FORMATIVE WRITING ASSESSMENT

Department of Literacy

Instruction & Interventions

Office of Academics

Grade: 10

Text-Based Writing Prompts:

Administration and Scoring Guidelines

Teacher Directions:

Students will read a stimulus about a single topic. A stimulus consists of several texts written on a single topic. The stimulus may include informational or literary fiction or nonfiction texts and can cover a wide array of topics. After reading the stimulus, the students will respond to a writing prompt in which they will provide information on a topic, develop a narrative, or take a stance to support an opinion or argument. Students will be required to synthesize information from the text sets and must cite specific evidence from the texts to support their ideas. Students' informative/explanatory responses should demonstrate a developed and supported controlling idea. Students' opinion/argumentative responses should support an opinion/argument using ideas presented in the stimulus. Students will have 90 minutes to read the passages, and plan, write, revise and edit their essay. **Students should read the prompt first.** They should be encouraged to highlight, underline, and take notes to support the planning process.

Scoring:

The attached text-based rubric should be used to score student responses. While the total possible points on the rubric is ten, it is recommended that three individual scores be given—one score for each of the three domains on the rubric. This will allow the teacher to determine specific areas of need within individual student responses, thus allowing for differentiation in the writing instruction that follows these formative writing tasks. The three domains are: Purpose, Focus, Organization (PFO), Evidence and Elaboration (EE), and Conventions of Standard English (CSE). Teachers should score **holistically** within each domain—PFO (4-points), EE (4-points), and CSE (2-points).

Each level of scoring within a domain is based on the overarching statement for the score found in the rubric. For example, on the grades 6-11 rubric for argumentation, the overarching statement for a score of 4 in the Purpose, Focus, Organization domain is, "The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness." The bulleted points that follow the statement must be considered as factors in the scoring, but should not be utilized as a checklist. Most, but not all, of the bulleted points will be evident in the student writing for a score at a specific level.

Teachers should keep in mind that a score of 3 on the rubric for a domain signals student proficiency in the addressed writing standard with a score of 4 representing mastery. In the CSE domain, a score of two represents student proficiency in the standard.

Tenth Grade: Informative Prompt #2

Write an informative essay that examines how native and introduced species have adapted to life in Australia. Cite textual evidence from the sources you have read.

Manage your time carefully so that you can:

- Read the passages
- Plan your essay
- Write your essay
- Revise and edit your essay

Your written response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph essay. Remember to spend time reading, planning, writing, revising, and editing.

Part 1: Read Sources

Source 1: Informative Essay

Australian Fauna

by Deirdre Manning

AS YOU READ *Identify key terms and ideas to use in your essay. For example, "marsupial" is a likely term to be used in both sources.*

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Early in geological history, Australia was cut off from the rest of the world's land masses. This allowed a range of animals to establish successful populations in Australia—animals that were unable to do so in other parts of the world.

Almost all of Australia's native mammals are marsupials. Marsupials give birth to their young and then carry them in a pouch near their belly until the infant is old enough to survive on its own.

Another unusual type of mammal is the monotreme. Monotremes lay eggs instead of giving birth to live young. There are only two types of monotreme in the world—the platypus and the echidna—and both of them are found in Australia.

Platypuses

Platypuses are found all along the eastern coast of Australia, from Tasmania to far north Queensland. They are small dark-brown furry mammals with webbed paws and a duck-like beak.

Platypuses live in burrows that they dig into the banks of rivers. They are diving animals, and can stay under water for up to two minutes. Unlike a duck's beak, the platypus' beak is rubbery and flexible. It has hundreds of electroreceptor cells inside it, which can detect the electrical currents that are caused by its prey swimming through the water.

Platypuses give birth by laying eggs. The eggs are incubated by the mother in special nesting burrows. When it hatches, the baby platypus feeds on milk secreted from two patches of skin midway along the mother's belly.

Echidnas

Echidnas can be found all over Australia. They are small, round animals with large clawed feet, a long snout and a coat covered in sharp, flexible spines. Their diet consists almost exclusively of termites, which is why they are also known as spiny anteaters.

Echidnas also lay eggs. A single egg is laid in the female echidna's pouch and hatches in about ten days. The baby echidna (or puggle) lives in its mother's pouch until it begins to develop spines.

The echidna's spines are used mainly as a defense mechanism. When threatened, an echidna will either roll itself into a spiky ball or dig itself into the ground until only its spines are exposed.

Kangaroos

The kangaroo is Australia's largest marsupial. Kangaroos travel by hopping on their long hind legs, using their tail for balance. They can reach speeds of up to 56 kilometres per hour and can jump distances of eight metres and heights of almost two metres.

Kangaroos live in large packs (or mobs) of around 100. Their diet consists of grasses, leaves and other plants. They thrive wherever a regular water source is available. The introduction of European farming methods has established regular water supplies and allowed the kangaroo population to grow dramatically. It is estimated that there are around twenty million kangaroos in Australia.

A baby kangaroo is called a joey. Joeys are raised in their mother's pouch, suckling from the teats inside, until they are about ten months old. Within a few days of giving birth, female kangaroos enter into heat and will mate again and, if they successfully conceive, after one week's development the microscopic embryo enters a dormant state that will last until the previous young leaves the

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pouch. The development of the second embryo then resumes and proceeds to birth after a gestation period of about 30 days.

Emus

The emu is a large, flightless bird with hairy, brown feathers. Standing up to six feet tall and weighing an average of 60 kilograms, it is the second largest bird in the world. Emus can be found all over Australia, away from settled areas.

Emus have a stride that measures around nine feet and can run at speeds of up to 50 kilometres per hour. They travel large distances in pairs or small groups, though occasionally large herds of up to a thousand have been formed.

Emus have fairly large territories and can travel up to 900 kilometres in a nine-month period. If there is a reliable source of water, emus will stay nearby. They mainly tend to travel long distances in search of water. Their diet consists of leaves, grasses, fruits, native plants, and insects. Emu young are called chicks.

Wombats

The wombat is the world's largest burrowing herbivorous mammal. They average one meter in length and 25–35 centimeters in height. Wombats have four powerful legs that they use for digging, and large heads with small eyes, pointed ears and prominent snouts. Wombats are found mainly on the east coast of Australia, from Tasmania to southern Queensland.

Wombats are nocturnal animals. Nocturnal animals are active by night and sleep during the day. During summer, wombats spend almost eighty per cent of their time underground in their long, complex burrows. They mainly leave their burrows at night when the air temperature is cooler, but in colder weather they can be seen out during the day as well.

Wombats are grazing animals, eating mainly grass and other plants, including shrubs, roots, bark and moss. When feeding, a wombat can pick up its food with one of its front feet and place it straight into its mouth. Wombat young are called joeys and the female wombat has a pouch which faces backwards to prevent dirt from entering it when it is burrowing.

Tasmanian devils

The Tasmanian devil is the world's largest carnivorous marsupial. It is roughly the size of a dog, and is thick-set with a muscular build, a large, wide head and a short, thick tail. The devil's fur is black and usually has patches of white on its chest and rump.

Tasmanian devils are only found in Tasmania, though fossil evidence shows that there were devils on the Australian mainland 3,500 years ago. They have powerful jaws and long, sharp teeth. They are primarily nocturnal, coming out at night to forage for food. Devils are scavengers, sometimes eating small mammals as prey, but mainly living on the remains of dead animals. When feeding, a Tasmanian devil will eat everything, including bones and fur.

Generally speaking Tasmanian devils are solitary animals, but packs of devils will feed communally on larger dead animals they find, like cattle and sheep.

Koalas

Koalas are tree-dwelling marsupials whose diet consists almost exclusively of the leaves of a particular type of tree called Eucalyptus. Koalas have grey fur similar to sheep's wool, large prominent ears and a round face. Their limbs are long and muscular and their paws are broad with long claws. They can be found throughout mainland eastern Australia.

Koalas' paws have rough pads and long claws to help them climb. A koala's front paw has three fingers and two opposing digits, almost like two separate thumbs. The hind paws have a clawless opposing digit and two toes that are fused together to form a "grooming claw."

Koalas spend twenty hours a day sleeping or resting. The rest of the time is spent feeding, grooming and moving from tree to tree. The koalas' diet of eucalyptus leaves is a very low-energy diet, which accounts for their low levels of activity. Their main source of water is the dew and rain that collects on the leaves they eat. Koala young are called joeys.

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Source 2: Informative Essay

by Aidan Semmler

NEW TO AUSTRALIA

AS YOU READ *Identify topics addressed in this article that were addressed in the previous source.*

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More than 80 percent of the plants, mammals, reptiles, and frogs found in Australia are not found anywhere else in the world. The only placental mammals (all mammals that are not marsupials or monotremes) native to Australia are the house mouse and some species of rats and bats. This is not to say that there are only these few species of placental mammals in Australia; rabbits, foxes, and even camels are common, but they were introduced species. Australia had developed an ecology that was unique due to its remoteness. Once settlers arrived, they brought with them familiar animals, along with unexpected consequences.

The story of rabbits in Australia is a remarkable one. In 1859, a settler named Thomas Austin released 24 rabbits so that he could continue the hunting that he had enjoyed in England. Within ten years there were so many rabbits loose in Australia that even though about two million were shot or trapped each year, it didn't make a dent in their population. Over time, the rabbits have caused untold damage to Australia's native plants and animals. Destroying the plants has left less food for other animals and also causes erosion. The topsoil gets washed away and the land can no longer support vegetation. Rabbits are thought to have caused more species loss in Australia than any other other cause.

Like rabbits, foxes were introduced in Australia for hunting. They were originally brought over in the mid-1800s. There are now more than seven million red foxes in Australia. They are a successful predator, responsible for the decline or extinction of many native species.

Other introduced mammals that cause damage include over a million feral camels, two million feral goats, twenty million feral pigs, and eighteen million feral cats. These animals have lived in Australia for hundreds of years now, and have very few predators. This accounts for their huge successes as species, resulting in the major damage they inflict on the Australian ecosystem.

Perhaps most surprisingly dangerous to Australian ecology is a humble toad. The cane toad was introduced from Hawaii in 1935 to try to combat the native cane beetle, which was destroying much of the sugar cane crop. The cane toad population has now topped 200 million, causing major environmental damage. The toads are toxic, and native predators have no immunity to the poison. Toads can kill native predators such as the quoll, a cat-like marsupial that is also hunted by the red fox. The cane toad does not seem to have had any effect on the cane beetle: The cane beetles moved too high on the cane stalks for the cane toads to reach.

Bearing in mind the havoc caused by species introduction, it is remarkable that people are suggesting the reintroduction on a large scale of another non-native species. The dingo is a wild dog that appears to have reached Australia about 4,000 years ago. It is believed that dingoes are descended from domesticated dogs and were brought by seafaring people from Asia. The dingo is now Australia's largest carnivorous mammal. (That position used to belong to the Tasmanian tiger, a marsupial mammal that is now extinct. Tasmanian tigers were hunted enthusiastically in the nineteenth century, and the last of the species died in a zoo in 1936.) Most people regard the dingo as a true Australian because of its long residence down under. It is suggested that scarcity of dingoes allowed smaller, non-native, predators to hunt and cause the extinction of many native marsupials. Encouraging a larger population of dingoes to hunt these predators (and animals such as rabbits) might result in better conditions for native marsupials, which could flourish more easily than in an ecosystem in which introduced species either prey on them or devour their food.

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FINAL

English Language Arts
Text-based Writing Rubrics
Grades 6–11: Informative/Explanatory

Florida
Standards Assessments

UPDATED OCTOBER 2014

Grades 6-11 Informative/Explanatory Text-based Writing Rubric (Score points within each domain include most of the characteristics below.)			
Score	**Purpose, Focus, and Organization (4-point Rubric)**	**Evidence and Elaboration (4-point Rubric)**	**Conventions of Standard English (2-point Rubric begins at score point 2)**
4	The response is fully sustained and consistently focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear controlling idea and effective organizational structure creating coherence and completeness. The response includes most of the following: • Strongly maintained controlling idea with little or no loosely related material • Skillful use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas • Logical progression of ideas from beginning to end with a satisfying introduction and conclusion • Appropriate style and objective tone established and maintained	The response provides thorough and convincing support, citing evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the effective use of sources, facts, and details. The response includes most of the following: • Smoothly integrated, thorough, and relevant evidence, including precise references to sources • Effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques (including but not limited to definitions, quotations, and examples), demonstrating an understanding of the topic and text • Clear and effective expression of ideas, using precise language • Academic and domain-specific vocabulary clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose • Varied sentence structure, demonstrating language facility	
3	The response is adequately sustained and generally focused within the purpose, audience, and task; and it has a clear controlling idea and evident organizational structure with a sense of completeness. The response includes most of the following: • Maintained controlling idea, though some loosely related material may be present • Adequate use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas • Adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end with a sufficient introduction and conclusion • Appropriate style and objective tone established	The response provides adequate support, citing evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes the use of sources, facts, and details. The response includes most of the following: • Generally integrated and relevant evidence from sources, though references may be general or imprecise • Adequate use of some elaborative techniques • Adequate expression of ideas, employing a mix of precise and general language • Domain-specific vocabulary generally appropriate for the audience and purpose • Some variation in sentence structure	
Continued on the following page			

Score	Purpose, Focus, and Organization (4-point Rubric)	Evidence and Elaboration (4-point Rubric)	Conventions of Standard English (2-point Rubric)
2	The response is somewhat sustained within the purpose, audience, and task but may include loosely related or extraneous material; and it may have a controlling idea with an inconsistent organizational structure. The response may include the following: • Focused controlling idea but insufficiently sustained or unclear • Inconsistent use of transitional strategies with little variety • Uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end with an inadequate introduction or conclusion	The response provides uneven, cursory support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea that includes partial use of sources, facts, and details. The response may include the following: • Weakly integrated evidence from sources; erratic or irrelevant references or citations • Repetitive or ineffective use of elaborative techniques • Imprecise or simplistic expression of ideas • Some use of inappropriate domain-specific vocabulary • Most sentences limited to simple constructions	The response demonstrates an adequate command of basic conventions. The response may include the following: • Some minor errors in usage but no patterns of errors • Adequate use of punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling
1	The response is related to the topic but may demonstrate little or no awareness of the purpose, audience, and task; and it may have little or no controlling idea or discernible organizational structure. The response may include the following: • Confusing or ambiguous ideas • Few or no transitional strategies • Frequent extraneous ideas that impede understanding • Too brief to demonstrate knowledge of focus or organization	The response provides minimal support/evidence for the controlling idea or main idea, including little if any use of sources, facts, and details. The response may include the following: • Minimal, absent, erroneous, or irrelevant evidence or citations from the source material • Expression of ideas that is vague, unclear, or confusing • Limited and often inappropriate language or domain-specific vocabulary • Sentences limited to simple constructions	The response demonstrates a partial command of basic conventions. The response may include the following: • Various errors in usage • Inconsistent use of correct punctuation, capitalization, sentence formation, and spelling
0			The response demonstrates a lack of command of conventions, with frequent and severe errors often obscuring meaning.