

Constructed Response Questions – Grade 8 2013 for Teachers

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(Some questions did not present DOK and Standards information)

Samuel Peppard and the Wind Wagon

by Stephanie M. Bearce

“What kind of crazy contraption are you building?”

“That invention of yours is gonna kill you yet!”

“Samuel Peppard, you’ve gone plumb crazy!”

Samuel Peppard just laughed at his neighbors’ warnings and kept on working. Throughout the spring of 1860, Samuel holed up in his barn in Oskaloosa, Kansas, building something big. Something nobody in town had ever seen before. Something called a wind wagon.

At twenty-seven, Samuel had an aptitude for construction. He was a millwright by trade and earned his money building and repairing mill parts such as wooden wheels and metal gears, which were also used to build wagons.

Having grown up on the Midwestern plains, he also knew something about the prairie winds. These winds seemed to blow constantly, and Samuel thought they would provide the perfect energy source for driving a wagon. The wind offered many advantages over a horse: it didn’t have to eat, drink, or sleep, and it certainly didn’t leave behind piles of smelly manure. The wind wagon seemed to be the ideal transportation for anyone headed to the Colorado gold fields—and that’s just where Samuel planned to go.

So all spring Samuel hammered. He sewed his sails and carved out a mast. And with the help of three friends—Steve Randall, J.T. Forbes, and Gid Colon—Samuel built his dream. By early May the wind wagon was ready for a test run. A warm spring wind whipped at their faces as Samuel and his friends hauled the wagon a mile out of town.

Samuel climbed on board the wind wagon. He raised the mainsail, and it immediately caught the breeze. The wagon sped forward but then suddenly lunged toward the ground. Samuel held on for dear life, afraid the wagon would flip over. Quickly he lowered the large sail and hoisted the small one. The small sail caught less wind, and the wagon raced smoothly through the prairie grass. Samuel and his friends were still cheering when the wagon rolled over a small hill, leaped thirty feet into the air, and crashed.

Samuel crawled out to inspect the damage. It was nothing a good millwright couldn’t fix. Samuel and his friends pushed the wagon back to town, and in two days, it was as good as new. Shaped like a small boat on buggy wheels, the wagon now had a hand brake to control the speed and a rudder for steering.

“Where are you going with that contraption?”

“You’ll never get to Colorado.”

“Samuel Peppard, you’ve gone plumb crazy!”

Samuel waved good-bye to his neighbors as he and his friends loaded food, camping equipment, and rifles into the wind wagon. Samuel, J.T., Steve, and Gid then sailed north on the prairie grass to join the Oregon Trail to Fort Kearny.

At times the prairie winds cooperated, and the wagon zipped through the rolling plains at fifteen miles per hour. J.T., Steve, and Gid laughed and shouted as Samuel steered past old-fashioned buggies pulled by horses.

But other days, the winds died down, and the horse-drawn wagons marched past as the wind wagon sat still. On those days J.T., Steve, and Gid went hunting for supper while Samuel waited with the wagon for the wind to return. As soon as the wind picked up, Samuel hoisted the sail, and his friends ran to jump on board. The wind wagon crew had to be ready to sail whenever the wind blew, even if it was the middle of the night. Sometimes J.T. and Steve watched the prairie moon and listened to the coyotes call as Samuel and Gid steered the wagon west.

It only took fifteen days for the wind wagon to reach Fort Kearny. When it rolled into town there was quite a commotion.

“What in the world is that strange wagon?”

“I’ve never seen anything like it.”

“Somebody’s gone plumb crazy!”

Samuel Peppard’s wind wagon became an instant hit. A reporter for Frank Leslie’s Illustrated Newspaper wrote an article about the wagon, and people up and down the Oregon Trail were talking about how fast it could travel and how much money it saved with no horses to feed.

Even Native Americans were amazed at the sight of the wind wagon. Samuel told the reporter that when a group of Indians on horseback had seen the wagon, they started a playful contest. All the riders raced alongside trying to keep up with the wind wagon; one by one, they dropped off. When the last rider finally gave up, he waved to Samuel and said, “White man fly like a bird.”

After Fort Kearny, Samuel and his friends sailed parallel to the Oregon Trail all the way to Fort Morgan, Colorado. There, the wind wagon met its match.

“What’s that swirling dust?”

“Hurry, Samuel, lower the sail!”

“This wagon’s gone plumb crazy!”

When the dust devil blew away, the wind wagon lay in a broken heap with no hope of repair. Fortunately, neither Samuel nor his friends were hurt. By the time they dusted themselves off, they were surrounded by many horse-drawn wagons offering rides.

Samuel and his friends hitched a ride with the baggage wagon for the rest of their journey to Denver. They had crossed over five hundred miles in their wind wagon in only a month.

Samuel Peppard never built another wind wagon. After hunting for gold in Colorado, he joined the Union army and fought in the Civil War. When the war was over, he went home to Oskaloosa, got married, and raised thirteen children.

And sometimes, when he told the story of his wind wagon, Samuel Peppard heard his grandchildren say:

“What kind of contraption was that?”

“You could have been killed.”

“Grandpa, you were plumb crazy.”

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Read the sentence from paragraph 4 and the directions that follow.

Samuel Peppard just laughed at his neighbors' warnings and kept on working.

Using details from the text, explain how this sentence affects the reader's understanding of Samuel Peppard.

Type your answer in this box.

2 Point Response includes an explanation of how the given sentence affects the reader's understanding of Samuel Peppard and at least one correct supporting detail from the text.

Exemplar:

The narrator's statement makes the reader think that Samuel is confident in his idea for the wind wagon. Samuel knew he could make it work because he was good at construction, and he laughed because he knew his neighbors didn't understand wagon-building as well as he did.

1 Point Response includes an explanation of how the given sentence affects the reader's understanding of Samuel Peppard with limited or missing support from the text.

Exemplar:

The narrator's statement shows that Samuel is confident even though his neighbors don't understand what he is doing.

0 Point Response that does not explain how the given sentence affects the reader's understanding of Samuel Peppard receives no credit.

Exemplar:

Samuel's neighbors are curious.

DOK:

Standard(s):

1006



Samuel Peppard can be described in many ways. Think of a character trait that Samuel possesses and give examples from the text that support your response.

Type your answer in the space provided.

Type your answer in this box.

2 Point Response includes an appropriate character trait and a supporting example from the text. Correct responses may include a description of Samuel’s determination and dedication.

Exemplar

Samuel Peppard was a determined person who didn’t care what other people thought. From the beginning, other people told him his idea of a wind-drawn wagon was crazy. But he never let their doubts slow him down. In the story, “Samuel Peppard just laughed at his neighbors’ warnings and kept working.” He believed in his idea, and he persisted in rebuilding his wagon even after its first crash.

1 Point Response includes an appropriate character trait with missing or incomplete support.

Exemplar

Samuel was an independent thinker. He didn’t mind when people thought his ideas were strange.

0 Point Response that does not provide an appropriate character trait receives no credit.

Exemplar

Samuel’s neighbors warned him.

DOK:

Standard(s):



A student is writing an argumentative essay about physical education (PE) classes in middle schools for her English assignment. The teacher suggested the student add an opening sentence that establishes a clear claim. Read the student's draft and the directions that follow.

Too many kids waste dozens of hours each week in front of the TV or computer. They may be exercising their fingers and sometimes their minds, but they are not exercising the rest of their bodies. But, in physical education class, they do. Recent research has shown that physical education class has many benefits: it can teach teamwork, build confidence, and increase academic success. Students who take regular physical education classes not only develop healthier habits throughout their lives, but the activity reduces anxiety and improves judgment. One study revealed that students who did not have access to these classes were 2.5 times more likely to become inactive. Some students may feel awkward in physical education class; however, they may be getting more out of it than they realize.

Write **at least one** sentence at the beginning of the paragraph that establishes a clear claim.

Type your answer in the space provided.

Type your answer in this box.

1 Point Response includes at least one sentence that establishes a clear claim for the given paragraph.

Exemplar

Middle school kids need classes like physical education.

0 Point Response does not include a sentence that establishes an appropriate claim for the paragraph receives no credit.

Exemplar

Our school has gym twice a week this year.



For health class, Cristi has written an informational report on eating a more nutritional diet. Her teacher has asked that she include evidence to support her research. Read two paragraphs from the report, her notes, and the directions that follow.

Fruits and vegetables are important to a healthy diet and lifestyle. We need vitamins and minerals found in these foods in order to be our best. Finding the sweetest, juiciest of these foods will help people enjoy eating them.

People who do not eat enough fruits and vegetables may have serious health risks. Without the proper fiber in their diet, some people may have poor digestion. This can cause high cholesterol, which may lead to heart disease. These foods also provide antioxidants, which help us to prevent illnesses and even cancer. Furthermore, having a lack of vitamin C in the body can create problems like dry skin, brittle hair and nails, dental problems, and tiredness. In order to live the healthiest life possible, it is essential to add these natural foods to our daily diets.

Notes about Fruits and Vegetables from Research

- Some of the highest fiber fruits: apples and bananas; some of the highest fiber vegetables: broccoli, beans, carrots
- Vitamin B: found in many vegetables, such as green peas and potatoes; keeps energy at high level
- Vitamin C: in citrus fruit, such as oranges; helps immune system fight off illness
- Folic acid: found in many fruits and vegetables; helps brain development and functioning of the brain.

Revise the paragraphs using the facts in the box to better support the key ideas. The revised paragraph should be well organized and should include sentences that are clear and complete.

Type your answer in the space provided.

Type your answer in this box.

2 Point Response uses the additional facts to better support the key ideas in the paragraphs. The response uses appropriate word choices and organization for the intended audience and purpose. The sentences and ideas are coherent and connected through the use of appropriate transitions, organization and a variety of sentence structures.

Exemplar

Fruits and vegetables are important to a healthy diet and lifestyle. Most of our bodies need vitamins and minerals found in these foods in order to be our best. Vitamin B, found in many vegetables such as green peas and potatoes, is important to keeping our energy at its highest level. Foods containing vitamin C, like oranges, help to keep our immune systems working to fight off illness. Many of the fruits and vegetables also contain folic acid, which studies have shown help brain development and functioning. Finding the sweetest, juiciest of these foods will help people enjoy eating them.

1 Point Response includes most of the additional facts in a somewhat well-developed paragraph. The response may include extraneous or loosely related details and may have limited and predictable vocabulary that may not be consistently appropriate for the intended audience and purpose. Some evidence of coherent structure through use of transitions, organization and sentence variety is present, if used inconsistently.

Exemplar

Fruits and vegetables are important to a healthy diet and lifestyle. Most of our bodies need vitamins and minerals found in these foods in order to be our best. Vitamins like B and C are in vegetables like peas and oranges and help people stay healthy and fight diseases. Folic acid helps the brain. Finding the sweetest, juiciest of these foods will help people enjoy eating them.

0 Point Response that does not use the given facts in a correct or complete paragraph receives no credit. The response may include few supporting details that may be vague, repetitive, incorrect, or interfere with the meaning of the text. The response may have inappropriate vocabulary for the intended audience and purpose.

Exemplar

Fruits and vegetables are important to a healthy diet and lifestyle. People should eat different kinds of fruits and vegetables. Finding the sweetest, juiciest of these foods will help people enjoy eating them.



One sentence in the paragraph contains an error in grammar usage. Read the paragraph and the directions that follow.

Sheila and Desmond began their new jobs at a local bakery. After showing them around the store, the owner told them not to eat while working behind the counter. Sheila, with a cupcake frosted with vanilla icing, watched Desmond stuff his mouth. Just then, the owner came in, saw what had happened, and fired Desmond.

Type the incorrect sentence below, correcting the error in grammar usage.

Type your answer in this box.

2 Point Response identifies the incorrect sentence and corrects the error in grammar usage.

Exemplar

Sentence 3: Sheila watched Desmond stuff his mouth with a cupcake frosted with vanilla icing.

1 Point Response identifies the incorrect sentence, but includes a partial or incorrect revision of the sentence.

Exemplar

Sentence 3: With a cupcake frosted with vanilla icing, Sheila watched Desmond stuff his mouth.

0 Point Response that does not identify the incorrect sentence receives no credit.

Exemplar

Sentence 1: At the local bakery, they began their new jobs.



Luke is revising his paper on Venus Flytraps which he plans to submit to a contest sponsored by a science website. He has decided that the underlined words are not precise enough for his audience.

The trapping job of the Venus Flytrap is performed by the terminal portion of each of the plant's leaves and is started by tiny hairs on their inner surfaces. When an insect or spider crawling along the leaves contacts a hair, the trap closes. Small insects and spiders have no chance of escape from this carnivorous plant.

Rewrite the first sentence, replacing the underlined words with more precise terms.

Type your answer in the space provided.

Type your answer in this box.

2 Point Response replaces both underlined words with more precise terms.

Exemplar

The trapping function of the Venus Flytrap is performed by the terminal portion of each of the plant's leaves and is activated by tiny hairs on their inner surfaces.

1 Point Response includes one precise term to replace one of the underlined words.

Exemplar

The trapping job of the Venus Flytrap is performed by the terminal portion of each of the plant's leaves and is triggered by tiny hairs on their inner surfaces.

0 Point Response that does not replace either of the general underlined terms with more precise terms receives no credit.

Exemplar

The trapping job of the Venus Flytrap is performed by the terminal portion of each of the plant's leaves and is started by tiny hairs on their inner surfaces.

Constructed Responses 2014 – Grade 8

From SBAC portal – Practice Test Scoring Guides at SBAC.com

DOK: 3

Standards: W-1.a: use information provided in a stimulus to write organized arguments by establishing and introducing a clear claim.

2552



A student is writing an editorial for the local newspaper about cell phones in schools. Read the draft of the editorial and complete the task that follows.

Needing to Communicate

Many parents want to be able to have access to their children via cell phones during the school day. However, with the regulations that are present at most schools, contacting their children can seem impossible to parents. While it is true that cell phones can be used improperly in a classroom, this problem can be avoided by establishing a clear set of rules. Instead of banning cell phones completely in schools, school districts should impose limits. These limits would help ensure that mobile devices are used for the right circumstances. For example, students would not be able to use phones during classes. They would, however, be able to use phones during breaks, such as lunch, and after school. This limit would eliminate disruptive phone alerts during lessons but still enable appropriate use for students who are able to follow the rules and thus earn the privilege of carrying a phone.

Write an introduction to the editorial that establishes and introduces a clear claim that supports the use of cell phones in schools.

Type your answer in this box.

2 Point Response

- establishes an appropriate claim that adequately articulates the argument(s) presented in the stimulus
- provides adequate information to put the claim about the school board's plan to frame the argument /put it into context
- does more than list arguments to support the claim—not formulaic
- provides an adequate connection to the body paragraph 2 point sample answer

Exemplar:

Cell phones should be allowed in schools. The reality is that a greater number of students and their parents are acquiring cell phones. As a result, we are increasingly becoming a generation that is dependent on mobile technology. Schools already have rules for the use of technology, such as school computers. Therefore, why not create a policy for cell phones as well? Rules would be better than a ban.

Annotation: The writer’s introduction does reflect the argument as a whole and sets the context. The suggested solution moves the reader to the next body paragraph. This “adequate” response meets all criteria for a 2, although other “2” responses may not hit all 4 bullets, or might utilize other approaches.

1 Point Response

- provides a claim that partially reflects the argument(s) presented in the stimulus
- provides general information that attempts to frame the argument/put the claim into context
- may list arguments—formulaic
- provides a weak connection to the body paragraph

Exemplar:

Schools should allow students to have cell phones.

Currently, we depend on cell phones to stay in touch with others and to get updated information. School is about gathering information; therefore, cell phones will help.

Annotation: The claim is appropriate for the argument, but there is little context provided, and the information provided is mostly general (“stay in touch”) or irrelevant to the stimulus (“gathering information”). The connection to the body paragraph is weak. Other “1” responses may have different strengths, weaknesses, approaches and still receive an overall score of “1.”

0 Point Response

- provides no claim OR provides a claim that is not adequate/ appropriate for the stimulus
- provides irrelevant or no information to frame the argument or put the claim into context
- provides no appropriate connection to the body paragraph

Exemplar:

I have a cell phone that my mom gave to me to use to keep in contact with her. It’s great for school. It has Internet access on it, so that I can check email and look up information as well.

Annotation: There is an implicit claim (“it’s great for school” [therefore they shouldn’t be banned]), but the information provided to frame the argument is irrelevant to the stimulus (“my mom,” “email,” etc.). There is no attempt to connect to the body of the paragraph. See other grade levels for different types of “0” responses.

Student Directions

Penny Argumentative Performance Task

Task:

In recent years, a heated debate has emerged about money in the United States. This particular debate is not about big economic issues, though. Surprisingly, it is about the economic pros and cons of producing and using pennies.

The controversies surrounding the production and continued use of pennies is one of the topics that will be part of an upcoming website project for your history class. As part of your initial research, you have uncovered four sources about the historical and economic impact of the penny.

After you have reviewed these sources, you will answer some questions about them. Briefly scan the sources and the three questions that follow. Then, go back and read the sources carefully so you will have the information you will need to answer the questions and finalize your research. You may click on the Global Notes button to take notes on the information you find in the sources as you read. You may also use scratch paper to take notes.

In Part 2, you will write an argumentative essay on a topic related to the sources.

Directions for Beginning:

You will now examine several sources. You can re-examine any of the sources as often as you like.

Research Questions:

After examining the research sources, use the remaining time in Part 1 to answer three questions about them. Your answers to these questions will be scored. Also, your answers will help you think about the research sources you have read and looked at, which should help you write your argumentative essay.

You may click on the Global Notes button or refer back to your scratch paper to look at your notes when you think it would be helpful. Answer the questions in the spaces below the items.

Both the Global Notes on the computer and your written notes on scratch paper will be available to you in Part 1 and Part 2 of the performance task.

Part 1

Sources for Performance Task:

Source #1

The following article is from the *New York Times*, published on April 7, 2012.

Penny Wise, or 2.4 Cents Foolish?

by Jeff Sommer

The news from north of the border is both trivial and unsettling: they won't be making shiny new pennies in Canada anymore.

The government in Ottawa has made this decision after years of deliberation¹, for reasons that would seem to apply equally well in the United States.

"Pennies take up too much space on our dressers at home," Jim Flaherty, the Canadian finance minister², said in a speech last month. A persuasive government brochure put it this way: "We often store them in jars, throw them away in water fountains, or refuse them as change."

Pennies cost more to produce than they are worth. [T]hey are worth so little that many Canadians don't bother to use them at all. . . .

Do we really need pennies?

The Canadian government doesn't think so. By the fall, it plans to stop minting them and stop distributing them through banks. It won't actually ban them, though. Some people have grown so attached to pennies—a penny saved is a penny earned, after all—that they may want to keep using them indefinitely, and they can, the Canadian government says.

But those who can bear to part with their pennies are being encouraged to bring them to banks for eventual melting or to donate them to charities—which will presumably bring them in for melting. Electronic transactions will continue to include cents, while retail sales will be rounded up or down.

Inflation³ is sometimes cited as a threat whenever small coins are phased out. A \$2.01 cup of coffee should be rounded down to \$2, while \$2.03 should become \$2.05, for example, but retailers in the real world might raise prices more than lower them. That could cause a small, one-time inflation burst, says

François Velde, an expert on the history of small change. . . .

"But in a competitive market, you might well see price decreases," says Mr. Velde, a senior economist at the Federal Reserve Bank of Chicago who is working this year at the Bank of France. "In a place like New York, a 99-cent price of pizza might go down to 95 cents rather than \$1 to avoid crossing that higher price threshold." Over all and over time, there should be no net price effect, he says.

He finds the argument for phasing out the penny to be at least as strong in the United States as in Canada because the two nations' small coins, political history and socioeconomic culture have so much in common. "That's what makes the Canadian decision a little unsettling," he says. "Their pennies even look a lot like ours."

In the United States, the mint says, each zinc and copper coin costs 2.41 cents to produce and distribute. It costs 1.6 Canadian cents to make a penny at the mint in Winnipeg, according to Canadian government figures. (A Canadian cent is worth about 0.99 cents at the current exchange rate.) "From the standpoint of economics, that's just a total waste of money," Mr. Velde says.

Pennies may not be big money, even if you add them together. But we are paying a cost for the privilege of squirreling them away in drawers and on dressers. The United States government—that is, taxpayers—lost \$60.2 million on the production and distribution of pennies in the 2011 fiscal year, the mint's budget shows, and the losses have been mounting: \$27.4

million in 2010, and \$19.8 million in 2009.

A number of countries, including Australia, New Zealand, Brazil, Finland, the Netherlands, Norway, Sweden, Switzerland and Britain, have already dropped their lowest-denominated coins, without dire consequences.

What is to be done in the United States? The mint defers to Congress, and Congress hasn't told it to abolish the penny. Lawmakers have directed the mint to study ways to make small coins more cheaply. Mike White, a spokesman for the mint, says a report will be completed in December. . . .

At the very least, a change in the composition of the American penny seems likely.

In 1982, Congress authorized the Treasury to make such a change, and it did. Before then, pennies were 95 percent copper and 5 percent zinc. . . . Pennies manufactured since have been copper-plated zinc, with zinc making up 97.5 percent of the coin and copper only 2.5 percent. Steel, which was used in pennies in World War II, could be substituted next.

But why stop at the penny? It's not the only American coin that costs more than it's worth. Each nickel costs 11.18 cents to produce and distribute, the mint says, at a loss to taxpayers of \$56.5 million in the last fiscal year. In its 2013 budget proposal, the Obama administration has asked for authority to alter the composition of the nickel, too. . . .

"The whole situation is ridiculous," Mr. Velde says. ". . . The serious, simple solution is to do away with

the penny."

A penny for your thoughts?

¹deliberation: discussion or debate

²Canadian finance minister: responsible for presenting the Canadian government's budget each year and helping to determine the funding levels for government departments

³Inflation: causing prices to increase

Sommer, J. (2012, April 7). Penny Wise, or 2.4 Cents Foolish? *New York Times*. Retrieved from: http://www.nytimes.com/2012/04/08/your-money/canada-drops-the-penny-but-will-the-us.html?_r=0

Source #2

The following is a newspaper article published in December 2012.

Is the Penny Worth It?

by Rachel Mancuso

The United States Department of Defense doesn't think so. For over 30 years, pennies haven't been used on foreign military bases. Pennies are "too heavy and are not cost-effective¹ to ship," according to Chris Ward, a spokesman for the Army and Air Force Exchange Service. This idea is the topic of much discussion lately, and the US Congress is considering eliminating the penny from the United States currency system.

On foreign military bases, instead of using pennies, the shops and restaurants round to the nearest 5-cents. For example, if a lunch bill comes out to \$9.06, it would be rounded down to \$9.05. If it was \$9.09, it would be rounded up to \$9.10.

The rounding system seems to work well for the military, and some experts such as Harvard professor N. Gregory Mankiw want to do the same in the entire United States. Some people fear that rounding will end up costing people extra money. Mark Weller, Americans for Common Cents spokesperson, claims that stores will not choose to round their prices down. He claims that what he calls the "rounding tax" will cost consumers \$600 million per year. Dr. Robert Whaples, a professor at Wake Forest, disagrees and does not think the economic impact of eliminating pennies will be significant.

Not only does he believe that it will have an insignificant impact on prices, but Whaples seems to think that eliminating the penny will save time too. He asserts that this time saved is even more valuable than eliminating a potential impact on rounding prices. His study says that the time wasted counting pennies could add up to over \$700 million per year nationwide. To a retail business, time is money because many retail businesses pay their employees by the hour. If the retail clerk and customer spend just 2.5 seconds per transaction counting pennies, those seconds add up. Those seconds add up to an estimated \$700 million in wages that businesses pay retail clerks to count pennies.

Not everyone agrees that the penny should be totally eliminated. Many argue that price-rounding cannot be

done fairly, and that finding a way to make pennies cheaper is a better approach. Steel, which was used to make pennies during World War II, would be a cheaper alternative. No matter what your stance, the penny debate is real, and the United States has to make a decision one way or the other.

¹cost-effective: producing desirable results without costing a lot of money

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Source #3

The following newspaper article examines the efforts of one school to use pennies to help a worthy cause.

Give a Penny—Save the Day!

by Ted Waterhouse

Last week, Washington Middle School (WMS) hosted its annual Penny Drive for Charity. Students from every grade brought in bags and jars of pennies, and, with everyone's assistance, they raised over \$3000 in one week!

This amazing effort was made possible due to the power of the penny. Many people do not see the value in the penny, and they feel as though pennies are not worth the trouble of carrying them around.

Pennies might be a little bulky, but they add up; moreover, because they are worth so little, people don't mind donating them to charity. Students at WMS found that out for themselves last week.

If the school had organized a dime or a quarter drive, they probably would not have raised as much money. As Michael Cooper, an eighth grader, said, "If you asked for my quarters, I would have said 'no' because I use them for video games. Pennies don't really matter much, so I was happy to give them to someone who could use them." Many other students I spoke with echoed Michael's words.

Bottom line: A penny is not worth much by itself, but as WMS found out, there is power in numbers. When people put all their pennies together for a good cause, they can add up quickly, and they can truly help a

good cause. So if you don't see much value in a penny, WMS can put it to good use!

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Source #4

The following article from a general interest magazine published in 2014 explores some of the changes the penny has gone through.

The Ever-Changing Penny by Maria Story

The one-cent piece, commonly referred to as the "penny," has been a part of United States history for over two hundred years. Its design has changed twenty-one times. History also shows that as the economy has changed, so has the value of the coin.

The first pennies, minted until 1857, were very large—larger than our modern day quarter and had different images of the Statue of Liberty on the front. People did not really like how big they were. Several other versions of the coin were minted before finally producing the familiar Lincoln penny in 1909. Since then, ten varieties have been minted, mostly because of changes in metal content. Changing metal content was important to try to reduce production costs¹. The

U.S. Mint is still exploring additional designs and different, more cost effective, metal compositions for the penny.

The history of a penny reveals more than just a coin—it exposes a piece of American culture. The one-cent piece has influenced our language, giving us a number of idioms², such as "a penny for your thoughts" (a way to ask what someone is thinking) and "not one red cent" (meaning no money at all). The coin also gave rise to the terms like "penny candy" (a piece of candy sold for a cent) and "penny arcade" (an amusement center with machines that cost one cent to operate).

Despite its cultural influences the penny is currently under attack. The reason? Because making money also costs money. In 2011, it cost the U.S. Mint more than 2.4 cents to produce one penny. This has led many to argue that the penny is inflating the economy and should be eliminated. However, what many people fail to also consider is that the nickel, too, costs more to produce than it is worth. In 2011, the cost for the U.S. Mint to produce a nickel was over eleven cents. Even though production costs are slightly lower today, the penny still costs the U.S. just over 1.8 cents to produce. The nickel's cost is currently 9.4 cents.

The history of the American penny is a curious one. How long it will remain a part of our spending currency is yet to be determined.

¹production costs: costs of the materials and labor needed to manufacture something

²idiom: a word or phrase that means something different from its usual meaning

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DOK: 4

Standard(s): RI-1

The student will analyze information within and among multiple sources of information.

2695



Source #4 describes how some people want to eliminate the penny from the United States' economy. Explain how the information in Source #2 adds to the reader's understanding of the potential effects of eliminating pennies in the United States. Give **two** details from Source #2 to support your explanation.

Key Elements:

Source #2 (Is the Penny Worth It?)

- The U.S. Department of Defense stopped using the penny on foreign military bases over 30 years ago because pennies are “too heavy and are not cost effective to ship.”
- The foreign military bases use a pricing system that rounds transactions to the nearest 5-cents, and that rounding system seems to work well.
- Some fear that rounding will cost more for customers because of rising prices. Mark Weller says the “rounding tax” will cost consumers \$600 million per year.
- Dr. Whaples study says that over \$700 million is wasted per year in the United States through the time it takes retail clerks and customers to count pennies.
- Many argue that price rounding cannot be done fairly, so finding a cheaper way to make pennies is a better option for cutting the costs of the penny. One option for cutting costs is by using steel to make pennies like was done during World War II.

Type your answer in this box.

2 Point Response is an evidence-based explanation that provides two pieces of evidence from Source #2 that support this idea and that explains how each example supports the idea.

Exemplar:

Source #2 adds to the reader’s understanding by providing more information about why some people think the penny should be eliminated. For example, it gives the concrete example of a study done by Dr. Whaples which indicated that eliminating the penny could save over \$700 million because of the time wasted counting pennies. This concrete example helps the reader understand that eliminating the penny has the potential to save a significant amount of money.

In addition, Source #2 also provides more information on the reasons some people think the penny should remain. For example, many people fear that eliminating the penny and rounding prices will cause customers to have to pay more over time. This example helps the reader understand that there may be negative consequences to eliminating the penny.

1 Point Response is an evidence-based explanation that provides two pieces of evidence from Source #2 that support this idea but doesn't explain how each example supports the idea.

OR

Response is an evidence-based explanation that provides only one piece of evidence from Source #2 that supports this idea and that explains how that example supports the idea.

Exemplar

Source #2 adds to the reader’s understanding by providing more information about why some people think the penny should be eliminated. For example, it gives the concrete example of a study done by Dr. Whaples which indicated that eliminating the penny could save over \$700 million because of the time wasted counting pennies. This concrete example helps the reader understand that eliminating the penny has the potential to save a significant amount of money.

0 Point Response is an explanation that is incorrect, irrelevant, insufficient, or blank.

Exemplar

Eliminating the penny could save the United States a lot of money.

DOK: 4

Standard(s): WHST-8

The student will use reasoning, evaluation, and evidence to assess the credibility of each source in order to select relevant information to support research.

2696



All of the sources provide information about the penny. Which source would **most likely** be relevant to students researching the ways to reduce the cost of producing the penny? Justify your answer and support it with **two** pieces of information from the sources.

Key Elements:

Source #1 (Penny Wise, or 2.4 Cents Foolish?)

- Congress has instructed the US Mint to study ways to make the penny more cheaply.
- Congress changed the composition of the penny in 1982 to be more zinc and less copper.
- Steel was used to make pennies during World War II.
- A nickel costs more than 11 cents to produce and distribute.

Type your answer in this box.

Rubric:

2 Points Response is an evidence-based explanation that correctly identifies the most relevant source AND includes two pieces of evidence from that source that support this evaluation and that explains why each piece of evidence supports the idea that it is the most relevant source.

Exemplar:

Source #1 is most likely to be relevant to students researching the ways to reduce the cost of producing the penny because it provides the most detailed information about changes that have been made to the penny in the past to reduce costs. For example, it points out that in 1982 Congress changed the metals in the penny to contain more zinc and less copper in order to reduce the cost. Also, during WWII steel was used to make pennies instead of copper. These two pieces of information make Source #1 the most relevant source for ways to reduce the cost of producing pennies.

1 Point Response is an evidence-based explanation that correctly identifies the most relevant source AND includes one piece of evidence from that source that support this evaluation and that explains why the piece of evidence supports the idea that it is the most relevant source.

OR

Response is an evidence-based explanation that correctly identifies the most relevant source AND includes two pieces of evidence from that source that support this evaluation but does not explain why each piece of evidence supports the idea that it is the most relevant source.

OR

Response is an evidence-based explanation that does not identify a source or correctly identify the most relevant source but includes two pieces of evidence from the correct source and that explains why each piece of evidence supports the idea that it is the most relevant source.

Exemplar

Source #1 is most likely to be relevant to students researching the ways to reduce the cost of producing the penny because it provides the most detailed information about changes that have been made to the penny in the past to reduce costs. For example, it points out that in 1982 Congress changed the metals in the penny to contain more zinc and less copper in order to reduce the cost. This information makes Source #1 the most relevant source for ways to reduce the cost of producing pennies.

0 Point Response is an explanation that is incorrect, irrelevant, insufficient, or blank.

Exemplar

Source #2 is the most relevant source to students researching the ways to reduce the cost of producing the penny.

DOK: 4

Standard(s): W1-A

The student will write full arguments about topics or texts, attending to purpose and audience: establish and support a claim, organize and cite supporting (text) evidence from credible sources, and develop a conclusion that is appropriate to purpose and audience and follows and supports the argument(s) presented.

2698



Student Directions

Penny Argumentative Performance Task

Part 2

You will now review your notes and sources, and plan, draft, revise, and edit your writing. You may use your notes and refer to the sources. Now read your assignment and the information about how your writing will be scored; then begin your work.

Your Assignment:

As a contribution to the website your history class is creating, you decide to write an argumentative essay that addresses the issues surrounding the penny. Your essay will be displayed on the website and will be read by students, teachers, and parents who visit the website.

Your assignment is to use the research sources to write a multi-paragraph argumentative essay either for or against the continued production of the penny in the United States. Make sure you establish an argumentative claim, address potential counterarguments, and support your claim from the sources you have read. Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the sources. Be sure to reference the sources by title or number when using details or facts directly from the sources.

Argumentative Essay Scoring:

Your argumentative essay will be scored using the following:

- 1. Organization/purpose:** How well did you state your claim, address opposing claims, and maintain your claim with a logical progression of ideas from beginning to end? How well did your ideas thoughtfully flow from beginning to end using effective transitions? How effective was your introduction and your conclusion?
- 2. Evidence/elaboration:** How well did you integrate relevant and specific information from the sources? How well did you elaborate your ideas? How well did you clearly state ideas in your own words using precise language that is appropriate for your audience and purpose? How well did you reference the sources you used by title or number?
- 3. Conventions:** How well did you follow the rules of grammar usage, punctuation, capitalization, and spelling?

Now begin work on your argumentative essay. Manage your time carefully so that you can

- plan your multi-paragraph argumentative essay.
- write your multi-paragraph argumentative essay.
- revise and edit the final draft of your multi-paragraph argumentative essay.

Word-processing tools and spell check are available to you.

For Part 2, you are being asked to write a multi-paragraph argumentative essay, so please be as thorough as possible. Type your response in the space provided. The box will expand as you type.

Remember to check your notes and your prewriting/planning as you write and then revise and edit your argumentative essay.

Type your answer in this box.

4-Point Argumentative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Organization/Purpose	<p>The response has a clear and effective organizational structure, creating a sense of unity and completeness. The organization is fully sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is consistently and purposefully focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim is introduced, clearly communicated, and the focus is strongly maintained for the purpose and audience consistent use of a variety of transitional strategies to clarify the relationships between and among ideas effective introduction and conclusion logical progression of ideas from beginning to end; strong connections between and among ideas with some syntactic variety alternate and opposing argument(s) are clearly acknowledged or addressed* 	<p>The response has an evident organizational structure and a sense of completeness. Though there may be minor flaws, they do not interfere with the overall coherence. The organization is adequately sustained between and within paragraphs. The response is generally focused:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim is clear, and the focus is mostly maintained for the purpose and audience adequate use of transitional strategies with some variety to clarify relationships between and among ideas adequate introduction and conclusion adequate progression of ideas from beginning to end; adequate connections between and among ideas alternate and opposing argument(s) are adequately acknowledged or addressed* 	<p>The response has an inconsistent organizational structure. Some flaws are evident, and some ideas may be loosely connected. The organization is somewhat sustained between and within paragraphs. The response may have a minor drift in focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim may be somewhat unclear, or the focus may be insufficiently sustained for the purpose and/or audience inconsistent use of transitional strategies and/or little variety introduction or conclusion, if present, may be weak uneven progression of ideas from beginning to end; and/or formulaic; inconsistent or unclear connections among ideas alternate and opposing argument(s) may be confusing or not acknowledged * 	<p>The response has little or no discernible organizational structure. The response may be related to the claim but may provide little or no focus:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> claim may be confusing or ambiguous; response may be too brief or the focus may drift from the purpose and/or audience few or no transitional strategies are evident introduction and/or conclusion may be missing frequent extraneous ideas may be evident; ideas may be randomly ordered or have unclear progression alternate and opposing argument(s) may not be acknowledged * 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

* Acknowledging and/or addressing the opposing point of view begins at grade 7.

4-Point Argumentative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)					
Score	4	3	2	1	NS
Evidence/Elaboration	<p>The response provides thorough and convincing elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) including reasoned, in-depth analysis and the effective use of source material. The response clearly and effectively develops ideas, using precise language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> comprehensive evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated, relevant, and specific clear citations or attribution to source material effective use of a variety of elaborative techniques* vocabulary is clearly appropriate for the audience and purpose effective, appropriate style enhances content 	<p>The response provides adequate elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) that includes reasoned analysis and the use of source material. The response adequately develops ideas, employing a mix of precise with more general language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate evidence (facts and details) from the source material is integrated and relevant, yet may be general adequate use of citations or attribution to source material adequate use of some elaborative techniques* vocabulary is generally appropriate for the audience and purpose generally appropriate style is evident 	<p>The response provides uneven, cursory elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) that includes some reasoned analysis and partial or uneven use of source material. The response develops ideas unevenly, using simplistic language:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> some evidence (facts and details) from the source material may be weakly integrated, imprecise, repetitive, vague, and/or copied weak use of citations or attribution to source material weak or uneven use of elaborative techniques*; development may consist primarily of source summary or may rely on emotional appeal vocabulary use is uneven or somewhat ineffective for the audience and purpose inconsistent or weak attempt to create appropriate style 	<p>The response provides minimal elaboration of the support/evidence for the claim and argument(s) that includes little or no use of source material. The response is vague, lacks clarity, or is confusing:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> evidence (facts and details) from the source material is minimal, irrelevant, absent, incorrectly used, or predominantly copied insufficient use of citations or attribution to source material minimal, if any, use of elaborative techniques*; emotional appeal may dominate vocabulary is limited or ineffective for the audience and purpose little or no evidence of appropriate style 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

*Elaborative techniques may include the use of personal experiences that support the argument(s).

2-Point Argumentative Performance Task Writing Rubric (Grades 6-11)				
Score	2	1	0	NS
Conventions	<p>The response demonstrates an adequate command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> adequate use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates a partial command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> limited use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<p>The response demonstrates little or no command of conventions:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> infrequent use of correct sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Insufficient (includes copied text) In a language other than English Off-topic Off-purpose

Holistic Scoring:

- Variety:** A range of errors includes sentence formation, punctuation, capitalization, grammar usage, and spelling
- Severity:** Basic errors are more heavily weighted than higher-level errors.
- Density:** The proportion of errors to the amount of writing done well. This includes the ratio of errors to the length of the piece.