

eMPower**ME**

STUDENT
SAMPLE ITEM BOOKLET
Writing & Language
Grade 8





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Sample Items

Directions

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

So, Who Can Sew?

1. The skills children learn these days are not the skills their grandparents learned. **2.** In the past, it was common for people to learn the domestic art of sewing. **3.** Many people even made their own clothing. **4.** Today, too few children are taught this important skill and instead either pay someone else to fix their clothes, or they must replace worn clothing altogether.

5. It provides opportunities for character development, such as patience in working through a process, confidence from completing a project, independence, and creativity. **6.** In fact, a study from the Pennsylvania Cooperative Extension Service found that “children—are not only naturally interested in sewing; they also derive creative benefits from this craft.” **7.** A study from Harvard University similarly determined that “the critical ages for learning creative skills are eight to twelve.” **8.** Some individuals argue that this skill does not reflect the needs of twenty-first century students. **9.** Yet, students can apply career-related technology to their creations by using software to scan, digitize, and stitch out their own designs.

10. It’s no wonder that some public and charter schools recognize the importance of sewing and are bringing it back to their classrooms. **11.** The challenge for schools now is that many teachers do not have this knowledge. **12.** However, students and teachers can find sewing classes in fabric shops, adult education programs, camps, and other youth organizations. **13.** Teaching sewing to students not only provides them with lasting benefits but also helps ensure this important skill is passed along to future generations.

This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.

1. In sentences 1–4, how does the writer introduce the main argument of the passage?

- A** by encouraging the reader to enroll in sewing classes
- B** by presenting negative effects of not knowing how to sew
- C** by explaining why children are no longer taught how to sew
- D** by offering an opposing viewpoint about learning how to sew

Which choice provides the **best** evidence for the answer to the previous question?

- A** “skills children learn these days are not the skills their grandparents learned.”
- B** “learn the domestic art of sewing”
- C** “too few children are taught this important skill”
- D** “pay someone else to fix their clothes, or they must replace worn clothing altogether”

2. Which sentence should be added right before sentence 5 to provide the **best** transition to the ideas that follow?
- A Sewing is an essential skill with long-lasting benefits that students need to learn.
 - B Children of our grandparents' generations were better prepared for life as adults than children today.
 - C Skills in the domestic arts are as important in the classroom as the core subjects of math, science, history, and English.
 - D Modern careers demand skills that are not taught in school, such as problem solving, creative thinking, and using technology.
3. How should the underlined portion of sentence 6 be changed to show that some words have been omitted from the quotation?
- A NO CHANGE
 - B "children, are"
 - C "children: are"
 - D "children . . . are"
4. The writer is deciding whether sentence 9 supports the main argument of the passage. Should the writer keep sentence 9?
- A Yes, because the sentence offers another claim that is related to the argument.
 - B Yes, because the sentence addresses the counterclaim with additional evidence.
 - C No, because the sentence introduces an unrelated detail that weakens the claim of the passage.
 - D No, because the sentence offers a counterclaim that is not thoroughly addressed in the passage.

5. How should the underlined word in sentence 12 be changed to **best** connect the ideas in the sentence?
- A NO CHANGE
 - B Likewise,
 - C Therefore,
 - D Additionally,
6. How should the underlined portion of sentence 13 be changed to make the sentence use the active voice?
- A NO CHANGE
 - B they pass along this important skill
 - C important skills pass along from students
 - D this important skill is passed along by students