



Preparation Manual
English Language Arts and
Reading/Social Studies 4–8 (113)

Overview and Exam Framework
Sample Selected-Response Questions
Sample Selected-Response Answers and Rationales

- D. Portfolio assessments produce statistically more reliable scores

Answer

Option C is correct because portfolio assessments, in which student performance is assessed on the basis of a body of work, can be used to gauge an individual student's progress. If the students turn in parts of the portfolio throughout the course, the quality of their work earlier in the course can be compared to the quality of their work later. Standardized end-of-course assessments, by contrast, do not allow for this kind of evaluation. **Option A is incorrect** because the scoring of portfolio assessments is generally more complex and time-consuming than is the case with standardized end-of-course assessments. **Option B is incorrect** because scores on portfolio assessments are generally more difficult to compare from year to year than is the case with scores from standardized end-of-course assessments. **Option D is incorrect** because portfolio assessments often yield scores that are statistically less reliable than the scores obtained from standardized end-of-course assessments.

39. A sixth-grade social studies teacher has just completed a lesson on the differences between limited and unlimited governments. Which of the following would most effectively assess a student's ability to apply the new concepts just learned?

- A. A vocabulary quiz defining the terms "limited" and "unlimited"
- B. An exit card identifying five countries that have a limited government
- C. A survey soliciting student opinion about the limits on United States government
- D. A journal entry describing what it would be like to live under an unlimited government

Answer

Option D is correct because writing a journal entry is a form of assessment that would be more likely to provide evidence of students' ability to apply the concepts they have just learned. A valid response would necessitate an implicit or explicit comparison between the student's own experience living under a limited government in the United States and the experience of living under an unlimited government. **Option A is incorrect** because it describes a less useful form of assessment; knowledge of the vocabulary does not necessarily equate to ability to apply the concept. **Option B is incorrect** because it focuses on only one of the two types of governments discussed in the lesson. **Option C is incorrect** because it also focuses on only one of the two types of government.

40. According to the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills (TEKS) for social studies, seventh-grade social studies students are expected to be able to evaluate the validity of a source based on language, corroboration with other sources and information about the author.

- A. Utilizing social studies terminology regularly and appropriately
- B. Identifying different points of view relating to historical events
- C. Expressing individual ideas about social studies topics orally
- D. Creating written and visual materials based on historical data

Answer

Option B is correct because the ability to identify different points of view is necessary before a student can assess the validity of a source. **Option A is incorrect** because utilizing social studies vocabulary is a more general skill that does not relate to the skill of assessing validity as specifically as does option B. **Option C is incorrect** because assessments of the validity do not necessarily have to be expressed orally. **Option D is incorrect** because the skill of creating materials based on data is not a prerequisite of source evaluation.