

Grade 6 Informational Mini-Assessment

“The History of Earth Day” by Amanda Davis, “Earth Day” by Claudia Atticot and Alexandra Manning, and a video from NBC News

This grade 6 mini-assessment is based on “The History of Earth Day” by Amanda Davis, “Earth Day” compiled by Claudia Atticot and Alexandra Manning, and a video from NBC News. The texts and video are considered to be worthy of students’ time to read and listen to and also meet the expectations for complexity at grade 6. Assessments aligned to the Common Core State Standards (CCSS) will employ quality, complex texts and videos such as these. The mini-assessment will measure both Reading Standards for Informational Text as well as some Language, Writing, and Listening/Speaking Standards.

Questions aligned to the CCSS should be worthy of students’ time to answer and therefore do not focus on minor points of the text. 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 thirteen questions, including one optional writing prompt, that address the Standards listed below.

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 is necessary.

The questions align to the following standards:

| | |
|---------------|---|
| RI.6.1 | Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text. |
| RI.6.2 | Determine a central idea of a text and how it is conveyed through particular details; provide a summary of the text distinct from personal opinions or judgments. |
| RI.6.3 | Analyze in detail how a key individual, event, or idea is introduced, illustrated, and elaborated in a text (e.g., through examples or anecdotes). |
| RI.6.4 | Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative, connotative, and technical meanings. |
| RI.6.5 | Analyze how a particular sentence, paragraph, chapter, or section fits into the overall structure of a text and contributes to the development of the ideas. |
| RI.6.6 | Determine an author's point of view or purpose in a text and explain how it is conveyed in the text. |
| RI.6.7 | Integrate information presented in different media or formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively) as well as in words to develop a coherent understanding of a topic or issue. |
| RI.6.8 | Trace and evaluate the argument and specific claims in a text, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. |
| RI.6.9 | Compare and contrast one author's presentation of events with that of another (e.g., a memoir written by and a biography on the same person). |
| W.6.1 | Write arguments to support claims with clear reasons and relevant evidence. |
| W.6.4 | Produce clear and coherent writing in which the development, organization, and style are appropriate to task, purpose, and audience. |

| | |
|---------------|--|
| W.6.7 | Conduct short research projects to answer a question, drawing on several sources and refocusing the inquiry when appropriate. |
| W.6.9 | Draw evidence from literary or informational texts to support analysis, reflection, and research. |
| SL.6.2 | Interpret information presented in diverse media and formats (e.g., visually, quantitatively, orally) and explain how it contributes to a topic, text, or issue under study. |
| SL.6.3 | Delineate a speaker’s argument and specific claims, distinguishing claims that are supported by reasons and evidence from claims that are not. |
| L.6.1 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. |
| L.6.2 | Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. |
| L.6.3 | Use knowledge of language and its conventions when writing, speaking, reading, or listening. |

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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 6 Mini-Assessment — Earth Day

Today you will read two passages about Earth Day and watch a video on the topic. 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 go back and change your answer to Part A if you want to.

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 the ways you may have additional time.

Now read the passages. After you have read the passages, turn your papers over, as we'll be watching the video together. Then you will use information from both the texts and the video to answer the questions.

Text 1: The History of Earth Day

*By Amanda Davis
Scholastic Kids Press Corps*

- 1 Imagine a world without trees. What if the rain forests, and all of the exotic plants and colorful animals that call it home, suddenly did not exist? In 1962, Gaylord Nelson decided something needed to be done to protect the environment. The work that he began led to what we now know as Earth Day.
- 2 Nelson realized very few people were concerned about environmental problems like deforestation, the destruction of trees.
- 3 "For several years, it has been troubling me," Nelson wrote in a 1962 article, "that the state of the environment is simply a non-issue in the politics of our country."
- 4 Nelson then headed to Washington, D.C., where he hoped to convince President John F. Kennedy to take a stand on environmental issues. Nelson first met with Attorney General Robert Kennedy, who agreed that it was an important issue. It wasn't long before President Kennedy heard Nelson's concerns and agreed that action should be taken.
- 5 The President set out on a five-day, 11-state conservation tour in September 1963. Although Kennedy's high-profile tour was not a success, Nelson was not ready to give up.
- 6 Nelson continued to speak to audiences across 25 states about the importance of the environment. Although his point of view began to catch on among most people, politicians still were not listening.
- 7 "The idea that became Earth Day," said Nelson, "occurred to me while on a conservation speaking tour out West in the summer of 1969."
- 8 It was September of 1969, at a conference in Seattle, when Nelson announced that he would stage a nationwide grassroots¹ demonstration on behalf of the environment the next spring. He invited everyone in the audience to attend.

¹ Led by common people, as opposed to a political party or social organization

- 9 On April 22, 1970, more than 20 million demonstrators and thousands of schools and local communities participated in Nelson's demonstration. The occasion made people sit up and pay attention to environmental issues. Word about the environment began to spread.
- 10 On March 21, 1971, the UN Secretary-General signed a proclamation establishing Earth Day as an official international holiday. Now people all over the world are learning about environmental issues in their communities.
- 11 Gaylord Nelson died on July 3, 2005, but his contributions will always be remembered as younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world's environment.

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Text 2: "Earth Day" We take a look at Earth Day by the numbers

From the pages of 

*Compiled by Claudia Atticot and Alexandra Manning
April 1, 2013*

Energy & Waste

- 1 The average American produces more than four pounds of garbage per day. Over the course of a year, that is more than 1,600 pounds of garbage per person.
- 2 Almost half of the food in the U.S. goes to waste - approximately 3,000 pounds per second.
- 3 The recycling rate has increased from less than 10% in 1980 to more than 34% in 2011.

Plastic

- 4 In 2012, the U.S. produced 32 million tons of plastic. Only 9% was recovered for recycling.
- 5 It takes about 450 years for plastic beverage bottles to break down in a landfill.
- 6 The energy saved by recycling one plastic bottle can power a computer for 25 minutes.

Glass

- 7 It takes approximately 1 million years for a glass bottle to break down in a landfill.
- 8 The energy saved from recycling one glass bottle will operate a 100-watt light bulb for four hours.
- 9 Producing glass from new materials requires 30% more energy than using used glass.

Paper

- 10 Americans use about 69 million tons of paper and paperboard each year.
- 11 Preventing one ton of paper waste saves between 15 and 17 mature trees.
- 12 By recycling 1 ton of paper, we save enough energy to heat a home for six months.

Water

- 13 Almost 97% of the world's water is salty or otherwise undrinkable. Another 2% is locked in ice caps and glaciers. Only 1% is usable for agriculture, manufacturing, and personal needs.
- 14 The average American uses about 100 gallons of water per day and more than 100,000 gallons of water per year.
- 15 Every square mile of the oceans contains more than 46,000 pieces of floating plastic.
- 16 About 8 million metric tons of plastic goes into the ocean each year.

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<http://www.timeforkids.com/news/earth-day/87036>

When the class is ready, we will watch the video together. Remember, to signal that you are ready to watch the video, please turn your mini-assessment face down on your desk.

We will watch the video twice, as some of the questions will be asking you to remember specific information from it.

Click on the link to view the video.

<http://www.nbcnews.com/video/icue/29901388#29901388>

QUESTIONS:

1. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: Based on the information in Text 1, “The History of Earth Day,” what is the most accurate meaning of the word *conservation* as used in the article?

- A. Restoring damaged areas to their original conditions
- B. Researching how humans negatively impact the environment
- C. Saving and protecting the environment and its natural resources
- D. Developing strategies that will likely be useful in saving living things

Part B: Which sentence in Text 2, “Earth Day,” best demonstrates one effect of *conservation*?

- A. “The average American produces more than four pounds of garbage per day.”
- B. “It takes about 450 years for plastic beverage bottles to break down in a landfill.”
- C. “By recycling 1 ton of paper, we save enough energy to heat a home for six months.”
- D. “The average American uses about 100 gallons of water per day and more than 100,000 gallons of water per year.”

2. In Text 1, how does the author best illustrate the importance of conservation?

- A. She uses visual imagery to help the reader imagine what the world would look like if humans continue to be wasteful and create pollution.
- B. She lists the names of several important people who fought to make others aware of the results of pollution and waste.
- C. She provides data to show the negative impact of pollution on the world.
- D. She describes what is happening to forests all over the world.

3. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: What is the central idea of Text 1?

- A. Gaylord Nelson organized a huge event to bring people together to come up with ways to help the environment.
- B. President Kennedy campaigned unsuccessfully to convince people the environment was in danger.
- C. Many politicians acknowledged there were concerns about the environment, but none of them took action to address the issues.
- D. Gaylord Nelson’s tireless efforts to call attention to issues with the environment led to the creation of an annual event celebrating the health of our planet.

Part B: Which sentence from Text 1 best helps develop the correct central idea from Part A?

- A. “Nelson realized very few people were concerned about environmental problems like deforestation, the destruction of trees.”
- B. “The President set out on a five-day, 11-state conservation tour in September 1963.”
- C. “‘The idea that became Earth Day,’ said Nelson, ‘occurred to me while on a conservation speaking tour out West in the summer of 1969.’”
- D. “Gaylord Nelson died on July 3, 2005, but his contributions will always be remembered as younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world’s environment.”

4. Read this sentence from paragraph 9 of Text 1.

“On April 22, 1970, more than 20 million demonstrators and thousands of schools and local communities participated in Nelson's demonstration.”

How does this sentence fit into the overall structure of the text and help contribute to the development of ideas?

- A. In paragraph 2 the author states that Nelson claimed that “very few people were concerned about environmental problems like deforestation, the destruction of trees.” This sentence shows that Nelson’s claim was actually incorrect at the time in which he made it.
- B. In paragraphs 4-5 the author describes the efforts of the Kennedys. This sentence describes an event they attended, emphasizing how supportive of Nelson’s efforts these men were.
- C. In paragraphs 1-8 the author describes Nelson’s efforts to bring attention to environmental issues. This sentence explains how successful those efforts eventually were.
- D. In paragraph 11 the author states that “younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world’s environment.” This sentence provides support for the author’s claim.

5. Complete the following chart by writing in the sentence from the Evidence Box that most strongly helps to develop the author’s points of view about issues she mentions in Text 1. You will not use all sentences provided.

| Author’s point of view | Evidence |
|--|----------|
| America’s leaders were not taking environmental concerns seriously enough at first. | |
| Nelson was highly effective in bringing environmental concerns to people all over the world. | |
| Nelson was determined to make others listen to his concerns. | |

| Evidence Box |
|---|
| “In 1962, Gaylord Nelson decided something needed to be done to protect the environment.” (Paragraph 1) |
| “Nelson then headed to Washington, D.C., where he hoped to convince President John F. Kennedy to take a stand on environmental issues.” (Paragraph 4) |
| “It wasn't long before President Kennedy heard Nelson's concerns and agreed that action should be taken.” (Paragraph 4) |
| “Nelson continued to speak to audiences across 25 states about the importance of the environment.” (Paragraph 6) |
| “Although his point of view began to catch on among most people, politicians still were not listening.” (Paragraph 6) |
| “On March 21, 1971, the UN Secretary-General signed a proclamation establishing Earth Day as an official international holiday.” (Paragraph 10) |

6. In Text 1, which claim made by the author is least supported by evidence?

- A. “. . . , Gaylord Nelson decided something needed to be done to protect the environment.”
- B. “The work that he began led to what we now know as Earth Day.”
- C. “Word about the environment began to spread.”
- D. “. . . but his contributions will always be remembered as younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world's environment.”

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

Part A: Based on the information in Text 2, “Earth Day,” with which statement would the authors most likely agree?

- A. People are interested in learning new ways to protect the environment.
- B. Data proves that environmental pollution is going to have long-term effects.
- C. New ways to recycle materials have been discovered.
- D. Research show that recycling has helped reduce environmental pollution.

Part B: Which sentence from Text 2 best helps develop the point of view identified as the correct answer to Part A?

- A. “Almost half of the food in the U.S. goes to waste – approximately 3,000 pounds per second.”
- B. “It takes about 450 years for plastic beverage bottles to break down in a landfill.”
- C. “The energy saved by recycling one plastic bottle can power a computer for 25 minutes.”
- D. “The energy saved from recycling one glass bottle will operate a 100-watt light bulb for four hours.”

8. Which sentence from Text 2 best illustrates the fact that more people than ever before are taking advantage of opportunities to recycle?

- A. “Over the course of a year, that is more than 1,600 pounds of garbage per person.”
- B. “The recycling rate has increased from less than 10% in 1980 to more than 34% in 2011.”
- C. “Only 9% was recovered for recycling.”
- D. “By recycling 1 ton of paper, we save enough energy to heat a home for six months.”

9. In the video, what is the speaker suggesting when he says, “. . . young and old, Democrat and Republican”? (minute 1:25 -1:35)

- A. that the problems with the environment have been caused by all kinds of people
- B. that people disagreed which laws should be passed to protect the environment
- C. that the first Earth Day event was supported by people all kinds of people
- D. that no matter what age a person is or what his or her beliefs are, one should support Earth Day

10. The following question has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A: Which option below best summarizes the central idea of the video?

- A. Although things are not perfect, Americans have made progress in regard to cleaning up the Earth.
- B. Because the land in America is so large and was settled later than other countries, no one suspected humans could ever damage it.
- C. Many laws have been passed as a result of Gaylord Nelson's attention to the environment.
- D. Every year, the American people celebrate Earth Day.

Part B: Which image from the video is used to develop this central idea?



- 11. Which detail from the video best supports the central idea from Text 1 that some of Gaylord Nelson’s long-term goals were achieved?**
- A. the information about what happened when America became a “great machine at full throttle”
 - B. the information about the new generation that was “taking its place in American life,” one with the power to protest
 - C. the information about how many people, “an estimated 20 million people,” participated in the first Earth Day
 - D. the information that President Nixon created the Environmental Protection Agency “clean up our nation’s air and water”
- 12. How does the presentation of information in Text 2 differ from the way the speaker presents the information in the video?**
- A. The authors of Text 2 provide factual data about waste and recycling, while the speaker in the video uses emotional language to emphasize the importance of protecting the environment.
 - B. The authors of Text 2 focuses mostly on the effects of pollution on bodies of water, while the speaker in the video emphasizes that all aspects of our planet have been affected.
 - C. The authors of Text 2 suggests that conditions on our planet have improved as much as they need to, while the speaker in the video suggests that there is still progress to be made.
 - D. The authors of Text 2 claim that many people have made a positive impact in helping address pollution issues, while the speaker in the video credits Gaylord Nelson as the person most deserving of recognition.

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. The texts for this mini-assessment are placed at grade 6 for the purpose of this exemplar. This section of the exemplar explains the process that was used to place the texts at grade 6 and the reasons that they meet the expectations for text complexity in Reading Standard 10. “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 one² 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).
2. Place a text or excerpt at a **grade-level** based on a qualitative analysis (see below).

| Title | Quantitative Measure #1 | Quantitative Measure #2 |
|--|-------------------------|-------------------------|
| Text 1: “The History of Earth Day” (orange circles below) | Reading Maturity: 8.8 | Flesch-Kincaid: 9.6 |
| Text 2: “Earth Day” (blue circles below) | Reading Maturity: 8.3 | Flesch-Kincaid: 6.2 |

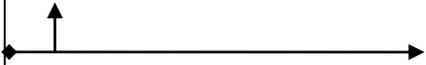
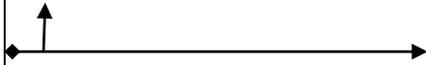
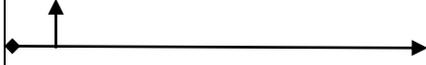
After gathering the quantitative measures, the next step is to place the quantitative scores in the Conversion Table found in the “Supplement to Appendix A” (www.corestandards.org/resources) and determine the **grade band** of the text. Figure 1 reproduces the conversion table from the Supplement to Appendix A, showing how the initial results from Flesch-Kincaid and the Lexile measure were converted to grade bands.

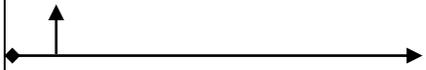
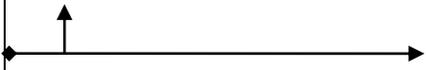
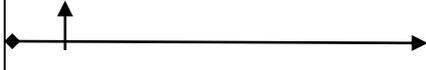
Figure 1: Updated Text Complexity Grade Bands and Associated Ranges from Multiple Measures⁷

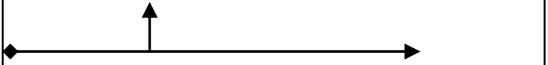
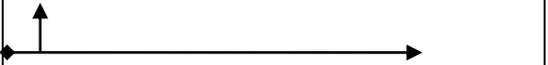
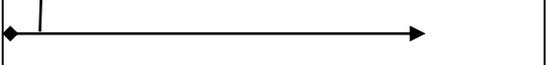
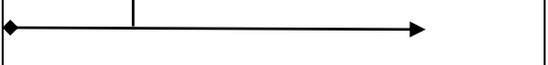
| Common Core Band | ATOS | Degrees of Reading Power [®] | Flesch-Kincaid ⁵ | The Lexile Framework [®] | Reading Maturity | SourceRater |
|------------------------------------|---------------|---------------------------------------|-----------------------------|-----------------------------------|------------------|---------------|
| 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 |

² For higher stakes tests, it is recommended that two 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 by doing a qualitative analysis, a sample of which can be found in Appendix A of the CCSS. (www.corestandards.org).

| Qualitative Analysis | Text 1: “The History of Earth Day” | Where to place within the band? | | | | | |
|---|---|---|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| Category | Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band | early 6 – mid 6 | end 6 – early 7 | Mid – end 7 | Early – mid 8 | End 8 | NOT suited to band |
| Structure: (both story structure or form of piece) | This passage is structured both by time order and by the use of cause and effect to show how each event led to the next. The relationships are clear and explicitly stated in the text as the author describes how Earth Day grew from Gaylord Nelson’s concerns and tremendous work, resulting in an annual international event. |  | | | | | |
| Language Clarity and Conventions | Although most of the vocabulary can be expected to be accessible to sixth grade students, some of the terms (e.g., deforestation, grassroots, environmental, conservation) may be challenging. However, there is strong context for all except grassroots, which is footnoted. Although the text contains a few compound and complex sentences, most sentences are simple and easily navigated. |  | | | | | |
| Knowledge Demands (life, content, cultural/literary) | To understand the full impact of the text, it would be helpful for students to know some basic information about the harmful effects of waste and pollution. But even without that knowledge, the information needed to answer the test questions lies within the four corners of the text. |  | | | | | |
| Levels of Meaning (chiefly literary)/ Purpose (chiefly informational) | The main purpose of the text is explicit and readily accessible: The author informs readers about the history of Earth Day, especially Gaylord Nelson’s efforts to bring attention to the condition of the environment |  | | | | | |
| Overall placement: Grade 6 | Justification: This text is on the lower end of complexity for the grade band and therefore most appropriate for grade 6. The organizational structure allows students to follow connected events to an end result, the knowledge demands are low, and the level of meaning is implicit. Some vocabulary may be challenging but there is strong context for students to determine meaning. |  | | | | | |

| Qualitative Analysis | Text 2: "Earth Day" | Where to place within the band? | | | | | |
|--|---|---|--------------------|----------------------|------------------|-------|--------------------------|
| Category | Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band | early 6 – mid 6 | end 6 – early 7 | Mid – end 7 | Early – mid 8 | End 8 | NOT suited to band |
| Structure: (both story structure or form of piece) | This passage is a list of facts about conservation and pollution, organized under headings. The list does not have, nor does it require, transitions between facts, as the relationships are defined by the headings of each section. |  | | | | | |
| Language Clarity and Conventions | The vocabulary can be expected to be accessible to sixth grade students. The text contains mostly simple sentences, although there is an occasional compound or complex sentence. |  | | | | | |
| Knowledge Demands (life, content, cultural/literary) | Students would benefit from some understanding of recycling, but the text provides sufficient context to allow readers to understand the concept. Ultimately, the information in the text should be familiar and accessible to 6 th grade readers. |  | | | | | |
| Levels of Meaning (chiefly literary)/ Purpose (chiefly informational) | The main purpose of the text is implicit but readily accessible: The list presents facts tied to waste, recycling, and conservation |  | | | | | |
| Overall placement: Grade 6 | Justification: This text is readily accessible in regard to the qualitative measures analyzed. The vocabulary and sentence structure are accessible to the average 6th grader, and there are no demands for prior knowledge or understanding. |  | | | | | |

| Qualitative Analysis | Earth Day video | Where to place within the band? | | | | | |
|--|--|---|-----------------|-------------|---------------|-------|--------------------|
| Category | Notes and comments on text, support for placement in this band | early 6 – mid 6 | end 6 – early 7 | Mid – end 7 | Early – mid 8 | End 8 | NOT suited to band |
| Structure: (both story structure or form of piece) | This video is organized primarily chronologically, proceeding through the history of the conservation movement. The video also uses by comparison/contrast (pre pollution vs. post), as well as some cause and effect (the impact of pollution and how it, coupled with Nelson’s efforts to raise awareness, sparked the conservation movement). |  | | | | | |
| Language Clarity and Conventions | Although most of the vocabulary can be expected to be accessible to sixth grade students, some figurative language (e.g., “birds on the wings,” “a great machine at full throttle,” “a colossus of factories”) may present challenges. However, the visuals further understanding of the terms and provide sufficient context for students to determine meaning. |  | | | | | |
| Knowledge Demands (life, content, cultural/literary) | No prior knowledge is required for students to understand the video and the issues it portrays. |  | | | | | |
| Levels of Meaning (chiefly literary)/ Purpose (chiefly informational) | The main purpose of the video is explicit and included in the last line: There is only one “Earth” and we need to take care of it. The video provides background as the problems humans have caused, the efforts to address those problems, and the resulting change in an effort to persuade listeners to protect our planet. |  | | | | | |
| Overall placement: Grade 6 | Justification: This video is moderately complex in regard to organizational structure and vocabulary. It has a singular purpose and clear level of meaning and there are no demands for prior knowledge. |  | | | | | |

Question Annotations: Correct Answer(s) and Distractor Rationales

| Question Number | Correct Answer(s) | Standards | Rationales for Answer Options |
|-----------------|-------------------|-------------------|---|
| 1 Part A | C | RI.6.4, RI.6.1 | <p>A. Although an aspect of <i>conservation</i>, “restoring damaged areas to their original conditions” is only one small part of conservation efforts and does not, therefore, define <i>conservation</i>.</p> <p>B. Although <i>conservation</i> efforts may be determined and supported by those “researching how humans negatively impact the environment,” that is not the definition of <i>conservation</i>.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. <i>Conservation</i> means “saving and protecting the environment and its natural resources.”</p> <p>D. Although part of <i>conservation</i> efforts is to “develop strategies that will likely be useful in saving living things,” <i>conservation</i> is the action of acting on those strategies.</p> |
| 1 Part B | C | | <p>A. The fact that “the average American produces more than four pounds of garbage per day” provides a reason for conservation but does not demonstrate an effect of conservation efforts.</p> <p>B. The fact that “it takes about 450 years for plastic beverage bottles to break down in a landfill” provides a reason for conservation but does not demonstrate an effect of conservation efforts.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. One strategy used in conservation efforts is to recycle; therefore, the fact that “by recycling 1 ton of paper, we save enough energy to heat a home for six months” shows one effect of conservation.</p> <p>D. The fact that “the average American uses about 100 gallons of water per day and more than 100,000 gallons of water per year” provides a reason for conservation but does not demonstrate an effect of conservation efforts.</p> |
| 2 | A | RI.6.3, RI.6.1 | <p>A. This is the correct answer. The author begins the text by creating a visual image of what the world would look like if humans continue to be wasteful and create pollution by saying, “Imagine a world without trees. What if the rain forests, and all of the exotic plants and colorful animals that call it home, suddenly did not exist?”</p> <p>B. Although the author includes names of important people (Gaylord Nelson, President Kennedy, Robert Kennedy), the mention of those individuals is meant to show the people Nelson recruited to help call attention to conservation but does not help illustrate the importance of conservation as much as the visual image does.</p> <p>C. Although the author includes some data (1962 as the date of Nelson’s first article on conservation, 25 state conservation tour for Nelson, five day, 11-state conservation tour for President Kennedy, 20 million demonstrators), the data does not support the importance of conservation efforts as much as it explains who was interested in conservation and what they did about it.</p> <p>D. Although the author defines deforestation, she does so mainly to illustrate an example of one issue Nelson realized few people were concerned with, not to show the importance of conservation.</p> |
| 3 Part A | D | RI.6.2, RI.6.1 | <p>A. Although Earth Day is an important concept in the text, this central idea is not complete unless it is related to the tireless efforts Nelson put forth to call attention to environmental concerns.</p> <p>B. Although President Kennedy’s unsuccessful environmental campaign is mentioned, this is not a central idea of the text.</p> <p>C. Although politicians are referenced in the passage, their lack of action is not a central idea.</p> <p>D. This is the correct answer. Gaylord Nelson worked very hard to call attention to concerns about the environment; these efforts led to Earth Day.</p> |

| Question Number | Correct Answer(s) | Standards | Rationales for Answer Options |
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| 3 Part B | C | | <p>A. Although “Nelson realized very few people were concerned about environmental problems like deforestation, the destruction of trees,” this sentence only shows his concern rather than his tireless efforts that led to Earth Day.</p> <p>B. Although “The President set out on a five-day, 11-state conservation tour in September 1963,” this sentence does not support the idea that Nelson’s efforts led to Earth Day, as the tour was quite ineffective.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. “‘The idea that became Earth Day,’ said Nelson, ‘occurred to me while on a conservation speaking tour out West in the summer of 1969,’” supports Nelson’s tireless efforts (conducting an extensive tour on the subject of conservation) and how the idea of Earth Day grew from those efforts.</p> <p>D. Although “Gaylord Nelson died on July 3, 2005, but his contributions will always be remembered as younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world’s environment,” speaks to Nelson’s important role in bringing attention to conservation, the sentence doesn’t speak directly to his extensive efforts and how they resulted in Earth Day.</p> |
| 4 | C | RI.6.5, RI.6.1 | <p>A. Although the author states in paragraph 2 of Text 1 that “very few people were concerned about environmental problems like deforestation, the destruction of trees,” the fact that “on April 22, 1970, more than 20 million demonstrators and thousands of schools and local communities participated in Nelson’s demonstration” does not show Nelson’s initial claim was incorrect as his initial claim was made in 1962 and the demonstration did not occur until 1970 after he’d made a point to bring conservation to people’s attention.</p> <p>B. Although the author of Text 1 does mention the efforts of the Kennedys, they did not attend the demonstration mentioned in paragraph 9.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. Paragraphs 1-8 of Text 1 document Nelson’s efforts to bring attention to environmental issues, and the fact that “on April 22, 1970, more than 20 million demonstrators and thousands of schools and local communities participated in Nelson’s demonstration,” helps develop the idea that Nelson’s efforts were successful.</p> <p>D. Although “younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world’s environment,” the 20 million demonstrators mentioned were active in 1970 and are now the older generation rather than supporting the author’s claim that younger generations still fight for conservation.</p> |

| Question Number | Correct Answer(s) | Standards | Rationales for Answer Options | |
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| 5 | See last column | RI.6.6, RI.6.1 | Author’s point of view | Evidence |
| | | | America’s leaders were not taking environmental concerns seriously enough at first. | “Although his point of view began to catch on among most people, politicians still were not listening.” (Paragraph 6) <i>Rationale: This sentence develops the author’s point of view about America’s leaders by stating “politicians were not listening” to Nelson’s concerns at first.</i> |
| | | | Nelson was highly effective in bringing environmental concerns to people all over the world. | “On March 21, 1971, the UN Secretary-General signed a proclamation establishing Earth Day as an official international holiday.” (Paragraph 10) <i>Rationale: This sentence develops the author’s point of view about Nelson’s effectiveness in bringing concerns to people all over the world by showing Earth Day is now “an official international holiday.”</i> |
| Nelson was determined to make others listen to his concerns. | “Nelson continued to speak to audiences across 25 states about the importance of the environment.” (Paragraph 6) <i>Rationale: This sentence develops the author’s point of view about Nelson’s determination to make people listen to his concerns by showing he “continued to speak to audiences across 25 states,” an extensive effort on his part.</i> | | | |
| 6 | D | RI.6.8, RI.6.1 | <p>A. The claim that “Gaylord Nelson decided something needed to be done to protect the environment” is strongly supported by details about articles Nelson wrote on the topic and the efforts he made to protect the environment.</p> <p>B. The claim that “The work that he began led to what we now know as Earth Day” is fully supported by details about Nelson’s continued efforts to bring attention to conservation and the explanation of when the UN officially created Earth Day as an international holiday.</p> <p>C. The claim that “word about the environment began to spread” is supported by the details about the resulting 20 million demonstrators who turned out for Nelson’s first huge event and the fact that the UN eventually created Earth Day.</p> <p>D. This is the correct answer. The author offers no proof that “younger generations continue his [Nelson’s] fight to preserve the world’s environment.”</p> | |

| Question Number | Correct Answer(s) | Standards | Rationales for Answer Options |
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| 7 Part A | B | RI.6.6, RI.6.1 | <p>A. The authors’ list includes data that shows there is still a tremendous amount of waste and pollution created every day, as such, it is unlikely they would agree that “people are interested in learning new ways to protect the environment.”</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. The authors’ mention how long plastic takes to break down and how much plastic is floating in the ocean, showing that there are no quick fixes to environmental issues.</p> <p>C. Although the list includes data about how much energy can be saved by some recycling efforts, no new ways to recycle materials are mentioned.</p> <p>D. Although the list includes information about how much energy can be saved by some recycling efforts, no new ways to recycle materials are mentioned.</p> |
| 7 Part B | B | | <p>A. The fact that so much food in the U.S. goes to waste does not reveal the long-term effects of environmental pollution.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. The fact that it takes 450 years for plastic to break down shows that the effects of waste and pollution are long-term.</p> <p>C. The fact that energy saved by recycling can power a computer does not support the idea that effects of environmental pollution are long term.</p> <p>D. The fact that energy saved by recycling can operate a light bulb for four hours does not support the idea that effects of environmental pollution are long term.</p> |
| 8 | B | RI.6.3, RI.6.1 | <p>A. The fact “over the course of a year, that is more than 1,600 pounds of garbage per person” shows people continue to be wasteful rather than that more people than ever before are taking advantage of opportunities to recycle.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. Data showing that “the recycling rate has increased from less than 10% in 1980 to more than 34% in 2011” indicates that more people are now recycling than ever before.</p> <p>C. The fact “only 9% was recovered for recycling” shows that recycling is still very limited, at least in regard to plastics.</p> <p>D. The fact “by recycling 1 ton of paper, we save enough energy to heat a home for six months” provides an example of a benefit of recycling but does not support the idea that benefits such as this have convinced more people than ever before to recycle.</p> |
| 9 | C | RI.6.4, RI.6.1, SL.6.3, SL.6.2 | <p>A. Although the problems with environmental pollution have likely been caused by all kinds of people, the speaker uses “young and old, Democrat and Republican” to emphasize that the first Earth Day event drew support from people from all walks of life.</p> <p>B. Although it is possible that people disagreed which laws to pass to protect the environment, the speaker uses “young and old, Democrat and Republican” to emphasize that the first Earth Day event drew support from people from all walks of life.</p> <p>C. This is the correct answer. The speaker uses “young and old, Democrat and Republican” to show the variety of contrast in the kinds of people who supported the first Earth Day event.</p> <p>D. Although it is likely the speaker would agree that “young and old, Democrat and Republican” people should support Earth Day, he does not use those words in the video for that persuasive purpose. Instead, he uses the phrase to show the variety of people who supported the first Earth Day event.</p> |

| Question Number | Correct Answer(s) | Standards | Rationales for Answer Options |
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| 10 Part A | A | RI.6.2, | <p>A. This is the correct answer. The last 30 seconds of the video best summarize the central message that while things are better in America in regard to environmental concerns, we still have progress to make.</p> <p>B. Although the speaker mentions the vast size of America and the fact that it was settled fairly late compared to other nations, the central idea isn't that no one suspected humans could damage it.</p> <p>C. Although the speaker mentions various laws that have been passed regarding conservation, the detail is included to show that we've made progress; it does not support the idea that there is still progress to be made.</p> <p>D. Although the video mentions Earth Day as a result of progress made, the speaker mentions that there is still progress to be made with conservation efforts.</p> |
| 10 Part B | B | RI.6.1, SL.6.3, SL.6.2 | <p>A. The image of the sun on the horizon is included to show that America is a place of beauty and does not support the idea of progress (or lack thereof) in regard to addressing environmental concerns.</p> <p>B. This is the correct answer. The image of the eagle is included twice in the beginning to show the wildness of nature in early America, then the speaker mentions that humans started polluting and "eagles almost disappeared" and that "American the beautiful became America the endangered." At the end of the video, the eagle appears again when the speaker says "the Eagle is back" to show a sign of progress, but also says "the journey is not yet complete."</p> <p>C. The image of the factories and congestion is included to show how Americans were polluting the environment, not to show progress (or lack thereof) in regard to conservation efforts.</p> <p>D. The image of the crowd of people is included to show that people finally started paying attention to concerns about the environment; it does not speak to progress (or lack thereof) in regard to the effects conservation efforts.</p> |
| 11 | D | RI.6.7, RI.6.1, SL.6.3, SL.6.2 | <p>A. The words "a great machine at full throttle" are used in the video to emphasize that America was becoming industrialized and do not show that Nelson's long-term goals were achieved.</p> <p>B. The words "taking its place in American life" are used in the video to describe that a new generation was rising in America and do not show that Nelson's long-term goals were achieved.</p> <p>C. The words "an estimated 20 million people" are used in the video to show the level of support garnered by Nelson's efforts, specifically at the first event, but do not speak to the long-term goals he had.</p> <p>D. This is the correct answer. The information about Nixon creating the EPA to "clean up our nation's air and water" supports Nelson's long-term goal of getting politicians to be concerned about the environment and to take action accordingly.</p> |
| 12 | A | RI.6.9, RI.6.1, SL.6.3, SL.6.2 | <p>A. This is the correct answer. Text 2 is an objective list of facts about waste and recycling, but the video includes emotional language to persuade the reader of the importance of protecting the environment.</p> <p>B. Although the speaker of the video attends to many aspects of our planet that have been effected by waste and pollution, the authors of Text 2 focus on more than just pollution of bodies of water.</p> <p>C. Although the speaker in the video suggests that there is still progress to be made in regard to conservation, the authors of Text 2 do not suggest that conditions have improved as much as they need to. In fact, they include a few facts about how little recycling actually takes place.</p> <p>D. Although the speaker in the video clearly thinks Gaylord Nelson played an important role in bringing concerns about environmental pollution to the attention of the world, he does not imply Nelson is the person most deserving of recognition, as the speaker also talks about the impact Nixon had.</p> |

| Question Number | Correct Answer(s) | Standards | Rationales for Answer Options |
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| 13 | See last column. | <p>W.6.1, W.6.4, W.6.7, W.6.9, RI.6.7, RI.6.1, SL.6.2, SL.6.3, L.6.1, L.6.2, L.6.3</p> | <p>Pro: Nelson’s concerns have been addressed in that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Many more people became concerned about the environment <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Text 1: Millions of people became aware of concerns: “On April 22, 1970, more than 20 million demonstrators and thousands of schools and local communities participated in Nelson's demonstration. The occasion made people sit up and pay attention to environmental issues. Word about the environment began to spread.” ○ Text 1: Even internationally, concerns were acknowledged: “On March 21, 1971, the UN Secretary-General signed a proclamation establishing Earth Day as an official international holiday. Now people all over the world are learning about environmental issues in their communities.” ○ Text 1: Generations will continue to fight for the environment: “younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world's environment.” ○ Text 2: More people are recycling: “The recycling rate has increased from less than 10% in 1980 to more than 34% in 2011.” ○ Text 2: People have learned ways to make recycling beneficial, showing research on the issues has taken place – “It takes approximately 1 million years for a glass bottle to break down in a landfill,” “The energy saved from recycling one glass bottle will operate a 100-watt light bulb for four hours,” “Producing glass from new materials requires 30% more energy than using used glass,” and other data in the text that speaks to recycling efforts ○ Video: Many types of people learned about the concerns with the environment: “An estimated 20 million people participated” at the first Earth Day event, “young and old, Democrat and Republican.” ○ Video: Politicians finally paid attention as well: President Nixon signed acts such as the Endangered Species Act, the Clean Air Act, the Clean Water Act, and established the Environmental Protection Agency. ○ “By the 10s of thousands, Americans left the city streets to be restored in the wild,” “but the air is better, the water is cleaner. The eagle is back.” <p>Con: Nelson’s concerns have not been addressed in that</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Text 1: Clearly there are still concerns as people continue to have to fight for the environment: “as younger generations continue his fight to preserve the world's environment.” • Text 2: Americans are still extremely wasteful: “The average American produces more than four pounds of garbage per day. Over the course of a year, that is more than 1,600 pounds of garbage per person,” “Almost half of the food in the U.S. goes to waste - approximately 3,000 pounds per second,” “In 2012, the U.S. produced 32 million tons of plastic. Only 9% was recovered for recycling,” “Americans use about 69 million tons of paper and paperboard each year,” “The average American uses about 100 gallons of water per day and more than 100,000 gallons of water per year,” and “About 8 million metric tons of plastic goes into the ocean each year.” • Video: Despite progress, concerns remain: “The journey is not yet complete.” |

Additional Resources for Assessment and CCSS Implementation

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

Sample Scoring Rubric for Text-Based Writing Prompts:

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