

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
1	Option C is correct	When Robert and Belinda overhear Jorge and Maura talk in separate conversations, it results in Robert's and Belinda's decisions to apologize to each other, which is the resolution to the conflict involving their argument.
	Option A is incorrect	In line 9, Robert and Belinda angrily storm off after having a fight, leaving Jorge and Maura behind. This event contributes to the rising action of the play. This is not part of the resolution.
	Option B is incorrect	Belinda's article in the student newspaper is one of the causes of the argument between her and Robert, which contributes to part of the rising action, not the resolution.
	Option D is incorrect	When Robert gives the newspaper adviser an idea, in apparent retaliation to Belinda's article, it escalates the situation between Belinda and him. This is part of the rising action, not the resolution.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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2	Option A is correct	After hearing Robert’s disclosure that he authored an article detailing the high cost of printing the school newspaper, Belinda responds with disbelief: “You didn’t!” (line 20). This provides evidence that she is shocked that Robert would do such a thing.
	Option B is incorrect	Belinda may be angry at Robert, but it is not because she thinks that he is not paying enough attention to her. There is no context in this scene for this being the definition of <u>aghast</u> .
	Option C is incorrect	Belinda is not proud of her friend Robert’s achievement of publishing an article in the school newspaper. She is surprised and unhappy about what he has done.
	Option D is incorrect	Belinda’s statement “You didn’t!” does not show that she is impressed by Robert’s article getting published. There is no context in this scene that this is the definition of <u>aghast</u> .

Item Position	Rationale	
3	Option D is correct	Belinda’s remarks in line 37—when she admits that Robert’s “point about the newspaper wasn’t wrong”—show that she is reconsidering her personal belief about the money spent on printing the school newspaper.
	Option A is incorrect	Throughout the play, Jorge has one goal—getting Belinda and Robert to apologize to each other—and this line merely states that desire. It does not show a character reconsidering a personal belief.
	Option B is incorrect	Maura knows that Robert and Belinda need to apologize to each other, but forgetting why they are fighting does not display any type of reconsideration of a personal belief.
	Option C is incorrect	Robert’s statement about the school paper’s adviser thinking about publishing the school newspaper less frequently concerns a financial decision and not a reconsideration of a personal belief.

Item Position	Rationale	
4	Option C is correct	Figurative language is language that uses words that mean something different than their literal interpretation. In line 43, the playwright uses figurative language to compare apologizing to losing in a competition as a way to explain why Robert has trouble apologizing.
	Option A is incorrect	The playwright's intention is to explain the reason why Robert has trouble apologizing, not to emphasize that sports are important to Robert.
	Option B is incorrect	Jorge does reveal how he feels about Robert when he says Robert "is an amazing guy." However, that is not part of the figurative language used in line 43.
	Option D is incorrect	Jorge is on Robert's side, which is why he and Maura plot to get Robert and Belinda to apologize to each other. However, the playwright uses figurative language in line 43 to explain the reason for Robert's actions, not to show Jorge's support.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale
5	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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6	Option C is correct	The playwright uses a cause-and-effect organizational structure in scene 2 to show that Maura and Jorge’s plan is successful because their actions cause Robert and Belinda to apologize to each other.
	Option A is incorrect	The fight between Robert and Belinda takes place in scene 1.
	Option B is incorrect	The finer details of Maura and Jorge’s plan to get Robert and Belinda to apologize to each other are not detailed in the play; the reader only sees them “huddle together” to discuss the plan at the end of scene 1.
	Option D is incorrect	Robert’s and Belinda’s articles do influence the conflict of the play, since the articles are the reasons why they are in a fight. However, those details are shared in scene 1.

Item Position	Rationale	
7	Option C is correct	Although both Robert and Belinda have hurt feelings, after they overhear Maura and Jorge's conversations in scene 2, they separately consider the importance of their friendship and apologize to each other. These events develop the theme, a universal idea about life, that friendship requires a willingness to forgive each other's faults.
	Option A is incorrect	Although Maura and Jorge work together to end the feud between Robert and Belinda, there is no suggestion in the play that Maura and Jorge are closer friends with each other than with any other members in their group. Maura's and Jorge's actions do not develop a theme of being willing to forgive a friend's faults.
	Option B is incorrect	There is no evidence that Maura and Jorge are experienced in resolving conflicts. The play contains only the information about how they are trying to resolve a conflict involving their friends Robert and Belinda. Therefore, their actions do not develop a theme of being willing to forgive each other's faults.
	Option D is incorrect	Belinda's article may have accidentally caused Robert some difficulty, but Robert's article appears as deliberate retaliation for the trouble he thinks that her actions caused him. Neither of these actions develop the theme of being willing to forgive a friend's faults.

Item Position	Rationale	
8	Option A is correct	A dramatic action means an action with a clear motivation. In scene 2, the playwright develops the dramatic action by intentionally having Belinda and Robert listen in on Maura and Jorge's conversations so that Belinda and Robert feel compelled to apologize to each other.
	Option B is incorrect	In scene 2, the playwright does not develop any dramatic action with Maura and Jorge's exits from the stage in lines 36 and 45. Their exits allow Belinda and later Robert to contemplate the conversation that each has overheard.
	Option C is incorrect	In scene 2, Belinda's and Robert's expected and simultaneous apologies in line 51 concludes, but does not develop, the play's dramatic action. The apologies are part of the resolution.
	Option D is incorrect	In scene 2, the volume of Maura and Jorge's conversations does not develop the dramatic action in the play. Maura and Jorge speak loudly enough for Belinda and Robert to hear their conversation so that they can influence their fighting friends to apologize. The content of their conversations—rather than the volume of the conversations—leads to the dramatic action.

Item Position	Rationale	
9	Option B is correct	The thesis, or central idea, of the excerpt is that Morgan was an accomplished musician who shared his talents by teaching others. The author supports the thesis by including details about where Morgan studied music, who influenced his career, and what Morgan’s job as the music director and conductor of the Oakland Symphony entailed. The author also includes information about MUSE, the music education program for kids that Morgan established and oversaw.
	Option A is incorrect	Morgan’s work to recognize his students’ talents and bring in musicians from his orchestra as mentors supports the part of the thesis about how Morgan shared his talents with others. These are supporting details, not the thesis.
	Option C is incorrect	The information about Morgan’s MUSE program provides details to support part of the thesis about how Morgan used his talents to teach others. However, the influence of the MUSE program on music education is not the thesis itself.
	Option D is incorrect	The details in paragraph 4 about how Morgan brought “musicians . . . into classrooms to teach kids” support the part of the thesis about how Morgan used his talents to teach others. However, the thesis of the excerpt is not that Morgan inspired others in the community.

Item Position	Rationale	
10	Option B is correct	The footnote explains that the Oberlin Conservatory of Music is “a highly regarded music school,” which emphasizes the quality of the music school Morgan attended after high school.
	Option A is incorrect	The subject of the footnote is the conservatory’s reputation and history. The reason Morgan was accepted as a student there is not included in the footnote.
	Option C is incorrect	The footnote does not include information about whether Morgan excelled at the conservatory. Instead, the subject of the footnote is the conservatory’s reputation and history.
	Option D is incorrect	Although the footnote includes information about the conservatory’s reputation and history, it does not include the range of music education opportunities provided at the school.

Item Position	Rationale	
11	Option C is correct	In paragraph 1, the reader can infer that 12-year-old Morgan’s musical talent was recognized as unique among his peers because he was asked by an instructor to compose and conduct a concert piece at such a young age.
	Option A is incorrect	The reader cannot infer that Morgan had “already” been exposed to a variety of instruments as a 12-year-old, because paragraph 1 states that in junior high, he “learned to play many instruments.”
	Option B is incorrect	The reader cannot infer that 12-year-old Morgan’s biggest dream was to attend Oberlin Conservatory of Music, because there is no evidence in paragraph 1 to suggest that he even knew about the school when he was that age.
	Option D is incorrect	There is no evidence in paragraph 1 to suggest that Morgan was more interested in conducting a concert than in composing music. Although the author notes that Morgan’s “instructor asked him to compose and conduct a concert piece,” the reader cannot infer whether he preferred conducting over composing.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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12	Option B is correct	This summary includes all the important ideas from the section “The Role of a Teacher,” including Morgan’s work with an influential conductor and Morgan’s professional work connecting schoolchildren to music.
	Option A is incorrect	This summary is incomplete. The ideas from paragraph 2 about Morgan working with a renowned conductor and graduating from college are not included in the summary. Morgan conducting the Oakland Symphony and bringing in professional musicians to work with students is also not included (paragraph 4).
	Option C is incorrect	This attempt at a summary contains minor details about Morgan’s work with Bernstein and leaves out important ideas about Morgan’s music program, MUSE, and his work teaching kids about music.
	Option D is incorrect	This attempt at a summary includes minor details about Oakland but not enough information about Morgan volunteering, his founding of MUSE, and his work connecting schoolchildren with music.

Item Position	Rationale	
13	Option D is correct	The author's use of third-person limited point of view in this story allows the reader to know only Logan's thoughts; for example, he believes that he shares a connection with Jamie about practicing basketball early on a Saturday: " <i>I guess I'm not the only one wanting to avoid the inquisitive eyes of others</i> " (paragraph 7).
	Option A is incorrect	The author's use of third-person limited point of view is not instrumental in showing how Logan knows about the knee injury Jamie is recovering from. Logan knows about it, but so does Logan's dad. It is not a private thought.
	Option B is incorrect	The author's use of third-person limited point of view could explain how Logan feels about his father's support, but those types of thoughts are neither highlighted nor included in the story.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 1, Logan thinks to himself, " <i>With some time to practice in private, I know I'll get better,</i> " so the reader can tell that Logan is insecure about showing "his mediocre basketball skills" to his peers. However, the third-person limited point of view does not make it clear how Logan feels about sharing the court with the neighborhood kids.

Item Position	Rationale	
14	Option A is correct	When Jamie goes to the public basketball court, he encounters Logan, who is practicing his basketball skills. In an unexpected turn of events, Jamie ends up giving Logan helpful pointers, and he coaches an impromptu basketball game that occurs after several neighborhood kids also show up to the court. Jamie's encouragement of Logan helps the younger boy's confidence level, which is a positive outcome.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Jamie does not interact with anyone else on the court at first, that does not indicate that Jamie is reserved. Later, Jamie gives Logan pointers and offers him praise for his efforts. However, there is no indication that these interactions at the basketball court lead to open communication between the characters.
	Option C is incorrect	Although an impromptu basketball game occurs at the public basketball court, there is no indication that the game is competitive. Furthermore, there are not multiple coaches present. Instead, Jamie coaches all the players and offers pointers "from the sidelines" (paragraph 10).
	Option D is incorrect	Jamie, the captain of a high-school basketball team, goes to the public basketball court Saturday morning to practice. Logan and other neighborhood kids also show up there to practice. This would indicate that the people in the story have regular, not limited, access to practicing basketball.

Item Position	Rationale	
15	Option D is correct	Because he is given such a high compliment by someone he admires, Jamie, on his “hustle” at the end of the impromptu game (paragraph 11), Logan is likely to play more confidently in the future.
	Option A is incorrect	Logan considers himself a player with “mediocre basketball skills” at the beginning of the story (paragraph 1), and it is highly unlikely only one Saturday morning of play would make him athletically equal to Jamie, who has “led his basketball team to two state championships” (paragraph 5).
	Option B is incorrect	Although Logan tries to “look casual” even though he is “beaming inside” over his experience with Jamie (paragraph 12), there is no evidence in the story that Logan considers asking Jamie to coach the neighborhood kids on a regular basis.
	Option C is incorrect	Although a group of neighborhood kids unexpectedly show up and play basketball with Logan at the end of the story, there is no indication that Logan knows those kids or that he would want to organize teams to play at the neighborhood basketball court in the future.

Item Position	Rationale	
16	Option D is correct	Mood in a text is when the author makes the reader feel a certain way through words or details. The author’s use of the phrase “a winded but happy Logan” conveys that Logan is pleased with the outcome of his practice session at the basketball court, indicating a satisfied mood.
	Option A is incorrect	The author’s use of the phrase “each Saturday as the sun was rising” in paragraph 1 does not convey a satisfied mood. It suggests that Logan is dedicated to practicing.
	Option B is incorrect	The author’s mention of “a tall player effortlessly [shooting] a basket” creates a sense of mystery about finding out the identity of that player and how that person relates to Logan’s story.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 7, the author’s use of the phrase “honoring Jamie’s privacy” suggests that Logan feels a sense of understanding and empathy for Jamie, who suffered a knee injury.

Item Position	Rationale	
17	Option C is correct	In the excerpt, Morgan’s MUSE program provided students with the opportunities to learn about classical music from professional musicians and to perform solos and experience performances, which inspired MUSE students to improve their skills. In the story, Logan is motivated to improve his basketball skills when the high-school basketball captain offers him pointers, gives him praise, and coaches him in an impromptu game.
	Option A is incorrect	In the excerpt, there is no mention of anyone experiencing moments of doubt. In contrast, in the story, the reader could infer that Logan has doubts about his basketball ability, when he refers to “his mediocre basketball skills” (paragraph 1). However, there is no mention of Logan being surprised to learn of others who also experience moments of doubt.
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 8 of the excerpt, there is evidence of a learning structure when a student remarks that Morgan was “ ‘really serious in getting [down] to business.’ ” However, in the story, there is no evidence of needing structure to learn something. Logan independently practices shooting hoops and later plays in an impromptu game of basketball. Additionally, Logan is not learning something new. Rather, he is trying to improve on existing skills.
	Option D is incorrect	In the excerpt, there is no evidence of young people serving as role models. Instead, Morgan, an adult professional conductor, along with other adult musicians, served as role models for students. Conversely, in the story, Logan is starstruck to be playing on the same court as Jamie, a high-school basketball player, so Jamie could be considered a role model for Logan.

Item Position	Rationale	
18	Option D is correct	The reader can infer from paragraphs 2 through 4 of the excerpt that teaching others requires commitment, as evidenced by the description of Morgan being “dedicated to offering kids a chance to explore classical music” and by Morgan’s MUSE program, in which he volunteered at local schools (paragraph 3). In the story, the reader can infer that teaching can happen spontaneously when Jamie, the high-school basketball captain, coaches an impromptu basketball game with neighborhood kids (paragraph 10).
	Option A is incorrect	In the excerpt, Morgan continued to be influenced by his mentor, Bernstein, even after he graduated (paragraph 2), which indicates that Morgan looked for ways to improve himself. However, in paragraphs 8 through 10 of the story, the reader cannot infer that mentors feel content with their current skill level. Although Jamie is injured, he goes to the basketball court to practice shooting hoops. This shows that Jamie wants to improve his skills.
	Option B is incorrect	According to paragraphs 2 through 4 of the excerpt, Morgan worked hard to succeed in his professional life. During one summer of college, he apprenticed with a famous conductor. After graduating, Morgan became the music director and conductor of the Oakland Symphony and started the MUSE program for kids. However, in paragraphs 8 through 10 of the story, there is no mention of a professional. Instead, the successful basketball player is a high-school student.
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraphs 2 through 4 of the excerpt, an inference cannot be made that leadership is best achieved in a relaxed environment, since Morgan developed MUSE, which is a structured music education program for students. In paragraphs 8 through 10 of the story, Jamie coaches a group of neighborhood kids in an impromptu game of basketball. However, there is no evidence to support the idea that the game is competitive.

Item Position	Rationale	
19	Option A is correct	Both Morgan and Jamie welcomed opportunities to share their expertise with others. In the excerpt, Morgan founded MUSE, volunteered at local schools, and conducted student orchestras to better students' musical experiences. In the story, Jamie offers Logan pointers on how to improve his basketball skills and coaches from the sidelines when a group of neighborhood kids play an impromptu basketball game.
	Option B is incorrect	In the excerpt, Morgan's methods might have been both challenging to and effective for students, since a lot of practice time was required. However, in the story, Jamie's teaching method is not challenging but still effective. Jamie uses compliments and offers tips to help Logan improve his basketball skills.
	Option C is incorrect	In the excerpt, Morgan was said to have an "amazing rapport with students" (paragraph 7). However, there is no evidence that Morgan formed lasting friendships with students. In the story, Jamie tells Logan, "See you next Saturday" (paragraph 11), indicating that the two may meet up again. However, there is no evidence that Jamie and Logan will form a lasting friendship.
	Option D is incorrect	In the excerpt, paragraphs 1 and 2 include information about Morgan's musical talents and accomplishments. However, the rest of the excerpt is about Morgan's work helping students realize their musical talents. In the story, Jamie goes to the basketball court to practice. However, soon after he arrives, he starts giving pointers to Logan and then coaches and encourages the neighborhood kids when an impromptu basketball game takes place.

Item Position	Rationale	
20	Option B is correct	The author of the excerpt uses categorization to show different periods of Morgan’s life as they relate to music—first as a youth, then as a professional, and then as a mentor to young/aspiring musicians. The author of the story uses chronological order so that the reader experiences the events in the same order that Logan does.
	Option A is incorrect	The author of the excerpt does reveal what different students learned from Morgan. However, the author’s purpose for using categorization is to show different periods of Morgan’s life as they relate to music. In the story, the use of chronological order is not to highlight the interactions between characters but to tell the events of the story in the order in which they occur.
	Option C is incorrect	The author of the excerpt does emphasize Morgan’s achievements. However, that is not why the author uses a categorical structure. In the story, the author does not use chronological order to create sympathy for Logan. Instead, the author uses it to describe the events that occur to Logan one Saturday morning.
	Option D is incorrect	The author of the excerpt uses the categorical structure to show different periods of Morgan’s life as they relate to music, not to outline the areas in which Morgan excelled. In the story, the author mentions Logan’s belief that he possesses “mediocre basketball skills” (paragraph 1). However, that is not the reason the author structures the story using chronological order. The author does so to tell the events in the order in which they occur.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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21	Option C is correct	The author includes the photograph with the article to help the reader understand what ancient snow goggles looked like. From the photograph, the reader can see the shape of the goggles and the location of the eye slit.
	Option A is incorrect	The photograph helps the reader understand what ancient snow goggles looked like, but there is no indication in the photograph of how they were made.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author provides information in the article about the materials that people used to make ancient snow goggles, the photograph does not help the reader imagine which of those materials were used to make the snow goggles shown.
	Option D is incorrect	There is no evidence in the photograph that helps the reader determine how long the first pair of snow goggles lasted.

Item Position	Rationale	
22	Option A is correct	In the section "An Unusual Design," the author includes the steps that the native peoples used to make snow goggles in order to explain how snow goggles were created. These details help develop the thesis that native peoples of the Arctic region created snow goggles to prevent snow blindness.
	Option B is incorrect	In the section "An Unusual Design," the author does not use a problem-solution organizational structure. None of the goggles' elements are identified as problematic or needing a solution.
	Option C is incorrect	The author does not list the qualities of snow goggles in order of importance, and this information does not develop the thesis of the article.
	Option D is incorrect	The author of the article does not use a compare-and-contrast organizational structure in the section "An Unusual Design." In paragraph 9, in the section "Effective Eyewear," the author compares snow goggles with modern sunglasses.

Item Position	Rationale	
23	Option D is correct	In paragraph 2, the author notes that native peoples of the “northernmost regions have developed ways of adapting” their houses, clothing, and food to the harsh environment. In paragraph 9, the author points out several advantages of ancient snow goggles over modern sunglasses. Based on the information in these paragraphs and throughout the article, the reader can conclude that designers of modern equipment today should study the solutions of the native peoples of Earth’s northernmost regions.
	Option A is incorrect	The author discusses snow blindness and the problems that can result with not practicing eye safety in snowy environments, but there is no indication in the article that modern-day Arctic explorers are using ancient snow goggles instead of modern equipment to protect their eyes.
	Option B is incorrect	The author includes explanations and details to discuss the way native peoples used snow goggles. Therefore, the reader can conclude that modern-day people are, in fact, able to understand how native peoples used their snow goggles.
	Option C is incorrect	The author discusses snow blindness and how snow goggles solved problems for native peoples in the past. However, there is no indication in the article that there is any collaboration between those who currently study snow blindness and native peoples.

Item Position	Rationale	
24	Option B is correct	The author's use of the phrases "migrated long distances" and "across . . . the Arctic Circle region" help the reader determine that the meaning of <u>span</u> as it is used in paragraph 6 deals with geography and best fits the definition "an extended distance."
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author includes details in paragraph 6 about a period of time, stating that some of the snow goggles that have been found "are dated at about 4,000 years old," the definition of the word <u>span</u> in this context is not related to time.
	Option C is incorrect	There is no context to support this meaning of the word <u>span</u> in paragraph 6.
	Option D is incorrect	The author's use of the word <u>span</u> deals with the context of geography, not architecture, so "the length between two supports of a structure" does not match the meaning of <u>span</u> in paragraph 6.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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25	Option D is correct	Imagery is the use of vivid language to represent objects, actions, or ideas. The author's use of imagery in paragraph 1—"The sun breaks," "brilliantly reflecting," "view is breathtaking," and "magical yet harsh environment"—reveals the author's appreciation of the area's natural beauty.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the author's word choice in paragraph 1 could be considered formal, the author does not reveal a concern for the environment.
	Option B is incorrect	The author's use of the term "harsh environment" does indicate an acknowledgment of danger. However, the majority of the author's language in paragraph 1 reveals an appreciation of the natural beauty of the area.
	Option C is incorrect	Irony is a type of figurative language in which an author expresses the opposite of what is expected. The author uses irony in paragraph 1—"a magical yet harsh environment"—but it is to emphasize an appreciation of the area's natural beauty. The author's use of language does not suggest that there is something humorous about the landscape.

Item Position	Rationale	
26	Option C is correct	In paragraph 9, the author states that the ancient snow goggles “carved out of bone” are “extremely durable,” whereas a modern pair of glasses is made from “flimsy plastic.” These details support the key idea that ancient snow goggles made from bone are stronger than modern sunglasses and thus long-lasting.
	Option A is incorrect	The statement that ancient snow goggles improved the vision of those who had trouble seeing does not support the key idea that ancient snow goggles were long-lasting. Instead, it supports the idea that snow goggles functioned much like modern prescription glasses.
	Option B is incorrect	The statement about the slit in ancient snow goggles does not support the key idea that ancient snow goggles were long-lasting. Instead, it supports the idea that ancient snow goggles could help improve a person’s vision.
	Option D is incorrect	The statement comparing modern sunglasses to ancient snow goggles does not support the key idea that snow goggles were long-lasting. Instead, it supports the idea that some features of ancient snow goggles were better than those of modern sunglasses.

Item Position	Rationale	
27	Option C is correct	An analogy is a literary device that creates a parallel connection between two ideas. The author adds the analogy about black eye paint being used by modern football players in order to help the reader better relate to how ancient peoples used soot to reduce blinding glare from the snow and ice.
	Option A is incorrect	The author's use of the analogy does not help explain how scientific inventions influenced sports. Ancient snow goggles were not the inspiration for football players using black eye paint to prevent glare.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author does explain that staring at "a snowy landscape or an icy sea" for too long can cause eye damage (paragraph 4), that is not the reason the author uses the analogy in paragraph 8. Instead, the author likens the use of black soot in ancient snow goggles to the black paint football players place under their eyes in order to show how both help reduce glare.
	Option D is incorrect	In the article, the author mentions both sunglasses and eye paint as modern methods of eye protection. However, the author's use of the analogy in paragraph 8 is not intended to suggest that people today have more eye protection choices than people in the past did.

Item Position	Rationale	
28	Option C is correct	The sentence about sunlight reflecting off the snow making it difficult for a person to see is an important idea to include in the summary because it helps explain why it was necessary for ancient peoples to create and wear snow goggles.
	Option E is correct	The fact that ancient snow goggles have been found in several Arctic regions is important to include in the summary because it shows the idea that the need for eye protection in Arctic regions was widespread.
	Option A is incorrect	The information about hunters traveling long distances through harsh, snowy conditions is a minor detail and unnecessary for explaining why snow goggles were a necessary invention.
	Option B is incorrect	The information about what people use today in bright sunlight is not relevant to include in a summary about the necessity of ancient snow goggles.
	Option D is incorrect	The materials used for some snow goggles is a minor detail and is not needed in a summary about why snow goggles were a necessary invention.

Item Position	Rationale
29	<p>The student response below has been identified by Texas educators as meeting the requirements for a 10-point (maximum score) response based on the rubric criteria. For additional information, refer to the grade 8 scoring guide available on the STAAR Reading Language Arts Resources webpage.</p> <p>Have you ever gone to a history class, and wondered, what's the point of this? What is learning about past objects or lives going to help me do? Well, I have an answer and a very specific example. One reason is that studying the past can give you insight to the cultures and ways of life many years back. To add on to this, it also gives you and insight to the evolution of humans.</p> <p>Snow goggles were made over 4,000 years ago. At least the first ones we have found in the arctic are. When someone looks at a snowy area, the sun reflects off of the snow and into your eyes. This can cause sunburn and serious damage to your eyes. The native people of the Arctic (Aleut, Inupiat, Yuit, Tlingit, and Haida) faced this problem. In fact, to stop this from happening they invented the first snow goggles. These were like modern day sunglasses but more durable and more effective. Most goggles were made out of wood, bone, antler, and leather and were hand carved to fit one specific person. Then they had black soot put into the goggles to block out more sun. This shows that many natives are smarter than we think and very problem solvers as well.</p> <p>Humans have always been inventors and naturally curious creatures. This is no different, especially when it comes to our history and past cultures. We may have more inventions and fancier ones, but they are inventions all the same. We have developed, but are the same. Like back then when the first snow goggles were made. They were made to solve a problem and shows the creativity and intelligence of past cultures. We, even now, have branched off the idea of snow goggles and made sunglasses, modern day snow goggles, etc.</p> <p>Humans stay the same, but will always change. We reveal things such as how ancient cultures relate to anything now. Even snow goggles reveal our natural curiosity as humans and how people in the past worked to make new objects and make life easier. It shows that we were problem solvers, and had set the bar for the future very high.</p>

Item Position	Rationale	
30	Option D is correct	A topic sentence is a sentence that captures the meaning of an entire paragraph. In this topic sentence, the writer effectively introduces the claims made in paragraph 2, which focuses on how potential customers frequently consult online reviews before they buy.
	Option A is incorrect	Here the writer offers a sentence that repeats information already given in sentence 1. Thus, it would not effectively introduce the ideas presented in the second paragraph.
	Option B is incorrect	In this sentence, the writer offers a definition of “loyal customers,” but those customers are not the primary focus of this paragraph.
	Option C is incorrect	With this sentence, the writer notes the many ways a customer can shop. That fact, however, has nothing to do with the specific point of this paragraph, so this would not be an effective topic sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
31	Option C is correct	In sentence 19, the writer repeats information that is already clearly stated in sentence 18. This repetition adds nothing of value to the fourth paragraph, so sentence 19 should be removed.
	Option A is incorrect	In sentence 17, the writer supports the statement made in sentence 16 by giving further detail about how quickly one can write a positive review. Therefore, sentence 17 should not be removed.
	Option B is incorrect	In sentence 18, the writer poses a contrast to the situation described in sentence 17 and thereby offers new information. Sentence 18 is important to the development of the paragraph and needs to stay.
	Option D is incorrect	In sentence 20, the writer insists that even if writing a negative review takes time, it is still worthwhile. This is an important claim that is supported by the writer's argument in sentences 21 and 22, so it cannot be removed.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

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32	Option D is correct	This sentence is written correctly and effectively. It does not need to be revised.
	Option A is incorrect	By using both “despite” and “regardless of,” the writer repeats an idea, making this an ineffective sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	In this revision, the writer places the phrase “is what they say” at the end of the sentence, which leaves that phrase without a clear subject. This results in an awkward and unclear sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Here the writer creates confusion by using both “who say” and “say that.” The result is a confusing and ineffective sentence.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
33	Option B is correct	Throughout the paper, the writer has illustrated how online reviews benefit both customers and businesses. With these sentences, he restates his argument and gives it an effective conclusion.
	Option A is incorrect	With these sentences, the writer offers advice and addresses the reader using the pronoun "you." This is inconsistent with the tone, or attitude, in the rest of the paper and would not give the paper a fitting conclusion.
	Option C is incorrect	In this suggested replacement, the writer stresses that the people who write reviews are real people. While this claim is likely true, it has not been the focus of the arguments presented in this paper and would not be an effective conclusion.
	Option D is incorrect	In these sentences, the writer stresses that reading online reviews is critical to making "good life decisions." This advice marks an inappropriate shift in tone, or attitude, and is therefore inappropriate as a conclusion for this paper.

Item Position	Rationale	
34	Option A is correct	In sentence 15, the writer states that Nadia has discovered the source of the noises she hears. This sentence provides the best support because in it, the writer reveals the source of those noises.
	Option B is incorrect	Adding this sentence would not support sentence 15 because the comfort of Nadia's chair is not related to the noises she is hearing.
	Option C is incorrect	With this sentence, the writer shares that Nadia is reflecting on the beauty of the day. This statement would not support sentence 15 because it is not related to the noises or the source of the noises.
	Option D is incorrect	Inserting this sentence informs the reader about the shade in Nadia's backyard, but it would not provide support for sentence 15.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale
35	For SCR items, please refer to the scoring guide.

Item Position	Rationale	
36	Option B is correct	In the fourth paragraph, the writer describes Nadia’s curiosity and her efforts to learn more about the birds in her backyard. The details in sentence 20 about the location of the family computer are unimportant, so this sentence should be removed.
	Option A is incorrect	Sentence 19 should not be removed because the writer uses it to describe the beginnings of Nadia’s quest to learn about her backyard birds, the central topic of this paragraph.
	Option C is incorrect	In sentence 21, the writer provides an important detail about the progress of Nadia’s research, so this sentence should not be removed.
	Option D is incorrect	Sentence 22 is essential because in it, the writer reports the first of Nadia’s discoveries. This sentence also provides context for Nadia’s fascination and her wanting to “know more,” as described in sentence 23. Therefore, sentence 22 should not be removed.

Item Position	Rationale	
37	Option D is correct	In the new sentence, the writer states that “more and more birds came to visit the feeder.” This can only happen after Nadia has hung the feeder in her backyard. Thus, the new sentence properly follows sentence 27.
	Option A is incorrect	In sentence 24, the writer notes that Nadia began studying photos of birds, but at this point in the story, she has not yet hung the feeder. It would not make sense to add the new sentence here.
	Option B is incorrect	The writer shares in sentence 25 some of what Nadia learned from her research. Here again, Nadia has not yet hung the feeder, so it would not make sense to add a sentence about birds visiting the feeder.
	Option C is incorrect	In sentence 26, the writer mentions the bird feeder, but the feeder is not yet hanging from the tree. It would be out of place to add a sentence about birds visiting the feeder at this point in the paragraph.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
38	Option D is correct	A proper noun is a noun that refers to a specific person, place, idea, or event, and it must be capitalized. The words "chemistry" and "physics" are not being used as proper nouns in this sentence, so they do not need to be capitalized. This change corrects that error.
	Option A is incorrect	Because the subject of this sentence is a singular noun ("study"), the singular form of the verb ("has proved") is required.
	Option B is incorrect	"Essential" is the correct spelling of the word being used in this sentence.
	Option C is incorrect	Using the preposition "to" is correct in this context. Substituting the preposition "on" would distort the meaning of the phrase and the sentence.

Item Position	Rationale	
39	Option B is correct	The writer needs to insert a comma after “positive charge” because commas are required to set off the phrase (“which have a positive charge”) in the middle of the sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	An apostrophe is not necessary in “contains” because this word is a verb, not a possessive noun.
	Option C is incorrect	“Neutrons” is the correct spelling of the word being used in this sentence.
	Option D is incorrect	A double negative is an error that occurs when two negative words are used in the same sentence. This change would introduce a double negative (“haven’t no”) into the sentence, which is not grammatically correct.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
40	Option A is correct	An independent clause is a clause that can stand alone as a complete sentence. In sentence 5, two independent clauses are connected by a comma, which is an error. In this revised version, the writer corrects the error by replacing the second independent clause with a phrase that redefines "electrons."
	Option B is incorrect	This is a run-on sentence, an error in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly.
	Option C is incorrect	The second punctuated phrase in this suggested replacement is a fragment, or an incomplete sentence. Therefore, this cannot be the correct answer choice.
	Option D is incorrect	Here the first punctuated phrase is a fragment. This cannot be the correct way to write 5.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
41	Option A is correct	Using the word "If" indicates an uncertain relationship between Rutherford's and Thomson's respective contributions. By changing this word to "While," the writer correctly conveys the idea that their separate discoveries were of equal significance.
	Option B is incorrect	Changing "discovered" to "discovers" would incorrectly introduce a present-tense verb. Thomson's discovery took place in the past.
	Option C is incorrect	"Existance" is not the correct spelling of the word "existence."
	Option D is incorrect	Sentence 11 features the misleading word "If," so a change is needed.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
42	Option A is correct	In sentence 2, the writer is continuing the teacher’s instruction from sentence 1, so quotation marks are not necessary at the beginning of this sentence.
	Option B is incorrect	Because the teacher’s instruction in sentence 1 is written in present tense, this tense should be continued in sentence 2. A shift to the past-tense verb “needed” would be an error.
	Option C is incorrect	“Detailed” is the correct spelling of the word being used in this sentence. It is not necessary to double the final consonant in “detail” before adding the suffix <i>-ed</i> .
	Option D is incorrect	A comma is required before the closing quotation marks, so this comma should not be deleted.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
43	Option D is correct	No change is needed in this sentence because the sentence is complete and contains no grammatical or spelling errors.
	Option A is incorrect	The preposition "for" conveys the correct meaning in this sentence. Substituting the preposition "from" would suggest that the assignment had paired the boys up, which would create confusion for the reader.
	Option B is incorrect	A change from "and knew" to "they knew" would create a run-on sentence, an error in which two or more main clauses are joined incorrectly.
	Option C is incorrect	The phrase "to sit" is the correct form of the verb for sentence 4. Using the past-tense verb "sat" after "to" would make no sense.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
44	Option C is correct	Because this story is written using the past tense, “hung” is the correct form of the verb for this sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	“Hangs” is a present-tense verb and thus would be inconsistent with the other verbs (“stood” and “walked”) in sentence 5.
	Option B is incorrect	“Will hang” is the future-tense form of the verb, so it would not be the correct replacement here.
	Option D is incorrect	This form of the verb would not be correct in this past-tense sentence.

STAAR Spring 2025 Grade 8 Reading Language Arts Rationales

Item Position	Rationale	
45	Option B is correct	Sentence 8 is a sentence fragment, or an incomplete sentence. By inserting the pronoun “they” after “school,” the writer provides a subject for the sentence, which corrects the fragment.
	Option A is incorrect	The first punctuated phrase in this option is a sentence fragment, so it is not an acceptable way to rewrite sentence 8.
	Option C is incorrect	Here again, the first punctuated phrase is a sentence fragment, which means this cannot be the correct answer.
	Option D is incorrect	In this suggestion, the writer replaces “had” with “having,” leaving the punctuated phrase with neither a subject nor a proper verb. This is not a complete sentence, so it cannot be the correct answer.