

Student Name _____
(Please Print)

Grades 9–10

**Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program
(TCAP)**

**Writing Assessment
2014 Operational Test**



State of Tennessee Department of Education



TCAP Writing Operational Test

TCAP/WA

DIRECTIONS

Today you will be taking the **Grades 9–10 Writing Assessment**. The test is made up of two texts and two prompts. For each prompt, you are to plan and write an essay about the text(s) according to the instructions provided. This activity will show how well you write. Express your thoughts clearly and make your writing interesting to the reader. Your essays will be scored as rough drafts, but you should watch for careless errors.

There are some important things to remember as you complete the test:

- The time you have for reading the first text and writing on the first prompt is 60 minutes. After 60 minutes, you will take a break from writing. You may return to edit your response later as part of the second 60-minute session, if you have time.
- Read each prompt carefully and think about the best way to answer it.
- Write only about the texts and prompts you are given.
- You may use the blank paper provided to you for pre-writing activities and notes, but only responses written on pages 3–6 and 8–13 of your answer document will be scored.
- If you do not know the answer to a prompt, skip it and go on to the next prompt. You may return to it later if there is time.

Writing Assessment Introduction

Deforestation is the cutting and removal of a large quantity of trees or a large amount of forest. Deforestation comes in many forms, including fires, clear-cutting for agriculture, ranching and development, unsustainable logging for timber, and degradation due to climate change.

Humans are clearing Earth's forests on a massive scale. While forests are cut down for many reasons, trees are most often removed for reasons involving money. The majority of deforestation occurs when forests are cut and burned to create new farmland or grazing fields for livestock. The loss of forests has many negative consequences, which you will read about today.

Writing Assessment Texts

Two texts will be used with this set of writing prompts:

- Text 1: "The Sumatran Rainforest Will Mostly Disappear Within 20 Years" by John Vidal
- Text 2: "Amazon's Doomed Species Set to Pay Deforestation's 'Extinction Price'" by Ian Sample

Writing Assessment Prompts

Two writing prompts have been provided:

- Analytic Summary of Text 1
- Analysis of Texts 1 and 2

GRADES 9–10 WRITING ASSESSMENT
TENNESSEE COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT PROGRAM (TCAP)
2014 OPERATIONAL TEST
WRITING PROMPT 1

Please read the following text.

The Sumatran Rainforest Will Mostly Disappear Within 20 Years

by John Vidal

1 *In only a few years, logging and agribusiness have cut Indonesia's vast rainforest by*
2 *half. The government has renewed a moratorium¹ on deforestation but it may already be*
3 *too late for the endangered animals—and for the people whose lives lie in ruin.*

4 Our small plane had been flying low over Sumatra² for three hours but all we had seen
5 was an industrial landscape of palm and acacia trees stretching 30 miles in every
6 direction. A haze of blue smoke from newly cleared land drifted eastward over giant
7 plantations. Long drainage canals dug through equatorial swamps dissected the land.
8 The only sign of life was excavators loading trees on to barges to take to pulp mills.

9 The end is in sight for the great forests of Sumatra and Borneo and the animals and
10 people who depend on them. Thirty years ago the world's third- and sixth-largest islands
11 were full of tigers, elephants, rhinos, orangutan and exotic birds and plants but in a
12 frenzy of development they have been trashed in a single generation by global
13 agribusiness and pulp and paper industries.

14 Their plantations supply Britain and the world with toilet paper, biofuels and vegetable oil
15 to make everyday foods such as margarine, cream cheese and chocolate, but distraught
16 scientists and environmental groups this week warn that one of the 21st century's
17 greatest ecological disasters is rapidly unfolding.

18 Official figures show more than half of Indonesia's rainforest, the third-largest swath in
19 the world, has been felled in a few years and permission has been granted to convert up
20 to 70% of what remains into palm or acacia plantations. The government last week
21 renewed a moratorium on the felling of rainforest, but nearly a million hectares are still
22 being cut each year and the last pristine areas, in provinces such as Ache and Papua,
23 are now prime targets for giant logging, palm and mining companies.

¹ **moratorium:** a temporary stop of an activity

² **Sumatra:** an island in Western Indonesia

24 The toll on wildlife across an area nearly the size of Europe is vast, say scientists who
25 warn that many of Indonesia’s species could be extinct in the wild within 20–30 years.
26 Orangutan numbers are in precipitous decline, only 250–400 tigers remain and fewer
27 than 100 rhino are left in the forests, said the International Union for Conservation of
28 Nature.

29 Millions of hectares are nominally protected, but the forest is fragmented, national parks
30 are surrounded by plantations, illegal loggers work with impunity³ and corruption is rife in
31 government. “This is the fastest, most comprehensive transformation of an entire
32 landscape that has ever taken place anywhere in the world including the Amazon. If it
33 continues at this rate all that will be left in 20 years is a few fragmented areas of natural
34 forest surrounded by huge manmade plantations. There will be increased floods, fires
35 and droughts but no animals,” said Yuyun Indradi, political forest campaigner with
36 Greenpeace south-east Asia in Jakarta.

37 Last night the WWF’s⁴ chief Asian tiger expert pleaded with the Indonesian government
38 and the world to stop the growth of palm oil plantations. “Forest conversion is massive.
39 We urgently need stronger commitment from the government and massive support from
40 the people. We cannot tolerate any further conversion of natural forests,” said
41 Sunarto Sunarto in Jakarta.

42 Indonesia’s deforestation has been accompanied by rising violence, say watchdog
43 groups.⁵ Last year, more than 600 major land conflicts were recorded in the palm
44 plantations. Many turned violent as communities that had lost their traditional forest
45 fought multinational companies and security forces. More than 5,000 human rights
46 abuses were recorded, with 22 deaths and hundreds of injuries.

47 “The legacy of deforestation has been conflict, increased poverty, migration to the cities
48 and the erosion of habitat for animals. As the forests come down, social conflicts are
49 exploding everywhere,” said Abetnego Tarigan, director of Walhi, Indonesia’s largest
50 environment group.

51 Scientists fear that the end of the forest could come quickly. Conflict-wracked Aceh,
52 which bore the brunt of the tsunami in 2004, will lose more than half its trees if a new
53 government plan to change the land use is pushed through. A single Canadian mining
54 company is seeking to exploit 1.77m hectares for mining, logging and palm plantations.

³ **impunity**: exemption or freedom from punishment

⁴ **WWF**: World Wildlife Fund

⁵ **watchdog groups**: a group that serves as a protector against illegal practices

55 Large areas of central Sumatra and Kalimantan are being felled as coal, copper and
56 gold mining companies move in. Millions of hectares of forest in west Papua are
57 expected to be converted to palm plantations.

58 “Papuan, some of the poorest citizens in Indonesia, are being utterly exploited in legally
59 questionable oil palm land deals that provide huge financial opportunities for
60 international investors at the expense of the people and forests of West Papua,” said
61 Jago Wadley, a forest campaigner with the Environment Investigation Agency.

62 Despite a commitment last week from the government to extend a moratorium on
63 deforestation for two years, Indonesia is still cutting down its forests faster than any
64 other country. Loopholes in the law mean the moratorium only covers new licences and
65 primary forests, and excludes key peatland areas and existing concessions which are
66 tiger and elephant habitats. “No one seems able to stop the destruction,” said
67 Greenpeace International’s forest spokesman, Phil Aikman.

68 The conflicts often arise when companies are granted dubious logging or plantation
69 permissions that overlap with community-managed traditional forests and protected
70 areas such as national parks.

71 Nine villages have been in conflict with the giant paper company April, which has
72 permission to convert, with others, 450,000 hectares of deep peat forests on the Kampar
73 Peninsula in central Sumatra. Because the area contains as much as 1.5bn tonnes of
74 carbon, it has global importance in the fight against climate change.

75 “We would die for this [forest] if necessary. This is a matter of life and death. The forest
76 is our life. We depend on it when we want to build our houses or boats. We protect it.
77 The permits were handed out illegally, but now we have no option but to work for the
78 companies or hire ourselves out for pitiful wages,” said one village leader from Teluk
79 Meranti who feared to give his name.

80 They accuse corrupt local officials of illegally grabbing their land. April, which strongly
81 denies involvement in corruption, last week announced plans to work with London-
82 based Flora and Fauna International to restore 20,000 hectares of degraded forest land.

83 Fifty miles away, near the town of Rengit, villagers watched in horror last year when their
84 community forest was burned down—they suspect by people in the pay of a large palm
85 oil company. “Life is terrible now. We are ruined. We used to get resin, wood, timber,
86 fuel from the forest. Now we have no option but to work for the palm oil company. The
87 company beat us. The fire was deliberate. This forest was everything for us. We used it
88 as our supermarket, building store, chemist shop and fuel supplier for generations of

89 people. Now we must put plastic on our roofs,” said one man from the village of
90 Bayesjaya who also asked not to be named.

91 Mursyi Ali, from the village of Kuala Cenaku in the province of Riau, has spent 10 years
92 fighting oil plantation companies which were awarded a giant concession. “Maybe
93 35,000 people have been impacted by their plantations. Everyone is very upset. People
94 have died in protests. I have not accepted defeat yet. These conflicts are going on
95 everywhere. Before the companies came we had a lot of natural resources, like honey,
96 rattan, fish, shrimps and wood,” he said.

97 “We had all we wanted. That all went when the companies came. Everything that we
98 depended on went. Deforestation has led to pollution and health problems. We are all
99 poorer now. I blame the companies and the government, but most of all the
100 government,” he continued. He pleaded with the company: “Please resolve this problem
101 and give us back the 4,100 hectares of land. We would die for this if necessary. This is a
102 life or death,” he says.

103 Greenpeace and other groups accuse the giant pulp and palm companies of trashing
104 tens of thousands of hectares of rainforest a year but the companies respond that they
105 are the forest defenders and without them the ecological devastation would be worse.
106 “There has been a rampant escalation of the denuding of the landscape but it is mostly
107 by migrant labour and palm oil growers. Poverty and illegal logging along with migrant
108 labour have caused the deforestation,” said April’s spokesman, David Goodwin.

109 “What April does is not deforestation. In establishing acacia plantations in already-
110 disturbed forest areas, it is contributing strongly to reforestation. Last year April planted
111 more than 100 million trees. Deforestation happens because of highly organised illegal
112 logging, slash-and-burn practices by migrant labour, unregulated timber operations.
113 There has been a explosion of palm oil concessions.”

114 The company would not reveal how much rainforest it and its suppliers fell each year but
115 internal papers seen by the *Observer* show that it planned to deforest 60,000 hectares of
116 rainforest in 2012 but postponed this pending the moratorium. It admits that it has a
117 concession of 20,000 hectares of forest that it has permission to fell and that it takes up
118 to one-third of its timber from “mixed tropical hardwood” for its giant pulp and paper mill
119 near Penabaru in Riau.

120 There are some signs of hope. The heat is now on other large palm oil and paper
121 companies after Asia Pulp and Paper (APP), one of the world’s largest such companies,
122 was persuaded this year by international and local Indonesian groups to end all
123 rainforest deforestation and to rely solely on its plantations for its wood.

124 The company, which admits to having felled hundreds of thousands of acres of
125 Sumatran forest in the last 20 years, had been embarrassed and financially hurt when
126 other global firms including Adidas, Kraft, Mattel, Hasbro, Nestlé, Carrefour, Staples and
127 Unilever dropped products made by APP that had been made with rainforest timber.

128 “We thought that if we adopted national laws to protect the forest that this would be
129 enough. But it clearly was not. We realised something was not right and that we needed
130 a much higher standard. So now we will stop the deforestation, whatever the cost. We
131 are now convinced that the long-term benefits will be greater,” said Aida Greenbury,
132 APP’s sustainability director. “Yes. We got it wrong. We could not have done worse.”

133 *This article was amended on 27 May 2013. It originally said Asia Pacific Resources*
134 *International had been persuaded to end all rainforest deforestation. The company was*
135 *Asia Pulp and Paper. This has been corrected.*

Source: Vidal, John. “The Sumatran Rainforest Will Mostly Disappear Within 20 Years.”
The Observer, May 26, 2013. Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd 2013. Used by
permission.

READ THIS WRITING PROMPT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR WRITING.

Writing Prompt 1: Analytic Summary

You have read “The Sumatran Rainforest Will Mostly Disappear Within 20 Years” by John Vidal. In this text, the writer develops several central ideas. Determine one central idea from the text and write an essay that summarizes and analyzes how that central idea is developed over the course of the text, including how it emerges and is shaped and refined by particular details. Cite strong and thorough evidence from the text to support your analysis. Follow the conventions of standard written English.

You may use the space below for prewriting. Extra pages for prewriting are also available after the second writing prompt, starting on page 15 of this test booklet. However, **only** the lined pages 3–6 in your answer document will be scored for this prompt. You have 60 minutes.

This test booklet must be returned with all test material.

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WRITING PROMPT 2

You have read “The Sumatran Rainforest Will Mostly Disappear Within 20 Years.” Now please read the following text.

**Amazon’s Doomed Species Set to Pay
Deforestation’s ‘Extinction Debt’**

by Ian Sample

1 *Ending forest clearance would not save some species from the effects of decades of*
2 *destruction, scientists find.*

3 The destruction of great swaths of the Brazilian Amazon has turned scores of rare
4 species into the walking dead, doomed to disappear even if deforestation were halted
5 in the region overnight, according to a new study.

6 Forest clearing in Brazil has already claimed casualties, but the animals lost to date in
7 the rainforest region are just one-fifth of those that will slowly die out as the full impact
8 of the loss of habitat takes its toll. In parts of the eastern and southern Amazon, 30
9 years of concerted deforestation have shrunk viable⁶ living and breeding territories
10 enough to condemn 38 species to regional extinction in coming years, including 10
11 mammal, 20 bird and 8 amphibian species, scientists found.

12 The systematic clearance of trees from the Amazon forces wildlife into ever-smaller
13 patches of ground.

14 Though few species are killed off directly in forest clearances, many face a slower death
15 sentence as their breeding rates fall and competition for food becomes more intense.

16 Scientists at Imperial College, London, reached the bleak conclusion after creating a
17 statistical model to calculate the Brazilian Amazon’s “extinction debt”, or the number of
18 species headed for extinction as a result of past deforestation. The model draws on
19 historical deforestation rates and animal populations in 50 by 50 kilometre squares of
20 land.

21 It stops short of naming the species most at risk, but field workers in the region have
22 drawn attention to scores of creatures struggling to cope with habitat destruction and
23 other environmental threats.

⁶ **viable:** capable of working successfully

24 White-cheeked spider monkeys, which feed on fruits high in the forest canopy, are
25 endangered largely because of the expansion of farmland and road building. The
26 population of Brazilian bare-faced tamarins⁷ has halved in 18 years, or three
27 generations, as cities, agriculture and cattle ranching have pushed into the rainforest.
28 The endangered giant otter, found in the slow-moving rivers and swamps of the
29 Amazon, faces water pollution from agricultural runoff and mining operations in the area.

30 Writing in the journal *Science*, Robert Ewers and his co-authors reconstructed extinction
31 rates from 1970 to 2008, and then forecast future extinction debts under four different
32 scenarios, ranging from “business as usual” to a “strong reduction” in forest clearance,
33 which required deforestation to slow down 80% by 2020.

34 “For now, the problem is along the arc of deforestation in the south and east where there
35 is a long history of forest loss. But that is going to move in the future. We expect most of
36 the species there to go extinct, and we’ll pick up more extinction debt along the big,
37 paved highways which are now cutting into the heart of the Amazon,” Ewers told the
38 *Guardian* from Belém, northern Brazil.

39 Under the “business as usual” scenario, where around 62 sq miles (160 sqkm) of forest
40 are cleared each year, at least 15 mammal, 30 bird and 10 amphibian species were
41 expected to die out locally by 2050, from around half of the Amazon. Under the most
42 optimistic scenario, which requires cattle ranchers and soy farmers to comply with
43 Brazilian environmental laws, the extinction debt could be held close to 38 species.

44 Ewers said the model reveals hotspots in the Brazilian Amazon where conservation
45 efforts should be focused on the most vulnerable wildlife. “This shows us where we are
46 likely to have high concentrations of species which are all in trouble, and that becomes a
47 way for directing our conservation efforts. We are talking about an extinction debt. Those
48 species are still alive, so we have an opportunity to get in there and restore the habitat to
49 avoid paying that debt,” Ewers said.

50 The Brazilian Amazon is home to 40% of the world’s tropical forest and one of the most
51 biodiverse regions on the planet. About 54% of the area is under environmental
52 protection, and in the past five years, stricter controls and better compliance have driven
53 deforestation rates down to a historical low.

54 The trend towards less deforestation might not last though. Under pressure from the
55 financial crisis, the Brazilian government has proposed a rapid development programme
56 in the Amazon to fuel the economy. The move foresees the construction of more than

⁷ **tamarin:** endangered primate species

57 20 hydroelectric power plants in the Amazon basin and an extensive push into the
58 rainforest.

59 Environmentalists are further concerned about an overhaul to Brazil’s Forest Code,
60 which is widely expected to weaken the protection of the rainforest, and potentially
61 speed up deforestation once more, according to an article in *Science* by Thiago Rangel,
62 an ecologist at the Federal University of Goiás in Brazil. “Extinction debts in the Brazilian
63 Amazon are one debt that should be defaulted on,” he writes.

64 Reducing the rate that extinction debts build up is not enough to preserve the Amazon’s
65 biodiversity, Rangel argues. “The existing debt may eventually lead to the loss of
66 species. To prevent species extinctions, it is necessary to take advantage of the window
67 of opportunity for forest regeneration. Restored or regenerated forests initially show
68 lower native species richness than the original forests they replaced, but they gradually
69 recover species richness, composition and vital ecosystems functions, reducing
70 extinction debt and mitigating local species loss,” he writes.

71

Source: Sample, Ian. “Amazon’s Doomed Species Set to Pay Deforestation’s ‘Extinction Debt.’”
The Guardian. July 13, 2012. Copyright Guardian News & Media Ltd. Used by permission.

READ THIS WRITING PROMPT CAREFULLY BEFORE YOU BEGIN YOUR WRITING.

Writing Prompt 2: Analysis

You have now read “The Sumatran Rainforest Will Mostly Disappear Within 20 Years” by John Vidal and “Amazon’s Doomed Species Set to Pay Deforestation’s ‘Extinction Debt’” by Ian Sample, two articles about deforestation. Write an essay that argues which of these two texts more effectively describes the consequences of deforestation, based on the reasoning and evidence in the texts. Include an explanation of the specific claims of both texts and cite strong and thorough evidence from both texts to support your argument. Follow the conventions of standard written English.

You may use the space below for prewriting. Extra pages for pre-writing are also available on the next few pages of this test booklet. However, **only** the lined pages 8–13 in your answer document will be scored for this prompt. You have 60 minutes.

This test booklet must be returned with all test material.

You may use this area for notes ONLY. Use the lines pages in your answer document to write your essay.

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