

**Grade 8 English Language Arts Sample Items (Reading)
Answer Key**

Item #	Item Type	Point(s)	Standard	Rubric / Key	Scoring
1	Multiple Choice	1	RL.8.4	C	The correct response receives 1 point
2	Hot Text	1	RL.8.1	For this item, the student selects: "Alice didn't dare to argue the point, but went on: '—and I thought I'd try and find my way to the top of that hill—'"	The correct response receives 1 point
3	Multiple Choice	1	RL.8.3	A	The correct response receives 1 point
4	Hot Text	1	L.8.4	For this item, the student selects: "No, I shouldn't," said Alice" <u>AND</u> "a hill CAN'T be a valley, you know. That would be nonsense—"	The correct response receives 1 point
5	Evidence-Based Selected Response	1	RL.8.2	Part A: C Part B: B	The correct response receives 1 point
6	Multiple Choice	1	RL.8.6	C	The correct response receives 1 point

**Grade 8 English Language Arts Sample Item (Writing)
Sample Responses**

Item #	Item Type	Standard	Rubric & Scoring
7	Writing Prompt	W.8.2	<p>Writing prompts are scored using the 10-point rubrics posted on the Portal. Each rubric has three domains:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Purpose, Focus, and Organization (0-4 points) • Evidence and Elaboration (0-4 points) • Conventions of Standard English (0-2 points) <p>Sample responses and scores are included on the pages that follow.</p>

10-point Student Sample Response

Purpose, Focus, and Organization (4-point Rubric)	Evidence and Elaboration (4-point Rubric)	Conventions of Standard English (2-point Rubric)
4	4	2

Nestled between the Andes and Amazon Basin is a historical site like no other. Built in the 15th century and conquered by the Spaniards in the 16th century Machu Picchu was trapped in time until the early 1900s, when it was discovered again. Sitting at more than 7,800 feet above sea level it is surrounded by mountain slopes, peaks and valleys. Machu Picchu is the last known Inca stronghold, and it provides a glimpse of the life many Inca's experienced during the 15th century. The breath-taking cultural site is one of the most signifigant and prized travel destinations in the world.

The Stones of Machu Picchu claims that Machu Picchu is one of the world's great archaeological wonders. Not only does it contain spectacular architecture but the natural setting of Machu Picchu also encompasses its unique enviromental habitats for plenty of unique animal species and rich diversity of flora and fauna. *Historic Sanctuary of Machu Picchu* by UNESCO says Machu Picchu is in some of the scenically most attractive mountainous territory of the Peruvian Andes. The surrounding valleys have cultivated exceptionally well for over 1,000 years and some of the habitats give homes to endangered species. Several of them include the spectacled bear, the dwarf brocket, and the Andean condor. When the ruins were first discovered again in 1911 by Hiram Bingham he described them as "covered with trees and moss, the growth of centuries", as told by Duane Damon in *The Stones of Machu Picchu*.

Machu Picchu also contains many historical artifacts. Inca graves, stone dishes and several bronze implements were discovered, as stated in *The Stones of Mach Picchu*. The site contains many major historical and cultural inflences and some of the people who live around Machu Picchu continue a way of life that resemble their Inca ancestors, being based on potatoes, maize, and llamas. Although Machu Picchu has stood for a long time, safety and sanitary issues for travelers and visitors have started to emerge. However, don't fret because high quality and new long-term solutions are being built for the natural wonders. Machu Picchu is a very unique sight not only for its educational value, but also for its condition.

Machu Picchu is a very signifigant travel destination for many reasons which include its historical signifigance, amazing structures, and spectacular enviromental sights. Located in a breathtaking natural setting, the city's beauty comes from its amazing architecture and mountaintop views. Visitors from all over the world flock to the "city of the clouds" every year to get a glimpse of history uncovered. They look, refect and wonder about many of the unanswered questions surrounding Machu Picchu. Machu Picchu gives the modern generations a look back to a time like no other and the experiance is sure to last a lifetime.

7-point Student Sample Response

Purpose, Focus, and Organization (4-point Rubric)	Evidence and Elaboration (4-point Rubric)	Conventions of Standard English (2-point Rubric)
3	2	2

Are you tired of hearing about Mt. Rushmore? Exhausted from your long trek at the Great Wall of China? Bored of the statues at Notre Dame? Well, why don't you take a trip down to good old Peru to visit the amazing stones of Machu Picchu? You will be taken aback by the rich history of the place and stunned by some of the things you may see there.

Discovered by Hiram Bingham in the summer of 1911, Machu Picchu is often believed to be the ruins of Vilcabamba, the last capital of the Inca civilization. By the time Mr. Bingham stumbled upon this historical treasure, people had been trying to find the location of Vilcabamba or Vitcos for 400 years! Vilcabamba was the secret hiding place of Manco II when he fled the Spanish Conquest in 1535. Machu Picchu is believed by many to be the ruins of Vitcos. Machu Picchu is considered one of the world's greatest archaeological wonders. Inca graves, stone dishes and several bronze implements have been found on the site. These are great proof that Machu Picchu could be the ruins of Vilcabamba. Although there are other location which may also be the ruins of Vitcos, Machu Picchu is still an stupendous place to come and visit. People from all over the world come to see this grand spectacle. They are intrigued by the mystery of Machu Picchu and charmed by the incredible archetecture. You could be one of these people.

Machu Picchu is a desirable destination not only because of the historical significance, but also because of the lovely location this admirable sanctuary. Machu Picchu is located at the meeting point between the Peruvian Andes and the Amazon Basin, 2430 m above sea level. It is in the middle of a tropical mountain forest and surrounded by well cultivated land, Machu Picchu has some of the most breathtaking scenery in the world. The people living near Machu Picchu live in a way that is similar to the Inca. Machu Picchu is also a habitat for many endangered species, including but not limited to: the dwarf brocket, the otter, the long-tailed weasel, the Andean cock of the rock, the Andean condor, the boa, and the pampas cat. If you look carefully, you may spot one!

The gorgeous archetecture is also another great reason to visit Machu Picchu. Machu Picchu consists of about 200 structures. The city is split into upper and lower sections, which separates the residential area from the farming area. The intricate design for this city is thousands of years old and was probably the most archetectually advanced city in its time.

So whether you come for the rich history, the superb scenery and wildlife, or for the jaw-dropping archetecture, I assure you, Machu Picchu will not dissappoint you. This city never fails to impress. So do yourself a favor and pay a visit to the city in the clouds.

5-point Student Sample Response

Purpose, Focus, and Organization (4-point Rubric)	Evidence and Elaboration (4-point Rubric)	Conventions of Standard English (2-point Rubric)
2	1	2

“Hey! Let’s plan a vacation, let’s go to Peru!” But where in Peru you might ask? Well Machu Picchu is the place to go! I’m here to inform you all about this wonderful place and the civilization that made it happen. The Inca civilizaton, many people have examined it before. For example, Francisco Pizarro, he was a Spanish conqueror who took over the Incas in the 1530s. Well it looks like he just didn’t examine, he took over!

Let me inform you more on this historic world heritage site. Machu Picchu was built in the fifteenth century and it is so big! It covers 79 acres of moutain slopes, peaks and valleys. Bet you didn’t know that. You probably also didn’t know that Machu Picchu stands 2,430 meters above sea level!

Machu Picchu is one of the most amazing urban creations of the Inca Empire. It is also a secure habitat for several endangerd species. The spectacled bear is one of the most interesting species in Machu Picchu. Other animals that live in the secured habitat are also the otter, the long tailed weasel, and much more.

I hope I’ve gotten your attention, I’m only getting started. Machu Picchu has a lot to say and you’re going to love it. Machu Picchu is a world renowned archaeological site, an amzing city with a setting so natural, so beautiful. Machu Picchu is one of the most attractive mountainous territory of the Peruvian Andes, as said in the source.

Machu Picchu is the place to go if you ever plan on going to a vacation out to Peru. Just by reading this you might just fall in love with the picture you imagined in your head of Machu Picchu. Machu Picchu is probably still more beautiful than the picture you imagined in your head after reading this. Machu Picchu is the place to go!