Smarter Balanced Performance Task Release Item- 4th Grade “Living Here or There”

Stimuli Text

Text 1
Informational text to be created; a passage of no more than 500 words describing the life of a family that has to move on a regular basis due to the father’s job.

Video
2–3 minute travel/National Geographic–type video featuring the landscape, climate, plant/animal life, etc., of desert, plains, mountain, and coastal regions of North America.

Text 2
Informational text to be created; a passage of no more than 500 words describing major differences in the climate, plant and animal life, transportation, food sources, etc., in North American desert, mountain, plains, and coastal regions.

Task

Part 1 (35 minutes): Ultimately tasked with writing an opinion essay about which environment they would choose to live, students will be introduced to the topic of different environments/biomes through reading an informational text about a family that has moved from one environment to another, watching a video about various types of environments, and reading an informative text on the subject of diverse environments, taking notes on these sources. Students will then answer one multiple-choice and two constructed-response questions, each addressing the research skills of analyzing and evaluating information.

Part 2 (70 minutes): Finally, students will compose a full-length opinion essay on which environment they would choose to live, referring to details from the video and from the informational texts. Prewriting, drafting, and revising will be involved.

Student Prompt:

You will read two articles about the differences between living in certain types of environments, such as desert areas and plains areas, taking notes on these sources. You will then write an opinion essay about which environment you would most want to live in and why.