Directions

• Read all the directions for each question carefully and think about the answer.

• This Assesslet contains five items. Questions 1-3 are selected-response items where you choose the one BEST answer. Answer each question by filling in the circle on your answer document.

• Question 4 is a constructed-response item. Write your answer on the lines provided on your answer document.

• Question 5 is an extended-response item. Use the scratch paper provided to plan your writing. Then, write your essay on the lines provided on your answer document.

• Be sure to write your answers in the spaces provided on the answer document.
Read Passages A and B. Then, respond to the questions that follow.

Passage A: North America’s Tallest Mountain: Denali (Formerly Mount McKinley)

In the center of the Alaska Range, Denali (known to most North Americans as Mount McKinley) stands out among the other majestic mountains. Denali is the tallest mountain in North America. The unofficial height, measured by radar equipment in 2010, is 20,237 feet, or 6,168 meters, above sea level. Denali is the most popular attraction for people who visit Denali National Park and Preserve in Alaska.

The name, Denali, was given to the mountain by the native Athabaskan people. It means “The Great One.” In 1896, a gold prospector named the mountain Mount McKinley for the presidential nominee William McKinley. President McKinley never had the opportunity to visit his namesake. Even though the native Alaskan people always refer to the mountain as Denali, the official name remained Mount McKinley until August 28, 2015, when President Obama signed the agreement to officially name the mountain Denali. The park, however, was renamed Denali National Park and Preserve in 1980.

Denali is located about 170 miles southwest of Fairbanks, Alaska, and about 130 miles north-northwest of Anchorage, Alaska. The large mound of granite was created during a period of tectonic activity that began approximately 60 million years ago. The mountain has two summits and is covered with snow and glaciers. The climate is extremely cold. It can be -75 degrees Fahrenheit, but the wind chill can make it feel like -118 degrees Fahrenheit. A human can freeze on the mountain in an instant. There is a weather station located at 18,700 feet (5,700 meters) that records the temperatures on the mountain. The northern latitude (63 degrees) causes Mount McKinley to have lower barometric pressure than any other mountain. This makes it very difficult for climbers to adjust to the altitude.

This does not stop hikers and mountain climbers from being drawn to the mountain. The first person to attempt to climb the mountain was James Wickersham in 1903, but he did not complete the climb. Two prospectors, Hudson Stuck and Harry Karstens, led a party to the South Peak in June of 1913. Their party was the first to reach the

Passage A continued on page 3
top. Barbara Washburn, in 1947, was the first woman to reach the summit of Denali. The first blind climber reached the top in 1993. In 2001, Galen Johnston, age 11, became the youngest female to reach the top. That same year, Toshiko Uchida (age 70) became the oldest female to complete the climb. In 2013, Tom Choate (age 78) broke the record as the oldest male to reach the summit. Over the years, an estimated 32,000 people have attempted to climb the mountain, but only about half of them have succeeded. Even so, several hundred climbers manage to reach the summit each year. Denali is still as fascinating to climbers today as it was hundreds of years ago.
Passage B: The Experience of a Lifetime

When I decided to climb Denali, formerly Mt. McKinley, I had no idea what a challenge it would be. I just knew it would be a once-in-a-lifetime experience. I researched training programs and joined an online group that was planning to make a climb in a year. I thought that would give me ample time to prepare and train. Little did I know what was ahead of me.

The group met in Talkeetna, Alaska. We took a small plane to the base camp on the Kahiltna Glacier. Once there, I became very nervous about making the climb. There were 24 tents scattered on the crevasses of the glacier. I heard our guide telling us that many climbers never make it out of base camp; they just get back on the plane and go home.

After that first night, I understood why. I woke up in the darkness and felt like I was in a freezer. Snow was inside the tent, on top of my sleeping bag, and had covered my tent mate. I could not even imagine what at least two more weeks of nights like this might be like for us.

The main climbing season for Denali is from early May to early July. I had to apply and commit to the group two years in advance. There were six people selected for the group. Our guide has climbed the mountain more than once and is a veteran climber. Why should I be so worried?

The next morning, we ate breakfast, loaded up our gear, and headed out to make it to the second camp site. We journeyed in two groups of three, connected by ropes for our safety. It took us about an hour to travel one mile. Six hours later, we arrived at the campsite cold and hungry and set up our tents. We were fortunate that the previous climbers left snow walls that would help protect us from the extreme wind chill during the night.

Passage B continued on page 5
The next day, we carried only half of the gear to the third camp site. At 10,000 feet I was struggling to breathe. (Anything over 4,900 feet is considered high altitude for humans.) While digging the hole to cache our gear, I felt faint and was hyperventilating. One of the other climbers told me to rest. The ‘double carry’ strategy used to move the gear helps climbers adjust to the high altitudes, but it also makes some climbers realize that they cannot make the climb.

Unfortunately, I felt I could not complete the climb. I was discouraged and did not want to give up on my dream of climbing Denali. The next day, we hiked back down to the previous campsite to get the remaining gear. I connected with another group that was on the way down the mountain and returned to base camp. I flew back to Talkeetna, telling myself that, one day, I would try again to climb this wonderful mountain.
Selected-Response Questions

For questions 1-3, answer each question by filling in the circle on your answer document.

1  Which sentence BEST describes the central idea of Passages A and B?
   A  Denali is also called Mount McKinley.
   B  Denali means “The Great One.”
   C  The conditions on Denali make it impossible to climb.
   D  Mountain climbers, past and present, feel challenged to climb Denali.

2  Which of the following is required for making a climb on Denali?
   A  You must travel in a group.
   B  You must have proper training and conditioning.
   C  You must be at least 18 years of age and no older than 60.
   D  You must have previous experience climbing other mountains.

3  Which of the following makes climbing Denali MOST difficult?
   A  the location
   B  knowing how to schedule the climb
   C  having enough time to make the climb
   D  handling cold temperatures, wind chill, and altitude
4 Why is the narrator of Passage B unable to continue the climb? Support your answer with details from BOTH Passages.

Write your answer on the lines provided on your answer document.
Extended-Response Question

Passage A and Passage B focus on the same central idea but are told from different points of view. Write an informational essay explaining how the different points of view affect your understanding of the central idea. In your essay, be sure to:

- Identify the point of view of Passage A, and explain how it affects your understanding of the central idea.
- Identify the point of view of Passage B, and explain how it affects your understanding of the central idea.
- Cite evidence from Passages A and B to support your explanation.

Use the scratch paper provided to plan your writing. Then, write your essay on the lines provided on your answer document.