

CCSS Aligned Question Stems

INTRODUCTION TO ALIGNED TEXT DEPENDENT QUESTION STEMS

While these stems are written in the form of a selected response question (e.g. “Which of the following sentences best...”), this opening could be cut from the prompt to generate an open ended response for classroom discussion or written work (e.g. “State an important claim about...”).

In addition, several of these stems could be turned into a two part question, with Part B asking a variation on this follow-up question: “Select the best piece of evidence/three pieces of evidence from the following excerpts that support your response to Part A.”

When writing their own questions teachers should be attuned to the “spirit” versus the “letter” of the question stems below and modify them accordingly to fit the situation and text under investigation.

STANDARD R2: THEME/CENTRAL IDEA IN A TEXT

“Which of the following sentences best states an important claim about [theme/central idea] as described in _____?”

“Identify the claim about _____ that is most supported by the evidence within _____.”

“Which of the following sentences best reflects _____’s ideas about _____ as explained in _____?”

“Choose the main idea/theme that is supported by the most relevant and sufficient evidence within _____.”

“Select the claim that is supported by the most relevant and sufficient evidence within _____.”

“Which of the following sentences is the best/most accurate summary of paragraph/section X?”

STANDARD R3: DEVELOPMENT OF EVENTS AND IDEAS IN A TEXT

“Which sentence best explains how [event/character X] shapes or alters the [key idea/plot/actions of a character] in the text?”

“Which of the following sentences describes how _____ changed the reader’s understanding of _____?”

“Choose the sentence that best describes how event/individual/idea X is explained over the course of the text.”

“Which of the following explanations best matches the textual evidence about _____?”

“Which of the following answers lists the plot/events/steps in the correct order?”

“From the choices below select the next step in process/event X.”

STANDARD R4: MEANING OF WORDS AND PHRASES IN A TEXT

“What does the word _____ mean in the context it appears in the paragraph/text?”

“What explanation best describes the impact the word/phrase _____ has on the author’s key ideas/claims/themes?”

“What does the word/phrase _____ in paragraph _____ indicate about _____?”

STANDARD R5: TEXT STRUCTURE

“Which of the following sentences best explains how section X of the text relates to section Y / the whole of the text?”

“Which sentence/section of the text describing idea X most clearly addresses issue Y?”

“Which sentence/section of the text most clearly advances the analysis of _____ about topic Y?”

“The chronological/cause and effect/examples/comparison organization of the text is most clearly found in which sentence/section of the text below?”

“Which sentence in paragraph X/which paragraph in section Y most clearly explains key idea Z?”

STANDARD R6: POINT OF VIEW IN A TEXT OR TEXTS

“Which of the following descriptions/pieces of evidence from the text most strongly shows the author’s point of view / purpose?”

“Which of the answers below best explains how the author’s description of _____ had on the key claims/ideas/argument/explanation of the text?”

“What is the primary impact of the authors’ differing points of view / purposes/reasoning/choice of evidence about _____ on the claim that _____?”

“Which of the following sentences/pairs of sentences reflects the authors’ differing points of view / purposes about _____ ?

STANDARD R7: COMPARING DIFFERENT MEDIA IN A TEXT

“Which of the following answers best describes the information found in/added by the chart/graph/map/image?”

“Which sentence below best explains the relationship between the chart/graph/map/image and the author’s main ideas/claims/argument/explanation?”

“What is the best explanation below for how the chart/graph/map/image shapes or augments the author’s main ideas/claims/argument/explanation?”

“What conclusion can be drawn from evaluating the multiple sources (including media sources) of information on the topic?”

“Which document most effectively provides information to address the question/solve the problem around _____?”

STANDARD R8: ARGUMENT AND REASONING IN A TEXT (FOR INFORMATIONAL TEXT ONLY)

“Based on the text, which of the following is a fact rather than an opinion/reasoned judgment/inference?”

“Which of the following is not a step in the argument about _____ found in section _____ of the text?”

“What piece of evidence most strongly supports the author’s claim that _____?”

“What additional information or evidence would most strongly corroborate/support [or challenge/disrupt] the author’s reasoning in support of the claim that _____?”

STANDARD R9: COMPARE AND CONTRAST THEMES AND TOPICS IN TWO OR MORE TEXTS

“What key conclusion about the topic / text can be made from comparing _____ with _____?”

“What is the conclusion with the most support when comparing and contrasting the evidence from the documents _____, _____ and _____?”

“What is the best description of how [primary text] relates to [secondary text]?”

“What is the strongest conclusion that can be drawn by the contrasting interpretations or presentations of information about topic X in the documents _____ and _____?”