

Things to Remember: Short Answer Responses

STAAR Notes



As part of the reading portion of the STAAR test, you will have to respond to several short answer questions about one or more of the reading selections. Use the A-S-C strategy to formulate the most effective response.

A – Assertion

- An assertion answers the question in a single sentence.
- Should be the first sentence of your paragraph. Functioning like a thesis or a topic sentence, your assertion tells the reader the focus of your paragraph.

S – Support

- Use textual evidence to support your assertion
- Textual evidence can be in the form of a direct quote or a paraphrase.

C – Commentary

- Commentary makes the connection between your assertion and support.
- Should not simply restate your assertion or support

Final Thoughts...

- Your response **MUST** stay in the box.
 - Use the space available in your test booklet to plan so that you can fine tune your response before writing it on your answer document.
 - Writing in tiny print should **NOT** be your strategy for staying in the box. Being concise should be your strategy.
- Citations are **not necessary**. If, however, you want to include citations for the sake of accuracy and there is enough space in your box, cite by author's last name and page number. For example, (Bruder 2).

- *Embedding quotes is the most effective way to incorporate support because it allows you to blend evidence and commentary within the same sentence.*
- *Embedded quotes should be SHORT. Once you have found the sentence that best supports your assertion, determine what the heart of the quote is. In other words, the part of the sentence that is absolutely necessary for proving your point.*
- *If the question asks you to compare two of the reading selections, you must incorporate textual evidence from **BOTH** reading selections.*
- *Be careful that your response stays focused on what the question asks for. Reread your response to be sure your commentary does not ramble on about something unnecessary and does not introduce new ideas that are unsupported.*