



MASSACHUSETTS

Department of Elementary  
and Secondary Education

*Release of Spring 2026  
MCAS Test Items from the  
Grade 6 English Language Arts  
Paper-Based Test*

**Spring 2026  
Massachusetts Department of  
Elementary and Secondary Education**



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# Overview of Grade 6 English Language Arts Test

The spring 2026 grade 6 English Language Arts (ELA) test was administered in two formats: a computer-based version and a paper-based version. Most students took the computer-based test. The paper-based test was offered as an accommodation for eligible students who were unable to use a computer. More information can be found on the MCAS Test Administration Resources page at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/admin.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/admin.html).

Most of the operational items on the grade 6 ELA test were the same, regardless of whether a student took the computer-based version or the paper-based version. In places where a technology-enhanced item was used on the computer-based test, an adapted version of the item was created for use on the paper test. These adapted paper items were multiple-choice or multiple-select items that tested the same ELA content and assessed the same standard as the technology-enhanced item.

**This document displays released items from the paper-based test**, along with associated reading passages. Released items from the computer-based test are available on the MCAS Resource Center website at [mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/released-items](http://mcas.onlinehelp.cognia.org/released-items).

## Test Sessions and Content Overview

The grade 6 ELA test was made up of two separate test sessions. Each session included reading passages, followed by selected-response questions and essay questions. On the paper-based test, the selected-response questions were multiple-choice items and multiple-select items, in which students select the correct answer(s) from among several answer options.

## Standards and Reporting Categories

The grade 6 ELA test was based on grades 6–12 learning standards in three content strands of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* (2017), listed below.

- Reading
- Writing
- Language

The *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* is available on the Department website at [www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html).

ELA test results are reported under three MCAS reporting categories, which are identical to the three framework content strands listed above.

The tables at the conclusion of this document provide the following information about each released and unreleased operational item: reporting category, standard(s) covered, item type, and item description. The correct answers for released selected-response questions are also displayed in the released item table.

## Reference Materials

During both ELA test sessions, the use of authorized bilingual word-to-word dictionaries and glossaries was allowed for students who are currently or were ever reported as English learners. No other reference materials were allowed during any ELA test session.

# Grade 6 English Language Arts

This session contains 19 questions.

## Directions

Read each passage and question carefully. Then answer each question as well as you can. You must record all answers in this Test & Answer Booklet.

For most questions, you will mark your answers by filling in the circles in your Test & Answer Booklet. Make sure you darken the circles completely. Do not make any marks outside of the circles. If you need to change an answer, be sure to erase your first answer completely.

Some questions will ask you to write a response. Write your response in the space provided. Only responses written within the provided space will be scored.

**Read the passages about how two girls approach significant changes in their lives. Then answer the questions that follow.**

Read the passage about a girl named Jubilee.

### from *Hope Springs*

by Jaime Berry

- 1 I knew this day was coming. The final week of sixth grade and the start of summer break creeping up meant prime relocation time. I'd lived with Nan long enough to know the signs.
- 2 She'd been in a mood for weeks, and now my new utensil organization system had pushed her grouchiness into a full-out fluster. Every drawer in the kitchen was open. . . . I cringed as she tossed a wooden spatula in the Tupperware drawer.
- 3 "Nan, if we put things back in the same place we found them, it's easier to find them again," I said.
- 4 "Where's the fun in that?" she asked. If Nan was searching for fun in the silverware drawers, we'd be packing up sooner than I thought. Plus, she never put anything in the same place twice, including us.
- 5 I'd made sure the maps were out and organized on the table. They sat in my Arletta Paisley linen expandable snap-top folder next to Nan's kissing squirrels salt and pepper shakers—a gift from our current landlord, Mr. Taft. The shakers sat on opposite ends of the table. I scooted them together for luck.
- 6 "Aha! Victory." Nan waved the can opener above her head. Dinner was pretzels and peanut butter with a side of canned peaches. She opened the can and slid the fruit wedges, syrup and all, into two bowls. The foamy soles of her white nurse shoes made a sticky sound on the linoleum as she walked over to the table.
- 7 "You read my mind, sugar." She pointed at the maps with the opener. "This job has fried my nerves. Relocation Rule Number Five-hundred-whatever: Why fight on the battlefield when new fields await?" Some of our rules were tried and true; others, we made up on the spot when the occasion called for it. I wrote them all down in a notebook. We already had nineteen—and counting.
- 8 "Let's fold out one of those maps and consider the possibilities," Nan said. "Nothing like a new place to shake things up a little."

## English Language Arts

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- 9 According to Nan, she was a born loner but always blessed with a plus-one, first my daddy and now me. . . . Nan and I lived in the same apartment in Pleasant View, Tennessee—right outside Nashville—for nearly two whole years. Forever, by Nan’s standards. But then Momma started touring\* so often, there wasn’t much point in trying to stay close to her. . . . We’d been searching for a place to call home ever since.
- 10 “Maybe this time, we’ll find the perfect place,” I said as I ran my fingers over the folded edges of the maps. “I’ve got a good feeling.”
- 11 For years, Nan and I had searched for a place that felt absolutely head-to-toe “just right” perfect. Nan called it a search for substance, but I’d noticed a bit of a pattern. Today, it was a smart-mouthed doctor at the nursing home, . . . and the time before that was a traffic cop figuring out Nan’s secret to avoiding parking meters. There was always something that led us to getting the maps out.
- 12 Shortly after that, we got out too.
- 13 Only this time, I had a plan—an Arletta Paisley inspired plan. Even though I was prepared for another move, I felt a little like a squirrel on the inside, all jitters.
- 14 Arletta Paisley had her own show on the Hearth & Home Network called *Queen of Neat*. Her sign-off was “Join me next week, because y’all know life can get messy.” I liked the idea that I could take my messy life and make something else of it with my own two hands and a little effort. Arletta Paisley was from Hope Springs, Texas, and every word she said came out coated in a thick Texas drawl, sweet but with a little edge, like salted caramel. Maybe Hope Springs would be our perfect place. If it was good enough for Arletta Paisley, then surely it could be good enough for us too.
- 15 Nan wouldn’t use a computer for our town selections. She said this process required an old-fashioned map and intuition. I’d color-coded our collection of maps with tags made of free paint chips from the hardware store, a practical bit of flair learned from season 4, episode 11: “Neat for Next to Nothing.” Next to nothing pretty much summed up our budget.
- 16 Since Nan’s favorite color was yellow, I’d put a great big honking yellow tag on Texas. Just like magic, she pulled out that map first. She didn’t even ask me what the tags meant.

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\* touring—traveling to different places to perform for audiences

## English Language Arts

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- 17 "Texas," Nan said. "Now, a state that big gives us some options." Nan was big on options. For her, choices meant freedom. But for me, I felt most free when I was making something. Arletta's show had turned me into a crafter, someone who could make things by hand. Crafting took skill and creativity, and came with a clear-cut set of directions.
- 18 With regular old household items, patience, and imagination, I could create something new. Arletta called it "glamorganizing." But I thought of it as a way to leave a tiny bit of me behind with the people and places we left, and sometimes, a way to take a little something along as a keepsake. All my crafts, from the large-scale collages hanging on the walls to the decorated toilet paper dispenser, were what Nan called "pack-worthy." The walls and rooms might change, but what was on and in them didn't.
- 19 Nan handed me the map, passed a bowl of peaches, and said, "All right, Jubilee, let the search for substance begin."
- 20 So, Texas was easy. The tricky part was getting Nan to pick Hope Springs out of all those other towns.

*Hope Springs* by Jaime Berry. Copyright © 2021. Reprinted by permission of Little, Brown, an imprint of Hachette Book Group, Inc.

Read the passage about a girl named Callie who has moved from California to Scotland with her family.

### from *Across the Pond*

by Joy McCullough

- 1 Callie pressed her forehead to the thick windowpane and looked out across the rolling hills. She wanted to drink in everything at once—the infinite shades of green, the mossy stone walls along winding paths, the sheep grazing in far-off fields. A draft danced across the back of her neck, but the chill was quickly replaced by a flicker of something Callie hadn't felt in ages. Maybe ever.
- 2 Possibility.
- 3 At home, her life was small. Small apartment, small people. Making herself smaller and smaller until she almost disappeared.
- 4 But here, in an actual castle where everything was larger than any life she'd ever known, where the grassy fields beyond the window stretched out like an ocean of green, she already felt her world expanding.
- 5 She felt her *self* expanding.
- 6 Callie wasn't the kind of girl who traveled to Europe, like Kate,<sup>1</sup> who "wintered" in Switzerland, or Imogen,<sup>2</sup> who spent her birthday in Paris. The only place Callie had ever traveled was Phoenix. It was sadly lacking in magical firebirds.
- 7 But now here she was. In Scotland. In an actual castle.
- 8 Even the exhaustion of the endless travel from San Diego to New York to London to Edinburgh to the village of South Kingsferry couldn't extinguish the new thing bubbling up inside her.
- 9 "Hey kiddo," her dad said, peeking his head into the billiards room. "Are you joining us for the rest of the tour?"

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<sup>1</sup> Kate—a friend of Callie

<sup>2</sup> Imogen—a friend of Callie

## English Language Arts

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- 10 Of course she was. Callie wanted to turn over every stone in this fortress of a place, from the [workers'] quarters to the castle keep, an enormous tower at the castle's center. For hundreds of years, the keep had been a lookout to watch for enemies and take refuge if the worst should happen.
- 11 "Where's the moat?"<sup>3</sup> Callie's little brother, Jax, had asked when they first arrived. Their parents had laughed.
- 12 It wasn't such a silly question, though. Some of Callie's daydreams in the months leading up to the trip definitely included moats. But her parents had been here before. To them it was less of a fantasy.
- 13 "No moat," Dad said. "Or drawbridge. It wasn't the sort of castle with its own military. Just a family. . . . And visiting nobles."
- 14 Generations upon generations of an old Scottish family named Spence had lived . . . in this place, and . . . they'd had dreams and fears and great loves and crushing disappointments. Even when the Spence line had dwindled down to only Lady Philippa Whittington-Spence, she'd made sure to keep it a place where a family could build something together, safe from intruders.
- 15 "Where'd you run off to?" Mom asked, when Dad appeared with Callie in tow.
- 16 "I found her in the billiards room," Dad said.
- 17 "Billiards?!" Jax screeched, appearing from behind a massive gold chair. "I wanna see!"
- 18 He took off running and Dad sprinted after him.
- 19 "What do you think?" Mom asked, staring at the massive portrait of a stern man in a military uniform, hanging over the biggest fireplace Callie had ever seen. "I always felt like this guy was judging me."
- 20 "Is it all the same?" Callie asked. "From when you lived here before?"
- 21 "Pretty much. All your first impressions . . . I bet they're the same as mine the first time I arrived. Almost twenty years ago now!"
- 22 "You're old," Callie said, and Mom laughed.
- 23 "What do you think? You okay?"

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<sup>3</sup> moat—a deep, wide trench, usually filled with water, surrounding a castle

## English Language Arts

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24 Callie nodded. She was more than okay. “I guess I can’t quite believe this is really happening. I mean . . . we *live* here now.”

\* \* \*

25 Callie hadn’t believed her parents when they sat her down with Jax and told them their family had inherited a castle, and how would they feel about moving to Scotland? . . .

26 To them, it was a familiar place, though.

27 Years earlier, Callie’s parents had lived in a cottage on the castle grounds and befriended the owner, Lady Whittington-Spence. Lady as in nobility, which was apparently still a thing. . . .

28 Callie’s parents had been the lucky young grad students who happened upon an ad in the newspaper and followed their curiosity to the Spence grounds.

29 Callie’s American parents thought they had stumbled onto an enchanting little rental for their years at the University of Edinburgh. They had no idea how dear they would become to the grand and lonely lady who occupied the sprawling castle. They definitely had no idea that years later, when her will was read, the solicitors<sup>4</sup> would find the entire property had been left to those two students who had shown her kindness while she mourned her husband.

30 “I live in a caaaaastle!!!!” Jax whooped, bouncing into view and out again before Dad could snatch him.

31 Mom sighed. “I’d better help keep that one from climbing the walls. I’m not sure they’re all structurally sound.”

32 Jax was wired on airplane snacks and adrenaline. He might never sleep again. But it was a big improvement over the whining and moaning when he’d first found out about the move. He hadn’t wanted to leave all his friends and his teams and his school. He’d lived all seven years of his life in San Diego and didn’t even want to imagine something different.

33 He’d also pitched a fit when he found out he could only take to Scotland what he could cram into two suitcases. Shipping everything would have been way too expensive, and just because they were moving into a castle didn’t mean they were rich. But what about Jax’s basketball and

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<sup>4</sup> solicitors—people who work as legal advisors

favorite books and video games and folders full of baseball cards? Callie would have gone with only her backpack. It was going to be a new life, and who cared about all the stuff she'd thought she needed to get by when that stuff never really got her anywhere but miserable? . . .

- 34 No, Callie had packed light for Scotland, for a new life. The moment she found out they were moving, she was ready. But she'd had to wait for months while legal stuff got sorted out in San Diego and Scotland—stuff about school enrollment and apartment leases, and travel visas, and on and on. . . . Callie had started to think it wouldn't ever really happen. Her hopes had floated up only to be yanked back down again.
- 35 "Callie!" Jax appeared again. "Come on! You've got to see!"
- 36 Callie followed him to the doorway across from the billiards room. Like the rest of the castle, it was dark and a little musty, but then it had been empty and closed up for months. All that time Callie had been waiting to arrive, the castle had been waiting on them, too. The castle might not be a living thing, exactly, but a place couldn't exist for centuries, sheltering generations, and not become entwined with its inhabitants. Callie could barely breathe. These stone walls had witnessed everything.
- 37 They'd witnessed girls like her, probably, who'd been crushed and betrayed, but who'd gotten back up and marched out those massive doors to meet what was next. These stone walls could tell Callie things.

*Across the Pond* by Joy McCullough. Copyright © 2021 by Joy McCullough. Reprinted by permission of Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division.

## English Language Arts

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- 1 Read the dictionary entry in the box.

**prime:** *adj.* **1.** first or original **2.** type of number with no factors **3.** being an ideal situation **4.** being of rare quality

Now read the sentence from paragraph 1 of *Hope Springs* in the box.

The final week of sixth grade and the start of summer break creeping up meant prime relocation time.

Which meaning of the word *prime* is used in the sentence?

- Ⓐ meaning 1
  - Ⓑ meaning 2
  - Ⓒ meaning 3
  - Ⓓ meaning 4
- 2 What is the **main** purpose of paragraph 2 of *Hope Springs*?
- Ⓐ to contrast the personalities of Jubilee and Nan
  - Ⓑ to raise doubts about Jubilee’s version of events
  - Ⓒ to provide details about Nan’s desire to avoid tasks
  - Ⓓ to reveal the reasons Jubilee and Nan want to move

## English Language Arts

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- 3** Based on paragraphs 7–11 of *Hope Springs*, what can the reader **best** infer about Nan and Jubilee?
- Ⓐ They do not stay in the same town very long.
  - Ⓑ They are surprised to be leaving again so soon.
  - Ⓒ They do not agree on where they should go next.
  - Ⓓ They are planning to return to their hometown someday.

- 4** Read the sentence from paragraph 17 of *Hope Springs* in the box.

But for me, I felt most free when I was making something.

What is the purpose of the comma in the sentence?

- Ⓐ to introduce a quotation
  - Ⓑ to signal a direct address
  - Ⓒ to separate items in a series
  - Ⓓ to set off an introductory element
- 5** Based on *Hope Springs*, how does Jubilee know that Nan is thinking about moving?
- Ⓐ She discovers maps in a kitchen drawer.
  - Ⓑ She recognizes clues from past experiences.
  - Ⓒ She sees a note from the landlord on the kitchen table.
  - Ⓓ She finds a book with information about renting apartments.

## English Language Arts

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- 6 Which emotion is **mainly** suggested in paragraphs 1–4 of *Across the Pond*?
- Ⓐ sympathy
  - Ⓑ confusion
  - Ⓒ confidence
  - Ⓓ excitement
- 7 Based on *Across the Pond*, what does the repetition of the words “small” and “smaller” in paragraph 3 **mainly** suggest about Callie?
- Ⓐ She avoids discussing things with others.
  - Ⓑ She thinks her former life was uninteresting.
  - Ⓒ She imagined the castle would be unpleasant.
  - Ⓓ She felt sad about saying goodbye to people she cared about.

### 8 Part A

Read paragraph 30 of *Across the Pond* in the box.

“I live in a caaaaastle!!!!” Jax whooped, bouncing into view and out again before Dad could snatch him.

Based on the paragraph, what do Jax’s actions **mainly** reveal?

- Ⓐ He is tired from his long airplane flight.
- Ⓑ He is enthusiastic about exploring his environment.
- Ⓒ He is relieved his prior expectations have been met.
- Ⓓ He is patient while waiting for his parents to give him a tour.

### Part B

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ “He took off running and Dad sprinted after him.” (paragraph 18)
- Ⓑ “Callie hadn’t believed her parents when they sat her down with Jax and told them their family had inherited a castle, and how would they feel about moving to Scotland?” (paragraph 25)
- Ⓒ “He’d also pitched a fit when he found out he could only take to Scotland what he could cram into two suitcases.” (paragraph 33)
- Ⓓ “Callie followed him to the doorway across from the billiards room.” (paragraph 36)

## English Language Arts

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- 9 In *Across the Pond*, how do paragraphs 27–29 **mainly** contribute to the development of the passage?
- Ⓐ They explain how Callie’s family came to own the castle.
  - Ⓑ They foreshadow Callie’s reaction to the castle grounds.
  - Ⓒ They introduce the conflict that Callie’s family must overcome.
  - Ⓓ They explain how Callie’s attitude about moving to a different country changed.
- 10 Which detail from *Across the Pond* **best** develops a central idea of the passage?
- Ⓐ “For hundreds of years, the keep had been a lookout to watch for enemies . . . if the worst should happen.” (paragraph 10)
  - Ⓑ “It wasn’t the sort of castle with its own military. Just a family.” (paragraph 13)
  - Ⓒ “I guess I can’t quite believe this is really happening. I mean . . . we *live* here now.” (paragraph 24)
  - Ⓓ “He hadn’t wanted to leave all his friends and his teams and his school.” (paragraph 32)

## English Language Arts

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- 11 The authors of *Hope Springs* and *Across the Pond* both provide details that describe the main characters.

Based on the passages, determine whether **each** phrase **mainly** describes Jubilee from *Hope Springs*, Callie from *Across the Pond*, or both Jubilee and Callie.

has traveled very little

- Ⓐ Jubilee
- Ⓑ Callie
- Ⓒ both

enjoys creating things by hand

- Ⓐ Jubilee
- Ⓑ Callie
- Ⓒ both

has big expectations for the future

- Ⓐ Jubilee
- Ⓑ Callie
- Ⓒ both

believes living somewhere else will be good

- Ⓐ Jubilee
- Ⓑ Callie
- Ⓒ both

## English Language Arts

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For this question, you will write an essay based on the passages. The essay should be about four to five paragraphs in length. Be sure to:

- Include a central idea.
- Use evidence from the passages to support the central idea.
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

- 12 Based on *Hope Springs* and *Across the Pond*, write an essay that compares and contrasts Jubilee’s and Callie’s feelings about going to live in a new place. Use evidence from **both** passages to develop your essay.

Write your answer on the next two pages.



A large rectangular box with a black border, containing 25 horizontal lines for writing. The lines are evenly spaced and extend across the width of the box.

Read the passage about Bill Bowerman, the inventor of the waffle tread running shoe. Then answer the questions that follow.

### Finding Inspiration

*by Laurie Lawlor*

- 1 Inspiration sometimes comes at random times. For example, Bill Bowerman (1911–1999) came up with an idea for a running shoe after looking more closely at his family’s waffle iron.
- 2 Born and raised in Portland, Oregon, Bowerman was a devoted teacher with a passion for running. He believed that running offered a great way for individuals to improve their physical health. He promoted jogging to people of all ages. He even wrote a popular book about the subject in 1967.
- 3 From 1948 to 1972, Bowerman guided an impressive list of track-and-field champions at the University of Oregon. He also coached the 1972 U.S. Olympic track-and-field team. “Victory,” Bowerman reminded his runners, “is doing the best you can, and even if you lose, you will have learned something.”
- 4 Throughout his life, Bowerman looked for practical solutions to problems. He helped develop rubberized asphalt runways that proved safer than grass in rainy weather for track-and-field events. But it was his contributions to running shoes that really changed the sport.
- 5 Bowerman believed that the spiked running shoes worn in the 1950s were clumsy and heavy. They also caused injuries. “Poorly designed shoes,” he said, “. . . caused more shin splints, foot sores, leg cramps and aching knees and backs than anything else.” He believed a lighter, more flexible shoe was possible.
- 6 Bowerman spent years tinkering with shoe designs. He began by making individual, lightweight shoes for each of his athletes. He introduced the arch support and the cushioned midsole. When he couldn’t find a company to make his shoes, he and a former student, Phil Knight, teamed up. . . .
- 7 And the waffle iron’s role in all this? Watching waffles being made one morning made Bowerman wonder if a similar pattern on the soles of running shoes might create better traction. Bowerman’s “waffle” tread idea—which resulted after he poured liquid urethane onto the waffle iron—changed the industry.

## English Language Arts

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- 8 In 1971, Bowerman and Knight launched [their own] brand. . . . At the 1972 Munich Olympics, four of the top seven finishers in the marathon event wore the now-famous . . . running shoes. Further improvements to the shoe's weight came when Bowerman switched the traditional upper shoe material to lighter nylon.
- 9 In 1980, Bowerman and Knight . . . began selling running shoes to professionals and recreational runners in more than 100 countries around the world.



Waffle iron



Running shoes with  
a waffle tread

"Finding Inspiration" by Laurie Lawlor, from *Cobblestone* Magazine (February 2021). Text copyright © 2021 by Cricket Media, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Cricket Media, Inc. Photograph 1 copyright © iStockphoto/alenkadr. Photograph 2 copyright © iStockphoto/kevinjeon00.

## English Language Arts

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- 13 Read the sentence from paragraph 1 in the box.

Inspiration sometimes comes at random times.

Which detail from the passage **best** develops the idea that Bowerman was inspired by a random event?

- Ⓐ "Born and raised in Portland, Oregon, Bowerman was a devoted teacher with a passion for running." (paragraph 2)
- Ⓑ "From 1948 to 1972, Bowerman guided an impressive list of track-and-field champions at the University of Oregon." (paragraph 3)
- Ⓒ "Bowerman believed that the spiked running shoes worn in the 1950s were clumsy and heavy." (paragraph 5)
- Ⓓ "Watching waffles being made one morning made Bowerman wonder if a similar pattern on the soles of running shoes might create better traction." (paragraph 7)

- 14 What is the **main** function of the dashes in paragraph 7?

- Ⓐ to set off a clarifying detail
- Ⓑ to indicate a contrasting idea
- Ⓒ to highlight a necessary correction
- Ⓓ to emphasize the definition of a technical term

## English Language Arts

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- 15** Based on the passage, what was the **main** reason Bowerman wanted to encourage jogging?
- Ⓐ to generate sales of specialty shoes
  - Ⓑ to create interest in the book he had written
  - Ⓒ to expand participation on his college track team
  - Ⓓ to advocate for a healthy lifestyle for people of all ages
- 16** What is the author's **most likely** purpose for writing the passage?
- Ⓐ to describe the development of a product that many people use
  - Ⓑ to explain how working with others can increase the chances of success
  - Ⓒ to show how runners take precautions to overcome hazardous track conditions
  - Ⓓ to describe the steps taken by professional athletes to improve their performance

Read the poem and then answer the questions that follow.

### In Time of Silver Rain

by Langston Hughes

In time of silver rain  
The earth  
Puts forth new life again,  
Green grasses grow  
5 And flowers lift their heads,  
And over all of plain  
The wonder spreads  
Of life,  
Of life,  
10 Of life!

In time of silver rain  
The butterflies  
Lift silken wings  
To catch a rainbow cry,  
15 And trees put forth  
New leaves to sing  
In joy beneath the sky  
As down the roadway  
Passing boys and girls  
20 Go singing, too,  
In time of silver rain  
When spring  
And life  
Are new.

"In Time of Silver Rain" by Langston Hughes, from *The Collected Poems of Langston Hughes*, edited by Arnold Rampersad with David Roessel, Associate Editor. Copyright © 1994 by the Langston Hughes Estate. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of the Knopf Doubleday Publishing Group, a division of Penguin Random House LLC.

## English Language Arts

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- 17 What is the **main** effect of repeating the phrase “Of life” in lines 8–10?
- Ⓐ It describes different reactions to spring returning.
  - Ⓑ It emphasizes how it feels to watch spring appear.
  - Ⓒ It suggests how quickly spring begins to fade away.
  - Ⓓ It explains that spring begins the cycle of the seasons.

18 **Part A**

Which sentence **best** expresses a theme developed in the poem?

- Ⓐ Enjoy youth before it is over.
- Ⓑ Spring brings rebirth and celebration.
- Ⓒ Some misfortune happens even during the joyful springtime.
- Ⓓ The environment should be valued for its majesty and wonder.

**Part B**

Which quotation from the poem **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ “And over all of plain / The wonder spreads” (lines 6 and 7)
- Ⓑ “The butterflies / Lift silken wings” (lines 12 and 13)
- Ⓒ “As down the roadway / Passing boys and girls / Go singing, too,” (lines 18–20)
- Ⓓ “When spring / And life / Are new.” (lines 22–24)

- 19 How is the poem **mainly** structured?
- Ⓐ as a description of events signaling the arrival of spring
  - Ⓑ as a comparison of the differences among plants in spring
  - Ⓒ as a contrast of different types of weather that occur each year
  - Ⓓ as a summary of how phases in nature reflect personal discoveries

# Grade 6 English Language Arts

## Spring 2026 Released Operational Items

PBT Item No.	Page No.	Reporting Category	Standard	Item Type*	Item Description	Correct Answer (SR)**
1	10	<i>Language</i>	L.6.4	SR	Use context to determine the meaning of a multiple-meaning word.	C
2	10	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.5	SR	Determine the purpose of a specific paragraph in a passage.	A
3	11	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.1	SR	Make an inference about characters based on specific paragraphs in a passage.	A
4	11	<i>Language</i>	L.6.2	SR	Determine the function of punctuation used in a sentence.	D
5	11	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.1	SR	Make an inference based on a specific detail from a passage.	B
6	12	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.4	SR	Determine the mood created in specific paragraphs of a passage.	D
7	12	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.3	SR	Analyze what the repetition of words in a paragraph suggests about a character.	B
8	13	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.2	SR	Analyze what is revealed by a character's actions in a specific paragraph and identify a detail from the passage that supports the analysis.	B;A
9	14	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.5	SR	Analyze how specific paragraphs contribute to a passage.	A
10	14	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.2	SR	Identify a detail that develops a central idea in a passage.	C
11	15	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.3	SR	Compare and contrast traits of characters in two passages.	B;A;C;C
12	16	<i>Language, Writing</i>	L.6.1, L.6.2, L.6.3, W.6.2, W.6.4	ES	Write an essay that compares and contrasts how characters in two passages respond to a specific event; use evidence from both passages to support the explanation.	
13	21	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.2	SR	Identify a detail that develops a central idea in a passage.	D
14	21	<i>Language</i>	L.6.2	SR	Determine the function of punctuation used in a sentence.	A
15	22	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.1	SR	Make an inference about a specific idea in a passage.	D
16	22	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.6	SR	Identify the author's purpose for writing a passage.	A
17	24	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.5	SR	Determine the effect of a repeating phrase in a poem.	B
18	24	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.2	SR	Determine a theme of a poem and then identify support in the poem.	B;D
19	25	<i>Reading</i>	RL.6.5	SR	Identify the structure of a poem.	A

\* ELA item types are: selected-response (SR) and essay (ES).

\*\* Answers are provided here for selected-response items only. Sample responses and scoring guidelines for any constructed-response and essay items will be posted to the Department's website later this year.

## Grade 6 English Language Arts Spring 2026 Unreleased Operational Items

<b>PBT Item No.</b>	<b>Reporting Category</b>	<b>Standard</b>	<b>Item Type*</b>	<b>Item Description</b>
20	<i>Language</i>	L.6.4	SR	Determine the meaning of a word in context.
21	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.3	SR	Identify a detail that helps develop a key idea in a passage.
22	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.6	SR	Determine an author's point of view in a passage.
23	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.6	SR	Identify the purpose for writing a passage.
24	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.5	SR	Analyze how paragraphs in a passage contribute to the development of an important idea.
25	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.4	SR	Analyze how word choice contributes to an understanding of a passage.
26	<i>Language</i>	L.6.2	SR	Determine the function of punctuation used in a sentence.
27	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.7	SR	Determine how a photograph supports information presented in a passage.
28	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.5	SR	Contrast how particular sections of two passages contribute to the development of ideas.
29	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.3	SR	Compare and contrast experiences of characters in two passages.
30	<i>Reading</i>	RI.6.2	SR	Determine a central idea developed in two passages.
31	<i>Language, Writing</i>	L.6.1, L.6.2, L.6.3, W.6.2, W.6.4	ES	Write an essay that explains actions taken that led to success in two passages; use evidence from the passages to support the explanation.

\* ELA item types are: selected-response (SR) and essay (ES).