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## VIII. English Language Arts, Grade 10

A. Composition

B. Reading Comprehension

# Grade 10 English Language Arts Test

## Test Structure

The grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts test was presented in the following two parts:

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

## A. Composition

The spring 2008 grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts Composition test and Composition Make-Up test were based on learning standards in the **Composition** strand of the Massachusetts *English Language Arts Curriculum Framework* (2001). The 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](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html).

In *Test Item Analysis Reports* and on the Subject Area Subscore pages of the MCAS *School Reports* and *District Reports*, ELA Composition test results are reported under the reporting categories **Composition: Topic Development** and **Composition: Standard English Conventions**.

## Test Sessions and Content Overview

The MCAS ELA Composition test 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 Scoring Guides for the MCAS English Language Arts Composition are available at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/elacomp\\_scoreguide.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/elacomp_scoreguide.html).

## Reference Materials and Tools

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

## Cross-Reference Information

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

## English Language Arts Composition, Grade 10

### Grade 10 Writing Prompt

#### WRITING PROMPT

In many works of literature, a character must adjust to life in a new environment.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a character who must adjust to life in a new environment. In a well-developed composition, identify the character, describe how the character adjusts to life in a new environment, and explain how the character's adjustment relates to the work as a whole.

### Grade 10 Make-Up Writing Prompt

#### WRITING PROMPT

In many works of literature, a character goes on a journey that changes his or her life.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a character who goes on a journey that changes his or her life. In a well-developed composition, identify the character, describe how the journey changes the character's life, and explain how the journey relates to the work as a whole.

## B. Reading Comprehension

The spring 2008 grade 10 MCAS English Language Arts Reading Comprehension test 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](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html).

In *Test Item Analysis Reports* and on the Subject Area Subscore pages of the MCAS *School Reports* and *District Reports*, ELA Reading Comprehension test 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 and Content Overview

The MCAS grade 10 ELA Reading Comprehension test 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. Common reading passages and test items are shown on the following pages as they appeared in test booklets. Due to copyright restrictions, certain reading passages cannot be released to the public on the Web site. For further information, contact Student Assessment Services at 781-338-3625.

### Reference Materials and Tools

The use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries was allowed for current and former limited English proficient students only, during all three ELA Reading Comprehension test sessions. No other reference materials were allowed during any ELA Reading Comprehension test 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 three reading selections with sixteen multiple-choice questions and two open-response questions. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

*Have you ever wondered where the ideas for all those clever toys come from? Read the article “Toy Story” to find out how many toys come to be. Answer the questions that follow.*



# TOY STORY

by JOSH SENS

- In 1998, as the last yo-yo craze was winding down, a NASA mechanical designer named Rob Thate put a new spin on the old toy by adding a peg and changing two vowels. His invention, the YaYa, was a cross between a yo-yo and a top. You spun it on the ground and controlled it with a string.
- Thate patented the idea and pitched it to toy-makers. But no one nibbled. Five years later, the YaYa is in production. But like the toy
- itself, there’s a string attached. Thate has put up the money himself.
- “It’s been a long road and a real learning experience, but well worth all the effort,” says Thate, who works at Goddard Space Flight Center in Maryland. “In a sense, I’d rather design a toy that millions of people play with than a satellite that no one sees.”
- Every year, in basements and garages across the country thousands of inventors like Thate

dream of turning their late-night tinkering into a toy that will have children tugging at their parents' sleeves. Some are lab-coat scientists. Others have no formal training. But they are all-important pieces in a \$30 billion industry that, for all its corporate reach, is still held together by the little guy.

5 Ever hear of something fuzzy called a Furby? How about Slinky? Mr. Potato Head and G.I. Joe? Most megahit toys that clutter playrooms are the offspring of independent inventors. They daydream. They fiddle. They build prototypes\* and cross their fingers. Who knows when a brainstorm will make lightning strike?

6 “Coming up with that runaway toy is obviously a long shot,” says Richard Levy, coauthor of the recently published *Toy and Game Inventor’s Handbook*. “But the toy industry is still one of the last frontiers where a person with that itch, with that special concept, has a chance of having that concept see the light of day.”

7 But like the fashion industry, the toy industry is fickle and fast moving, dictated by trends that no one can predict. Cabbage Patch Kids once inspired frenzied bidding. Now you can hardly give them away. In years past, Hot Wheels, Teletubbies, Power Rangers, and Barney have all made it to the top of the best-sellers list. Diane Cardinale of the Toy Industry Association (TIA), an industry trade group, says that electronic and educational toys have been on the rise in recent years. They’ve ranged from Furby the virtual pet, to the less cuddly Leap-Pad, which teaches kids phonics.

8 New toys often ride in on pop-culture waves, which are the most difficult to predict. The rule of thumb is that today’s Buzz Lightyear is tomorrow’s Woody the Cowboy, abandoned under Andy’s bed.

9 No one knows this better than folks at the two toy-making giants, Hasbro and Mattel, who have gobbled up their competition (Parker Brothers, Tonka, Fisher Price, Kenner) like Hungry, Hungry Hippos. Both companies are known for moving cautiously and corporately. Fifty years ago, Merrill Hassenfeld, the president of Hasbro, met directly with independent inventors, searching for toys with that magical glow. Nowadays, key decisions are made in boardrooms and through market testing. To reach an audience of children, inventors go through grown-ups in gray suits.

10 “I call it the MBA syndrome,” says Levy. “No focus group can predict what a kid will love. But if independent inventors try going directly to a toy company, chances are no one’s going to listen to them.”

11 Enter the toy broker, the inventor’s link to the industry. A good broker helps with everything from the patent, to the prototype, to the details of the manufacturing deal. But even with a good broker, getting a toy licensed (bought by a toy company, which agrees to manufacture it) is a long shot. Gary Ahlert, a Connecticut broker, calculates the odds at 10,000 to one.

12 One of the toys he licensed recently is the Airzooka, a small trash-can shaped contraption that shoots a harmless gush of air up to 20 feet. Its creator, Brian Jordan, a 31-year-old Air Force pilot, talked to nearly 50 toy brokers before he got his licensing deal.

13 “You know the saying,” Jordan says. “Ten percent inspiration, 90 percent perspiration.”

14 Some ideas aren’t born, of course. They spring to life. Consider Slinky, which came into being in 1943, when a marine engineer named Richard James watched a metal coil fall off his desk and bounce around the deck. Silly Putty was even more serendipitous.

\* *prototype* — an original model on which an invention is patterned

It was invented by accident by a General Electric engineer who was trying to make synthetic rubber.

- 15 These days, industry-watchers say, there's less room for that kind of happy mistake. Toy-makers seek safe bets, particularly products that have "brand" appeal. Think of Tickle Me Elmo. Its phenomenal success stemmed partly from its link to the character on *Sesame Street*.
- 16 But there are no guarantees. Every popular toy in history has had what TIA's Cardinale calls "play-ability" — an undefinable quality that you just know when you see it. Whatever "it" is, toys like the Yard Crew Big Mike Lawnmower have it — the plastic push-toy was one of the top 10 best-selling toys last year.
- 17 What will be the next smash hit? Impossible to say. The toy industry, like the CIA, is cloaked in secrecy. Every February, the who's who of the business gather at the American

International Toy Fair in New York for a sneak peek at toys that will hit the shelves during the holiday season of the following year.

- 18 "Chances are," says Levy, "whatever they think is going to be the big seller won't be, and the other way around. You just never know."
- 19 One thing's certain: Whoever invents the next megatoy won't have to worry about inventing again. Under most licensing agreements, inventors earn an average of five percent of every toy sold — not bad if you manage to sell millions of them.
- 20 Rob Thate has more modest goals. Without backing from a big toy-maker, he has created his own company to produce an initial run of 2,500 YaYas. He's not sure yet if he'll turn a profit. But if your grandchildren wind up playing with a YaYa, not a yo-yo, you'll know things worked out pretty well.

"Toy Story" by Josh Sens. Copyright © 2003 by Josh Sens. Reprinted with permission of the author. Illustration by Bob Dob. Reprinted with permission of the illustrator. Copyright © November 2003 by American Way Magazine. All rights reserved.

- 1 According to the article, why is it so hard to predict which toys will sell well?
- A. Adults tend to buy their children the same toys they had as kids.
  - B. Toy companies make production decisions very slowly.
  - C. Children often react differently to toys than toy companies expect.
  - D. The toy industry lacks experts with experience as inventors.

- 2 In paragraph 6, to what does the phrase "runaway toy" refer?
- A. a toy that becomes extremely popular
  - B. a toy that is hard to find
  - C. a toy that has changed into something else
  - D. a toy that involves some kind of motion

- 3 In paragraph 8, what is the **most likely** reason the author includes the image of a toy abandoned under the bed?
- A. to remind the reader how upsetting it is to lose a toy
  - B. to show how quickly a toy can fall from popularity
  - C. to point out that American children have too many toys
  - D. to compare the toy industry to the fashion industry
- 4 According to the article, what does a toy broker do?
- A. markets new toys to toy stores
  - B. hires inventors to work for toy manufacturers
  - C. helps inventors sell new toys to manufacturers
  - D. advertises new toys to the public
- 5 Based on the article, which of the following is the **best** description of the independent toy inventor?
- A. shy and reclusive
  - B. creative and idealistic
  - C. wealthy and well-educated
  - D. reckless and self-absorbed
- 6 What effect does the author's use of words such as "fiddle," "gobbled," and "peek" have on the article?
- A. It emphasizes the main idea.
  - B. It describes popular toys.
  - C. It reveals the author's opinion.
  - D. It establishes a playful tone.
- 7 Which of the following is the **best** definition of the word *serendipitous* as it is used in paragraph 14?
- A. fun
  - B. profitable
  - C. worthy
  - D. lucky

**Question 8 is an open-response question.**

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

**Write your answer to question 8 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.**

- 8** Based on the article, describe the challenges faced by the independent inventor seeking to produce a successful toy. Use relevant and specific information from the article to support your answer.

The following song lyrics by Bob Dylan were written during the 1960s, a turbulent time in American history. Read the lyrics to “Blowin’ in the Wind” and “The Times They Are A-Changin’” and answer the questions that follow.

## Blowin’ in the Wind

How many roads must a man walk down  
Before you call him a man?  
Yes, ’n’ how many seas must a white dove sail  
Before she sleeps in the sand?  
5 Yes, ’n’ how many times must the cannon balls fly  
Before they’re forever banned?  
The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind,  
The answer is blowin’ in the wind.

How many times must a man look up  
10 Before he can see the sky?  
Yes, ’n’ how many ears must one man have  
Before he can hear people cry?  
Yes, ’n’ how many deaths will it take till he knows  
That too many people have died?  
15 The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind,  
The answer is blowin’ in the wind.

How many years can a mountain exist  
Before it’s washed to the sea?  
Yes, ’n’ how many years can some people exist  
20 Before they’re allowed to be free?  
Yes, ’n’ how many times can a man turn his head,  
Pretending he just doesn’t see?  
The answer, my friend, is blowin’ in the wind,  
The answer is blowin’ in the wind.

—Bob Dylan

Lyrics from BLOWIN’ IN THE WIND by Bob Dylan. Copyright © 1962; renewed 1990 by Special Rider Music.

# The Times They Are A-Changin'

Come gather 'round people  
 Wherever you roam  
 And admit that the waters  
 Around you have grown  
 5 And accept it that soon  
 You'll be drenched to the bone.  
 If your time to you  
 Is worth savin'  
 Then you better start swimmin'  
 10 Or you'll sink like a stone  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

Come writers and critics  
 Who prophesize with your pen  
 And keep your eyes wide  
 15 The chance won't come again  
 And don't speak too soon  
 For the wheel's still in spin  
 And there's no tellin' who  
 That it's namin'.  
 20 For the loser now  
 Will be later to win  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

Come senators, congressmen  
 Please heed the call  
 25 Don't stand in the doorway  
 Don't block up the hall  
 For he that gets hurt  
 Will be he who has stalled  
 There's a battle outside  
 30 And it is ragin'.  
 It'll soon shake your windows  
 And rattle your walls  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

Come mothers and fathers  
 35 Throughout the land  
 And don't criticize  
 What you can't understand  
 Your sons and your daughters  
 Are beyond your command  
 40 Your old road is  
 Rapidly agin'.  
 Please get out of the new one  
 If you can't lend your hand  
 For the times they are a-changin'.

45 The line it is drawn  
 The curse it is cast  
 The slow one now  
 Will later be fast  
 As the present now  
 50 Will later be past  
 The order is  
 Rapidly fadin'.  
 And the first one now  
 Will later be last  
 55 For the times they are a-changin'.

—Bob Dylan

- 9 In lines 3 and 5 of “Blowin’ in the Wind,” which of the following contrasting pairs do the “white dove” and the “cannon balls” symbolize?
- A. peace and war
  - B. order and chaos
  - C. freedom and slavery
  - D. nature and machines
- 10 What is the effect of writing “Blowin’ in the Wind” as a series of questions?
- A. It encourages the listener to think about the speaker’s concerns.
  - B. It causes the listener to care about the speaker’s life.
  - C. It emphasizes the speaker’s confusion.
  - D. It emphasizes the speaker’s curiosity.
- 11 What is the message of the first verse of “The Times They Are A-Changin’”?
- A. Changes in society are about to occur.
  - B. Changes in society can cause confusion.
  - C. Most people will embrace changes in society.
  - D. Creative people can make changes in society.
- 12 Based on “The Times They Are A-Changin’,” why does the speaker **most likely** single out “senators, congressmen” and “mothers and fathers”?
- A. They understand the problems of society.
  - B. They represent an outdated set of values.
  - C. They are the most open to change.
  - D. They are role models for the speaker.
- 13 The songwriter’s use of contractions in **both** songs reveals that he most likely feels he represents
- A. the common man.
  - B. the political leaders.
  - C. the religiously devout.
  - D. the artistic community.

*In this excerpt from Richard Wright's autobiography, Black Boy, the sixteen-year-old Wright leaves the South, where he has repeatedly been the victim of racism, and arrives in Chicago to begin a new life. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.*

from **Black Boy**  
by Richard Wright

Sometimes I wonder, huh,  
Wonder if other people wonder, huh,  
Sometimes I wonder, huh,  
Wonder if other people wonder, huh,  
Just like I do, oh, my Lord, just like I do!

—NEGRO FOLK SONG

- 1 *My first glimpse of the flat black stretches of Chicago depressed and dismayed me, mocked all my fantasies. Chicago seemed an unreal city whose mythical houses were built of slabs of black coal wreathed in palls of gray smoke, houses whose foundations were sinking slowly into the dank prairie. Flashes of steam showed intermittently on the wide horizon, gleaming translucently in the winter sun. The din of the city entered my consciousness, entered to remain for years to come. The year was 1927.*
- 2 *What would happen to me here? Would I survive? My expectations were modest. I wanted only a job. Hunger had long been my daily companion. Diversion and recreation, with the exception of reading, were unknown. In all my life—though surrounded by many people—I had not had a single satisfying, sustained relationship with another human being and, not having had any, I did not miss it. I made no demands whatever upon others.*
- 3 *The train rolled into the depot. Aunt Maggie and I got off and walked slowly through the crowds into the station. I looked about to see if there were signs saying: FOR WHITE—FOR COLORED. I saw none. Black people and white people moved about, each seemingly intent upon his private mission. There was no racial fear. Indeed, each person acted as though no one existed but himself. It was strange to pause before a crowded newsstand and buy a newspaper without having to wait until a white man was served. And yet, because everything was so new, I began to grow tense again, although it was a different sort of tension than I had known before. I knew that this machine-city was governed by strange laws and I wondered if I would ever learn them.*
- 4 *As we waited for a streetcar to take us to Aunt Cleo's home for temporary lodging, I looked northward at towering buildings of steel and stone. There were no curves here, no trees; only angles, lines, squares, bricks and copper wires. Occasionally the ground beneath my feet shook from some faraway pounding and I felt that this world, despite its massiveness, was somehow dangerously fragile. Streetcars screeched past over steel tracks. Cars honked their horns. Clipped speech sounded about me. As I stood in the icy wind, I wanted to talk*

to Aunt Maggie, to ask her questions, but her tight face made me hold my tongue. I was learning already from the frantic light in her eyes the strain that the city imposed upon its people. I was seized by doubt. Should I have come here? But going back was impossible. I had fled a known terror, and perhaps I could cope with this unknown terror that lay ahead.

5 The streetcar came. Aunt Maggie motioned for me to get on and pushed me toward a seat in which a white man sat looking blankly out the window. I sat down beside the man and looked straight ahead of me. After a moment I stole a glance at the white man out of the corners of my eyes; he was still staring out the window, his mind fastened upon some inward thought. I did not exist for him; I was as far from his mind as the stone buildings that swept past in the street. It would have been illegal for me to sit beside him in the part of the South that I had come from.

6 The car swept past soot-blackened buildings, stopping at each block, jerking again into motion. The conductor called street names in a tone that I could not understand. People got on and off the car, but they never glanced at one another. Each person seemed to regard the other as a part of the city landscape. The white man who sat beside me rose and I turned my knees aside to let him pass, and another white man sat beside me and buried his face in a newspaper. How could that possibly be? Was he conscious of my blackness?

7 We went to Aunt Cleo's address and found that she was living in a rented room. I had imagined that she lived in an apartment and I was disappointed. I rented a room from Aunt Cleo's landlady and decided to keep it until I got a job. I was baffled. Everything seemed makeshift, temporary. I caught an abiding sense of insecurity in the personalities of the people around me. I found Aunt Cleo aged beyond her years. Her husband, a product of a southern plantation, had, like my father, gone off and left her. Why had he left? My aunt could not answer. She was beaten by the life of the city, just as my mother had been beaten. Wherever my eyes turned they saw stricken, frightened black faces trying vainly to cope with a civilization that they did not understand. I felt lonely. I had fled one insecurity and had embraced another.

. . .

"Black Boy" Pages 261-263 from BLACK BOY by RICHARD WRIGHT. Copyright, 1937, 1942, 1944, 1945 by Richard Wright; renewed © 1973 by Ellen Wright. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

- 14 Based on the excerpt, the author discovers that Chicago, rather than being divided by race, is characterized by
- A. a sense of abundant opportunity.
  - B. a lack of human interaction.
  - C. a feeling of community.
  - D. a mood of fear.
- 15 In paragraph 1, what does the author mean when he says that Chicago “mocked all my fantasies”?
- A. Chicago did not intimidate him.
  - B. Chicago did not meet his expectations.
  - C. Chicago seemed like a friendly city.
  - D. Chicago was similar to where he grew up.

- 16 Read the sentences from paragraph 5 in the box below.

I sat down beside the man and looked straight ahead of me. After a moment I stole a glance at the white man out of the corners of my eyes. . . .

What do the sentences show about the author?

- A. He is not used to seeing white people.
  - B. He is not comfortable meeting new people.
  - C. He is surprised at the despair of the people.
  - D. He is accustomed to being wary of white people.
- 17 Why does the author **most likely** begin the excerpt with the “Negro Folk Song”?
- A. to show his religious nature
  - B. to establish a tone of uncertainty
  - C. to provide an example of urban culture
  - D. to show his excitement about the move

**Question 18 is an open-response question.**

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

**Write your answer to question 18 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.**

- 18** In paragraph 7, the author writes that he “had fled one insecurity and had embraced another.” Explain what the author discovers about Chicago that causes him to feel this way. Support your answer with relevant and specific information from the excerpt.

# English Language Arts

## READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 2

### DIRECTIONS

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

*This excerpt from the novel Frankenstein is narrated by a monster Dr. Frankenstein created. Because the monster's appearance arouses terror, he has been hiding. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.*

from *FRANKENSTEIN*  
by Mary Shelley

...

- 1 “The winter advanced, and an entire revolution of the seasons had taken place since I awoke into life. My attention, at this time, was solely directed towards my plan of introducing myself into the cottage of my protectors. I revolved many projects; but that on which I finally fixed was, to enter the dwelling when the blind old man should be alone. I had sagacity enough to discover, that the unnatural hideousness of my person was the chief object of horror with those who had formerly beheld me. My voice, although harsh, had nothing terrible in it; I thought, therefore, that if in the absence of his children, I could gain the good-will and mediation of the old De Lacey, I might by his means be tolerated by my younger protectors.
- 2 “One day, when the sun shone on the red leaves that strewed the ground, and diffused cheerfulness, although it denied warmth, Safie, Agatha, and Felix departed on a long country walk, and the old man, at his own desire, was left alone in the cottage. When his children had departed, he took up his guitar, and played several mournful but sweet airs, more sweet and mournful than I had ever heard him play before. At first his countenance was illuminated with pleasure, but, as he continued, thoughtfulness and sadness succeeded; at length, laying aside the instrument, he sat absorbed in reflection.
- 3 “My heart beat quick; this was the hour and moment of trial, which would decide my hopes, or realise my fears. The servants were gone to a neighbouring fair. All was silent in and around the cottage: it was an excellent opportunity; yet, when I proceeded to execute my plan, my limbs failed me, and I sank to the ground. Again I rose; and, exerting all the firmness of which I was master, removed the planks which I had placed before my hovel to conceal my retreat. The fresh air revived me, and, with renewed determination, I approached the door of their cottage.
- 4 “I knocked. ‘Who is there?’ said the old man.—‘Come in.’
- 5 “I entered; ‘Pardon this intrusion,’ said I; ‘I am a traveller in want of a little rest; you would greatly oblige me if you would allow me to remain a few minutes before the fire.’
- 6 “‘Enter,’ said De Lacey, ‘and I will try in what manner I can to relieve your wants; but, unfortunately, my children are from home, and as I am blind, I am afraid I shall find it difficult to procure food for you.’
- 7 “‘Do not trouble yourself, my kind host; I have food; it is warmth and rest only that I need.’

- 8 “I sat down, and a silence ensued. I knew that every minute was precious to me, yet I remained irresolute in what manner to commence the interview; when the old man addressed me. ‘By your language, stranger, I suppose you are my countryman;—are you French?’
- 9 “‘No; but I was educated by a French family, and understand that language only. I am now going to claim the protection of some friends, whom I sincerely love, and of whose favour I have some hopes.’
- 10 “‘Are they Germans?’
- 11 “‘No, they are French. But let us change the subject. I am an unfortunate and deserted creature; I look around, and I have no relation or friend upon earth. These amiable people to whom I go have never seen me, and know little of me. I am full of fears, for if I fail there, I am an outcast in the world forever.’
- 12 “‘Do not despair. To be friendless is indeed to be unfortunate; but the hearts of men, when unprejudiced by any obvious self-interest, are full of brotherly love and charity. Rely, therefore, on your hopes; and if these friends are good and amiable, do not despair.’
- 13 “‘They are kind—they are the most excellent creatures in the world; but unfortunately, they are prejudiced against me. I have good dispositions; my life has been hitherto harmless and in some degree beneficial; but a fatal prejudice clouds their eyes, and where they ought to see a feeling and kind friend, they behold only a detestable monster.’
- 14 “‘That is indeed unfortunate; but if you are really blameless, cannot you undeceive them?’
- 15 “‘I am about to undertake that task; and it is on that account that I feel so many overwhelming terrors. I tenderly love these friends; I have, unknown to them, been for many months in the habits of daily kindness towards them; but they believe that I wish to injure them, and it is that prejudice which I wish to overcome.’
- 16 “‘Where do these friends reside?’
- 17 “‘Near this spot.’
- 18 “The old man paused and then continued, ‘If you will unreservedly confide to me the particulars of your tale, I perhaps may be of use in undeceiving them. I am blind and cannot judge of your countenance, but there is something in your words which persuades me that you are sincere. I am poor and an exile, but it will afford me true pleasure to be in any way serviceable to a human creature.’
- 19 “‘Excellent man! I thank you and accept your generous offer. You raise me from the dust by this kindness; and I trust that, by your aid, I shall not be driven from the society and sympathy of your fellow-creatures.’
- 20 “‘Heaven forbid! Even if you were really criminal, for that can only drive you to desperation, and not instigate you to virtue. I also am unfortunate; I and my family have been condemned, although innocent; judge, therefore, if I do not feel for your misfortunes.’
- 21 “‘How can I thank you, my best and only benefactor? From your lips first have I heard the voice of kindness directed towards me; I shall be forever grateful; and your present humanity assures me of success with those friends whom I am on the point of meeting.’
- 22 “‘May I know the names and residence of those friends?’
- 23 “I paused. This, I thought, was the moment of decision, which was to rob me of, or bestow happiness on me forever. I struggled vainly for firmness sufficient to answer him, but the effort

destroyed all my remaining strength; I sank on the chair and sobbed aloud. At that moment I heard the steps of my younger protectors. I had not a moment to lose, but, seizing the hand of the old man, I cried, ‘Now is the time! Save and protect me! You and your family are the friends whom I seek. Do not you desert me in the hour of trial!’

24 “‘Great God!’ exclaimed the old man, ‘who are you?’

25 “At that instant the cottage door was opened, and Felix, Safie, and Agatha entered. Who can describe their horror and consternation on beholding me? Agatha fainted, and Safie, unable to attend to her friend, rushed out of the cottage. Felix darted forward, and with supernatural force tore me from his father, to whose knees I clung: in a transport of fury, he dashed me to the ground and struck me violently with a stick. I could have torn him limb from limb, as the lion rends the antelope. But my heart sunk within me as with bitter sickness, and I refrained. I saw him on the point of repeating his blow, when, overcome by pain and anguish, I quitted the cottage, and in the general tumult escaped unperceived to my hovel.”

In the public domain.

**19** According to paragraph 1, why does the monster decide to approach De Lacey when he is alone?

- A. De Lacey is an influential figure in the town.
- B. De Lacey is the kindest member of the family.
- C. De Lacey will not judge the monster by his appearance.
- D. De Lacey does not have enough strength to fight the monster.

**20** What is the “fatal prejudice” to which the monster refers in paragraph 13?

- A. the assumption that the monster is dangerous
- B. the assumption that the monster will die soon
- C. the assumption that the monster cannot be helped
- D. the assumption that the monster cannot speak well

- 21 Based on paragraphs 18 and 20, why does De Lacey sympathize with the monster?
- A. He is deceived by the monster's argument.
  - B. He and the monster are both outcasts from society.
  - C. He and the monster both have a physical disability.
  - D. He is reassured by his family's reaction to the monster.

- 22 Read the statement from paragraph 19 in the box below.

“You raise me from the dust by this kindness . . .”

What does the figurative language suggest?

- A. De Lacey has grown to idolize the monster.
- B. De Lacey has helped the monster to his feet.
- C. De Lacey has been a source of salvation to the monster.
- D. De Lacey has been a source of entertainment to the monster.

- 23 Which of the following sentences represents the **main** turning point of the excerpt?
- A. “The fresh air revived me, and, with renewed determination, I approached the door of their cottage.” (paragraph 3)
  - B. “I am full of fears, for if I fail there, I am an outcast in the world forever.” (paragraph 11)
  - C. “I thank you and accept your generous offer.” (paragraph 19)
  - D. “This, I thought, was the moment of decision, which was to rob me of, or bestow happiness on me forever.” (paragraph 23)

- 24 What does paragraph 25 **most** suggest about the monster's future?
- A. It is likely that the monster will try to harm the family.
  - B. De Lacey will convince his family to help the monster.
  - C. It is unlikely that the monster will be accepted by society.
  - D. The monster will try to convince Felix of his good intentions.

- 25 In the excerpt, what is the **main** effect of using the monster’s point of view?
- A. It helps the reader understand the children’s fear.
  - B. It helps the reader recognize the monster’s humanity.
  - C. It helps the reader imagine the monster’s surroundings.
  - D. It helps the reader sympathize with the man’s blindness.
- 26 What is the meaning of *irresolute* as it is used in paragraph 8?
- A. intense
  - B. intrigued
  - C. indecisive
  - D. indifferent
- 

**Question 27 is an open-response question.**

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

**Write your answer to question 27 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.**

- 27 Based on the excerpt, describe the difference between the monster’s true character and the way he is perceived by others. Support your answer with relevant and specific information from the excerpt.

# English Language Arts

## READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 3

### DIRECTIONS

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

*After being the central figure of American independence and leading the formation of the new country, George Washington decided not to seek a third term as president. Read how this decision affected the young country and answer the questions that follow.*

### *The Farewell*

from *Founding Brothers* by Joseph J. Ellis

- 1      THROUGHOUT THE first half of the 1790s, the closest approximation to a self-evident truth in American politics was George Washington. A legend in his own time, Americans had been describing Washington as “the Father of the Country” since 1776—which is to say, before there was even a country. By the time he assumed the presidency in 1789—no other candidate was even thinkable—the mythology surrounding Washington’s reputation had grown like ivy over a statue, effectively covering the man with an aura of omnipotence, rendering the distinction between his human qualities and his heroic achievements impossible to delineate.
- 2      Some of the most incredible stories also happened to be true. During Gen. Edward Braddock’s ill-fated expedition against the French outside Pittsburgh in 1755, a young Washington had joined with Daniel Boone to rally the survivors, despite having two horses shot out from under him and multiple bullet holes piercing his coat and creasing his pants. At Yorktown in 1781, he had insisted on standing atop a parapet for a full fifteen minutes during an artillery attack, bullets and shrapnel flying all about him, defying aides who tried to pull him down before he had properly surveyed the field of action. When Washington spoke of destiny, people listened.
- 3      If there was a Mount Olympus in the new American republic, all the lesser gods were gathered farther down the slope. The only serious contender for primacy was Benjamin Franklin, but just before his death in 1790, Franklin himself acknowledged Washington’s supremacy. In a characteristically Franklinesque gesture, he bequeathed to Washington his crab-tree walking stick, presumably to assist the general in his stroll toward immortality. “If it were a sceptre,” Franklin remarked, “he has merited it and would become it.”
- 4      In the America of the 1790s, Washington’s image was everywhere, in paintings, prints, lockets; on coins, silverware, plates, and household bric-a-brac. And his familiarity seemed forever. His commanding presence had been the central feature in every major event of the revolutionary era: the linchpin of the Continental Army throughout eight long years of desperate fighting from 1775 to 1783; the presiding officer at the Constitutional Convention in 1787; the first and only chief executive of the fledgling federal government since 1789. He was the palpable reality that clothed the revolutionary rhapsodies in flesh and blood, America’s one and only indispensable character. Washington was the core of gravity that prevented the American Revolution from flying off into random orbits, the stable center around which the revolutionary energies formed. As one popular toast of the day put it, he was “the man who unites all hearts.” He was the American Zeus, Moses, and Cincinnatus all rolled into one.

- 5 Then, all of a sudden, on September 19, 1796, an article addressed to “the PEOPLE of the United States” appeared on the inside pages of the *American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia’s major newspaper. The conspicuous austerity<sup>1</sup> of the announcement was matched by its calculated simplicity. It began: “Friends, and Fellow Citizens: The period for a new election of a Citizen, to Administer the Executive government of the United States, being not far distant . . . it appears to me proper, especially as it may conduce<sup>2</sup> to a more distinct expression of the public voice, that I should now apprise you of the resolutions I have formed, to decline being considered among the number of those, out of whom a choice is to be made.” It ended, again in a gesture of ostentatious moderation, with the unadorned signature: “G. Washington, United States.”
- 6 Every major newspaper in the country reprinted the article over the ensuing weeks, though only one, the *Courier of New Hampshire*, gave it the title that would echo through the ages—“Washington’s Farewell Address.” Contemporaries began to debate its contents almost immediately, and a lively (and ultimately silly) argument soon ensued about whether Washington or Hamilton actually wrote it. Over a longer stretch of time, the Farewell Address achieved transcendental status, ranking alongside the Declaration of Independence and the Gettysburg Address as a seminal statement of America’s abiding principles. Its Olympian tone made it a perennial touchstone at those political occasions requiring platitudinous wisdom. And in the late nineteenth century the Congress made its reading a mandatory ritual on Washington’s birthday. Meanwhile, several generations of historians, led by students of American diplomacy, have made the interpretation of the Farewell Address into a cottage industry of its own, building up a veritable mountain of commentary around its implications for an isolationist foreign policy and a bipartisan brand of American statecraft.
- 7 But in the crucible of the moment, none of these subsequent affectations or interpretations mattered much, if at all. What did matter, indeed struck most readers as the only thing that truly mattered, was that George Washington was retiring. The constitutional significance of the decision, of course, struck home immediately, signaling as it did Washington’s voluntary surrender of the presidency after two terms, thereby setting the precedent that held firm until 1940, when Franklin Delano Roosevelt broke it. (It was reaffirmed in 1951 with passage of the Twenty-second Amendment.) But even that landmark precedent, so crucial in establishing the republican<sup>3</sup> principle of rotation in office, paled in comparison to an even more elemental political and psychological realization.
- 8 For twenty years, over the entire life span of the revolutionary war and the experiment with republican government, Washington had stood at the helm of the ship of state. Now he was sailing off into the sunset. The precedent he was setting may have seemed uplifting in retrospect, but at the time the glaring and painful reality was that the United States without Washington was itself unprecedented. The Farewell Address, as several commentators have noted, was an oddity in that it was not really an address; it was never delivered as a speech. It should, by all rights, be called the Farewell Letter, for it was in form and tone an open letter to the American people, telling them they were now on their own.

<sup>1</sup> *austerity* — the quality of being plain and unadorned

<sup>2</sup> *conduce* — contribute

<sup>3</sup> *republican* — relating to a form of government where citizens vote for their representatives

- 28 What is the **main** point that the author develops in paragraphs 1–4?
- A. Washington was heroic on the battlefield.
  - B. Washington was unable to live up to his reputation.
  - C. Washington was uncomfortable with his godlike status.
  - D. Washington was the essential figure of the new country.
- 29 Based on paragraph 5, what does the author find striking about Washington’s letter?
- A. Washington gave no reasons for his retirement.
  - B. Washington’s letter appeared in a popular newspaper.
  - C. Washington gave no recommendation about who should succeed him.
  - D. Washington’s humble tone contradicted the importance of his announcement.
- 30 In paragraph 6, the author’s descriptions of the Farewell Address include “transcendental,” “seminal,” “Olympian,” and “touchstone.” What do these descriptions suggest about the address?
- A. It is a highly influential document.
  - B. It is a hard document to understand.
  - C. It has been used for political purposes.
  - D. It has been compared to ancient philosophy.
- 31 Based on the excerpt, why was Washington’s farewell unsettling to Americans at the time?
- A. It raised questions about the role of the president.
  - B. There were no reasons for Washington’s retirement.
  - C. People had come to rely on Washington’s leadership.
  - D. There were no other people qualified to lead the country.

- 32 In paragraph 8, why does the author refer to the years when Washington was president as an “experiment”?
- A. People were unsure whether Washington would be a good president.
  - B. People were unsure whether American democracy would succeed.
  - C. People thought the revolution would fail without Washington.
  - D. People thought Ben Franklin’s ideas about government should be tested.
- 33 Which of the following sentences serves as an important transition in the excerpt?
- A. “In the America of the 1790s, Washington’s image was everywhere, in paintings, prints, locketts; on coins, silverware, plates, and household bric-a-brac.”
  - B. “He was the American Zeus, Moses, and Cincinnatus all rolled into one.”
  - C. “Then, all of a sudden, on September 19, 1796, an article addressed to ‘the PEOPLE of the United States’ appeared on the inside pages of the *American Daily Advertiser*, Philadelphia’s major newspaper.”
  - D. “Its Olympian tone made it a perennial touchstone at those political occasions requiring platitudinous wisdom.”
- 34 What is the meaning of *omnipotence* as it is used in paragraph 1?
- A. inner conflict
  - B. absolute power
  - C. unlimited patience
  - D. complete obscurity

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 Based on the excerpt, explain why Washington’s decision to retire had such an impact on the United States. Support your answer with relevant and specific information from the excerpt.

*The play Bus Stop, by William Inge, takes place in a restaurant that serves as a rest stop for buses in a small Kansas town. Read the excerpt from act 1 and answer the questions that follow.*

*from* **BUS STOP**  
by William Inge

Students read a selection titled *Bus Stop* and then answered questions 36 through 40 that follow on page 228 of this document.

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From BUS STOP by William Inge, copyright 1954 by William Inge as an unpublished work. Copyright © 1955 by William Inge. Used by permission of Random House, Inc.

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- 36 What is the **main** contrast established in lines 1–12?
- A. the different personalities of the characters
  - B. the different effects of the snow on the building
  - C. the force of the storm and the comfort of the restaurant
  - D. the excitement of the storm and the sadness of the characters

- 37 In line 6, what does the phrase “more seasoned” suggest about Grace?
- A. She is a better worker than Elma is.
  - B. She has more life experience than Elma has.
  - C. She becomes upset more easily than Elma does.
  - D. She is more annoyed by the storm than Elma is.

- 38 What does the description of Will in lines 66–69 show about him?
- A. He is good at his job.
  - B. He is unsure of himself.
  - C. He has a carefree attitude.
  - D. He has an imposing presence.

- 39 Read the lines from the play in the box below.

- *Outside, the powerful, reckless wind comes and goes, blasting against everything in its path . . .* (lines 8–9)
- GRACE Now I wonder why I can't get th' operator. (line 16)
- GRACE . . . Now, maybe I can get the operator. (*Jiggles receiver*)  
Quiet as a tomb. (*Hangs up*) (line 53)
- WILL . . . It's just like all the elements had lost their reason. (lines 84–85)

What effect does the author build in the lines?

- A. a peaceful atmosphere
  - B. a sense of apprehension
  - C. Grace's increasing loneliness
  - D. Grace's increasing excitement
- 40 Based on the excerpt, what can the reader **most likely** expect as the play continues?
- A. The storm will begin to subside.
  - B. Grace and Elma will have an argument.
  - C. Will and Grace will go out into the storm.
  - D. The arrival of the bus will intensify the action.

**Grade 10 English Language Arts  
Reading Comprehension  
Spring 2008 Released Items:  
Reporting Categories, Standards, and Correct Answers\***

Item No.	Page No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Correct Answer (MC)*
1	205	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	C
2	205	<i>Language</i>	4	A
3	206	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	B
4	206	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	C
5	206	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	B
6	206	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	D
7	206	<i>Language</i>	4	D
8	207	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	
9	210	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	A
10	210	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	14	A
11	210	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	14	A
12	210	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	14	B
13	210	<i>Language</i>	6	A
14	213	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	B
15	213	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	B
16	213	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	D
17	213	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	B
18	214	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	
19	217	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	8	C
20	217	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	A
21	218	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	B
22	218	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	C
23	218	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	D
24	218	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	C
25	219	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	B
26	219	<i>Language</i>	4	C
27	219	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	12	
28	222	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	D
29	222	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	D
30	222	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	A
31	222	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	C
32	223	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	B
33	223	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	C
34	223	<i>Language</i>	4	B
35	224	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	13	
36	228	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	C
37	228	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	15	B
38	228	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	D
39	228	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	B
40	228	<i>Reading and Literature</i>	17	D

\* Answers are provided here for multiple-choice items only. Sample responses and scoring guidelines for open-response items, which are indicated by shaded cells, will be posted to the Department's Web site later this year.

