one of them pretends to bestow rights.

- (4) "All men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed."
- (5) Here is no shadow of government authority over rights, nor exclusion of any from their full and equal enjoyment. Here is pronounced the right of all men, and "consequently," as the Quaker preacher said, "of all women," to a voice in the government. And here, in this very first paragraph of the declaration, is the assertion of the natural right of all to the ballot; for, how can "the consent of the governed" be given, if the right to vote be denied. Again:
- (6) "That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such forms as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness."
- (7) Surely, the right of the whole people to vote is here clearly implied. For however destructive in their happiness this government might become, a disfranchised class could neither alter nor abolish it, nor institute a new one, except by the old brute force method of insurrection and rebellion. One-half of the people of this nation to-day are utterly powerless to blot from the statute books an unjust law, or to write there a new and a just one. The women, dissatisfied as they are with this form of government, that enforces taxation without representation,—that compels them to obey laws to which they have never given their consent,—that imprisons and hangs them without a trial by a jury of their peers, that robs them, in marriage, of the custody of their own persons, wages and children,—are this half of the people left wholly at the mercy of the other half, in direct violation of the spirit and letter of the declarations of the framers of this government, every one of which was based on the immutable principle of equal rights to all. By those declarations, kings, priests, popes, aristocrats, were all alike dethroned, and placed on a common level politically, with the lowliest born subject or serf. By them, too, men, as such, were deprived of their divine right to rule, and placed on a political level with women. By the practice of those declarations all class and caste distinction will be abolished; and slave, serf, plebeian, wife, woman, all alike, bound [leap] from their subject position to the proud platform of equality.

PUBLIC DOMAIN

1. Anthony begins the speech by declaring that she will *prove* that she did not commit a crime. What evidence does she use to give her argument persuasive power?

- A. She retells historical events in a way that makes them understandable.
- B. She builds a logical argument based on a founding document.
- C. She cites research on her topic to increase the credibility of her ideas.
- D. She refers to statements by other leaders working for the right to vote.

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

**Part A: Which statement best describes Anthony’s primary point of view regarding the role of government?**

- A. Government should define and provide basic human rights to all.
- B. Government should enforce the law even when citizens are dissatisfied.
- C. Government should classify different roles for different groups of people.
- D. Government should ensure that basic human rights are not infringed upon.

**Part B: Which two statements from the speech provide the best evidence for Anthony’s point of view?”**

- A. “We assert the province of government to be to secure the people in the enjoyment of their unalienable rights.”
- B. “And when 100 or 1,000,000 people enter into a free government, they do not barter away their natural rights; they simply pledge themselves to protect each other in the enjoyment of them, through prescribed judicial and legislative tribunals.”
- C. “That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government . . . “
- D. “For however destructive in their happiness this government might become, a disfranchised class could neither alter nor abolish it, nor institute a new one, except by the old brute force method of insurrection and rebellion.”
- E. “By them, too, men, as such, were deprived of their divine right to rule, and placed on a political level with women.”
- F. “By the practice of those declarations all class and caste distinction will be abolished; and slave, serf, plebeian, wife, woman, all alike, bound from their subject position to the proud platform of equality.”

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

**Part A: What is the meaning of the word *unalienable* in the fourth paragraph of the speech?**

- A. cannot be defined
- B. cannot be taken away
- C. cannot be seen or touched
- D. cannot be given to all

**Part B: Which two phrases from the text best help the reader understand the meaning of *unalienable*?**

- A. "God-given"
- B. "Endowed by their Creator"
- C. "deriving their just powers"
- D. "the consent of the governed"
- E. "the right of all men"
- F. "as the Quaker preacher said"
- G. "by those declarations"

4. Anthony states that preventing women from having equal rights with men is a "direct violation of the spirit and letter of the declarations of the framers of this government." In which sentence in her speech does Anthony most clearly disregard the "letter" (the literal meaning) of the Declaration and substitute a meaning that reflects the "spirit" of the document?

- A. "They agree to abandon the methods of brute force in the adjustment of their differences, and adopt those of civilization."
- B. "The Declaration of Independence, the United States Constitution, the constitutions of the several states and the organic laws of the territories, all alike propose to protect the people in the exercise of their God-given rights."
- C. "Here is pronounced the right of all men, and 'consequently,' as the Quaker preacher said, 'of all women,' to a voice in the government."
- D. "For however destructive in their happiness this government might become, a disfranchised class could neither alter nor abolish it, nor institute a new one, except by the old brute force method of insurrection and rebellion."

5. Some of the structural elements of Anthony’s speech are listed in the left-hand column below. The right-hand column contains quotations from the speech. Find a quotation that illustrates each structural element and put the number of that quotation next to the element. Use one quotation for each element. Not all quotations will be used.

Structural Elements	Number of the Quotation	Quotations from the Speech
A. Statement of what the speech is intended to accomplish		1. " 'That whenever any form of government becomes destructive of these ends, it is the right of the people to alter or abolish it, and to institute a new government, laying its foundations on such principles, and organizing its powers in such forms as to them shall seem most likely to effect their safety and happiness.'"
B. Statement of the concept about the origin of human rights that introduces the main argument		2. "It shall be my work this evening to prove to you that in thus voting, I not only committed no crime, but, instead, simply exercised my citizen's right, . . ."
C. Evidence that people are born with rights and that one of these is the right to vote		3. ". . . [H]alf of the people [are] left wholly at the mercy of the other half, in direct violation of the spirit and letter of the declarations of the framers of this government, every one of which was based on the immutable principle of equal rights to all."
D. Evidence that all people should have the vote because citizens are expected to be able make peaceful changes to government		4. "'All men are created equal, and endowed by their Creator with certain unalienable rights. Among these are life, liberty and the pursuit of happiness. That to secure these, governments are instituted among men, deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed.'"
E. Statement that women are treated unfairly by the government		5. "By them, too, men, as such, were deprived of their divine right to rule, and placed on a political level with women."
		6. "We assert the province of government to be to secure the people in the enjoyment of their unalienable rights. We throw to the winds the old dogma that governments can give rights."

6. Why does Anthony provide a list of the wrongs government commits against women?

- A. to illustrate that change is needed to fulfill the intentions of the founding documents
- B. to urge women to take their rightful place as rulers instead of dependents
- C. to ask women to forgive past actions in hopes of forging a stronger nation
- D. to justify the fact that when women have power they will replace the existing government



**7. In the last paragraph of the excerpt, what is the meaning of the concept of a “platform” of equality in relation to the central idea of Anthony’s speech?**

- A.** A platform is flat; everyone stands at the same level, which reflects Anthony’s argument that men and women have equal rights.
- B.** A platform is wide and deep; there is room for everyone, which symbolizes Anthony’s argument that the Constitution addresses rights for all.
- C.** A platform is elevated; equality for everyone is an exalted ideal, which illustrates Anthony’s argument that the right to vote is a privilege and should be held in high regard.
- D.** A platform is long-lasting; everyone should have permanent equality, which describes Anthony’s vision of how long unalienable rights have existed.

**Writing Prompt (Optional)**

**8. Anthony mentions the word “right” or “rights” many different times in this excerpt. How does she use and refine this key term over the course of her speech? Use evidence from the passage to support your response. Your writing will be scored on organization, development of ideas, and use of grammar, punctuation, and spelling.**

**Your response will be scored on how well you:**

- **Demonstrate your understanding of the ideas of the text**
- **Use evidence from the text to help develop and support your ideas**
- **Organize your response in a logical manner**
- **Demonstrate an appropriate writing style through the use of precise word choice and varied sentences**
- **Use standard conventions for writing**




## 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. “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?” has been placed at Grade 11 for the purpose of this exemplar. This section of the exemplar provides an explanation of the process that was used to place the text at Grade 11, illustrating why this text meets the expectations for text complexity in Reading Standard 10. Appendix A of the Common Core State Standards and the Supplement to Appendix A: *New Research on Text Complexity* lay out a research-based process for selecting complex texts. According to Appendix A of the CCSS, the first step in selecting grade-level appropriate texts is to place a text within a grade-band according to a quantitative text complexity score.

### Quantitative Analysis

<b>Excerpt from “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?”</b>	<b>Quantitative Measure #1</b>	<b>Quantitative Measure #2</b>
	FK: 12.9	Lexile: 1420L

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.coresstandards.org/resources](http://www.coresstandards.org/resources)) and determine the grade **band** of the text.

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

**Figure 1: Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges from Multiple Measures<sup>7</sup>**

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

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](http://www.corestandards.org)). The grade

Qualitative Analysis	Excerpt from “Is It a Crime for a Citizen of the United States to Vote?”	Where to place within the band?					
Category	Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band	Early 9 to Mid-9	End 9 to Early 10	Mid to End 10	Early to Mid-11	End 11	NOT Suited to Band
Structure (both story structure or form of piece)	The structure is relatively straightforward; the organization is generally evident and logical. However, connections among some ideas, processes, or events are implicit and subtle.						
Language Clarity and Conventions	The language is generally complex, with abstract and archaic language commonly used. The academic vocabulary and domain-specific words are not usually defined within the text. Also, the text consists of many complex sentences with subordinate phrases and clauses.						
Knowledge Demands (life, content, cultural/literary)	The subject matter of the text may involve some understanding of the history of the Women’s Suffrage Movement, the Declaration of Independence, and the conditions for women at this point in U.S. history.						
Levels of Meaning (chiefly literary)/ Purpose (chiefly informational)	The primary purpose of the text is stated explicitly.						
<b>Overall placement: Grade 11</b>	The language and conventions used in this text are the main drivers of the text’s complexity. Although the structure is straightforward and the purpose is stated explicitly, the topic itself, developed through formal language, is also challenging.						

## Question Annotations: Correct Answers and Distractor Rationales

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options
1	B	RI.11-12.8, RI.11-12.1	<p>A. Although in this statement Anthony does refer to the origin of government and the founding documents, she is not retelling events to prove her point.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. In this excerpt from the speech, Anthony interprets two quotations from the Declaration of Independence to build her argument for women’s suffrage.</p> <p>C. Although the quotations from the Declaration are the basis for the argument, they are not research documents, nor are they cited as research.</p> <p>D. Although Anthony notes that women are dissatisfied with current conditions and should have equal rights with men, she does not use the statements of other women to support her position.</p>
2, Part A	D	RI.11-12.6, RI.11-12.8, RI.11-12.1	<p>A. Although Anthony discusses the role of government in terms of human rights, her argument is that government does not provide rights but the people have their rights innately.</p> <p>B. Although Anthony does discuss the right of people to change government if they are not satisfied, she does not endorse the idea that government should enforce laws in the face of dissatisfaction; otherwise, she would not be speaking against being arrested for breaking the law herself by voting.</p> <p>C. Although the final paragraph of the excerpt describes political and religious roles in society, Anthony does not suggest that government should support those roles; instead, she asserts that those roles are no longer relevant.</p> <p>D. This is a correct answer. One of the central ideas of the speech is that government cannot confer rights and therefore cannot take them away.</p>
2, Part B	A, B		<p>A. This is a correct answer; it is a direct statement of Anthony’s view of the role of government.</p> <p>B. This is a correct answer; in it Anthony gives a broad explanation of her view of the role of government.</p> <p>C. Although this statement focuses on forms of government, it does not provide evidence for Anthony’s view of government.</p> <p>D. Although this statement explains why voting is important to preserve governments, it does not provide evidence for Anthony’s view of government.</p> <p>E. Although this statement is an important central idea in the speech, it does not provide evidence for Anthony’s view of government.</p> <p>F. Although this statement focuses on Anthony’s ultimate goals in her reform movement, it does not provide evidence for Anthony’s view of government.</p>

3, Part A	B		<p>A. Because the speech names some rights (life, liberty, pursuit of happiness, and the ballot), it is clear that these rights can be defined.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. The context makes it clear that people are born with rights and therefore they cannot be taken away. This is a central idea of the speech.</p> <p>C. Although rights are intangible, the context of the speech does not support this meaning.</p> <p>D. Although the speech focuses on rights for all, there is no context to support this meaning.</p>
3, Part B	A, B	RI.11-12.4, RI.11-12.1	<p>A. This is a correct answer. Anthony uses this phrase synonymously with unalienable.</p> <p>B. This is a correct answer. This phrase precedes unalienable and indicates its meaning.</p> <p>C. Although this phrase occurs in the quotation from the Declaration, it does not provide context for unalienable.</p> <p>D. Although this phrase also occurs in the quotation from the Declaration, it does not provide context for unalienable.</p> <p>E. Although this phrase also occurs in the quotation from the Declaration, it does not provide context for unalienable.</p> <p>F. Although this phrase also occurs in the speech, it does not provide context for unalienable.</p> <p>G. Although this phrase also occurs in the speech, it does not provide context for unalienable.</p>
4	C	RI.11-12.8, RI.11-12.3, RI.11-12.1	<p>A. Although this statement represents an inference from the letter of the Declaration ("deriving their just powers from the consent of the governed,") Anthony is not substituting one meaning for another.</p> <p>B. Although Anthony is summarizing a principle in the founding documents, she is not substituting one meaning for another.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. Anthony has to go beyond the letter of the Declaration to the spirit behind it to substitute for "men" the meaning "men and women."</p> <p>D. Although Anthony is arguing the logic of the meaning of the quotation from the Declaration, she is not substituting one meaning for another.</p>
5	2 6 4 1 3	RH.11-12.5, RI.11-12.3, RH.11-12.1, RI.11-12.1	<p>2. With this statement, Anthony announces the purpose for her speech.</p> <p>6. With this statement, Anthony begins to unfold the argument that government does not give people their rights; they are born with them.</p> <p>4. Anthony uses this quotation to help prove that the right to vote is inherent and cannot be taken from people.</p> <p>1. Anthony uses this quotation to help prove that if people can peacefully make changes in government (as the words imply), then the people must have the right to vote.</p> <p>3. With this statement, Anthony explains how women are mistreated by the half of the population that does have the vote.</p>

6	A	RI.11-12.8, RI.11-12.2, RI.11-12.1	<p>A. This is the correct answer. A careful reading of the final paragraph of the excerpt shows that Anthony’s central idea is that the founding documents require giving women the right to vote as one part of their rightful political equality.</p> <p>B. Although Anthony several times talks about government and rulers, she is not advocating for women to be rulers but to be political equals.</p> <p>C. Although Anthony lists wrongs that she believes need correction, she is not urging forgiveness; instead, she is urging action; when they receive the vote, women will not enact laws that treat themselves so unfairly.</p> <p>D. Although Anthony envisions a new political order, with all citizens having political equality, she does not advocate overthrowing the government.</p>
7	A	RI.11-12.4, RH.11-12.4, RI.11-12.1, RH.11-12.1	<p>G. This is the correct answer. The word choice conveys Anthony’s meaning precisely; she is claiming that the founding documents made no political distinctions among people; all are at the same level, just as any group standing on a platform are all at the same level. .</p> <p>H. Although the word platform could convey breadth and depth, the context shows that this meaning for the word is not applicable here, as platform is intended to convey the same level; “ kings, priests... all alike... placed on a common level...”</p> <p>I. Although generally platforms are elevated above ground level, the context shows that this aspect of a platform is not meant here. Anthony does not here address voting as a privilege but rather an essential right</p> <p>J. Although the speech refers to unalienable and permanent rights, the context shows that this idea is not related to the concept of a platform here, as Anthony does not address how long unalienable rights have existed only that in the past the “old dogma” was that “governments can give rights.”</p>
Optional Writing Prompt	See right column	W.11-12.2, W.11-12.4, W.11-12.9, RI.11-12.3, L.11-12.1, L.11-12.2 L.11-12.3	<p><b>Top-Score Responses will address many or all of the following ideas:</b></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• At first, Anthony’s main focus is the right to vote because she was arrested for voting. And, that this right was guaranteed to her.</li> <li>• Next, “rights” become something people are born with; they are “God-given.” Anthony points out that she always has had the right to vote because the government doesn’t give rights; she was born with that right.</li> <li>• Accordingly, Anthony then turns to the concept of rights as they are defined in the Declaration of Independence, which shows that governments don’t give rights; they protect rights.</li> <li>• Anthony then links rights to orderly and peaceful government: The Declaration also shows that the government is formed by the consent of the governed, which implies that people need the right to vote in order to make laws and to change laws.</li> <li>• Anthony then notes that none of the “grand documents left us... assumes for government the power to create or confer rights” She is saying here that not only are these rights “inalienable” and “natural” and hence not given by governments but that our “grand documents” recognize this.</li> </ul>

			<ul style="list-style-type: none"><li>• After establishing these principles about the right to vote, Anthony expands her focus to equal rights for all. It's clear that women are not treated well by the laws of this country. They are being denied other rights besides the right to vote.</li><li>• She ends this excerpt with the idea that the founding documents show that women and men have the same rights, equal political rights: "...all alike, ... bound to the proud platform of equality."</li></ul>
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## 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 Implementation

**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](http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf)
- See the Text Complexity Collection on [www.achievethecore.org](http://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](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)