Among all those mortals who grew so wise that they learned the secrets of the gods, none was more cunning than Daedalus.

He once built, for King Minos of Crete, a wonderful Labyrinth of winding ways so cunningly tangled up and twisted around that, once inside, you could never find your way out again without a magic clue. But the king’s favor veered with the wind, and one day he had his master architect imprisoned in a tower. Daedalus managed to escape from his cell; but it seemed impossible to leave the island, since every ship that came or went was well guarded by order of the king.

At length, watching the sea-gulls in the air—the only creatures that were sure of liberty—he thought of a plan for himself and his young son Icarus, who was captive with him.

Little by little, he gathered a store of feathers great and small. He fastened these together with thread, molded them in with wax, and so fashioned two great wings like those of a bird. When they were done, Daedalus fitted them to his own shoulders, and after one or two efforts, he found that by waving his arms he could \textit{winnow} the air and \textit{cleave} it, as a swimmer does the sea. He held himself aloft, wavered this way and that, with the wind, and at last, like a great fledgling, he learned to fly.

Without delay, he fell to work on a pair of wings for the boy Icarus, and taught him carefully how to use them, bidding him beware of rash adventures among the stars. “Remember,” said the father, “never to fly very low or very high, for the fogs about the earth would weigh you down, but the blaze of the sun will surely melt your feathers apart if you go too near.”

For Icarus, these cautions went in at one ear and out by the other. Who could remember to be careful when he was to fly for the first time? Are birds careful? Not they! And not an idea remained in the boy’s head but the one joy of escape.

The day came, and the fair wind that was to set them free. The father bird put on his wings, and, while the light urged them to be gone, he waited to see that all was well with Icarus, for the two could not fly hand in hand. Up they rose, the boy after his father. The hateful ground of Crete sank beneath them; and the country folk, who caught a glimpse of them when they were high above the tree-tops, took it for a vision of the gods—Apollo, perhaps, with Cupid after him.

At first there was a terror in the joy. The wide vacancy of the air dazed them—a glance downward made their brains reel. But when a great wind filled their wings, and Icarus felt himself sustained, like a halcyon-bird in the hollow of a wave, like a child uplifted by his mother, he forgot everything in the world but joy. He forgot Crete and the other islands that he had passed over: he saw but vaguely that
winged thing in the distance before him that was his father Daedalus. He longed for one draught of flight to quench the thirst of his captivity: he stretched out his arms to the sky and made towards the highest heavens.

        Alas for him! Warmer and warmer grew the air. Those arms, that had seemed to uphold him, relaxed. His wings wavered, drooped. He fluttered his young hands vainly—he was falling—and in that terror he remembered. The heat of the sun had melted the wax from his wings; the feathers were falling, one by one, like snowflakes; and there was none to help.

        He fell like a leaf tossed down the wind, down, down, with one cry that overtook Daedalus far away. When he returned, and sought high and low for the poor boy, he saw nothing but the bird-like feathers afloat on the water, and he knew that Icarus was drowned.

        The nearest island he named Icaria, in memory of the child; but he, in heavy grief, went to the temple of Apollo in Sicily, and there hung up his wings as an offering. Never again did he attempt to fly.

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        Words that could be defined for students are in bold.
How does Demosthenes’ experience observing a trial at age 16 affect his life choices, as described in the passage? Use two details from the passage to support your response.

Write your answer in complete sentences.

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**CCLS Alignment:** RL.6.3

**Commentary:** This question aligns to CCLS RL.6.3. It asks students to look at a particular event in the beginning of the passage and explain how it affects the unfolding of the story and the development of the character throughout the rest of the passage.

**Rationale:** The response accurately describes Demosthenes’ reaction to the trial ("Demosthenes went home determined to become a lawyer and public speaker") and then provides evidence that this reaction affected him throughout his life ("He brought suit against his guardians ... he recovered a large part of the property") and ("He soon acquired great influence in Athens and became one of the ten official orators").
How does Demosthenes overcome obstacles to reach his goal? Use two details from the passage to support your response.

Write your answer in complete sentences.

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CCLS Alignment: RL.6.1; additional standards may be added after further development.

Commentary: This question aligns to CCLS RL.6.1. It asks students to cite specific textual evidence to explain Demosthenes’ goal, the obstacles in his way, and how he overcame those obstacles.

Rationale: The response accurately describes the steps taken by Demosthenes in order to reach his goal of becoming a great orator (“It is said that to improve his voice he spoke with stones in his mouth,” “To overcome his habit of lifting one shoulder above the other he suspended a sword so that the point would prick his shoulder as he raised it,” “He built an underground room in which he could study,” etc.).
Closely reread the following sentence from lines 7–8 of the passage:

“...but it seemed impossible to leave the island, since every ship that came or went was well guarded by order of the king.”

How does this sentence contribute to the development of the plot of the passage? Use two details from the passage to support your answer.

Write your answer in complete sentences.

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Aligned CCLS: RL.6.5

Commentary: This item aligns to CCLS RL.6.5 because it asks students to analyze how a sentence fits into or impacts the overall development of the passage. Similarly, it challenges a student to look beyond the main idea of the passage, balancing the meaning of what came before the sentence and what followed.

Rationale: The response accurately explains that Daedalus’s motivation for flying was driven by his desire to be free from imprisonment, which eventually leads to his son flying too close to the sun. Appropriate textual evidence includes, but is not limited to, “like a great fledgling, [Daedalus] learned to fly,” “Up they rose, the boy and his father,” “The heat of the sun had melted the wax from his wings,” “He fell like a leaf tossed down the wind,” etc.
In both the *Demosthenes* biography and the *Icarus and Daedalus* myth the main characters exhibit determination in pursuit of their goals. Did determination help both main characters reach their goals, or did it lead them to tragedy? Write an argument for whether you believe determination helped or hurt the two main characters.

In your response, be sure to do the following:

- [ ] describe how determination affected the outcome in *Demosthenes*
- [ ] describe how determination affected the outcome in *Icarus and Daedalus*
- [ ] explain the similarities or differences that exist in the ways determination played into the outcome of both texts
- [ ] use details from both passages in your response

**Aligned CCLS:** RL.6.9, W.6.1, W.6.4, W.6.8, W6.9a, and W.6.9b

**Commentary:** This item aligns to CCLS RL.6.9, W.6.1, W.6.4, W.6.8, W6.9a, and W.6.9b because it asks students to provide evidence from the texts to support written analysis of what the texts say explicitly.

**Rationale:** The response accurately describes how determination affects the outcome of *Demosthenes* and of *Icarus and Daedalus*, giving examples of similarities and differences that exist in the way this determination played into the outcome of both texts. In both texts the characters demonstrate determination. Demosthenes overcomes personal obstacles (his stuttering, soft voice, and odd posture) through determination and persistent hard work (building an underground room to practice speaking without disturbance, practicing speaking with stones in his mouth, reciting amid the roar of the waves, and pricking his shoulder to remind him to keep his posture perfect) to become one of Athens’ ten official orators. Daedalus overcomes the imprisonment of himself and his son, Icarus, on the Island of Crete, by his determination. He demonstrates this by his careful crafting of sea-gull inspired wings and learning to fly with them (like a fledgling bird). The wings were made of feathers and wax, so Daedalus warned young Icarus to be careful and not fly too high into the heavens. But Icarus did fly too high, the wings melted, and he fell to the
water and drowned. The determination of Daedalus did lead him to his successful escape, but he lost his son. In both texts determination leads to the characters’ goals; however, Demosthenes achieves complete success as an orator while Daedalus’s achievement of his goal also leads to tragedy.