



The Pennsylvania System of School Assessment

Reading Item and Scoring Sampler

SUPPLEMENT

2009–2010
Grade 7

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READING

INTRODUCTION

The 2009–2010 Reading Item and Scoring Sampler Supplement displays released items from the 2009 PSSA operational test. The sampler supplement is to be used in conjunction with the previous year’s sampler. The 2008–2009 Reading Item and Scoring Sampler can be found on the PDE website at <http://www.pde.state.pa.us/>. Select the “Pre K–12 Schools” tab at the top of the page. Then select “Assessment” in the “Learn About” column to the left. Select “Resource Materials” in the “Learn About” column of the next page, and then scroll down to find the appropriate sampler. Alternately, you may type in or click this link to reach the location of the item samplers: http://www.pde.state.pa.us/a_and_t/cwp/view.asp?a=108&Q=73314&a_and_tNav=680|&a_and_tNav=

This item and scoring sampler supplement contains multiple-choice items and an open-ended item. Each item is preceded by the Assessment Anchor and Eligible Content coding. The multiple-choice answer options are followed by an annotation that explains why the correct answer is correct and the other answer options are incorrect. The correct answer is indicated by an asterisk. The table following each multiple-choice item displays the percentages of students who chose each answer option. The correct answer is also shaded in these tables. The table following the open-ended item indicates the students’ performance at each score point. Sample student responses for each of the scoring levels are also included for the open-ended item.

READING PASSAGE

Read the following passage about ocean currents. Then answer questions 1–8.

Shoes Overboard!

by Sharlene P. Nelson

From the late fall of 1990 through early 1991, beachcombers in the Pacific Northwest began to find hundreds of shoes lying on beaches and encrusted with salt and barnacles. They were puzzled. Where did the shoes come from? How did they get there? One scientist studied the puzzle and found some answers. His answers are teaching him more about ocean currents.

In May 1990 the container ship *Hansa Carrier* left Korea on its way across the Pacific Ocean toward the United States. Containers as large as a train’s boxcar were strapped on the ship’s deck. Five of them were filled with shoes: sneakers, sandals, hiking boots, and golf shoes.

Then a violent storm struck. Strappings snapped. Containers fell overboard, broke open, and spilled 61,000 Nike shoes into the ocean. Some of the shoes drifted on a current flowing east and washed ashore after floating 1,500 miles.

A beachcomber found 200 shoes on a Washington State beach. Later, shoes were found in British Columbia, 100 of them on Vancouver Island and 250 more on Queen Charlotte Islands. Still more shoes were discovered washed up on beaches along the Oregon coast.

The puzzle-solving scientist is Dr. Curtis Ebbesmeyer, an oceanographer based in Seattle,

Washington. Dr. Ebbesmeyer studies drifting objects to learn about ocean currents.

Currents are like wide rivers in oceans. They can influence weather. They have carried drifting boats and bottles with messages from one continent to another. Currents determine what direction an oil spill will go.

For twenty years Ebbesmeyer has studied one drifting object at a time, such as a bottle with a message found on a beach or an abandoned ship that landed on a shore. You can guess why he got excited when he read an article in a newspaper about beachcombers finding the shoes.

“I knew instantly this was a real opportunity,” Ebbesmeyer says. “It is extremely rare that an oceanographer gets to study thousands of drifting objects in the ocean at one time.”

He phoned beachcombers, including an Oregon artist, Steve McLeod. McLeod had collected information about when and where 1,600 shoes were found.

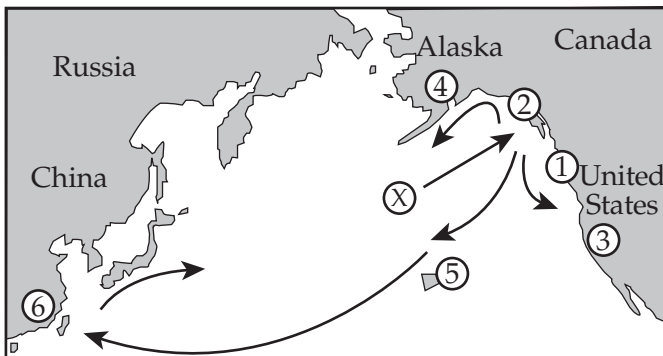
With a list of the identification numbers found inside the shoes, Ebbesmeyer was able to learn that the shoes had been loaded aboard the *Hansa Carrier*. Using the name of the ship, he learned when and where the shoes were spilled. He took the information to his

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friend W. James Ingraham, Jr., who is also an oceanographer.

Ingraham is the creator of a computer program, or model, that simulates ocean currents in the North Pacific. To develop the model, he entered thousands of bits of information into the computer, including average rate of current flow, the way an object will drift in the wind, and the daily winds over the North Pacific since 1946.

“You can put an object anywhere in the model at any time since 1946, and the model



Point X shows where the shoes spilled into the ocean. James Ingraham used a computer program to predict where some of the shoes might reach shore and about how long it would take them. Dr. Curtis Ebbesmeyer is keeping a record of when and where people are actually finding the shoes. The scientists are comparing their information to learn more about ocean currents.

Point on Map	Prediction by Computer Model	Shoes Found
1	Vancouver Island	Washington State and Vancouver Island
2	Queen Charlotte Islands	Queen Charlotte Islands
3	Oregon	Oregon
4	Prince William Sound	Middleton Island (seventy miles away)
5	Hawaii	Hawaii
6	Taiwan	No reports yet

will give you an idea of where it is going to go,” says Ebbesmeyer.

To check the computer model and make it better, Ingraham needs facts about drifting objects like the floating shoes. Ingraham entered information about the shoe spill. The chart shows the major shoe beachings that the model predicted and what actually has happened so far.

The chart does not show the surprising shoe finds. The model predicted little scattering of the shoes as the currents carried them eastward. “But the shoes were found scattered from California to northern British Columbia,” says Ebbesmeyer. “The north-south scattering must be caused by winds blowing to the north along the coast in the wintertime and changing toward the south in the summertime.”

The scientists hope some shoes will appear on Japanese and other Asian beaches. “It takes five to six years for an object to drift completely around the North Pacific,” Ebbesmeyer says. The main ocean current makes a huge whirlpool moving slowly in a big circle called the North Pacific gyre. But the gyre changes throughout the year, and smaller currents spin off at different places.

Shoe information continues to arrive at Ebbesmeyer’s office, giving him and Ingraham more opportunities to improve the computer model. Eventually, they hope to be able to tell where to find valuable cargoes lost in storms and where to look for ships and people lost at sea.

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MULTIPLE-CHOICE ITEMS

Note: All percentages listed in the tables below the items have been rounded.

A.2.4.1

1. Which detail from the passage supports the main idea?
- A The shoes were encrusted with barnacles and salt.
 - B The cargo ship carried containers as large as train cars.
 - C The shoes were washed ashore by reliable ocean currents. *
 - D The cargo included sneakers, sandals, and hiking boots.

The student is asked to identify a detail from the passage that supports the main idea. Option C best reflects the main idea by referring to the predictability of ocean currents. Options A, B, and D are specific facts found in the passage, but they do not support the main idea.

A	B	C	D
5%	4%	83%	7%

A.2.2.2

2. Read the following sentences from the passage.

“He phoned beachcombers, including an Oregon artist, Steve McLeod. McLeod had collected information about when and where 1,600 shoes were found.”

The word beachcombers probably means people who go to the beach to look for

- A places to sell food.
- B swimmers in danger.
- C interesting objects. *
- D different kinds of birds.

The student is asked to identify the meaning of the word “beachcombers” by understanding the context in which the word is used. The passage implies that beachcombers find interesting objects such as shoes, bottles, and boats, which supports option C. While options A, B, and D refer to things typically found near beaches, they do not fit in the context of the sentence.

A	B	C	D
3%	8%	88%	1%

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A.2.4.1

3. Dr. Ebbesmeyer learned that the shoes came from the *Hansa Carrier* by
- A using the identification numbers of the shoes. *
 - B following the currents that carried the shoes to shore.
 - C asking for information from people in other countries.
 - D developing a computer model to show how far the shoes drifted.

The student is asked how Dr. Ebbesmeyer learned that the shoes come from the *Hansa Carrier*. Option A has clear text support (“With a list of identification numbers found inside the shoes, Ebbesmeyer was able to learn that the shoes had been loaded aboard the *Hansa Carrier*”). Options B, C, and D are general factual statements found in the passage that do not answer the question.

A	B	C	D
62%	17%	5%	16%

A.2.5.1

4. Which is the **best** summary of the passage?
- A Containers fell overboard during a storm and spilled shoes.
 - B Studying moving objects helps make computer models better.
 - C Currents are like wide rivers in oceans and can influence weather.
 - D Scientists are studying the drifting shoes to learn more about ocean movements. *

The student is asked to identify the best brief summary of the passage. Option D best reflects the passage in its entirety. Options A, B, and C offer specific statements about the main topic, but they do not properly summarize the information in the passage.

A	B	C	D
21%	4%	5%	69%

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A.2.2.2

5. The author writes that a computer program, or model, “simulates ocean currents.” The word simulates probably means
- A finds.
 - B changes.
 - C imitates. *
 - D measures.

The student is asked to identify the meaning of “simulates” in the context of how it is used in the passage. The context from the word “model” leads the student to option C, “imitates.” Options A, B, and D do not fit in the context of the sentence.

A	B	C	D
23%	10%	51%	16%

A.2.4.1

6. Dr. Ebbesmeyer believed the shoes scattered north and south because
- A large ships change the direction of ocean currents.
 - B waves push floating objects in different directions.
 - C ocean currents change direction close to the shore.
 - D winds blow in different directions in winter and summer. *

The student is asked to identify why Dr. Ebbesmeyer believed the shoes scattered north and south. Option D is supported by Dr. Ebbesmeyer’s quote in the passage (“The north-south scattering must be caused by winds blowing to the north along the coast in the wintertime and changing toward the south in the summertime”). Options A, B, and C contain statements that cannot be attributed to Dr. Ebbesmeyer.

A	B	C	D
5%	22%	17%	55%

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A.2.6.1

7. The author most likely wrote this passage in order to
- A describe for the reader details about ocean storms.
 - B persuade the reader to study objects lost from ships.
 - C entertain the reader with a story about a ship in a storm.
 - D inform the reader about scientists who study ocean currents. *

The student is asked to identify the author's purpose for writing the passage. Since the passage is an informational piece about the scientists who study ocean currents, option D is the correct answer. Options A, B, and C describe other writing modes.

A	B	C	D
8%	5%	11%	75%

READING

ITEM-SPECIFIC SCORING GUIDELINE

Item #8

This item is reported under Category A, Comprehension and Reading Skills.

Assessment Anchor:

A.2 – Understand nonfiction appropriate to grade level.

Specific Eligible Content addressed by this item:

A.2.3.1 – Make inferences and/or draw conclusions based on information from text.

Scoring Guide:

Score	In response to this item, the student—
3	demonstrates <i>complete</i> knowledge of understanding inferences by giving two reasons that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes, explains why this information would be helpful, and uses details from the passage to support the response.
2	demonstrates <i>partial</i> knowledge of understanding inferences by giving two reasons that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes. (Examples: Student gives two reasons that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes without explaining why this information would be helpful OR Student gives one reason that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes and explains why this information would be helpful.)
1	demonstrates <i>incomplete</i> knowledge of understanding inferences by giving one reason that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes. (Example: Student gives one reason that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes without explaining why this information would be helpful.)
0	gives a response that provides <i>insufficient</i> material for scoring or is inaccurate in all aspects.
Non-scorable	BLK (blank)... No response or written refusal to respond or too brief to determine response OT..... Off task/topic LOE..... Response in a language other than English IL..... Illegible

Example—Top Scoring Response (3 Points):

Inferences/Conclusions with Details
Dr. Ebbesmeyer has many good reasons to want to continue to receive information about the shoes. One reason is to improve the computer model that simulates ocean currents in the North Pacific. This can be done by comparing what the model predicted would happen to the shoes to the evidence of what actually has happened with the shoes so far. Dr. Ebbesmeyer also wants to see how scattered the shoe beachings are. This information would be helpful to not only improve understanding of the ocean but to also help find ships or people lost at sea.

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OPEN-ENDED ITEM RESPONSES

A.2.3.1 Response Score: 3

8. Give at least two reasons that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes. Explain why this information would be helpful. Use details from the passage to support your response.

Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue to get information about the shoes because it would help him to better understand ocean currents. Knowing about the ocean currents could help in a few ways. The passage stated that "the currents determine what direction an oil spill will go." This would save time and effort in clean up as well as many animal's lives. The oil spill can be tracked down and contained by blocking the oil before it gets to a certain point. If there was a shipwreck survivors and life boats could be tracked and people might be rescued faster, and in time to survive.

The student has given a complete answer to the task by giving two reasons that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes ("... because it would help him to better understand ocean currents" and "... the currents determine what direction an oil spill will go") and by explaining why this information would be helpful ("If there was a shipwreck survivors and life boats could be tracked and people might be rescued...") using details from the passage to support the response.

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A.2.3.1 Response Score: 1

8. Give at least two reasons that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes. Explain why this information would be helpful. Use details from the passage to support your response.

Because so he can know where they came from and how they got here. And so he could learn more about the ocean movements. I think that these two reasons would be helpful because something can happen in the ocean movements and stuff that he drink can like damage our lives and some people wont eaven know what happened in the oceans to caused what happened so i think it's good for us to start studying now that way when something does happen we will no wat caused it and what it was.

The student has given an incomplete answer to the task by giving one reason that Dr. Ebbesmeyer probably wants to continue receiving information about the shoes (“... so he could learn more about the ocean movements”) without explaining why this information would be helpful.

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SUMMATIVE DATA TABLE

Multiple-Choice Items

Sampler Sequence	A	B	C	D
1	5%	4%	83%	7%
2	3%	8%	88%	1%
3	62%	17%	5%	16%
4	21%	4%	5%	69%
5	23%	10%	51%	16%
6	5%	22%	17%	55%
7	8%	5%	11%	75%

Open-Ended Item

Sampler Sequence	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1	Score Point 0
8	19%	37%	31%	13%

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Acknowledgements

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