



*Release of
November 2007
MCAS Retest Items*

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Massachusetts Department of Education



This document was prepared by the
Massachusetts Department of Education
Jeffrey Nellhaus
Acting Commissioner of Education

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Commissioner's Foreword

Dear Colleagues:

One of the goals of the Department of Education is to help schools acquire the capacity to plan for and meet the accountability requirements of both state and federal law. In keeping with this goal, the Department regularly releases MCAS test items to provide information regarding the kinds of knowledge and skills that students are expected to demonstrate. In November 2007, MCAS retests in Mathematics and English Language Arts were administered in high schools across the state. In keeping with our past practice of releasing all test items on which student results are based, I am pleased to announce that all questions from these tests are included in *Release of November 2007 MCAS Retest Items*.

This publication is available only through the Department of Education Web site at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/testitems.html. The test items for both ELA and Mathematics can be easily printed from this site. I encourage local educators to use the relevant sections of this document together with their *Test Item Analysis Report Summaries* and *Test Item Analysis Rosters* as guides for planning changes in curriculum and instruction that may be needed to ensure that schools and districts make regular progress in improving student performance.

Thank you for your support as we work together to strengthen education for our students in Massachusetts.

Sincerely,

Jeffrey Nellhaus
Acting Commissioner of Education

I. Document Purpose and Structure

Document Purpose and Structure

Purpose

The purpose of this document is to share with educators and the public all of the test items from the November 2007 MCAS English Language Arts and Mathematics Retests. Local educators will be able to use this information to identify strengths and weaknesses in their curriculum and instruction, and to guide the changes necessary to more effectively meet their students' needs.

This document is also intended to be used by school and district personnel as a companion document to the Test Item Analysis Reports. Each school in which a retest was administered receives a November Retest *Test Item Analysis Report Summary* and a *Test Item Analysis Roster* for English Language Arts and Mathematics. These reports provide data generated from student responses. Each report lists, for the school receiving the report, the names of all enrolled students who took the November 2007 Retest in that report's content area, and shows how each student answered each test question (item). The report labels each item as multiple-choice, open-response, short-answer, or writing prompt and identifies the item's MCAS reporting category. Item numbers in this document correlate directly to the "Item Numbers" in the Test Item Analysis Reports.

Structure

Chapters II and III of this document contain, respectively, information for the November 2007 English Language Arts and Mathematics Retests. Each of these chapters has three main sections. The first section introduces the chapter by listing the Massachusetts *Curriculum Framework* content strands assessed by MCAS in that chapter's content area. These content strands are identical to the MCAS reporting categories under which retest results are reported to schools and districts. In addition, there is a brief overview of the retest (number of test sessions, types of items, reference materials allowed, and cross-referencing information).

The **second section** contains the test items used to generate November 2007 MCAS student results for that chapter's content area. With the exception of the ELA Composition writing prompt, the test items in this document are shown in the same order and basic format in which they were presented in the test booklets. The Mathematics Reference Sheet used by students during MCAS Mathematics test sessions is inserted immediately following the last question in the Mathematics chapter.

Due to copyright restrictions, certain English Language Arts reading passages are not available on the Department's Internet site. Copyright information for all reading passages is provided in the document. For further information, contact Student Assessment Services at 781-338-3625.

The **final section** of each chapter is a table that cross-references each item with its MCAS reporting category and with the *Framework* standard it assesses. Correct answers to multiple-choice questions and, for the Mathematics retest, short-answer questions are also listed in the table.

Materials presented in this document are **not** formatted **exactly** as they appeared in student test booklets. For example, in order to present items most efficiently in this document, the following modifications have been made:

- Some fonts and/or font sizes may have been changed and/or reduced.
- Some graphics may have been reduced in size from their appearance in student test booklets; however, they maintain the same proportions in each case.
- All references to page numbers in answer booklets have been deleted from the directions that accompany test items.
- The four lined pages provided for students' initial English Language Arts Composition Retest drafts are omitted.

II. English Language Arts Retest

A. Composition

B. Reading Comprehension

English Language Arts Retest

Test Structure

The English Language Arts Retest was presented in the following two parts:

- the ELA Composition Retest, which used a writing prompt to assess learning standards from the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework's* **Composition** strand
- the ELA Reading Comprehension Retest, which used multiple-choice and open-response questions (items) to assess learning standards from the *Curriculum Framework's* **Language** and **Reading and Literature** strands

A. Composition

The English Language Arts (ELA) Composition Retest was based on learning standards in the Composition strand of the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework* (2001). These learning standards appear on pages 72–83 of the *Framework*, which is available on the Department Web site at www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html.

In Test Item Analysis Reports, ELA Composition Retest results are reported under the **Composition** reporting category.

Test Sessions and Content Overview

The ELA Composition Retest included two separate test sessions, administered on the same day with a short break between sessions. During the first session, each student wrote an initial draft of a composition in response to the appropriate writing prompt on the next page. During the second session, each student revised his or her draft and submitted a final composition, which was scored in the areas of Topic Development and Standard English Conventions. The MCAS Writing Scoring Guide (Composition Grade 10) is available at www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/scoring10.doc.

Reference Materials

At least one English-language dictionary per classroom was provided for student use during ELA Composition retest sessions. The use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries was allowed for current and former limited English proficient students only. No other reference materials were allowed during either ELA Composition retest session.

Cross-Reference Information

Framework general standards 19–22 are assessed by the ELA Composition.

English Language Arts Retest

November Retest Writing Prompt

WRITING PROMPT

Often in works of literature, a character influences others in good or bad ways.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a character who has the power to influence other characters in good or bad ways. In a well-developed composition, identify the character, describe how the character influences others in good or bad ways, and explain how the character's behavior is important to the work of literature.

B. Reading Comprehension

The English Language Arts Reading Comprehension Retest was based on learning standards in the two content strands of the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework* (2001) listed below. Page numbers for the learning standards appear in parentheses.

- Language (*Framework*, pages 19–26)
- Reading and Literature (*Framework*, pages 35–64)

The *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework* is available on the Department Web site at www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html.

In Test Item Analysis Reports, ELA Reading Comprehension retest results are reported under two MCAS reporting categories: **Language** and **Reading and Literature**, which are identical to the two *Framework* content strands listed above.

Test Sessions

The ELA Reading Comprehension Retest included three separate test sessions. Sessions 1 and 2 were both administered on the same day, and Session 3 was administered on the following day. Each session included selected readings, followed by multiple-choice and open-response questions. Reading passages and test items are shown on the following pages as they appeared in test booklets. Due to copyright restrictions, certain passages cannot be released to the public on the Web site.

Reference Materials

The use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries was allowed for limited English proficient students only, during all three ELA Reading Comprehension sessions. No other reference materials were allowed during any ELA Reading Comprehension retest session.

Cross-Reference Information

The table at the conclusion of this chapter indicates each item’s reporting category and the *Framework* general standard it assesses. The correct answers for multiple-choice questions are also displayed in the table.

English Language Arts

READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 1

DIRECTIONS

This session contains two reading selections with twelve multiple-choice questions and two open-response questions. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

In northern New Zealand, the forces of nature have created elaborate caves. Read this article about the caves, and then answer the questions that follow.

The “Stars” of Waitomo Cave

by Donna O’Meara

1 **A**fter driving two hours west of Rotorua on the North Island of New Zealand, past rolling green hills dotted with white sheep and bush, I pull into the sleepy little village of Waitomo. The village is built on a foundation of limestone bedrock that has been shaped by the age-old forces of water. Its specialized topography¹ is called a *karst* landscape (from the German for the limestone region of Kras, which includes parts of Slovenia, Croatia, and Italy), and is marked by sinkholes, caves, deep shafts, and disappearing rivers.

2 Thirty million years ago, Waitomo was under the sea. Shells from crabs, clams, and other sea creatures compacted on the sea floor to form limestone. But, over time, the motion of earth’s crust pushed New Zealand up and out of the sea.

3 The force left fractures and crevices in the new land. Rain, mixed with carbon dioxide from our atmosphere, formed a weak acid that slowly ate away at the limestone as it trickled through these cracks. The cracks widened into deep shafts, and then into

caves with underground rivers. The name Waitomo comes from the Maori words *wai* for water and *tomo* for shaft. The Maori are a New Zealand people of Polynesian and Melanesian² descent.

4 I am greeted at the opening of the largest cave by a young Maori woman, whose bright smile glows against her honey-colored skin and dark, wavy hair. “My name is Kuranui and I will be your guide today,” she tells me and a few other eager cave explorers. “Follow me, watch your step, and don’t bump your head.”

5 As we enter the dark mouth of the cave, Kuranui tells us her ancestors, the Maori people who first settled New Zealand, knew of this cave for thousands of years, but kept its location a secret. However, in 1887, her great grandparents showed the cave system to a friend, an Englishman named Fred Mace, who was interested in exploring and mapping caves. Mace turned over his maps and photographs of the cave system to the New Zealand government, which eventually convinced the Maori to open the caves as a

¹ *topography* — the surface features of a place or region

² *Polynesian/Melanesian* — people native to islands in the South Pacific

tourist attraction in 1911. Today, the cave system is New Zealand's largest tourist draw, hosting 400,000 visitors annually.

6 Inside, the floor of the cave that we are exploring feels slippery and smooth. I am blinded for an instant as my eyes adapt to the dim interior. I immediately notice the sound of dripping water. The air is warm and moist. We wriggle through a narrow passage about 60 centimeters wide and about 4 meters high as we climb down farther into the earth. Soft lights make the cave interior look as though it were molded from creamy wax or polished alabaster.³ The walls look like folded silk.

7 Kuranui tells us that we are entering the Cathedral Room. The smooth reflective quality of the walls makes the acoustics⁴ so perfect in this large cavern that the New Zealand Opera once held a small concert (an opera singer and most likely taped music) for a select audience here by candlelight!

8 It looks like a fairy world. The rumpled walls soar to a ceiling almost 20 meters high. A massive calcite crystal column dominates the cavern. What look like milky-glass icicles hang from the rippled ceiling and jut from a pale floor that looks like poured banana pudding. "This," Kuranui says, "is the cave's way of interior decorating." All of these curving, twisting formations, which to me seem to be the artwork of angels, are called *speleothems*. The speleothems are splashed with streaks of pastel pink, yellow, amber, red, and green. Speleothems come in many shapes and sizes and are all formed from water: sitting water, dripping water, and flowing water.

9 The "icicles" overhead are actually spear-shaped straw stalactites. They originate when a single drop of water dangles from

the ceiling and deposits a tiny circle of calcite crystals. Over time, this creates a ring-shaped build-up. The process repeats over time and a cone-shaped stalactite is formed.

10 When the droplet falls and strikes the floor, it deposits calcite that builds upward to form a stalagmite. Sometimes the stalactite and the stalagmite grow together and form a large column. Waitomo's greatest column weighs approximately 2,500 kilograms. By some estimates, it takes about 8 million drops of water per day (about 92 drops per second) and 4,000 years to form one 1.8-meter-high stalagmite.

11 The wavy walls and floor are covered with flowstone. The crystal ripples, "curtains," "draperies," and "shawls" are formed when water flows in sheets down cave walls.

12 As we forge deeper into the cave, the path narrows and slopes sharply. We duck under a large crystal archway overhead and stop at the edge of a precipice, where we see the top of a wooden ladder. At the ladder's bottom, about 3 meters down, is a small boat containing a long pole. It is floating on a smooth river that looks black because it is unlit.

13 Using her flashlight to see, Kuranui escorts each of us down into the boat. As she picks up the pole and pushes off from the cave wall, she instructs us to stop talking as she turns off her flashlight. I hear the trickle of water against the boat. We silently maneuver through dark underground corridors and channels.

14 Next, our guide asks us to close our eyes. The boat stops and gently rocks back and forth. "OK," Kuranui says. "Open your eyes." I see what appears to be the most brilliant star-filled night sky I could ever

³ *alabaster* — a white, smooth stone often used in statues

⁴ *acoustics* — factors influencing how well sound is heard

imagine. Millions of twinkling “stars” shine overhead on the cave’s ceiling. “This,” Kuranui whispers, “is Glowworm Grotto.” The spectacle is pure magic. I can’t believe these “stars” are worms!

15 Although other glowworm caves exist throughout the world, this particular glowworm, *Arachnocampa luminosa*, is found only in New Zealand. The Glowworm Cave of Waitomo has the perfect humidity, darkness, temperature, and structure to host the largest concentration of glowworms in the country. Glowworms are the larval or maggot stage of a tiny flying insect, the fungus gnat. The worm’s greenish glow, called *bioluminescence*, is produced by a special internal process.

16 After hatching from eggs, the glowworms remain attached to the cave ceiling with a sticky substance for nine months. Like cave fishermen, they “cast” down a sticky line.

Insects flying into the cave are snagged, reeled in, and eaten. The hungrier the worm is, the brighter it glows. After nine months in this glowworm stage, the worm becomes a gnat and lives for only three more days.

17 Still amazed by what we have just seen, we drift toward the back of the cave toward an opening about 6 meters high. Insects that feed the glowworms fly in through this opening, and the mature glowworms fly out of it as gnats. We dock and climb out of the boat. Sunlight begins to filter in as we make our exit. Kuranui, I realize, is doing just what her ancestors would have wanted her to do. She is sharing *and* protecting her Maori cultural heritage by caretaking for this unique cave system. She is ensuring that its beauty will be preserved for generations of visitors and Maori to enjoy.

LET IT GLOW, LET IT GLOW, LET IT GLOW

18 **H**ow does the glowworm glow? The function is called *bioluminescence*. Bioluminescence is light made by an organism through a chemical reaction. Many deep sea fish are bioluminescent, but on land only this gnat and a few other insects such as the firefly produce light.

19 When the glowworm combines a waste product called luciferin with the enzyme luciferase and the energy molecule ATP (adenosine triphosphate), an electronically excited glow results.

20 Bioluminescence is different from fluorescence and phosphorescence, which result when light from an outside source, such as a light bulb, is absorbed and then re-emitted as photons. That’s how glow-in-the-dark ceiling stars, pens, posters, and t-shirts work.

21 By the way, if you’re lucky enough to visit the glowworms someday, please don’t shine your flashlight on them. It would weaken them, their light would fade, and they would go hungry.

- 1 According to the article, what does the Maori name “Waitomo” mean in English?
- A. icicle cave
 - B. water shaft
 - C. glowworm grotto
 - D. waxed wall cavern
- 2 According to paragraph 5, what action of Kuranui’s ancestors led to the development of Waitomo as a tourist attraction?
- A. They drew maps of the entire cave system.
 - B. They designed a lighting system for the caves.
 - C. They showed the caves to an interested friend.
 - D. They invited thousands of visitors to the caves.
- 3 In paragraphs 6 and 8, what is the **main** effect of the similes “like folded silk” and “like poured banana pudding”?
- A. They emphasize the texture of the caves.
 - B. They suggest how the stone caves were formed.
 - C. They illustrate the varying colors of the stone caves.
 - D. They show how the caves are different from other caves.
- 4 In addition to its extraordinary beauty, the Cathedral Room is **most** notable for its
- A. spectacular indoor lighting.
 - B. quiet, worshipful atmosphere.
 - C. excellent sound transmission.
 - D. comfortable, even temperature.

- 5 Based on paragraph 17, why did the Maori keep the location of the caves a secret for thousands of years?
- A. They valued the caves as forts.
 - B. They thought the caves were dangerous.
 - C. They feared outsiders would harm the caves.
 - D. They thought others would not be interested in the caves.
- 6 How does the author of the article **mainly** organize her description of the cave system?
- A. She explains the stages of the caves' development.
 - B. She classifies the various kinds of cave rock formations.
 - C. She compares and contrasts two of the underground caves.
 - D. She describes what she sees as she moves through the caves.
- 7 Which of the following is the **best** definition of the word *descent* as it is used in paragraph 3?
- A. gradual decline
 - B. attack or onslaught
 - C. downward passage
 - D. ancestry or lineage
- 8 In paragraph 14, why is the word “stars” placed inside quotation marks?
- A. The stars are those of a Maori song.
 - B. The stars referred to are not real stars.
 - C. “Stars” is the most important word in the article.
 - D. “Stars” is a quote from something Kuranui says.

Question 9 is an open-response question.

- **Read the question carefully.**
- **Explain your answer.**
- **Add supporting details.**
- **Double-check your work.**

Write your answer to question 9 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

- 9** Based on the article, explain how the guide Kuranui enriches the experience of the tourists who are visiting the caves. Support your answer with relevant and specific information from the article.

**NO TEST MATERIAL
ON THIS PAGE**

**GO TO THE
NEXT PAGE**

How can a pleasant walk along the beach become a moral conflict? Read what happens in this excerpt of “Setting Free the Crabs” from the book *Small Wonder* and answer the questions that follow.

Setting Free the Crabs

by Barbara Kingsolver

- 1 **A**t the undulating line where the waves licked the sand on Sanibel Island, our three pairs of human footprints wove a long, sinuous path behind us. Littoral zone: no-man’s-land, a place of intertidal danger for some forms of life and of blissful escape for others. The deliberate, monotonous call and response of waves—assail, retreat—could have held me here forever in a sunlight that felt languid as warm honey on my skin. So we moved in a trance, my mother, my daughter, and I, the few sandblasted clamshells and knotty whelks we had gathered clacking together in the bag that hung carelessly from my fingertips. Our practiced beachcombers’ eyes remained on high alert, though, and eventually my daughter’s eye caught the first true find of our day: a little horse conch,¹ flame orange, faceted, perfect as a jewel. *Treasure.*
- 2 My daughter wanted to take it home, I know. She turned it over, already awed like any lottery winner by the stroke of sudden wealth and the rapid reordering of the mind that tells itself, *Yes! You did deserve this.*
- 3 And then her face fell. “Uh-oh,” she said. “Already taken.”
- 4 “Oh, shoot,” my mother said. “Is it alive?” There are laws, on Sanibel, about taking live creatures from the ocean.
- 5 “Well, not the conch—that’s gone. But a hermit crab’s in the shell.”
- 6 Two small white claws protruded from the opening. The sluggish gastropod that had been architect and builder of this magnificent orange edifice had already died—probably yesterday, judging from the condition of the shell—but as any house hunter can tell you, no home this gorgeous stands empty for long. A squatter crab had moved in.
- 7 “Oh, they don’t care if you take *those*,” my mother reassured her. “There are thousands of hermit crabs on this beach.”
- 8 She was right, of course, though I could not help thinking, There are thousands of us on this beach, too—at what point do we become expendable?² But I said nothing, because I had nothing sure to say, and anyway I was more interested in hearing how my daughter would respond. I decided to watch my leggy, passionate ten-year-old walk into the jaws of this dilemma by herself.
- 9 She looked up, uncertain. “But it’s a living creature, Grandmama. We can’t kill it just because we want a shell for our collection.”
- 10 My mother, like every grandmother, wants her grandchildren to have the sun, the moon, and the stars, all tucked into a box with a bright red bow. If my daughter really wanted this shell, Grandmama was going to give her an out. “Well,” she said, summoning remarkable creativity, “can’t we find it another shell?”

¹ *conch* — any of various tropical marine shells

² *expendable* — not worth saving

- 11 My daughter pondered this. She knows, as I do, that a hermit crab won't give up its shell just because you want it. It will hold on. It will relinquish a claw or a head, or whatever else you manage to pull off, rather than come out. Were we going to take this thing home and set out an array of alternatives in front of it, as if it were a hapless³ shopper who'd won a dazzling spree? Some hermit crabs, the bigger ones with reddish claws, are game for a certain amount of terrestrial adventure, but this one wasn't that kind. Away from the littoral zone, this tiny life would give up its ghost⁴ within a few hours. I know this, I'm ashamed to say, from experience. So I waited, as did my husband, who had jogged up to join us, wondering what our little life-and-death huddle was all about.
- 12 My daughter looked at the creature in her hand for a long time and then said firmly, "No. We can't kill it."
- 13 "Anyway, it has the best shell on this whole beach," Steven said, quick to nail a few planks of support to her decision lest it should wobble. "It deserves to keep it."
- 14 So we handed it over to him, and he tossed it far out into the surf, to brood out there however a crustacean mind may brood upon a catastrophe narrowly escaped in the cradle of a human child's hand.

...

³ *hapless* — unfortunate

⁴ *give up its ghost* — to cease living

- 10 According to the excerpt, why does the narrator **not** give her opinion about her daughter's keeping the shell?
- A. She wants her daughter to make the decision.
 - B. She does not care what the decision turns out to be.
 - C. She knows her daughter will not take her advice.
 - D. She would like to have the shell for herself.

- 11 In paragraph 13, what does the metaphor "quick to nail a few planks of support to her decision" suggest to the reader?
- A. The father wants to reinforce his daughter's choice.
 - B. The father is a skillful carpenter.
 - C. The daughter is easily influenced by her grandmother.
 - D. The daughter is stubborn.

- 12 Read the sentence from paragraph 10 in the box below.

My mother, like every grandmother, wants her grandchildren to have the sun, the moon, and the stars, all tucked into a box with a bright red bow.

What does this hyperbole emphasize in the sentence?

- A. The grandmother cares a great deal about material things.
- B. The grandmother values her granddaughter's happiness.
- C. The grandmother wants her granddaughter to care about nature.
- D. The grandmother tries to act like all the other grandmothers she knows.

- 13 Which of the following is a theme in the excerpt?
- A. Parents must protect their children.
 - B. Every living thing is precious.
 - C. Material things are poor measures of wealth.
 - D. Nature is dangerous as well as beautiful.

Question 14 is an open-response question.

- Read the question carefully.
- Explain your answer.
- Add supporting details.
- Double-check your work.

Write your answer to question 14 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

- 14 Based on the excerpt, explain what conflict the narrator’s daughter faces and how her conflict is resolved. Use relevant and specific information from the excerpt to support your answer.

English Language Arts

READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 2

DIRECTIONS

This session contains two reading selections with eleven multiple-choice questions and one open-response question. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

*Kade's father was a minor league pitcher until he crushed his thumb in a mill accident. He becomes bitter and discouraged without baseball. Read this excerpt from the novel *The Brothers K* to find out how the father plans to get baseball back in his life. Answer the questions that follow.*

The Brothers K

by DAVID JAMES DUNCAN

- 1 One day along about the time the big league teams were moving out of Florida and Arizona and up into the cold with the rest of us, Papa and Roy drove home from the mill an hour early, and out of Roy's pickup unloaded the first really good clue as to the nature of Papa's building project: a load of clean topsoil, which they heaped right in the center of the shed's floorless floor. I knew at that moment that Papa was building a pitcher's mound in there. And I took some joy in this discovery. My joy was guarded, however, by a dozen or so unanswerable questions which the mound raised, like welts, in my mind. For instance:
- 2 "What possible good will a pitcher's mound in a manurey backyard hutch do him with the rest of the ballpark, not to mention the team, completely missing?"
- 3 And "What good will any sort of mound anywhere do him with his pitching thumb still dead as a doornail and his life still chained to a daily stint at the mill?"
- 4 Still, once I knew that the shed had to do with baseball—once I realized that he was focusing (however fuzzily) on pitching, and that this new focus had him looking darned near as happy as he looked insane—I kept my questions to myself. While the trapeze artist is in mid-flip, while the tamer's head is halfway down the lion, while the magician's saw is passing through the lady in the box, even the thickest kid in the audience knows it's no time for questions.
- 5 Papa eventually made his pitcher's mound perfect. He spent four or five hours, two nights in a row, painstakingly shaping, reshaping and tamping down the dirt with shovels and feet and a big iron bar before he was satisfied enough to plant a pitcher's rubber smack-dab on the summit. Then—one balmy, half-mooned mid-April evening when my brothers were all off at their various ball practices and Mama and the twins were inside the house—I suddenly had Papa, his shed, and his happy insanity all to myself. . . .
- 6 The first thing Papa did that night was drag the old wood extension ladder out from under the house and lean it against the back wall of the garage. Next he stuck an electric drill and a few other tools in his carpenter's belt, climbed the ladder, and began wiring two lights in up under the garage eave—spotlights this time, great big powerful ones. When he got them both working he aimed their brilliant beams in a V straight down the wall, then tried—and failed—to sound casual as he told me to grab a tape and check the distance from the pitcher's rubber to the spot where the beams struck the ground. "It's a clue, Kade," he said. "A good one."

- 7 But I needed no clues. I'd finally pieced it together. This was no harebrained fraction of an imaginary ballpark. It was something perfectly practical—assuming that its builder was a pitcher. Papa's backyard shed was an all-weather bullpen and the garage wall was simply its backstop. He'd just built himself a warm, dry place in which to practice pitching year-round. Trying to play it cool, and failing just like Papa, I said, "I don't need a tape. I can eyeball it. It's sixty feet six inches—exactly."
- 8 He didn't laugh when I said this. He barely even smiled. He just said, "A regular Sherlock," meaning Holmes, I guess, and tossed down his keys like I was sixteen and had asked to borrow the car. "Bring back anything odd you might find in the trunk of the Fortyford," he said.
- 9 I ran round the house and down to the car at the curb, yanked open the trunk, and was not at all surprised to find a battered old home plate lying there. What did surprise me was that the instant I picked it up, wham! *yak butter* . . . Papa's whole project ceased to feel arcane or mysterious and began instead to make a boy's kind of sense. Common sense. *Baseball* sense. Had it been a new plate I don't know what I'd have felt, but something about this beat-up matter-of-fact one made everything Papa was doing seem just as matter-of-fact. Some sort of genuine athletic comeback was in the making here. I just knew it. I could taste it. But only on the inside of me. Outside of me the whole project still seemed so crazy and vulnerable that in order to protect it I carried that indestructible house-shaped old slab of rubber back around the garage as if it were blown glass or precious china. "It won't break," Papa laughed when he saw me coming. "You can pound it in yourself," he added, "soon as you've done the preliminary honors."
- 10 I asked what honors those were. He pointed at the garden hoe and rake leaning against the toolshed. "How about weeding me out a batter's box?"
- 11 I set to work like a pirate who's just found the X on the map. Meanwhile Papa went back in the garage, and returned with a used twin mattress. When he'd spotted this pee-stained relic at a Goodwill drop-box a few weeks back, he'd cried, "Perfect!" and tied it to the roof of the car—causing my brothers and me to wonder yet again about his mental health. But when he got it home he'd calmly covered it with two sheets of black plastic and a third layer of rainproof Army surplus canvas, and now its purpose was obvious: padding and soundproofing for his garage-wall backstop. Nailing two stout metal bookshelf brackets to the wall, he hung the mattress from them by its handles.
- 12 He disappeared into the garage again, and this time was gone long enough for me to desod the "batter's box," pick out every last rock and weed, and work the dirt smooth as the top of a fresh pumpkin pie by dragging the back of the rake over it again and again. While I worked the day turned dusky without my noticing. But what I did notice, under the spotlights, was the odd, half-canceled dual shadows that I was casting. They looked uncannily familiar. I straightened up, tried to place them, couldn't, and had just started raking again when it hit me: they were almost exactly the sorts of shadows that ballplayers cast at a night ballgame. Like a painter trying to get perspective, I backed away from my efforts then, and was delighted to see that, at least in this light, my hokey handmade batter's box had truly begun to resemble a few square feet of bona fide bush league ball diamond. *And if a homemade batter's box can get this real this fast, I thought, there's no reason why Papa can't make it out of this yard, out of the mill, clear on out of this town and back into pro ball . . .*
- 13 At which point I heard the school bus bringing my brothers home, my brain kicked in, our yard turned back into a yard, and I mumbled aloud, "Naw. No way. Don't be ridiculous."

- 14 “What’s ridiculous?” Papa asked—and I jumped. I hadn’t heard him slip up behind me.
- 15 “Nothing!” I snapped. “Nothing’s ridiculous!” But he looked a little hurt, so I added,
“You weren’t supposed to hear is all. I was thinking out loud.”
- 16 “About what?”
- 17 I shrugged. “You and baseball.”
- 18 “Oh,” he said. “Well. Me and baseball. That *is* ridiculous.”
- 19 We both began to laugh then, and for a moment that yak butter belief in a comeback filled me a second time. But right at the height of it Papa stopped laughing, looked around the yard, waved a careless hand at everything we’d done, and said, “You know, Kade. This whole thing, this shed business, it really *is* ridiculous.” Then he smiled—and sadly, almost shyly added, “But Vera says her stupid prayers no matter what. Right?”
- 20 . . . It was a gesture, a wonderful gesture. But a gesture nonetheless. “Look, Kade,” he said, reaching down and squeezing my sagging shoulders. “My situation, baseball-wise, is hopeless.”
- 21 My throat began to close. I looked away to hide the welling in my eyes.
- 22 “The thing is,” he said, “I don’t want you getting worked up over nothing when I start spending time out here. I built this shed because throwing baseballs keeps my head on straight. I did *not* build it to inaugurate some sort of fairytale comeback. Do you understand that?”
- 23 I stared at the little piece of diamond we’d just made.
- 24 “No matter how well I may eventually seem to be throwing, and no matter what your all-knowing brother Everett may say, all I’m ever gonna do out here is toss the pitcher’s equivalent of harelip prayers. Okay?”
- 25 My tongue felt thick and dry now—not a hint of yak butter anywhere.
- 26 “Don’t think of it as baseball, Kade. Call it my hobby, or some weird kind of worship maybe. Call it psalmball, or shedball, or thumbball if you like. But remember it’s not baseball. It’s not a comeback. You’ve got to promise me that.”
- 27 A lump of sandstone lay in my throat. I couldn’t speak. But he waited. He waited till our eyes met, then bent my will like an arm wrestler bends a wrist: I had to nod to keep from breaking. “Okay,” he said, handing me his hammer. “Let’s pound in that plate.”
- 28 We did so. But I took no pleasure in it now. And when Papa stepped back and sighed, “That’s it, such as it is . . .” he just looked like a worn-out millworker.

. . .

- 15 According to the excerpt, why is Kade's father building a place to pitch?
- A. He needs to regain the strength in his injured hand.
 - B. He needs pitching to help him through daily life.
 - C. He wants to teach Kade everything he knows about pitching.
 - D. He finally feels ready to try to become a pro ball player again.
- 16 Which of the following quotations **best** shows the importance of the project to Papa?
- A. “. . . Papa and Roy drove home from the mill an hour early, and out of Roy's pickup unloaded the first really good clue . . .” (paragraph 1)
 - B. “He spent four or five hours, two nights in a row, painstakingly shaping, reshaping and tamping down the dirt . . .” (paragraph 5)
 - C. “Next he stuck an electric drill and a few other tools in his carpenter's belt . . .” (paragraph 6)
 - D. “. . . Papa stopped laughing, looked around the yard, waved a careless hand . . .” (paragraph 19)
- 17 Reread paragraph 9. Why does Kade carry the home plate so carefully?
- A. It is old and very fragile.
 - B. It comes from the ballpark where Papa pitched.
 - C. It represents his athletic talents.
 - D. It symbolizes his hopes for Papa's comeback.

- 18 What do the narrator's italicized thoughts in paragraph 12 reveal about him?
- A. They show that he loves baseball more than anything else.
 - B. They explain the inner conflict he feels.
 - C. They express his deepest wish for his father.
 - D. They show he is a thinker rather than a person of action.
- 19 Based on the excerpt, why does Papa suggest Kade should call what he does in the bullpen "psalmball, or shedball, or thumbball"?
- A. He knows Kade is upset and wants to make him laugh.
 - B. He takes pride in being a little bit different from everyone else.
 - C. He wants Kade to accept that he will never play pro baseball again.
 - D. He wants Kade to know he does not want an audience when he is in the bullpen.
- 20 Which of the following **best** describes the difference between Kade and Papa in the excerpt?
- A. Kade is stubborn while Papa is patient.
 - B. Kade is hopeful while Papa is realistic.
 - C. Papa is hardworking while Kade is lazy.
 - D. Papa has finished his baseball career while Kade is just beginning his.
- 21 The excerpt begins and ends with a mention of the mill. What does this suggest to the reader?
- A. how important the mill is to the survival of Kade's family
 - B. that the materials for Papa's bullpen come from the mill
 - C. how Papa's job at the mill is a source of conflict between him and Kade
 - D. the reality that Papa is a millworker rather than a ballplayer

Question 22 is an open-response question.

- Read the question carefully.
- Explain your answer.
- Add supporting details.
- Double-check your work.

Write your answer to question 22 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

- 22 Describe how Kade’s feelings change over the course of the excerpt. Use relevant and specific information from the excerpt to support your answer.

In the following poem, the speaker and her mother struggle to make a decision. Read the poem and answer the questions that follow.

The Black Walnut Tree

Students read a selection titled “The Black Walnut Tree” and then answered questions 23 through 26 that follow on pages 26–27 of this document.

Due to copyright restrictions, the selection cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the copyright citation below.

From TWELVE MOONS by Mary Oliver. Copyright © 1972, 1973, 1974, 1976, 1977, 1978, 1979 by Mary Oliver. By permission of Little, Brown and Co.

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-
- 23 What is the **main** purpose of lines 1–5 of the poem?
- A. to describe the setting
 - B. to establish the conflict
 - C. to reveal a family secret
 - D. to suggest a universal truth
- 24 In line 1, the speaker states that “My mother and I debate.” She is indicating that they debate
- A. with the lumberman.
 - B. about the fate of their tree.
 - C. with the mortgage bankers.
 - D. about the condition of their cellar drains.

- 25 In lines 27–28, why does the speaker **most likely** confess that she and her mother would “crawl with shame / in the emptiness we’d made”?
- A. They would have lost a piece of their heritage.
 - B. They would have lowered the value of their home.
 - C. They would be embarrassed in front of their neighbors.
 - D. They would regret the loss of shade provided by the tree.

- 26 Read lines 30–35 of the poem in the box below.

So the black walnut tree
swings through another year
of sun and leaping winds,
of leaves and bounding fruit,
and, month after month, the whip-
crack of the mortgage.

What is emphasized by the metaphor in the last two lines?

- A. the sacrifices necessary to keep the tree
- B. the pleasure the tree brings to the speaker
- C. the appearance of the tree during different seasons
- D. the income the tree produces for the speaker and her mother

English Language Arts

READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 3

DIRECTIONS

This session contains two reading selections with thirteen multiple-choice questions and one open-response question. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

In the following essay about hummingbirds, author Diane Ackerman helps to explain the widespread fascination with these tiny birds. Read the essay and answer the questions that follow.

Mute Dancers: How to Watch a Hummingbird

by DIANE ACKERMAN

- 1 A lot of hummingbirds die in their sleep. Like a small fury of iridescence, a hummingbird spends the day at high speed, darting and swiveling among thousands of nectar-rich blossoms. Hummingbirds have huge hearts and need colossal amounts of energy to fuel their flights, so they live in a perpetual mania to find food. They tend to prefer red, trumpet-shaped flowers, in which nectar thickly oozes, and eat every 15 minutes or so. A hummingbird drinks with a W-shaped tongue, licking nectar up as a cat might (but faster). Like a tiny drum roll, its heart beats at 500 times a minute. Frighten a hummingbird and its heart can race to over 1,200 times a minute. Feasting and flying, courting and dueling, hummingbirds consume life at a fever pitch. No warm-blooded animal on earth uses more energy, for its size. But that puts them at great peril. By day's end, wrung-out and exhausted, a hummingbird rests near collapse.
- 2 In the dark night of the hummingbird, it can sink into a zombielike state of torpor; its breathing grows shallow and its wild heart slows to only 36 beats a minute. When dawn breaks on the fuchsia and columbine,¹ hummingbirds must jump-start their hearts and fire up their flight muscles to raise their body temperature for another all-or-nothing day. That demands a colossal effort, which some can't manage. So a lot of hummingbirds die in their sleep.
- 3 But most do bestir themselves. This is why, in American Indian myths and legends, hummingbirds are often depicted as resurrection birds, which seem to die and be reborn on another day or in another season. The Aztec² god of war was named Huitzilopochtli, a compound word meaning "shining one with weapon like cactus thorn," and "sorcerer that spits fire." Aztec warriors fought, knowing that if they fell in battle they would be reincarnated as glittery, thuglike hummingbirds. The male birds were lionized³ for their ferocity in battle. And

¹ *fuchsia and columbine* — plants with showy flowers

² *Aztec* — the Native American people who dominated northern Mexico in the early sixteenth century

³ *lionized* — regarded with great respect

their feathers flashed in the sun like jewel-encrusted shields. Aztec rulers donned ceremonial robes of hummingbird feathers. As they walked, colors danced across their shoulders and bathed them in a supernatural light show.

4 While most birds are busy singing a small operetta of who and what and where, hummingbirds are virtually mute. Such small voices don't carry far, so they don't bother much with song. But if they can't serenade a mate, or yell war cries at a rival, how can they perform the essential dramas of their lives? They dance. Using body language, they spell out their intentions and moods, just as bees, fireflies or hula dancers do. That means elaborate aerial ballets in which males twirl, joust, sideswipe and somersault. Brazen and fierce, they will take on large adversaries—even cats, dogs or humans.

5 My neighbor Persis once told me how she'd been needled by hummingbirds. When Persis lived in San Francisco, hummingbirds often attacked her outside her apartment building. From their perspective she was on *their* property, not the other way round, and they flew circles around her to vex her away. My encounters with hummingbirds have been altogether more benign. Whenever I've walked through South American rain forests, with my hair braided and secured by a waterproof red ribbon, hummingbirds have assumed my ribbon to be a succulent flower and have probed my hair repeatedly, searching for nectar. Their touch was as delicate as a sweat bee's. But it was their purring by my ear that made me twitch. In time, they would leave unfed, but for a while I felt like a character in a Li'l Abner cartoon who could be named something like "Hummer." In Portuguese, the word for hummingbird (*Beija flor*) means "flower kisser." It was the American colonists who first imagined the birds humming as they went about their chores.

6 Last summer, the historical novelist Jeanne Mackin winced to see her cat, Beltane, drag in voles, birds and even baby rabbits. Few things can compete with the blood lust of a tabby cat. But one day Beltane dragged in something rare and shimmery—a struggling hummingbird. The feathers were ruffled and there was a bit of blood on the breast, but the bird still looked perky and alive. So Jeanne fashioned a nest for it out of a small wire basket lined in gauze, and fed it sugar water from an eye dropper. To her amazement, as she watched, "it miscarried a little pearl." Hummingbird eggs are the size of coffee beans, and females usually carry two. So Jeanne knew one might still be safe inside. After a quiet night, the hummingbird seemed stronger, and when she set the basket outside at dawn, the tiny assault victim flew away.

7 It was a ruby-throated hummingbird that she nursed, the only one native to the East Coast. In the winter they migrate thousands of miles over mountains and open water to Mexico and South America. She may well have been visited by a species known to the Aztecs. Altogether, there are 16 species of hummingbirds in North America, and many dozens in South America, especially near the equator, where they can feed on a buffet of blossoms. The tiniest—the Cuban bee hummingbird—is the smallest warm-blooded animal in the world. About two and one-eighth inches long from beak to tail, it is smaller than the toe of an eagle, and its eggs are like seeds.

8 Hummingbirds are a New World phenomenon. So, too, is vanilla, and their stories are linked. When the early explorers returned home with the riches of the West, they found it impossible, to their deep frustration, to grow vanilla beans. It took ages before they discovered why—that hummingbirds were a key pollinator of vanilla orchids—and devised beaklike splinters of bamboo to do the work of birds.

- 9 Now that summer has come at last, lucky days may be spent watching the antics of hummingbirds. The best way to behold them is to stand with the light behind you, so that the bird faces the sun. Most of the trembling colors aren't true pigments, but the result of light staggering through clear cells that act as prisms. Hummingbirds are iridescent for the same reason soap bubbles are. Each feather contains tiny air bubbles separated by dark spaces. Light bounces off the air bubbles at different angles, and that makes blazing colors seem to swarm and leap. All is vanity in the end. The male's shimmer draws a female to mate. But that doesn't matter much to gardeners, watching hummingbirds patrol the impatiens⁴ as if the northern lights⁵ had suddenly fallen to earth.

⁴ *impatiens* — a popular garden plant

⁵ *the northern lights* — bands of colored light that appear in the sky, most often in the Arctic region

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- 27 What quality of a hummingbird is **most** emphasized by the author's use of the words "darting" and "swiveling" in paragraph 1?
- A. the gleam of its feathers
 - B. the speed of its movements
 - C. its attraction to bright blossoms
 - D. its hostility toward other animals

- 28 Read the sentence from paragraph 1 in the box below.

Feasting and flying, courting and dueling, hummingbirds consume life at a fever pitch.

- What does the sentence **mainly** suggest about hummingbirds?
- A. The lives of hummingbirds are purposeful and hectic.
 - B. Hummingbirds must eat large amounts of food to survive.
 - C. Hummingbirds are capable of doing many things at the same time.
 - D. The habits and activities of hummingbirds are like those of people.

- 29 According to paragraph 2, why does it take a “colossal effort” for a hummingbird to rouse itself each morning?
- A. It becomes overheated while it is sleeping.
 - B. Its ability to fly lessens when it is inactive.
 - C. Its heart rate drops radically during the night.
 - D. It consumes extremely large quantities of food.
- 30 According to paragraph 3, what is the **main** connection between hummingbirds and Aztec warriors?
- A. The warriors believed that male hummingbirds could spit fire.
 - B. The warriors carried shields decorated with hummingbird feathers.
 - C. The warriors believed that they would be reborn as hummingbirds.
 - D. The warriors carried hummingbird feathers to increase their luck in battle.
- 31 According to paragraph 4, why do hummingbirds express themselves through “body language” rather than song?
- A. They have voices that are barely audible.
 - B. They are physically unable to produce sound.
 - C. Their dance is more expressive than the songs of other birds.
 - D. Their wings are better built for flight than those of other birds.
- 32 According to paragraph 7, the Cuban bee hummingbird is **most** remarkable for its
- A. size.
 - B. speed.
 - C. warm blood.
 - D. ruby-colored throat.

- 33 Read the sentence from paragraph 2 in the box below.

In the dark night of the hummingbird, it can sink into a zombielike state of torpor; its breathing grows shallow and its wild heart slows to only 36 beats a minute.

What is the **best** synonym for the word *torpor* as it is used in the sentence?

- A. fear
- B. cold
- C. boredom
- D. inactivity

- 34 Which of the following is **most likely** the root of the word *iridescent* in paragraph 9?
- A. *ira*, meaning “anger”
 - B. *iris*, meaning “rainbow”
 - C. *cent*, meaning “hundred”
 - D. *describe*, meaning “perceive”

Question 35 is an open-response question.

- **Read the question carefully.**
- **Explain your answer.**
- **Add supporting details.**
- **Double-check your work.**

Write your answer to question 35 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

- 35 Describe the types of information the author uses to give the reader a clear understanding of hummingbirds. Support your answer with relevant and specific details from the essay.

In this scene from Act One of Arthur Miller's play A View from the Bridge, Eddie Carbone, a dock worker, is with his wife Beatrice and his niece Catherine in the dining room of the Carbone's Brooklyn apartment. Catherine was raised by her aunt and uncle after her mother died, and she is currently attending secretarial school. Read the scene and answer the questions that follow.

from A View from the Bridge

by Arthur Miller

Students read a selection from *A View from the Bridge* and then answered questions 36 through 40 that follow on pages 36–37 of this document.

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From A VIEW FROM THE BRIDGE by Arthur Miller, copyright © 1955, 1957, renewed © 1983, 1985 by Arthur Miller. Used by permission of Viking Penguin, a division of Penguin Group (USA) Inc.

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- 36 What is the **main** conflict in the scene?
- A. Eddie is worried about Catherine's choice of job.
 - B. Beatrice resents the concern Eddie feels for Catherine.
 - C. Catherine is angered by Eddie's over-protective nature.
 - D. Catherine dislikes having to support Eddie and Beatrice.

- 37 Read lines 95–96 from the scene in the box below.

EDDIE, *smiling but hurt*: I only ask you one thing—don't trust nobody. You got a good aunt but she's got too big a heart, you learned bad from her. Believe me.

What does Eddie **most likely** mean when he says these words to Catherine?

- A. He thinks Beatrice raised Catherine to spend money generously.
- B. He thinks Beatrice taught Catherine to learn from her experiences.
- C. He thinks Beatrice led Catherine to place too much faith in others.
- D. He thinks Beatrice encouraged Catherine to leave school before finishing.

- 38 Which statement **best** describes Beatrice's treatment of Catherine in the scene?
- A. Beatrice supports Catherine's choice.
 - B. Beatrice worries excessively about Catherine.
 - C. Beatrice belittles Catherine's attempts to help.
 - D. Beatrice insists that Catherine take her advice.
- 39 Based on the scene, what is the **most likely** reason Eddie finally tells Catherine to take the job?
- A. Eddie works near where Catherine will be working.
 - B. Eddie admires the skills Catherine has demonstrated.
 - C. Eddie knows Catherine will be working in a nice office.
 - D. Eddie understands he must let Catherine make her own decision.
- 40 What is the purpose of the use of dashes in lines 11 and 13?
- A. to introduce comments that explain characters' thoughts
 - B. to introduce ideas that are less important than the main idea
 - C. to indicate that certain lines are to be spoken simultaneously
 - D. to indicate that a character's line is interrupted by another line

English Language Arts
Language and Literature Retest
November 2007 Released Items:
Reporting Categories, Standards, and Correct Answers*

Item No.	Page No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Correct Answer (MC)*
1	11	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	B
2	11	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	C
3	11	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	A
4	11	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	C
5	12	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	C
6	12	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	D
7	12	<i>Language</i>	4	D
8	12	<i>Language</i>	5	B
9	13	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	
10	17	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	A
11	17	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	A
12	17	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	B
13	17	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	11	B
14	18	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	
15	22	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	B
16	22	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	B
17	22	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	D
18	23	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	C
19	23	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	C
20	23	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	B
21	23	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	D
22	24	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	
23	26	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	14	B
24	26	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	B
25	27	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	14	A
26	27	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	14	A
27	30	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	B
28	30	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	A
29	31	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	C
30	31	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	C
31	31	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	A
32	31	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	A
33	32	<i>Language</i>	4	D
34	32	<i>Language</i>	4	B
35	32	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	
36	36	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	A
37	36	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	C
38	37	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	A
39	37	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	D
40	37	<i>Language</i>	5	D

* Answers are provided here for multiple-choice items only. Each open-response item has its own set of scoring guidelines, which allow for valid alternate interpretations and responses.