

ELA.09.CR.1.07.095 C1 T7

Sample Item ID:	ELA.09.CR.1.07.095
Grade/Model:	9/2
Claim:	1: Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.
Assessment Target(s):	7. LANGUAGE USE: Determine or analyze the figurative (e.g., euphemism, oxymoron, hyperbole, paradox), or connotative meanings of words and phrases used in context and the impact of those word choices on meaning and tone
Secondary Target(s):	n/a
Standard(s):	RL-4; L-5a
DOK:	3
Difficulty:	E
Item Type:	Constructed Response
Score Points:	3
Key:	See Rubric
Stimulus/Passage(s):	An Old-Fashioned Girl, by Louisa May Alcott
Stimuli/Text Complexity:	Though the quantitative measures suggest a lower grade placement, the language features and the fact that it is, essentially, focused on characterization, suggest that the appropriate placement for this passage is grade 9. Based on these sets of measures, this passage is recommended for assessment at grade 9. Please see text complexity worksheet attached.
Acknowledgement(s):	http://www.gutenberg.org/catalog/world/readfile.php?fk_files=2346130
Item/Task Notes:	
How this task contributes to the sufficient evidence for this claim:	To complete this task, students must determine the author's likely intent in using figurative language in this story.
Target-Specific Attributes (e.g., accessibility issues):	This task requires students to enter text using a keyboard.

Stimulus Text:

Read the following passage and then answer the question.

An Old-Fashioned Girl

by Louisa May Alcott

Polly hoped the "dreadful boy" would not be present; but he was, and stared at her all dinner-time, in a most trying manner. Mr. Shaw, a busy-looking gentleman, said, "How do you do, my dear? Hope you'll enjoy yourself;" and then appeared to forget her entirely. Mrs. Shaw, a pale, nervous woman, greeted her little guest kindly, and took care that she wanted for nothing. Madam Shaw, a quiet old lady, with an imposing cap, exclaimed on seeing Polly, "Bless my heart! The image of her mother a sweet woman how is she, dear?" and kept peering at the newcomer over her glasses, till, between Madam and Tom, poor Polly lost her appetite.

Fanny chatted like a magpie, and Maud fidgeted, till Tom proposed to put her under the big dish-cover, which produced such an explosion, that the young lady was borne screaming away, by the much-enduring Katy. It was altogether an uncomfortable dinner, and Polly was very glad when it was over. They all went about their own affairs; and after doing the honors of the house, Fan was called to the dressmaker, leaving Polly to amuse herself in the great drawing-room.

Polly was glad to be alone for a few minutes; and, having examined all the pretty things about her, began to walk up and down over the soft, flowery carpet, humming to herself, as the daylight faded, and only the ruddy glow of the fire filled the room. Presently Madam came slowly in, and sat down in her arm-chair, saying, "That's a fine old tune; sing it to me, my dear. I haven't heard it this many a day." Polly didn't like to sing before strangers, for she had had no teaching but such as her busy mother could give her; but she had been taught the

utmost respect for old people, and having no reason for refusing, she directly went to the piano, and did as she was bid.

"That's the sort of music it's a pleasure to hear. Sing some more, dear," said Madam, in her gentle way, when she had done.

Pleased with this praise, Polly sang away in a fresh little voice that went straight to the listener's heart and nestled there. The sweet old tunes that one is never tired of were all Polly's store; and her favorites were Scotch airs, such as, "Yellow-Haired Laddie," "Jock o' Hazeldean," "Down among the Heather," and "Birks of Aberfeldie." The more she sung, the better she did it; and when she wound up with "A Health to King Charlie," the room quite rung with the stirring music made by the big piano and the little maid.

"By George, that's a jolly tune! Sing it again, please," cried Tom's voice; and there was Tom's red head bobbing up over the high back of the chair where he had hidden himself.

It gave Polly quite a turn, for she thought no one was hearing her but the old lady dozing by the fire. "I can't sing anymore; I 'm tired," she said, and walked away to Madam in the other room. The red head vanished like a meteor, for Polly's tone had been decidedly cool.

The old lady put out her hand, and drawing Polly to her knee, looked into her face with such kind eyes, that Polly forgot the impressive cap, and smiled at her confidingly; for she saw that her simple music had pleased her listener, and she felt glad to know it.

"You mustn't mind my staring, dear," said Madam, softly pinching her rosy cheek. "I haven't seen a little girl for so long, it does my old eyes good to look at you."

Polly thought that a very odd speech, and couldn't help

saying, "Aren't Fan and Maud little girls, too?"

"Oh, dear, no! Not what I call little girls. Fan has been a young lady this two years, and Maud is a spoiled baby. Your mother's a very sensible woman, my child."

"What a very queer old lady!" thought Polly; but she said "Yes'm" respectfully, and looked at the fire.

"You don't understand what I mean, do you?" asked Madam, still holding her by the chin.

"No 'm; not quite."

"Well, dear, I'll tell you. In my day, children of fourteen and fifteen didn't dress in the height of the fashion; go to parties, as nearly like those of grown people as it's possible to make them; lead idle, giddy, unhealthy lives, and get blas, at twenty. We were little folks till eighteen or so; worked and studied, dressed and played, like children; honored our parents; and our days were much longer in the land than now, it seems to, me."

The old lady appeared to forget Polly at the end of her speech; for she sat patting the plump little hand that lay in her own, and looking up at a faded picture of an old gentleman with a ruffled shirt and a queue.

"Was he your father, Madam?"

"Yes, dear; my honored father. I did up his frills to the day of his death; and the first money I ever earned was five dollars which he offered as a prize to whichever of his six girls would lay the handsomest darn in his silk stockings."

"How proud you must have been!" cried Polly, leaning on the old lady's knee with an interested face.

"Yes, and we all learned to make bread, and cook, and wore little chintz gowns, and were as gay and hearty as kittens. All lived to be grandmothers and fathers; and I'm the last, seventy,

next birthday, my dear, and not worn out yet; though daughter Shaw is an invalid at forty."

"That's the way I was brought up, and that's why Fan calls me old-fashioned, I suppose. Tell more about your papa, please; I like it," said Polly.

"Say 'father.' We never called him papa; and if one of my brothers had addressed him as 'governor,' as boys do now, I really think he'd have him cut off with a shilling."

Item Stem:

In the highlighted sentences in the excerpt, the narrator compares Fanny to a magpie and Tom to a meteor. Explain what the author suggests about Polly by using these similes.

Scoring Rubric	
3	The response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives sufficient evidence of the ability to interpret the intent of figurative language • Includes specific explanations that make clear reference to the text • Fully supports the explanations with clearly relevant details from the text
2	The response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives some evidence of the ability to interpret the intent of figurative language • Includes some specific explanations that make reference to the text • Adequately supports the explanations with relevant details from the text
1	The response: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Gives limited evidence of the ability to interpret the intent of figurative language • Includes explanations, but they are not explicit or make only vague references to the text • Supports the explanation with at least one detail but the relevance of that detail to the text must be inferred
0	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • A response gets no credit if it provides no evidence of the ability to interpret the intent of figurative language, includes no relevant information from the text, or is vague.

Scoring Notes:

Response may include but is not limited to: The first simile sets up a clear contrast between Fanny's nonstop chattering and Polly's respectful listening. The second simile contrasts Tom's rushed exit from the room with Polly's more measured and thoughtful behavior. Both similes show that Polly does not care for Fanny and Tom and prefers to spend time with Madam Shaw.

Score Point 3 Sample:

When the narrator compares Fanny to a magpie, which is a noisy bird, it shows that Fanny likes to talk a lot and probably doesn't give other people a chance to say much. Polly is described as being much quieter and low-key. The comparison of Tom to a meteor shows that he's very fast-moving and maybe knocks things around a little. The narrator describes Polly as a thoughtful and more careful person, someone who probably wouldn't run around like Tom. Using these comparisons shows the reader that Polly is very different from Fanny and Tom and is much more like Madam Shaw.

Score Point 2 Sample:

The narrator compares Fanny to a magpie, which is a noisy bird, because Fanny has similar characteristics. A meteor is a fast-moving object, and when the narrator compares Tom to it, it means that Tom also moves fast. These comparisons show that Fanny and Tom are different from Polly.

Score Point 1 Sample:

The narrator compares Fanny to a magpie and Tom to a meteor, which moves fast, to show that they share some characteristics with those objects. It shows that Polly is different than the other children.

Score Point 0 Sample:

Polly sings and Tom is a character in the story too.

Worksheet: Text Complexity Analysis		
Title	Author	Text Description
An Old-Fashioned Girl	Louisa May Alcott	Excerpt from chapter 1 of Alcott's well-known book



Recommended Placement for Assessment: Grade 9
 Though the quantitative measures suggest a lower grade placement, the language features and the fact that it is, essentially, focused on characterization, suggest that the appropriate placement for this passage is grade 9. **Based on these sets of measures, this passage is recommended for assessment at grade 9.**

Qualitative Measures	Quantitative Measures
<p>Meaning/Purpose: <u>Moderately complex:</u> Implied, but fairly straightforward literary text. After the first paragraphs, the passage becomes narrowly focused on the interaction between Polly and Madam.</p> <p>Text Structure: <u>Slightly complex:</u> Events proceed in a predictable, linear fashion.</p> <p>Language Features: <u>Very complex:</u> Language is somewhat archaic, with multiple expressions that will require interpretation (or reading over of) by the reader.</p> <p>Knowledge Demands: <u>Moderately complex:</u> Most of the passage is devoted to conversation, rather than action or events, so requires more from the reader than a simple narrative does. The significance of the passage is in the characterization, which is a relatively sophisticated task to interpret.</p>	<p>Common Core State Standards Appendix A Complexity Band Level (if applicable):</p> <p>Lexile or Other Quantitative Measure of the Text:</p> <p>Lexile: 910L; grades 4-5 Flesch-Kincaid: 5.2 Word Count: 1008</p> <p style="background-color: #0056b3; color: white; text-align: center;">Considerations for Passage Selection</p> <p>Passage selection should be based on the ELA Content Specifications targets and the cognitive demands of the assessment tasks.</p> <p>Potential Challenges a Text May Pose:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Accessibility • Sentence and text structures • Archaic language, slang, idioms, or other language challenges • Background knowledge • Bias and sensitivity issues • Word count

Adapted from the 2012 ELA SCASS work