English Language Arts / English Language Development

Analyzing and Writing Arguments, Research Across Texts, and Informational Oral Presentations

Performance Supertask |   
Teacher Document

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Overview of the Performance Task

This performance task evaluates students’ understanding of the following key Big Ideas within the grade nine English language arts (ELA) and English language development (ELD)-based course:

* **Analyzing and Writing Arguments:** Using knowledge of rhetoric to analyze arguments from diverse perspectives and write arguments.
* **Research Across Texts:** Conducting research and using findings in written informational and explanatory texts.
* **Informational Oral Presentations:** Planning and delivering oral presentations conveying information from credible sources.

The task targets specific overlapping components of the associated Big Ideas and offers accessible strategies and examples of how students can demonstrate proficiency with the concepts. Various tools, mediums, and connections are provided for teachers to customize the task to the unique needs, cultures, interests, and abilities of their students to promote an inclusive and relevant educational experience. As explained in the Practice Brief, “Selecting and Scaffolding Complex Texts,” the instructional sequencing of texts and tasks is a way to maintain the rigor of the grade nine ELA and ELD standards while also bolstering students’ motivation and success. In this performance task, the texts and tasks are divided into parts and sequenced specifically to foster engagement and build a coherent experience for the students. For example, in this performance task, students first analyze others’ arguments in Part 1, then they research their own topics in Part 2, write their own argument in Part 3, and build a presentation in Part 4.

When preparing to administer this performance task, the teacher needs to distinguish between flexible and fixed elements based on what the Big Idea-aligned standards require to ensure students have multiple ways to demonstrate their knowledge without compromising the depth and rigor within the standards. Furthermore, when specifically focusing on students with disabilities, educators should always consult and embed supports defined within a student’s Individualized Education Program (IEP) to ensure that all required accommodations and supplementary aids are provided during the assessment. For more on the standards supporting each Big Idea please refer to the *ELA/ELD Guidance Document: Big Ideas and Standards Alignment*.

Administering the Performance Task and Embedding Resources for Students

Each part of this task is broken into a series of parts with corresponding items for administration. This section provides guidance to the educator on how to administer each part of the task and supports the student in demonstrating their understanding of the Big Ideas. As you are planning to administer this performance task, review these recommendations as they offer associated key vocabulary, appropriate and inappropriate resources, and potential alternative means of expression.

Key Vocabulary Terms

The key vocabulary terms provided below are essential to the concepts within the Big Ideas, therefore unless otherwise noted, these vocabulary terms should have been pre-taught to students before completing these performance tasks. Ensure your students have encountered these terms before providing them with this performance task as they are not to be taught during the assessment:

* claim, counterclaim, evidence, reasoning, refute, fallacy, valid, theme, tone, analysis, rhetoric

Strategies for Supporting Students

The following sections describe appropriate and inappropriate resources to provide students as they complete a task.

Appropriate Resources

Appropriate resources maintain the rigor of the standards while also accommodating student difficulties such as confusion and anxiety or providing material resources specific accommodations identified in a student’s IEP that the student could use to complete the task without compromising the standard or Big Idea:

* reading the item to the student
* answering clarifying questions related to the key vocabulary (for example, to clarify *theme*, a teacher could ask, “What idea seems to appear regularly as you read this text?” or for *evidence*, a teacher could say, “Where in the text can you find a sentence that supports your response to the question?”
* helping the student to make sense of the item by asking questions such as, “What is this question asking you to figure out? What important information does the question give you? Are there any words you want to ask about or look up?”
* offering manipulatives and tools to support expressing knowledge and proficiency such as pictures or objects that represent a setting or a character in the text
* helping the student to access classroom or web-based resources that support a greater understanding of ELA/Literacy and ELD Big Idea terms
* providing multiple copies of the content
* providing a graphic organizer or sentence stems for students to take notes before any discussion
* providing a blank outline for students to plan their narrative prior to writing or a collaborative conversation
* providing a brainstorming template for students to jot down their ideas for writing or a collaborative conversation
* printing images or content on larger sheets
* allowing students to complete different parts or items over an extended period of time (versus completing an entire task or part in one sitting)
* providing multiple choices for where and how students can complete the performance task (for example, a quiet area in the classroom, at the student’s desk but with headphones projecting white noise, on a computer, or by hand)

Inappropriate Resources

This section describes resources that, when applied, modify the task by supporting the student in a facet of the task they need to do themselves to be proficient. These resources should be avoided as they may alter the rigor of the standards and negatively impact the student’s ability to independently demonstrate proficiency:

* explaining to students how to use the resources such as a notetaking template or an outline for their writing
* reteaching the ELA/Literacy and ELD Big Idea concepts such as how to analyze a theme and gather evidence to support the analysis
* retelling students how to complete the concepts being assessed
* providing students with sentence stems to use as a framework for their writing task
* translating materials for students into another language or allowing students to write their narrative or converse in a language other than English
* offering multiple comprehensive prompts for each question that lead the student to the answer

Potential Alternative Means of Expression

The following options provide various ways students might demonstrate their knowledge of the standards being assessed.[[1]](#footnote-2)

When conducting research and analyzing literature from diverse perspectives, students can demonstrate their thinking and learning by:

* writing short responses with pen and paper or a word-processing application
* communicating their understanding verbally
* creating an infographic or other visualization
* creating a multimedia presentation

When writing arguments, students can be supported with the following options for demonstrating their skills and knowledge:

* using text-to-speech or speech-to-text to complete the content
* writing with pen and paper
* writing using a word processor that includes spelling and grammar tools
* dictating to a scribe[[2]](#footnote-3)

When creating an oral presentation, students can present in the following ways or use the following tools:

* using notes or a brainstorming/outline template available to stay organized through the presentation
* creating a slide presentation and narrating key points
* creating a poster presentation and narrating key points
* using a screen casting from a multimedia device
* creating a podcast
* creating a video of the oral presentation
* using text-to-speech software to communicate key points of a presentation

In addition to the alternative means of expression listed above, educators should consult a student’s IEP to determine if any other accommodations or supplementary aids could be provided as appropriate resources in this performance task.

PART 1. Analyzing and Writing Arguments (A)

Part 1 of this performance task outlines the following:

* associated standards that will be assessed
* assessment items
* rubrics that assess each item
* sample student responses

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the related standards, review the student task, explore each item’s rubric, and view the sample student responses to sufficiently prepare students to use this performance task to show proficiency in this task. The items for this part of the task pair with the items from Part 3 of this performance task. Part 1 and Part 3 together assess the entire *Analyzing and Writing Arguments: Using Knowledge of Rhetoric to Write Arguments and Analyze Arguments from Diverse Perspectives* Big Idea.

Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards

Clusters of content standards exist within the Big Ideas allowing the Big Ideas to demonstrate the central concepts and key understandings of the course content. The assessment categories provide the teacher with the key concepts being evaluated in each Big Idea as well as the associated content standards centered within the Big Idea of this task and come from the California ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework and are aligned to California-adopted ELA and ELD state standards.

Big Idea: Analyzing and Writing Arguments—Using Knowledge of Rhetoric to Write Arguments and Analyze Arguments from Diverse Perspectives

Students will critically analyze diverse perspectives and craft well-reasoned arguments. The California ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework[[3]](#footnote-4) highlights the importance of these skills, noting that students must go beyond understanding texts to analyze their composition and craft their own convincing arguments (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 672). Developing rhetorical knowledge enables students to understand the impact of authors’ choices, grasp the role of audience, purpose, and context, and apply that rhetorical knowledge in their own writing (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 689). Students understand the power of language and persuasive communication which enhances their world understanding and prepares them for effective participation in society. Please note that in Part 1 of this performance task, students analyze arguments. In Part 4, students will write an argument.

Related Standards

**Evidence Statement 1:** Students identify and analyze an author’s perspective or intent in a text and evaluate the rhetorical strategies used to promote it.

* **ELA.RI.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (*Item 1*)
* **ELA.RI.9-10.3** Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them. (*Item 2*)
* **ELA.RI.9-10.6** Determine an author’s point of view or purpose in a text and analyze how an author uses rhetoric to advance that point of view or purpose. (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.6b.Br** Explain inferences and conclusions drawn from close reading of grade-level texts and viewing of multimedia using a variety of verbs and adverbials (for example, creates the impression that, consequently). (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.7.Br (Evaluating Language Choices)** Explain how successfully writers and speakers structure texts and use language (for example, specific word or phrasing choices) to persuade the reader (for example, by providing well-worded evidence to support claims or connecting points in an argument in specific ways) or create other specific effects, with light support. (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br (Understanding Text Structure)** Apply analysis of the organizational structure of different text types (for example, how arguments are organized by establishing clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing clear and cohesive arguments, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives. (*Items 1 and 2*)

**Evidence Statement 2:** Students critically evaluate an argument in a text, including its claims and evidence, to determine the validity of its reasoning and identify any inaccuracies or logical fallacies.

* **ELA.RI.9-10.5** Analyze in detail how an author’s ideas or claims are developed and refined by particular sentences, paragraphs, or larger portions of a text (for example, a section or chapter). (*Item 2*)
* **ELA.RI.9-10.8** Delineate and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient; identify false statements and fallacious reasoning. (*Item 3*)
* **ELA.L.9-10.3** 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. (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.7.Br (Evaluating Language Choices)** Explain how successfully writers and speakers structure texts and use language (for example, specific word or phrasing choices) to persuade the reader (for example, by providing well-worded evidence to support claims or connecting points in an argument in specific ways) or create other specific effects, with light support. (*Items 2 and 5*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br (Understanding Text Structure)** Apply analysis of the organizational structure of different text types (for example, how arguments are organized by establishing clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing clear and cohesive arguments, informative/explanatory texts, and narratives. (*Items 1 and 2*)

**Evidence Statement 4:** Students apply their understanding of language to both comprehend text and effectively choose language for its intended impact in various contexts.[[4]](#footnote-5)

* **ELA.L.9-10.3** 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. (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.8.Br (Analyzing Language Choices)** Explain how a writer’s or speaker’s choice of a variety of different types of phrasing or words (for example, hyperbole, varying connotations, the cumulative impact of word choices) produces nuances and different effects on the audience. (*Items 2*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br (Understanding text structure)** Apply analysis of the organizational structure of different text types (for example, how arguments are organized by establishing clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing clear and cohesive arguments, informative/explanatory texts and narratives. (*Items 1 and 2*)

Part 1. Directions

During this part of the performance task, students read and analyze arguments about a multisided topic or topics.

Optional Task Entry Activity

To enhance student motivation and relevance, teachers may introduce argumentative topics through a piece of literature—such as a novel excerpt, short story, or poem—that features an issue with multiple perspectives that is of interest to students (for example, teen social media use, cell phone use in school, fur banning, social media ban, binge-watching). The selected piece of literature could be read aloud or together, and the teacher can facilitate a discussion around the issue with multiple perspectives. The arguments students analyze in Part 1 of this performance task can align with the issue with multiple perspectives presented in the selected piece of literature.

Item 1 Directions

Based on the student’s reading of the text (argument), the student identifies the main claims made in favor of the key issue in the text and cites evidence to support the analysis. Your responses to the following questions will be used to demonstrate your understanding and analysis.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 1)

What are the main claims being made in the text? Cite strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis.

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 1

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, pp. 672–673, and 681–682, which outline the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses.The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the related standards listed above for evidence statements 1 and 4 in the *Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards* section covering standards **ELA.RI.9-10.1**, **ELD.PI.9-10.6b.Br**, **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br** of this performance task.

Rubric for Item 1

| Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The student attempts to cite textual evidence but may unclearly or insufficiently support the analysis. The student uses limited verbs and adverbials to explain. | The student cites textual evidence that somewhat supports the analysis but may lack thoroughness or clarity in connecting to explicit statements and inferences. The student uses some verbs and adverbials to explain (for example, creates the impression that, consequently). | The student cites strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. The student effectively uses verbs and adverbials to explain (for example, creates the impression that, consequently). |

Item 2 Directions

Based on the reading of the text (argument), the student analyzes how the author structures their argument, the author’s point of view or purpose, and examines the rhetorical strategies used. Additionally, the student analyzes how the author’s ideas or claims are developed by specific sentences, paragraphs, or sections, and how the author’s language choice enhances their argument.

Item 2 (Student Document, p. 2)

After reading the text, respond to the following questions.

* How does the author structure their argument to support their claim, and how are the ideas and claims developed and refined throughout the text? Analyze the order of points, specific sentences, and paragraphs, and how they are introduced and developed.
* What is the author's point of view, and how do they use rhetoric and language to advance this point of view? Analyze the choice of words, tone, style, and rhetorical strategies used.

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 2

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, pp. 672–673, and 681–682, which outline the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses.The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the related standards listed above for evidence statements 1, 2, and 4 in the *Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards* section covering standards **ELA.RI.9-10.3**, **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br**, **ELA.RI.9-10.6**, **ELD.PI.9-10.7.Br**, **ELD.PI.9-10.8**, **ELA.RI.9-10.5**, **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br**, **ELA.L.9-10.3** of this performance task.

Rubric for Item 2

| Criteria | Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Structure and Idea Development | The student attempts to describe how the author structures their argument and develops their ideas but the explanation is unclear, inaccurate, or incomplete. | The student provides a general description of the author’s argument structure and development of ideas but may miss some nuances or specific examples. | The student thoroughly analyzes how the author structures their argument and develops their ideas, including the order of points, specific sentences, and paragraphs, with detailed examples. |
| Author’s Point of View and Rhetorical Strategies | The student identifies the author’s point of view or purpose but the analysis of rhetorical strategies is superficial or inaccurate, with limited supporting details. | The student identifies the author’s point of view or purpose with some clarity and includes some relevant supporting details and specific techniques but lacks thoroughness. | The student clearly and accurately identifies the author’s point of view or purpose, providing a thorough analysis with specific examples and explanations of rhetorical strategies. |
| Analyzing Language | The student attempts to analyze the author’s choice of words, tone, and style but the analysis is unclear or lacks depth. | The student analyzes the author’s choice of words, tone, and style but may not fully capture their impact on the argument. | The student thoroughly analyzes the author’s choice of words, tone, and style, clearly explaining how these elements enhance the argument, with specific examples. |

Item 3 Directions

Based on the student’s reading of the text (argument), the student evaluates the argument and specific claims in the text, assessing whether the reasoning is valid and the evidence is relevant and sufficient.

Item 3 (Student Document, p. 3)

After reading the text, respond to the following question.

Restate the argument you see the text is making and evaluate the reasoning in the text and assess whether the evidence is strong and relevant. Are there any false statements or logical fallacies?

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 3

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, pp. 672–673 and 681–682, which outline the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses. The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the related standards listed above for evidence statement 2 in the *Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards* section covering standards **ELA.RI.9-10.8** and **ELD.PI.9-10.7.Br**.

Rubric for Item 3

| Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The student has a vague or unclear evaluation, limited identification of evidence, and little to no recognition of false statements or logical fallacies. | The student has some evaluation of reasoning, identifies some relevant evidence, and recognizes some false statements or logical fallacies but lacks depth. | The student has a clear and thorough evaluation of reasoning, identifies strong and relevant evidence, and accurately identifies false statements and logical fallacies. |

Part 1. Sample Student Responses

The content below provides sample proficient responses from a student based on their reading analysis of opposing arguments about the multisided topic of book banning. The text that leads with “Student Voice” is an example of how a student might respond to each item. This section should only serve as a model—different students will arrive at solutions in different ways. Since it is important to provide students with more than a single perspective, the “Student Voice” section has a sample response for a text with the “pro” position and a sample response for a text with the “against” position. Lastly, because this Big Idea does not dictate the expression mediums students use, students can be given different communication mediums as viable alternative means of expression. The book-banning argument texts that served as the basis for the “Student “Voice” responses were adapted from resources found at ProCon.org and can be found in **Appendix A** and **Appendix B**.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 1)

What are the main claims being made in the text? Cite strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis.

Student Voice—Text 1: The main claims in favor of book banning are that it protects children from exposure to inappropriate material and respects parents’ rights to decide what their children read. Evidence includes: “Parents have the right to decide what material their children are exposed to and when” and “Book bans help guide young people toward appropriate content while still allowing the availability of such books through other means.” Additionally, the text states, “If books with inappropriate material are readily accessible, children might encounter content their parents disapprove of before parents even realize what their children are reading” (ProCon.org).

Student Voice—Text 2: The main claims against book banning are that it violates freedom of speech and access to information, stops people from seeing different viewpoints, and limits intellectual and personal growth. Evidence includes: “Parents may control what their own children read, but they do not have the right to restrict what books are available to other people” (NCAC) and “Justice William Brennan wrote that removing books from library shelves could violate students’ First Amendment rights” (Brennan 1982).

Item 2 (Student Document, p. 2)

After reading the text, respond to the following questions.

* How does the author structure their argument to support their claim, and how are the ideas and claims developed and refined throughout the text? Analyze the order of points, specific sentences, and paragraphs, and how they are introduced and developed.
* What is the author's point of view, and how do they use rhetoric and language to advance this point of view? Analyze the choice of words, tone, style, and rhetorical strategies used.

Student Voice—Text 1: The author argues that banning books in schools and public libraries is necessary to protect children and respect parents’ rights. The argument is made through clear points: parents’ control over what their kids read, the harm of inappropriate content, and the idea that this isn’t true censorship. Each point is backed up with examples and evidence.

First, the author says parents should decide what their children read. This is supported by the example of the group Speak Up for Standards, which points out that explicit content is in school reading lists. Next, the author talks about the harm of inappropriate content like sex, violence, and drug use. Studies from the American Academy of Pediatrics show that early exposure to explicit content can lead to negative effects and early engagement in adult behaviors. The Top Ten Most Challenged Books in 2020, which include adult themes, show how common this content is in young adult literature.

The author also explains that removing certain books from libraries is about community standards, not censorship. Quotes from Peter Sprigg and Mark Hemingway argue that it’s about guiding children to appropriate material without completely restricting access. This helps to show that book banning is not a total ban but a guided choice.

The author’s view is clearly in favor of book banning to protect children and respect community values. The author uses strategies like quoting experts and providing evidence to support this view. The words “necessary measure” and “protect” show how important book banning is. The tone is protective and reasonable, making book banning seem like a sensible action.

Overall, the author’s word choice, tone, and style make the argument stronger by presenting it as balanced. The use of specific examples and evidence helps build a thorough analysis, making the argument convincing. The detailed explanation of how book banning protects children and respects parents’ rights, along with the discussion of community standards, provides a clear and structured argument that supports the claim effectively.

Student Voice—Text 2: The author argues that book banning in schools and public libraries takes away the right to freedom of speech and access to information. The argument is structured through clear points: the importance of different perspectives, the educational value of challenged books, and the role of books in building empathy. Each point is backed up with examples and evidence.

First, the author says that book banning limits exposure to different perspectives, which are important for intellectual and personal growth. This point is supported by quotes from the National Coalition Against Censorship and the 1982 Supreme Court ruling on Board of Education v. Pico. Justice William Brennan’s statement that removing books from libraries because of disagreement with their ideas violates students’ First Amendment rights strengthens this claim.

Next, the author talks about the educational value of frequently challenged books. Examples like “The Great Gatsby,” “The Catcher in the Rye,” and “To Kill a Mockingbird” show how these books are important for understanding literature and American history. The author mentions that 46 of the Radcliffe Publishing Group’s “Top 100 Novels of the 20th Century” are frequently challenged, showing the importance of these works in education.

The author refines the argument by discussing how books help build empathy and social–emotional development. Studies are cited to show that reading fiction improves social skills and understanding of others. For example, reading “Harry Potter” has been shown to improve attitudes about immigrants, homosexuals, and refugees. The author’s point of view is clearly against book banning, arguing that it limits important freedoms and hinders intellectual and emotional growth. The author uses strategies like citing experts and providing evidence to support this view. The words “infringes” and “limits” emphasize the negative impact of book banning. The tone is critical and persuasive, presenting book banning as harmful and unnecessary.

Overall, the author’s word choice, tone, and style enhance the argument by presenting it as balanced and well-supported. The use of specific examples and evidence helps build a thorough analysis, making the argument convincing. The detailed explanation of how book banning infringes on rights and limits important educational opportunities provides a clear and structured argument that supports the claim effectively.

Item 3 (Student Document, p. 3)

After reading the text, respond to the following question.

Restate the argument you see the text is making and evaluate the reasoning in the text and assess whether the evidence is strong and relevant. Are there any false statements or logical fallacies?

Student Voice—Text 1: The reasoning in the text is mostly valid, as it logically moves from the need for parental control to the types of inappropriate content and the impact of community values. The evidence is relevant, with citations from credible sources like the American Academy of Pediatrics and examples from book challenges. However, the argument could be stronger by addressing the full range of impacts of book banning on intellectual freedom. There are no false statements, but there might be a logical fallacy in assuming that removing books from libraries greatly prevents access. This point is mentioned in the text but could be explained more.

Student Voice—Text 2: The reasoning in the text is valid. It logically progresses from the need for intellectual freedom to the benefits of reading diverse literature. For example, studies showing the positive effects of reading books like the “Harry Potter” series on people’s attitudes toward different groups strengthen the argument. The evidence is relevant and sufficient, with citations from credible sources. Sources like the National Coalition Against Censorship (NCAC) are used to argue that even books some people find “objectionable” can have educational value. There are no false statements or logical fallacies present.

PART 2. Research Across Texts

Part 2 of this performance task outlines the following:

* associated standards that will be assessed
* assessment items
* rubrics that assess each item
* sample student responses

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the related standards, review the student tasks, explore each item’s rubric, and view the sample student responses to sufficiently prepare students to use this performance task to show proficiency in this task. The items for this task cover the *Research Across Texts: Conducting Research and Using Findings in Written Informational and Explanatory Texts* Big Idea.

Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards

Clusters of content standards exist within the Big Ideas allowing the Big Ideas to demonstrate the central concepts and key understandings of the course content. The assessment categories provide the teacher with the key concepts being evaluated in each Big Idea as well as the associated content standards centered within the Big Idea of this task and come from the CaliforniaELA/Literacy and ELD Framework and are aligned to California-adopted ELA and ELD state standards.

Big Idea: Research Across Texts—Conducting Research and Using Findings in Written Informational and Explanatory Texts

Opportunities to engage in research contribute to students’ content knowledge and as research projects expand and become more complex, they contribute to students’ motivation and engagement (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 710). While conducting research, students interpret a range of written, audio, visual, and multimedia sources and communicate about findings. By integrating research findings and understanding various sources, students improve their analytical skills. Students also produce well-structured texts, preparing them for academic and societal participation (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 965).

Related Standards

**Evidence Statement 1:** Students analyze informational texts to determine and summarize central ideas, citing strong evidence for explicit statements and inferences drawn from the text.

* **ELA.RI.9-10.1** Cite strong and thorough textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. (*Item 1*)
* **ELA.RI.9-10.2** Determine a central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by specific details; provide an objective summary of the text. (*Item 1*)
* **ELA.RI.9-10.3** Analyze how the author unfolds an analysis or series of ideas or events, including the order in which the points are made, how they are introduced and developed, and the connections that are drawn between them. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.6a** Explain ideas, phenomena, processes, and relationships within and across texts (for example, compare/contrast, cause/effect, themes, evidence-based argument) based on close reading of a variety of grade-appropriate texts, presented in various print and multimedia formats, using a variety of detailed sentences and a range of general academic and domain-specific words. (*Item 1*)

**Evidence Statement 2:** Students write informative texts that convey complex ideas. They conduct research and synthesize information from multiple sources while using technology and proper citation to present their ideas clearly and accurately.

* **ELA.W.9-10.2.a-f** 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. (*Item 2*)
* **ELA.W.9-10.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. (*Item 2*)
* **ELA.W.9-10.8** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation including footnotes and endnotes. (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.10a.Br** Write longer and more detailed literary and informational texts (for example, an argument about water rights) collaboratively (for example, with peers) and independently using appropriate text organization and register. **ELD.PI.9-10.10b.Br** Write clear and coherent summaries of texts and experiences by using complete and concise sentences and key words (for example, from notes or graphic organizers). (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br (Understanding Text Structure)** Apply analysis of the organizational structure of different text types (for example, how arguments are organized by establishing clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing clear and cohesive arguments, informative/explanatory texts and narratives. (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.2a.Br (Understanding Cohesion)** Apply knowledge of a variety of language resources for referring to make texts more cohesive (for example, using nominalization, paraphrasing, or summaries to reference or recap an idea or explanation provided earlier) to comprehending grade-level texts and to writing clear and cohesive grade-level texts for specific purposes and audiences. (*Item 2*)

Part 2. Directions

Students develop their own research questions about a policy or condition that is of interest to them. Their questions guide the ensuing research to answer these questions leading to informational writing of their research results. Later, students will use their research and skills in analyzing informational and argumentative writing to write their own argument (Part 3) and develop a presentation (Part 4).

Item 1 Directions

Students develop their own questions about a multisided topic or policy to investigate through research. Students write an informational research summary in which they summarize their research and consider how their research addressed their questions, noting any new questions that came up and possible next steps for inquiry.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 4)

Now you will consider a multisided topic or local policy that you are curious about. Maybe you’ve noticed a lot of accidents in an intersection, you and your friends need to walk far to get to the soccer field, or there seems to be a lot of food thrown away at lunchtime. You decide which questions you’d like to answer and then conduct research to answer your own questions. Finally, write an informational research summary. Please consult your teacher for any appropriate resources you may wish to use to complete this task, such as using speech-to-text software. Your summary must address the following components:

* **Introduction and Organization:** Introduce your topic or thesis statement clearly. Organize your ideas and information effectively, using headings, graphics (for example, figures or tables), and multimedia when useful to aid comprehension.
* **Summary of Findings:** What did you learn from your research? Provide a clear and concise summary of your findings, developing your topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
* **New Questions:** What new questions have emerged from your research? Use appropriate and varied transitions to link your major sections, creating cohesion and clarifying relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
* **Sources:** List the sources you used—citing them correctly with footnotes and endnotes—and briefly summarize what you learned from each. Ensure you use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
* **Overall Insights, Style, and Tone:** Describe your overall insights from the research, any new questions you now have, and your next steps related to the multisided topic. Maintain a formal style and objective tone while adhering to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which you are writing.
* **Conclusion:** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation you have presented, articulating the implications or significance of the topic.

Your summary should be clear, coherent, and well-organized, using complete and concise sentences and key words as needed.

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 1

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, pp. 685–686, which outline the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses.The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the Related Standards listed above for evidence statement 2 in the *Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards* section covering standards **ELA.W.9-10.2**.a-f, **ELA.W.9-10.7**, **ELA.W.9-10.8**, **ELD.PI.9-10.10.a-b.Br**, **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br**, and **ELD.PII.9-10.2a.Br** of this performance task.

Rubric for Item 1

| Success criteria | Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Introduction and Organization | The student provides a vague or minimal summary of findings with insufficient or irrelevant facts and details; minimal development of the topic; and a limited understanding of organizational structure. | The student provides a somewhat clear summary of findings with some relevant facts and details; development of the topic lacks depth or completeness; and some understanding of organizational structure. | The student provides a clear and thorough summary of findings with relevant facts and details; and has a well-developed topic and a thorough understanding of organizational structure. |
| Summary of Findings and Development of Topic | The student provides a vague or minimal summary of findings with insufficient or irrelevant facts and details; and minimally develops the topic. | The student provides a somewhat clear summary of findings with some relevant facts and details; their development of the topic lacks depth or completeness. | The student provides a clear summary of findings supported by relevant facts and details that are clear, creative, and fully developed. |
| New Questions and Use of Transitions | The student lists new questions that are vague or unrelated to the research; uses minimal or ineffective transitions; and the ideas and sections are not clearly linked. | The student lists new questions that are somewhat relevant to the research but lack depth; and uses some transitions to link the sections but they may not create full cohesion or clarity. | The student lists new questions that are relevant and thought-provoking; and effectively uses transitions to create a cohesive and clear presentation. |
| Sources and Language Use | The student lists sources with minimal or unclear summaries; does not cite sources; uses imprecise or inappropriate language; and minimally uses domain-specific vocabulary. | The student lists sources with brief but somewhat clear summaries of what was learned; does not cite sources correctly; and uses some precise language and domain-specific vocabulary but not consistently. | The student lists and correctly cites sources with clear and detailed summaries; and uses precise and appropriate language with consistent use of domain-specific vocabulary. |
| Overall Insights, Style, and Tone | The student provides limited or unclear overall insights, new questions, and next steps; uses an inconsistent or informal style and tone; and does not adhere to norms and conventions. | The student provides some overall insights, new questions, and next steps but they may lack depth or clarity; and generally maintains a formal style and objective tone but may have some inconsistencies. | The student provides insightful overall conclusions, new questions, and next steps; and consistently maintains a formal style and objective tone, adhering to norms and conventions. |
| Conclusion | The student provides a minimal or unclear concluding statement; and does not support the information presented. | The student provides a concluding statement that somewhat follows from and supports the information presented. | The student provides a strong and clear concluding statement that effectively supports the information presented. |

Item 2 Directions

Students choose one of their sources from Item 1 to analyze and respond to related questions.

Item 2 (Student Document, p. 6)

Choose one of your sources from Item 1 to analyze and respond to related questions.

* What is the central idea of your chosen text, and how does it emerge, develop, and refine from the beginning to the end? Provide specific details from each part of the text.
* How does the author introduce and arrange the main points in the text, connect different ideas, and use the structure (for example, chronological, cause and effect, problem and solution) to make the argument or narrative more effective? Provide examples from the introduction, transitions between sections, and overall structure.

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 2

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, pp. 672–673 and 681–682, which outline the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses.The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the related standards listed above for evidence statement 1 in the *Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards* section covering standards **ELA.RI.9-10.1**, **ELA.RI.9-10.2**, **ELA.RI.9-10.3**, and **ELD.PI.9-10.6a** of this performance task.

Rubric for Item 2

| Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| --- | --- | --- |
| The student uses minimal or unclear evidence and analysis, with limited inferences and understanding of meanings.  The student’s central idea is vaguely identified with unclear or minimal details on its emergence, development, and refinement.  The student has a limited or unclear description of how the main points are introduced, ordered, and connected; and minimal discussion of the text structure. | The student uses some relevant evidence and analysis, with some clear inferences and understanding of meanings.  The student’s central idea is identified with some clarity, providing some specific details on its emergence, development, and refinement.  The student uses some description of how the main points are introduced, ordered, and connected; and some discussion of how the text structure aids argument or narrative. | The student uses strong, thorough evidence and analysis, clear inferences, and a thorough understanding of explicit/implicit meanings.  The student’s central idea is clearly and accurately identified, providing specific and relevant details on its emergence, development, and refinement.  The student uses a clear and detailed description of how the main points are introduced, ordered, and connected with a thorough discussion of how the text structure enhances the argument or narrative. |

Part 2. Sample Student Responses

The content below provides a sample of proficient responses from a student. The text that leads with “Student Voice” is an example of how a student might respond to each item. This section should only serve as a model—different students will arrive at solutions in different ways.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 4)

Now you will consider a multisided topic or local policy that you are curious about. Maybe you’ve noticed a lot of accidents in an intersection or that you and your friends need to walk far to get to the soccer field or there seems to be a lot of food thrown away at lunchtime. You decide which questions you’d like to answer and then conduct research to answer your own questions. Finally, write an informational research summary. Your summary must address the following components:

* **Introduction and Organization:** Introduce your topic or thesis statement clearly. Organize your ideas and information effectively, using headings, graphics (for example, figures, tables), and multimedia when useful to aid comprehension.
* **Summary of Findings:** What did you learn from your research? Provide a clear and concise summary of your findings, developing your topic with well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other examples appropriate to the audience’s knowledge of the topic.
* **New Questions:** What new questions have emerged from your research? Use appropriate and varied transitions to link your major sections, creating cohesion and clarifying relationships among complex ideas and concepts.
* **Sources:** List the sources, citing them correctly with footnotes and endnotes you used, and briefly summarize what you learned from each. Ensure you use precise language and domain-specific vocabulary to manage the complexity of the topic.
* **Overall Insights, Style, and Tone:** Describe your overall insights from the research, any new questions you now have, and your next steps related to the multisided topic. Maintain a formal style and objective tone while adhering to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which you are writing.
* **Conclusion:** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the information or explanation you have presented, articulating the implications or significance of the topic.

Your summary should be clear, coherent, and well-organized, using complete and concise sentences and key words as needed.

Student Voice: I investigated the issue of car traffic in my neighborhood and used the following six sources for my research.

One source I used was “The Path to Reducing Pedestrian Deaths Is Steep but Straight” by J. Bouie from *The New York Times* (2023, October 21). From this article, I learned pedestrian deaths have increased 77 percent between the years 2010–2021 and probably have continued to increase to today. The author attributes the bigger and heavier trucks and SUVs on the roads as one reason pedestrian deaths are rising. These vehicles have large blind zones so the driver is unable to see pedestrians, needs longer distances to fully stop, and causes more damage when they do hit a pedestrian because of their height. Additionally, the author noted the disparity in pedestrian deaths between more affluent and less affluent neighborhoods. Less affluent neighborhoods have fewer sidewalks, wider roads, and “sparse streetscapes” which encourage speeding. This article pointed out the dangers of walking for pedestrians, which might discourage people from walking by choice. It also provided suggestions of what a city or community could do to make the streets safer for pedestrians, such as reducing traffic speeds, automated traffic cameras, and sidewalks with a barrier between people and cars.

Another valuable source was the article “Want To Live In A Walkable, Bikeable City? Follow These Tips” from *LAist* (2023, November 27). This article pointed out that cars and trucks create air pollution which makes walking and biking better for the climate. The goal of the article is to offer suggestions for changing a community’s perspective on day-to-day transportation to make walking, biking, and mass transit more appealing. I learned that I should first notice how I get around and about the Walkability Audit tool. This article included resources such as America Walks to find others who are working to promote safe walking and biking. Furthermore, the section, “Pay attention to politics,” emphasized the importance of communicating with lawmakers.

The last article led me to the Walk Audit Tool Kit, which offered background information about how neighborhoods and cities have actually been designed for cars instead of people. The toolkit also provided concrete ways to notice traffic and pedestrian patterns in my community, as well as the general titles of lawmakers who can listen and make changes.

Additionally, I learned about America Walks from the *LAist* article. AmericaWalks.org has information about the various issues and concerns for walkable communities. There is information about why cities have prioritized cars over people and links to local efforts to promote safer streets for pedestrians. From this website, I learned that there is currently a bill, SB 961, that would require all new vehicles to alert the driver if they were more than 10 mph over the speed limit. Based on this, I can tell that Californians are working to make streets safer for pedestrians by reducing the speed of traffic. One page on the America Walks website offered different perspectives on why increasing the walkability of a neighborhood is beneficial. The different documents showed how increased walkability could reduce pollution and traffic congestion, improve the local economy, and save individuals time and money.

Another source I used was an article from the magazine Fast Company. This article made me think about how more driving might lead people to want to drive more. I learned that people driving in cars often judge the outside environment worse than walkers of the same environment. The author stated that researchers found a negative judgment only takes 5 seconds, but a positive effect requires at least 20 seconds. This makes me think that when we spend more time in cars, we might have worse feelings about the areas which might make us walk less in our neighborhoods.

The final source I used came from the California Office of Traffic Safety. The information provided by the California Office of Traffic Safety pointed out that California has the most pedestrian deaths on its roads than any other state. The webpage included safety tips for pedestrians as well as for drivers.

As a result of my research, I learned that many factors influence why people rely on cars for traveling short distances, such as convenience, the perception of safety, and the real dangers cars pose to pedestrians. I learned that there are concrete ways that a community might make streets safer for pedestrians, such as barriers between pedestrians and cars and trees to make walking more pleasant. I also learned there are vibrant organizations across California and within my area that are actively working to promote safer streets. Some new questions that emerged from my research include: How can local governments be more effectively encouraged to prioritize pedestrian safety? What role can schools and community groups play in advocating for safer streets? What are the most effective strategies for reducing pedestrian deaths in less affluent neighborhoods?

My next step in exploring this topic further is to use the Walk Audit Took Kit that was linked in the *LAist* article and see if this could become our class project. This tool will help us identify specific areas in our neighborhood that need improvement. Additionally, we can use this information to advocate for changes with local lawmakers and community organizations.

In conclusion, the implications of my research suggest that while individual actions can contribute to safer streets, systemic changes are essential for substantial improvements. By working together as a community and leveraging available resources, we can create safer and more walkable neighborhoods.

Item 2 (Student Document, p. 6)

Choose one of your sources from Item 1 to analyze and respond to related questions.

* What is the central idea of your chosen text, and how does it emerge, develop, and refine from the beginning to the end? Provide specific details from each part of the text.
* How does the author introduce and arrange the main points in the text, connect different ideas, and use the structure (for example, chronological, cause and effect, problem and solution) to make the argument or narrative more effective? Provide examples from the introduction, transitions between sections, and overall structure.

Student Voice: Analysis of How Ideas Unfold and Connect in “Driving Through a Neighborhood Makes You Like It Way Less Than If You Were Walking or Biking

Introduction and Order of Main Points:

The author introduces the main points by starting with a general statement about how the mode of transportation influences perceptions of neighborhoods. The introduction sets the stage with the statement, “The way you get around influences how you perceive your surroundings,” which is followed by a brief overview of the study conducted by Kevin Krizek. This order helps to develop the overall argument by first presenting a broad concept and then narrowing it down to specific research findings, which makes the argument more concrete and relatable for the reader.

Connections Between Points:

The author effectively connects different points throughout the text by using transitions that guide the reader from one idea to the next. For example, after discussing the initial findings of Krizek’s study, the author transitions to the implications of these findings with phrases like “These findings suggest that…” and “Furthermore, urban planners can use this knowledge…” These transitions help to maintain a logical flow and make the connections between the study’s results and their broader implications clear.

Structure of the Text:

The structure of the text is primarily cause and effect, which enhances the effectiveness of the author’s argument. The cause is the mode of transportation (walking, biking, or driving), and the effect is the perception of the neighborhood. By structuring the text this way, the author makes it easy for readers to understand the relationship between transportation modes and neighborhood perceptions. The text also includes elements of problem and solution, especially when discussing how urban planners can address the issue by designing more pedestrian- and bike-friendly neighborhoods. This combination of structures helps reinforce the argument by providing a clear explanation of the issue and potential ways to address it.

In summary, the author introduces and orders the main points in a logical sequence that builds from a general concept to specific research findings. Effective transitions connect the points, and the cause-and-effect structure—along with problem and solution elements—helps to clearly convey the author’s argument and make it more persuasive.

PART 3. Analyzing and Writing Arguments (B)

Part 3 of this performance task outlines the following:

* associated standards that will be assessed
* assessment items
* rubrics that assess each item
* sample student responses

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the related standards, review the student tasks, explore each item’s rubric, and view the sample student responses to sufficiently prepare students to use this performance task to show proficiency in this task. Part 1 and Part 3 together assess the entire *Analyzing and Writing Arguments: Using Knowledge of Rhetoric to Write Arguments and Analyze Arguments from Diverse Perspectives* Big Idea.

Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards

Clusters of content standards exist within the Big Ideas allowing the Big Ideas to demonstrate the central concepts and key understandings of the course content. The assessment categories provide the teacher with the key concepts being evaluated in each Big Idea as well as the associated content standards centered within the Big Idea of this task and come from the California ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework and are aligned to California-adopted ELA and ELD state standards.

Big Idea: Analyzing and Writing Arguments—Using Knowledge of Rhetoric to Write Arguments and Analyze Arguments from Diverse Perspectives

Students will critically analyze diverse perspectives and craft well-reasoned arguments. The California ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework highlights the importance of these skills, noting that students must go beyond understanding texts to analyze their composition and craft their own convincing arguments (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 672). When students develop rhetorical knowledge, this enables them to understand the impact of authors’ choices, grasp the role of audience, purpose, and context, and apply that rhetorical knowledge in their own writing. (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 689). Students understand the power of language and persuasive communication which enhances their world understanding and prepares them for effective participation in society. Please note that in Part 1 of this performance task, students analyzed arguments. In this part, Part 3, students will write an argument.

Related Standards

**Evidence Statement 3:** Students construct well-reasoned arguments in writing, incorporating clear claims, relevant evidence, and counterarguments while maintaining a formal style and structure that facilitates clear communication.[[5]](#footnote-6)

* **ELA.W.9-10.1** Write arguments to support claims in an analysis of substantive topics or texts, using valid reasoning and relevant and sufficient evidence. (*Item 1*)
  + **ELA.W.9-10.1a** Introduce precise claims, distinguish the claims from alternate or opposing claims, and create an organization that establishes clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
  + **ELA.W.9-10.1b** Develop claims and counterclaims fairly, supplying evidence for each while pointing out the strengths and limitations of both in a manner that anticipates the audience’s knowledge level and concerns.
  + **ELA.W.9-10.1c** Use words, phrases, and clauses to link the major sections of the text, create cohesion, and clarify the relationships between claims and reasons, between reasons and evidence, and between claims and counterclaims.
  + **ELA.W.9-10.1d** Establish and maintain a formal style and objective tone while attending to the norms and conventions of the discipline in which they are writing.
  + **ELA.W.9-10.1e** Provide a concluding statement or section that follows from and supports the argument presented.
* **ELA.L.9-10.1** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (*Item 1*)
  + **ELA.L.9-10.1a** Use parallel structure.
  + **ELA.L.9-10.1b** Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.
* **ELA.L.9-10.3** 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. (*Item 1*)
* **ELA.L.9-10.6** Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.4.Br (Adapting Language Choices)** Adjust language choices according to the task (for example, group presentation of research project), context, (for example, classroom, community), purpose (for example, to persuade, to provide arguments or counterarguments), and audience (for example, peers, teachers, college recruiter). (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.11a.Br (Justifying/Arguing)** Justify opinions or persuade others by making connections and distinctions between ideas and texts and articulating sufficient, detailed, and relevant textual evidence or background knowledge, using appropriate register. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br (Understanding Text Structure)** Apply analysis of the organizational structure of different text types (for example, how arguments are organized by establishing clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing clear and cohesive arguments, informative/explanatory texts and narratives. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.2a.Br (Understanding Cohesion)** Apply knowledge of a variety of language resources for referring to make texts more cohesive (for example, using nominalization, paraphrasing, or summaries to reference or recap an idea or explanation provided earlier) to comprehending grade-level texts and to writing clear and cohesive grade-level texts for specific purposes and audiences. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.6.Br (Connecting Ideas)** Combine clauses in a variety of ways to create compound and complex sentences that make connections between and link concrete and abstract ideas, for example, to make a concession (for example, While both characters strive for success, they each take different approaches through which to reach their goals.), or to establish cause (for example, Women’s lives were changed forever after World War II as a result of joining the workforce). (*Item 1*)

**Evidence Statement 4:** Students apply their understanding of language to both comprehend text and to effectively choose language for its intended impact in various contexts.

* **ELA.L.9-10.3** 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. (*Item 1*)
* **ELA.L.9-10.1** Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. (*Item 1*)
  + **ELA.L.9-10.1a** Use parallel structure.
  + **ELA.L.9-10.1b** Use various types of phrases (noun, verb, adjectival, adverbial, participial, prepositional, absolute) and clauses (independent, dependent; noun, relative, adverbial) to convey specific meanings and add variety and interest to writing or presentations.
* **ELA.L.9-10.6** Acquire and use accurately general academic and domain-specific words and phrases, sufficient for reading, writing, speaking, and listening at the college and career readiness level; demonstrate independence in gathering vocabulary knowledge when considering a word or phrase important to comprehension or expression. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.4 (Adapting Language Choices)** Adjust language choices according to the task (for example, group presentation of research project), context, (for example, classroom, community), purpose (for example, to persuade, to provide arguments or counterarguments), and audience (for example, peers, teachers, college recruiter). (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.12a.Br (Selecting Language Resources)** Use a variety of grade-appropriate general academic words (for example, anticipate, transaction) and domain-specific words and phrases (for example, characterization, photosynthesis, society, quadratic functions), including persuasive language, accurately and appropriately when producing complex written and spoken texts. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br (Understanding Text Structure)** Apply analysis of the organizational structure of different text types (for example, how arguments are organized by establishing clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing clear and cohesive arguments, informative/explanatory texts and narratives. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.2a.Br (Understanding Cohesion)** Apply knowledge of a variety of language resources for referring to make texts more cohesive (for example, using nominalization, paraphrasing, or summaries to reference or recap an idea or explanation provided earlier) to comprehending grade-level texts and to writing clear and cohesive grade-level texts for specific purposes and audiences. (*Item 1*)

Part 3. Directions

Students apply their research about the multisided topic of their choice and argue about a related position.

Item 1 Directions

Part 3 has one item which is the written argument. All the previous parts of the performance task have been leading up to this final application. In Part 1 of this performance task, students analyzed arguments. In Part 2, they conducted research on the argument they chose. Now, in Part 3, students take a position about the topic they researched and write an argument based on the task guidelines. Because this item centers on the skill of writing, all alternative means of expression must also ultimately produce written text as well. For more on potential alternative means of expression for this item please refer to the “Potential Alternative Means of Expression” section of this document.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 7)

Using the research you have already conducted on your chosen multisided topic, you will now write a well-reasoned argumentative essay. Your essay should incorporate clear claims, relevant evidence, and counterarguments while maintaining a formal style and structure that facilitates clear communication. Your task is to take a stance on the issue and construct a compelling argument in its favor. Follow the guidelines to structure your essay effectively.

* **Claim:** Clearly state a precise, knowledgeable claim: Ensure your main point (thesis) is clear, compelling, and sets the direction for your argument.
* **Development:** Develop claims and counterclaims thoroughly: Provide strong, relevant, and sufficient evidence to support your claims. Acknowledge and refute counterclaims effectively.
* **Organization:** Use clear and logical organization with appropriate transitions: Ensure your argument flows smoothly with a clear progression of ideas. Structure sections and paragraphs cohesively.
* **Style and Tone:** Maintain a formal style and objective tone appropriate for the audience and purpose.
* **Grammar and Usage:** Demonstrate command of standard English grammar and usage: Use parallel structure and a variety of phrases and clauses effectively. Accurately use general academic and domain-specific vocabulary.
* **Conclusion:** Provide a strong and effective conclusion: Ensure your conclusion follows from and supports your argument. Synthesize the main points and reinforce your thesis.

Following these guidelines will ensure that you demonstrate your ability to write detailed and compelling arguments effectively.

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 1

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, pp. 685–686, which outline the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses. The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the related standards listed above for evidence statements 3 and 4 in the *Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards* section covering standards **ELA.W.9-10.1a-e**, **ELA.L.9-10.1a-b**, **ELA.L.9-10.3**, **ELA.L.9-10.6**, **ELD.PI.9-10.4.Br** **ELD.PI.9-10.11a.Br**, **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br**, **ELD.PII.9-10.2a.Br**, **ELD.PII.9-10.6.Br**, and **ELD.PI.9-10.12a.Br** of this performance task.

Rubric for Item 1

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Success criteria | Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| Claim and Thesis | The student states a claim but it is unclear, vague, or not well-defined; and the thesis is weak or missing. | The student states a claim that is clear but may lack precision or depth, and the thesis is present but may not be as compelling or well-developed. | The student clearly states a precise, knowledgeable claim; and the thesis is compelling, clearly articulated, and sets the direction for the argument. |
| Development of Claims and Counterclaims | The student develops claims and counterclaims minimally or with irrelevant evidence; the evidence is insufficient or poorly organized; and counterclaims are acknowledged but not effectively refuted. | The student develops claims and counterclaims with some relevant evidence but may not be thorough; the evidence supports the argument but may lack depth or clarity; and the student acknowledges counterclaims but the refutation may be weak or unclear. | The student develops claims and counterclaims thoroughly, using relevant and sufficient evidence; the evidence is logically organized and clearly supports the argument; and the student acknowledges and refutes the counterclaims effectively. |
| Organization and Cohesion | The student uses weak or unclear organization; the argument lacks a clear progression of ideas; and sections and paragraphs are poorly structured and lack cohesion. | The student uses organization that is mostly logical but may lack clarity or smooth transitions; the argument is generally clear but may have some gaps in the progression of ideas; and sections and paragraphs are structured but may lack full cohesion. | The student uses clear and logical organization with appropriate transitions; the argument flows smoothly with a clear progression of ideas; and sections and paragraphs are well-structured and cohesive. |

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Success criteria | | Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| Style and Tone | The student fails to maintain a formal style or objective tone; uses language that is too informal or imprecise; and demonstrates limited control of conventions and vocabulary. | The student maintains a mostly formal style and tone but may have lapses; uses appropriate language but may lack variety or precision; and demonstrates some control of conventions and vocabulary. | The student maintains a formal style and objective tone appropriate for the audience and purpose; uses varied and precise language; and demonstrates control of conventions and vocabulary. |
| Language Usage | The student has a limited command of standard English grammar and usage; little to no use of parallel structure or varied phrases and clauses; and vocabulary use is often inaccurate or simplistic. | The student demonstrates some command of standard English grammar and usage; attempts parallel structure and varied phrases and clauses but with errors; and uses appropriate vocabulary with occasional inaccuracies. | The student demonstrates command of standard English grammar and usage; uses parallel structure and a variety of phrases and clauses effectively; and accurately uses general academic and domain-specific vocabulary. |
| Conclusion | The student provides a weak or missing conclusion; and fails to effectively summarize or reinforce the main points and thesis. | The student provides a conclusion that follows from the argument but may be weak or underdeveloped and summarizes the main points but may not effectively reinforce the thesis. | The student provides a strong and effective conclusion that follows from and supports the argument, synthesizes the main points, and reinforces the thesis. |

Part 3. Sample Student Response

The content below provides a sample of proficient responses from a student. The text that leads with “Student Voice” is an example of how a student might respond to each item. This section should only serve as a model—different students will arrive at solutions in different ways.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 7)

Using the research you have already conducted on your chosen multisided topic, you will now write a well-reasoned argumentative essay. Your essay should incorporate clear claims, relevant evidence, and counterarguments while maintaining a formal style and structure that facilitates clear communication. Your task is to take a stance on the issue and construct a compelling argument in its favor. Follow the guidelines to structure your essay effectively.

* **Claim:** Clearly state a precise, knowledgeable claim: Ensure your main point (thesis) is clear, compelling, and sets the direction for your argument.
* **Development:** Develop claims and counterclaims thoroughly: Provide strong, relevant, and sufficient evidence to support your claims. Acknowledge and refute counterclaims effectively.
* **Organization:** Use clear and logical organization with appropriate transitions: Ensure your argument flows smoothly with a clear progression of ideas. Structure sections and paragraphs cohesively.
* **Style and Tone:** Maintain a formal style and objective tone appropriate for the audience and purpose.
* **Grammar and Usage:** Demonstrate command of standard English grammar and usage: Use parallel structure and a variety of phrases and clauses effectively. Accurately use general academic and domain-specific vocabulary.
* **Conclusion:** Provide a strong and effective conclusion: Ensure your conclusion follows from and supports your argument. Synthesize the main points and reinforce your thesis.

Following these guidelines will ensure that you demonstrate your ability to write detailed and compelling arguments effectively.

Student Voice: We Must Improve Pedestrian Safety in Our City

In our neighborhood, driving appears to be the default mode of transportation even for short-distance trips. This preference raises important questions about the design of our community and its impact on pedestrian safety. My research aimed to uncover the reasons behind this trend and explore how our neighborhood could be made more pedestrian-friendly. Using sources such as “Want To Live In A Walkable, Bikeable City? Follow These Tips” from *LAist* and the “Walk Audit Tool Kit” from AARP, I discovered that convenience, appeal, and safety significantly influence people’s reliance on cars. Therefore, I argue that our city must enhance pedestrian safety by adding barriers, such as hedges, between sidewalks and traffic.

To begin with, convenience plays a crucial role in people’s decision to drive rather than walk. Driving is often seen as more practical when individuals need to transport items, stop at multiple locations, or travel in groups. Although these conveniences are valid, they should not overshadow the need for safer walking conditions. By creating a more pedestrian-friendly environment, we can encourage walking for short trips, reducing traffic congestion, and promoting a healthier lifestyle.

Furthermore, the appeal of driving over walking is deeply ingrained in our societal norms. Many people find comfort in the security of their vehicles, particularly when walking feels unsafe or unusual. In areas where pedestrian activity is rare, the sight of empty sidewalks flanked by busy roads can be intimidating. Enhancing the visual and physical appeal of walking routes through the addition of green barriers can make walking a more attractive option. These barriers not only beautify the environment but also provide a sense of safety and separation from vehicular traffic (AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit).

Safety, perhaps the most critical factor, has a substantial impact on walking habits. Alarming statistics reveal that pedestrian deaths increased by 77 percent from 2010 to 2021, largely due to the rise of heavier and taller vehicles like SUVs and the prevalence of large, multi-lane intersections (*LAist*, 2023). These factors create hazardous conditions for pedestrians, especially at intersections where visibility is limited and crossing times are short for some people. Implementing barriers such as hedges can protect pedestrians by providing a buffer zone between sidewalks and traffic. Additionally, features like pedestrian islands can break up crossing distances and allow individuals to navigate one direction of traffic at a time, significantly enhancing safety (AARP Walk Audit Tool Kit).

Critics might argue that implementing such measures is costly and could disrupt traffic flow. However, the benefits far outweigh the drawbacks. Improved pedestrian infrastructure can lead to reduced traffic congestion, lower accident rates, and a healthier population. Increased walkability can also reduce pollution, save individuals time and money, and boost the local economy, as highlighted by resources on the America Walks website (America Walks). Cities across California and organizations like Walk America are already demonstrating the success of such initiatives. By prioritizing pedestrian safety, we can create a more inclusive and vibrant community.

In conclusion, our city must take decisive action to improve pedestrian safety by adding barriers such as hedges between sidewalks and traffic. This measure addresses the issues of convenience, appeal, and safety that currently deter people from walking. By making these changes, we can encourage more residents to opt for walking over driving, fostering a safer, healthier, and more connected community. It is time for our city to prioritize pedestrians and transform our neighborhood into a model of walkability and safety.

PART 4. Informative Oral Presentations

Part 4 of this performance task outlines the following:

* associated standards that will be assessed
* assessment items
* rubrics that assess each item
* sample student responses

Teachers should familiarize themselves with the related standards, review the student tasks, explore each item’s rubric, and view the sample student responses to sufficiently prepare students to use this performance task to show proficiency in this task. The items for this part of the performance task cover all requirements for the *Informative Oral Presentations: Planning and Delivering Oral Presentations Conveying Information from Credible Sources* Big Idea.

Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards

Clusters of content standards exist within the Big Ideas allowing the Big Ideas to demonstrate the central concepts and key understandings of the course content. The assessment categories provide the teacher with the key concepts being evaluated in each Big Idea as well as the associated content standards centered within the Big Idea of this task and come from the California ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework and are aligned to California-adopted ELA and ELD state standards.

Big Idea: Informative Oral Presentations—Planning and Delivering Oral Presentations Conveying Information from Credible Sources

Students will develop and deliver increasingly sophisticated presentations on complex and varied topics with attention to meaning and forms of language, (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 694). These presentations convey information from credible sources in a way that is clear, logical, and mindful of the audience. (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 732). Students express their understanding and thinking in a variety of ways, which are both the products of students’ learning and the ways in which they learn. They continue to adapt their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating their command of English, (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 694).

Related Standards

**Evidence Statement 1:** Students will selectively include information from sources, evaluate each source’s usefulness, integrate information smoothly, and cite sources accurately.

* **ELA.W.9-10.8** Gather relevant information from multiple authoritative print and digital sources, using advanced searches effectively; assess the usefulness of each source in answering the research question; integrate information into the text selectively to maintain the flow of ideas, avoiding plagiarism and following a standard format for citation including footnotes and endnotes[[6]](#footnote-7).
* **ELA.W.9-10.7** Conduct short as well as more sustained research projects to answer a question (including a self-generated question) or solve a problem; narrow or broaden the inquiry when appropriate; synthesize multiple sources on the subject, demonstrating understanding of the subject under investigation. (Assessed in Part 3 of the Performance Task)
* **ELA.W.9-10.2** 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. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.6.Br (Connecting Ideas)** Combine clauses in a variety of ways to create compound and complex sentences that make connections between and link concrete and abstract ideas, for example, to make a concession (for example, While both characters strive for success, they each take different approaches through which to reach their goals), or to establish cause (for example, Women’s lives were changed forever after World War II as a result of joining the workforce). (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.7.Br (Condensing Ideas)** Condense ideas in a variety of ways (for example, through a variety of embedded clauses, or by compounding verbs or prepositional phrases, nominalization) to create precise simple, compound, and complex sentences that condense concrete and abstract ideas … (*Item 2*)

**Evidence Statement 2:** Students will deliver clear, concise, and logical presentations with appropriate non-verbal cues and organized content that aligns with the presentation’s purpose, audience, and task.

* **ELA.SL.9-10.4** Present information, findings, and supporting evidence clearly, concisely, and logically (using appropriate eye contact, adequate volume, and clear pronunciation) such that listeners can follow the line of reasoning and the organization, development, substance, and style are appropriate to purpose (for example, argument, narrative, informative, response to literature presentations), audience, and task. (*Item 2*)
* **ELA.SL.9-10.5** Make strategic use of digital media (for example, textual, graphic, audio, visual, and interactive elements) in presentations to enhance understanding of findings, reasoning, and evidence and to add interest. (*Item 2*)
* **ELA.SL.9-10.6** Adapt speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating command of formal English when indicated or appropriate. (See grades 9–10 language standards 1 and 3 for specific expectations.) (*Item 2*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.4.Br (Adapting Language Choices)** Adjust language choices according to the task(for example, group presentation of research projects), context (for example, classroom, community), purpose (for example, to persuade, to provide arguments or counterarguments), and audience (for example, peers, teachers, college recruiter). (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PI.9-10.9.Br (Presenting)** Plan and deliver a variety of oral presentations and reports on grade-appropriate topics that express complex and abstract ideas well supported by evidence and sound reasoning, and are delivered using an appropriate level of formality and understanding of register. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br (Understanding Text Structure)** Apply analysis of the organizational structure of different text types (for example, how arguments are organized by establishing clear relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence) to comprehending texts and to writing clear and cohesive arguments, informative/explanatory texts and narratives. (*Item 1*)
* **ELD.PII.9-10.2a.Br (Understanding Cohesion)** Apply knowledge of a variety of language resources for referring to make texts more cohesive (for example, using nominalization, paraphrasing, or summaries to reference or recap an idea or explanation provided earlier) to comprehending grade-level texts and to writing clear and cohesive grade-level texts for specific purposes and audiences. (*Item 2*)

Part 4. Directions

In Part 4, students use their research and summaries to create a plan to present their findings. Students have multiple mediums they can use to deliver their presentations. The primary focus of this Big Idea is for students to conduct their own research, create a clear plan for communicating their research, and carry out their plan effectively.

Item 1 Directions

Using the research they have already conducted on their chosen multisided topic, students create a presentation plan and design or select digital media such as text, graphics, audio, visual, or interactive elements to enhance their presentation.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 9)

Using research you have already conducted on a chosen topic, create a presentation plan and design or select digital media such as text, graphics, audio, visual, or interactive elements to enhance your presentation.

* **Remember that your response must include**
  + the central message of your presentation,
  + the sources you are using to reinforce your messages, and
  + a clear design of the messages and presentation tools you will be using.

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 1

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, pp. 685–686 and p. 694, which outline the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses. The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the related standards listed above for evidence statements 1 and 2 in the Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards section covering standards ELA.W.9-10.2, ELD.PI.9-10.4.Br, and ELD.PII.9-10.1.Br of this performance task.[[7]](#footnote-8)

Rubric for Item 1

| Criteria | Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Purpose and Coherence | The student’s presentation plan lacks a clear purpose or claims. The organization and ideas are underdeveloped or unclear. | The student’s presentation plan has a vague purpose or claims and some organization and coherence, and ideas are developed but may lack depth or clarity. | The student’s presentation plan is well-organized, goal-oriented, and coherent; the purpose or claims are clear; and the ideas are thoroughly developed, clear, and accurately convey complex information. |
| Sources | The student’s information is inaccurate or unclear, lacks evidence and analysis, and has no tie to the presentation’s purpose. | The student’s information is mostly accurate and clear; includes some evidence and analysis; and is loosely tied to the purpose. | The student’s information is accurate, clear, and detailed; it includes strong evidence across an array of insightful analyses; and supports the stated purpose. |
| Presentation Design | The student uses minimal, unclear, or unrelated non-verbal cues to the presentation content; and does not integrate them effectively. | The student’s non-verbal cues are present and related to the presentation content but may lack clarity or full integration. | The student’s non-verbal cues are clear, well-designed, and seamlessly integrated; they significantly enhance the presentation and understanding. |

Item 2 Directions

After creating a presentation plan to share their research findings, students will deliver their presentations to their peers. This can be delivered via video or live to a small or larger group of students. This item measures the delivery of the student’s presentation.

Item 2 (Student Document, p. 10)

Deliver your speech clearly and confidently. You will be presenting your research findings to an audience of your peers. Ensure your presentation and delivery is clear, concise, and logical. You will have a predetermined amount of time to deliver your presentation and your supporting visuals. You may create a video of your presentation or present it live to an audience.

* **Remember that your response must include**
  + a clear purpose, claim, or central message;
  + content-specific language; and
  + a coherent flow with language supporting clear transitions and sentence structure.

A Rubric for Assessing a Response to Item 2

The points below are derived from standards contained in the ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. 694, which outlines the guidelines for grade nine ELA/Literacy and ELD courses.The following success criteria are used to assess proficiency in the performance task according to the related standards listed above for evidence statement 2 in the *Task Alignment to Key Elements of Big Ideas and Standards* section covering standards **ELA.SL.9-10.4**, **ELA.SL.9-10.5**, **ELA.SL.9-10.6**, **ELD.PI.9-10.9.Br**, and **ELD.PII.9-10.2a.Br**, of this performance task.

Rubric for Item 2

| Success Criteria | Attempted | Approaching | Proficient |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Presentation Organization and Delivery | The student’s presentation lacks clarity or logical organization, and the student’s delivery is inadequate in eye contact, volume, or pronunciation.  The student minimally adapts their speech to the context and task and has a limited command of formal English when required. | The student’s presentation is generally clear and logical but may have minor issues with organization or delivery (eye contact, volume, and pronunciation).  The student adapts their speech to the context and task but may lack consistency or full command of formal English when required. | The student’s presentation is clear, concise, and logical, with appropriate eye contact, volume, and pronunciation, making it easy for listeners to follow.  The student effectively adapts their speech to a variety of contexts and tasks, demonstrating a strong command of formal English when appropriate. |
| Organization of Evidence | The student’s presentation lacks a clear delivery of ideas and supporting evidence with minimal expression of complex ideas. | The student’s presentation delivers ideas and supporting evidence but may lack clarity in some parts with some expression of complex ideas. | The student presents ideas and supporting evidence clearly and concisely, effectively expressing complex ideas that are easy to follow. |
| Presentation Design | The student’s non-verbal cues are minimal, unclear, or unrelated to the presentation content and not integrated effectively. | The student’s non-verbal cues are present and related to the presentation content but may lack clarity or full integration. | The student’s non-verbal cues are clear, well-designed, and seamlessly integrated, which significantly enhances the presentation and understanding. |
| Sentence Structure and Cohesion | The student uses limited cohesive devices and language resources to connect ideas.  The student has a limited variety in sentence structures with minimal connection between ideas. | The student uses some cohesive devices and language resources to connect ideas but may lack consistency.  The student has some variety in sentence structures and attempts to connect ideas but may lack coherence. | The student has skillful use of cohesive devices and language resources, making the presentation clear and cohesive.  The student uses varied and precise sentence structures that effectively connect and condense ideas. |

Part 4. Sample Student Responses

The content below provides a sample of proficient responses from a student. The text that leads with “Student Voice” is an example of how a student might respond to each item. This section should only serve as a model—different students will arrive at solutions in different ways.

Item 1 (Student Document, p. 9)

Using research you have already conducted on a chosen topic, create a presentation plan and design or select digital media such as text, graphics, audio, visual, or interactive elements to enhance your presentation.

* **Remember that your response must include**
  + The central message of your presentation
  + The sources you are using to reinforce your messages
  + A clear design for the messages and presentation tools you will be using

**Context on Student Response:** The student response below was designed to be an example of a student**-**created presentation plan. It is important to remember that there will be many strategies students might deploy when creating a presentation; if their plan meets the criteria defined with the Item1 rubric, it should be considered a viable proficient response.

Student Voice:

Presentation Purpose: Describe research I conducted to better understand why people in our community choose to drive instead of walking for short-distance trips.

Duration of Presentation: 5 minutes

Sources:

AARP. 2024. “Walk Audit Tool Kit.” Accessed July 16, 2024. <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit-download/>.

America Walks. 2024. “Benefits of Walkability.” Accessed July 16, 2024. <https://americawalks.org/resources/benefits-of-walkability/>.

*LAist*. 2023. “Want To Live In A Walkable, Bikeable City? Follow These Tips.”

Presentation Design: Poster Session—I will create a poster that helps my audience visualize the key points of my presentation. Below are the key talking points I provide for each area of the poster. I will gesture to each of these areas when speaking and use my voice to describe each talking point. The notes below are not a word-for-word script—some of my peers used this strategy but it was not my preference. Figure 1 below shows the poster I am using as my non-verbal cue for my listeners.

* Star 1: Title of the Poster—Why do people choose to drive instead of walking for short-distance trips? Describe my reasoning for choosing and researching this topic. I live in an urban area that is friendly to walkers but I still notice many of my friends and family driving.
* Star 2: Research—Describe the two sources I chose to help me better understand my research question. *LAist*. 2023. “Want To Live In A Walkable, Bikeable City? Follow These Tips” and AARP. 2024. “Walk Audit Tool Kit.” Accessed July 16, 2024. <https://www.aarp.org/livable-communities/getting-around/aarp-walk-audit-tool-kit-download/> and <https://americawalks.org/>.
* Star 3: Learning 1 – Convenience—People like the convenience of being able to go to multiple geographic locations, groups like going together, and not having to worry about walking pace.
* Star 4: Learning 2 – Appeal—Cultural norms in communities may lean toward driving because it is so common. People at times forget that walking is an option for some venues.
* Star 5: Learning 3 – Safety—Crossing the street, walking alone and feeling exposed, and so many cars on the street could all be contributing factors preventing those in my community from seeing walking as an option.
* Star 6: Potential Solution and My Next Steps—AARP provides several examples of ways streets could be made safer for pedestrians and therefore more friendly for walkers. Options: Creating barriers between cars and people, unique versions of a crosswalk, and other road designs support an increased likelihood of walking. My next steps: I am going to talk to my friends and family about my learnings and lead the charge to go on more walks in my community.

Figure 1. Sample Student-Generated Presentation Poster



Item 2 (Student Document, p. 10)

Deliver your speech clearly and confidently. You will be presenting to an audience of your peers to share your research findings. Ensure your presentation and delivery is clear, concise, and logical. You will have a predetermined amount of time to deliver your presentation and your supporting visuals. You may create a video of your presentation or present it live to a small or large audience.

* **Remember that your response must include**
  + A clear purpose, claim, or central message
  + Content-specific language
  + A coherent flow with language supporting clear transitions and sentence structure

Student Voice: (students deliver the speech from Item 1)

Hello. The purpose of this presentation is to describe research I conducted to better understand why people choose to drive instead of walking for short-distance trips. Some of my research questions were, “Why is my neighborhood more friendly to cars than to people? What would make my neighborhood safer for pedestrians? Would better walking conditions lead to more people walking for short distances, like school, than using their cars?” I chose this topic because I would like to better understand why people often choose to drive instead of walk. In my neighborhood, we have a lot of easily accessible shops and grocery stores but I notice my friends and family in my community still often choose to drive.

To answer my research questions, I used several sources including “Want To Live In A Walkable, Bikeable City? Follow These Tips” (*LAist*, 2023) and the “Walk Audit Tool Kit.” As a result of my research, I learned that many factors influence why people rely on cars for traveling short distances such as convenience, appeal, and safety. To communicate what I learned, I created this poster to help you visualize the key points in this presentation.

Convenience: Driving can be more convenient when someone wants to buy or move items or plans to stop at several locations. Driving can also be more convenient if a group of people needs to go somewhere. Everyone can arrive at the same time and the group doesn’t have to worry about different people’s walking pace.

Appeal: Driving seems to be the default way of getting around and it seems odd to walk. In fact, there are some places where it is rare to see people walking for transportation. There is the appeal of being alone and secure in one’s own car and the lack of appeal of walking alone on barren sidewalks in the middle of many busy lanes of zooming cars.

Safety: Pedestrian safety seems so simple and yet has many contributing factors. I learned pedestrian deaths have increased by 77 percent between the years 2010 and 2021 and probably have continued to increase today. Heavier and taller vehicles, such as SUVs, are contributing to dangers for pedestrians, and large multi-lane intersections also greatly impact safety. In this section of my poster, I printed a photo of an intersection only a mile away from our school. It is difficult for a car on the far-right side of the street to see a pedestrian who is crossing from the other side. Also, for pedestrians who may move more slowly, it would be difficult to cross four to six lanes before the light changes.

Considering the safety concerns for pedestrians, the resource AARP describes how streets could be designed to prioritize pedestrian safety. Pedestrians could have barriers such as parkways and bicycle lanes to protect them from cars. Also, “pedestrian islands” break up the distance for the person crossing the street and allow the person crossing to focus on one direction of traffic at a time. I also learned there are vibrant organizations across California and within my area that are actively working to promote safer streets such as Walk America.

Appendix A—Mentor Text 1 for Student Responses   
to Part 1

Pro: Book Banning Protects Children and Society

Book banning in schools and public libraries is a necessary measure to protect children from exposure to inappropriate material and respect parents’ rights to decide what their children read. Book bans help guide young people toward appropriate content while still allowing the availability of such books through other means.[[8]](#footnote-9)

Parents have the right to decide what material their children are exposed to and when. Having books with adult topics available in libraries limits parents’ ability to control their children’s reading material. For instance, Speak up for Standards, a group seeking age-appropriate reading materials for students in Dallas, TX, pointed out that “Literary works containing explicit [scenes, as well as] vulgar and obscene language” were on the approved reading list for grades 7–12 (ProCon.org). If books with inappropriate material are readily accessible, children might encounter content their parents disapprove of before parents even realize what their children are reading. As writer Macey France stated, “Opting your child out of reading [a certain] book doesn’t protect him or her. They are still surrounded by the other students who are going to be saturated with this book” (France 2018). According to a study by the American Academy of Pediatrics, early exposure to explicit content can influence the psychological development of children, often leading to premature engagement in adult behaviors (AAP 2016).

Children should not be exposed to sex, violence, drug use, or other inappropriate topics in school or public libraries. The young adult genre often includes adult themes that young people are not yet ready to handle. The American Academy of Pediatrics found that exposure to violence in media can make kids act aggressively and desensitize them to violence (AAP 2016). As Kim Heinecke, a mother of four, emphasized, “It is not a matter of ‘sheltering’ kids. It is a matter of guiding them toward what is best. We are the adults. It is our job to protect them—no matter how unpopular that may seem” (White 2016).

Keeping books with inappropriate content out of libraries protects kids but does not prevent people from reading those books or authors from writing them. Peter Sprigg of the Family Research Council noted that removing certain books from libraries is about showing discretion and respecting community values, without stopping anyone from obtaining those books elsewhere. He stated, “It’s an exaggeration to refer to this as book banning. There is nothing preventing books from being written or sold, nothing to prevent parents from buying it or children from reading it” (Rohrer 2010). Mark Hemingway, a writer and school board member, argued that deciding not to use public funds to disseminate certain books is a responsible choice rather than censorship, similar to not offering highly controversial books like “Protocols of the Elders of Zion” in public libraries (Hemingway 2014). The American Library Association notes that book challenges are often about community standards and parental guidance rather than outright censorship (ALA 2021).

Critics of book banning argue that it infringes on freedom of speech and access to information, preventing individuals from being exposed to diverse perspectives and ideas essential for intellectual and personal growth. They believe that book banning leads to a homogenized society where controversial or challenging viewpoints are suppressed. However, this perspective overlooks the primary concern of protecting young readers from inappropriate content and respecting community values. Moreover, the availability of these books through other channels ensures that access is not entirely restricted.

In conclusion, book banning in schools and public libraries is a necessary and responsible measure to protect children from inappropriate content and uphold community values. It respects parents’ rights to guide their children’s reading while ensuring that young people are exposed to age-appropriate material. Removing certain books from libraries does not prevent access to these books but ensures that public resources are used responsibly.

Appendix B—Mentor Text 2 for Student Responses   
to Part 1

Con: Book Banning Infringes on Freedom of Speech and Access to Information

Book banning in schools and public libraries infringes on the fundamental rights of freedom of speech and access to information. It prevents individuals from being exposed to diverse perspectives and ideas, which are essential for intellectual and personal growth. Rather than protecting children, book bans limit their understanding of the world and their place in it.[[9]](#footnote-10)

Parents may control what their own children read, but they do not have the right to restrict what books are available to other people. Parents who object to specific books can opt their children out of assignments without infringing on the rights of others. The National Coalition Against Censorship (2016) explains, “Even books or materials that many find ‘objectionable’ may have educational value, and the decision about what to use in the classroom should be based on professional judgments and standards, not individual preferences.” In the 1982 Supreme Court ruling on Board of Education v. Pico, Justice William Brennan wrote that removing books from library shelves could violate students’ First Amendment rights, adding, “Local school boards may not remove books from school libraries simply because they dislike the ideas contained in those books” (U.S. Supreme Court 1982).

Many frequently challenged books help people gain a better understanding of the world and their place in it. Books like *The Great Gatsby* by F. Scott Fitzgerald, *The Catcher in the Rye* by J.D. Salinger, and *To Kill a Mockingbird* by Harper Lee have long been considered essential reading for understanding literature and American history, yet they are frequently challenged. Banning these books would deprive students of essential cultural and historical knowledge, as well as differing points of view. In fact, 46 of the Radcliffe Publishing Group’s “Top 100 Novels of the 20th Century” are frequently challenged, highlighting the importance of these works in education.

Books serve as portals to different life experiences, fostering empathy and social–emotional development. One study found that reading J.K. Rowling’s *Harry Potter* series, which is frequently challenged for religious concerns about witchcraft, “improved attitudes” about immigrants, homosexuals, and refugees (Vezzali et al. 2014). Another study discovered that reading narrative fiction helps readers understand their peers and raises social abilities (Kidd et al. 2013). A study published in *Basic and Applied Social Psychology* found that people who read a story about a Muslim woman were less likely to make broad judgments based on race (Johnson, Huffman, and Jasper 2014). Proponents of book banning argue that it is necessary to protect children from harmful content and uphold community values. They believe that certain books contain inappropriate material that can negatively influence young readers. However, this argument fails to recognize that shielding children from diverse perspectives can hinder their intellectual and emotional development. Instead of banning books, providing guidance and open discussions about challenging content can better prepare children for the complexities of the world.

In conclusion, book banning in schools and public libraries infringes on freedom of speech and access to information, limiting exposure to diverse perspectives and essential knowledge. Books play a crucial role in fostering empathy, intellectual growth, and social understanding. Rather than imposing restrictions, we should encourage open dialogue and critical thinking to help young people navigate complex issues and become informed, engaged citizens.

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1. As an important note, there will likely be other ways students can express their understanding beyond this list. For an option to be viable, it must allow for each element defined as necessary in a proficient response to be assessed. [↑](#footnote-ref-2)
2. If a student dictates to a scribe, it is important for the scribe to be careful to record **only** what the student explicitly communicates, rather than making interpretations and “filling in the blanks.” [↑](#footnote-ref-3)
3. The multiple references to the *California English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework* in this performance task are cited and abbreviated as (ELA/Literacy and ELD Framework, p. number).

   California Department of Education (CDE). 2014. *English Language Arts/English Language Development Framework for California Public Schools, Kindergarten Through Grade Twelve*. Sacramento, CA: CDE Press. [↑](#footnote-ref-4)
4. Evidence Statement 3 is assessed in Part 3 of this performance task and, therefore, is skipped in Part 1. [↑](#footnote-ref-5)
5. Evidence statements 1 and 2 where fully assessed in Part 1 of this performance task and, therefore, are not the essential focus of this part of the task. [↑](#footnote-ref-6)
6. Assessed in Part 3 of the Performance Task. [↑](#footnote-ref-7)
7. **ELA.W.9-10.7** and **ELA.W.9-10.8** are addressed in Part 2 of this performance task. [↑](#footnote-ref-8)
8. Adapted from <ProCon.org>. [↑](#footnote-ref-9)
9. Adapted from <ProCon.org>. [↑](#footnote-ref-10)