



New York State  
**EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

**New York State Testing Program**  
**Grade 7**  
**English Language Arts Test**

**Released Questions**

**2024**

New York State administered the English Language Arts Tests in April 2024 and is making approximately 75% of the questions from these tests available for review and use.



# New York State Testing Program Grades 4–8 English Language Arts

## Released Questions from 2024 Exams

### **Background**

As in past years, SED is releasing large portions of the 2024 NYS Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics test materials for review, discussion, and use.

For 2024, included in these released materials are at least 75 percent of the test questions that appeared on the 2024 tests (including all constructed-response questions) that counted toward students' scores. Additionally, SED is providing information about the released passages; the associated text complexity for each passage; and a map that details what learning standards each released question measures and the correct response to each question. These released materials will help students, families, educators, and the public better understand the tests and the New York State Education Department's expectations for students.

### **Understanding ELA Questions**

#### **Multiple-Choice Questions**

Multiple-choice questions are designed to assess the New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards in English Language Arts. These questions ask students to analyze different aspects of a given text, including central idea, style elements, character and plot development, and vocabulary. Almost all questions, including vocabulary questions, will be answered correctly only if the student comprehends and makes use of the whole passage.

For multiple-choice questions, students select the correct response from four answer choices. Multiple-choice questions assess reading standards in a variety of ways. Some ask students to analyze aspects of text or vocabulary. Many questions require students to combine skills. For example, questions may ask students to identify a segment of text that best supports the central idea. To answer these questions correctly, a student must first comprehend the central idea and then show understanding of how that idea is supported. Questions tend to require more than rote recall or identification.

#### **Two-Credit Constructed-Response Questions**

Two-credit constructed-response questions are designed to assess New York State P–12 Reading and Language Standards. These are single questions in which a student uses textual evidence to support his or her answer to an inferential question. These questions ask the student to make an inference (a claim, position, or conclusion) based on their analysis of the passage, and then provide two pieces of text-based evidence to support their answer.

The purpose of the two-credit constructed-response questions is to assess a student's ability to comprehend and analyze text. In responding to these questions, students are expected to write in complete sentences. Responses require no more than three complete sentences. The rubric used for evaluating two-credit constructed-response questions can be found in the grade-level Educator Guides at <https://www.nysed.gov/state-assessment/grades-3-8-ela-math-and-science-test-manuals>.

## Four-Credit Constructed-Response Questions

Four-credit constructed-response questions are designed to measure a student’s ability to write from sources. Questions that measure Writing from Sources prompt students to communicate a clear and coherent analysis of one or two texts. The comprehension and analysis required by each four-credit response is directly related to grade-specific reading standards. Student responses are evaluated on the degree to which they meet grade-level writing and language expectations. This evaluation is made by using a rubric that incorporates the demands of grade-specific New York State P–12 Reading and Language Standards.

The integrated nature of the standards for ELA and literacy requires that students are evaluated across the strands (Reading, Writing, and Language) with longer pieces of writing, such as those prompted by the four-credit constructed-response questions. The rubric used for evaluating four-credit constructed-response questions can be found in the grade-level Educator Guides at <https://www.nysed.gov/state-assessment/grades-3-8-ela-math-and-science-test-manuals>.

## New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards Alignment

The alignment to the New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts is intended to identify the analytic skills necessary to successfully answer each question. However, some questions measure proficiencies described in multiple standards, including writing and additional reading and language standards. For example, two-credit and four-credit constructed-response questions require students to first conduct the analyses described in the mapped standard and then produce written responses that are rated based on writing standards. To gain greater insight into the measurement focus for constructed-response questions, please refer to the rubrics.

### ***These Released Questions Do Not Comprise a “Mini Test”***

To ensure it is possible to develop future tests, some content must remain secure. This document is *not* intended to be representative of the entire test, to show how operational tests look, or to provide information about how teachers should administer the test; rather, its purpose is to provide an overview of how the test reflects the demands of the New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards.

The released questions do not represent the full spectrum of the standards assessed on the State tests, nor do they represent the full spectrum of how the standards should be taught and assessed in the classroom. It should not be assumed that a particular standard will be measured by an identical question in future assessments.

## 2024 Grade 7 ELA Test Text Complexity Metrics for Released Questions Available

Selecting high-quality, grade-appropriate passages requires both objective text complexity metrics and expert judgment. For the Grades 3–8 assessments based on the New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts, both quantitative and qualitative rubrics are used to determine the complexity of the texts and their appropriate placement within a grade-level ELA exam.

**Quantitative measures** of text complexity are used to measure aspects of text complexity that are difficult for a human reader to evaluate when examining a text. These aspects include word frequency, word length, sentence length, and text cohesion. These aspects are efficiently measured by computer programs. While quantitative text complexity metrics are a helpful start, they are not definitive.

**Qualitative measures** are a crucial complement to quantitative measures. Using qualitative measures of text complexity involves making an informed decision about the difficulty of a text in terms of one or more factors discernible to a human reader applying trained judgment to the task. To qualitatively determine the complexity of a text, NYS educators use a rubric composed of five factors; four of these factors are required and one factor is optional. The required criteria are: meaning, text structure, language features, and knowledge demands. The optional factor, graphics, is used only if a graphic appears in the text.

**To make the final determination** as to whether a text is at grade-level and thus appropriate to be included on a Grades 3–8 assessment, New York State uses a two-step review process, which is an industry best-practice. First, all prospective passages undergo quantitative text complexity analysis using three text complexity measures. If at least two of the three measures suggest that the passage is grade-appropriate, the passage then moves to the second step, which is the qualitative review using the text-complexity rubrics. Only passages that are determined appropriate by at least two of three quantitative measures of complexity *and* are determined appropriate by the qualitative measure of complexity are deemed appropriate for use on the exam.

### Text Complexity Metrics for 2024 Grade 7 Passages

Passage Title	Word Count	Lexile	Flesch-Kincaid	ATOS	Qualitative Review
<b>Excerpt from Bessie Coleman: First Black Woman Pilot</b>	962	1070	8.9	8.06	Appropriate
<b>Excerpt from Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry</b>	932	1130	8.1	7.1	Appropriate
<b>Excerpt from Rule of Rock</b>	747	740	4.8	5.92	Appropriate
<b>Prairie Dogs: Little Rodents That Talk Big</b>	675	1020	7.7	6.83	Appropriate
<b>PAIR - Excerpt from Hiking for Fun</b>	516	1000	7.3	7.21	Appropriate
<b>PAIR - Excerpt from Want a Healthier Family? Tell Them to Take a Hike</b>	503	1110	7.1	7.9	Appropriate

### New York State 2024 Quantitative Text Complexity Chart for Assessment and Curriculum

To determine if a text’s quantitative complexity is at the appropriate grade level, New York State uses the table below. In cases where a text is excerpted from a large work, only the complexity of the excerpt that students see on the test is measured, not the large work, so it is possible that the complexity of a book might be above or below grade level, but the text used on the assessment is at grade level. Because the measurement of text complexity is inexact, quantitative measures of complexity are defined by grade band rather than by individual grade level and then paired with the qualitative review by an educator.

Grade Band	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework	Reading Maturity	SourceRater
<b>2<sup>nd</sup>–3<sup>rd</sup></b>	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13	0.05 – 2.48
<b>4<sup>th</sup>–5<sup>th</sup></b>	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92	0.84 – 5.75
<b>6<sup>th</sup>–8<sup>th</sup></b>	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57	4.11 – 10.66
<b>9<sup>th</sup>–10<sup>th</sup></b>	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81	9.02 – 13.93
<b>11<sup>th</sup>–12<sup>th</sup></b>	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.20	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00	12.30 – 14.50

Source: Student Achievement Partners

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# *New York State Testing Program*

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## English Language Arts Test Session 1

Grade **7**

Spring 2024

**RELEASED QUESTIONS**

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# Session 1



## TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some ideas to help you do your best:

- Read the whole passage before you answer the questions. Most questions will only make sense after you read the whole passage.
- You might need to read the passage more than once to answer a question.
- Read each question carefully. Take your time.
- A question may include a quote from a passage. You might need to review both the quote and the whole passage to answer the question.

When you write your answers

- make sure to answer the whole question;
- use examples or details from the text;
- write in complete sentences; and
- use correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.



## **D**irections

Read this article. Then answer questions 15 through 21.

*When African-American Bessie Coleman was not admitted to flight schools in the United States, she did not give up. She went to France, where she began to train as a pilot in a famous flight school.*

# **Excerpt from *Bessie Coleman: First Black Woman Pilot***

*by Connie Plantz*

- 1 In France, Coleman walked nine miles to and from school every day for ten months. Her first flying lessons were on the ground in a French Nieuport Type 82 plane. This twenty-seven-foot biplane with a forty-foot wingspan was made of wood, lacquered cloth, pressed cardboard, wire, steel, and aluminum. It was rather flimsy, and pilots had to conduct careful inspections for any flaws that could cause parts to break off in the air.
- 2 As the trainee, Coleman sat in the rear cockpit. She was not always able to see her instructor, and she could not hear over the roar of the engine. Instead she learned by watching. This early aircraft did not have brakes or a steering wheel. A vertical stick, attached to the floor by a hinge, controlled the plane's up and down movements. Two rudder pedals caused the plane to go left or right. The instructor in the front cockpit had the same steering system. When the pilot moved his stick, Coleman would observe how her stick moved. When the pilot used one of his rudder pedals, Coleman could see one of her pedals move. She learned that a metal tailskid would drag along the ground upon touching down. The friction between the ground and the skid slowed the plane. . . .
- 3 The day of her final test for her license, Coleman was shown where she must land the plane. To pass the test, she had to land within fifty meters (164 feet) of the spot. First, Coleman flew a five-kilometer (three-mile) closed-circuit course<sup>1</sup> twice at an altitude of fifty meters. She flew a figure eight, then turned off the engine, glided into a landing, and rolled to a stop at the exact location. She successfully completed the requirements to earn her pilot's license.

4 On June 15, 1921, eighteen years after Orville and Wilbur Wright’s pioneering flight, Bessie Coleman became the first black woman in the world to earn the prestigious<sup>2</sup> Fédération Aéronautique Internationale (FAI) pilot’s license. Because she had been refused flying lessons in the United States, Coleman now had an international license. This document proved without a doubt that she was a skilled, well-trained pilot. If she had been allowed to take flying lessons in the United States, she probably would not have a license at all, because they were not required until 1926. But Coleman had followed Robert Abbott’s advice and turned her disadvantages into advantages. Even Amelia Earhart, who began flying in 1921, did not have this prestigious license until two years later.

5 Coleman remained in France for a while, she said, because flying was so popular there. She exaggerated that “flying is as popular in Europe as automobiling is in America.” In Paris, she visited aircraft manufacturers and factories. She later claimed to have ordered a 130-horsepower Nieuport de Chasse to be manufactured and sent to her in the United States. . . .

6 There were no jobs for African-American pilots in the field of aviation. Barnstorming, though, had no racial restrictions. This aeronautic entertainment was also open to women. During Coleman’s stay in France, Laura Brownell set a loop-the-loop record for women pilots—she flew 199 loops. Ten days after Coleman’s return to Chicago, Lillian Boyer, a Chicago resident, made her first plane-to-plane transfer. Within the next year Boyer developed a stunt in which she stood in a speeding automobile and grabbed a rope ladder attached to the bottom of a plane passing overhead. . . .

7 Bessie Coleman’s dreams went far beyond just becoming a barnstormer. Five months after returning to the United States, she told a *Chicago Defender* reporter that she planned to start an aviation school. First, she would visit France to purchase planes. Upon her return, she would perform exhibitions from New York City to the aviation fields at Mineola, Long Island. Then, anyone interested in learning to fly could attend the New York branch of her aviation school. . . .

8 Bessie Coleman performed the first public flight by an African-American woman in the United States on September 3, 1922. The show began with a man from the Curtiss company, Captain Edward C. McVey, escorting Coleman to her plane and then climbing into the passenger seat. Glenn Curtiss required an employee to fly with Coleman to make sure she knew how to handle the borrowed Curtiss plane. Coleman was fashionably dressed in a tailored officer’s uniform made especially for her shows. Her goggles were pushed up over her leather pilot’s helmet, allowing the crowd to see her face. First she knelt in the grass beside the plane to pray. Then three thousand spectators stood, hats in hand, as the band played “The Star Spangled Banner.” The last notes of the anthem died away, and the crowd remained standing as the biplane took off. It spiraled upward into the sky. Then it traced the path of a rising half loop while banking—tilting as it turned. Several minutes later, Coleman landed and Captain McVey climbed out.

**GO ON**

- 9           The spectators thought the show was over, but Coleman surprised them by picking up African-American stuntman Hubert Fauntleroy Julian. He flew with her to fifteen hundred feet, then flamboyantly<sup>3</sup> parachuted from the wing of the airplane. The onlookers went wild. They had just witnessed the first solo flight of an African-American woman pilot. After a smooth landing, Captain McVey presented Coleman with a flower bouquet. She concluded the show by taking individual passengers up in the plane for a \$5 fee.
- 10           The New York entertainment newspaper *Billboard* reported that as a pilot, Coleman was conservative<sup>4</sup> but skilled. Officials at the field praised her ability to pilot a plane she had no prior experience with. *Billboard* also reported that more African Americans probably flew that day than had flown since planes were invented.

<sup>1</sup>**closed-circuit course:** a path that starts and ends in the same place and has been determined ahead of time

<sup>2</sup>**prestigious:** well-respected, leading

<sup>3</sup>**flamboyantly:** in a show-off manner

<sup>4</sup>**conservative:** careful

15

Which statement **best** expresses a central idea of paragraph 2?

- A Sticks and rudder pedals were used in both cockpits of the airplane.
- B People learned how to fly airplanes by observing the actions of the pilot.
- C Metal tailskids would create friction to slow the airplanes as they landed.
- D Pilots maneuvered their airplanes by using vertical sticks and rudder pedals.

16

What do the details in paragraph 7 **most** reveal about Bessie Coleman?

- A her preference for planes made in France
- B her desire to share her knowledge with others
- C her desire to travel throughout the United States
- D her dissatisfaction with performing as a barnstormer

17

What is the **main** way paragraph 3 connects with paragraph 8?

- A by referring to the altitude to which Coleman flew
- B by describing Coleman's popularity with crowds
- C by indicating the types of planes Coleman flew
- D by demonstrating Coleman's skills as a pilot

**GO ON**

18

How do paragraphs 8 and 9 develop a central idea in the article?

- A by referring to the thousands of people watching the first female African-American aviator
- B by indicating that Coleman was prohibited from flying the plane without another pilot
- C by illustrating how the first female African-American pilot flew in loops while tilting the plane
- D by describing how Coleman wanted to fly a type of plane with which she was unfamiliar

19

The tone of paragraph 9 can **best** be described as

- A anxious, due to the dangerous jump of the stuntman
- B tense, because of the height to which the airplane flew
- C delighted, due to the reaction of the crowd to the stuntman
- D enthusiastic, because people were excited for the opportunity to fly

20

Which statement **best** describes why Coleman goes to flight school in France?

- A She knows there are more aircraft manufacturers in France.
- B She is denied the opportunity to train as a pilot in the United States.
- C She believes flying is more popular in France than in the United States.
- D She knows she will be able to learn by observing her instructors in France.

21

Which sentence would be **most** important to include in a summary of the article?

- A Coleman first takes flying lessons in a twenty-seven-foot biplane.
- B Coleman claims flying in France is as popular as driving cars in America.
- C Coleman is described by newspapers as a careful but skilled pilot.
- D Coleman is the first African-American woman to perform a solo flight.

**GO ON**

# Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 22 through 28.

*Nine-year-old Cassie Logan and her three brothers are on their way to school. It is the first day of a new school year.*

## Excerpt from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*

*by Mildred D. Taylor*

1 My youngest brother paid no attention to me. Grasping more firmly his newspaper-wrapped notebook and his tin-can lunch of cornbread and oil sausages, he continued to concentrate on the dusty road. He lagged several feet behind my other brothers, Stacey and Christopher-John, and me, attempting to keep the rusty Mississippi dust from swelling with each step and drifting back upon his shiny black shoes and the cuffs of his corduroy pants by lifting each foot high before setting it gently down again. Always meticulously neat, six-year-old Little Man never allowed dirt or tears or stains to mar anything he owned. Today was no exception. . . .

2 “Y’all go ahead and get dirty if y’all wanna,” he replied without even looking up from his studied steps. “Me, I’m gonna stay clean.” . . .

3 “Ah, Cassie, leave him be,” Stacey admonished,<sup>1</sup> frowning and kicking testily at the road.

4 “I ain’t said nothing but—”

5 Stacey cut me a wicked look and I grew silent. His disposition had been irritatingly<sup>2</sup> sour lately. If I hadn’t known the cause of it, I could have forgotten very easily that he was, at twelve, bigger than I, and that I had promised Mama to arrive at school looking clean and ladylike. “Shoot,” I mumbled finally, unable to restrain myself from further comment, “it ain’t my fault you gotta be in Mama’s class this year.”

6 Stacey’s frown deepened and he jammed his fists into his pockets, but said nothing.

7 Christopher-John, walking between Stacey and me, glanced uneasily at both of us but did not interfere. A short, round boy of seven, he took little interest in troublesome things, preferring to remain on good terms with everyone. Yet he was always sensitive to others and now, shifting the handle of his lunch can from his right hand to his right wrist and his smudged notebook from his left hand to his left armpit, he stuffed his free hands into his pockets and attempted to make his face as moody as Stacey’s and as cranky as mine. But after a few moments he seemed to forget that he was supposed to be grouchy and began whistling cheerfully. There was little that could make Christopher-John unhappy for very long, not even the thought of school.

**GO ON**

8 I tugged again at my collar and dragged my feet in the dust, allowing it to sift back onto my socks and shoes like gritty red snow. I hated the dress. And the shoes. There was little I could do in a dress, and as for shoes, they imprisoned freedom-loving feet accustomed to the feel of warm earth.

9 “Cassie, stop that,” Stacey snapped as the dust billowed in swirling clouds around my feet. I looked up sharply, ready to protest. Christopher-John’s whistling increased to a raucous,<sup>3</sup> nervous shrill, and grudgingly I let the matter drop and trudged along in moody silence, my brothers growing as pensively<sup>4</sup> quiet as I.

10 Before us the narrow, sun-splotched road wound like a lazy red serpent dividing the high forest bank of quiet, old trees on the left from the cotton field, forested by giant green and purple stalks, on the right. A barbed-wire fence ran the length of the deep field, stretching eastward for over a quarter of a mile until it met the sloping green pasture that signaled the end of our family’s four hundred acres. An ancient oak tree on the slope, visible even now, was the official dividing mark between Logan land and the beginning of a dense forest. Beyond the protective fencing of the forest, vast farming fields, worked by a multitude<sup>5</sup> of share-cropping families, covered two thirds of a ten-square-mile plantation. That was Harlan Granger land.

11 Once our land had been Granger land too, but the Grangers had sold it during Reconstruction to a Yankee for tax money. In 1887, when the land was up for sell again, Grandpa had bought two hundred acres of it, and in 1918, after the first two hundred acres had been paid off, he had bought another two hundred. It was good rich land, much of it still virgin forest, and there was no debt on half of it. But there was a mortgage on the two hundred acres bought in 1918 and there were taxes on the full four hundred, and for the past three years there had not been enough money from the cotton to pay both and live on too.

12 That was why Papa had gone to work on the railroad.

13 In 1930 the price of cotton dropped. And so, in the spring of 1931, Papa set out looking for work, going as far north as Memphis and as far south as the Delta country. He had gone west too, into Louisiana. It was there he found work laying track for the railroad. He worked the remainder of the year away from us, not returning until the deep winter when the ground was cold and barren. The following spring after planting was finished, he did the same. Now it was 1933, and Papa was again in Louisiana laying track.



- 14 I asked him once why he had to go away, why the land was so important. He took my hand and said in his quiet way: “Look out there, Cassie girl. All that belongs to you. You ain’t never had to live on nobody’s place but your own and long as I live and the family survives, you’ll never have to. That’s important. You may not understand that now, but one day you will. Then you’ll see.”

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<sup>1</sup>**admonished:** scolded

<sup>2</sup>**irritatingly:** in a way that bothers

<sup>3</sup>**raucous:** rowdy

<sup>4</sup>**pensively:** thoughtfully

<sup>5</sup>**multitude:** huge number

22

Read this phrase from paragraph 8.

**. . . and as for shoes, they imprisoned freedom-loving feet accustomed to the feel of warm earth.**

How does the use of personification in this phrase **mainly** add to the reader's understanding of the narrator?

- A by emphasizing the narrator's preference for being outside
- B by illustrating how the narrator feels about school
- C by showing how the narrator is different than Little Man
- D by highlighting the narrator's desire to help Papa

23

Which detail would be **most** important to include in a summary of the story?

- A "Always meticulously neat, six-year-old Little Man never allowed dirt or tears or stains to mar anything he owned." (paragraph 1)
- B "If I hadn't known the cause of it, I could have forgotten very easily that he was, at twelve, bigger than I . . ." (paragraph 5)
- C "An ancient oak tree on the slope, visible even now, was the official dividing mark between Logan land and the beginning of a dense forest." (paragraph 10)
- D ". . . for the past three years there had not been enough money from the cotton to pay both and live on too." (paragraph 11)

24

How does the narrator **mainly** develop each brother's viewpoint?

- A by indicating their feelings about school
- B through descriptions of their personalities
- C by indicating her disagreements with them
- D through descriptions of their appearances

**GO ON**

25

Siblings may be very different but still completely understand each other. How do the details in the story **best** support this idea?

- A The narrator describes the traits of each brother as they walk to school.
- B The narrator and her brothers understand the importance of the land to their family.
- C The narrator realizes why her oldest brother is feeling unhappy.
- D The narrator and her brothers respect their father's decision to work in other states.

26

What do the details in the story reveal about Papa?

- A He prefers working on the railroad to growing cotton.
- B He was not surprised when the price of cotton changed.
- C He is determined to keep the land his father purchased.
- D He was not able to talk to his other children about the land.

27

**This question is worth 2 credits.**

What is a central idea of “Excerpt from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*”? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

Write your response for this question in your separate Session 1 Answer Booklet.

Writing on this page will not be scored.

28

**This question is worth 2 credits.**

In paragraphs 5 through 7 of “Excerpt from *Roll of Thunder, Hear My Cry*,” how does the author’s word choice affect the tone of the story? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

Write your response for this question in your separate Session 1 Answer Booklet.

Writing on this page will not be scored.

**STOP**

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**Grade 7**  
**English Language Arts Test**  
**Session 1**  
**Spring 2024**

Name: \_\_\_\_\_



# ***New York State Testing Program***

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## **English Language Arts Test Session 2**

**Grade 7**

**Spring 2024**

**RELEASED QUESTIONS**

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# Session 2



## TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some ideas to help you do your best:

- Read the whole passage before you answer the questions. Most questions will only make sense after you read the whole passage.
- You might need to read the passage more than once to answer a question.
- Read each question carefully. Take your time.
- A question may include a quote from a passage. You might need to review both the quote and the whole passage to answer the question.

When you write your answers

- make sure to answer the whole question;
- use examples or details from the text;
- write in complete sentences; and
- use correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

For the last question in this test book, you may plan your writing on the Planning Page provided. However, do NOT write your final answer on the Planning Page. Write your final answer on the lined pages.



**Directions** Read this story. Then answer questions 29 through 35.

## Excerpt from *Rule of Rock*

by Benjamin Jacobson

1 The RPS exam, the ultimate test, was supposed to start ten minutes ago. The top five candidates in the class—Persephone was first—gathered to face a one-time-only pass/fail assessment of their worth. Success meant becoming a Decider, a member of the Global Legislature, the lawmaking branch of Orbis Publican, one of only a thousand people in the world entrusted with political power. Like the ten thousand other students of the Academy, she'd received twelve years of strict training and guidance in history and philosophy and psychology, and she'd participated in countless simulations. All this was intended to create young adults who could see all sides of an issue and act for the greatest good. . . .

2 The Proctor spoke. "In this test, there are three possible answers. The first is stone, the second paper, and the third blades. Stone crushes blades but is suffocated by paper. Paper suffocates stone but is cut by blades. And blades can cut paper but are crushed by stone. I will choose one weapon, and you will choose a weapon in response. The students who select the wisest answer will become Deciders."

3 Persephone's mind raced and she felt a flush across her skin. All her years of work climbing to the top of her class would come down to this, a game of chance? Her mind calculated the rather simple odds. No answer had an obvious advantage. Could this be the true secret behind the utopian world government of Orbis Publican? In the end the peaceful world was all up to chance?

4 Her heartbeat quickened as an idea came to her. Was this a test to see who would rebel against such an oversimplification of a vital process? Persephone thought about protesting, but something held her back. She didn't have enough information. Lee, third in the class, thought otherwise.

5 "Proctor," Lee said, stepping forward out of line. "I refuse to participate in this test. Random chance is an unjust method for choosing Deciders."

6 "You decide too quickly. Such snap judgments make you unworthy. You are dismissed." Lee's face flushed, and his lips trembled. He ran out of the room as quickly as Persephone had entered.

7 "Any other complaints?" The candidates stood silent. "Good, let's continue. I choose stone." The Proctor held a fist out in front of him. It was a trick then. The Proctor revealed his weapon before the students could choose theirs. He had destroyed his own odds of winning. The Proctor stepped to Christy, the left-most student. "What is your choice?"

**GO ON**

- 8 Christy extended a flat hand signifying paper. The Proctor moved to his right to find Luke. Luke hesitated, then extended paper as well. Would they both be approved as Deciders? Persephone knew it couldn't be that easy. Nothing in her twelve years at the Academy had been that easy. Laura, to her immediate right, obviously agreed, for on her turn she extended the two fingers of the blades, the loser's gambit. Laura must be thinking that the wisest choice was to accept defeat, to compromise, to settle. Was that the right answer?
- 9 The Proctor stood now in front of Persephone. In all of her tests she had never doubted a single choice. But now in this, her most important assessment, she had to go with her gut. She extended her hand. . . .
- 10 Later, each student sat down with the Proctor to discuss the result. Persephone watched them go into the room one by one. No one came out. Finally, her turn came. She entered the chamber. The Proctor sat at a red table. Behind him there was an exit.
- 11 "During the RPS, you chose Stone. Why?" . . .
- 12 "The game is a test. I knew that I could defeat you, but you didn't ask me to defeat you. You asked me to choose wisely. It is not wisdom to want to destroy your rival. It is evil to do so. It is also not correct to bow down to your rival; one must stand up for what one knows is right. The wise answer is to meet on an even field, stone on stone. The battle may be protracted, but in the end only equality can create victory for all."
- 13 The Proctor leaned back in his chair. "That is a hard lesson to learn: To hold back from winning and to fight through the loss. To seek a fair balance is to find the Truth. Welcome to the Legislature, Decider Persephone."

29

Read these sentences from paragraph 6.

**“You decide too quickly. Such snap judgments make you unworthy. You are dismissed.”**

Which important idea does the author develop in these sentences?

- A It is best to lead by example.
- B Make sure to tell the truth when you speak.
- C Try to have all of the information before making a choice.
- D Go with your first instinct when making a statement.

30

What does paragraph 8 reveal about Persephone?

- A She struggles at her school.
- B She becomes frustrated easily.
- C She wants to have more choices.
- D She thinks carefully before acting.

31

What is the **best** definition of “settle” as it is used in paragraph 8?

- A to agree to something less
- B to separate materials
- C to become quiet
- D to find a place to stay

**GO ON**

32

Which detail would be **most** important to include in a summary of the story?

- A “. . . she’d received twelve years of strict training and guidance in history and philosophy and psychology . . .” (paragraph 1)
- B “The students who select the wisest answer will become Deciders.” (paragraph 2)
- C “Lee’s face flushed, and his lips trembled. He ran out of the room . . .” (paragraph 6)
- D “The Proctor sat at a red table. Behind him there was an exit.” (paragraph 10)

33

Which sentence from the story **best** describes Persephone’s perspective about the RPS exam?

- A “Persephone’s mind raced and she felt a flush across her skin.” (paragraph 3)
- B “Persephone thought about protesting, but something held her back.” (paragraph 4)
- C “Persephone knew it couldn’t be that easy.” (paragraph 8)
- D “Persephone watched them go into the room one by one.” (paragraph 10)

34

What does the word “equality” mean as it is used in paragraph 12?

- A agreement
- B fairness
- C intelligence
- D tolerance

35

How does Persephone change from the beginning to the end of the story?

- A At first she is afraid of the test, but then she succeeds at it.
- B At first she is uncertain about the test, but then she understands it.
- C At first she is suspicious of the test, but then she cares about it.
- D At first she is angry at the test, but then she finds it amusing.

**GO ON**

## *Directions*

Read this article. Then answer questions 36 through 42.

# Prairie Dogs: Little Rodents That Talk Big

*by Cynthia Mills*

- 1       Prairie dogs got their name because people thought their calls sounded a little like a dog's bark. Actually, maybe they should've been called prairie watchdogs because they bark to alert the colony when intruders enter their territory.
- 2       From the wagging tail of a happy dog, to the bristling fur and spitting yowls of an angry cat, animals can definitely get their messages across. Dr. Con Slobodchikoff, a biologist at Northern Arizona University, thinks that at least one animal—the lowly prairie dog—can say a lot.
- 3       Prairie dog alarms are distinctive. The sound is halfway between the buzzing of a kazoo and the squawk of a disturbed crow, and can be heard from three miles away. It's hard for humans to hear the differences between the calls, though, because they only last about half a second—about as long as it takes to say “Hey!” really fast.
- 4       So Dr. Slobodchikoff decided to record the calls. He ran the sounds through a computer that would slow them down and turn them into detailed pictures called spectrograms. Using spectrograms, he could compare one sound to another and see if they were different.
- 5       The spectrograms showed that prairie dogs make different alarm calls for hawks than for coyotes and other land-bound threats. But while the calls for flying hunters like hawks were pretty much the same, the calls for animals on the ground—for dogs, cats, or humans—were different from one another.
- 6       Were the prairie dogs saying more than “Look out above” and “Look out below”? Slobodchikoff recorded the calls over and over again. He not only recorded the prairie dogs' alarm calls while students or dogs walked by, but also when plywood cutouts of a coyote, a skunk, and a simple oval were placed nearby.
- 7       The prairie dogs watched regular dogs the same way they watched coyotes, but not as intensely. Their reactions to humans depended on past experience. In an area where humans had long hunted them, the prairie dogs dove into their burrows to hide; in places where people left them alone, they didn't react much at all. The prairie dogs responded to the cutouts in various ways, but not the same way they did to a real predator.

8           The calls were even different when people wore different clothes! There was a call for a human in a white T-shirt and another for a human in a yellow T-shirt. Then Slobodchikoff tried different types of dogs, using huskies, retrievers, and even a miniature poodle. Again the calls changed for the type of dog.

9           At first Slobodchikoff couldn't believe it. After all, prairie dogs are just rodents, like mice and rats, and aren't supposed to be that smart. So he worked harder to prove his findings, testing them again and again. Every time the results were the same.

10          The prairie dogs were telling each other some pretty detailed things: not just "Watch out!" but "Look, there's a guy with his dog, but they look harmless." Although the calls are a single sound, or at least a continuous one, they seem to carry a lot of information.

11          Slobodchikoff also thinks prairie dogs pay attention to the order of the sounds they make. Besides studying alarm calls, he has also recorded the little noises, the chitter-chattering, they make to each other. Since the prairie dogs don't do anything when they hear these sounds (for example, they don't duck or dive into a hole as they do when they hear an alarm call), he doesn't know if the sounds have any meaning. But prairie dogs do seem to make the sounds in particular orders: They chitter-chatter, but they don't chatter-chitter. Does the order of the sounds matter? If so, it might mean that their "language" is even more complicated than we thought.

12          Though Slobodchikoff may not have proved that prairie dogs actually talk, he has found out what most of us have suspected all along: Animals have a lot to tell us. We just have to find out the best ways to listen.

36

According to paragraph 3, the calls of prairie dogs are “distinctive” because they

- A are understood by other animals
- B tend to be short
- C convey important information
- D are unique sounds

37

Which claim by the author is **most** strongly supported with evidence?

- A “Prairie dogs got their name because people thought their calls sounded a little like a dog’s bark.” (paragraph 1)
- B “It’s hard for humans to hear the differences between the calls, though, because they only last about half a second . . .” (paragraph 3)
- C “The prairie dogs watched regular dogs the same way they watched coyotes, but not as intensely.” (paragraph 7)
- D “Slobodchikoff also thinks prairie dogs pay attention to the order of the sounds . . .” (paragraph 11)



38

Read this sentence from paragraph 9.

**At first Slobodchikoff couldn't believe it.**

Which statement provides the **best** support for this claim?

- A Prairie dogs have almost the same response to coyotes as they do to the regular dogs they encounter.
- B Prairie dogs have similar reactions to airborne predators, although they have a variety of responses to land animals.
- C Prairie dogs have unique responses to people wearing different colors as well as to various types of dogs.
- D Prairie dogs have alarm calls they use to warn their colonies, although their calls provoke little response.

39

How does paragraph 5 relate to paragraph 10?

- A by explaining that prairie dog alarms appear to contain specific details
- B by indicating the similarity of prairie dog alarm calls about airborne predators
- C by explaining that prairie dogs may make a continuous sound when they communicate
- D by indicating that prairie dog calls distinguish between land animals and birds

**GO ON**

40

Which statement **best** represents a central idea of the article?

- A “Actually, maybe they should’ve been called prairie watchdogs because they bark to alert the colony . . .” (paragraph 1)
- B “After all, prairie dogs are just rodents, like mice and rats, and aren’t supposed to be that smart.” (paragraph 9)
- C “Although the calls are a single sound, or at least a continuous one, they seem to carry a lot of information.” (paragraph 10)
- D “Besides studying alarm calls, he has also recorded the little noises, the chitter-chattering . . .” (paragraph 11)

41

Read this phrase from paragraph 11.

**They chitter-chatter, but they don’t chatter-chitter.**

What does this phrase suggest about prairie dogs?

- A The noises prairie dogs make to each other consist of predictable patterns.
- B Prairie dogs are unable to reverse the order of the sounds they make to each other.
- C The noises prairie dogs make to each other are less important than their alarm calls.
- D Prairie dogs usually ignore the sounds that are unrelated to the presence of predators.

42

The **main** reason spectrograms are important to Slobodchikoff’s research is because they

- A suggest to researchers that prairie dogs respond to different clothes
- B help researchers analyze prairie dog alarm calls from several miles away
- C enable researchers to hear slowed-down prairie dog alarm calls
- D allow researchers to compare many prairie dog alarm calls

**GO ON**

# Directions

Read this article. Then answer question 43.

*Jef Wilson is the author of two books about the benefits of physical activity.*

## Excerpt from *Hiking for Fun!*

*by Jef Wilson*

### Getting Back to Nature

1 Hiking, which is exploring the outdoors on foot, is one of the best ways to get connected to nature. It's basically walking or climbing on nature routes or trails. Sometimes there is a special destination, but often the reward of hiking is the walk itself and everything you see along the way—trees, plants, animals, and bodies of water. For many people, it's a great way to “get away from it all.”

2 Once you've mastered the basics of hiking, you might even want to move on to orienteering,<sup>1</sup> a competition in which hikers navigate their way across an area of land. Orienteering will really put your hiking skills to the challenge!

### Exploring New Territory

3 Today, we can easily find out about a place on the other side of the world through encyclopedias, the Internet, and maps. But before there were maps of the whole world, people only knew about the areas close to them. Hiking explorers were the first to find out about other lands.

4 An ancient Egyptian explorer named Hannu (also known as Hennu) made the first recorded expedition, or trip, around 2750 B.C. Hannu wrote about his explorations in stone. He explored areas that are now part of eastern Ethiopia and Somalia. When he returned to Egypt, he brought back great treasures including metal, wood, and precious myrrh, which is dried tree sap used in perfumes.

5 Many hikers, trailblazers, and other explorers have charted the world since Hannu. Their efforts have helped people learn all the things we know about the world today.

6 The Lewis and Clark expedition, from 1804 to 1806, was the first trip to the Pacific Coast and back. In the early 1800s, most of the country was uncharted, and people knew very little about it. Lewis and Clark made maps of major rivers and mountain ranges.

### A Hike for Everyone!

7 Hiking allows all kinds of people to enjoy nature. Boys and girls, men and women, young folks and seniors—hiking is for everyone. When you hike, you set your own pace and control where and how you go.

**GO ON**

8           Why hike? Hiking allows you to go to places that often cannot be seen any other way. Most hiking trails do not allow cars and bikes, so the only way to enjoy them is by your own two feet. Most hikers also find peace in nature. It can help you relax and relieve stress.

9           Because of its wide appeal, hiking is a great way to spend time with your family and friends. There are different types of hiking. Off-trail hiking is called “bushwalking” or “bushwhacking.” Overnight or longer hikes are called “backpacking.” Hiking even has other names in different parts of the world. New Zealanders use the word “tramping” for overnight trips. Hiking in the mountains of Nepal and India is called “trekking.”

### **Exercise Your Rights**

10          Besides being fun, hiking is great exercise! Regular hiking builds strong muscles, a strong heart, and healthy lungs. It builds stamina and endurance, which means you’ll have more energy for longer periods of time!

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<sup>1</sup>**orienteering:** a competitive sport that involves racing to checkpoints using a map and compass

**43**

**This question is worth 2 credits.**

In “Excerpt from *Hiking for Fun!*” how is a central claim supported in paragraphs 1 and 2? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

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**GO ON**

# Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 44 through 46.

*Brent Coleman is a staff writer for the Cincinnati Enquirer.*

## Excerpt from *Want a Healthier Family? Tell Them to Take a Hike*

*by Brent Coleman*

1 One of Tammy York’s treasured moments with her two children occurred when they were on a hike at Cincinnati Nature Center during the last cicada<sup>1</sup> invasion.

2 They spotted a newly hatched cicada hanging low to the ground, got down to its level and watched it dry out its new wings—for an entire hour.

3 “It was better than any movie they’d seen,” York says. “They were so enthralled.”

4 York, who holds a wildlife management degree from Purdue University, worked as a naturalist for 21 years before staying home to be a mom and write a book about hiking in and around Cincinnati.

5 She says she believes there are long-term mental health benefits to hiking with children.

6 York, author of *60 Hikes Within 60 Miles* shares that perspective with Cincinnati father of two Jeff Alt, who just published his second book, *Get Your Kids Hiking*.

### **Fighting Digital Distractions**

7 The two hiking advocates know they’re fighting upstream against digital technology for their kids’ attention. But they say they’ve seen firsthand the payoff of walking in the woods.

8 “It opens the avenue for kids to teach themselves, to concentrate on one thing,” York says, a skill she believes is diminished by spending too much time listening to music on an iPod or playing video games.

9 “There are so many distractions. Everything is calling for their attention,” she says. “Twenty years from now, that one thing (ability to concentrate) is going to be severely lacking in our society.”

10 Hiking, York says, gives a boy or girl’s body the chance to reset itself and his or her mind to focus. . . .

**GO ON**

11 York gave her children tiny “princess” backpacks to hike with. She empowered them  
by letting them choose their snacks (apple or banana, Wheat Thins or pretzels) and  
Crayon colors. She packed drawing paper, water in Nalgene bottles and plastic bags for  
sitting down where it was wet.

12 When kids are little, she says, watch for fatigue on their faces as they hike. Stop and  
sit down. Let them draw what they want and talk about what they want.

13 “If you go out and preach, preach, preach, they’ll tune you out,” York says.

**Little Ones Don’t Know They’re Learning**

14 Alt believes parents’ teaching is absorbed by infants, but there’s a certain point to stop  
doing it.

15 When they say “Look, Daddy, a bird” it’s time to switch to “child directed hiking” in  
which you allow them to touch, smell and engage with nature on their own, Alt says.

16 To help them, he says, “Take along a magnifying glass and let them look at leaves up  
close. Bring a bug holder. Tip rocks over to let them see all the pill bugs underneath.

17 “The goal,” Alt says, “is to expose kids to the outdoors and make it a routine so they  
won’t second-guess<sup>2</sup> it when they get older.”

18 By that he means, second-guess Dad when he says “Kill that iPod, son. It’s time for a  
hike.”

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<sup>1</sup>**cicada:** winged insect that hatches in predictable, long-term cycles

<sup>2</sup>**second-guess:** judge something later, often in a critical or negative way

This question is worth 2 credits.

In "Excerpt from *Want a Healthier Family?*," what effect does the repetition of the word "concentrate" in paragraphs 8 and 9 have on the information in the section "Fighting Digital Distractions"? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

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*Planning Page*

**You may PLAN your writing for question 46 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 21 and 22.**







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**Grade 7**  
**English Language Arts Test**  
**Session 2**  
**Spring 2024**

**THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT**  
**THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234**  
**2024 English Language Arts Tests Map to the Standards**

**Grade 7**

Question	Type	Key	Points	Standard	Subscore	Multiple Choice Questions	Constructed Response Questions	
						Percentage of Students Who Answered Correctly (P-Value)	Average Points Earned	P-Value (Average Points Earned ÷ Total Possible Points)
<b>Session 1</b>								
15	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.2	Reading	0.63		
16	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Reading	0.68		
17	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Reading	0.77		
18	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.5	Reading	0.59		
19	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.4	Reading	0.49		
20	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Reading	0.46		
21	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.2	Reading	0.79		
22	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.4	Reading	0.59		
23	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.2	Reading	0.46		
24	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.6	Reading	0.54		
25	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.9	Reading	0.32		
26	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Reading	0.69		
27	Constructed Response		2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.2	Writing to Sources		1.35	0.67
28	Constructed Response		2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.4	Writing to Sources		1.36	0.68
<b>Session 2</b>								
29	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.2	Reading	0.83		
30	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Reading	0.73		
31	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.L.4	Reading	0.73		
32	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.2	Reading	0.64		
33	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.6	Reading	0.60		
34	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.4	Reading	0.73		
35	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Reading	0.56		
36	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.4	Reading	0.59		
37	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.8	Reading	0.30		
38	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.8	Reading	0.53		
39	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.5	Reading	0.59		
40	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.2	Reading	0.67		
41	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.4	Reading	0.52		
42	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Reading	0.50		
43	Constructed Response		2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.8	Writing to Sources		1.63	0.82
44	Constructed Response		2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.4	Writing to Sources		1.50	0.75
45	Constructed Response		2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.6	Writing to Sources		1.54	0.77
46	Constructed Response		4	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-7.R.3	Writing to Sources		2.24	0.56

\*This item map is intended to identify the primary analytic skills necessary to successfully answer each question on the 2024 operational ELA test. However, each constructed-response question measures proficiencies described in multiple standards, including writing and additional reading and language standards. For example, two-point and four-point constructed-response questions require students to first conduct the analyses described in the mapped standard and then produce written responses that are rated based on writing standards. To gain greater insight into the measurement focus for constructed-response questions, please refer to the rubrics shown in the Educator Guides.