Sample Items for Grade 6: Excerpt from "Julie of the Wolves" by Jean Craighead George

Sample Item 2: Questions and Standards

Part A Question: Based on the passage from *Julie* of the Wolves, how does Miyax feel about her father?

- a. She is angry that he left her alone.
- b. She blames him for her difficult childhood.
- c. She appreciates his thorough knowledge of nature.*
- d. She is grateful that he planned out her future.

Sample Item 2: Advances and Answers

Part A Item Advances: The skills of rereading carefully to find specific information and of applying understanding of a text are essential college and career skills. This Evidence-Based Selected-Response question allows students to more deeply demonstrate comprehension of the main character in the excerpt. Part A of the item sets the stage for Part B, where students are asked to prove their answer through citing evidence from the text, which represents an advance from traditional assessments.

The item meets the standards by asking students to delve deeply into how the main character is feeling as she reflects on her predicament. She thinks about her father as she struggles to find a way to communicate with the black wolf, and she appreciates the fact that her father was able to do so when he was alive, recognizing that trying to imitate his experience is the one thing that can save her. The reader must infer based on this reflection that Miyax appreciates her father's understanding and knowledge of nature.

Part A Answer Choice Rationales: Options A and B may seem plausible to students who did not closely read the passage or misinterpreted the text, while Option D is not at all supported by the text. However, only Option C correctly represents her appreciation for her father's skills.

Part B Question: Which sentence from the passage best shows Miyax's feelings for her father?

- a. "She had been lost without food for many sleeps on the North Slope of Alaska."
- b. "This could be done she knew, for her father, an Eskimo hunter, had done so."*
- c. "Unfortunately, Miyax's father never explained to her how he had told the wolf of his needs."

Part B Item Advances: Part B of this Evidence-Based Selected-Response question takes the item in a new direction that calls for students to show the evidence they used to help them decide how Miyax feels about her father. Students not only must determine the feelings of the character (Part A) but also must provide the context used to establish the accuracy of their answer. Part B asks students to identify a quotation from the text that supports their answer in Part A, illustrating one of the key shifts in CCSS assessment: use of textual evidence.

Part B Answer Choice Rationales: Option A addresses only Miyax's situation, and not her feelings toward her father. Option C could be misinterpreted as anger or resentment on Miyax's part, but it is really just a neutral statement of

d. "And not long afterward he paddled his kayak into the Bering Sea to hunt for seal, and he never returned."

fact: Miyax's father was never able to impart the knowledge of how to communicate with wolves. Option D could be misinterpreted as a reason for Miyax to blame her father for forcing her to grow up without a father, but it is also is a statement of fact: her father disappeared during a hunt.

Sample Item 2: Alignment

Explanation of Alignment: The item meets the PARCC Assessment Claim for Reading Literature, as the question is based on a literary passage. Additionally, the item is aligned well to the two standards and the evidence statements listed because it asks students to identify how Miyax feels based on her reaction to her father's experiences and knowledge. This reaction helps move the plot forward in that Miyax has established that since her father was able to communicate with the wolf, she may be able to as well. The item then asks students to cite textual evidence to support the inference they have made in Part A.

PARCC Assessment Claim, Standards and Evidence Statements Assessed

PARCC Assessment Claim: Reading Literature: Students read and demonstrate comprehension of grade-level complex literary text.

<u>Standard RL.6.1</u>: Cite textual evidence to support analysis of what the text says explicitly as well as inferences drawn from the text.

Evidence Statement for RL.6.1:

The student's response

• Provides cited textual evidence to support analysis of inferences drawn from the text.

<u>Standard RL.6.3</u>: Describe how a particular story's or drama's plot unfolds in a series of episodes as well as how the characters respond or change as the plot moves toward resolution.

Evidence Statements for RL.6.3:

The student's response

• Provides a description of how the characters respond or change as the plot moves towards a resolution.

Sample Item 2: Scoring Points and Rationale

Scoring Rationale: Past tests would have given credit for a right answer regardless of how a student arrived at the answer, but the PARCC assessment reflects the key shift of requiring close reading by offering credit only if both Part A and Part B are correct.

Scoring Points:

- 2 points are earned when the student correctly chooses the answer to Part A (C) and the answer to Part B (B).
- No partial credit is available for this item.

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