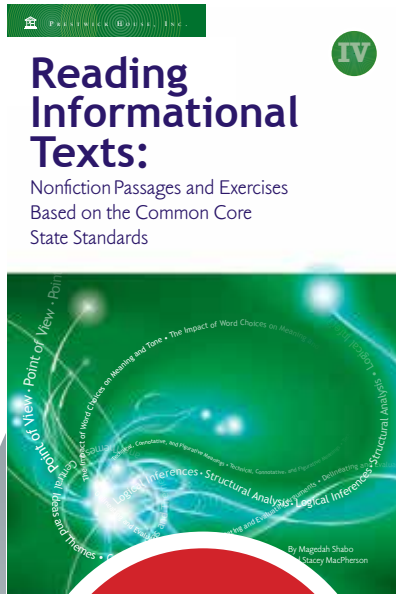




# Reading Informational Texts:

Nonfiction Passages and Exercises Based on the Common Core State Standards

# Sample



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## IV



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## The Art of War

### Section I: Laying Plans

1. SUN TZU SAID: THE ART OF WAR is of vital importance to the **State**.
2. It is a matter of life and death, a road either to safety or to ruin. Hence it is a subject of inquiry which can on no account be neglected.
3. The art of war, then, is governed by five constant factors, to be taken into account in one's deliberations, when seeking to determine the conditions **obtaining in the field**.
4. These are:
  - (1) The Moral Law;
  - (2) Heaven;
  - (3) Earth;
  - (4) The Commander;
  - (5) Method and discipline.
5. The Moral Law causes the people to be in complete **accord** with their ruler, so that they will follow him regardless of their lives, undismayed by any danger.
6. Heaven signifies night and day, cold and heat, times and seasons.
7. Earth comprises distances, great and small; danger and security; open ground and narrow passes; the chances of life and death.
8. The Commander stands for the virtues of wisdom, sincerity, benevolence, courage and strictness.
9. By method and discipline are to be understood the **marshaling** of the army in its proper subdivisions, the graduations of rank among the officers, the maintenance of roads by which supplies may reach the army, and the control of military **expenditure**.
10. These five heads should be familiar to every general: he who knows them will be victorious; he who knows them not will fail.
11. Therefore, in your deliberations, when seeking to determine the military conditions, let them be made the basis of a comparison, in this wise:—
12. (1) Which of the two **sovereigns** is imbued with the Moral law?  
 (2) Which of the two generals has most ability?

“Obtaining in the field” is an archaic phrase. What do you think it means? Rephrase the expression using your own words.

Note the methodical structure of the work. Sun Tzu mentions five factors in point four, then develops each idea individually in points five through nine.

Why is the Moral Law so crucial to succeeding in war? For example, what problems might result if it is not followed?

Sun Tzu uses several literary devices in point ten, including anaphora, and parallelism. Identify these literary devices and assess their effectiveness in the passage.

**Anaphora:** the repetition of a word or phrase at the beginning of a series of successive sentences or clauses

**Parallelism:** the repetition of similarly constructed phrases, clauses, or sentences within a short section of writing

8. The following questions are found in the *Commander's Tactical Handbook*, published by the United States Marine Corps, in a section on evaluating a plan: Does the defensive plan—

- *Allow for flexibility?*
- *Allow for proper use of terrain?*
- *Provide for mutual support?*
- *Provide adequate security measures?*

What similarities does this section of the manual have in common with *The Art of War*? Identify statements from *The Art of War* that agree with this plan.

9. Based on what Sun Tzu writes, infer what he would say about the possible use of nuclear weapons in a modern war.

**mysticism**; the horrible mysticism of money. The writer of that passage did not really have the remotest notion of how Vanderbilt made his money, or of how anybody else is to make his. He does, indeed, conclude his remarks by **advocating** some scheme; but it has nothing in the world to do with Vanderbilt. He merely wished to **prostrate** himself before the mystery of a millionaire. For when we really worship anything, we love not only its clearness but its **obscurity**. We **exult** in its very invisibility. Thus, for instance, when a man is in love with a woman he takes special pleasure in the fact that a woman is unreasonable. Thus, again, the very **pious** poet, celebrating his Creator, takes pleasure in saying that God moves in a mysterious way. Now, the writer of the paragraph which I have quoted does not seem to have had anything to do with a god, and I should not think (judging by his extreme **unpracticality**) that he had ever been really in love with a woman. But the thing he does worship—Vanderbilt—he treats in exactly this mystical manner. He really revels in the fact his **deity** Vanderbilt is keeping a secret from him. And it fills his soul with a sort of **transport** of cunning, an **ecstasy** of priestcraft, that he should pretend to be telling to the **multitude** that terrible secret which he does not know.

Speaking about the instinct that makes people rich, the same writer remarks—

“In olden days its existence was fully understood. The Greeks **enshrined** it in the story of Midas, of the ‘Golden Touch.’ Here was a man who turned everything he laid his hands upon into gold. His life was a progress amidst riches. Out of everything that came in his way he created the precious metal. ‘A foolish legend,’ said the **wisecracs** of the Victorian age. ‘A truth,’ say we of to-day. We all know of such men. We are ever meeting or reading about such persons who turn everything they touch into gold. Success dogs their very footsteps. Their life’s pathway leads **unerringly** upwards. They cannot fail.”

Unfortunately, however, Midas could fail; he did. His path did not lead unerringly upward. He starved because whenever he touched a biscuit or a ham sandwich it turned to gold. That was the whole point of the story, though the writer has to **suppress** it delicately, writing

Note Chesterton’s effective use of alliteration in the phrase, “mysticism of money” and, later, “mystery of a millionaire” and “mystical manner.” What is his main point?

**Alliteration:** the repetition of sounds at the beginning of words

Note Chesterton’s continued use of religious imagery throughout the paragraph. What metaphor does he use to describe the writer of the article’s opinion of Vanderbilt in the last sentence of the paragraph?

**Imagery:** the descriptive use of words to evoke impressions or mental pictures

**Metaphor:** a comparison of two things that are basically dissimilar in which one is described in terms of the other

According to a 4th century Roman account of the myth, “[M]idas, king of Lydia, swelled at first with pride when he found he could transform everything he touched to gold; but when he beheld his food grow rigid and his drink harden into golden ice then he understood that this gift was a bane.”



## INTRODUCTION

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### ***A Vindication of the Rights of Woman***

Published by British philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft in 1792, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman* is considered by many to be one of the earliest and most influential works of feminist thought. Wollstonecraft's main argument throughout the book is that women deserve to be educated so that they can fulfill their duties as citizens and become valued members of society. She contends that the then-current power structure discouraged and hindered women from exercising their full capacity for virtue and reason, attributes that she believes are God-given and meant for all human beings.

In the first chapter of the book, which you are about to read, Wollstonecraft begins by establishing the fundamental capacities that distinguish human beings from all other animals. This introduction lays the groundwork for her argument that all people are equal in the eyes of God, and are endowed by Him with certain basic rights. Since this is the case, she argues, any government or institution in which an imbalance of power occurs is unjust. According to Wollstonecraft, the first step toward a more advanced civilization—with *all* human beings as equal members—is to acknowledge the problematic nature of hierarchical systems and arbitrary power. As she emphatically states at one point during the chapter, “[T]he more equality there is established among [human beings], the more virtue and happiness will reign in society.”

### **Mary Wollstonecraft**

Feminist writer and philosopher Mary Wollstonecraft was born in London on April 27, 1759. Having endured an unstable early childhood due to an abusive and financially irresponsible father, she left home at nineteen to live and work on her own. In 1784, she co-founded a school in Newington Green, a Dissenting community in north London.

In 1787, Wollstonecraft moved back to London with the goal of earning a living through writing. She soon found a position with the liberal publisher Joseph Johnson, translating French and German texts, and writing articles and reviews for Johnson's periodical the *Analytical Review*. Her first major work was *A Vindication of the Rights of Men* (1790), a response to another writer's criticism of the French Revolution. In the book, she attacks monarchical and aristocratic governments, while supporting republicanism. As a writer, Wollstonecraft continued to advocate for human rights and equality, and, in 1792, published her most influential work, *A Vindication of the Rights of Woman*.

While in Paris after the publication of that book, Wollstonecraft met Gilbert Imlay, an American, and the two began an affair. She became pregnant, and, in 1794, gave



## VOCABULARY

Note: All definitions are based on the context in which the term is used in this reading selection.

**acquirement:** skill; ability

**adventitious:** random; accidental; not natural or intrinsic

**apostrophizing:** speaking directly to something abstract, making it seem as if it were alive

**apotheosis:** the elevation of something to divine status; glorification

**aristocracy:** government by an elite ruling class

**arraign:** to accuse; to charge

**axioms:** universally accepted rules or principles

**baneful:** harmful; deadly

**benignity:** kindness; goodness

**blasphemy:** disrespect toward God or something generally held sacred; sacrilegious words or actions

**calumnies:** slurs; insults; malicious statements

**cant:** insincere or meaningless talk

**caprice:** a whim; impulse

**celestial:** relating to the sky or the heavens

**consecrated:** made sacred or holy

**contagion:** an illness or disease

**contemptible:** shameful; disgraceful

**countenance:** outward appearance

**curate:** a clergyman who assists a parish priest

**demi-gods:** people with godlike attributes

**despisers:** haters

**despotism:** a political system in which one ruler holds absolute power

**deviations:** variations; departures

**dispensations:** things given out, usually in shares or allotments

**eloquence:** a skill in expressing oneself

**enamoured:** [enamored] in love with; captivated

**ensanguined:** covered or stained with blood

**equipoise:** balance; equilibrium

**exalts:** lifts; elevates

**exerts:** puts (oneself) into effort or tiring action

**expedient:** practical; useful; beneficial

**fastidious:** extremely concerned with accuracy and detail

**gait:** a manner of walking



 **Essay Question**

In 1789, Noah Webster predicted that certain causes would produce “in a course of time, a language in North America as different from the future language of England as the modern Dutch, Danish and Swedish are from the German, or from one another.” According to Mencken, what two major factors did Webster fail to consider in his prediction? What recent developments can you think of that would make Webster’s prediction even less likely to come true today than in Mencken’s time? Provide quotations from the text to support your answer.

*Answers may vary but should include some of the following points:*

upon retiring from the courtroom to consult as to their verdict, such partition, if it be a movable one, shall be taken to their consultation room, and set up in such way as to prevent black jurors from coming too close to their brother jurors of the white race. If the "partition" used in the courtroom happens to be stationary, provision could be made for screens with openings through which jurors of the two races could **confer** as to their verdict without coming into personal contact with each other. I cannot see but that, according to the principles this day announced, such state legislation, although conceived in hostility to, and enacted for the purpose of humiliating, citizens of the United States of a particular race, would be held to be consistent with the Constitution.

I do not deem it necessary to review the decisions of state courts to which reference was made in argument. Some, and the most important, of them, are wholly inapplicable, because rendered prior to the adoption of the last amendments of the Constitution, when colored people had very few rights which the dominant race felt obliged to respect. Others were made at a time when public opinion, in many localities, was dominated by the institution of slavery; when it would not have been safe to do justice to the black man; and when, so far as the rights of blacks were concerned, race prejudice was, practically, the supreme law of the land. Those decisions cannot be guides in the era introduced by the recent amendments of the supreme law, which established universal civil freedom, gave citizenship to all born or naturalized in the United States, and residing here, obliterated the race line from our systems of governments, national and state, and placed our free institutions upon the broad and sure foundation of the equality of all men before the law.

I am of the opinion that the statute of Louisiana is inconsistent with the personal liberty of citizens, white and black, in that state, and hostile to both the spirit and letter of the Constitution of the United States. If laws of **like** character should be enacted in the several states of the Union, the effect would be in the highest degree **mischievous**. Slavery, as an institution tolerated by law, would, it is true, have disappeared

The final sentence of the paragraph is a periodic sentence.

**Periodic Sentence:** a sentence in which the most important material or word does not occur until the end

Notice the verb/direct object construction included in this sentence: established freedom, gave citizenship, obliterated the race line, and placed our institutions.

What are some reasons for Harlan's not considering certain prior court decisions?

Using the Louisiana ruling as a model, the states could continue discriminating against citizens even though the Constitution prohibits it. Harlan, in wrapping up his dissent, concludes with antithetical wording: slavery and blessings of freedom; tolerated by law and disappeared from our country; sinister legislation and full enjoyment; legal inferiority and People of the United States.