

# STAAR CONNECTION™

## Diagnostic Series™

Writing

8

teacher

v4



**KAMICO®**  
**Instructional Media, Inc.**

# STAAR CONNECTION™

## Writing 8 teacher

# Diagnostic Series™

XXIX/i/MMXXII  
Version 4



**KAMICO®**

Instructional Media, Inc.

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**KAMICO® Instructional Media, Inc.**  
**STAAR CONNECTION™**  
**Introduction**

KAMICO® Instructional Media's program is validated by scientifically based research. **STAAR CONNECTION™ Diagnostic Series™** and **Developmental Series™** can be used in tandem to ensure mastery of Texas reporting categories and TEKS. The *Diagnostic Series™* consists of a bank of assessments. Each assessment covers a mixture of reporting categories and TEKS. This research-based format provides continual reinforcement for and ensures retention of mastered concepts. To take full advantage of this series, administer an assessment to students. After they have completed the assessment, use it as an instructional tool. Go over each item with the class, discussing all correct and incorrect answers. Then, use the assessment as a diagnostic tool to determine a standard for which students need remediation. Find that standard in the *Developmental Series™*.

Each book in the *STAAR CONNECTION Developmental Series™* consists of isolated activities and assessments to allow for the development of specific TEKS. For every TEKS, there is at least one individual or group activity. The activities provide a fun, challenging, yet nonthreatening, way to develop mastery of the TEKS. In addition to these activities, each *Developmental Series™* book has assessments on isolated standards to be used to identify mastery or the need for further skill development or reinforcement. Continue to alternate between the *STAAR CONNECTION™ Diagnostic Series™* and the *Developmental Series™*.

KAMICO's **DATA CONNECTION®** software prints student answer sheets on plain paper using a standard laser printer, scans answer sheets using a TWAIN-compliant scanner, scores assessments, and disaggregates student academic data, showing which goals and objectives are mastered and which goals and objectives are in need of reinforcement. The software is preprogrammed to work with all KAMICO® assessments. It is easily customized to work with other instructional materials and assessments as well as teacher-, school-, district-, or state-created assessments. **DATA CONNECTION®** analyzes academic data from individual students, classes, grade levels, and demographic groups. Reports are presented in tabular and graphic form. Item analysis is provided to help determine the most effective method of instruction.

KAMICO® Instructional Media, Inc., supports efforts to ensure adequate yearly progress and eliminate surprises in high-stakes test results.

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**STAAR CONNECTION™**  
**Diagnostic Series™**  
**Grade 8 Writing**  
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**State of Texas Assessment of Academic Readiness  
Grade 8 Writing Assessment  
Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills**

**Strand 6**

- (10) **Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts—writing process.** The student uses the writing process recursively to compose multiple texts that are legible and uses appropriate conventions. The student is expected to
- (A) plan a first draft by selecting a genre appropriate for a particular topic, purpose, and audience using a range of strategies such as discussion, background reading, and personal interests;
  - (B) develop drafts into a focused, structured, and coherent piece of writing by
    - (i) organizing with purposeful structure, including an introduction, transitions, coherence within and across paragraphs, and a conclusion; and
    - (ii) developing an engaging idea reflecting depth of thought with specific facts, details, and examples;
  - (C) revise drafts for clarity, development, organization, style, word choice, and sentence variety;
  - (D) edit drafts using standard English conventions, including
    - (i) complete complex sentences with subject-verb agreement and avoidance of splices, run-ons, and fragments;
    - (ii) consistent, appropriate use of verb tenses and active and passive voice;
    - (iii) prepositions and prepositional phrases and their influence on subject-verb agreement;
    - (iv) pronoun-antecedent agreement;
    - (v) correct capitalization;

- (vi) punctuation, including commas in nonrestrictive phrases and clauses, semicolons, colons, and parentheses; and
  - (vii) correct spelling, including commonly confused terms such as *its/it's*, *affect/effect*, *there/their/they're*, and *to/two/too*.
- (11) **Composition: listening, speaking, reading, writing, and thinking using multiple texts—genres.** The student uses genre characteristics and craft to compose multiple texts that are meaningful. The student is expected to
- (B) compose informational texts, including multi-paragraph essays that convey information about a topic, using a clear controlling idea or thesis statement and genre characteristics and craft.

Name \_\_\_\_\_ Date \_\_\_\_\_

**Read the selection, and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.**

*Jazlyn read about idioms. She wrote this paper to tell about what she learned. Read Jazlyn's paper, and think about how it should be revised. Then answer the questions that follow.*

### **Spilling the Beans on Idioms Is a Piece of Cake**

(1) English is a rich language with countless colorful idioms, phrases, and proverbs. (2) Several of these figures of speech use food, animals, and tools to illustrate a point. (3) The original meanings of many of the expressions have been mostly forgotten over the centuries. (4) Today, people repeat these expressions without thinking about their origins. (5) The stories of the origins of some of popular expressions are often fascinating and extremely entertaining.

(6) Several English expressions concern food. (7) Take for example the saying that someone is "worth his salt," which means that he performs an excellent job and is worth his pay. (8) The source of this expression derives from ancient Rome, where salt was highly valued. (9) Roman soldiers were given money designated to be spent on salt. (10) Therefore, if someone was worth his salt, he did good work and was worthy of being paid. (11) Or, take the expression, "spill the beans," which means to give away a secret. (12) This saying may go back to the days of ancient Greece, where citizens voted by placing a black or white bean in a cannister. (13) If the beans were spilled, the results of the election were known before they were supposed to be.



(14) Animals, too, are very important. (15) Take, for example, the expression "crocodile tears." (16) If a person fakes remorse or sadness, people say he is crying crocodile tears. (17) This expression derives from the belief that crocodiles shed tears as they consume their prey. (18) It is true that crocodiles possess lachrymal glands like humans and that they can therefore "cry" to lubricate their eyes. (19) Perhaps when an observer noticed a crocodile shedding tears while eating its prey, she thought that the crocodile was showing insincere remorse for killing the animal. (20) Have you ever been warned to not look a gift horse in the mouth? (21) This expression means that one should be grateful for a present and not wish to have gotten something more valuable. (22) Horses' gums recede as they age. (23) By looking in a horse's mouth, a person can guess the horse's age. (24) Therefore, it would be rude to look in the mouth of a horse that was given as a present; doing so would show that a recipient was focused more on how much the horse is worth than with the kindness behind the gift. (25) Countless other animal references, from "dog days" to "birds of a feather" abound in English expressions.

(26) If a person is talking about something that disappoints despite a promising start, he might describe it as "a flash in the pan." (27) This expression refers to old muskets that used a small pan containing gunpowder. (28) If the gunpowder ignited (creating a flash of light), but the musket ball never fired, the shooter would describe the disappointing result as a mere flash in the pan. (29) People refer to a different pan when they speak of something that does not



"pan out," which refers to a different sort of pan. (30) This expression refers to prospectors who panned for gold in rivers. (31) These people would wash gravel with water. (32) They hoped to reveal gold nuggets. (33) However, more often than not, the gold just did not "pan out."

(34) We use expressions and figures of speech to enhance our language and make it more colorful. (35) Many expressions about food, animals, and tools pepper the speech of English speakers. (36) Several of these sayings have ancient and interesting origins. (37) Today, new expressions are coined all the time, continuing to supplement the richness of the English language.

- 
- 1 Jazlyn would like to add the following sentence to the second paragraph (sentences 6-13).

*Many other expressions, like "piece of cake" and "going bananas," remind people of how much food influences what they say.*

Where is the **BEST** place to insert this sentence?

- A after sentence 7
- B after sentence 9
- C after sentence 12
- D after sentence 13

2 Jazlyn would like to replace sentence 14 with a better topic sentence. Which of these sentences would be the **BEST** replacement for sentence 14?

- F Animals, too, play important roles in English idioms.
- G Animals are not the only thing that are important to English idioms.
- H Many things have been important in the past.
- J Some dictionaries provide the stories behind colorful animal idioms.

3 Jazlyn wants to add the following sentence to the fourth paragraph (sentences 26-33).

*Besides food and animals, another group of expressions comes from tools.*

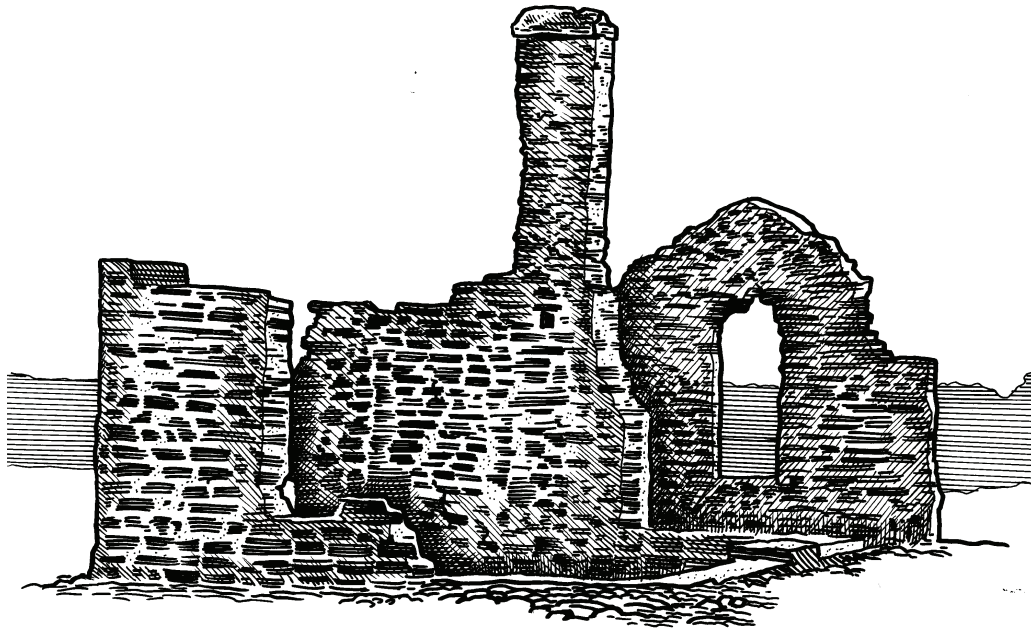
Where is the **BEST** place to insert this sentence?

- A before sentence 26
  - B before sentence 27
  - C before sentence 28
  - D before sentence 30
- 4 What is the **BEST** way to revise sentence 29?
- F Referring to a different pan when they speak of something that does not "pan out," this refers to a different sort of pan.
  - G People refer to a different pan when they speak of something that does not "pan out," and they refer to a different sort of pan.
  - H People refer to a different pan when they speak of something that does not "pan out."
  - J People refer to a different pan, a different sort of pan, when they speak of something that does not "pan out."

- 5 What is the **BEST** way to combine sentence 31 and 32?
- A These people would wash gravel with water, and they hoped to reveal gold nuggets.
  - B These people would wash gravel with water, hoping to reveal gold nuggets.
  - C These people would wash, hope, and reveal gravel, water, and gold nuggets.
  - D Even though these people would wash gravel with water, they hoped to reveal gold nuggets.
- 6 Which of the following sentences uses a point of view that does not match the point of view of the rest of the paper?
- F sentence 4
  - G sentence 8
  - H sentence 21
  - J sentence 34

Read the selection, and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

*Darren has been reading about nineteenth-century Texas history. He wrote this paper about the role played by Texas's frontier forts. Proofread Darren's paper, and look for any mistakes he has made. When you finish reading, answer the questions that follow.*



### Texas's Frontier Forts

(1) Once Texas was admitted to the United States in 1845, American settlers flooded into the new state. (2) Many settled on the Texas frontier, a region that posed many dangers. (3) The greatest of these threats came from Native Americans who raided settlements to obtain necessary supplies and to discourage further settlement on their traditional homelands. (4) To protect frontier settlers in Texas, the U.S. Army builded a line of forts from the Red River to the Rio Grande. (5) Today, the stories of Texas's forts still astound history buffs. (6) Three forts who have particularly interesting histories are Fort Mason, Fort Griffin, and Fort Richardson.

(7) Fort Mason was built in 1851 in what is today the Hill Country town of Mason. (8) The fort discouraged attacks by Apaches, Comanches, and Kiowas. (9) German settlers quickly located near Fort Mason, established the bustling town of Mason. (10) The fort hosted a distinguished list of soldiers. (11) Twenty of the soldiers who served at Fort Mason eventually became Civil War generals, including Albert Sidney Johnston, John Bell Hood, and Robert E. Lee. (12) Soon after the Civil War, Native Americans departed the area. (13) With the threat from raiders gone, the fort was abandoned in 1869. (14) Today, only one original fort building remains. (15) However, traces all around Mason of the fort can be seen. (16) After the soldiers left, the town's citizens used stones from the fort to make many of the structures in town.

(17) Fort Griffin, built in 1867 near present-day Albany, was better known for its civilian neighbors than for the soldiers stationed within its walls. (18) Like at Fort Mason, a town sprouted near Fort Griffin. (19) The town, also called Fort Griffin or the "Flat," was one of the Wild West's wildest. (20) Gambling parlors and saloons lined its main road. (21) Doc Holiday first met Wyatt Earp there. (22) Infamous desperado John Wesley Hardin lived there, too, as did Pat Garret, who would later shoot Billy the Kid. (23) However, unlike Mason, the town of Fort Griffin disappeared when the fort was abandoned in 1881. (24) Today, many of the fort's ruins can still be seen, but an old stone jail is all that remains of the Flat.

(25) All Texas forts played important roles, but only a handful saw as much

action as Fort Richardson. (26) Built in 1867 near present-day Jacksboro, Fort Richardson was the northernmost of Texas's frontier forts. (27) Soldiers there had the enormous task of suppressing Native American attacks in the entire northern regions of Texas, including the vast Panhandle. (28) By 1872, Fort Richardson was the largest military installation in the country. (29) Battles with the Kiowas and Comanches were commonplace. (30) The most notable was the famous Battle of Palo Duro Canyon, fought in 1874 between a detachment from the fort and a combined force of Cheyennes, Comanches, and Kiowas. (31) Fort Richardson closed in 1878 and today, many of its stone buildings have been carefully restored.

(32) In all, there are eight historic fort sites on the Texas prairies that together describe an important part of the state's history. (33) At many locations, few traces of the original forts remain. (34) However, if you visit one of these sites stand very still, and close your eyes, it is not hard to hear the voices of the long-gone soldiers, Native Americans, settlers, and outlaws who played such important roles in making Texas what it is today.

---

7 What change should be made to sentence 4?

- A change *frontier* to *fronteer*
- B delete the comma after *Texas*
- C change *builded* to *built*
- D change *Red River* to *Red river*

- 8 What change should be made to sentence 6?
- F change *forts* to *fort*
  - G change *who* to *that*
  - H change *particularly* to *particular*
  - J delete the comma after *Fort Mason*
- 9 What change, if any, should be made to sentence 9?
- A change *settlers* to *setlers*
  - B change *established* to *establishing*
  - C change *bustling town of Mason* to **Bustling Town of Mason**
  - D no change is needed
- 10 How should sentence 15 be rewritten?
- F However, traces can be seen all around Mason of the fort.
  - G However, of the fort traces all around Mason can be seen.
  - H However, traces of the fort can be seen all around Mason.
  - J Traces all around Mason of the fort, however, can be seen.
- 11 What change, if any, should be made to sentence 31?
- A change *closed* to *closes*
  - B insert a comma after *1878*
  - C change *its* to *it's*
  - D make no change



12 What change, if any, should be made to sentence 34?

- F insert a comma after *sites*
- G change the comma after *eyes* to a semicolon
- H change outlaws to *Outlaws*
- J no change is needed

**READ** the following quotation.

Science does not know its debt to imagination.  
—Ralph Waldo Emerson

**THINK** carefully about the following statement.

Imagination is an important part of scientific discovery.

**WRITE** an essay explaining ways imagination is important to science.

Be sure to —

- clearly state your controlling idea
- organize and develop your explanation effectively
- choose your words carefully
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, grammar, and sentences

BE SURE YOU HAVE RECORDED ALL OF YOUR ANSWERS  
ON THE ANSWER DOCUMENT.



**STAAR CONNECTION™**  
**Diagnostic Series™ Grade 8 Writing**  
**TEKS Writing Alignment Chart and Cross-Curricular Alignments**

KAMICO® supports cross-curricular teaching strategies and encourages efforts to apply, transfer, and integrate knowledge across multiple content areas. Therefore, each assessment in this writing book reinforces at least one Grade 8 social studies, science, or art TEKS. The following tables show which TEKS are reinforced within this book.

<b>Assessment 6</b>			
<b>Question Number</b>	<b>Answer</b>	<b>Strand</b>	<b>TEKS</b>
1	D	6	10Bii
2	F	6	10Bii
3	A	6	10C
4	H	6	10C
5	B	6	10C
6	J	6	10C
7	C	6	10Dii
8	G	6	10Div
9	B	6	10Dii
10	H	6	10Di
11	B	6	10Dvi
12	F	6	10Dvi
<b>Cross-Curricular Alignments</b>			
		<b>Science TEKS</b>	
Writing Prompt		3D	
Editing Section		6C, 6D	