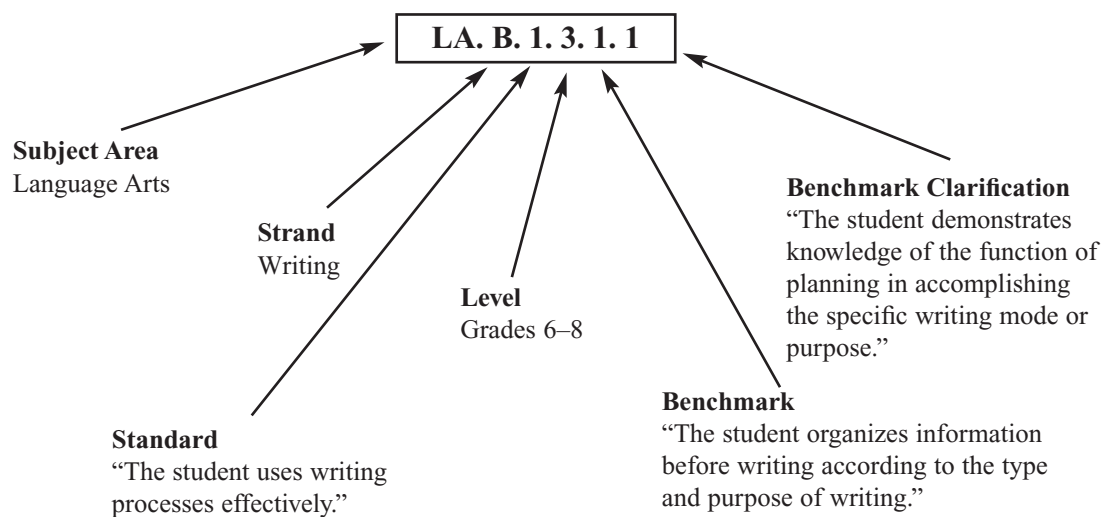


# Benchmark Classification System

Each benchmark in the Sunshine State Standards is coded with a system of numbers and letters.

- The first two letters in the *first two positions* of the code identify the **subject area** (e.g., LA for Language Arts).
- The letter in the *third position* (third letter) represents the **strand**, or category of knowledge, to which the benchmark belongs. There are five strands in Language Arts: Reading (A); Writing (B); Listening, Viewing, and Speaking (C); Language (D); and Literature (E). FCAT Writing+ only assesses Writing (B).
- The number in the *fourth position* represents the **standard** for the benchmark.
- The number in the *fifth position* shows the **developmental level** of the benchmark:
  - 1 indicates PreK–2
  - 2 indicates Grades 3–5
  - 3 indicates Grades 6–8
  - 4 indicates Grades 9–12
- The number in the *sixth position* indicates the specific **benchmark** which falls under the specified grade cluster and within the standard.
- The number in the *last position* represents the **benchmark clarification** statement that describes how students will demonstrate achievement of the benchmark. Note that this number is not a part of the Sunshine State Standards and has been assigned for FCAT Writing+ assessment purposes only.



## BENCHMARKS ASSESSED AT GRADE 8

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS BENCHMARK	ITEM FORMAT
<b>STRAND B: WRITING</b>	
<p><b>LA.B.1.3.1</b> The student organizes information before writing according to the type and purpose of writing.</p> <p><b>LA.B.1.3.1 Benchmark Clarifications</b></p> <p><b>Focus</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Clarification 1.3.1.1</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of the function of planning in accomplishing the specific writing mode or purpose.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Clarification 1.3.1.2</b> The student recognizes how modifications to a writing plan affect the maintenance of the writing focus.</p> <p><b>Organization</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Clarification 1.3.1.3</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of the function of prewriting in establishing an effective organizational plan.</p>	MC4
<p><b>LA.B.1.3.2</b> The student drafts and revises writing that is focused, purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation; conveys a sense of completeness and wholeness with adherence to the main idea; has an organizational pattern that provides for a logical progression of ideas; has support that is substantial, specific, relevant, concrete, and/or illustrative; demonstrates a commitment to and an involvement with the subject; has clarity in presentation of ideas; uses creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper; demonstrates a command of language (word choice) with freshness of expression; has varied sentence structure and sentences that are complete except when fragments are used purposefully; and has few, if any, convention errors in mechanics, usage, and punctuation.</p> <p>Note: The conventions portion of this benchmark is assessed by LA.B.1.3.3. (Also assesses LA.B.2.3.3)</p> <p><b>LA.B.1.3.2 Benchmark Clarifications</b></p> <p><b>Focus</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Clarification 1.3.2.1</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of effective ways to focus on a central idea or topic.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Clarification 1.3.2.2</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of the mode or purpose for writing.</p> <p><b>Organization</b></p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Clarification 1.3.2.3</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of how a logical progression of ideas contributes to effective organization and communication.</p> <p style="padding-left: 20px;"><b>Clarification 1.3.2.4</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of how to use transitional elements to develop relationships among ideas.</p>	MC4, WP

**MC3:** three-option multiple-choice

**MC4:** four-option multiple-choice

**WP:** writing prompt

## BENCHMARKS ASSESSED AT GRADE 8 (CONTINUED)

SUNSHINE STATE STANDARDS BENCHMARK	ITEM FORMAT
<b>STRAND B: WRITING</b>	
<p><b>LA.B.1.3.2 Benchmark Clarifications (continued)</b>  <b>Support</b></p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.2.5</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of how to incorporate supporting ideas that clarify, explain, or define, contributing to a sense of completeness or wholeness in writing.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.2.6</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of how communication is affected by word choice.</p>	MC4, WP
<p><b>LA.B.1.3.3</b> The student produces final documents that have been edited for correct spelling; correct punctuation, including commas, colons, and semicolons; correct capitalization; effective sentence structure; correct common usage, including subject/verb agreement, common noun/pronoun agreement, common possessive forms, and with a variety of sentence structures, including parallel structure; and correct formatting.            Note: This benchmark assesses the conventions portion of LA.B.1.3.2. Correct formatting is not assessed.</p> <p><b>LA.B.1.3.3 Benchmark Clarifications</b>  <b>Conventions</b></p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.1</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of spelling conventions.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.2</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of punctuation conventions.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.3</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of correct capitalization.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.4</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of standard English usage.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.5</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of sentence structure.</p>	MC3, WP
<p><b>LA.B.2.3.1</b> The student writes text, notes, outlines, comments, and observations that demonstrate comprehension of content and experiences from a variety of media.</p>	Not assessed
<p><b>LA.B.2.3.2</b> The student organizes information using alphabetical, chronological, and numerical systems.</p>	Not assessed
<p><b>LA.B.2.3.3</b> The student selects and uses appropriate formats for writing, including narrative, persuasive, and expository formats, according to the intended audience, purpose, and occasion.</p>	Assessed with LA.B.1.3.2
<p><b>LA.B.2.3.4</b> The student uses electronic technology, including databases and software, to gather information and communicate new knowledge.</p>	Not assessed

**MC3:** three-option multiple-choice  
**MC4:** four-option multiple-choice  
**WP:** writing prompt

## BENCHMARK LA.B.1.3.1

<b>Strand</b>	<b>B</b> Writing
<b>Standard</b>	<b>1</b> The student uses writing processes effectively.
<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>LA.B.1.3.1</b> The student organizes information before writing according to the type and purpose of writing.
<b>Benchmark Clarifications and Content Codes</b>	<p><b>Content Code:</b> Provided in parentheses below.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.1.1</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of the function of planning in accomplishing the specific writing mode or purpose. (Planning for a Purpose: PP)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.1.2</b> The student recognizes how modifications to a writing plan affect the maintenance of the writing focus. (Topic Awareness: TA)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.1.3</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of the function of prewriting in establishing an effective organizational plan. (Organizational Plan: OP)</p>
<b>Content Limits</b>	<p>Focus and organization are assessed by this benchmark.</p> <p><b>Focus</b> Focus items ask students to identify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• subtopics or details that can be added to a writing plan;</li> <li>• subtopics or details that are repetitive or extraneous to the topic;</li> <li>• an appropriate title of the composition for which the writing plan is being developed; and</li> <li>• characteristics that indicate the intended purpose for which the writing plan is being developed.</li> </ul> <p><b>Organization</b> Organization items ask students to identify</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• details that should be rearranged in a writing plan to facilitate an effective organizational plan;</li> <li>• the best location for new details to be added to a writing plan; and</li> <li>• the intended organizational pattern indicated by the writing plan.</li> </ul>

Topics should be familiar to students at Grade 8. Details should not require specialized background knowledge. Knowledge of the formal structure and format of an organizational tool, such as a formal outline, will not be tested.

**Item Types**

At Grade 8, this benchmark is assessed by using four-option multiple-choice (MC4) items.

**Stimulus Attributes**

The writing plans should be within the scope of Grade 8 composition experience. Writing plans must contain sufficient context to enable the students to identify the purpose for writing. Short phrases are preferred over complete sentences.

The writing plan should contain a topic, subtopics, and/or supporting details. The writing plan can be missing a topic, subtopic, or detail that should be identified by the student. The writing plan can also be partially complete, and the student might be asked which detail or subtopic should be added, deleted, or rearranged in the writing plan.

**Response Attributes**

Distractors may include, but are not limited to

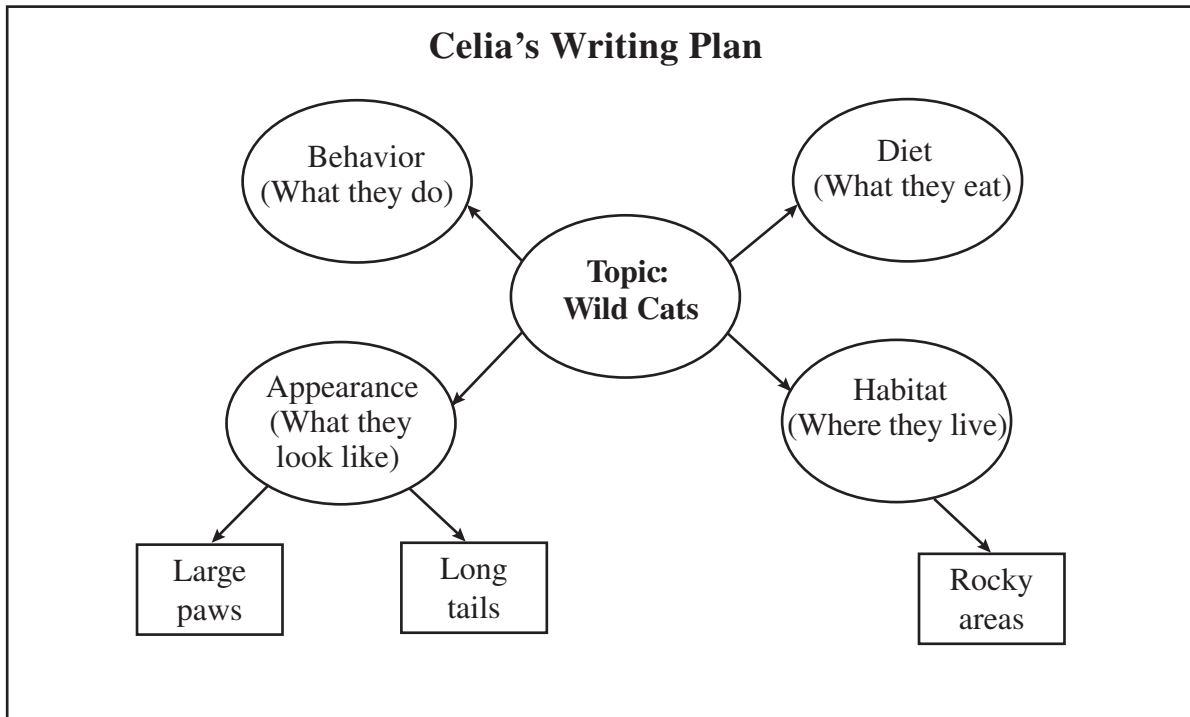
**Focus**

- subtopics to which a detail cannot be added;
- details that cannot be grouped;
- subtopics that cannot be added;
- titles that are inappropriate for the composition that is being planned;
- purposes or modes for which the writing is not intended;
- details that cannot be added to or deleted from a subtopic;

**Organization**

- subtopics or details from the writing plan that are correctly placed;
- subtopics or details that, if selected, would result in faulty organization; and
- organizational patterns for which the writing is not intended.

Sample items #1–3 are based on “Celia’s Writing Plan.”



**Sample Item 1** (Focus)

**Clarification 1.3.1.2** The student recognizes how modifications to a writing plan affect the maintenance of the writing focus.

Under which subtopic should details about Grassy areas, Forests, and Mountains be placed?

- A. Appearance
- B. Behavior
- C. Diet
- ★ D. Habitat

The correct answer is D. Details about the places wild cats can live, such as Grassy areas, Forests, and Mountains, should be added under the subtopic “Habitat.”

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. Details about physical descriptions of wild cats should be placed under the subtopic “Appearance.”
- B. Details about activities or actions of wild cats should be placed under the subtopic “Behavior.”
- C. Details about food sources for wild cats should be placed under the subtopic “Diet.”

**Sample Item 2 (Focus)**

**Clarification 1.3.1.2** The student recognizes how modifications to a writing plan affect the maintenance of the writing focus.

Which detail below should be added under the subtopic “Behavior”?

- ★ A. Sometimes wild cats are playful.
- B. Some wild cats like cold climates with little rain.
- C. Special markings help them blend into their surroundings.
- D. Some examples of food sources are rodents, birds, and fish.

The correct answer is A. The detail “Sometimes wild cats are playful” indicates action and should be added under the subtopic “Behavior.”

**Distractor Rationale**

- B. The detail about climates should be added under the subtopic “Habitat.”
- C. The detail about special markings should be added under the subtopic “Appearance.”
- D. The detail about food sources should be added under the subtopic “Diet.”

**Sample Item 3 (Focus)**

**Clarification 1.3.1.1** The student demonstrates knowledge of the function of planning in accomplishing the specific writing mode or purpose.

Based on the writing plan, what kind of paper is Celia planning to write?

- A. a paper that tells a story about wild cats
- ★ B. a paper that explains characteristics of wild cats
- C. a paper that gives directions for drawing a wild cat
- D. a paper that describes the decline of the wild cat population

The correct answer is B. The writing plan shows that the writer is planning to use informational details to explain characteristics of wild cats.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. Because the writing plan does not include the elements of narration, such as setting, characters, or events in the plot, the writer is not planning to write a story about wild cats.
- C. Because the writing plan does not indicate that the writer will explain the steps involved in drawing a wild cat, the writer is not planning to write an instructional paper.
- D. Because the writing plan does not include subtopics or sensory details about the decline of the wild cat population, the writer is not planning to write a paper describing the population decline.

## BENCHMARK LA.B.1.3.2

<b>Strand</b>	<b>B</b> Writing
<b>Standard</b>	<p><b>1</b> The student uses writing processes effectively.</p> <p><b>2</b> The student writes to communicate ideas and information effectively.</p>
<b>Benchmark</b>	<p><b>LA.B.1.3.2</b> The student drafts and revises writing that is focused, purposeful, and reflects insight into the writing situation; conveys a sense of completeness and wholeness with adherence to the main idea; has an organizational pattern that provides for a logical progression of ideas; has support that is substantial, specific, relevant, concrete, and/or illustrative; demonstrates a commitment to and an involvement with the subject; has clarity in presentation of ideas; uses creative writing strategies appropriate to the purpose of the paper; and demonstrates a command of language (word choice) with freshness of expression. . . . (See Appendix B for the full text of this benchmark.) Note: The conventions portion of this benchmark is assessed by LA.B.1.3.3.</p> <p>Also assesses LA.B.2.3.3 The student selects and uses appropriate formats for writing, including narrative, persuasive, and expository formats, according to the intended audience, purpose, and occasion.</p>
<b>Benchmark Clarifications and Content Codes</b>	<p><b>Content Code:</b> Provided in parentheses below.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.2.1</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of effective ways to focus on a central idea or topic. (Central Idea: CI)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.2.2</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of the mode or purpose for writing. (Writer’s Purpose: WP)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.2.3</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of how a logical progression of ideas contributes to effective organization and communication. (Logical Order: LO)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.2.4</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of how to use transitional elements to develop relationships among ideas. (Transitional Devices: TD)</p>



**Clarification 1.3.2.5** The student demonstrates knowledge of how to incorporate supporting ideas that clarify, explain, or define, contributing to a sense of completeness or wholeness in writing. (Development of Support: DS)

**Clarification 1.3.2.6** The student demonstrates knowledge of how communication is affected by word choice. (Word Choice: WC)

### Content Limits

Focus, organization, and support are assessed by this benchmark.

#### Focus

Focus items ask students to identify

- details that are repetitive, extraneous, or unimportant to the topic or central idea;
- ideas that effectively advance, maintain, or summarize the central idea and purpose of the draft; and
- characteristics in the writing that promote the intended mode or purpose.

**Notes:** Items should not directly ask students to identify the main idea.

In the writing sample, repetitive information should be redundant and ineffective and should be in close proximity to what is being repeated.

#### Organization

Organization items ask students to identify

- material that should be rearranged in a text to provide a logical progression of ideas;
- the best location in a specific paragraph or section of the text for new details to be added;
- the appropriate modification or addition of transitional devices; and
- the basis of the organizational pattern or text structure.

#### Support

Support items ask students to identify

- details that can be added to a text to enhance the sense of completeness; and
- effective word choice, including style, tone, and specificity.

### Item Types

This benchmark is assessed using four-option multiple-choice (MC4) items.

**Stimulus Attributes** To meet the goals of the test, samples are designed to test students' knowledge of

- a clearly expressed or implied topic and central idea;
- characteristics of writing that identify the intended mode or purpose, and the audience and occasion;
- relevant and non-repetitive details;
- a logical organizational pattern;
- effective transitions;
- ideas or details supporting the topic;
- precise word choice; and
- effective use of style and tone.

**Response Attributes**

Distractors for multiple-choice items may include, but are not limited to

**Focus**

- sentences that cannot be added to the sample because they are not related to the topic;
- sentences that cannot be added to or deleted from the sample because they are or are not redundant;
- sentences from the sample that cannot be deleted;
- presentation of paragraph topic ideas that, if developed, would not maintain the focus;
- titles or concluding statements or paragraphs that are not effective;
- characteristics of the writing that do not identify the writer's mode or purpose;
- invalid reasons for including information intended to present or maintain the central idea or purpose;

**Organization**

- sentences from the sample that are correctly placed;
- sentences that, if selected, would result in faulty organization;
- transitional devices that are not accurate or effective;
- invalid organizational patterns;
- organizational patterns that are not present in the writing sample;

**Support**

- words or phrases that are not precise or are not consistent with style and tone;
- sentences that cannot be added to the sample or a paragraph because they do not develop support;
- techniques that do not develop support in the writing sample; and
- reasons for revising that are not based on improving word choice or the development of support.

Sample items #1–6 are based on the writing sample “The Beginning of Organized Baseball.”

The article below is a first draft that Antonio wrote for school. The article contains errors. Read the article to answer questions XX-XX.

### The Beginning of Organized Baseball

- [1] The first organized baseball teams and their rules go back to the 1840s. [2] At that time, a New Yorker named Alexander J. Cartwright wrote the first-known written rules of the game.
- [3] Baseball had been played for fun in America since the early 1800s. [4] During these early games, friends played baseball games using various rules. [5] In 1845, Cartwright and others formed the Knickerbockers Baseball Club. [6] This is when baseball history began to change.
- [7] Cartwright established the requirements for the modern baseball field, which became diamond-shaped with the pitcher’s mound in the center. [8] His rules gave the requirements of the playing field. [9] Bases would be 90 feet apart. [10] His rules also described the area where a ball was considered to be out-of-bounds. [11] His changes allowed the fans to get closer to the playing field. [12] Cartwright improved baseball for the fans.
- [13] Over the next ten to fifteen years, teams playing by Cartwright’s rules formed in the New York area. [14] New teams formed in many other cities. [15] In 1869, the first professional team, the Cincinnati Red Stockings, was formed. [16] Known as the Cincinnati Reds, it is still in existence today.
- [17] Baseball has become an American pastime. [18] Cartwright gave the game its first set of written rules and helped organize the sport. [19] Some of Cartwright’s rules remain today. [20] For these reasons, he will always be remembered in baseball history. [21] Some baseball players were elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame.

**Sample Item 1** (Focus)

**Clarification 1.3.2.1** The student demonstrates knowledge of effective ways to focus on a central idea or topic.

Which sentence should be deleted because it presents a detail that is unimportant to the article?

- A. sentence  18
- B. sentence  19
- C. sentence  20
- ★ D. sentence  21

The correct answer is D. The detail provides extraneous information about baseball players being elected to the Baseball Hall of Fame, thus creating a lack of focus.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. This detail helps to maintain focus and is important because it expresses the central idea that Cartwright was the first to place baseball rules in written form.
- B. This detail helps to maintain focus and is necessary because it demonstrates the importance of Cartwright's work to modern baseball.
- C. This detail helps to maintain focus and is a concluding statement that is relevant to the article.

**Sample Item 2** (Focus)

**Clarification 1.3.2.1** The student demonstrates knowledge of effective ways to focus on a central idea or topic.

Which sentence below should Antonio add to conclude the article?

- A. Baseball is an organized team sport.
- B. Baseball is a game for the young and old.
- C. Alexander J. Cartwright should have created different rules for baseball.
- ★ D. Alexander J. Cartwright should be called the “father” of modern baseball.

The correct answer is D. Because this idea can be concluded from the article, this statement could be appropriately added to the end of the article to strengthen the focus, indicating insight into the writing situation.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. This general information about baseball does not maintain focus and should not be used to conclude the article.
- B. This general information about people and baseball does not maintain focus and should not be used to conclude the article.
- C. This statement of opinion does not maintain focus and should not be used to conclude the article.

**Sample Item 3 (Organization)**

**Clarification 1.3.2.3** The student demonstrates knowledge of how a logical progression of ideas contributes to effective organization and communication.

Antonio wants to add the sentence below to his article:

**To do this, he mixed his own ideas for playing baseball with the requirements from an earlier form of the game called Rounders.**

Where should this sentence be added to keep the details in the correct order?

- A. after sentence
- ★ B. after sentence
- C. after sentence
- D. after sentence

The correct answer is B. Sentence  introduces Cartwright as the writer of the first-known rules of baseball. The detail about how he developed the rules further explains, and should follow the idea presented in sentence .

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. Sentence  states the main idea of the article. Information about the source of Cartwright's rules would not logically follow sentence .
- C. Sentence  gives information about how long baseball has been played in America. Information about the source of Cartwright's rules would not follow sentence .
- D. Sentence  mentions that during the early games of baseball, friends played by various rules. Information about the source of Cartwright's rules would not logically follow sentence .

**Sample Item 4 (Organization)**

**Clarification 1.3.2.3** The student demonstrates knowledge of how a logical progression of ideas contributes to effective organization and communication.

Why does Antonio present the ideas in the article the way he does?

- A. He wants to compare baseball clubs to show how they are alike.
- ★ B. He wants to show how the establishment of rules led to baseball becoming a nationally recognized sport.
- C. He wants to present the most important argument last to support his opinion about the popularity of baseball.
- D. He wants to emphasize the counterclockwise direction a player must follow when moving from base to base.

The correct answer is B. Organizing by cause-and-effect is appropriate in a paper showing how the establishment of rules led to baseball becoming a nationally recognized sport.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. Organizing by comparing two baseball clubs would be appropriate in a paper showing how teams are alike.
- C. Organizing by presenting the most important argument last would be appropriate in a paper convincing someone of the writer's opinion.
- D. Organizing by emphasizing the counterclockwise movement of a player around the bases would be appropriate in a paper describing the particular path a player must follow.

**Sample Item 5** (Support)

**Clarification 1.3.2.6** The student demonstrates knowledge of how communication is affected by word choice.

Read the sentence below from Antonio’s article:

**2** At that time, a New Yorker named Alexander J. Cartwright wrote the first-known written rules of the game.

Which revision below improves the word choice and removes the repetition?

- ★ **A.** At that time, a New Yorker named Alexander J. Cartwright wrote the first formal rules of the game.
- B.** At that time, a New Yorker named Alexander J. Cartwright was first to write the first-known written rules of the game.
- C.** At that time, a New Yorker named Alexander J. Cartwright, a writer, wrote the first-known written rules of the game.
- D.** At that time, a New Yorker named Alexander J. Cartwright was first to write the first-known recorded rules of the game.

The correct answer is A. The revised sentence is improved by eliminating repetition (i.e., “wrote” and “written”).

**Distractor Rationale**

- B.** This version of the sentence repeats “first” and the idea of writing the rules.
- C.** This version of the sentence repeats the idea of writing the rules.
- D.** This version of the sentence repeats “first” and the idea of writing (or recording) the rules.



**Sample Item 6 (Support)**

**Clarification 1.3.2.6** The student demonstrates knowledge of how communication is affected by word choice.

Which sentence below matches the style and tone of Antonio’s article?

- A. The kind of stuff that Cartwright made up for rules was called the Knickerbocker rules.
- ★ B. The rules and regulations that Cartwright developed became known as the Knickerbocker rules.
- C. The do’s and don’ts that Cartwright had the smarts to think up were named the Knickerbocker rules.
- D. The governing procedures conceived and prescribed by Cartwright were proclaimed to be regarded as the Knickerbocker rules.

The correct answer is B. This sentence matches the objective tone used in Antonio’s article.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. This sentence is too informal to match the objective tone of the article.
- C. This sentence is too informal to match the objective tone of the article.
- D. This sentence is too elevated to match the objective tone of the article.

Sample items #7–11 are based on the writing sample “Actors Needed.”

The announcement below is a first draft that Jared wrote for his school’s theater acts committee. The announcement contains errors. Read the announcement to answer questions xx-xx.

**Actors Needed**

→ [1] Tryouts for the school’s spring play will be held next week at school.

[2] The auditions will start on Wednesday. [3] They will continue through Saturday. [4] To audition, students must be in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade.

[5] Based on each student’s performance at the tryouts, the theater arts committee will decide which student is best-suited for each part in the play.

[6] The theater arts committee did not help with the auditions last year.

[7] **The audition process will take place over a three-day period.**

**Wednesday**

→ [8] First, the committee will ask students to read a short passage from the script. [9] The passage will not be long. [10] Students who are chosen will be asked to take a short passage home to memorize.

**Thursday**

→ [11] Next, students who were selected to memorize the short passage from the script will meet at 3 P.M. to recite their lines. [12] Some students will be invited to a third audition on another date.

**Saturday**

→ [13] The theater arts committee will announce the students who will play the lead and supporting roles in the play. [14] All students selected on Thursday will perform together.

→ [15] All students interested in doing other things with the play should report to the gym at 9 A.M. [16] Please dress in comfortable clothes. [17] Be prepared to stay all day.

**Sample Item 7** (Focus)

**Clarification 1.3.2.1** The student demonstrates knowledge of effective ways to focus on a central idea or topic.

Which sentence contains an unimportant detail that should be deleted from the announcement?

- A. sentence  1
- B. sentence  3
- C. sentence  5
- ★ D. sentence  6

The correct answer is D. Sentence  6 gives information about last year's auditions that is unimportant to the announcement, thus creating a lack of focus.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. The information about when auditions will be held helps to maintain focus and is important in the announcement.
- B. The information about auditions continuing through Saturday helps to maintain focus and is important in the announcement.
- C. The information about the role of the theater arts committee helps to maintain focus and is important in the announcement.

**Sample Item 8 (Organization)**

**Clarification 1.3.2.4** The student demonstrates knowledge of how to use transitional elements to develop relationships among ideas.

Which transition should be added to the beginning of sentence [13] to show the connection between ideas in the announcement?

- A. Still
- ★ B. Finally
- C. In addition
- D. Furthermore

The correct answer is B. The transition “Finally” indicates time order. The action mentioned in sentence [13] will follow the action mentioned in sentence [12].

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. “Still” is not an appropriate transition from sentence [12] to sentence [13] because sentence [13] does not contain information that is being added to sentence [12].
- C. “In addition” is not an appropriate transition from sentence [12] to sentence [13] because sentence [13] does not contain information that is being added to sentence [12].
- D. “Furthermore” is not an appropriate transition from sentence [12] to sentence [13] because sentence [13] does not contain information that is an extension of sentence [12].

**Sample Item 9** (Focus)

**Clarification 1.3.2.1** The student demonstrates knowledge of effective ways to focus on a central idea or topic.

Which sentence states information already presented and should be deleted from the announcement?

- A. sentence  4
- ★ B. sentence  9
- C. sentence  12
- D. sentence  14

The correct answer is B. Sentence  8 states that the students will read a short passage. Sentence  9 repeats this information.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. Sentence  4 contains information about the requirement that students auditioning must be in sixth, seventh, or eighth grade. This information is not repeated in the announcement.
- C. Sentence  12 contains information about an invitation to attend a third audition. This information is not repeated in the announcement.
- D. Sentence  14 contains information about students selected on Thursday who will be performing together. This information is not repeated in the announcement.

**Sample Item 10 (Support)**

**Clarification 1.3.2.5** The student demonstrates knowledge of how to incorporate supporting ideas that clarify, explain, or define, contributing to a sense of completeness or wholeness in writing.

Which sentence below provides a detail that supports sentence **10**?

- A. This will be the final audition.
- B. In the past, only two auditions were held.
- ★ C. With practice, learning the passage should not take long.
- D. The theater arts committee encourages all students to be respectful.

The correct answer is C. This sentence provides a detail that supports sentence **10**, which is about memorizing a short passage.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. This sentence is about the final audition, not about students memorizing a short passage at home.
- B. This sentence is about previous auditions, not about students memorizing a short passage at home.
- D. This sentence is about the theater arts committee, not about students memorizing a short passage at home.

**Sample Item 11 (Support)**

**Clarification 1.3.2.6** The student demonstrates knowledge of how communication is affected by word choice.

Read the sentence below from the announcement:

**15** All students interested in doing other things with the play should report to the gym at 9 A.M.

Which words should replace “doing other things with the play” in sentence **15** to make the wording most specific?

- A. assisting others on their jobs
- B. volunteering time on the play
- C. helping others with their tasks
- ★ D. working on costumes and make-up

The correct answer is D. The words “doing other things” are general and nonspecific. Replacing these words with “working on costumes and make-up” adds specificity.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. “Assisting” is vague, just as “doing” is vague.
- B. “Volunteering time” is not as specific as “working on costumes and make-up.”
- C. “Helping” is vague, just as “doing” is vague.

## BENCHMARK LA.B.1.3.3

<b>Strand</b>	<b>B</b> Writing
<b>Standard</b>	<b>1</b> The student uses writing processes effectively.
<b>Benchmark</b>	<b>LA.B.1.3.3</b> The student produces final documents that have been edited for correct spelling; correct punctuation, including commas, colons, and semicolons; correct capitalization; effective sentence structure; correct common usage, including subject/verb agreement, common noun/pronoun agreement, common possessive forms, and with a variety of sentence structures, including parallel structure.... (See Appendix B for the full text of this benchmark.) Note: This benchmark assesses the conventions portion of LA.B.1.3.2. Correct formatting is not assessed.
<b>Benchmark Clarifications and Content Codes</b>	<p><b>Content Code:</b> Provided in parentheses below.</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.1</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of spelling conventions. (Spelling: SP)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.2</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of punctuation conventions. (Punctuation: P)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.3</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of correct capitalization. (Capitalization: C)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.4</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of standard English usage. (Usage: U)</p> <p><b>Clarification 1.3.3.5</b> The student demonstrates knowledge of sentence structure. (Sentence Structure: SS)</p>
<b>Content Limits</b>	<p><b>Spelling</b> Test spelling of commonly used words with an emphasis on commonly used rules.</p> <p><b>Punctuation</b> Test commonly used rules for punctuation.</p> <p>Do not test</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• a comma where its use is optional (e.g., before the coordinating conjunction in a compound sentence or before the <i>and</i> in a series);</li> <li>• a colon between independent clauses;</li> <li>• dashes or parentheses;</li> <li>• apostrophes in the possessive forms of two or more persons possessing something; or</li> <li>• the punctuation of A.M. or P.M.</li> </ul>



**Capitalization**

Test commonly used rules of capitalization.

Do not test the capitalization of religions or religious denominations.

**Usage**

Test common standard English usage.

Do not test the use of pronouns in the avoidance of sexist language.

**Sentence Structure**

Test commonly used devices for combining short, related sentences.

Test common structures used to construct grammatically correct sentences.

Test the imitation of the intended meaning, or of the structure of an original sentence.

**Item Type**

This benchmark is assessed using three-option multiple-choice (MC3) items.

**Stimulus Attributes**

Cloze selections with numbered blanks will be used to test the conventions of spelling and usage.

Stand-alone contexts presenting a sentence with an underlined section containing an error will be used to test the conventions of spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and usage.

Stand-alone contexts containing three identically-worded sentences, but with variations in capitalization or punctuation, will be used to test the conventions of capitalization or punctuation.

Stand-alone contexts that contain sentence parts, sentences to be combined, or a sentence that must be replicated in meaning or in structure will be used to test the convention of sentence structure.

**Response  
Attributes****Spelling, Usage, Punctuation, or Capitalization**

Distractors for stand-alone contexts containing an underlined section with an embedded error include options that incorrectly identify the type of error presented. Distractors may include, but are not limited to

**Spelling**

- options with misspelled words;

**Usage**

- options with incorrect word usage (e.g., homophones and non-standard English);
- options with incorrect tense;
- options with incorrect verb form;
- options with incorrect subject-verb agreement;
- options with incorrect pronoun-antecedent agreement;
- options with incorrect use of possessive forms;
- options with incorrect adjective and/or adverb forms;
- options with incorrect comparative or superlative forms;

**Punctuation**

- sentences that contain incorrect punctuation;

**Capitalization**

- sentences that contain incorrect capitalization;

**Sentence Structure**

- sentences that are not correctly combined:
  - sentences with misplaced modifiers,
  - sentences that lack parallel construction,
  - sentence fragments,
  - sentences that are redundant,
  - sentences with nonstandard word order,
- sentences that fail to communicate the intended meaning; or
- sentences that fail to replicate the structure of the original sentence.

Sample items #1–4 are based on the cloze-selection “Crocodiles and Alligators.”

Read the article “Crocodiles and Alligators.” Choose the word or words that correctly complete questions xx-xx, and mark your answers on the Sample Answer Sheet on page xx.



### Crocodiles and Alligators

Crocodiles and alligators are similar in appearance, but (1) different in many ways.

A crocodile weighs four times more than an alligator. A crocodile is brown with tan spots, but an alligator is usually dark gray or black. Some of a crocodile's teeth can be seen when its mouth (2).

A crocodile mother stays with her (3) for several weeks. In contrast, young alligators must take care of (4). As soon as they hatch, baby alligators must swim and find food.

Alligators are found in the southern part of the United States. They live in rivers, lakes, and swamps. Crocodiles are found mainly in Africa, Australia, and India.

**Sample Item 1** (Conventions)**Clarification 1.3.3.4** The student demonstrates knowledge of standard English usage.

Which answer should go in blank (1)?

- A. their
- B. there
- ★ C. they're

The correct answer is C. This is the correct use of the contraction for “they are.”

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. “Their” does not mean “they are.” “Their” shows ownership and is a homophone for the correct answer “they’re.”
- B. “There” does not mean “they are.” “There” means “at that place” and is a homophone for the correct answer “they’re.”

**Sample Item 2** (Conventions)**Clarification 1.3.3.4** The student demonstrates knowledge of standard English usage.

Which answer should go in blank (2)?

- ★ A. is closed
- B. are closed
- C. was closed

The correct answer is A. The singular verb “is” agrees with the singular subject “mouth.”

**Distractor Rationale**

- B. The plural verb “are” does not agree with the singular subject “mouth.”
- C. The verb “was” is past tense and does not agree with the present tense of the sample.

**Sample Item 3 (Conventions)****Clarification 1.3.3.1** The student demonstrates knowledge of spelling conventions.

Which answer should go in blank (3)?

- A. babbies
- ★ B. babies
- C. babys

The correct answer is B. The rule for making the word plural has been correctly applied. In a word ending in y preceded by a consonant, change the y to i and add es.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. The rule for making the word plural was not applied correctly.
- C. The rule for making the word plural was not applied correctly.

**Sample Item 4 (Conventions)****Clarification 1.3.3.4** The student demonstrates knowledge of standard English usage.

Which answer should go in blank (4)?

- A. theirselves
- B. themselfs
- ★ C. themselves

The correct answer is C. This option uses the correct reflexive pronoun.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. “Theirselves” is nonstandard for “themselves.”
- B. “Themselfs” is a misspelling of “themselves.”

Sample items #5–10 are stand-alone items.

**Sample Item 5** (Conventions)

**Clarification 1.3.3.2** The student demonstrates knowledge of punctuation conventions.

In which sentence below is all **punctuation** correct?

- A. John spilled the bowl of cereal it splashed across the table.
- B. John spilled the bowl of cereal, it splashed across the table.
- ★ C. John spilled the bowl of cereal; it splashed across the table.

The correct answer is C. This option shows the correct use of a semicolon to connect the two sentences.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. The semicolon needed to connect the two sentences is missing.
- B. A comma is placed where a semicolon should be.

**Sample Item 6** (Conventions)

**Clarification 1.3.3.3** The student demonstrates knowledge of correct capitalization.

In which sentence below is all **capitalization** correct?

- ★ A. We live beside the new grocery store on Main Street near Kennedy General Hospital.
- B. We live beside the new Grocery store on Main Street near Kennedy General Hospital.
- C. We live beside the new grocery store on Main street near Kennedy General Hospital.

The correct answer is A. This sentence contains proper nouns that are capitalized (“Main Street,” “Kennedy General Hospital”).

**Distractor Rationale**

- B. In this sentence, “Grocery” is a common noun and should not be capitalized.
- C. In this sentence, “street” is a proper noun and should be capitalized because it is part of the name of a specific street, “Main Street.”

**Sample Item 7 (Conventions)****Clarification 1.3.3.4** The student demonstrates knowledge of standard English usage.

Read the sentence below:

Maria's puppy, a tiny Australian terrier, has the shortest tale I've ever seen.

Which type of error appears in the underlined section of the sentence?

- ★ A. Usage error
- B. Capitalization error
- C. Punctuation error

The correct answer is A. The word *tale* is incorrect in this sentence. The correct word should be spelled *t-a-i-l* which means the back part of an animal that extends behind its body.

**Distractor Rationale**

- B. No capitalization errors occur in the underlined section of the sentence.
- C. No punctuation errors occur in the underlined section of the sentence.

**Sample Item 8 (Conventions)****Clarification 1.3.3.5** The student demonstrates knowledge of sentence structure.**Example of a Replication Item**

Read the sentence in the box.

**Running to the playground, Michael did not hear Carlos asking him to wait.**

Which sentence below expresses the same meaning as the sentence in the box?

- ★ A. Michael, running to the playground, did not hear Carlos asking him to wait.
- B. Carlos, asking him to wait, did not hear Michael running to the playground.
- C. Michael did not hear Carlos, running to the playground, asking him to wait.

The correct answer is A. The sentence rephrases the example sentence and maintains the original meaning.

**Distractor Rationale**

- B. This sentence states that Carlos did not hear Michael; this does not express the same meaning as the sentence in the box.
- C. This sentence states that Carlos was running; this does not express the same meaning as the sentence in the box.

**Sample Item 9 (Conventions)****Clarification 1.3.3.5** The student demonstrates knowledge of sentence structure.**Example of a Parts Item**

Combine all the ideas in the box to create one logical sentence.

**running quickly**  
**to grab the dog**  
**my sister tried**  
**that had broken the leash**

Which sentence below correctly combines the ideas from the box?

- A. My sister tried to grab the dog that had broken the leash running quickly.
- B. To grab the dog, my sister tried running quickly that had broken the leash.
- ★ C. Running quickly, my sister tried to grab the dog that had broken the leash.

The correct answer is C. This sentence correctly combines the words in the box to create a complete, meaningful sentence.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. The word order makes the meaning of this sentence confusing.
- B. The word order makes the meaning of this sentence confusing.



**Sample Item 10 (Conventions)****Clarification 1.3.3.5** The student demonstrates knowledge of sentence structure.**Example of a Combining Item**

Combine all the sentences in the box to create one logical sentence.

**Many children like to play.**

**They like to play outside.**

**When the weather is nice**

Which sentence below correctly combines the ideas from the box?

- A. Many nice children like to play when the weather is outside.
- ★ B. Many children like to play outside when the weather is nice.
- C. Many children like to play, and play outside when the weather is nice.

The correct answer is B. This sentence correctly combines the ideas in the box to create one complete sentence.

**Distractor Rationale**

- A. This sentence changes the meaning of the ideas in the box and is not logical; **all** weather is outside.
- C. This sentence unnecessarily repeats the word “play” and is incorrectly punctuated.