



***SPRING 2017
NEW JERSEY
BIOLOGY COMPETENCY TEST
(NJBCT)***

**STUDENT PREPARATION
BOOKLET**



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PTM # 1510.74

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STUDENT PREPARATION BOOKLET

WHAT IS THE NEW JERSEY BIOLOGY COMPETENCY TEST (NJBCT)?

The New Jersey Biology Competency Test (NJBCT) measures whether students have gained the knowledge and skills identified in the Biology section of the New Jersey Student Learning Standards in Science (NJSLS-S). The NJSLS-S, adopted by the State Board of Education, identify what students should know and be able to do at the end of various benchmark years. The NJBCT will help determine whether a student is making satisfactory progress toward mastering the Biology skills. All New Jersey public high school students, regardless of grade level, who are enrolled in a first-time Biology course, or content equivalent, during the 2016–2017 school year, must take the test, regardless of prior testing exposure and experience.

The test will be administered on two days, May 31 and June 1, 2017. The make-up test dates are June 7 and 8, 2017. The timing of the test is approximately 1 hour and 45 minutes each day.

WHAT WILL THE TEST BE LIKE?

The NJBCT consists of two types of questions. The first type is multiple choice, whereby students select the correct answer from four choices (A, B, C, or D). The answer is then recorded by darkening the appropriate choice in the answer folder. The second type is a performance assessment task (or PAT), whereby students respond to a Biology task by writing a detailed explanation of their solution to a problem.

Responses to all questions are recorded in a separate answer folder. Information recorded in the test booklet or on scratch paper does not count toward your score.

Biology Content

The test will measure your ability to solve problems by applying Biology concepts. The areas to be tested are as follows:

- Organization and Development;
- Matter and Energy Transformation;
- Interdependence;
- Heredity and Reproduction; and
- Evolution and Diversity.

Most questions are multiple choice, which have a weight of one point each. The performance assessment tasks require you to construct and explain your own written or graphic responses. Your response receives a score from 1 to 4 from two raters, based on a 4-point customized rubric. The two raters' scores are summed and multiplied by a factor of 1.5 to arrive at the final PAT score, which can vary from 3 to 12.

You will receive a Periodic Table of the Elements handout for use as a reference during the test. (See page 22 in this booklet for a sample of the handout.)

HOW CAN I PREPARE MYSELF TO TAKE THE NJBCT?

Before the test . . .

- Get a good night's sleep the night before the test. Start your day off with a good breakfast so that you have plenty of energy to take the test.
- Relax. You will think more clearly if you are relaxed when you take a test. Dress comfortably on the day of the test so that you are at ease and not distracted.
- Leave your cell phone at home on testing day. In order to maintain a secure test administration, you are not permitted at any time to have a cell phone or any other electronic device while you are in a testing room. If you have a cell phone or any other electronic device while in a testing room, your answer folder will be voided.
- Don't cram. The skills measured by the NJBCT are learned over a long period of time. So, the best preparation is to attend class regularly and complete all assignments diligently.

During the test . . .

- Think positively. Believe that you will do your very best. Be confident of your ability.
- Read the directions carefully before beginning each part of the test. This will help you understand what you are supposed to do, will save time, and help you avoid careless mistakes.
- Read each question carefully. Try to answer the question before you look at the responses. If you find your answer there, mark that response. If not, ask yourself whether your answer is reasonable. Reread the question, keeping the responses in mind. Take care to read what the question is asking.
- Make sure that your answers are reasonable. Do you understand what the question is asking? Have you made use of all the relevant information provided to answer the question correctly? Does your response answer the question? Did you choose the best answer among those listed?
- If you aren't sure of the answer to a question, try to eliminate some of the responses. Think about the reasons why you were able to eliminate some of the choices. These reasons may provide you with the information you need to choose the correct answer. If you can eliminate some of the choices, select the remaining answer choice that makes the most sense.
- Skip a question and go on to the next one if you have no idea of the answer. Spending too much time on one question might keep you from having enough time to answer others that you do know. If there is time, you should come back to it later at the end of that part of the test. Try not to leave any question unanswered.
- Pace yourself during the test. Budget your time so that you have a chance to answer all the questions. Your teacher will periodically let you know the time remaining in the part of the test you are taking.
- Fill in your answer folder carefully. Make sure that you record all your responses in your separate answer folder in the right spaces. No credit will be given for anything written in the test booklet. You may know the answer to a question, but if you do not mark your answer in the right place, you will not receive credit for your answer.

- Check your answers as you take the test. Make sure that you have chosen the response that best answers the question. Checking your answers as you work through the test will save time later in rethinking a question. Check your answer folder to make sure that you have darkened the correct answer space.
- Some questions require more planning than others. This is especially true of performance assessment tasks. First, outline the steps required to respond to the task. Then, identify related information and eliminate non-related information when you can.

WHAT WILL THE NJBCT LOOK LIKE?

The remainder of this booklet will give you an idea of what the test materials are like.

Types of Questions

Many of the multiple-choice questions on the test assess a level of cognitive processes that is higher than the cognitive processes assessed by the questions on a traditional multiple-choice test. It will take you an average of between one and two minutes to answer each multiple-choice question. The answers are computer scored and have a weight of one point each.

Performance Assessment Tasks (PATs) require you to construct your own written or graphical responses and to explain your responses. It will take approximately 45 minutes to answer each task. Your responses are hand scored by two raters on a scale from 1 to 4. The two raters' scores are summed and multiplied by a factor of 1.5 to arrive at the final PAT score, which can vary from 3 to 12.

You can expect 60 multiple-choice questions and 2 PATs. Some of these questions are field test items intended for use in future tests.

HOW WILL MY SCORES BE REPORTED?

When you receive your NJBCT Score Report, it will show a total score, as well as a subtotal score in Biology for the specific knowledge and skills measured. The total score will correspond to one of three proficiency levels—Advanced Proficient, Proficient, or Partially Proficient. If you have not met the appropriate level of proficiency, your school may give you additional help to develop the skills.

NJBCT SAMPLE MULTIPLE-CHOICE QUESTIONS

The following multiple-choice questions are samples of the types included in the test. Responses to the answers are included with a rationale as to why the answer is correct.

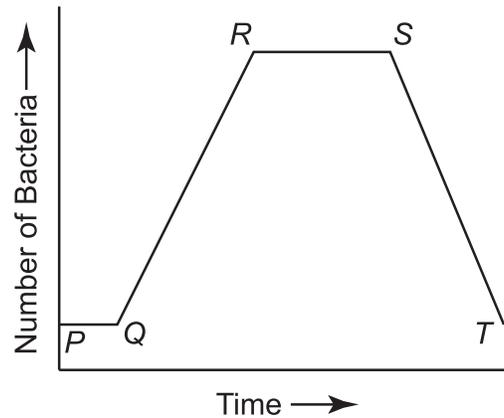
Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS3-1: Ask questions to clarify relationships about the role of DNA and chromosomes in coding the instructions for characteristic traits passed from parents to offspring.

1. Scientists use a certain technique to measure RNA levels in various cell types. Which of the following is most directly observed by this technique?
 - A. mutation
 - B. biomagnification
 - C. gene expression
 - D. osmotic regulation

Rationale: The correct answer is C.

Most genes are expressed as the proteins they encode. The quantity of mRNA transcript for a single gene is an indication of how actively it is transcribed. Scientists determine which genes are expressed in a cell by identifying and counting the mRNA transcripts present in that cell.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS2-1: Use mathematical and/or computational representations to support explanations of factors that affect carrying capacity of ecosystems at different scales.

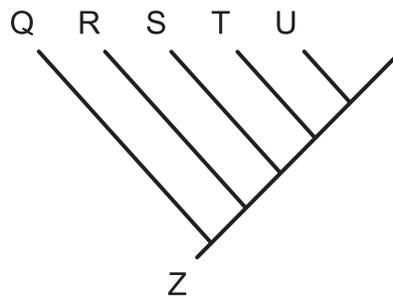


2. The graph above shows a growth curve plotted by students to describe their work culturing bacteria in a liquid solution. What is likely happening during the period between *S* and *T*?
- A. cell growth rate equaling cell death rate
 - B. growth and development of the bacteria
 - C. a doubling of the number of bacteria per unit of time
 - D. cell death occurring faster than cell division

Rationale: The correct answer is D.

The lag phase occurs from time P – Q, as the bacteria adapt to the environment. This is followed by an exponential increase (Q – S) until the bacteria run out of nutrients and/or space and enter the stationary phase (R – S). The culture then undergoes rapid death (S – T) as indicated by the rapid decline in bacterial numbers over a short period.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS4-1: Communicate scientific information that common ancestry and biological evolution are supported by multiple lines of empirical evidence.



3. The figure above shows the evolutionary relationship between certain organisms. Which pair of organisms is most closely related?
- A. R and U
 - B. Q and R
 - C. S and U
 - D. Q and S

Rationale: The correct answer is B.

The organisms are classified based on shared derived characteristics; Z represents the common ancestor of all the descendants in the tree. The points at which the original branch splits off are called nodes, and they indicate a divergence or speciation event. Organisms that share the greatest number of characteristics with each other are closer to each other in the clade diagram than those that show greater divergence. Q and R, which are separated by one divergence/speciation event, would be more closely related than R and U, S and U, and Q and S, which share fewer characteristics.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS4-2: Construct an explanation based on evidence that the process of evolution primarily results from four factors: (1) the potential for a species to increase in number, (2) the heritable genetic variation of individuals in a species due to mutation and sexual reproduction, (3) competition for limited resources, and (4) the proliferation of those organisms that are better able to survive and reproduce in the environment.

4. In a population, why is variability in a trait essential for natural selection?
- A. New traits can arise as a result of mutations.
 - B. Fossils are more likely to be preserved when diversity is high.
 - C. A variety of different acquired traits are necessary to maintain genetic diversity.
 - D. Individuals carrying traits with a survival advantage are more likely to reproduce.

Rationale: The correct answer is D.

Genetic variability is caused by mutation and/or random mating and may result in new traits. Under changing environmental conditions these traits may confer an advantage that enables some individuals to survive and reproduce, thereby maintaining survival of the population.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS1-4: Use a model to illustrate the role of cellular division (mitosis) and differentiation in producing and maintaining complex organisms.

5. Cells in an embryo differentiate as the organism develops. One advantage of differentiation is that
- A. specialization makes each cell independent.
 - B. each cell is dependent and can survive on its own.
 - C. specialized cell types make organisms more efficient.
 - D. each cell type can survive in a different environment.

Rationale: The correct answer is C.

During differentiation a cell changes from one type to another, generally from a less specialized cell to a more specialized cell that differs in structure and function. The structural modifications that occur in a specialized cell enable it to do a specific job in the organism, and having only one job to do increases the efficiency.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS2-4: Use mathematical representations to support claims for the cycling of matter and flow of energy among organisms in an ecosystem.

wheat → mice → snakes → owls

6. In the simplified food chain above, which organism is capable of transferring the most total energy?
- A. wheat
 - B. mice
 - C. snakes
 - D. owls

Rationale: The correct answer is A.

Producers create their own energy through photosynthesis, using part of it for life functions. When they are eaten, the remaining energy is transferred to the next organism: mice. Available energy decreases as it moves through a food chain; therefore, the organism capable of transferring the most energy is the producer: wheat.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS4-2: Construct an explanation based on evidence that the process of evolution primarily results from four factors: (1) the potential for a species to increase in number, (2) the heritable genetic variation of individuals in a species due to mutation and sexual reproduction, (3) competition for limited resources, and (4) the proliferation of those organisms that are better able to survive and reproduce in the environment.

7. A student is attempting to summarize the key points of biological evolution. The student writes: “Individuals within a population vary in their traits. Individuals with traits that are well suited to their environments are more likely to survive and reproduce. Populations change as certain traits appear more or less frequently within individuals.”

What other statement should the student include?

- A. “Many of these traits have a genetic basis.”
- B. “Hybridization is similar to artificial selection.”
- C. “Individuals acquire new traits as they get older.”
- D. “Farmers often select their best livestock for breeding.”

Rationale: The correct answer is A.

Biological evolution is the process by which the traits/characteristics exhibited by an organism or a population of organisms change over successive generations due to genetic variation created by mutation and random mating.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS4-1: Communicate scientific information that common ancestry and biological evolution are supported by multiple lines of empirical evidence.

8. The observation that seemingly dissimilar organisms, such as hummingbirds, humans, and whales, have similar skeletal structures has led biologists to suggest that
- A. only the best-adapted organisms with analogous structures can survive.
 - B. advantageous changes can be passed along to offspring.
 - C. most evolution occurs rapidly following a mass extinction.
 - D. organisms exhibiting homologous structures might have evolved from a common ancestor.

Rationale: The correct answer is D.

Homologous structures are part of an organism’s body that are structurally similar to parts of other species’ bodies. The common ancestry is evident in the structure and development of these parts, even if their function is different.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS2-5: Develop a model to illustrate the role of photosynthesis and cellular respiration in the cycling of carbon among the biosphere, atmosphere, hydrosphere, and geosphere.

9. Organisms are composed mainly of complex carbon molecules. Carbon enters the ecosystem when
- A. parasites infect a host.
 - B. microorganisms decompose proteins.
 - C. consumers eat producers rich in carbon compounds.
 - D. producers take in carbon dioxide from the atmosphere.

Rationale: The correct answer is D.

In order for carbon to enter the ecosystem it must first be converted into a useful biological form. This is accomplished by plants using the process of photosynthesis. They combine radiant energy with atmospheric carbon dioxide and water to produce carbohydrate molecules which begin to move through the ecosystem when the plants are eaten by primary consumers.

Biology/Life Science Course Content—HS-LS3-1: Ask questions to clarify relationships about the role of DNA and chromosomes in coding the instructions for characteristic traits passed from parents to offspring.

10. A mutation occurs in the DNA of a fertilized frog's egg. The resulting new trait may first be expressed in
- A. the original frog.
 - B. a parent of the original frog.
 - C. the offspring of the original frog.
 - D. the mate of the original frog.

Rationale: The correct answer is C.

When a mutation occurs in a fertilized egg, any trait related to that mutation will show up first in the developing individual and may be passed to subsequent offspring of that individual. It cannot, however, be acquired by the parent, the mate, or the original organism.

NJBCT SAMPLE PERFORMANCE ASSESSMENT TASK (PAT)

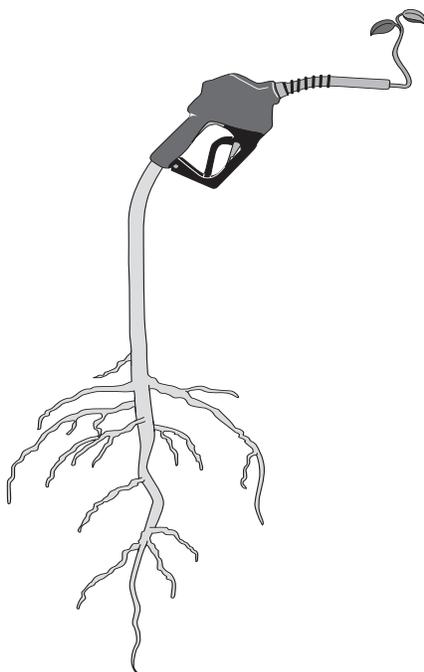
The performance assessment task (PAT) on pages 10–14 is a sample of the type included in the NJBCT. Following the PAT, on pages 15–21, are sample student responses and their scores to help you understand how the response was scored.

Fueling Change

CropCorp is a new corporation with the mission of developing new **biofuels**¹. You have been hired as a consultant to manage its newly acquired farm. You must decide which crop will most efficiently transform sunlight into a product that can be used to make a **biofuel**. You want to choose a crop that will make the most efficient use of space and resources (land, fertilizer, money).

The farm you are planning for is located in central New Jersey, where the soil is a mix of sand, clay, and organic material with some stone and gravel. The land is flat with a 2-acre pond and 100 acres of forest that can be used for logging. One acre of land is approximately the size of a football field.

All alternative fuel decisions have environmental and economic costs that must be considered. CropCorp would like you to recommend which crop, corn or **switchgrass**², should be planted on the new farm.



¹ **biofuels**—any fuels that are obtained from a renewable biological resource

² **switchgrass**—native prairie grass that can be grown in abundance in the United States

Figure 1
Relevant Data Regarding Corn and Switchgrass Crops

	Corn	Switchgrass
Approximate number of vehicles using fuel type	4 million	0 Note: Technology still being developed
Approximate number of working farms	300,000	100
Minimum temperature	32°F	-42°F
After-harvest regrowth rate	None	Moderate
Other uses for crop	Seed, food, starch, animal feed, sweetener	Decorative landscaping
Precipitation range	20–50 inches/year	12–60 inches/year
Soil textures	Medium	Coarse, fine, and medium
Harvest per acre (average)	3.5 tons/acre	11.5 tons/acre
Fuel per acre (in GJ ³)	10.15 GJ /acre	26.45 GJ /acre
Part of plant converted to biofuel	Grain	All parts
Cost per acre of production	\$100–150/acre	\$75–100/acre

³ **GJ** – one billion joules, which are units of energy used to measure energy content

Your Task:

- 1) Review the data about corn and switchgrass provided in Figure 1.
- 2) Determine which **ONE** crop you think would be the better crop for the farm, considering all factors provided in Figure 1.
- 3) Write a persuasive argument to the president of the corporation, detailing your decision and justifying your **ONE** crop choice using data from Figure 1. Be sure to include all of the following elements:
 - Which crop you have chosen and why.
 - Cite evidence and data from Figure 1 to support your recommendation.
 - Address potential environmental and economic consequences of your recommendation.

Please write your response in paragraph form.

Fueling Change Scoring Rubric

4 POINTS	3 POINTS	2 POINTS	1 POINT
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects and thoroughly explains crop choice with no misconceptions. • Uses extensive data from table to support decision. • Shows strong evidence of weighing multiple environmental and economic consequences. • All arguments are strongly based on scientific evidence and/or principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects and explains crop choice with no misconceptions. • Uses some data from table to support decision. • Shows some evidence of weighing multiple environmental and economic consequences. • Most arguments are based on scientific evidence and/or principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects and explains crop choice with minor misconceptions. • Uses data from table to support decision. • Some arguments are based on scientific evidence and/or principles. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Selects but does not explain crop choice. • Does not use data from table to support decision. • Few to no arguments are based on scientific evidence and/or principles.

Did you remember to:

- Choose only **ONE** crop for the farm?
- Write a persuasive argument to the president of the corporation?
- Include all the following elements in your argument?
 - Which crop you have chosen and why?
 - Cite evidence and data from Figure 1 to support your recommendation.
 - Address potential environmental and economic consequences of your recommendation.
- Justify all of your work using biological concepts and principles?

Sample 4-Point Score

Dear President of CropCorp,

As you know, a crop is still needed for planting in the newly acquired farmland. I believe the company should plant corn here. Unlike switchgrass, the corn would be much more beneficial to the company. It can be used in many ways. Corn can be useful to the economic part of this as well.

First of all, the fuel made from corn can be used in cars. The technology for cars to use fuel made from switchgrass isn't even finished yet. It is better to make something that people can use. If you invest in switchgrass, the technology could take years to be completed. This would only be a waste of time and money.

Next is that 300,000 farms use corn as a crop. This means that it is successful. Meanwhile, only 100 use switchgrass. There could be problems with the plant or it may not yield enough money to balance out the cost. This makes corn an even better choice.

Another point is that corn has many uses. It can be used for things like seed, animal feed, food, starch, and sweetener. This means not all of the plant would go to waste. It should also make up the balance of cost. Switchgrass, however, can only be used for decorative landscaping. So, it most likely isn't cost-effective in that area.

Last are the downsides to planting corn. According to Figure 1, it's about \$100–\$150 for every acre, while switchgrass is only \$75–\$100. Here, switchgrass is better cost-wise. The grain of corn is the only part that can be used for biofuel as well; however, all of switchgrass can be utilized. This means that you get less biofuel per acre of corn also. Figure 1 shows only 10.15 GJ/acre for corn compared to 26.45 GJ/acre for switchgrass. Only 3.5 tons of corn are harvested, too. It also may not survive a hard frost, as it only survives to about 32°F at the minimum. The company will also have to replant it every year.

In conclusion, corn may have downsides, but it's the upsides that matter. Corn can be used for tons of things and can be cost-effective in the end. It should yield a good crop. If you choose corn, CropCorp will be ahead of its industry.

Sincerely,
GSH

4-Point Score

This response received a score point total of 4. The writer selected *corn* as the better crop for the farm because the technology to use corn is already in place, there are more farms harvesting corn than switchgrass, and because of the “many uses” of corn. The data table was effectively used to provide both the pros and cons for selecting corn as the crop of choice. It was noted that over 300,000 farms are presently using “corn as a crop” and that corn is very “cost-effective” because it can be used for seed, food, animal feed, and as a sweetener. The downsides for choosing corn include its high cost per acre, and that “the grain of corn is the only part of the plant that can be used for biofuel.” The writer strongly enhanced the response with scientific evidence and knowledge of science.

Sample 4-Point Score

Dear President,

After a thorough review of the comparison data between the corn and switchgrass, the conclusion has been made that growing switchgrass on the farm would produce the most ideal results; it would also be much easier to maintain and it would be much more efficient than corn. The pros of producing switchgrass most certainly outweigh the cons of growing it. First, a brief overview will enlighten you.

Besides the fact that switchgrass fuel technology has not yet been fully developed, and the fact that it cannot be used for much else besides fuel and decorative landscaping (whereas corn can be utilized for seed, food, starch, animal feed, sweetener), switchgrass proves to be far more advantageous. Of course, the primary objective here is to earn money. There are 300,000 corn farms and only about 100 switchgrass farms. As you can see, switchgrass has much less competition; therefore, a larger profit will be made. Switchgrass is less difficult to take care of, more efficient with fuel and the total quantity in a harvest, and cheaper. It requires any temperature above -42°F , while corn cannot survive in temperatures below freezing. In southern areas, that could be fine, but the farm's geological location in the colder zone would make it hard to grow corn. It also can grow in coarse, fine, or medium soil, which the farm has a mixture of. Corn can only grow in medium textures. Also, less replanting would have to be done, as it has a moderate after-harvest regrowth rate, as opposed to none with corn.

Switchgrass would be more efficient, so CropCorp's spending would decrease. A penny saved is a penny earned. The harvest per acre is 11.5 tons, and the fuel per acre is 76.45 billion joules; the figures are 3.5 tons per acre and 10.15 joules per acre for corn. As you can see, there is quite a significant difference. Additionally, no part of the plant would go to waste because all of it would be used. Only the grain from corn is used. Finally, the cost is \$25–\$50 cheaper per acre than corn.

Nevertheless, this decision comes with some strings attached to it. There may be potential environmental and economic consequences. First of all, CropCorp would have to log the forest in order to have more space to grow the crop. Deforestation is a significant issue—it destroys habitats of a plethora of different species. An entire ecosystem would be destroyed. Also, if the fields are planted too often, it can result in infertility of the soil, thus inhibiting the planting of more crops and hurting the company financially. A valuable piece of capital would be lost. The final problem that can be foreseen is the failure to develop the proper technology that can utilize switchgrass for fuel. This would result in a disaster—CropCorp would be in possession of a costly farm that would only be good for decorative landscaping. This operation is a high-risk, high-reward experiment. But high risk is something that goes hand-in-hand with the alternative fuel market; therefore, nothing can be done but hoping for the best.

Please consider my proposal with much thought.

Sincerely,
Your Employee

4-Point Score

This response received a score point total of 4. The writer selected *switchgrass* as the better crop for the farm because it would be much more efficient and easier to maintain. Using extensive evidence from the table, the writer noted that although switchgrass cannot be used for much else besides fuel, it is still more advantageous than corn. With demand for the product high and fewer farms producing switchgrass, there would be a large profit to be made. The care of switchgrass, the minimum growth temperature, and the fact that it could grow in a variety of soil textures were additional reasons for choosing the crop.

The writer noted the decision of choice comes with some “strings attached.” CropCorp might have to log the forest adjacent to the farm, thus destroying habitats. In addition, repeated plantings could result in soil infertility, which might inhibit future plantings. All of the evidence and arguments were thoroughly explained with no misconceptions. The writer strongly enhanced the response with scientific evidence.

Sample 3-Point Score

Switchgrass is an alternative source of fuel that is inexpensive and plentiful. It is cheaper than corn and provides more fuel. Therefore, it should be the best choice for the farm.

Switchgrass can survive in extremely low temperatures, lowering the costs needed to maintain a certain temperature. Unlike corn, switchgrass can withstand temperatures as low as negative forty-two degrees Fahrenheit. This would decrease the amount of money needed to keep it above a certain temperature, as it would be shocking if the temperature were to drop that low.

Once grown, the switchgrass is bountiful and much of it would be able to be put toward fuel. The only use of switchgrass, other than for potential fuel, is for decorative landscaping, so it will not be scarce. Switchgrass is only seventy-five to a hundred dollars per acre and given there is almost twelve tons of it grown per acre, there is a lot to be grown at such a low price. Switchgrass can be grown in a wide range of soil textures, such as coarse, fine, and medium. It is perfect for the area the new farm is in.

Switchgrass has much fuel potential, making it the ideal crop. You can get about 26.45 billion joules of fuel per acre. With almost twelve tons of it per acre, that's a lot of potential fuel. Every part of the switchgrass can be converted into fuel, leaving no waste.

Obviously, switchgrass is the best choice for the new farm. It is inexpensive and easily maintained. It also can be converted into extremely large amounts of fuel.

3-Point Score

This response received a score point total of 3. The writer selected *switchgrass* as the better crop, citing it was cheaper than corn and would provide more fuel. Using some information from the data table, the writer notes that switchgrass can survive at extremely low temperatures, has a low per-acre production cost, and is able to be grown in a wide variety of soil textures. The writer provides some evidence in addressing the economic and environmental issues in choosing switchgrass. The plant has relatively low per-acre fuel cost and every part of the switchgrass plant can be converted into fuel, leaving no waste. Most arguments are based on scientific evidence and supported with sound principles.

Sample 2-Point Score

Corn is the best option for the farm. Although switchgrass is the seemingly better option in terms of survivability, cost, and crop output, there is no functional machine that uses switchgrass as a power source. It seems pointless to invest in a crop which is only useful if used to fuel vehicles that do not exist. The current number of switchgrass farms is needed for biofuel because most of the existing corn farms are used for making corn into food and other products. The fact that only the grain of corn is used is negligible. As corn is a plant, any waste products can be easily recycled into fertilizer for next year's crop.

2-Point Score

This response received a score point total of 2. The writer selected *corn* and explained, with some minor misconceptions, why the choice was the best option for the farm. Although switchgrass is a “better option in terms of survivability, cost, and crop output, there is no functional machine that uses switchgrass as a power source.” The response uses a limited amount of information from the data table, specifically calling attention to the current number of corn farms and to the parts of the corn plant used in making fuel. Only some of the writer's arguments are based on scientific knowledge.

Sample 1-Point Score

I would choose the corn for now, but when the technology for switchgrass is developed, then the switchgrass will be a better choice.

1-Point Score

This response received a score point total of 1, as the writer chose *corn* as the best option for the farm. The response contains a limited explanation for choosing corn, does not use data from the data table to support a decision, and no arguments are based on scientific evidence or principles.

Sample 1-Point Score

I think that corn is the better crop for the farm.

Dear President of the Corporation,

I feel that switchgrass is the better crop for the farm, considering most factors provided. Switchgrass is cheaper than corn per acre of production. Switchgrass also has more of soil textures—not just one.

1-Point Score

This response received a score point total of 1 due to the inconsistencies in the writer's response. Corn was initially chosen as the crop of choice, but the body of the response primarily deals with switchgrass. Although a crop was selected, the response lacked an explanation for the choice, had little support from the data table, and contained no arguments that were based on scientific evidence or principles.

PERIODIC TABLE OF THE ELEMENTS

This table, provided as a handout, is used as a reference on the NJBCT. It is not required for all items. The items in this Student Preparation Booklet do not require reference to the table.

PERIODIC TABLE OF THE ELEMENTS

18																	
2																	
He Helium 4.003																	
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Rf Rutherfordium (261)																	
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