

**TE_xES English Language
Arts and Reading 7 – 12
(231) Study Guide**

TEST PREP AND PRACTICE QUESTIONS FOR THE TEXAS
EXAMINATIONS OF EDUCATOR STANDARDS EXAM 231

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CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

Comparative Literature

Read the two poems and discuss the related themes. Refer to the literary devices and details the poets use, citing specific examples from the texts.

“Ozymandias”

PERCY BYSSHE SHELLEY

I met a traveller from an antique land
Who said: “Two vast and trunkless legs of stone
Stand in the desert. Near them, on the sand,
Half sunk, a shattered visage lies, whose frown,
And wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,
Tell that its sculptor well those passions read
Which yet survive, stamped on these lifeless things,
The hand that mocked them and the heart that fed.
And on the pedestal these words appear—
‘My name is Ozymandias, king of kings:
Look on my works, ye Mighty, and despair!
Nothing beside remains. Round the decay
Of that colossal wreck, boundless and bare
The lone and level sands stretch far away.’

“The Second Coming”

WILLIAM BUTLER YEATS

Turning and turning in the widening gyre
The falcon cannot hear the falconer;
Things fall apart; the centre cannot hold;
Mere anarchy is loosed upon the world,
The blood-dimmed tide is loosed, and everywhere
The ceremony of innocence is drowned;
The best lack all conviction, while the worst
Are full of passionate intensity.

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

Writing Assessment and Pedagogy

Read the following 45-minute in-class writing assignment and tenth-grade student response carefully before beginning your assessment.

A school is trying to determine whether to offer an extended 60-minute lunch period in the middle of the day or a shorter 30-minute lunch period with two other 15-minute breaks spaced throughout the day. Write a letter to the principal explaining which option you think would be better for students.

Remember to:

- ▶ State your position clearly
- ▶ Organize your argument appropriately
- ▶ Support your position with specific reasons and examples
- ▶ Choose your words carefully

Dear Mr. Martin

I think the school should definitely have a longer lunch period instead of shorter. It would be better for students and for teachers too. Here's why.

First of all, 30 minutes is not enough time to eat lunch! There are too many people and by the time you get your lunch from the cafeteria, lunch is over. So it is important to have a 60 minute lunch so we have time to eat.

Also with more time for lunch students can get other stuff done too. We can get help from our teacher, meet with friends, and also finish homework. If students can do these things during lunch, then there is more time after school to play sports or to spend with our family's. An example of this is when I was having trouble with my Algebra class, I went to see my teacher at lunch and he helped me with my homework so I understood it more. Then, after school, I was able to go to soccer practice with my friends without worrying that I had homework I did not understand. If lunch were shorter, I would have to ask my teacher for help after school, and I would miss soccer practice. Another student might go to soccer practice instead, and then he would fail his math test!

In conclusion, a longer lunch time is the better option for everyone at the school. Please consider keeping a longer lunch period instead of making it shorter.

1

Task One

Identify one significant strength of the student's response and explain how it contributes to the response's overall effectiveness. Refer to the response, providing specific examples, to support your assessment. Do not address the student's ability with the conventions of standard written English (e.g., grammar, usage, mechanics).

2

Task Two

Identify one significant weakness of the student's response and explain how it interferes with the response's overall effectiveness. Refer to the response, providing specific examples, to support your assessment. Do not address the student's errors in the conventions of standard written English (e.g., grammar, usage, mechanics).

3

Task Three

Describe one specific, appropriate instructional activity that you would implement to address the significant weakness of the student's response that you identified in Task 2. Be sure to explain how the activity would address the particular weakness you identified and why you think the activity would be effective.

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

Comparative Literature

Keep in mind there is no one correct answer for these questions; the following are examples.

Both poems convey a sense of loss and inhumanity; however, Yeats describes a chaotic scene of anarchy, while Shelley explores the aftermath. Both poets utilize intense imagery. However, the structures of the poems differ in accordance with their points. Yeats writes almost in free verse, adding to the unmanageable nature of the scene he describes, which becomes increasingly out of control; Shelley creates a sense of stability in his poem by writing a more organized sonnet.

Shelley allows humanity to return in the aftermath of the destruction of Ozymandias' empire. Whatever happened to cause the collapse of his regime and accompanying destruction, the reader has proof that life has continued; the narrator and the traveler—two living human beings—are present in the poem, bearing witness to the scene, safely ensconced in another time. On the other hand, Yeats erases humanity in his poem, beginning with his narrative style. Shelley's narrator is present in the first person, while Yeats' third-person narration puts distance between any sort of human voice and the chaotic scene he describes. His references to people—the “best” who “lack all conviction” and “the worst” who “are full of passionate intensity”—describe groups losing their humanity. These descriptions even lack human pronouns, further distancing them from the human condition. As “the falcon cannot hear the falconer,” the reader does not even know if the falconer exists any longer. Yet the bird—a non-human—lives on, no longer dominated by people. In contrast, Ozymandias himself, who comes across as a cruel and arrogant ruler, is given a personality, even a face. Despite his attitude and his expression, his “frown, and wrinkled lip, and sneer of cold command,” Ozymandias is still, in the end, human. The reader even learns of the very human sculptor who created the statue, who “well those passions read.”

Despite the “decay of that colossal wreck” where the remnants of Ozymandias' statue stand, and where “nothing beside remains,” the land is quiet and calm; the “lone and level sands stretch away.” While the land would seem empty and dead, the fact that a traveler has made his way there and returned to tell the tale to the narrator (and, by extension, the reader) hints that life has remained possible. On the other hand, the fact that “the centre cannot hold,” that “anarchy is loosed upon the world,” and that the “blood-dimmed tide is loosed” reveals that there is no stillness in Yeats' world, no organization. Repeating the word “loosed” only adds to the disarray.

And so it is with the organization of the writers' poems. Shelley writes a Petrarchan sonnet, an organized and compact poem structured using iambic pentameter and a clear rhyme scheme. He restores organization to the picture he paints; he provides stability.

In contrast, Yeats writes using iambic pentameter, but almost in free verse, reflecting the remnants of organization in the world he describes—a world in the process of falling apart, where the last vestiges of organization are nearly gone. Anarchy has been loosed, but it has not yet fully taken root: the reader is witnessing a process. And so the reader witnesses a process of poetic decay, collapsing poetic structure mirroring collapsing society, in contrast with the quiet, restorative nature of Shelley's work.

While imparting similar feelings of ruin, Shelley's and Yeats' poems differ in their messages. "Ozymandias," despite its description of a ruined empire, ultimately delivers a message of progress, a message that life can go on. In contrast, "The Second Coming" makes no promises about any future, but traps the reader in a moment of chaos from which no respite is guaranteed.

Writing Assessment and Pedagogy

Keep in mind there is no one correct answer for these questions; the following are examples.

Task One

A significant strength of the paper is the overall organization of the writing. The student begins the paper with an introduction, uses the transition words "First of all" and "also" to deliver specific reasons, and ends with a conclusion statement that summarizes the main idea. By using specific transitions and breaking the writing into sections, the student demonstrates an awareness of how different parts of the paper relate to one another and how an argument should be constructed to persuade.

Task Two

One weakness of the paper is that the student says his or her argument benefits "everyone," including "students and teachers," but the student does not address how it will benefit teachers or staff in the rest of the text. By stating that the argument takes into account varying sides and groups, the student leads the audience (the principal) to expect that it will address audience needs as well. Instead, the writing focuses only on the students; furthermore, it does not address any counterarguments. The student gives an example of how the longer lunch would benefit students by describing a time he or she "went to see my teacher at lunch and he helped me with my homework." While the example clearly demonstrates the benefit to the student, as well as the harm if it were not possible ("I would miss soccer practice"), the student fails to take the opportunity to address the benefit to the teachers as well, and it does not address any benefits for the principal or other staff.

Task Three

To help this student understand how to address multiple viewpoints in a piece of writing, the class could complete an activity that requires students to name possible viewpoints of different participants in a scenario. For example, the students could be asked to

role-play all different possible participants in the scenario. Students could work in small groups to determine how each group—parents, students, teachers and administrators—might respond to a proposal such as the following: “The school is considering extending school days by two hours on Monday through Thursday in order to take every Friday off. Consider various problems the school might have to solve in order to do this.” Students should create a list of concerns that each group would be likely to address. Because students are not asked to take a stand, but only consider the problems, they do not have to make an argument. Each group named should have different concerns, though, which would allow students to see that each group can be addressed in a different way. Once students have completed the list, they can share their thoughts and make a chart or graphic to see which questions concerned all groups.

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

Comparative Literature

Read the two poems and discuss the related themes. Refer to the literary devices and details the poets use, citing specific examples from the texts.

“The Tyger”

WILLIAM BLAKE

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forest of the night
What immortal hand or eye
Could frame thy fearful symmetry?

In what distant deeps or skies
Burnt the fire of thine eyes?
On what wings dare he aspire?
What the hand dare seize the fire?

And what shoulder, and what art,
Could twist the sinews of thy heart?
And when thy heart began to beat,
What dread hand? and what dread feet?

What the hammer? what the chain?
In what furnace was thy brain?
What the anvil? what dread grasp
Dare its deadly terrors clasp?

When the stars threw down their spears,
And watered heaven with their tears,
Did He smile his work to see?
Did He who made the lamb make thee?

Tyger! Tyger! burning bright
In the forests of the night,
What immortal hand or eye
Dare frame thy fearful symmetry?

Excerpt from "Elegy upon Tiger"

JONATHAN SWIFT

And is poor Tiger laid at last so low?
O day of sorrow!—Day of dismal woe!
Bloodhounds, or spaniels, lap-dogs, 'tis all one,
When Death once whistles—snap!—away they're gone.

See how she lies, and hangs her lifeless ears,
Bathed in her mournful lady's tears!
Dumb is her throat, and wagless is her tail,
Doomed to the grave, to Death's eternal jail!
In a few days this lovely creature must
First turn to clay, and then be changed to dust.

That mouth which used its lady's mouth to lick
Must yield its jaw-bones to the worms to pick.
That mouth which used the partridge-wing to eat
Must give its palate to the worms to eat.

Methinks I see her now in Charon's boat
Bark at the Stygian fish which round it float;
While Cerberus, alarmed to hear the sound,
Makes Hell's wide concave bellow all around.

She sees him not, but hears him through the dark,
And valiantly returns him bark for bark.

But now she trembles—though a ghost, she dreads
To see a dog with three large yawning heads.

Spare her, you hell-hounds, cease your frightful paws,
And let poor Tiger 'scape your furious jaws.

Let her go safe to the Elysian plains,
Where Hylax barks among the Mantuan swains;
There let her frisk about her new-found love:
She loved a dog when she was here above.

Writing Assessment and Pedagogy

Read the following 45-minute in-class writing assignment and tenth-grade student response carefully before beginning your assessment.

College applications encourage students to have outside interests, activities, and hobbies because they make a student well-rounded. Write an essay that describes your favorite hobby and why it might make a student appealing to a university.

Remember to:

- ▶ State your position clearly
- ▶ Organize your argument appropriately
- ▶ Support your position with specific reasons and examples
- ▶ Choose your words carefully

Knowing a person's hobbies and interests lets you know more about that person's character. For instance, a person who plays a sport might be a good team player or even a leader. He or she probably enjoys being outdoors and being active and may be adventurous. On the other hand, someone who collects rocks might be detail-oriented or enjoy science. This is why colleges like to know what your interests are—so they know what kind of person you are. My favorite hobby is running. I like to run after school and I like to run in races. The best time to run is in the morning, because it is cool outside. To be a good runner, you have to practice every day and you have to be able to run far but also be fast. Your coach will tell you what to do at practice and help you get faster, but it is up to you to go to practice every day and work as hard as you can. The reason a college might like a student who likes to run is that it means he is determined and a hard worker. That means he will do well in school too because he will work hard to get good grades. This shows that running is a good hobby to tell a college about.

1 Task One

Identify one significant strength of the student's response and explain how it contributes to the response's overall effectiveness. Refer to the response, providing specific examples, to support your assessment. Do not address the student's ability with the conventions of standard written English (e.g., grammar, usage, mechanics).

2 Task Two

Identify one significant weakness of the student's response and explain how it interferes with the response's overall effectiveness. Refer to the response, providing specific examples, to support your assessment. Do not address the student's errors in the conventions of standard written English (e.g., grammar, usage, mechanics).

3

Task Three

Describe one specific, appropriate instructional activity that you would implement to address the significant weakness of the student's response that you identified in Task 2. Be sure to explain how the activity would address the particular weakness you identified and why you think the activity would be effective.

CONSTRUCTED RESPONSE

Comparative Literature

Keep in mind there is no one correct answer for these questions; the following are examples.

Blake and Swift paint very different portraits of the same animal: the tiger. Both poems discuss tigers, but each poem takes a different perspective on the animal, making different statements about domestication and being wild. In “Tyger!”, Blake describes a fearsome, wild animal, while Swift, in “Elegy upon Tiger,” introduces the reader to a beloved, domesticated one. Both use vivid imagery, with heavy attention to detail; however, Blake describes the animal while Swift situates it in a journey to the afterlife. Both are written in couplets; however, the meters differ, enhancing the different perspectives the respective poems take. Blake’s tiger is an analogy for untamed ferocity, so wild that even God fears it, while Swift humanizes the tiger to the extent that it enjoys the same afterlife as a human being would.

Both writers use imagery to develop their very different tigers. Blake injects physicality into the poem by referring to “shoulder,” “sinews,” and twice to “heart,” rooting the reader into the bodily nature of the tiger. Even though “shoulder” refers not to the tiger but to an imaginary counterpart, the idea of a sinewy animal at odds with an opponent (“what shoulder...could twist the sinews of thy heart?”) brings a natural,

almost primitive, perspective to the poem. Reference to the "immortal hand or eye" calls to mind an immortal being (God); the tiger is so fearful that even a god would be intimidated by it. The poet also invokes God in the fifth stanza, calling into question the idea that the fearsome tiger could actually be a product of the same divine being that could make the gentle lamb ("Did He smile his work to see? Did He who made the lamb make thee?").

Swift starts by highlighting not the tiger in life, but the tiger in death, asking the reader to imagine "how she lies, and how hang her lifeless ears...dumb is her throat, and wagless is her tail." Early on, Swift establishes a vision of the tiger in death. However, he goes into even greater detail in asking the reader to imagine a decomposing tiger, explaining that "this lovely creature must be turned to clay and then be changed to dust." Worse, "That mouth which used its lady's mouth to lick/Must yield its jaw-bones to the worms to pick"; "That mouth which used the partridge-wing to eat/Must give its palate to the worms to eat." Swift is harsh in his stark and grim description of the physicality of death. Here, the physical nature of Blake's and Swift's imagery finds common ground, much like the physicality of an animal.

However, Swift ultimately takes a different approach. He continues to use vivid imagery, but he describes a scene that takes place in the afterlife according to Greek mythology. Unlike Blake, he provides more depth than the mere physicality of an animal. The tiger, like humans, rides across the River Styx in Charon's boat, but when she becomes aware of Cerberus, she "hears him through the dark,/And valiantly returns him bark for bark." Like other pets, she is partially of the human world—on the boat—yet still an active member of the animal kingdom, facing down another fierce animal. Unlike Blake's tiger, however, Swift's tiger recoils in fear; Cerberus is more fearsome than she, and "though a ghost, she dreads/To see a dog with three large yawning heads." The narrator himself must beg for the tiger to be allowed into the Elysian Fields and a heavenly afterlife. It is hard to imagine that Blake's tiger would be so frightened.

The poets also use rhythm and meter to create two opposite tigers. Blake's use of trochaic tetrameter gives his poem a more tense and targeted rhythm. The simple rhyme scheme and short couplets that Blake uses lend a sense of urgency and quickness to the poem, evoking the tension before a tiger pounces and the speed with which it can run and jump when hunting or fighting. Opening the poem with a trochee—Tyger!—grabs the reader's attention; using trochaic tetrameter gives the poem a sharp, unique quality not unlike a tiger, which always has a unique striped pattern on its fur and is a solitary animal. The feeling of being with a tiger—perhaps even of being a tiger itself—is transmitted to the reader through the poem. Blake's tiger is clearly wild and unpredictable.

On the other hand, the iambic pentameter in Swift's elegy is more lulling and comforting to the ear. And, like his tiger, Swift's poetic structure is less sharp and less harsh than Blake's structure (and Blake's tiger). Swift's use of iambic pentameter diminishes the sense of urgency that is inherent in Blake's poem; the longer lines provide more time in each line for narration, and iambs are less jarring than trochees. While the story itself is not necessarily pleasant, the poem lacks the shocking tension of Blake's work. The reader joins Swift's tiger in her journey through the afterlife as a trusting companion; Blake's tiger is still a wild animal, and therefore still in some way a threat.

While Blake and Swift describe the same animal, Blake provides a snapshot of a wild beast that cannot be controlled, while Swift describes a pet which the reader joins on a human experience. The poets' imagery and poetic devices help them create two very different animals.

Writing Assessment and Pedagogy

Keep in mind there is no one correct answer for these questions; the following are examples.

Task One

A strength of this paper is that the student connects concrete examples to abstract traits that a college might appreciate. The author says that a runner has to “practice every day and work as hard as you can,” and that a college would appreciate this because it means a runner is “determined and a hard worker” who “will do well in school too because he will work hard to get good grades.” The student clearly demonstrates an understanding of how the hobby develops personality traits and connects those to future actions, showing some depth of thought.

Task Two

A weakness of this paper is that the student does not organize the writing clearly. The writing is not divided into different sections or thoughts, and there are sentences inserted that seem off topic. For instance, the student offers a clear introduction that generalizes why colleges seek information about hobbies (“so they know what kind of person you are”), but then does not give a transition or begin a new paragraph when starting to talk about his own hobby. The student lists details about when s/he runs, what running entails, and what a typical practice might be like (“Your coach will tell you what to do at practice and help you get faster”), but does not include any transitions to connect these ideas. The overall effect is to make it hard for the reader to follow the overall main idea of the passage, that running encourages determination and hard work, which are appealing traits to a college.

Task Three

To help this student and others in the class learn how to organize a piece of writing and use transitions, the teacher can provide students with a list of transitions and ask them to use it along with an outlining activity. By providing the students with an outline to fill in, the teacher helps the student see the underlying organization of his thoughts. The student can then choose appropriate transitions and insert them into the outline. Students should practice this activity multiple times, and then eventually be asked to move forward with it by highlighting transitions used in paragraph-writing. The assignment might include a new prompt, such as the following: “There are many things to consider before deciding to get a pet. Think about specific responsibilities a person might have. Write a response that describes the things a person should think about before making the decision to get a pet.” This prompt allows students to easily construct a list of considerations first, which will help them learn to organize. Then, provide students with an outline template that asks them to write a topic sentence, three considerations, and a conclusion. Distribute a list of transitions and ask students to select the ones they want to insert between the topic sentence and first idea, second idea, third idea, and conclusion. Students can discuss and explain their choices the first time. As students gain familiarity with the list, they can begin to work without it.