

Read the passages and answer the questions that follow.

## Passage 1

### Excerpt from “A Capital Place”

by Kathiann M. Kowalski

#### Pick a City, But Not Just Any City

- 1 In the years prior to and during the Revolutionary War (1775–1783), the leaders of the 13 Colonies met in a variety of locations. After the war ended, Americans tried to figure out the best way to govern themselves. They decided they wanted a permanent place for the nation’s leaders to meet. America’s former colonists, however, argued about many issues — including where to locate their new nation’s capital.
- 2 The framers of the Constitution tried to establish some basic guidelines. Article I, Section 8 states that the nation’s seat of government would be a “District” measuring no more than 10 miles square. One or more states would have to cede, or give up, land to the federal government to create the city. But the Constitution did not state where to locate the capital.
- 3 Should the new capital be near the nation’s geographic center? Or should it be near the coast, where the largest numbers of people lived? Should it be an existing city? Or should it be a brand new one?
- 4 Leaders pushed for their own interests, and dozens of different cities were considered.
- 5 The Residence Act of 1790 gave President George Washington 10 years to get the new capital city built. Washington, D.C., became the nation’s official seat of government just within that deadline — by the fall of 1800.

#### Stay or Go?

- 6 But some people were not convinced that Washington, D.C., was the best place for the nation’s capital. The city offered sparse housing and relatively few services in the early 19th century.
- 7 Then, during the War of 1812, the British marched on Washington in 1814 and set fire to government buildings. Faced with a fire-damaged city, Congress considered a bill to move the capital to Philadelphia, but the bill did not pass.

8 The idea of moving the country's capital arose again at various times during the 19th century. The notion of multiple capitals came up, too. An 1850 map showed a proposed Western District of Columbia in southern Illinois. In 1869, people talked about moving the capital to St. Louis, Missouri.

9 Western cities wanted to be part of the action, too. Washington, D.C., was "both inconvenient and unhealthful," noted one 1890 article in Portland's Morning Oregonian. "[I]t is too hot for habitation in midsummer, is wretchedly cold and foggy in winter, and has no natural beauties of scenery or location to recommend it."

### **A Destination City**

10 Not only was it hard to completely silence talk of moving the capital, but the capital also served only as a seat of government. Many years passed before Washington, D.C., became the grand destination city that it is today with monuments, museums, and more. Those developments didn't necessarily have to happen, either.

11 Washington has become a cultural center for the United States as well as its seat of government. It's easy to take for granted Washington, D.C.'s identity as the U.S. capital today.

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## **Passage 2**

### **Excerpt from "A Permanent Home"**

by Kenneth R. Bowling

12 The United States faced many problems at the end of the Revolutionary War in 1783. The weakness of the federal government was the most critical issue. Despite the former Colonies being united as one country, most Americans still identified more closely with their individual states. One way to earn respect for and strengthen the young nation was to create a federal capital. But Americans disagreed over what kind of capital they wanted as well as where it should be located.

- 13        Some people wanted a small capital. They believed that the states should be more powerful than the federal government. Others favored a large capital and a strong federal government. The two opposing groups also differed over who would control the capital: Should Congress have total control, or should control be divided between the state and federal governments?
- 14        Then there was the issue of where to locate the capital. More than 30 sites were proposed. The list included Newport, Rhode Island, and Newburgh, New York, in the North and Norfolk and Williamsburg, Virginia, in the South. Western locations such as Pittsburgh, Pennsylvania, and Marietta, Ohio, also hoped to be considered.
- 15        The northern and southern states distrusted each other. They saw the capital as a means of gaining power and influence. Both argued in favor of a centrally located capital. But southerners wanted a geographically centered site, which would put the capital closer to their region. Northerners, on the other hand, thought that the capital should be chosen according to population, which would mean choosing a location in a northern state.
- 16        In October 1783, Congress decided to locate a small federal town on the Delaware River near Trenton, New Jersey. This angered southern congressmen. To appease the South, Elbridge Gerry of Massachusetts suggested that Congress establish a second federal town on the Potomac River near Georgetown, Maryland. Congress could reside for six months in each place. The plan was too expensive to carry out, however.
- 17        Four years later, the Constitutional Convention met in Philadelphia to revise the Articles of Confederation. There was still no agreement on a specific site for the capital. But delegates to the convention made some decisions. They declared that the capital should be part of a district — 10 miles square — and that Congress should have exclusive jurisdiction over it.
- 18        In September 1789, the first Congress under the U.S. Constitution met in New York. It took up the question of the location of the capital. Once again, southerners in the House of Representatives supported a geographically centered location on the Potomac River. Northerners favored a population-centered location on the Susquehanna River. Southern representatives warned that approval of the Susquehanna capital would threaten the continuation of the Union, but the northerners had enough votes to approve this site. Before a bill could be passed naming Germantown, near Philadelphia, as the site, however, Congress adjourned. The bill died.
- 19        Congress finally reached one of the first compromises between North and South that would hold the Union together over the next 70 years. In June, Hamilton sought support for his war debt payment plan from Secretary of State Thomas Jefferson. Jefferson invited him to dinner with Virginia representative James Madison. Madison was the leading opponent of Hamilton’s proposal.

- 20 At dinner, Madison agreed to convince enough southerners to support Hamilton's Assumption Bill (the law that allowed the federal government to assume the states' war debts). In exchange, Hamilton would prevent northern congressmen from defeating the Residence Act (the proposal to locate the permanent capital on the Potomac River). As part of the deal, the federal government would spend the next 10 years in Philadelphia until the new city was ready. Both acts then passed.
- 21 On July 17, 1790, President George Washington signed the act locating the capital on the Potomac. Washington saw the Potomac as the "Gateway to the West." The act gave the president unlimited power to build the capital city from the ground up. Washington chose the precise site for the capital himself. It was not far from his Virginia home, Mount Vernon. In September 1791, the city was named Washington, and the federal district surrounding it became the District of Columbia. It included the existing towns of Alexandria, Virginia, and Georgetown, Maryland.
- 22 George Washington did not live to see his dream of a Potomac capital come true. He died in 1799, and the federal government moved to the district in 1800. Despite the fact that it is no longer centrally located with respect to either territory or population, the nation's capital has remained there ever since.

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- 1** What does the phrase "a seat of government" mean as it is used in paragraph 10?
- A.** a temporary council
  - B.** an elected role
  - C.** an official headquarters
  - D.** an immense building

**Writing Prompt**

You have just read two passages about the origins of the nation's capital. Write an informational essay explaining the different opinions people had about where to locate the capital.

Manage your time carefully so that you can

- plan your essay and do some prewriting using your scratch paper.
- write your essay on the lined pages in your test booklet.

Be sure to

- use evidence from **both** passages.
- avoid over-relying on one passage.

Your written response should be in the form of a multi-paragraph informational essay.

Write your essay on the lined pages of your test booklet. **Anything you write that is not on the lined pages in your test booklet will NOT be scored.**

# TNReady Grades 6-8 Informational/Explanatory Rubric

Revised: May 2017

Score	Focus & Organization	Development	Language	Conventions
<b>4</b>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains an effective and relevant introduction.</li> <li>utilizes effective organizational strategies to create a unified whole and to aid in comprehension.</li> <li>effectively clarifies relationships among ideas and concepts to create cohesion.</li> <li>contains an effective and relevant concluding statement or section.</li> </ul>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilizes well-chosen, relevant, and sufficient evidence<sup>1</sup> from the stimuli to thoroughly and insightfully develop the topic.</li> <li>thoroughly and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, demonstrating a clear, insightful understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>illustrates consistent and sophisticated command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary<sup>2</sup> appropriate to the task.</li> <li>illustrates sophisticated command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest.</li> <li>utilizes sophisticated and varied transitional words and phrases.</li> <li>effectively establishes and maintains a formal style and an objective tone.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates consistent and sophisticated command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>may contain a few minor errors that do not interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains a relevant introduction.</li> <li>utilizes adequate organizational strategies to create a mostly unified whole and to aid in comprehension.</li> <li>clarifies most relationships among ideas and concepts, but there may be some gaps in cohesion.</li> <li>contains a relevant concluding statement or section.</li> </ul>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilizes relevant and sufficient evidence<sup>1</sup> from the stimuli to adequately develop the topic.</li> <li>adequately and accurately explains and elaborates on the evidence provided, demonstrating a sufficient understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>illustrates consistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary<sup>2</sup> appropriate to the task.</li> <li>illustrates consistent command of syntactic variety for meaning and reader interest.</li> <li>utilizes appropriate and varied transitional words and phrases.</li> <li>establishes and maintains a formal style and an objective tone.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates consistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>contains occasional minor and/or major errors, but the errors do not significantly interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains a limited introduction.</li> <li>demonstrates an attempt to use organizational strategies to create some unification, but ideas may be hard to follow at times.</li> <li>clarifies some relationships among ideas and concepts, but there are lapses in focus.</li> <li>contains a limited concluding statement or section.</li> </ul>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilizes mostly relevant but insufficient evidence<sup>1</sup> from the stimuli to partially develop the topic. Some evidence may be inaccurate or repetitive.</li> <li>explains some of the evidence provided, demonstrating only a partial understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli. There may be some level of inaccuracy in the explanation.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>illustrates inconsistent command of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>illustrates inconsistent command of syntactic variety.</li> <li>utilizes basic or repetitive transitional words and phrases.</li> <li>establishes but inconsistently maintains a formal style and an objective tone.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates inconsistent command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>contains frequent errors that may significantly interfere with meaning.</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>contains no or an irrelevant introduction.</li> <li>demonstrates an unclear organizational structure; ideas are hard to follow most of the time.</li> <li>fails to clarify relationships among ideas and concepts; concepts are unclear/or there is a lack of focus.</li> <li>contains no or an irrelevant concluding statement or section.</li> </ul>	In response to the task and the stimuli, the writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>utilizes mostly irrelevant or no evidence<sup>1</sup> from the stimuli, or mostly/only personal knowledge, to inadequately develop the topic. Evidence is inaccurate or repetitive.</li> <li>inadequately or inaccurately explains the evidence provided, demonstrating little understanding of the topic, task, and stimuli.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>illustrates little to no use of precise language and domain-specific vocabulary.<sup>2</sup></li> <li>illustrates little to no syntactic variety.</li> <li>utilizes no or few transitional words and phrases.</li> <li>does not establish or maintain a formal style and an objective tone.</li> </ul>	The writing: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>demonstrates limited command of grade-level conventions of standard written English.<sup>3</sup></li> <li>contains numerous and repeated errors that seriously impede meaning.</li> </ul>

<sup>1</sup>Evidence includes facts, extended definitions, concrete details, quotations, or other information and examples as appropriate to the task and the stimuli.

<sup>2</sup> Domain-specific vocabulary refers to the terminology used in the stimuli and/or associated with the topic.

<sup>3</sup> Conventions of standard written English include sentence structure, grammar, usage, spelling, capitalization, and punctuation.