

ELA.09.SR.1.01.097 C1 T1

Sample Item ID:	ELA.09.SR.1.01.097
Grade/Model:	9/1
Claim:	1: Students can read closely and analytically to comprehend a range of increasingly complex literary and informational texts.
Assessment Target(s):	1. KEY DETAILS: Cite explicit textual evidence to support inferences made or conclusions drawn about texts
Secondary Target(s):	n/a
Standard(s):	RL-1, RL-3
DOK:	2
Difficulty:	E
Item Type:	Selected Response
Score Points:	1
Key:	D
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 the 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 select the sentence that provides the best textual evidence in support of a stated inference.
Target-specific attributes (e.g., accessibility issues):	

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 any more; 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.

"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:

Madame Shaw seems to regard Polly more warmly than she

does the other children. Click on the highlighted sentence from the story that provides the best evidence that Polly shares this feeling.

Options:

[See highlighted sentences in passage.]

Distractor Analysis:

- A. 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 new-comer over her glasses, till, between Madam and Tom, poor Polly lost her appetite. : While this sentence shows Madam Shaw's initial warmth toward Polly, it also demonstrates Polly's initial level of anxiety around her.
- B. 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. : While this sentence shows Polly's respect for Madam Shaw, it doesn't show that she feels a strong connection to her.
- C. "I can't sing any more; I 'm tired," she said, and walked away to Madam in the other room. : Although this sentence demonstrates Polly preferring to be with Madam Shaw rather than Tom, it doesn't show that she feels a strong connection to her.
- D. KEY: "How proud you must have been!" cried Polly, leaning on the old lady's knee with an interested face. : The fact that Polly feels comfortable enough to lean on Madam Shaw after her initial formality reflects Polly's growing warmth and sense of connection with the older woman.

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; padding: 2px;">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