The Red Shell

Sandra ran out the door of the house and down the path to the beach one last time. The wind was blowing strong off the ocean, as if to drive all people away. Sandra felt like she had a hole in her stomach. She needed something to take back home with her, something to remember the last wonderful month. A small wave of water came toward her. The water rolled up to her ankles as she scanned the sand for treasure. She picked up a flat grey rock, looked at it, and skipped it across the water. She pushed a green shiny lump with her toe, but it turned out to be the end of a long piece of seaweed. Then she saw a small red shell in the shape of a cone. She picked it up and saw that it was not broken. She held it against her heart for a moment and closed her eyes. Then she put it in her pocket and ran back to the house, having said her goodbyes to the ocean.

Two weeks later, Sandra sat on her bed pulling off her socks. She had just come home from school. She saw that her red shell was not on the windowsill by her bed.

Sandra stormed into the kitchen. Her 4-year-old sister was under the kitchen table.

"Nina, did you take my shell?" she asked.

Nina began to cry and hugged a table leg.

"Can you tell me where it is?"

"I don’t remember. I’m sorry."

Sandra went back to the room she shared with Nina and began to look for the shell on Nina’s side of the room. She looked in her drawers and in her closet. Under Nina’s bed there was a dark rectangular shape. Sandra flattened herself and stretched out far enough to get it out with her fingertips.

It was a green wooden box that Sandra remembered. A year ago, when Sandra was 7, the box had contained a small blown glass bottle—a gift from her grandmother. Sandra opened the box, which now contained Nina’s things. Inside, there were five colored beads, a small red ball with a white heart on it, and a blue envelope with a lump in it. She turned over the envelope and her red shell fell out, along with a folded piece of paper. She flattened the paper out. It was a drawing she had made a few months before and had forgotten about. It showed a very large Sandra holding a very small Nina over her head. They both had huge smiles on their faces.

She could still barely hear Nina crying softly in the kitchen. She went and sat down next to her, took her hand, and put the shell in it.

“It’s okay, Nina. Keep it,” she said softly.

Nina took it in her hands. “But it’s yours.” She held it out to Sandra.

“Come with me,” said Sandra. She led Nina into the bedroom. She plucked the glass bottle off her desk and placed it on the table between their beds. Then she took the shell from Nina’s hand and rested it in the mouth of the bottle.

“Now it belongs to both of us,” she said.
Item 1

Selected-Response

Which word BEST describes how Sandra feels about leaving the ocean?

A. angry  
B. bored  
C. excited  
D. unhappy

Item 2

Selected-Response

Read the sentences from the story.

She saw that her red shell was not on the windowsill by her bed. Sandra stormed into the kitchen.

Which word BEST explains the meaning of the word stormed?

A. fell  
B. jumped  
C. rushed  
D. walked

Item 3

Selected-Response

Read the paragraph.

Sandra ran out the door of the house and down the path to the beach one last time. The wind was blowing strong off the ocean, as if to drive all people away. Sandra felt like she had a hole in her stomach. She needed something to take back home with her, something to remember the last wonderful month.

Which choice BEST explains what is meant in the underlined sentence?

A. Sandra feels sick.  
B. Sandra feels sad.  
C. Sandra feels angry.  
D. Sandra feels excited.
Item 4
Evidence-Based Selected-Response Technology-Enhanced

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

Part A

What is the central message of the story?

A. It is nice to share.
B. It is fun to play at the beach.
C. It is good to keep your room clean.
D. It is important to remember where you put things.

Part B

Which sentence from the story BEST supports the answer in Part A?

A. She picked up a flat grey rock, looked at it, and skipped it across the water.
B. Sandra went back to the room she shared with Nina and began to look for the shell on Nina’s side of the room.
C. “I don’t remember. I’m sorry.”
D. “Now it belongs to both of us,” she said.
Item 5

Constructed-Response

Why does Sandra go back into the kitchen the second time?

Use details from the story to support your answer. Write your answer on the lines on your answer document.

________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
________________________________________________________________________
Item 6

Extended Constructed-Response

Imagine that after Sandra says, “Now it belongs to both of us,” she asks Nina, “Why did you want the shell so much?” Write an ending to the story.

Use ideas from the story to support your dialogue and descriptions of feelings in your answer. Write your answer on the lines on your answer document.
# ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) ADDITIONAL SAMPLE ITEM KEYS

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Item</th>
<th>Standard/Element/Genre</th>
<th>DOK Level</th>
<th>Correct Answer</th>
<th>Explanation</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>ELAGSE3RL3 Literary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>D</td>
<td>The correct answer is choice (D) unhappy. She is unhappy because she is leaving the ocean after a “wonderful” month. She feels as if she has “a hole in her stomach.” Choices (A) and (B) are incorrect because there is no indication that she is either angry or bored in the beginning. Choice (C) is incorrect because even though she runs to the beach, she is sad when she is there.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>ELAGSE3RL4 Literary</td>
<td>2</td>
<td>C</td>
<td>The correct answer is choice (C) rushed. It shows that Sandra is angry and that she is moving fast, like the wind in a storm. Choice (A) is incorrect because there is nothing that indicates that she fell. Choice (B) is incorrect because there is no connection between jumped and stormed. Choice (D) is incorrect because stormed is more like rushing than walking.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>3</td>
<td>ELAGSE3L5a Literary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>B</td>
<td>The correct answer is choice (B) Sandra feels sad. The mention of “a hole in her stomach” suggests her feeling of loss at leaving a beloved place. Choices (A), (C), and (D) are incorrect because the reference to “a hole in her stomach” in the context of the story does not suggest sickness, anger, or excitement.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>4</td>
<td>ELAGSE3RL2 Literary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>A/D</td>
<td>The correct answers are choice (A) It is nice to share., and choice (D) “Now it belongs to both of us,” she said. Sandra is initially very upset that her red shell is missing, but when she sees that Nina has placed it in a box of treasured possessions, Sandra softens and decides to place the shell in a location in their room where they can both appreciate it. The answer choice for Part B of the item shows text that supports this central message. In Part A, choice (B) is incorrect in that Sandra leaves the beach early in the story. Choice (C) is incorrect because the tidiness of the room is not of true significance in the story. Choice (D) is incorrect because Sandra does not misplace the shell; Nina moves it to a hidden location. The incorrect options in Part B support incorrect answers in Part A.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>5</td>
<td>ELAGSE3RL3 Literary</td>
<td>3</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>See scoring rubric and sample response on page 61.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>6</td>
<td>ELAGSE3W3</td>
<td>4</td>
<td>N/A</td>
<td>See scoring rubric beginning on page 67 and sample response on page 62.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
ENGLISH LANGUAGE ARTS (ELA) SAMPLE SCORING RUBRICS
AND EXEMPLARY RESPONSES

Item 5

Scoring Rubric

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Description</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 2      | The exemplar shows a full-credit response. It achieves the following:  
  - Gives sufficient evidence of the ability to describe characters in a story and explain how their motivations and/or actions contribute to the sequence of events  
  - Includes specific examples/details that make clear reference to the text  
  - Adequately describes characters in a story and explains how their motivations and/or actions contribute to the sequence of events with clearly relevant information based on the text |
| 1      | The exemplar shows a 1-point response. It achieves the following:  
  - Gives limited evidence of the ability to describe characters in a story and explain how their motivations and/or actions contribute to the sequence of events  
  - Includes vague/limited examples/details that make reference to the text  
  - Describes characters in a story and explains how their motivations and/or actions contribute to the sequence of events with vague/limited information based on the text |
| 0      | The exemplar shows a response that would earn no credit. It achieves the following:  
  - Gives no evidence of the ability to describe characters in a story and explain how their motivations and/or actions contribute to the sequence of events with clearly relevant information based on the text |

Exemplar Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Awarded</th>
<th>Sample Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>2</td>
<td>Sandra is upset that her sister has taken the shell. When she sees that Nina has kept a picture of the two of them together, she changes her mind. She sees that Nina loves her and keeps things that remind Nina of her. She goes back into the kitchen to comfort Nina because she understands that there is nothing to be angry about.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>1</td>
<td>Sandra is mad at Nina for taking her shell. But then she finds the shell and goes back to say she's sorry.</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>0</td>
<td>Sandra goes back because she found the shell.</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>
### Exemplar Response

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Points Awarded</th>
<th>Sample Response</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| 4              | Sandra asked Nina, “Why did you want the shell?”  
                Nina thought for a moment. “Because it’s pretty. And . . .”  
                “And?” said Sandra.  
                “It’s something you like.”  
                “Is that why you kept the box and the drawing?”  
                Nina looked surprised for a moment. Then she smiled shyly.  
                “You know what?” said Sandra. “I kept the shell because it reminded me of the beach. I loved being there.”  
                “That’s why I kept those things,” said Nina. “They remind me of you.”  
                That made Sandra feel like crying. She hugged her sister for a long time. |
| 3              | Sandra asked Nina, “Why did you want the shell?”  
                “Because it reminded me of you,” said Nina.  
                Sandra thought about what Nina said. Then, Sandra felt bad for being mad at her sister.  
                “I kept the shell because it reminded me of the beach,” said Sandra. “Now we can remember it together.” |
| 2              | Sandra asked Nina, “Why did you want the shell?”  
                “It’s pretty, like the beach,” said Nina.  
                “Now we can remember it together,” said Sandra. |
| 1              | Sandra asked Nina why she wanted the shell. Nina said that she liked being at the beach. |
| 0              | You can find many shells at the beach. |
## Four-Point Holistic Rubric

**Genre: Narrative**

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Trait</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
|               | 4      | The student’s response is a well-developed narrative that fully develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus.  
- Effectively establishes a situation and introduces a narrator and/or characters  
- Organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally  
- Effectively uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue and description, to develop interesting experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations  
- Uses a variety of words and phrases consistently to signal the sequence of events  
- Provides a sense of closure that follows from the narrated experiences or events  
- Integrates ideas and details from source material effectively  
- Has very few or no errors in usage and/or conventions that interfere with meaning* |
|               | 3      | The student’s response is a complete narrative that develops a real or imagined experience based on text as a stimulus.  
- Establishes a situation and introduces one or more characters  
- Organizes events in a clear, logical order  
- Uses narrative techniques, such as dialogue and description, to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations  
- Uses words and/or phrases to indicate sequence  
- Provides an appropriate sense of closure  
- Integrates some ideas and/or details from source material  
- Has a few minor errors in usage and/or conventions with no significant effect on meaning* |
|               | 2      | The student’s response is an incomplete or oversimplified narrative based on text as a stimulus.  
- Introduces a vague situation and at least one character  
- Organizes events in a sequence but with some gaps or ambiguity  
- Attempts to use a narrative technique, such as dialogue and description, to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations  
- Uses occasional signal words to indicate sequence  
- Provides a weak or ambiguous sense of closure  
- Attempts to integrate ideas or details from source material  
- Has frequent errors in usage and conventions that sometimes interfere with meaning* |

*These criteria are based on the context and specific requirements of the assignment or exam.
## Four-Point Holistic Rubric

**Genre: Narrative**
*(continued)*

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Writing Trait</th>
<th>Points</th>
<th>Criteria</th>
</tr>
</thead>
</table>
| This trait examines the writer's ability to effectively develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective techniques, descriptive details, and clear event sequences based on a text that has been read. | 1 | The student’s response provides evidence of an attempt to write a narrative based on text as a stimulus.  
- Response is a summary of the story  
- Provides a weak or minimal introduction of a situation or a character  
- May be too brief to demonstrate a complete sequence of events  
- Shows little or no attempt to use dialogue or description to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations  
- Uses words that are inappropriate, overly simple, or unclear to convey any sense of event order  
- Provides a minimal or no sense of closure  
- May use few, if any, ideas or details from source material  
- Has frequent major errors in usage and conventions that interfere with meaning* |
| | 0 | The student will receive a condition code for various reasons:  
- Blank  
- Copied  
- Too Limited to Score/Illegible/Incomprehensible  
- Non-English/Foreign Language  
- Off Topic/Off Task/Offensive |

*Students are responsible for language conventions learned in their current grade as well as in prior grades. Refer to the language skills for each grade to determine the grade-level expectations for grammar, syntax, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling. Also refer to the “Language Progressive Skills, by Grade” chart in the Appendix for those standards that need continued attention beyond the grade in which they were introduced.*