PARCC Research Simulation Tasks

Following are the directions from the practice tests and the 2015 released items for grades 3-11 (found on the PARCC Website):

**GRADE 3:**

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<th>PRACTICE TEST: N/A</th>
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<td><strong>RELEASED ITEM:</strong></td>
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<td>Today you will research life in the Arctic. You will read <em>Life in a Deep Freeze</em> and a passage from “Inuit.” As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about life in the Arctic so you can write an essay. THEN: Your friend thinks it is impossible for people and animals to live in the Arctic. Write a letter to your friend explaining it is possible to live in the Arctic. Include information about how it is possible for people and animals to survive in the cold. Use ideas and facts from both articles in your letter.</td>
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**GRADE 4:**

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<td>Today you will read two articles and watch a video about the survival of wild horses on Assateague Island in Maryland and Chincoteague Island in Virginia. As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions so that you can write an essay…. THEN: Your class has been studying about the survival of the ponies on Assateague Island. Using information from the articles and the video, describe the roles that both the horses and humans play in the horses' survival. Use evidence from the articles and the video to support your answer.</td>
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<th><strong>RELEASED ITEM:</strong></th>
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<td>Today you will research relationships between animals. You will read a passage from the book <em>Owen &amp; Mzee: The Language of Friendship</em>. Then you will read the article “Helping Paws” and view the video <em>Fooled by Nature: Animal Partnership</em>. As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about relationships between animals so you can write an essay. THEN: You have read the passage from <em>Owen &amp; Mzee: The Language of Friendship</em>, which describes how a hippo and a tortoise depend on one another. You have also viewed a video about the connection between mongooses and hornbills. Think about how these relationships are different. Write an essay that describes how the friendship between Owen and Mzee is different from the relationship between mongooses and hornbills. Use examples from both the article and the video to support your conclusions.</td>
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**GRADE 5:**

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<td>Today you will research how penguins are rescued after a large oil spill. You will read</td>
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two articles, and then you will view a video. As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about the rescue of penguins so you can write an essay.

 THEN: Compare how the articles by Lauren Tarshis and Dyan deNapoli and the video describe penguin rescue efforts after oil spills. Support your essay with information from all three sources.

**RELEASED ITEM:** N/A (not released “due to item bank considerations”)

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**GRADE 6:**

**PRACTICE TEST:**

Today you will research how zoos impact animals. You will read one article titled “The Stripes Will Survive.” Then you will read one passage titled “The Zoos Go Wild” and view one video titled “Lions at the National Zoo.” As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about how zoos impact animals so you can write an essay.

 THEN: You have read two texts and viewed one video that claim that the role of zoos is to protect animals. Write an essay that compares and contrasts the evidence each source uses to support this claim. Be sure to use evidence from all three sources to support your response.

**RELEASED ITEM:** N/A (not released “due to item bank considerations”)

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**GRADE 7:**

**PRACTICE TEST:**

Today you will research electricity and consider some of the methods used in science texts and videos to support different purposes. First you will read a passage that explains some general principles of electricity. Next, you will watch a video about fun ways to learn about electricity circuits. Finally, you will read an article that explains how different materials conduct electricity. As you review these sources, think about the purpose of each and the role that explanations, demonstrations, and/or descriptions of experiments play in communicating that purpose. At the end of the task, you will be asked to write an essay.

 THEN: You have learned about electricity by reading two articles, “Energy Story” and “Conducting Solutions,” and viewing a video clip titled “Hands-on Science with Squishy Circuits.” In an essay, compare the purposes of the three sources. Then analyze how each source uses explanations, demonstrations, or descriptions of experiments to help accomplish its purpose. Be sure to discuss important differences and similarities between the information gained from the video and the information provided in the articles. Support your response with evidence from each source.

**RELEASED ITEM:**

Today you will research the Gold Rush in the late 1800s. You will read the article “Klondike Gold Rush.” Then you will read a passage from A Woman Who Went to
Alaska and view the video City of Gold. As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about the authors’ points of view and the way they present information so you can write an essay.

THEN: The authors of “Klondike Gold Rush” and A Woman Who Went to Alaska and the narrator of City of Gold are discussing the same topic but are using different points of view. How does each person’s point of view shape the reader’s understanding of the miners’ lives? Use details from each source to support your answer.

GRADE 8:

PRACTICE TEST:
Today you will research an experiment involving elephants. First, you will read an article about the experiment. Then you will view a video and read a passage of the actual study. As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about how the sources present information so you can write an analytical essay.

THEN: Write an essay comparing the information presented in the video with that presented in the article “Elephants Can Lend a Helping Trunk” and the passage from “Elephants Know When They Need a Helping Trunk in a Cooperative Task.” Remember to use evidence from the video, the article, and the passage to support your answer.

RELEASED ITEM:
Today you will research the topic of sound and the invention of the phonograph. You will read the article “The Incredible Talking Machine.” Then you will read a passage from the article “History of the Cylinder Phonograph” and the article “Psst… Hey, You.” As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about sound and the invention of the phonograph so you can write an essay.

THEN: You have now read TWO articles about the beginning of sound technology and ONE article about modern technology. Write an essay explaining how the process of refining and marketing the phonograph is similar to the development of the Audio Spotlight in “Psst… Hey, You.” Be sure to use details from all THREE articles to support your answer.

GRADE 9:

PRACTICE TEST:
Today you will research the development and one-time use of the atomic bomb. First you will read a passage from a speech by Robert Oppenheimer, the director of the Manhattan Project, under which the bomb was developed in Los Alamos, New Mexico. Then you will read a letter from a group of eminent scientists to President Harry S. Truman, asking him not to use the bomb. Finally you will read about President Truman and his decision to drop the bomb. As you review these sources, you will answer questions and gather information so that you can write an essay synthesizing what you have learned.

THEN: Write an essay that compares and contrasts a primary argument in each text that you have read regarding the decision to drop the atomic bomb. Your essay should explain how effectively you think each author supported that claim with reasoning and/or
evidence. Be sure to use evidence from the three texts to support your ideas.

RELEASED ITEM:
Today you will research how humans perceive sound and how sound relates to other aspects of human experience. You will read the article “First Notes.” Then you will read the passage from “Sound As My Mentor” and the passage “Stretching Sound to Help the Mind See.” As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about sound so you can write an essay.

THEN: You have now read an article and two passages about a scientific topic—sound. They are “Sound As My Mentor” and “First Notes” by Bernie Krause, and “Stretching Sound to Help the Mind See” by Walter Murch. The authors of all THREE sources claim that sound is difficult to understand and discuss. Write an essay in which you compare and contrast how the THREE sources demonstrate that sound is difficult to understand and discuss. Describe the evidence that each source presents, and use details from all THREE sources to support your response.

GRADE 10:

PRACTICE TEST:
In 1968 three students in Des Moines, Iowa, arrived at their separate schools wearing black armbands to protest United States involvement in the Vietnam War. The principals of the schools quickly instituted a policy banning the wearing of armbands, leading to the suspension of the students. A lawsuit filed on behalf of the students was eventually argued in the Supreme Court on November 12, 1986. Today you will read two passages and listen to a short audio clip discussing the context and impact of the case. At the end of the task, you will be asked to write an analytical essay.

THEN: You have just read or listened to three sources discussing the Supreme Court case of Tinker v. Des Moines:

• the United States Supreme Court majority opinion by Chief Justice Abe Fortas
• the United States Supreme Court dissenting opinion by Justice Hugo Black
• an audio clip of an interview with law professor Catherine Ross

Consider the points made by each source about the issues surrounding the Tinker v. Des Moines case.

Write an essay analyzing the arguments of those who believe certain kinds of speech should be prohibited within an educational setting and those who believe the opposite. Base the analysis on the specifics of the Tinker v. Des Moines case and the arguments and principles put forth in the three sources. The essay should consider at least two of the sources presented.

RELEASED ITEM:
Today you will research President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s economic plans to stabilize
the American economy during the 1930s and the Great Depression. You will read the radio address “The Forgotten Man.” Then you will read a passage from “Inaugural Address, March 4, 1933” and view the video FDR—The New Deal. As you review these sources, you will gather information and answer questions about President Franklin D. Roosevelt’s economic plans so you can write an essay.

THEN: You have read and listened to three texts that present Franklin Delano Roosevelt’s ideas. The three texts are:

• “The Forgotten Man,” a speech delivered by Roosevelt on April 7, 1932
• A passage from “Inaugural Address,” a speech delivered by Roosevelt on March 4, 1933
• A video clip concerning Roosevelt’s “New Deal” programs

Consider the points made by each text about Roosevelt’s plans for and beliefs regarding the future of the United States. Write an essay exploring Roosevelt’s view of the most critical challenges facing the United States during the Great Depression and in what way Roosevelt believed that his proposed solutions differed from those attempted by others.

Your essay should consider at least TWO of the texts that you have read. Remember to use textual evidence to support your ideas.

GRADE 11:

PRACTICE TEST:

Today you will read two documents that were written at the time of the American Revolution and watch a video that gives further information about one of these documents. As you study these sources, pay particular attention to the rhetorical features of each document and the audience to which each one was addressed. At the end of the task, you will be asked to write an analytical essay.

THEN:

You have studied three sources involving the establishment of American independence from Great Britain. The sources are:

• Declaration of Independence, signed on July 4, 1776
• A passage from Patrick Henry’s March 23, 1776, speech to the Second Virginia Convention
• The video “From Subjects to Citizens”

An important idea presented in the sources involves the colonists’ notions of the purpose of government. Write an essay in which you explore the perceptions of government’s purpose presented in the sources. In writing your essay, consider how the authors of the two written documents describe the ideal relationship between a government and its people, and how they describe the actual relationship between the government of Great Britain and the colonists. Consider also the perspective presented in the video. Remember to use evidence from all three sources to support your ideas.

RELEASED ITEM:

Today you will read three articles that discuss the collision theory of lunar formation. As
you read the articles, you will gather information and answer questions so that you can write an analytical essay.

THEN: Perhaps one of the most significant events to impact the study of the moon’s origins occurred when astronauts were actually able to visit the moon, beginning with the Apollo missions. Write an essay that uses references to ALL THREE articles to explain the significance of the lunar missions to the study of the moon’s origins. Your essay should

• Describe knowledge researchers had about the moon before humans were able to visit it;
• Discuss the kinds of evidence scientists can now draw upon thanks to the lunar missions;
• Explain how analysis of data and samples from the lunar missions has changed over time; and
• Suggest what role evidence from the lunar missions will likely play in the future studies of the moon’s origins.