

Writing
Student Background Questionnaire

2007
Grade 8

DIRECTIONS

In the next two sections, you will be asked questions about yourself and your education. The choices for some questions will be written across the page as shown. Fill in the oval for the best answer.

Example 1

	Never or hardly ever	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day
1. How often do you watch movies on TV?	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D

You should have filled in the oval below the answer that best tells how often you watch movies on TV.

The choices for some questions will be written down the page as shown. Now read Example 2 and indicate your answer.

Example 2

2. Which event would you prefer to attend?
<input type="radio"/> A basketball game
<input type="radio"/> B car show
<input type="radio"/> C concert
<input type="radio"/> D play

Make your answer mark clear and dark in the oval. If you make a mistake or want to change your answer, be sure to completely erase any unwanted marks.

Do not go past the  sign at the end of each section until you are told to do so.

If you finish before time is called, go back and check your work on that section only. Use your time carefully. Do as much as you can in each section.



SECTION 3

Section 3

In this section, please tell us about yourself and your family. The section has 13 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet.

VB331330

1. Are you Hispanic or Latino? Fill in **one** or **more** ovals.

- Ⓐ No, I am not Hispanic or Latino.
- Ⓑ Yes, I am Mexican, Mexican American, or Chicano.
- Ⓒ Yes, I am Puerto Rican or Puerto Rican American.
- Ⓓ Yes, I am Cuban or Cuban American.
- Ⓔ Yes, I am from some other Hispanic or Latino background.

VB331331

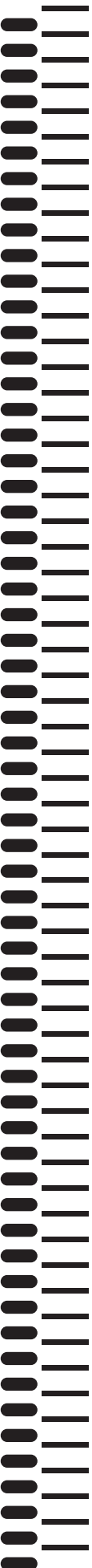
2. Which of the following best describes you? Fill in **one** or **more** ovals.

- Ⓐ White
- Ⓑ Black or African American
- Ⓒ Asian
- Ⓓ American Indian or Alaska Native
- Ⓔ Native Hawaiian or other Pacific Islander

Section 3

For the rest of the questions in this section, fill in only **one** oval for each question.

3. Does your family get a newspaper at least four times a week? VB331333
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
- (C) I don't know.
4. Does your family get any magazines regularly? VB331334
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
- (C) I don't know.
5. About how many books are there in your home? VB331335
- (A) Few (0–10)
- (B) Enough to fill one shelf (11–25)
- (C) Enough to fill one bookcase (26–100)
- (D) Enough to fill several bookcases (more than 100)
6. Is there a computer at home that you use? VB331336
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
7. Is there an encyclopedia in your home? It could be a set of books, or it could be on the computer. VB331337
- (A) Yes
- (B) No
- (C) I don't know.
8. About how many pages a day do you have to read in school and for homework? TB001101
- (A) 5 or fewer
- (B) 6–10
- (C) 11–15
- (D) 16–20
- (E) More than 20
9. How often do you talk about things you have studied in school with someone in your family? VB331339
- (A) Never or hardly ever
- (B) Once every few weeks
- (C) About once a week
- (D) Two or three times a week
- (E) Every day



VB331447

10. How many days were you absent from school in the last month?

- Ⓐ None
- Ⓑ 1 or 2 days
- Ⓒ 3 or 4 days
- Ⓓ 5 to 10 days
- Ⓔ More than 10 days

VB330870

11. How far in school did your mother go?

- Ⓐ She did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ She graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ She had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ She graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

VB330871

12. How far in school did your father go?

- Ⓐ He did not finish high school.
- Ⓑ He graduated from high school.
- Ⓒ He had some education after high school.
- Ⓓ He graduated from college.
- Ⓔ I don't know.

VB331451

13. How often do people in your home talk to each other in a language other than English?

- Ⓐ Never
- Ⓑ Once in a while
- Ⓒ About half of the time
- Ⓓ All or most of the time



SECTION 4

Section 4

This section has 13 questions. Mark your answers in your booklet. Fill in only **one** oval for each question.

VB345622

1. Please indicate how much you DISAGREE or AGREE with the following statements about reading and writing. Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Strongly disagree	Disagree	Agree	Strongly agree	
a. When I read books, I learn a lot.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345623
b. Reading is one of my favorite activities.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345624
c. Writing things like stories or letters is one of my favorite activities.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345625
d. Writing helps me share my ideas.	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345626

VB379288

2. How often do you do each of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

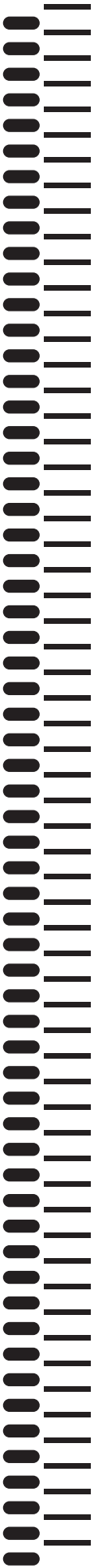
	Never or hardly ever	Once or twice a month	Once or twice a week	Almost every day	
a. Read for fun on your own time	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB379289
b. Talk with your friends or family about something you have read	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB379290
c. Write e-mails to your friends or family	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB379293

Section 4

VB345665

3. How often do you write each of the following **for school** this year? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	At least once a week	
a. Thoughts or observations in a log or journal	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345671
b. A simple summary of something you have read	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345672
c. A report about something that you have studied or researched	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345673
d. An essay in which you analyze or interpret something	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345674
e. A letter or essay in which you try to convince or persuade others to believe or do something	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345675
f. A story (such as a story about a personal or imagined experience)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345676
g. Business writing (such as a resume or letter to a company)	(A)	(B)	(C)	(D)	VB345677



VB378055

4. When you write a paper or report **for school** this year, how often do you do each of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	Sometimes	Almost always	
a. Brainstorm with other students to decide what to write about	(A)	(B)	(C)	VB378056
b. Organize your paper before you write (for example, make an outline, draw a chart)	(A)	(B)	(C)	VB378057
c. Make changes to your paper to fix mistakes and improve your paper	(A)	(B)	(C)	VB378058
d. Work with other students in pairs or small groups to discuss and improve your paper	(A)	(B)	(C)	VB378059

VB378060

5. When you write a paper or report **for school** this year, how often do you do each of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	Sometimes	Almost always	
a. Use a computer from the beginning to write the paper or report (for example, use a computer to write the first draft)	(A)	(B)	(C)	VB378061
b. Use a computer to make changes to the paper or report (for example, spell-check, cut and paste)	(A)	(B)	(C)	VB378122
c. Look for information on the Internet to include in the paper or report	(A)	(B)	(C)	VB378124

Section 4

VB378126

6. Think about the classes that you are taking this year. How often do you write something that is **at least a paragraph in length** for each of the following classes? Include things you write such as journal writing, reports, investigations, and essays. Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Never or hardly ever	A few times a year	Once or twice a month	At least once a week	
a. English class	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VB378127
b. Science class	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VB378128
c. Social studies or history class	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VB378129
d. Math class	<input type="radio"/> A	<input type="radio"/> B	<input type="radio"/> C	<input type="radio"/> D	VB378130

VB345715

7. For school this year, how often have you been asked to write long answers to questions on tests or assignments that involved reading?

- A Never
- B Once or twice this year
- C Once or twice a month
- D At least once a week

VB378054

8. When you write, how often does your teacher talk to you about what you are writing?

- A Never
- B Sometimes
- C Always



VB378131

9. When you write, how often does your teacher ask you to write more than one draft of a paper?

- Ⓐ Never
- Ⓑ Sometimes
- Ⓒ Always

VB429583

10. When your teacher grades your writing, how important is each of the following? Fill in **one** oval on each line.

	Not very important	Moderately important	Very important	
a. Your spelling, punctuation, and grammar	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB429584
b. The way your paper is organized	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB429585
c. The quality and creativity of your ideas	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB429586
d. The length of your paper	Ⓐ	Ⓑ	Ⓒ	VB429587

Section 4

VB595182

11. How hard was this test compared to most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- Ⓐ Easier than other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than other tests

VC034559

12. How hard did you try on this test compared to how hard you tried on most other tests you have taken this year in school?

- Ⓐ Not as hard as on other tests
- Ⓑ About as hard as on other tests
- Ⓒ Harder than on other tests
- Ⓓ Much harder than on other tests

VB595184

13. How important was it to you to do well on this test?

- Ⓐ Not very important
- Ⓑ Somewhat important
- Ⓒ Important
- Ⓓ Very important

