

Name: _____ Date: _____

How to Answer a Constructed Response Question

Step 1: State your claim.

Your claim is your answer to the question. Your claim should . . .

- **echo the question. In other words, it should turn the question into a statement.**

Example A: Imagine you are answering the question, “According to the article, what is the best way to eat chocolate?” Your answer should start like this: “According to the article, the best way to eat chocolate is . . .”

Example B: Imagine you are answering the question, “Does the author think it’s ever okay to lie?” If your answer is yes, your answer could start like this: “The author thinks that sometimes it’s okay to lie . . .”

- **include reasoning or explanation. So if you are answering a yes-or-no question, you need to do more than say yes or no—you also need to provide some explanation or reason for your answer. If you are answering an open-ended question, you need to provide a brief summary or explanation of your ideas. Your reasoning or explanation should be one to three sentences.**

Example A: According to the article, the best way to eat chocolate is take your time and enjoy the chocolate with all five of your senses.

Example B: “The author thinks that sometimes it’s okay to lie, if you are lying to make someone feel good and no harm will come from your lie.”

Step 2: Provide text evidence with commentary.

Text evidence is details from the text that support your claim—in other words, details from the text that show why your claim is true.

Commentary is where you explain WHY the text evidence supports your claim. Your commentary should include key words from your claim. Text evidence . . .

- **can be in the form of a direct quotation or paraphrase.**
- **should be cited. In other words, you need to make it clear to the reader where the quote or paraphrase came from. Give the page number and, if it’s not obvious, the author’s name and/or the name of the article.**

Here are two examples of text evidence with commentary:

Example A (using a direct quote): “Before you bite the chocolate, take a moment to look at it,” the author writes on page 5. “Admire its glossy shine. Then lift it to your nose and take a deep inhale. What do you notice?” (p. 5) Here, the author is telling readers to take their time before biting into the chocolate, and to use their senses of sight and smell to enjoy the chocolate.

For more on using text evidence, see Scope’s “How to Use Text Evidence” reference sheet.

Example B (using a paraphrase): According to the author, it's okay to tell your friend you're sure no one at the party noticed the spinach stuck between her teeth, because there is nothing to be done about it now and maybe you can relieve some of your friend's embarrassment (p. 14). Here, the author is saying that it's OK to tell a small lie that makes someone feel better and doesn't do any harm.

Step 3: Write a conclusion.

A conclusion is 1-3 closing sentences that leave your reader with an insightful thought. A conclusion could . . .

- **state whether you agree or disagree with the author's point of view, and why.**
- **state whether you think the author's reasoning is sound or unsound, and why.**
- **tell how the topic you've been writing about connects to your life.**

Here are two examples of text evidence with commentary:

Example A: Perhaps eating chocolate in the slow, thoughtful way the author suggests could lead to a deeper enjoyment of it—but eating chocolate this way would also require an awful lot of patience and self-control!

Example B: Is the author right? I think so. Being completely honest about everything at all times is very likely to lead to some hurt feelings, and why hurt someone's feelings if it's not necessary?

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Constructing a Response

Directions: Read "Please Don't Pet the Shark" and complete the activity on page 21. Then follow the steps below to write a response to the question on page 21.

→ See *Scope's* "How to Answer a Constructed-Response Question" for tips and information about how to complete this activity.

Question from page 21:

What idea about wildlife selfies does the author express?

Step 1: Write your claim.

Complete the sentences below to write your claim in response to the question.

The author expresses the idea that wildlife selfies are _____

_____.

Step 2: Provide text evidence with commentary.

Write two details from the article that support your claim. You can write them in the form of direct quotations or paraphrases. Include a citation for each detail. Explain how each detail supports your claim.

Detail 1: _____

Sentence explaining how this detail supports my claim: _____

Detail 2: _____

Sentence explaining how this detail supports my claim: _____

Step 3: Write a conclusion.

Wrap it all up. End your paragraph with a strong sentence that will give your readers something to think about. One option is to refer to your central claim. Or come up with an idea of your own!

Now it's time to put it all together. And guess what? You've already done the hardest part! All that's left is to take what you just wrote and put it together into one flowing paragraph. Write your final response on a separate sheet of paper.

Remember to:

- Use transitions between sentences.
- Read your paragraph to make sure your ideas are clear. Revise as needed.
- When you are satisfied with your paragraph, read it again to make sure there are no spelling or punctuation mistakes.

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Go to Scope
Online to listen
to the words
and definitions
read aloud.

Vocabulary:

"Please Don't Pet the Shark"

- 1. catastrophic (kat-uh-STROF-ik)** *adjective*; A *catastrophe* (kuh-TAS-truh-fee) is a terrible disaster that causes great suffering or damage. A flood that destroys hundreds of homes and ruins thousands of acres of crops is a catastrophe.

Catastrophic means "involving or causing great damage or suffering," as in, "The oil spill had catastrophic effects on the environment" or "The Red Cross helped the community recover from the catastrophic flood."

- 2. fearsome (FEER-suhm)** *adjective*; Something that is fearsome causes fear. A large, barking dog might be fearsome to some people. A fearsome monster from a scary movie might give you nightmares.

- 3. interaction (in-ter-AK-shuhn)** *noun*; To interact is to talk or do things with other people. You and your friends interact in the hallways between classes.

An interaction is an act of talking or doing things with other people. Your teacher might arrange your desks in groups instead of rows to encourage interaction.

- 4. potential (puh-TEN-shuhl)** *adjective or noun*; As an adjective, *potential* means "possible, or capable of becoming real." The potential side effects of a medicine—like making you tired or dizzy—are side effects that the medicine *could* cause.

As a noun, *potential* can mean "an ability that can lead to success or excellence." If you have potential as a piano player, you have skills or talent that can carry you to greatness. *Potential* can also mean "the chance or possibility that something will develop or become real." Icy roads increase the potential for car accidents.

- 5. skyrocket (SKAHY-rok-it)** *verb*; *Skyrocket* means "to rise or increase quickly to a very high level or amount." In other words, to shoot up like a rocket. If a performer appears on a televised singing competition, her level of fame might skyrocket overnight. If the price of gas suddenly increases by a large amount, you could say the price of gas has skyrocketed.

6. threatened (THRET-uhnd) *adjective*; You're probably familiar with the term *endangered species*—that is, species that are in danger of extinction, which means dying out completely. The U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service classifies species in this way to raise awareness and provide special protections for these species.

Another category in this classification system is *threatened species*. If a species is classified as threatened, it means the species is at risk of becoming endangered in the future.

In other words, endangered species are at the brink of extinction now, while threatened species are likely to be at the brink of extinction in the future, unless we take actions to protect them.

Directions: Below or on the back of this page, list any other words from the article whose definitions you are not sure about. For each word, use context clues to try to figure out the meaning. Then look up the word in a few different dictionaries. Discuss the primary meaning of the word with your teacher or another adult. Then write a definition for the word and one example sentence using the word.

Vocabulary Practice

"Please Don't Pet the Shark"

Directions: Below are titles and summaries for imaginary books. Choose the best title for each book. Briefly explain your choices. (There's one title you will not use.)

BOOK TITLES

- A. *Delightful Interactions With Magical Beings*
- B. *Fearsome Creatures*
- C. *Threatened Species: How We Can Help*
- D. *How to Handle Skyrocketing Success*

1. When a celebrity praises Jeannie Tolbert's small bakery on social media, Jeannie's business takes off—big time. People are suddenly traveling from all over the world to try her cookies and cakes. Talk shows want to interview her. Netflix wants to make a show about her. It's amazing! And it's ruining Jeannie's life! What should she do?

Title (A-D): _____ Why I chose this title: _____

2. The fairies in this fantasy novel are not the mysterious and magical beings you might expect. They are dreadful and terrifying!

Title (A-D): _____ Why I chose this title: _____

3. Photographer Kim Brown journeys around the world to explore a pressing question: How can we keep animals that are struggling to survive off the endangered species list?

Title (A-D): _____ Why I chose this title: _____

Directions: Choose the word that is most similar in meaning to each word in bold.

4. **skyrocket**

- Ⓐ decrease
- Ⓑ rise

5. **catastrophic**

- Ⓐ destructive
- Ⓑ successful

6. **potential**

- Ⓐ possible
- Ⓑ unlikely

7. **fearsome**

- Ⓐ delightful
- Ⓑ frightening

Directions: Circle the boldface word that best completes each sentence.

8. The hungry tiger let out a **fearsome/potential** growl.
9. The number of students who miss school because of the flu **skyrockets/interacts** during winter.
10. The weather forecast recommended bringing a light raincoat because of **potential/catastrophic** afternoon showers.

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“Please Don’t Pet the Shark” Quiz

Directions: Read “Please Don’t Pet the Shark.” Then answer the questions below.

1. Which sentence expresses a central idea of the article?

- (A) Ocean Ramsey is passionate about sharks.
- (B) Wildlife selfies are problematic.
- (C) Many jobs rely on fishing.
- (D) Some believe that shark fins can cure illnesses.

2. Which line supports the central idea you identified in question 1?

- (A) “This is catastrophic for sharks, the oceans, and humans.” (p. 21)
- (B) “Some die when they get tangled in fishing gear, but most are hunted for their fins.” (p. 21)
- (C) “Many scientists expressed horror over Ramsey’s shark photos, noting the potential for harm to both Ramsey and the sharks.” (p. 21)
- (D) “‘Beyond magic!’ she wrote. ‘Beautiful.’” (p. 20)

3. Which line supports the claim that sharks need our protection?

- (A) “Indeed, sharing such photos can inspire wonder and respect for wild creatures.” (p. 21)
- (B) “This was not the first time Ramsey had posed with a shark.” (p. 20)
- (C) “Each year, between 70 million and 100 million sharks are killed by humans.” (p. 21)
- (D) “Most people would swim away in terror.” (p. 20)

4. On page 21, author Lauren Tarshis writes “Shark fin soup is a prized dish in many countries.”

Based on context clues, what is the definition of *prized*?

- (A) highly desired or valued
- (B) flavored with strong spices
- (C) given as an award or prize
- (D) costing a lot of money

5. How does the section “No Shark Snuggles” contribute to the article? Choose two answers.

- (A) It provides information about other endangered animals.
- (B) It helps readers understand why Ramsey’s shark selfie is problematic.
- (C) It encourages readers to take pictures of their pets.
- (D) It offers advice on how to take pictures of wild animals responsibly.

6. Which statement CANNOT be supported by information in the article?

- (A) Sharks have a bad reputation.
- (B) In nature, everything is connected.
- (C) Wildlife selfies are a rising trend.
- (D) Instagram now flags harmful wildlife selfies.

Constructed-Response Question

Directions: Write your answer in a well-organized response.

7. What opinion of wildlife selfies does author Lauren Tarshis express in her article? How do you know? Be sure to answer both questions. Use text evidence to support your ideas.

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“Please Don’t Pet the Shark” Quiz

Directions: Read “Please Don’t Pet the Shark.” Then answer the questions below.

- Which sentence expresses a central idea of the section “Protecting Sharks”?
 (A) Great whites eat seals.
 (B) Protecting sharks is important.
 (C) Many people have jobs that rely on fishing.
 (D) Some people believe that shark fins cure illness.
- Which line supports the central idea you identified in question 1?
 (A) “Shark fin soup is a prized dish in many countries, where some people believe shark fins have healing powers.” (p. 21)
 (B) “Some die when they get tangled in fishing gear, but most are hunted for their fins.” (p. 21)
 (C) “Without sharks, many creatures would struggle to survive.” (p. 21)
 (D) “‘Beyond magic!’ she wrote. ‘Beautiful.’” (p. 20)
- On page 21, Lauren Tarshis writes “Each year, between 70 million and 100 million sharks are killed by humans.” This statistic helps support the idea that
 (A) sharks are fearsome predators.
 (B) wildlife selfies are harmful to animals.
 (C) sharks are under serious threat.
 (D) Ocean Ramsey is passionate about sharks.
- On page 21, Tarshis writes “Shark fin soup is a prized dish in many countries.” She means that the soup
 (A) is highly desired and valued.
 (B) is difficult to make.
 (C) has won many awards.
 (D) is expensive.
- How does the section “No Shark Snuggles” contribute to the article? Choose TWO answers.
 (A) It provides information about other endangered animals.
 (B) It helps readers understand why Ramsey’s shark selfie is problematic.
 (C) It encourages readers to take pictures of their pets.
 (D) It offers advice on how to take pictures of wild animals responsibly.
- Which statement CANNOT be supported by information in the article?
 (A) Sharks have a bad reputation.
 (B) In nature, everything is connected.
 (C) Wildlife selfies are a rising trend.
 (D) Instagram now flags harmful wildlife selfies.

Constructed-Response Question

Directions: Write your answer in a well-organized response.

- Consider the following claim: *Lauren Tarshis is concerned about wildlife selfies*. Explain whether you agree or disagree with this claim, based on Tarshis’s article “Please Don’t Pet the Shark.” Support your answer with text evidence.