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**SAMPLE ITEMS**

The structure of the practice items for this unit is similar to how it appears in Section 3 of the Georgia Milestones End-of-Course assessment:

1. selected-response (multiple-choice) questions (three on the actual test),
2. a constructed-response question, and
3. an extended writing-response question.

Additionally, the instructions for the extended writing prompt are in the same form as those that appear in the End-of-Course assessment.

**WRITING TASK**

The media have often shown pictures of glamorous movie stars walking pet cheetahs or other exotic animals around their grounds. At other times, the media have revealed shocking stories of events gone horribly wrong with a pet tiger, orangutan, or some other unusual pet. Some people say that ownership of these kinds of animals must be banned. Others just advocate more supervision. Weigh the claims on both sides, and then write an **argumentative essay**, in your own words, supporting one side of the debate in which you argue EITHER that people have the right to own exotic animals OR that exotic animals are not pets. Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your **argumentative essay**.

**Before you begin planning and writing, you will read two passages and answer three questions about what you have read**.**As you read the texts, think about what details from the passages you might use in your argumentative essay**.**These are the titles of the texts you will read:**

1. **License the Cats**
2. **Ban Ownership of Exotic Pets**

Unit 3: Writing—Argumentative and Informative Text

Unit 3: Writing—Argumentative and Informative Text **License the Cats**

One of the animal kingdom’s foremost examples of grace, majesty, and power is the Bengal tiger of India. The Indian subcontinent is home to fewer than 2,000 of these animals now, whereas a century ago, their population was 20 times that number. You may ask whether that reduction is as serious as it appears on its surface, and, paradoxically, the answer is both yes and no.

The Indian population of tigers is not the end of the matter; in fact, to find a tiger, you can do no better than to look to the United States, which is host to thousands of tigers. Some live in zoos for everyone to see, but more than 12,000 are owned privately as pets; 4,000 of those pets are in one state—Texas. Texas is one of 15 states that require a license to own not only Bengal tigers, but other big cats, such as leopards, lions, and panthers. Sixteen states have no restrictions on ownership whatsoever, nor do they even keep records of ownership. Nineteen states, however, ban ownership altogether.

It is relatively easy to buy a big cat in the United States; in some markets, they cost about the same as a thoroughbred dog—$400 to $1,000. If the new owner’s state is one of the 19 that ban ownership, it is relatively easy to buy an animal out of state and bring the animal across state lines. Because of the ease of making a purchase, animals often end up with people not fully prepared for the responsibility this kind of pet entails. Too often the novelty of a cute little cub wears thin after several hours of posting photos on social media or after the animal has gained hundreds of pounds. Providing food and shelter become onerous, to say the least. Many owners find themselves facing a real dilemma: devote the time and resources necessary to attend to the animal, or diminish the quality of its life through reduced living space and nutrition. (A 400-pound Siberian–Bengal tiger was once found in a New York City apartment.) People frequently try to divest themselves of the problem by getting rid of the cat. However, zoos generally don’t want more tigers, because they already have an optimal number. Even at low prices, few buyers exist for problem cats, some of whom may have harmed or frightened neighbors.

However, in some venues it is possible for exotic cats to live well, or even thrive, under the stewardship of a human. Some wealthy individuals devote large tracts of land to wildlife preserves, hosting giraffes, elephants, and antelope, as well as big cats.

The answer to the problem lies in licensing. The states requiring licensing currently vary widely in terms of requirements placed on the owner and the amount of oversight by the licensing agency. The ideal process should be costly for both the buyer and the state. With rigorous screening beforehand and a substantial licensing fee, in combination with diligent monitoring after the fact, it would be possible for these proud beasts to live well and also ensure that the species not become extinct.

Don’t put a bell on the cat. License its owner.

Unit 3: Writing—Argumentative and Informative Text **Ban Ownership of Exotic Pets**

In taking a stand against private ownership of “lions and tigers and bears,” it would be tempting to bring up the case of the Ohio man who released over 50 exotic “pets” into his neighborhood. But the argument does not need to rely on the actions of an outlier, a tragically disturbed man with an inordinate attraction to out-of-the-ordinary pets. A ban on owning such animals considers two dimensions: man and beast.

On one side of the argument is man’s innate fallibility. Too frequently, people become owners of big cats because they can be relatively inexpensive to obtain, often under $1,000. But buying, for example, a Bengal tiger, is the easy part. Soon owners find themselves with responsibility for 700 pounds of wild instinct. Unable to satisfy the animal’s needs for space and nutrition, which often happens, the owner becomes, in effect, an abuser. I’m sure that no one goes into such a relationship with that intent, but animal-rights caseworkers verify that result in a shocking number of instances.

Another side of the argument is the problem of the potential extinction of certain species of animal. Let’s focus on the Bengal tiger as representative of the issue. The native habitat of the Bengal tiger is India, which is now home to fewer than 2,000 Bengals, or 5% of what it supported a hundred years ago. The population is dangerously low, due to loss of habitat, hunting, and trading on the exotic animals market. Not counting those in zoos, the United States is home to about 12,000 privately owned Bengals. Former boxing champion Mike Tyson, for example, once owned three Royal Bengals. With a ban on private ownership and with the right kinds of wildlife management in a suitable habitat, this proud animal could once again roam at will in wild places rather than find its way to the head of an endangered species list.

Citizens of the United States are often wary of governmental prohibitions or restrictions; it is one of the ways we reinforce and practice our freedoms. But there is always that line somewhere between the needs or desires of the individual and the welfare of the larger community. When Mike Tyson failed to acquire proper licensing for his tigers, which he claimed cost him $4,000 per month to maintain, U.S. authorities seized them and relocated them to a refuge in Colorado. Such enforcement might be considered unduly expensive, and even oppressive. It would be far better to institute an outright ban on private ownership of the big cats or other similar exotic animals, with exceptions for zoos or compounds with a certified educational or environmental focus. As a matter of fact, that is already the case in 19 of our 50 states, and the people of those states do not feel that their freedoms have been threatened.

Ban private ownership of exotic pets.

Unit 3: Writing—Argumentative and Informative Text **Item 11**

**Selected-Response**

**Based on the proposal in “License the Cats,” what should a person have in order to get a license to own a tiger?**

**A.** a loving home

**B.** vast resources

**C.** access to a zoo

**D.** an appreciation of animals

**Item 12**

**Selected-Response**

**Why does the author of “Ban Ownership of Exotic Pets” refuse to use the details in the first paragraph to oppose exotic pet ownership?**

**A.** They are not typical of pet owner behavior.

**B.** The circumstances are too grisly to relate.

**C.** The information supports unlimited access.

**D.** It is not known whether any of the animals were tigers.

**Item 13**

**Constructed-Response**

**On which point do the authors of both articles MOSTLY agree?**

**Use details from BOTH articles to support your answer**.**Write your answer on the lines provided.**

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**Item 14**

**Extended Writing-Response**

**Now that you have read “License the Cats” and “Ban Ownership of Exotic Pets” and answered some questions about what you have read, create a plan for and write your argumentative essay.**

**WRITING TASK**

The media have often shown pictures of glamorous movie stars walking pet cheetahs or other exotic animals around their grounds. At other times, the media have revealed shocking stories of events gone horribly wrong with a pet tiger, orangutan, or some other unusual pet. Some people say that ownership of these kinds of animals must be banned. Others just advocate more supervision. Weigh the claims on both sides, and then write an **argumentative essay**, in your own words, supporting one side of the debate in which you argue EITHER that people have the right to own exotic animals OR that exotic animals are not pets. Be sure to use information from BOTH passages in your **argumentative essay**. **Write your answer on the lines provided**.

**Be sure to:**

1. Introduce your claim.
2. Support your claim with logical reasoning and relevant evidence, including facts and details, from the passages.
3. Acknowledge and address alternate or opposing claims.
4. Organize the reasons and evidence logically.
5. Identify the passages by title or number when using details or facts directly from the passages.
6. Develop your ideas clearly and use your own words, except when quoting directly from the passages.
7. Use appropriate and varied transitions to connect your ideas and to clarify the relationships among claims, counterclaims, reasons, and evidence.
8. Establish and maintain a formal style.
9. Provide a conclusion that supports the argument presented.
10. Check your work for correct usage, grammar, spelling, capitalization, and

 Punctuation.