



**Grade 10**  
**English Language Arts/Literacy**  
**Narrative Writing Task**

**2017 Released Items**

## **2017 Released Items: Grade 10 Narrative Writing Task**

The Narrative Writing Task focuses on one literary text. Students read the text or watch a video, answer questions, and write a narrative response that is tied to and draws on the text/video.

The 2017 blueprint for PARCC's grade 10 Narrative Writing Task includes Evidence-Based Selected Response/Technology-Enhanced Constructed Response items as well as one Prose Constructed Response prompt.

### **Included in this document:**

- Answer key and standards alignment
- PDFs of each item with the associated text

### **Additional related materials not included in this document:**

- Sample scored student responses with practice papers
- PARCC Scoring Rubric for Prose Constructed Response Items
- Guide to English Language Arts/Literacy Released Items: Understanding Scoring 2016
- PARCC English Language Arts/Literacy Assessment: General Scoring Rules for the 2016 Summative Assessment

**PARCC Release Items Answer and Alignment Document  
ELA/Literacy: Grade 10**

<b>Text Type:</b> NWT		
<b>Passage(s):</b> "Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad"		
<b>Item Code</b>	<b>Answer(s)</b>	<b>Standards/Evidence Statement Alignment</b>
VF821009	<b>Item Type: EBSR</b> <b>Part A:</b> B <b>Part B:</b> B	RL 10.1.1 RL 10.5.1
VF820997	<b>Item Type: EBSR</b> <b>Part A:</b> D <b>Part B:</b> B	RL 10.1.1 RL 10.3.1 RL 10.5.1
VF821039	<b>Item Type: EBSR</b> <b>Part A:</b> A <b>Part B:</b> D	RL 10.1.1 RL 10.2.1 RL 10.3.4
VF821064	<b>Item Type: EBSR</b> <b>Part A:</b> C <b>Part B:</b> A	RL 10.1.1 RL 10.9.1
VH001877	<b>Item Type: PCR</b>	Refer to Grade 10 Scoring Rubric
VH004520	<b>Item Type: EBSR (additional item)</b> <b>Part A:</b> B <b>Part B:</b> D	RL 10.1.1 RL 10.4.1

**Today you will view the painting “House by the Railroad” and read the poem “Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad” (1925). As you read, pay close attention to the information in the poem as you answer the questions to prepare to write a narrative story.**

Read the poem “Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad” (1925). Then answer the questions.



Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad (1925)

*by Edward Hirsch*

Out here in the exact middle of the day,  
This strange, gawky house has the expression  
Of someone being stared at, someone holding  
His breath underwater, hushed and expectant;

- 5** This house is ashamed of itself, ashamed  
Of its fantastic mansard rooftop  
And its pseudo-Gothic porch, ashamed  
of its shoulders and large, awkward hands.  
But the man behind the easel is relentless;  
**10** He is as brutal as sunlight, and believes

The house must have done something horrible  
To the people who once lived here  
Because now it is so desperately empty,  
It must have done something to the sky

**15** Because the sky, too, is utterly vacant  
And devoid of meaning. There are no  
Trees or shrubs anywhere—the house  
Must have done something against the earth.  
All that is present is a single pair of tracks

**20** Straightening into the distance. No trains pass.  
Now the stranger returns to this place daily  
Until the house begins to suspect  
That the man, too, is desolate, desolate  
And even ashamed. Soon the house starts

**25** To stare frankly at the man. And somehow  
The empty white canvas slowly takes on  
The expression of someone who is unnerved,  
Someone holding his breath underwater.  
And then one day the man simply disappears.

**30** He is a last afternoon shadow moving  
Across the tracks, making its way  
Through the vast, darkening fields.  
This man will paint other abandoned mansions,  
And faded cafeteria windows, and poorly lettered

**35** Storefronts on the edges of small towns.  
Always they will have this same expression,  
The utterly naked look of someone  
Being stared at, someone American and gawky,  
Someone who is about to be left alone  
Again, and can no longer stand it.

“Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad (1925)” from *WILD GRATITUDE* by Edward Hirsch, copyright © 1985 by Edward Hirsch. Used by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Random House LLC. All Rights Reserved.

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**1. Part A**

Which sentence describes a significant change that occurs in lines 30 through 39?

- A. The poem shifts from the concrete to the abstract.
- B. The poem transitions from the present tense to the future.
- C. The speaker directly addresses the reader.
- D. The speaker questions the assertions he had made earlier.

**Part B**

What does the change identified in Part A suggest about the speaker's view of Edward Hopper?

- A. It suggests the speaker's opinion that Hopper is a representative twentieth-century American artist.
- B. It suggests the speaker's view that Hopper's unique perspective will have a lasting influence on the way people view ordinary subjects.
- C. It suggests the speaker's belief that Hopper was drawn to certain kinds of subjects for his painting.
- D. It suggests the speaker's conviction that Hopper would be indebted to the influence of other artists for years to come.

**2. Part A**

Which statement **best** describes how the character of the house develops over the course of the poem?

- A. The house grows increasingly distant and soon withdraws from the artist.
- B. The house is proud and struggles to defy the artist's gaze.
- C. The house grows wistful and wishes the artist would portray it in a flattering light.
- D. The house is at first dismayed by the artist's gaze but then begins to return it.

**Part B**

How does the author use structure to make the house seem alive?

- A. He provides vivid visual details to describe the house.
- B. He gives the house human characteristics.
- C. He portrays the artist's growing affection for the house.
- D. He lists elements around the house that suggest physical discomfort.

**3. Part A**

Which sentence states an important theme of the poem?

- A. A work of art can provide insight into the mind of the artist.
- B. Forgiving one another for mistakes is a vital part of being human.
- C. What some consider their strengths might be viewed by others as personal weaknesses.
- D. Artists must work to see the everyday items of the world as objects of true beauty.

**Part B**

Which lines in the poem **most** clearly emphasize this theme?

- A. lines 13–16
- B. lines 21–24
- C. lines 33–36
- D. lines 37–40

**4. Part A**

Which phrase describes an aspect of the house that is unique to its representation in the poem?

- A. Hirsch’s poem presents details of the house’s architecture.
- B. Hirsch’s poem provides a view of the house’s interior.
- C. Hirsch’s poem describes the house as having human characteristics and emotions.
- D. Hirsch’s poem emphasizes the significance of the house’s geographical location.

**Part B**

Which line from the poem **most** clearly exemplifies the aspect of the house indicated by the answer to Part A?

- A. “Of someone being stared at, someone holding” (line 3)
- B. “But the man behind the easel is relentless” (line 9)
- C. “Trees or shrubs anywhere—the house” (line 17)
- D. “All that is present is a single pair of tracks” (line 19)

5. In the poem “Edward Hopper and the House by the Railroad (1925),” the speaker, who has been studying the painting “House by the Railroad,” claims that the house now **is so desperately empty**. Write a narrative story that describes the house in the past when it was once occupied. In your story, use details from the poem and painting to help you describe what it must have been like to live in the house before it was abandoned.

**6. Part A**

What is the meaning of the word **brutal** as it is used in line 10 of the poem?

- A. extremely harmful
- B. harshly truthful
- C. having conviction
- D. lacking concern

**Part B**

Which word elsewhere in the poem has a meaning similar to **brutal**?

- A. horrible (line 11)
- B. desperately (line 13)
- C. desolate (line 23)
- D. frankly (line 25)

