



Grade 9

**English Language Arts/Literacy
End of Year Paired Text Set**

2017 Released Items

2017 Released Items: Grade 9 End of Year Paired Text Set

The paired text set requires students to read two texts that are purposely paired. Students read the texts and answer questions about each text and about the texts as a pair.

The 2017 blueprint for the grade 9 paired text set includes Evidence-Based Selected Response/Technology-Enhanced Constructed Response items.

Included in this document:

- Answer key and standards alignment
- PDFs of each item with the associated text(s)

Additional related materials not included in this document:

- Guide to English Language Arts/Literacy Released Items: Understanding Scoring
- PARCC English Language Arts/Literacy Assessment: General Scoring Rules for the 2015 Summative Assessment

PARCC Release Items Answer and Alignment Document
ELA/Literacy: Grade 9

Text Type: Paired Lit		
Passage(s): "Getting Through" / "Continuing"		
Item Code	Answer(s)	Standards/Evidence Statement Alignment
VF645841	Item Type: EBSR Part A: C Part B: C, E, F	RL 9.1.1 L 9.4.1 RL 9.6.1
VF645853	Item Type: EBSR Part A: B Part B: D	RL 9.1.1 RL 9.2.1
VF645884	Item Type: EBSR Part A: D Part B: D	RL 9.1.1 RL 9.2.1
VF645887	Item Type: EBSR Part A: B Part B: B	RL 9.1.1 RL 9.2.2
VF645865	Item Type: EBSR Part A: C Part B: D	RL 9.1.1 RL 9.2.1
VF650380	Item Type: EBSR Part A: A Part B: C, D	RL 9.1.1 RL 9.2.1
VF645862	Item Type: EBSR (additional item) Part A: B Part B: A	RL 9.1.1 RL 9.5.1

Today you will read two poems about how time is signified by images in the natural world.

Read the poem "Continuing." Then answer the questions.

Continuing

by A. R. Ammons

Considering the show, some prize-winning
leaves broad and firm, a good year,
I checked the ground
for the accumulation of

5 fifty seasons: last year was
prominent to notice, whole leaves
curled, some still with color:
and, underneath, the year
before, though paler, had structure,

10 partial, airier than linen:
but under that,
sand or rocksoil already mixed
with the meal or grist:
is this, I said to the mountain,

15 what becomes of things:
well, the mountain said, one
mourns the dead but who
can mourn those the dead mourned;
back a way

20 they sift in a tearless
place: but, I said,
it's so quick, don't you think,
quick: most time, the mountain said, lies
in the thinnest layer: who

25 could bear to hear of it:
I scooped up the sand which flowed
away, all but a cone in the palm:

the mountain said, it
will do for another year.

“Continuing” by A. R. Ammons from A COAST OF TREES. Copyright © 1981 by
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1. Part A

What does the word **accumulation** mean in line 4 of “Continuing”?

- A. beautiful color
- B. partial covering
- C. gradual gathering
- D. temporary placement

Part B

Which **three** phrases from the poem help the reader understand the meaning of **accumulation**?

- A. “broad and firm” (line 2)
- B. “checked the ground” (line 3)
- C. “fifty seasons” (line 5)
- D. “whole leaves” (line 6)
- E. “the year / before” (lines 8–9)
- F. “but under that” (line 11)
- G. “meal or grist” (line 13)

2. Part A

Which sentence **most** accurately summarizes lines 1 through 13 of “Continuing”?

- A. The leaves make the soil rich and fertile.
- B. The leaves become part of the earth again.
- C. The leaves have fallen here for many years.
- D. The leaves change color in different locations.

Part B

Which lines from the poem represent an idea essential to the answer to Part A?

- A. “some prize-winning / leaves broad and firm, a good year,” (lines 1–2)
- B. “fifty seasons: last year was / prominent to notice” (lines 5–6)
- C. “whole leaves / curled, some still with color:” (lines 6–7)
- D. “but under that, / sand or rocksoil already mixed” (lines 11–12)

3. Part A

Which of these is a central idea of “Continuing”?

- A. The cycles of change are infinite.
- B. The beauty of autumn is breathtaking.
- C. The approach of death becomes undeniable.
- D. The process of nature exemplifies impermanence.

Part B

Which words from the poem **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A. “checked the ground / for the accumulation” (lines 3–4)
- B. “mourns the dead but who / can mourn those” (lines 17–18)
- C. “the year / before, though paler, had structure” (lines 8–9)
- D. “scooped up the sand which flowed / away” (lines 26–27)

4. Part A

In “Continuing,” how are the speaker and the mountain used to develop the theme of the poem?

- A. The mountain reinforces what the speaker says.
- B. The mountain prompts the speaker to consider a broader point of view.
- C. The speaker states a cause, and the mountain suggests its possible effect.
- D. The speaker points out a problem, and the mountain describes a solution.

Part B

Which lines from the poem **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A. 14 through 15
- B. 17 through 18
- C. 22 through 23
- D. 26 through 27

Read the poem "Getting Through." Then answer the questions.

Getting Through

by A. R. Ammons

The brook has worked
out the prominences of
a bend so as to find
curvature's sliding

5 speed and now thaw
or shower can reach it
to shell the shale out
from an overhung ledge:
the ledge bends way

10 over as if to contemplate
its solution in a spill:
right now I think
the skinny old arborvita's
roots may be holding everything

15 together: but when the spill
comes the brook will have
another heap
in its way, another
shambles to get

20 through or around: or
over: how much times does
a brook have: how much
time a brook has!

"Getting Through" by A. R. Ammons from A COAST OF TREES. Copyright © 1981 by A. R. Ammons. Used by permission of W. W. Norton & Company, Inc.

5. Part A

Which of these **best** states a central idea of “Getting Through”?

- A. The brook often floods.
- B. The brook supports life.
- C. The brook is constantly changing.
- D. The brook is very deep in places.

Part B

Which lines from the poem **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A. “thaw / or shower can reach it” (lines 5–6)
- B. “out / from an overhung ledge” (lines 7–8)
- C. “I think / the skinny old arborvita’s / roots” (lines 12–14)
- D. “another / shambles to get / through or around” (lines 18–20)

6. Part A

Which statement represents a theme that is present in both poems?

- A. Nature is patient and enduring.
- B. Objects in nature are wise in the ways of life.
- C. Change in nature sometimes happens quickly and sometimes slowly.
- D. Nature fares better without the intervention of humans.

Part B

Select **one** phrase from **each** poem that **best** supports the answer in Part A.

- A. "is this, I said to the mountain, / what becomes of things"
("Continuing") (lines 14–15)
- B. "it's so quick, don't you think, / quick" ("Continuing") (lines 22–23)
- C. "the mountain said, it / will do for another year." ("Continuing")
(lines 28–29)
- D. "The brook has worked / out the prominences of / a bend . . ."
("Getting Through") (lines 1–3)
- E. ". . . as if to contemplate / its solution in a spill" ("Getting
Through") (lines 10–11)
- F. ". . . the brook will have / another heap / in its way . . ."
("Getting Through") (lines 16–18)

7. Part A

What does the author want readers to know in lines 1 through 8 of “Getting Through”?

- A. The brook is sad.
- B. The brook is constant.
- C. The brook is all alone.
- D. The brook is thoughtful.

Part B

Which words from the poem **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A. “. . . worked / out the prominences . . .” (lines 1–2)
- B. “. . . curvature’s sliding / speed . . .” (lines 4–5)
- C. “. . . thaw / or shower. . .” (lines 5–6)
- D. “. . . from an overhung ledge. . .” (line 8)