

# **The Common Core ELA Test Review**

# Preparing for the Common Core in ELA

- Here's the secret:
  - There are no shortcuts.
    - You have to read more.
    - You have to write more.

# But what do I read?

- The short answer is, “Read everything!”
- The longer answer is:
  - read across multiple genres (stories, drama, poetry, nonfiction, etc.);
  - you should be making an effort to read across demographics (historical periods, ethnicities, perspectives, and genders);
  - and you should read within the appropriate “text complexity band.”
    - There are several ways to measure “text complexity”, but be careful - most only take into account sentence and word length. Ask your teacher!!!

# The Common Core ELA Test

- The exemplar exam:
  - Part 1 Reading:
    - Fiction Excerpt (8 multiple choice questions)
    - Poetry (4 multiple choice questions)
    - Nonfiction Excerpt (6 multiple choice questions)
  - Part 2 Writing from Sources:
    - Write an evidence-based argument on a specific issue using four out of five provided texts.
  - Part 3 Text-Based Response:
    - Write a two to three paragraph response that identifies a central idea in a text and analyzes how the author's use of one writing strategy (literary element or technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea.

# Part 1: Reading

A one thousand word excerpt from *The Awakening* by  
Kate Chopin.

“Sonnet 27” by William Shakespeare.

*Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie (also about one thousand  
words)

# Part 1: Reading *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

1 The primary purpose of the first paragraph is to

- (1) create a metaphor
- (2) foreshadow an event
- (3) establish a contrast
- (4) present a flashback

- “He was in excellent humor...and very talkative.”
- “She was overcome with sleep, and answered him with little half utterances.”

## Part 1: Reading *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

2 Placed in the context of the rest of the text, Mr. and Mrs. Pontellier's disagreement about Raoul's fever (lines 21 through 34) reflects

- (1) Mrs. Pontellier's resentment of her husband's night out
- (2) Mr. Pontellier's belief in his authority over his wife
- (3) Mrs. Pontellier's need for her husband's approval
- (4) Mr. Pontellier's concern for his wife's well-being

- He reproached his wife with her inattention, her habitual neglect of the children. If it was not a mother's place to look after children, whose on earth was it? He himself had his hands full with his brokerage business. He could not be in two places at once; making a living for his family on the street, and staying at home to see that no harm befell them. He talked in a monotonous, insistent way.

## Part 1: Reading *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

3 In lines 29 through 34, the author presents Mr. Pontellier as a man who feels

- (1) defeated
- (2) anxious
- (3) distracted
- (4) arrogant

- He **reproached** his wife with **her inattention**, her **habitual neglect** of the children. If it was not a **mother's place** to look after children, whose on earth was it? **He** himself **had his hands full** with his brokerage business. **He could not be in two places at once**; making a living for his family on the street, and staying at home to see that no harm befell them. He talked in a **monotonous, insistent** way.



# Part 1: Reading *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

4 The author's choice of language in lines 42 through 50 serves to emphasize Mrs. Pontellier's sense of

- (1) isolation
- (2) boredom
- (3) disbelief
- (4) inferiority

- Blowing out the candle, which her husband had left burning, she slipped her bare feet into a pair of satin mules at the foot of the bed and went out on the porch [by herself], where she sat down in the wicker chair and began to rock gently to and fro.
- It was then past midnight. The cottages were all dark. A single faint light gleamed out from the hallway of the house. There was no sound abroad except the hooting of an old owl in the top of a water-oak, and the everlasting voice of the sea, that was not uplifted at that soft hour. It broke like a mournful lullaby upon the night.

## Part 1: Reading *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

5 One major effect of the simile used in line 50 is to emphasize Mrs. Pontellier's

- (1) anger
- (2) distress
- (3) defiance
- (4) exhaustion

- It [the voice of the sea] broke like a mournful lullaby upon the night.

## Part 1: Reading *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

6 Lines 57 through 61 demonstrate Mrs. Pontellier's desire to

- (1) protect her reputation
- (2) question her situation
- (3) abandon her dreams
- (4) disguise her sorrow

- “She could not have told why *she was crying*. Such experiences as the foregoing were *not uncommon in her married life*. They seemed never before to have *weighed* much *against* the abundance of *her husband's kindness and* a uniform *devotion* which had come to be tacit and self-understood.”

## Part 1: Reading *The Awakening* by Kate Chopin

8 Based on events in the text, which quotation best reveals the irony of the statement that Mr. Pontellier's wife "was the sole object of his existence" (lines 11 and 12)?

- (1) "From his trousers pockets he took a fistful of crumpled bank notes" (lines 6 and 7)
- (2) "Then he lit a cigar and went and sat near the open door to smoke it" (lines 22 and 23)
- (3) "He assured her the child was consuming at that moment in the next room" (lines 27 and 28)
- (4) "He was eager to be gone, as he looked forward to a lively week in Carondelet Street" (lines 78 and 79)

- What is the opposite of the wife being the sole object of Mr. Pontellier's existence?
  - The wife being of no consequence to Mr. P's existence.

# Part 1: Reading “Sonnet 27” by Shakespeare

## Sonnet 27

Weary with toil, I haste me to my bed,  
The dear repose for limbs with travel tir'd;  
But then begins a journey in my head  
To work my mind, when body's work's expired:  
5 For then my thoughts—from far where I abide—  
Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee,  
And keep my drooping eyelids open wide,  
Looking on darkness which the blind do see:  
Save that my soul's imaginary sight  
10 Presents thy shadow to my sightless view,  
Which, like a jewel hung in ghastly night,  
Makes black night beauteous, and her old face new.  
Lo! thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,  
For thee, and for myself, no quiet find.

—William Shakespeare, 1609  
Quarto version

# Part 1: Reading “Sonnet 27” by Shakespeare

9 The narrator’s use of the phrase “zealous pilgrimage”(line 6) emphasizes

- (1) an emotional attachment
- (2) a fatiguing journey
- (3) a religious conversion
- (4) an unpleasant memory

- “Intend a zealous pilgrimage to thee”

# Part 1: Reading “Sonnet 27” by Shakespeare

10 As used in line 10, “shadow” most likely refers to the narrator’s

- (1) soul
- (2) surroundings
- (3) reflection
- (4) friend

- “Presents thy shadow to my sightless view”

# Part 1: Reading “Sonnet 27” by Shakespeare

11 The poet’s use of figurative language in line 11 emphasizes his

- (1) regret
- (2) fear
- (3) desire
- (4) faith

- “Which, like a jewel  
hung in ghastly night”





## Part 1: Reading “Sonnet 27” by Shakespeare

12 The couplet in lines 13 and 14 of the sonnet serves as

- (1) an exaggeration
- (2) a clarification
- (3) a summation
- (4) an allusion

- Lo! thus, by day my limbs, by night my mind,
- For thee, and for myself, no quiet find.

# Part 1: Reading *Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie

13 The first paragraph (lines 1 through 12) serves the author's purpose by

- (1) providing examples of alternative tax policies
- (2) contrasting the current taxation system with his proposal
- (3) comparing equal taxation with graduated taxation
- (4) distinguishing estate taxes from income taxes

- The growing disposition to tax more and more heavily large estates left at death is a cheering indication of the growth of a salutary change in public opinion. **The State of Pennsylvania now takes**—subject to some exceptions—**one-tenth of the property left by its citizens**. The budget presented in the British Parliament the other day **proposes to increase the death-duties**; and, most significant of all, **the new tax is to be a graduated one**. Of all forms of taxation, this seems the wisest.

## Part 1: Reading *Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie

14 The expression “sap the root of enterprise” (lines 16 and 17) refers to the

- (1) decline in consumer confidence
- (2) reduction in government funding
- (3) discouragement of private business
- (4) harm to international trade

- Nor need it be feared that this policy would *sap the root of enterprise* and render men less anxious to accumulate, for to the class whose ambition it is to leave great fortunes and be talked about after their death, it will attract even more attention, and, indeed, be a somewhat nobler ambition to have enormous sums paid over to the state from their fortunes.

# Part 1: Reading *Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie

15 What evidence from the text best clarifies the author's claim in lines 34 through 39 ("Even the poorest... amounts")?

- (1) lines 40 through 42 ("Poor and restricted... inestimable boon")
- (2) lines 52 through 54 ("This, then, ... or extravagance")
- (3) lines 63 and 64 ("The laws... distribution free")
- (4) lines 65 through 68 ("Individualism... for itself")

- “Even the poorest can be made to see this, and to agree that great sums gathered by some of their fellow-citizens and spent for public purposes, from which the masses reap the principal benefit, are more valuable to them than if scattered among them through the course of many years in trifling amounts.”
  - “Individualism will continue, but the millionaire will be but a trustee for the poor; intrusted for a season with a great part of the increased wealth of the community, but administering it for the community far better than it could or would have done for itself.”

# Part 1: Reading *Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie

16 The author's tone in lines 52 through 62 can best be described as

- (1) confident
- (2) indifferent
- (3) humble
- (4) sarcastic

- This, then, **is held to be the duty** of the man of Wealth: First, **to set an example of** modest, unostentatious living, **shunning** display or extravagance; **to provide moderately** for the legitimate wants of those dependent upon him; and after doing so to **consider all surplus revenues** which come to him simply as trust funds, which he is called upon to administer, and **strictly bound as a matter of duty** to administer in the manner which, in his judgment, is best calculated to produce the most beneficial results for the community—**the man of wealth thus becoming** the mere agent and trustee for his poorer brethren, bringing to their service his superior wisdom, experience and ability to administer, **doing for them better** than they would or could do for themselves.

# Part 1: Reading *Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie

17 A central idea in the text advocates that the wealthy should

- (1) be rewarded for their generosity to the public
- (2) contribute to the public during their lifetime
- (3) entrust their estates to charitable institutions
- (4) be focused on increasing their institutional worth

- Carnegie hopes that by taxing a person's wealth upon their death, that person would be more motivated to distribute their funds themselves during their life.

## Part 1: Reading *Wealth* by Andrew Carnegie

- 18 Which statement best reflects a central argument used by the author?
- (1) There is no way to insure fair distribution of earnings.
  - (2) People should only be paid what they actually earn.
  - (3) Sharing wealth among all would limit large gifts from benefactors.
  - (4) Equaling wealth among all would restrict the national tax base.

- Under its sway we shall have an ideal state, in which the surplus wealth of the few will become, in the best sense, the property of the many, because administered for the common good, and this wealth, passing through the hands of the few, can be made a much more potent force for the elevation of our race than if it had been distributed in small sums to the people themselves.

# Part 2: WRITING FROM SOURCES



# Your Task:

Carefully read each of the five texts provided. Then, using evidence from at least four of the texts, write a well-developed argument regarding the success of the Federal Theatre Project. Clearly establish your claim, distinguish your claim from alternate or opposing claims, and use specific and relevant evidence from at least four of the texts to develop your argument. Do not simply summarize each text.

# What do they *REALLY* want me to do?

- Read all the provided texts
- Take a stance: was the Federal Theatre Project successful or not?
- Support your stance using at least 4 of the provided texts
- Address and refute any counter arguments that could be raised against your claim

# How do I get started?

- When reading the prompt, underline the most important words or phrases. In this case, “write a well-developed argument regarding the success of the Federal Theatre Project”. This phrase tells you the type or information you need to be looking for.

# Tips for reading the text

- Use your own set of metacognitive markers to annotate the provided texts:
  - A simple +, -, or = at the top of each page will help you remember the stance each piece of text takes in regard to the topic
  - Underline important quotes or statistics that will be used as evidence when crafting your argument
  - Don't forget to notate pieces of evidence that could be used as counterarguments to your claim, you will need to refute these points.

# Before you begin writing

- Double check your outline to make sure you have:
  - established a clear claim regarding the topic
  - planned to use the required number of sources (4), and are properly referencing them- by text number and line number.
  - refuted arguments counter to your own using textual evidence
  - organized your ideas in a clear and logical manner

# How am I getting graded on this?

- The rubric for this essay is based on a 6 point scale, and focuses on the following criteria:
  - Content and Analysis: the extent to which the essay conveys complex ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to support claims in an analysis of the texts
    - Raters are looking for papers that introduce a precise and insightful claim, demonstrate in-depth and insightful analysis of the texts, and refute counterarguments

- **Command of Evidence:** the extent to which the essay presents evidence from the provided texts to support analysis
  - Raters are looking for you to present ideas fully while using specific and properly cited evidence from the text to support your ideas.

- Coherence, Organization, and Style: the extent to which the essay logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language
  - Raters are looking for you to skillfully and logically organize your ideas, while maintaining formal language use and structure.



- **Control of Conventions:** the extent to which the essay demonstrates command of conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

# So remember...

- Establish a claim
- Utilize and properly cite *at least* 4 of the given texts
- Address and refute counter claims
- Obey the rules of formal writing and standard written English

# Part 3: Text-Based Response

# Your Task:

- Closely read the text provided on pages 39 through 41 and write a well-developed, text-based response of two to three paragraphs. In your response, identify a central idea in the text and analyze how the author's use of one writing strategy (literary element or literary technique or rhetorical device) develops this central idea. Use strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis. Do not simply summarize the text. You may use the margins to take notes as you read and the next page to plan your response. Write your response in the spaces provided.

# What do they *REALLY* want me to do?

- Read the provided text
- Analyze the text and identify literary elements, literary technique, rhetorical device
- Discuss how the author uses the identified techniques to express him/herself.

What should I avoid?

- At all costs, avoid simply summarizing the text

# How do I get started?

- When reading the prompt, underline the most important words or phrases. In this case, “identify a central idea in the text and analyze how the author’s use of one writing strategy...develops this central idea”

# Tips for close reading text

- Using your own set of metacognitive markers, attempt to identify the following:
  - What is the overall tone in the piece?
  - What is the author's purpose?
  - What is the author's main idea?
  - Is the audience important?
  - What literary element, literary technique, or rhetorical device is the author utilizing in order to enhance the main idea of the piece?



# After you have identified the technique you will using...

- Identify the exact location of the technique (it is best to utilize a direct quote)
- Ascertain the function of the technique (example: what does the metaphor actually compare, explain)
- Discuss the devices function/relationship to message (how does this technique help the author convey the message to the intended audience?)

# Before you begin writing...

- Double check your outline to make sure you have:
  - identified a central idea in the text
  - identified **one** literary element, literary technique, or rhetorical device that the author is using
  - identified the function of the technique, **and** linked it to the central idea of the text.
  - organized your ideas in a clear and logical manner

# How am I getting graded on this?

- The rubric for this essay is based on a 4 point scale, and focuses on the following criteria:
  - Content and Analysis: the extent to which the response conveys complex ideas and information clearly and accurately in order to respond to the task and support an analysis of the text
    - Raters are looking for papers that introduce well-reasoned central idea and introduce thoughtful analysis of the author's use of the chosen technique to develop the central idea of the passage.

- **Command of Evidence:** the extent to which the response presents evidence from the provided text to support analysis
  - Rater are looking for you to organize your ideas clearly and consistently while making effective use of specific and relevant evidence to support analysis (do you use direct quotes and explain them?)

- Coherence, Organization, and Style: the extent to which the response logically organizes complex ideas, concepts, and information using formal style and precise language
  - Raters are looking for you to skillfully and logically organize your ideas, while maintaining formal language use and structure.

- **Control of Conventions:** the extent to which the response demonstrates command of conventions of standard English grammar, usage, capitalization, punctuation, and spelling
  - Raters are looking for papers that have infrequent errors

# So remember...

- identify a central idea in the text
- identify one literary element, literary technique, or rhetorical device that the author is using (directly quote this!)
- identify the function of the technique, and linked it to the central idea of the text.
- organize your ideas in a clear and logical manner