

Grade 7 Literature Mini-Assessment

“From the Wave” by Thom Gunn

This grade 7 mini-assessment is based on the poem “From the Wave” by Thom Gunn. You will read the poem and listen to a recording of reading of the poem. This text is considered to be a text worthy of students’ time to read and also meets the expectations for text complexity at grade 7. Assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will employ quality, complex texts and audio recordings such as these.

Questions aligned to the CCSS should be worthy of students’ time to answer and therefore do not focus on minor points of the texts. Questions also may address several standards within the same question because complex texts tend to yield rich assessment questions that call for deep analysis. In this mini-assessment there are eight questions that address the Reading Standards listed below. Additionally, there is an optional writing prompt, which is aligned to Reading, Writing, and Language Standards.

We encourage educators to give students the time that they need to read closely and write to the source. While we know that it is helpful to have students complete the mini-assessment in one class period, we encourage educators to allow additional time as necessary.

The questions align to the following standards:

RL.7.1	Cite several pieces of textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.
RL.7.2	Determine a theme or central idea of a text and analyze its development over the course of the text; provide an objective summary of the text.
RL.7.3	Analyze how particular elements of a story or drama interact (e.g., how setting shapes the characters or plot).
RL.7.4	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of rhymes and other repetitions of sounds (e.g., alliteration) on a specific verse or stanza of a poem or section of a story or drama.
RL.7.5	Analyze how a drama's or poem's form or structure (e.g., soliloquy, sonnet) contributes to its meaning
RL.7.7	Compare and contrast a text to an audio, video, or multimedia version of the text, analyzing each medium's portrayal of the subject (e.g., how the delivery of a speech affects the impact of the words).
W.7.3	Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, relevant descriptive details, and well-structured event sequences.
W.7.4	Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience.
W.7.9	Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research.
L.7.1	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking.
L.7.2	Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing.
L.7.3	Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading or listening.
SL.7.2	Analyze the main ideas and supporting details presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how the ideas clarify a topic text, or issue under study.

Contents

Grade 7 Mini-Assessment – “From the Wave” <u>Print for students</u>	3
Information for Teachers: Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of the Text.....	11
Question Annotations: Correct Answers and Distractor Rationales	13
Additional Resources for Assessment and CCSS Implementation	17

The assessment questions in this document align with the CCSS and reflect the instructional shifts implied by the standards. To learn more about these topics, please go to the following link:

www.achievethecore.org

Grade 7 Mini-Assessment – “From the Wave”

Today you will read the poem “From the Wave” by Thom Gunn and then listen to an audio recording of the reading. You will then answer several questions based on the text. I will be happy to answer questions about the directions, but I will not help you with the answers to any questions. You will notice as you answer the questions that some of the questions have two parts. You should answer Part A of the question before you answer Part B, but you may return to Part A if you wish.

Take as long as you need to read and answer the questions. If you do not finish when class ends, come see me to discuss when you may have additional time.

Now read the passage and answer the questions. I encourage you to write notes in the margin as you read the passage.

From the Wave

By Thom Gunn

- 1 It mounts at sea, a concave wall
 Down-ribbed with shine,
 And pushes forward, building tall
 Its steep incline.
- 5 Then from their hiding rise to sight
 Black shapes on boards
 Bearing before the fringe of white
 It mottles towards.
- 10 Their pale feet curled, they poise their weight
 With a learn'd skill.
 It is the wave they imitate
 Keeps them so still.
- 15 The marbling bodies have become
 Half wave, half men,
 Grafted it seems by feet of foam
 Some seconds, then,
- 20 Late as they can, they slice the face
 In timed procession:
 Balance is triumph in this place,
 Triumph possession.
- The mindless heave of which they rode
 A fluid shelf
 Breaks as they leave it, falls and, slowed,
 Loses itself.

25 Clear, the sheathed bodies slick as seals
Loosen and tingle;
And by the board the bare foot feels
The suck of shingle.

They paddle in the shallows still;
30 Two splash each other;
They all swim out to wait until
The right waves gather.

“From The Wave,” found in *Collected Poems* by Thom Gunn. Used by permission of Faber and Faber Ltd.

When the class is ready, we will listen to the audio recording together. To signal that you are ready to listen, please turn your mini-assessment face down on your desk.

We will listen to the recording twice, as some of the questions later in this mini-assessment will ask you to remember specific information from it.

<http://writersalmanac.publicradio.org/index/index.php?date=2001/08/01>

TEACHERS: PLEASE NOTE THAT REALPLAYER MUST BE INSTALLED ON YOUR COMPUTER FOR THE AUDIO TO WORK.
Begin the recording at 2:50, and conclude at 4:24.

QUESTIONS:

1. The following item has two parts. First answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: In line 9, what is the meaning of the word “poise”?

- A. to pause before moving
- B. to lift carefully
- C. to hover above
- D. to distribute evenly

Part B: Which two lines from the poem best help the reader understand the meaning of “poise”?

- A. “Then from their hiding rise to sight”
- B. “Their pale feel curl”
- C. “Keeps them so still”
- D. “Half wave, half men,”
- E. “Balance is triumph in this place”
- F. “The mindless heave of which they rode”

2. Which lines from the poem best illustrate the theme of this poem?

- A. “It mounts at sea, a concave wall
Down-ribbed with shine,”
- B. “Then from their hiding rise to sight
Black shapes on boards”
- C. “The marbling bodies have become
Half wave, half men,”
- D. “They paddle in the shallows still;
Two splash each other;”

3. How does Gunn's use of rhyme impact the poem?

- A. The rhyming scheme is used to illustrate the natural elegance of the waves.
- B. The rhyming scheme is used to show that waves are isolated events.
- C. The single syllable rhyming words signify that waves are simplistic.
- D. The alternating rhyming lines mirror the action of waves.

4. The following item has two parts. First answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: In what way does Gunn use poetic form to contribute to the meaning of the poem?

- A. He strategically places descriptive words within each stanza to emphasize the power of the waves.
- B. He sequences the stanzas to match the increasing and decreasing intensity of the wave.
- C. He uses precise action verbs to show that waves follow a cycle that began long ago.
- D. He alternates between describing the waves and describing the surfers to show that they are competing.

Part B: Highlight the stanza that serves as the climax of the poem.

5. Which sentence explains how the setting impacts the surfers?

- A. As the waves ebb and flow, the surfers must adjust to remain part of the action.
- B. The movement of the waves makes the surfers to return to the beach.
- C. The changes in the waves forces the surfers to stop enjoying the ride and hold on to survive.
- D. As the waves become stronger, the surfers enjoy surfing more.

6. The poet purposely uses poetic form to create a visual image for the reader. Complete the chart below by writing the stanza that best shows the phase of the wave. You can write the stanza number or the text of the stanza itself.

Wave beginning to rise	Wave at its highest and strongest	Wave fading away

7. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: Which statement most accurately captures the central idea of the poem?

- A. Surfing is both a challenging and dangerous activity.
- B. Surfing is a way to learn more about cycles in the natural world.
- C. Surfers must connect with the motion of the waves to be successful.
- D. Surfers must practice extensively to be able to master the activity.

Part B: Which line from the poem best supports the correct answer to Part A?

- A. "Late as they can, they slice the face"
- B. "It is the wave they imitate"
- C. "A fluid shelf"
- D. "They all swim out to wait until"

8. Reread stanzas 4 and 5 from the poem and listen again to the reading of the poem.

The marbling bodies have become
Half wave, half men,
15 Grafted it seems by feet of foam
Some seconds, then,

Late as they can, they slice the face
In timed procession:
Balance is triumph in this place,
20 Triumph possession.

In the audio recording of “From the Wave,” how does the delivery stanzas 4 and 5 contrast to the way the poet intends them to be read?

- A.** The speaker combines lines 16 and 17 by speaking quickly to emphasize the idea that the action takes place in a rushed manner, but the poet breaks the lines into stanzas to imply a pause while the surfers wait until the last moment to take action.
- B.** The speaker increases the volume of his voice for these two stanzas to show how the action is building, but the poet uses varying line lengths to show both a rise and fall in action.
- C.** The speaker takes long breaths as he reads the two stanzas to show the anxiety the surfers feel as they wait for the wave, but the poet includes lines 19 and 20 to show that the surfers feel confident about their actions.
- D.** The speaker delivers the stanzas without emotion to show that the surfers have become one with the wave, but the poet includes the word “triumph” twice to show that successfully riding the wave is an emotional experience.

Information for Teachers: Quantitative and Qualitative Analyses of the Texts

Regular practice with complex texts is necessary to prepare students for college and career readiness, as outlined in Reading Standard 10. The text for this mini-assessment has been placed at grade 7, and the process used to determine this grade level placement is described below. “Appendix A of the Common Core” and the “Supplement to Appendix A: New Research on Text Complexity” lay out a research-based process for selecting complex texts.

1. Place a text or excerpt within a **grade band** based on at least one¹ quantitative measure according to the research-based conversion table provided in the Supplement to Appendix A: New Research on Text Complexity (www.corestandards.org/resources). **Note: Given the unconventional punctuation of non-prose texts like poetry, quantitative measures cannot accurately determine the grade level of a text, and so are omitted below. In these cases, texts are placed based on qualitative analysis. The information on this page is included just for teacher understanding in general.**

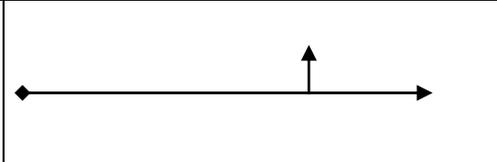
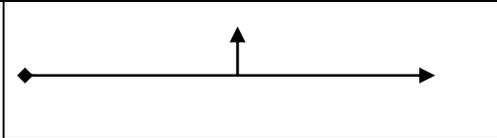
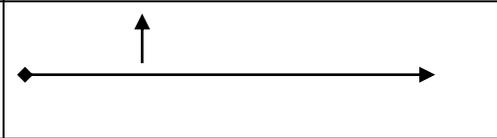
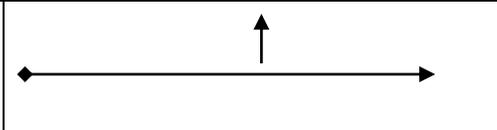
2. Place a text or excerpt at a **grade-level** based on a qualitative analysis.

Figure 1: Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges from Multiple Measures⁷

Common Core Band	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power®	Flesch-Kincaid ^s	The Lexile Framework®	Reading Maturity	SourceRater
2 nd – 3 rd	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13	0.05 – 2.48
4 th – 5 th	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92	0.84 – 5.75
6 th – 8 th	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57	4.11 – 10.66
9 th – 10 th	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81	9.02 – 13.93
11 th – CCR	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.2	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00	12.30 – 14.50

¹ For higher-stakes tests, it is recommended that two corresponding text complexity measures be used to place a text in a grade-band. When two measures are used, both placing the text in the same **band**, the results provide additional assurance that the text selected is appropriate for the band.

To find the **grade-level** of the text within the designated grade-band, engage in a systematic analysis of the characteristics of the text. The characteristics that should be analyzed during a qualitative analysis can be found in Appendix A of the CCSS. (www.corestandards.org)

Qualitative Analysis	"From the Wave"	Where to place within the band?					
Category	Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band	Too low for grade band	early to mid-6	mid 6 to early 7	mid 7 to early 8	mid to end 8	Too high for grade band
Structure (both story structure or form of piece)	The organization of the poem is clear and chronological, following both the building of the wave and the surfers' journey riding it. The third-person point of view is consistent throughout the poem, and while there are multiple surfers, they are treated as one character.						
Language Clarity and Conventions	The poem contains many examples of figurative language (<i>the marbling bodies; half wave, half man; a fluid shelf; the suck of shingle</i>), making the conventionality exceedingly complex. The vocabulary is mostly contemporary; however, there are some examples of above grade level vocabulary (<i>concave; mottles; grafted</i>) that may be challenging to some students.						
Knowledge Demands (life, content, cultural/literary)	The poem's theme is clear, but is conveyed with subtlety (<i>The marbling bodies have become/Half wave, half men</i>). There is no prior knowledge needed to gain access to the text; students in middle school should be familiar with surfing, even if they have not experienced it personally.						
Levels of Meaning (chiefly literary)/ Purpose (chiefly informational)	There is a singular theme in this text: The surfers are connected to the water both physically and emotionally, as they ride a wave through its entire cycle.						
Overall placement: Grade 7	The chronological organization, figurative language, and vocabulary level make this text most appropriate for grade 7.						

Question Annotations: Correct Answers and Distractor Rationales

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options
1, Part A	D		<p>A. “To pause before moving” describes how the surfers stop their movement, not how they shift their bodies on their boards.</p> <p>B. “To lift carefully” describes how the surfers position their feet on the board, not how the surfers balance their weight.</p> <p>C. “To hover above” describes how the boards balance on the waves, rather than how the surfers balance on their boards.</p> <p>D. This is the correct answer. “To distribute evenly” describes how the surfers balance, or “poise” on their boards.</p>
1, Part B	C, E	RL.7.4, RL.7.1	<p>A. “Then from their hiding rise to sight” refers to the surfers’ location, not how they balance on their boards.</p> <p>B. “Their pale feel curl” refers to how the surfers grip the boards, not how they shift their weight.</p> <p>C. This is a correct answer. “Keeps them so still” refers to how the surfers are able to balance on their boards.</p> <p>D. “Half wave, half men,” refers to the union between the surfer and the water, not how the surfers balance.</p> <p>E. This is a correct answer. “Balance is triumph in this place” refers to the importance of evenly distributing weight in surfing.</p> <p>F. “The mindless heave of which they rode” refers to the movement of the water, not the movement of the surfers.</p>
2	C	RL.7.2, RL.7.1, SL.7.2	<p>A. These lines describe the initial phase of the wave, before the surfers have faced the challenge of riding the wave.</p> <p>B. These lines describe the rising action of the poem, with the surfers mounting the wave, not the water and surfers coming together at the pinnacle of the wave.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. These lines describe the union of the water and the surfers at the climax of the poem.</p> <p>D. These lines describe two of the surfers after riding the wave, rather than the climax of the surfers riding the wave.</p>

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options
3	D	RL.7.4, RL.7.1, SL.7.2	<p>A. The repeated rhyme scheme mirrors how the waves are all continuous and predictable, rather than elegant.</p> <p>B. The repeated rhyme scheme mirrors how the waves are all connected and unending, not isolated events.</p> <p>C. Although the poem describes the wave as “the mindless heave,” many of the rhyming words are multi-syllable.</p> <p>D. This is the correct answer. The alternating rhyming lines mirror the repeated rhythm of the waves.</p>
4, Part A	B	RL.7.5, RL.7.1, SL.7.2	<p>A. Although Gunn uses descriptive words, these words emphasize the actions of the surfers, not the power of the waves.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. The build up and destruction of the wave mirrors the narrative arc of the poem.</p> <p>C. Although the author ends the poem by foreshadowing the next wave the surfers will ride, the poetic form focuses on the sequence of the stanzas.</p> <p>D. Although Gunn describes both the wave and the surfers, he emphasizes how they come together, rather than compete.</p>
4, Part B	See right column		<p><i>Late as they can, they slice the face In timed procession: Balance is triumph in this place, Triumph possession.</i></p> <p>This stanza serves as the climax of the poem in which the surfers conquer the wave, a scene developed in the previous four stanzas.</p>
5	A	RL.7.3, RL.7.2 RL.7.1, SL.7.2	<p>A. This is the correct answer. The surfers must adapt to the wave below their feet in order to successfully ride it until it breaks.</p> <p>B. Although the wave brings the surfers back to the shallow water, the surfers return to the deeper water, not the beach, in search of their next wave.</p> <p>C. The surfers enjoy riding the wave throughout the poem, and hold on to ride the wave until it breaks, not to survive.</p> <p>D. Though the surfers enjoy the wave throughout its cycle, because only one wave is described, no comparison is made.</p>

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options		
6	See right column	RL.7.5, RL.7.1, SL.7.2	Wave beginning to rise	Wave at its highest and strongest	Wave fading away
			<p>Correct answer: stanza 1 <i>It mounts at sea, a concave wall Down-ribbed with shine, And pushes forward, building tall Its steep incline.</i></p> <p>In this stanza, the wave is just forming (“mounts at sea,” “building tall”).</p>	<p>Correct answer: stanza 4 <i>The marbling bodies have become Half wave, half men, Grafted it seems by feet of foam Some seconds, then,</i></p> <p>In this stanza, the water and surfers become one entity (<i>half wave, half men</i>), as the power of the wave reaches its pinnacle.</p>	<p>Correct answer: Stanza 6 <i>The mindless heave of which they rode A fluid shelf Breaks as they leave it, falls and, slowed, Loses itself.</i></p> <p>In this stanza, the wave diminishes (<i>Breaks as they leave it; Loses itself.</i>) until it fades away entirely.</p>
7, Part A	C	RL.7.2, RL.7.1	<p>A. Although this statement may be true, in this poem surfing is depicted as an exciting activity requiring skill from each rider.</p> <p>B. Although the poem mirrors the cycle of a wave, this poem primarily focuses on the actions of the surfers, not the wave.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. Throughout the poem, the surfers must adjust to the growing wave to ride it to its completion.</p> <p>D. Although this statement may be true, there is no mention of practice throughout the poem.</p>		
7, Part B	B		<p>A. This line describes how the surfers leave the wave, rather than how they adapt to it throughout their ride.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. The surfers’ actions mirror the wave throughout the poem.</p> <p>C. This line describes the wave as it breaks, not the surfers’ actions.</p> <p>D. This line describes the surfers’ movement toward the next wave they will ride, not the wave that is the focus of the poem.</p>		

Question Number	Correct Answer(s)	Standards	Rationales for Answer Options
8	A	RL.7.7, RL.7.1, SL.7.2	<p>A. This is the correct answer. In the written poem, Gunn breaks the ideas captured in lines 16 and 17 into two stanzas, and the break indicates a pause. However, the reader runs the two stanzas together to emphasize the idea that the action of finally catching the wave is rushed.</p> <p>B. The speaker does not increase the volume of his voice for these two stanzas.</p> <p>C. The speaker does not take long breaths as he reads the two stanzas.</p> <p>D. By combining the two stanzas and rushing through the delivery of the lines, the speaker is, in fact, revealing emotion. The quick delivery emphasizes the rush of excitement surfers feel as they begin to cut through the wave.</p>
9	See right column.	W.7.3, W.7.4, W.7.9, RL.7.4, RL.7.1, L.7.1, L.7.2, L.7.3, SL.7.2	<p>Top-Score Response would address some or all of the following ideas:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The surfer watches the water ebb and flow as he or she prepares to take on a wave <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence: Sentence structure: Alternating line length representing ebb and flow • Sentence structure: Alternating rhyming lines representing back and forth cycle • The surfer experiences a building of both excitement and motion in the water as he or she gets ready to take on the wave. This peaks while actually surfing, and then is reduced after riding the wave. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence: Verb choice: <i>mounts</i> (shows wave climbing), <i>pushes forward</i>, <i>building tall</i> (momentum/power), <i>steep incline</i> (implies height), <i>mottles towards</i> (shows wave moving toward the surfers), <i>falls and</i>, <i>slowed</i>, <i>loses itself</i> (diminishing to nothing) • Both before and after actually surfing, the surfer observes and appreciates the waves <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence: Adjective choice: <i>down-ribbed with shine</i> (visual appearance top of wave), <i>fringe of white</i> (visual appearance of foam), <i>mindless heave</i> (unthinking force of nature) • As the surfer actually rides the wave, he or she feels at one with it. <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Evidence: <i>The marbling bodies have become/ Half wave, half men,/Grafted it seems by feet of foam</i>

Additional Resources for Assessment and CCSS

Shift 1 – Complexity: *Regular practice with complex text and its academic language*

- See Appendix B for examples of informational and literary complex texts:
http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf
- See the Text Complexity Collection on www.achievethecore.org

Shift 2 – Evidence: *Reading, writing, and speaking grounded in evidence from text, both literary and informational*

- See Close Reading Exemplars for ways to engage students in close reading on
<http://www.achievethecore.org/steal-these-tools/close-reading-exemplars>
- See the Basal Alignment Project for examples of text-dependent questions:
<http://www.achievethecore.org/basal-alignment-project>

Shift 3 – Knowledge: *Building knowledge through content-rich nonfiction*

- See Appendix B for examples of informational and literary complex texts:
http://www.corestandards.org/assets/Appendix_B.pdf

Scoring Rubric for Text-Based Writing Prompts:

http://achievethecore.org/content/upload/Scoring_Rubric_for_Text-Based_Writing_Prompts.pdf