

**VIRGINIA  
STANDARDS OF LEARNING ASSESSMENTS**

**Spring 2003 Released Test**

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**END OF COURSE  
ENGLISH:  
Reading/Literature and Research**

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**DIRECTIONS**

Read each passage. Then read each question about the passage. Decide which is the best answer to each question.

**SAMPLE**

**Salmon Run**

No one has taught them how to struggle up  
On this, a run of grueling, flogging odds.  
Instinctive wisdom and a will to rise  
Suspend their forms against the crashing flood.  
5 Nothing can defeat the pounding roar as  
Enraged waters battle their advance.  
Clinging by a hidden will they climb,  
Stubborn, tireless, faithful as a dream.  
Ascending higher regions of the stream.

**A What does this poem describe?**

- A Depression
- B Punishment
- C Regret
- D Determination

**B Lines 8 and 9 utilize —**

- F end rhyme
- G slant (approximate) rhyme
- H internal rhyme
- J alliteration

Directions: Read the job announcement and answer the questions that follow.

# JOBS

## **Virginia Careers**

Employment Opportunities  
in the Commonwealth of Virginia

### ***Keyboard Specialist***

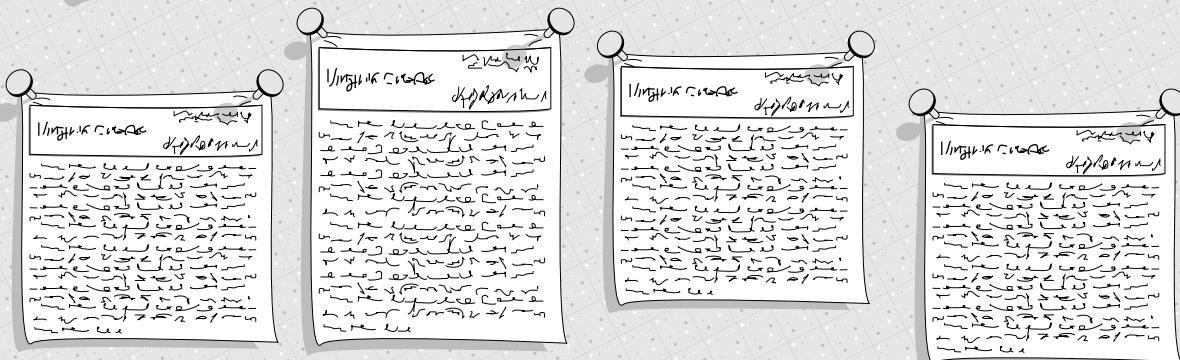
**Keyboard Specialist** is an entry-level position. The majority of the keyboard specialist's work involves skill in the manipulation of a standard typewriter, word processor, or computer alphanumeric keyboard. A minimum typing speed of 35 words per minute is required.

Typing of correspondence, documents, forms, and records is a key function of this position. Final copy is typed from typewritten drafts, marked copy, rough handwritten drafts, printed copy, and data from various sources. Some offices use electronic dictating equipment from which typewritten copy must be produced. Proficiency in correct layout, spelling, and punctuation, as well as basic rules of English grammar and usage, is essential. A thorough understanding of preferred rules of capitalization, hyphenation, spacing, and tabulation is needed.

Keyboard specialists are also called upon to operate other office machines such as copiers and fax machines. Opening and distributing incoming mail and maintaining alphabetic and chronological files are other routine duties. Some keyboard specialists are called upon to answer and make telephone calls and to refer visitors.

For information on job opportunities now available in this field, please contact the **Virginia Department of Personnel and Training**.

**Beginning Salary Range - \$14,000 to \$15,500**



**1 The phrase “entry-level position” is intended to —**

- A persuade only those with multiple years of job experience to apply for this position
- B encourage applicants who possess the necessary skills but might not yet have job experience
- C show that this job primarily involves the entry of data into various computer databases
- D invite applicants who would like to receive free training in the skills required for the job

**2 Read this excerpt from the first paragraph of the job description.**

**... involves skill in the manipulation of a standard typewriter, word processor, or computer alphanumeric keyboard.**

**Which of the following words would be the *best* replacement for “manipulation”?**

- F Operation
- G Maneuver
- H Orchestration
- J Management

**3 The job description indicates that keyboard specialists are expected to —**

- A receive training from the Virginia Department of Personnel and Training
- B hire office workers when additional help is needed
- C correct the spelling and punctuation of handwritten drafts
- D repair copiers and other kinds of office machines

**4 What paragraph contains information about how many words a minute an applicant must be able to type?**

- F 1
- G 2
- H 3
- J 4

- 5 Which skill is *most* important for a keyboard specialist to have?
- A Making speeches to large audiences
  - B Paying close attention to details
  - C Planning to meet long-term goals
  - D Finding creative solutions to problems

- 6 There is enough information in the job description to show that —
- F word processors are more efficient to use than computers
  - G the job of a keyboard specialist varies from one office to another
  - H it is more important to know word usage than English grammar
  - J keyboard specialists earn more in Virginia than in most other states

- 7 Which question is *not* answered in this job description?
- A What is the telephone number for the Virginia Department of Personnel and Training?
  - B Does the job require contact with persons outside the office?
  - C In what order are the files maintained?
  - D What kind of material does a keyboard specialist type?

- 8 A potential applicant for this job made this list of a keyboard specialist's duties.

**Keyboard Specialist's Duties**

**Producing a variety of typewritten material**  
**Dictating material to be typed**  
**Making copies**  
**Faxing material**  
**Opening and distributing mail**  
**Answering telephone**  
**Referring visitors**  
**Filing**

Which duty does *not* belong on this list?

- F Making copies
- G Answering telephone
- H Referring visitors
- J Dictating material to be typed

The nine test questions that follow are based on an excerpt from Scene Six of the Tennessee Williams' play, *The Glass Menagerie*.

Due to copyright limitations, this excerpt is not available publicly on the Internet.

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- 9 Laura’s stage directions in line 25 suggest that her character is —**
- A** self-assured and can’t wait for Jim to arrive for dinner
  - B** scared to have anyone try the salmon her mother made for dinner
  - C** nervous about preparing dinner for her family and a guest
  - D** unsure about what she should do to prepare herself for the guest

- 10 In line 32, Amanda says: “I told you I wasn’t going to humor you, Laura. Why have you chosen this moment to lose your mind?” Which *best* describes the effect of this statement?**
- F** The audience would feel pity for Tom since he made Laura uncomfortable.
  - G** The audience would turn against Tom for upsetting his sister Laura.
  - H** The audience would consider Amanda too critical for reprimanding Laura.
  - J** The audience would be angry at Laura for upsetting her mother Amanda.



11 The stage directions for the play help produce a tone of —

- A tension
- B elation
- C depression
- D exhaustion

12 Amanda's attitude toward Laura is one of —

- F respect and love
- G discontent and amusement
- H frustration and caring
- J happiness and silliness

13 What is the *best* example of situational irony in this scene?

- A The only boy Laura ever liked is coming to dinner.
- B It is raining the night Tom is bringing Jim to dinner.
- C Amanda has chosen to make salmon for the guests.
- D Tom did not mention to Jim that he had a sister.

14 Amanda is *best* described as —

- F an extraordinary chef
- G a supreme entertainer
- H an assertive mother
- J a strict disciplinarian

15 Which archetype of American literature does Laura *best* embody in this scene?

- A The fool
- B The rugged individualist
- C The shrew
- D The innocent

16 The age of the characters affects the way in which the scene is interpreted, but the ages are not stated directly. Which line *best* helps a reader to estimate the ages of the characters?

- F Line 1
- G Line 12
- H Line 38
- J Line 43

17 This selection can be identified as a play because it has —

- A dialogue and setting
- B setting and a conflict
- C conflict and characters
- D characters and stage directions

Directions: Read the poem and answer the questions that follow.

## The Armadillo<sup>1</sup>

*Elizabeth Bishop*

FOR ROBERT LOWELL

Elizabeth Bishop probably wrote this poem in Brazil where she lived from time to time. The “frail, illegal fire balloons” mentioned in the poem are a type of fireworks.

1 This is the time of year when almost every night the frail, illegal fire balloons appear. Climbing the mountain height,	Last night another big one fell. It splattered like an egg of fire against the cliff behind the house. The flame ran down. We saw the pair
5 rising toward a saint still honored in these parts, the paper chambers flush and fill with light that comes and goes, like hearts.	25 of owls who nest there flying up and up, their whirling black-and-white stained bright pink underneath, until they shrieked up out of sight.
10 Once up against the sky it's hard to tell them from the stars — planets, that is — tinted ones: Venus going down, or Mars,	30 The ancient owls' nest must have burned. Hastily, all alone, a glistening armadillo left the scene, rose-flecked, head down, tail down,
or the pale green ones. With a wind, they flare and falter, wobble and toss; 15 but if it's still they steer between the kite sticks of the Southern Cross, <sup>2</sup>	and then a baby rabbit jumped out, <i>short</i> -eared, to our surprise. 35 So soft! — a handful of intangible ash with fixed, ignited eyes.
receding, dwindling, solemnly and steadily forsaking us, or, in the downdraft from a peak, 20 suddenly turning dangerous.	40 <i>Too pretty, dreamlike mimicry!</i> <i>O falling fire and piercing cry</i> <i>and panic, and a weak mailed<sup>3</sup> fist</i> <i>clenched ignorant against the sky!</i>
	1965

“The Armadillo” from THE COMPLETE POEMS 1927-1979 by Elizabeth Bishop. Copyright © 1979, 1983 by Alice Helen Methfessel. Reprinted by permission of Farrar, Straus and Giroux, LLC.

<sup>1</sup>a burrowing mammal native to southern North America and South America characterized by an armorlike covering consisting of jointed, bony plates

<sup>2</sup>four bright stars in the Southern Hemisphere

<sup>3</sup>covered with a type of armor (mail) made of connected metal rings, overlapping scales, or loops of chain

18 The rhyme scheme in the first stanza is —

- F *a a b b*
- G *a b a b*
- H *a b c d*
- J *a b c b*

19 In stanza 1, fire balloons are described as “frail” and “illegal” in order to —

- A foreshadow what happens in the second half of the poem
- B illustrate why the people in that part of the world use fire balloons
- C reflect what happens in the first half of the poem
- D explain why the poet felt compelled to write about fire balloons

20 Which lines from the poem suggest fleeting love?

- F Lines 3 and 4
- G Lines 7 and 8
- H Lines 13 and 14
- J Lines 21 and 22

21 The references to color in lines 27 (“stained bright pink underneath”) and 32 (“rose-flecked”) indicate that —

- A flowers were blooming
- B the fire balloons were different colors
- C the animals may have been injured
- D the animals are unusual

22 In the last stanza, the image of the “*weak mailed fist / clenched ignorant against the sky!*” refers to the —

- F speaker
- G baby rabbit
- H owls
- J armadillo

23 What is the effect of putting the last stanza in italics?

- A It provides structural unity for the poem.
- B It emphasizes the word choice of this stanza.
- C It introduces a new speaker.
- D It illustrates that this is the most significant stanza.

24 Which line contains an example of simile?

- F Line 14 — “they flare and falter, wobble and toss;”
- G Line 22 — “It splattered like an egg of fire”
- H Line 33 — “and then a baby rabbit jumped out,”
- J Line 37 — “*Too pretty, dreamlike mimicry!*”

25 The armadillo in this poem serves as —

- A a symbol
- B an allusion
- C a foil
- D a cliché

Directions: Read the research paper and answer the questions that follow.

The following research paper was written by an eleventh-grade student for her English class.

Nasif 1

Naomi Nasif  
Mr. Parham  
English – 4  
10 February 2000

## The Spreading Chestnut Tree

Under a spreading chestnut-tree  
The village smithy stands.  
– Longfellow, *The Village Blacksmith*

1 When Henry Wadsworth Longfellow wrote those famous words, the eastern United States from Maine to Georgia and as far west as the Mississippi River was adorned with American chestnut trees. “Every fourth tree in America’s central Appalachian forests was a chestnut” (Silvan 17). In early summer, their creamy white flowers transformed the hillsides into a massive, billowy cloud. The American chestnut was a very important tree, valued for its timber and its nuts.

2 Though the American chestnut towered 80-100 feet high, often no branches appeared until 50 feet above the ground. The result was long, straight-grained timber that was sought after for telegraph and telephone poles and railroad ties. Its grayish-brown heartwood was ideal for making furniture. Because of its high resistance to rot, chestnut was used to construct over 300 miles of fencing along the Blue Ridge Parkway (Williams 121).

3 Not only did the American chestnut provide superb wood products, it also provided the finest-tasting, sweetest chestnuts grown in the world. Roasted chestnuts and chestnut stuffing were special treats for humans, and chestnuts were also a major source of food for wildlife such as deer, bears, and wild turkeys (Williams 122).

4 In 1904, someone noticed that something was wrong with the American chestnut trees at the Bronx Zoo in New York City. The trees were infected by an Asian fungus called *Cryphonectria parasitica* that arrived on the North American continent near the turn of the century. Scientist Adele Adamson describes the disease’s process:

The fungus caused a blight that was devastating to the chestnut trees. Entering through cracks in the bark, the blight fanned out beneath the bark until it girdled the entire trunk of the tree, choking off water and nutrients. After four decades, literally billions of these beautiful trees had been obliterated from eastern forests. (80)

Transmitted by wind-borne spores, the blight invaded and ravaged every indigenous stand of American chestnuts “...from Maine to Georgia so that they had virtually been erased from their natural range by the year 1950” (Williams 124).

5 In 1985, The American Chestnut Foundation was established. Researchers and volunteers began exploring ways to prevent the demise of one of America’s grandest trees. Scientists are now attempting to breed a blight-resistant chestnut. “Blight resistance is being transferred from Asian to American chestnuts in a breeding program designed to help the American trees. Additionally, in the wilds of America, the destructive fungus is starting to be destroyed by a blight of its own – another fungus disease” (Thomas 22). Researchers are convinced that if a blight could decimate half a continent of trees, then a counterattack could target the invading fungus with an equally devastating blight.

6 Though the struggle has just begun, more and more people have become aware of the invaluable treasure America has nearly lost and are willing to contribute their expertise and finances to save the King of Trees – the American chestnut. With continued effort, Americans may once again enjoy the healthy spreading chestnut boughs that Longfellow described long ago.

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### Works Cited

Adamson, Adele. “A Blight on America’s Chestnut Trees.” *Ecology Today*. 17 Nov. 1996: 80–95.

Longfellow, Henry Wadsworth. “The Village Blacksmith.” *The Poetical Works of Longfellow*. Cambridge ed. Boston: Houghton, 1975. 14–15.

Silvan, Joseph. *Trees in North America*. Chicago: Arbor Publications, 1995.

Thomas, Madeleine. “Saving the Chestnut Trees.” *Environmental Outlook*. Feb. 1985: 17–26.

Williams, Brian. *Great American Trees*. New York: American Publications, 1997.

**Due to space constraints, some of the specifications of the style manual used (such as double-spacing and a separate page for citing works) have not been followed in this paper.**

- 26 Naomi *most* likely began her paper with quoted lines of poetry in order to —
- F demonstrate the importance of the blacksmith in early American life
  - G describe in detail what an American chestnut tree looks like
  - H make the introductory paragraph easier to understand
  - J show that the chestnut tree was once an important part of American life

- 27 Naomi has supported her thesis for this paper with all of the following *except* —
- A facts about the Asian fungus that attacked the American chestnut trees
  - B her own experience with American chestnut trees
  - C others' opinions about the future of American chestnut trees
  - D figures about the size of American chestnut trees

- 28 According to this paper, the new blight will help the American chestnut tree by —
- F providing a source of knowledge about tree diseases
  - G attacking the fungus that has ravaged them
  - H bringing the public's attention and support to the problem
  - J causing importers to stop bringing in foreign trees

- 29 Which question is *not* answered in paragraph 4 of this paper?
- A Why is the Asian fungus dangerous to the chestnut tree?
  - B How does the Asian fungus travel from tree to tree?
  - C Where was the chestnut tree blight first noticed?
  - D How did the Asian fungus enter the United States?

- 30 Naomi included enough information in this paper to show that —
- F it is probably too late to save the American chestnut tree
  - G the threat to the American chestnut tree has been successfully eradicated
  - H scientists might be able to save the American chestnut tree
  - J the American chestnut tree is now thriving in this country

31 In paragraph 5, the word demise means —

- A defiance
- B discovery
- C death
- D development

32 Read the following excerpt from page 18 of Silvan’s book, *Trees in North America*.

“By 1912, the blight had destroyed wild chestnut trees in New Jersey, Massachusetts, and parts of New York and Connecticut.”

Which of the following would be considered plagiarism of this excerpt?

- F By the year 1912, “the blight had destroyed wild chestnut trees in New Jersey, Massachusetts, and parts of New York and Connecticut” (Silvan 18).
- G The blight had destroyed wild American chestnut trees in New Jersey, Massachusetts, and parts of New York and Connecticut by the year 1912 (Silvan 18).
- H In his book *Trees in North America*, Joseph Silvan states: “By 1912, the blight had destroyed wild chestnut trees in New Jersey, Massachusetts, and parts of New York and Connecticut” (18).
- J By the year 1912, wild chestnut trees in New Jersey, Massachusetts, and parts of New York and Connecticut had been destroyed by the blight.

33 Which question does Naomi *not* attempt to answer in this paper?

- A How does the fungus disease destroy the Asian fungus?
- B What was the natural range of the American chestnut?
- C In what ways has the timber of American chestnuts been used?
- D When was The American Chestnut Foundation established?

34 Which of these would *best* help the reader evaluate the accurate use of information in this paper?

- F Consulting the sources cited in the paper
- G Finding the word “chestnut” in a dictionary
- H Looking for additional facts in other sources
- J Examining an American chestnut tree

Directions: Read the excerpts and answer the questions that follow.

## from “The Wasteland”

*Al Gore*

- 1 One of the clearest signs that our relationship to the global environment is in severe crisis is the floodtide of garbage spilling out of our cities and factories. What some have called the “throwaway society” has been based on the assumptions that endless resources will allow us to produce an endless supply of goods and that bottomless receptacles (i.e., landfills and ocean dumping sites) will allow us to dispose of an endless stream of waste. But now we are beginning to drown in that stream. Having relied for too long on the old strategy of “out of sight, out of mind,” we are now running out of ways to dispose of our waste in a manner that keeps it out of either sight or mind.
- 2 In an earlier era, when the human population and the quantities of waste generated were much smaller and when highly toxic forms of waste were uncommon, it was possible to believe that the world’s absorption of our waste meant that we need not think about it again. Now, however, all that has changed. Suddenly, we are disconcerted—even offended—when the huge quantities of waste we thought we had thrown away suddenly demand our attention as landfills overflow, incinerators foul the air, and neighboring communities and states attempt to dump their overflow problems on us.
- 3 The American people have, in recent years, become embroiled in debates about the relative merits of various waste disposal schemes, from dumping it in the ocean to burying it in a landfill to burning it or taking it elsewhere, anywhere, as long as it is somewhere else. Now, however, we must confront a strategic threat to our capacity to dispose of—or even recycle—the enormous quantities of waste now being produced. Simply put, the way we think about waste is leading to the production of so much of it that no method for handling it can escape being completely overwhelmed. There is only one way out: we have to change our production processes and dramatically reduce the amount of waste we create in the first place and ensure that we consider thoroughly, ahead of time, just how we intend to recycle or isolate that which unavoidably remains.

Excerpt from *EARTH IN THE BALANCE* by Al Gore. Copyright © 1992 by Senator Al Gore. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.



## Letter to President Pierce, 1855

*Chief Seattle*

- 1 We know that the white man does not understand our ways. One portion of the land is the same to him as the next, for he is a stranger who comes in the night and takes from the land whatever he needs. The earth is not his brother, but his enemy, and when he has conquered it, he moves on. He leaves his fathers' graves, and his children's birthright is forgotten. The sight of your cities pains the eyes of the red man. But perhaps it is because the red man is a savage and does not understand.
- 2 There is no quiet place in the white man's cities. No place to hear the leaves of spring or the rustle of insect's wings. But perhaps because I am a savage and do not understand, the clatter only seems to insult the ears. The Indian prefers the soft sound of the wind darting over the face of the pond, the smell of the wind itself cleansed by a mid-day rain, or scented with the piñon pine. The air is precious to the red man. For all things share the same breath—the beasts, the trees, the man. Like a man dying for many days, he is numb to the stench.
- 3 What is man without the beasts? If all the beasts were gone, men would die from great loneliness of spirit, for whatever happens to the beasts also happens to man. All things are connected. Whatever befalls the earth befalls the sons of the earth.
- 4 It matters little where we pass the rest of our days; they are not many. A few more hours, a few more winters, and none of the children of the great tribes that once lived on this earth, or that roamed in small bands in the woods, will be left to mourn the graves of a people once as powerful and hopeful as yours.
- 5 The whites, too, shall pass—perhaps sooner than other tribes. Continue to contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste. When the buffalo are all slaughtered, the wild horses all tamed, the secret corners of the forest heavy with the scent of many men, and the view of the ripe hills blotted by talking wires, where is the thicket? Gone. Where is the eagle? Gone. And what is it to say goodbye to the swift and the hunt, the end of living and the beginning of survival? We might understand if we knew what it was that the white man dreams, what he describes to his children on the long winter nights, what visions he burns into their minds, so they will wish for tomorrow. But we are savages. The white man's dreams are hidden from us.

[Public Domain]

**35** Al Gore’s image of America drowning in an “endless stream of waste” is designed to elicit what emotion in the reader?

- A Fear
- B Sympathy
- C Hostility
- D Regret

**36** Al Gore uses the phrases “throwaway society” and “out of sight, out of mind.” These are examples of —

- F metaphor
- G hyperbole
- H irony
- J cliché

**37** The organizational structure of the selection from Al Gore’s book is *best* described as —

- A spatial sequence
- B compare/contrast
- C time sequence
- D problem/solution

**38** The tone of this selection from Al Gore’s book is *best* described as —

- F scholarly
- G hostile
- H cautionary
- J empathetic

**39 Chief Seattle says, “Like a man dying for many days, he is numb to the stench.” This is an example of —**

- A metaphor
- B hyperbole
- C simile
- D symbolism

**40 In paragraph 5, Chief Seattle asks three questions; each time, he answers the question himself. What is the effect of this?**

- F It engages the reader more directly than a simple statement would.
- G It creates reader sympathy for the fate of the Indian.
- H It reflects Chief Seattle’s educational background.
- J It frustrates the reader because it is not straightforward.

**41 Chief Seattle’s warning, “Continue to contaminate your bed, and you will one night suffocate in your own waste,” can be described as —**

- A a critique of Al Gore’s essay
- B an explanation of the concept Al Gore presents
- C a foreshadowing of the concerns expressed in Al Gore’s essay
- D the antithesis of Al Gore’s essay

**42 If you were to write a research paper in which you used these selections as examples, which of the following *most* likely describes the topic of the paper?**

- F Native American attitudes toward the early settlers
- G Attitudes toward the environment over time
- H Al Gore and Chief Seattle: A Study in Contrasts
- J What should America do with its garbage?

## Answer Key

Test Sequence	Correct Answer	Reporting Category	Reporting Category Description
1	B	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
2	F	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
3	C	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
4	F	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
5	B	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
6	G	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
7	A	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
8	J	003	Locate and use information from a variety of resource materials.
9	D	002	Understand the elements of literature.
10	H	002	Understand the elements of literature.
11	A	002	Understand the elements of literature.
12	H	002	Understand the elements of literature.
13	A	002	Understand the elements of literature.
14	H	002	Understand the elements of literature.
15	D	002	Understand the elements of literature.
16	G	002	Understand the elements of literature.
17	D	002	Understand the elements of literature.
18	G	002	Understand the elements of literature.
19	A	002	Understand the elements of literature.
20	G	002	Understand the elements of literature.
21	C	002	Understand the elements of literature.
22	J	002	Understand the elements of literature.
23	D	002	Understand the elements of literature.
24	G	002	Understand the elements of literature.
25	A	002	Understand the elements of literature.
26	J	003	Locate and use information from a variety of resource materials.
27	B	003	Locate and use information from a variety of resource materials.
28	G	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
29	D	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
30	H	003	Locate and use information from a variety of resource materials.
31	C	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
32	J	003	Locate and use information from a variety of resource materials.
33	A	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
34	F	001	Understand a variety of printed materials.
35	A	002	Understand the elements of literature.
36	J	002	Understand the elements of literature.
37	D	002	Understand the elements of literature.
38	H	002	Understand the elements of literature.
39	C	002	Understand the elements of literature.
40	F	002	Understand the elements of literature.
41	C	002	Understand the elements of literature.
42	G	003	Locate and use information from a variety of resource materials.