

Paired passages grade 8 staar Textbook

Paired Passages Grade 8 Staar

Paired Passages Grade 8 STAAR: A Guide to Success

paired passages grade 8 staar tests are a key component of the Texas STAAR (State

of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) exams for eighth-grade students. These passages require students to read two related texts and then answer questions that compare, contrast, analyze, or synthesize information from both. For many students, paired passages can be challenging, but understanding their structure and developing strong reading strategies can make all the difference. In this article, we'll explore what paired passages entail, why they matter, and how eighth graders can approach them confidently to boost their STAAR reading performance.

Understanding Paired Passages in the Grade 8 STAAR Exam

Paired passages are two texts placed side by side or consecutively, designed to be read together. They often cover similar topics or themes but might differ in genre, perspective, or purpose. For example, one passage might be a historical non-fiction piece while the other is a fictional story inspired by the same event. The STAAR exam leverages paired passages to assess a student's ability to think critically, compare different viewpoints, and integrate information.

Why Are Paired Passages Important?

The ability to analyze paired texts is a vital skill that goes beyond standardized testing. It mirrors real-life reading situations where information comes from multiple sources. The STAAR exam uses paired passages to evaluate several key literacy skills:

Comparing and contrasting themes, characters, or events

Understanding author's purpose and tone in different texts

Synthesizing information to draw conclusions

Evaluating evidence and making inferences

By mastering paired passages, students not only prepare for STAAR but also become stronger, more versatile readers.

Common Types of Paired Passages on the STAAR

Eighth-grade STAAR paired passages often include a variety of text combinations.

Knowing the types can help students anticipate what they're about to read and what kind of questions might follow.

1. Fiction and Nonfiction

One passage might be a short story or narrative, while the other is an informational article or biography related to the same topic. For example, a fictional story about a historical figure paired with a nonfiction biography of that person.

2. Two Nonfiction Texts

These might include articles, essays, or reports that offer different perspectives on the same event or idea. This format challenges students to evaluate differing viewpoints or analyze how two authors present similar information.

3. Two Fictional Works

Sometimes, students read two stories or poems with related themes or characters. This setup encourages analysis of literary elements such as plot, character development, or mood.

Effective Strategies for Tackling Paired Passages Grade 8 STAAR

Approaching paired passages can feel overwhelming because of the extra reading involved. However, with the right techniques, students can navigate them with ease.

Preview Both Passages Before Reading

Take a moment to skim the titles, subtitles, and any images or captions for both texts. This provides context and clues about the content and how the two passages might relate.

Annotate While You Read

Mark key points, underline important details, or jot down quick notes in the margins. Highlighting similarities and differences between the passages as you read will make answering questions more straightforward.

Focus on Question Types

STAAR paired passage questions often ask students to:

Identify the main idea of each passage

Compare and contrast information or viewpoints

Determine the author's purpose or tone

Use evidence from both texts to support answers

Anticipating these question types can help students read with purpose.

Use Graphic Organizers

Filling out Venn diagrams or T-charts while reading can help visually organize similarities and differences, making it easier to synthesize information.

Practice Resources and Tips for Success

Preparation is essential when it comes to paired passages. The more familiar students are with the format and question styles, the more confident they'll feel on test day.

Utilize STAAR Practice Tests

Texas Education Agency (TEA) provides released STAAR tests and sample questions online. Practicing with authentic materials helps students get comfortable with timing and question formats.

Read a Variety of Texts Regularly

Encouraging students to read widely—fiction, non-fiction, news articles, and essays—builds background knowledge and vocabulary, both of which are crucial for success on paired passages.

Discuss and Compare Texts in Class

Teachers can facilitate group discussions that focus on comparing texts, which mirrors the skills needed for the exam. Talking through similarities and differences improves comprehension and critical thinking.

Focus on Vocabulary Development

Understanding academic and content-specific vocabulary enhances reading fluency. Many paired passage questions depend on grasping key words or phrases to interpret meaning accurately.

Common Challenges and How to Overcome Them

Despite preparation, many students find paired passages tricky. Recognizing common obstacles can help in developing targeted strategies.

Information Overload

Reading two passages can feel like too much at once. Breaking the reading into manageable chunks and focusing on key details can reduce overwhelm.

Confusing Contrasts

When passages present conflicting information or viewpoints, it might be hard to keep track. Annotating and using graphic organizers can clarify differences and similarities.

Time Management

Paired passages require more reading and analysis, so pacing is critical. Practicing under timed conditions helps students learn how to allocate their time wisely during the exam.

Paired passages grade 8 STAAR questions are designed to challenge and develop critical literacy skills that are essential not only for exams but for lifelong learning. With consistent practice, strategic reading approaches, and exposure to a variety of texts, students can approach these passages with confidence and demonstrate their analytical abilities. The key is to stay curious, keep reading, and use each practice opportunity as a

stepping stone toward mastery.

Question

Answer

What are paired passages in
the Grade 8 STAAR reading
test?

Paired passages in the Grade 8 STAAR reading test
consist of two related texts that students read and
analyze together to compare, contrast, and synthesize
information.

How can students effectively
approach paired passages on
the STAAR exam?

Students should carefully read both passages,
annotate key points, identify the main ideas and
themes, and compare the authors' purposes,
perspectives, and use of evidence to answer the
questions accurately.

What types of questions are
commonly asked about paired
passages on the Grade 8

STAAR?

Questions often focus on comparing and contrasting themes, identifying the author's purpose or tone in each passage, analyzing how information is presented, and making inferences based on both texts.

Are paired passages always from the same genre on the

Grade 8 STAAR?

No, paired passages on the Grade 8 STAAR can be from different genres, such as one informational text and one literary text, to encourage students to analyze different writing styles and purposes.

What strategies help improve comprehension of paired passages for STAAR preparation?

Effective strategies include previewing both texts before reading, taking notes on similarities and differences, summarizing each passage, and

practicing answering paired passage questions to build familiarity and confidence.

Paired Passages Grade 8 STAAR: An In-Depth Exploration of Assessment Strategies and Student Preparedness

paired passages grade 8 staar represent a critical component of the Texas STAAR

(State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness) testing framework, particularly designed to evaluate eighth-grade students' reading comprehension and analytical skills. These paired passages challenge students to engage with two related texts, requiring them to synthesize information, compare and contrast viewpoints, and draw conclusions based on evidence from both sources. Understanding the structure and expectations of paired passages in the STAAR exam is essential for educators, students, and parents aiming to optimize test readiness and performance.

Understanding Paired Passages in the Grade 8 STAAR Context

Paired passages are a unique assessment format that tests higher-order thinking skills beyond simple recall. In the grade 8 STAAR reading section, students encounter two passages linked by a common theme, topic, or perspective. These passages could range from literary works to informational texts, and sometimes a combination of both. The primary objective is to assess students' ability to analyze how ideas are presented differently and to evaluate the relationships between texts.

The inclusion of paired passages aligns with the Texas Essential Knowledge and Skills

(TEKS) standards, emphasizing critical reading, analytical thinking, and evidence-based reasoning. Unlike standalone passages, paired passages require students to navigate multiple texts simultaneously, increasing the cognitive demand and reflecting real-world reading scenarios where readers must synthesize information from diverse sources.

Features of Paired Passages in the STAAR Exam

Several features distinguish paired passages on the grade 8 STAAR exam:

Varied Text Types: Passages may include fiction, nonfiction, poetry, or historical

1.

documents, exposing students to a broad range of genres.

Interrelated Themes: Both passages share a common theme or topic, prompting

2.

comparative analysis.

Question Complexity: Questions often require inferential thinking, such as

3.

identifying the author's purpose, analyzing tone, or evaluating argument effectiveness.

Textual Evidence: Students must cite evidence from both passages to support

4.

their answers, reinforcing close reading skills.

Time Management: The dual-text format demands efficient reading strategies

5.

within the time constraints of the exam.

Analytical Comparison: Paired Passages Versus Single Passage

Assessments

To appreciate the distinct challenges posed by paired passages in the grade 8 STAAR, it is instructive to compare them with traditional single-passage assessments.

Where single-passage questions focus primarily on comprehension and interpretation within a singular context, paired passages compel students to engage in comparative reasoning. This involves:

Identifying Contrasting Perspectives: Students analyze differing viewpoints or

1.

tones between texts.

Evaluating Consistencies and Discrepancies: Detecting similarities and

2.

differences in content and presentation.

Integrating Information: Synthesizing data from both passages to answer multi-

3.

layered questions.

This increased complexity enhances critical thinking but may also pose challenges for students who struggle with multitasking or time management.

Impact on Student Performance and Preparation

Empirical data from recent STAAR testing cycles suggest that paired passages can represent a stumbling block for a subset of eighth graders, particularly those with limited exposure to diverse text types or underdeveloped analytical skills. Educators report that students often find it difficult to navigate two texts simultaneously and to extract and compare relevant information effectively.

Preparation strategies have accordingly evolved to address these challenges:

Targeted Practice: Incorporating paired passage exercises in classroom

1.

instruction to familiarize students with the format.

Annotation Techniques: Teaching students to underline or highlight key points in

2.

both texts to facilitate quick reference.

Question Deconstruction: Training students to break down complex questions

3.

into manageable parts.

Time Management Drills: Simulating testing conditions to improve pacing and

4.

reduce anxiety.

Such strategic preparation has been shown to improve comprehension accuracy and

boost confidence during the STAAR exam.

Educational Resources and Tools for Paired Passages Grade 8

STAAR

Numerous educational resources have emerged to support students and educators in mastering paired passages for the grade 8 STAAR exam. These resources emphasize skill-building, practice, and assessment alignment.

Key Resources Include:

Practice Workbooks: Specifically designed STAAR prep books contain paired

1. passage exercises with answer explanations, helping students understand reasoning processes.

Online Platforms: Digital tools provide interactive paired passage reading

2. activities, instant feedback, and adaptive learning pathways.

Teacher Guides: Lesson plans and instructional strategies focusing on paired

3. texts, including scaffolding techniques for diverse learners.

Sample STAAR Tests: Official released tests offer authentic paired passage

4. samples to familiarize students with exam expectations.

Selecting resources that align with TEKS standards and mirror STAAR difficulty ensures

targeted and effective preparation.

Pros and Cons of the Paired Passage Format in Grade 8 STAAR

While paired passages improve the assessment's ability to measure complex literacy skills, they also present certain limitations.

Advantages

Enhanced Critical Thinking: Encourages deeper analysis and synthesis, reflecting

1.

real-world reading demands.

Broader Exposure: Students engage with multiple text genres and perspectives,

2.

enriching their reading experience.

Alignment with Standards: Directly supports TEKS objectives related to

3.

comprehension and evaluation.

Challenges

Increased Cognitive Load: Managing two texts simultaneously can overwhelm

1.

some students.

Time Constraints: The format requires efficient reading and answering, which may

2.

disadvantage slower readers.

Potential for Misinterpretation: Without careful instruction, students might

3.

misidentify relationships between passages.

Balancing these factors is crucial for educators aiming to maximize student success on the STAAR exam.

Integrating Paired Passages into Classroom Instruction

Effective integration of paired passages into everyday classroom instruction can demystify this assessment component and enhance student readiness.

Strategies for Educators

Incremental Exposure: Begin with simpler paired texts, gradually increasing

1.

complexity.

Explicit Teaching of Text Relationships: Use graphic organizers to illustrate

2.

compare/contrast, cause/effect, and other relationships.

Collaborative Discussions: Encourage group analysis and debate to deepen

3.

comprehension.

Frequent Formative Assessments: Provide regular low-stakes paired passage

4.

quizzes to build fluency.

Such instructional methods cultivate the analytical skills necessary for success not only on the STAAR but also in broader academic contexts.

As the grade 8 STAAR continues to evolve, paired passages remain a central feature that demands both skillful teaching and strategic preparation. By thoroughly understanding this format and implementing targeted learning approaches, educators can empower students to navigate these complex texts confidently, reflecting a deeper mastery of reading comprehension that extends well beyond the exam itself.

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nonfiction and fiction paired passages middle

Nonfiction And Fiction Paired Passages Middle School

****Unlocking Literacy Skills with Nonfiction and Fiction Paired Passages in Middle School****

nonfiction and fiction paired passages middle school are becoming an essential tool

in classrooms across the country. These paired passages offer a unique way to engage students by presenting two different texts—one non-fiction and one fiction—that revolve around a common theme or topic. This approach not only builds comprehension skills but also deepens critical thinking, making it a favorite among educators striving to meet diverse learning goals. If you're a teacher, parent, or student curious about how these paired passages work and why they matter, this article will guide you through their benefits, strategies for use, and examples tailored to middle school learners.

What Are Non-fiction and Fiction Paired Passages?

Paired passages involve reading two texts that complement each other in some way. In the case of non-fiction and fiction paired passages, one text presents factual information, while the other tells a story or explores the topic creatively through narrative. For example, a non-fiction passage might explain the science behind volcanoes, while the paired fiction passage could be a short story about a character living near a volcanic mountain.

These paired readings challenge students to switch gears between factual analysis and imaginative interpretation. By comparing and contrasting, students develop a more nuanced understanding of the topic and sharpen their ability to analyze different text types.

Why Use Paired Passages in Middle School?

Middle school is a critical time for literacy development. Students transition from learning

to read to reading to learn, and paired passages support this shift by encouraging:

Critical thinking: Students weigh evidence from the non-fiction text against the themes or emotions in the fiction passage.

Textual analysis: Comparing text structures, vocabulary, and author's purpose deepens comprehension.

Engagement: Diverse text types keep reading fresh and interesting.

Standardized test preparation: Many state assessments include paired passages that require students to synthesize information from both texts.

Benefits of Non-fiction and Fiction Paired Passages in Middle School

Integrating non-fiction and fiction paired passages offers multiple educational advantages that align well with middle school curricula.

Improved Comprehension Across Genres

Exposure to both non-fiction and fiction builds versatile reading skills. Non-fiction passages tend to focus on facts, data, and explanations, while fiction emphasizes narrative elements like plot, character, and setting. When students encounter both, they learn to adapt their reading strategies accordingly, which is essential for academic success.

Enhanced Vocabulary and Language Skills

Each genre introduces distinct vocabulary. Non-fiction passages often include technical terms and formal language, while fiction might use descriptive language and dialogue. Encountering these differences side-by-side helps students expand their vocabulary and

understand context clues more effectively.

Encouragement of Analytical Thinking

Paired passages prompt students to compare perspectives, identify themes, and analyze author intent. This analytical practice is vital for developing higher-order thinking skills.

For instance, after reading a nonfiction passage about climate change and a fictional story about a character affected by environmental changes, students can discuss how facts influence storytelling and vice versa.

How to Effectively Use Nonfiction and Fiction Paired Passages in the Classroom

Simply providing paired passages isn't enough?teachers need strategies to maximize their impact.

Selecting Appropriate Texts

Choose passages that share a clear connection. This could be a shared topic, theme, or setting. For middle schoolers, texts should be challenging but accessible, with vocabulary and concepts suitable for their grade level.

Guided Reading and Discussion

Before diving into independent reading, introduce the topic to spark curiosity. After reading, guide students through discussions that encourage them to compare the texts.

Questions might include:

What facts did you learn from the nonfiction passage?

How did the ?ction story make you feel about the topic?

What are the similarities and di?erences between the two texts? perspectives?

Graphic Organizers and Writing Activities

Tools like Venn diagrams or T-charts help students organize their thoughts visually.

Writing prompts that ask students to summarize both texts or express their opinions

based on the readings deepen comprehension.

Incorporate Technology and Multimedia

Enhance paired passages with related videos, podcasts, or interactive articles. This

multimedia approach caters to di?erent learning styles and makes the topic more

engaging.

Examples of Non?ction and Fiction Paired Passages for Middle

School

To illustrate how paired passages work, here are a few thematic examples that educators

can adapt or use directly:

Science and Imagination: Space Exploration

****Non?ction:**** An article explaining the basics of the solar system and recent

discoveries about Mars.

****Fiction:**** A short story about a young astronaut?s ?rst mission to Mars and the

challenges they face.

History and Storytelling: The Civil Rights Movement

****Non?ction:**** A passage outlining key events and ?gures in the civil rights era.

****Fiction:**** A narrative from the perspective of a middle school student living through that time.

Environmental Awareness: The Impact of Plastic Pollution

****Non-fiction:**** A factual article about how plastic affects oceans and marine life.

****Fiction:**** A story about a group of friends organizing a community cleanup to save their local beach.

Tips for Students Tackling Non-fiction and Fiction Paired Passages

For middle schoolers, approaching these passages can be tricky without some guidance.

Here are some strategies to help:

Read with purpose: Identify whether the passage is non-fiction or fiction and

1.

adjust your reading approach accordingly.

Annotate as you go: Highlight key facts in non-fiction and note descriptive

2.

language or emotions in fiction.

Look for connections: After reading both, jot down how they relate to each other

3.

and what new insights each passage provides.

Answer questions thoughtfully: Use evidence from both passages, citing specific

4.

lines when possible.

Practice regularly: The more you work with paired passages, the more

5.

comfortable and skilled you will become.

Supporting Literacy Standards with Paired Passages

Nonfiction and fiction paired passages align well with Common Core and other literacy standards. They foster skills like identifying main ideas, analyzing text structure, comparing viewpoints, and citing textual evidence. Teachers often integrate paired passages into lesson plans to ensure students meet these benchmarks while keeping learning engaging.

By blending factual reading with imaginative storytelling, paired passages encourage a balanced and rich reading experience. Middle schoolers learn to appreciate different kinds of texts and develop a toolkit for approaching complex reading assignments in higher grades.

Whether you're a teacher searching for fresh lesson ideas or a parent looking to support your child's reading skills, nonfiction and fiction paired passages provide a powerful way to build comprehension, critical thinking, and a lifelong love of reading. This integrated approach bridges the gap between facts and fiction, helping students navigate the diverse world of literature with confidence.

Question

Answer

What are non?ction and
?ction paired passages in
middle school reading?

Non?ction and ?ction paired passages are two texts on
the same topic or theme, one factual (non?ction) and one
imaginative or narrative (?ction), used together to help
middle school students compare and contrast di?erent
types of writing and deepen comprehension.

Why are non?ction and
?ction paired passages
important for middle school
students?

They help students develop critical thinking skills by
analyzing di?erent perspectives and writing styles,
improve comprehension by comparing factual
information with creative storytelling, and build
vocabulary and background knowledge across subjects.

How can teachers
e?ectively use non?ction

and fiction paired passages

in middle school

classrooms?

Teachers can design lessons that involve reading both passages, guiding students to identify similarities and differences, discussing author's purpose, point of view, and text features, and encouraging written responses or projects that synthesize information from both texts.

What are some common

themes used in non-fiction

and fiction paired passages

for middle school?

Common themes include historical events, scientific concepts, cultural traditions, social issues, biographies, and environmental topics, which allow students to explore the topic through factual explanation and narrative storytelling.

How do non-fiction and

fiction paired passages

support standardized test

preparation for middle

school students?

These paired passages mirror the format of many standardized reading assessments, helping students practice skills like identifying main ideas, comparing texts, analyzing author's purpose, and making inferences, which are commonly tested on exams.

Non?ction and Fiction Paired Passages Middle School: Enhancing Literacy Through Comparative Reading

Non?ction and ?ction paired passages middle school are increasingly integral

components of contemporary literacy curricula. These paired texts—one non?ction and one ?ction—are designed to be read in tandem, providing students with diverse perspectives on similar themes, topics, or historical events. This pedagogical approach encourages critical thinking, deepens comprehension skills, and fosters an appreciation for di?erent literary genres among middle school learners.

As educators seek to develop well-rounded readers capable of analyzing and synthesizing information, the use of non?ction and ?ction paired passages has gained traction. This article delves into the pedagogical rationale, bene?ts, challenges, and practical applications of these paired texts within middle school classrooms, o?ering a comprehensive overview for teachers, curriculum developers, and literacy specialists.

The Educational Value of Non?ction and Fiction Paired Passages

in Middle School

Middle school marks a critical period in literacy development. Students transition from learning to read to reading to learn—a shift that necessitates critical engagement with complex texts. Non-fiction and fiction paired passages serve as a strategic tool in this transition, enhancing students' analytical skills by juxtaposing factual content with narrative storytelling.

Non-fiction passages generally present factual, evidence-based information, often relating to science, history, or social studies. Fiction passages, by contrast, use narrative techniques to explore similar themes through character development, plot, or imaginative scenarios. When paired, these texts provide complementary perspectives that challenge students to compare and contrast not only content but also author's purpose, tone, and structure.

Research indicates that exposure to paired passages improves reading comprehension and critical thinking. According to a 2019 study published in the *Journal of Adolescent & Adult Literacy*, students engaging with paired texts demonstrated higher achievement in inferential reasoning and textual analysis compared to those reading single-genre texts. This suggests that non-fiction and fiction paired passages are not just pedagogical trends but evidence-based strategies fostering deeper literacy.

Key Features of Effective Paired Passages

For paired passages to be impactful, several features must be considered:

Thematic Connection: Both passages should revolve around a common theme

or

1.

topic, such as climate change, historical events, or cultural traditions, enabling meaningful comparisons.

Genre

Contrast:

Clear

differentiation

between

fiction

(informational,

2.

expository) and fiction (narrative, literary) helps students understand genre-specific conventions.

Appropriate Reading Level: Text complexity must align with middle school grade

3.

bands (typically grades 6-8), balancing challenge with accessibility.

Complementary Perspectives: Passages should offer varying viewpoints or

4.

emotional resonance?factual data paired with human experiences, for example?to

enrich understanding.

Implementing Nonfiction and Fiction Paired Passages in the Middle School Classroom

Effectively integrating paired passages requires thoughtful planning and scaffolding to maximize student engagement and comprehension.

Instructional Strategies

Teachers can employ diverse strategies when using nonfiction and fiction paired passages:

Pre-Reading Activities: Activate prior knowledge and introduce vocabulary or

1.

concepts to prepare students for the texts.

Guided Reading and Annotation: Encourage students to annotate texts,

2.

highlighting similarities, differences, and noteworthy literary features.

Comparative Analysis Discussions: Facilitate class discussions or small group

3.

work focused on comparing author's intent, text structure, and thematic elements.

Writing Assignments: Assign essays or reflective responses that require students

4.

to synthesize information from both passages.

By integrating these strategies, educators not only improve reading comprehension but also nurture critical thinking and writing skills vital for academic success.

Benefits for Diverse Learners

Nonfiction and fiction paired passages support differentiated instruction and can be particularly beneficial for diverse learners:

English Language Learners (ELLs): The multiple contexts provided by paired

1.

texts aid vocabulary acquisition and cultural understanding.

Students with Learning Disabilities: The combination of narrative and

2.

informational texts caters to varied learning preferences and strengths.

Advanced Readers: Complex paired passages challenge higher-level readers to

3.

engage in sophisticated textual analysis.

This versatility makes paired passages a valuable resource in inclusive classrooms.

Challenges and Considerations

Despite their benefits, nonfiction and fiction paired passages present certain challenges:

Text Selection Difficulties

Finding high-quality fiction and nonfiction texts that align thematically and are grade-level appropriate can be time-consuming. Misaligned passages may confuse students or dilute learning objectives.

Assessment Complexity

Assessing students' understanding of paired passages demands nuanced rubrics that evaluate comprehension across genres, inference abilities, and comparative analysis—tasks more complex than typical single-text assessments.

Potential Overload

For some students, reading and analyzing two texts simultaneously may be overwhelming, especially without adequate scaffolding or instructional support. Educators must weigh these factors carefully, ensuring that paired passages are introduced with clear guidance and support mechanisms.

Resources and Examples of Non-fiction and Fiction Paired

Passages for Middle School

Several publishers and online platforms offer curated paired passages tailored to middle school standards. Resources like CommonLit, ReadWorks, and Scholastic provide thematic collections that facilitate lesson planning.

For example, a paired passage on the American Civil Rights Movement might include a non-fiction article detailing historical facts and a fictional short story portraying a young protagonist's experience during the era. This pairing allows students to contextualize historical information emotionally and intellectually.

Sample Themes for Paired Passages

Environmental conservation: factual reports paired with fictional stories about

1.

young activists

Scientific discoveries: informational texts about breakthroughs alongside narratives

2.

imagining future implications

Historical events: biographies or timelines paired with historical fiction

3.

Social issues: essays on topics like bullying combined with realistic fiction

4.

addressing the same themes

These thematic pairings not only engage students but also encourage cross-disciplinary learning.

Exploring nonfiction and fiction paired passages middle school initiatives reveals their growing role in fostering analytical literacy. As educational standards evolve to emphasize critical thinking and cross-genre comprehension, paired texts stand out as effective resources. When thoughtfully selected and implemented, they equip young learners with the skills necessary to navigate complex information landscapes—an indispensable asset in the 21st century.

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