

PRACTICE TEST

English Language Arts

Grade 3

Student Name

School Name

District Name



Grade 3 English Language Arts

PRACTICE TEST

This practice test contains 11 questions.

Directions

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

For most questions, you will mark your answers by filling in the circles in your Practice Test 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 short response or an essay. Write your response or essay in the space provided. Only responses and essays written within the provided space will be scored.

Today you will read the story “A Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience.” Pay close attention to the actions of the characters and the events in the story. Answer the questions to help you prepare to write a narrative story.

Read the story “A Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience.” Then answer the questions.

A Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience

by Sandra Beswetherick

- 1 It was my idea to invite Derrick, the new kid in our neighborhood, on our annual father-and-son weekend trip. Derrick had never been camping or fishing.
- 2 “Great idea!” Dad said. “It’ll be a once-in-a-lifetime experience for him, one he’ll never forget.”
- 3 Dad and I didn’t realize how true that would turn out to be.
- 4 The car blew a tire on the way to our campsite. Not an impressive start.
- 5 “A minor setback, that’s all,” Dad said as Derrick and I tumbled out of the car to help.
- 6 It was dark by the time we reached the campsite, got the boat into the water, and set up the tent. There was a stiff, icy breeze blowing off the lake.
- 7 Derrick shivered as he examined the sky. “That isn’t snow, is it?”
- 8 “Snow?” I said.
- 9 “It never snows in March!” Dad protested.
- 10 But those big flakes fell fast and heavy, blanketing the ground.
- 11 I burst out laughing. Derrick grinned. But Dad was horrified. He hustled us into the tent so we wouldn’t catch pneumonia¹ or something. But first he made sure we didn’t track any snow into the tent with us.
- 12 “We need to keep the floor dry,” Dad insisted. “There’s nothing worse than sleeping in wet sleeping bags.”
- 13 He passed out sandwiches after we settled in. “Minor setback,” he assured Derrick. “The snow should be gone tomorrow.” Dad reached for the large bottle of cola to pour us each a drink.

¹catch pneumonia—get sick

- 14 Maybe the cola was warm, or maybe it had been jostled too much, because when Dad opened it, that bottle erupted like Mount Vesuvius. Cola overflowed like lava. Dad dropped the bottle. It rolled across the tent floor spewing its contents, and we ended up perched on our sleeping bags like castaways adrift² in a cola sea.
- 15 Derrick clapped both hands over his mouth. His face turned red, and his cheeks ballooned out as if *he* were about to explode, too. From behind his hands came the snuffling and snorting of trapped laughter.
- 16 I tried to keep a straight face, out of respect for Dad—not just because he’d insisted that we keep the tent floor dry, but because he’d wanted this trip to be perfect.
- 17 “Minor setback,” Dad muttered as we soaked up cola with our towels.
- 18 The next morning dawned bright and beautiful, much to Dad’s relief. Derrick stood at the water’s edge, admiring the clear still lake, the tree-lined shore, and the cloudless sky.
- 19 “Wait until you catch your first fish, Derrick,” Dad said as he got the boat ready. “That’s an experience you won’t forget.” Dad turned to me. “Right, Steve?”
- 20 “Right, Dad,” I answered.
- 21 “And wait until you taste some fried, freshly caught fish for breakfast,” Dad said. “Right, Steve?”
- 22 “Right, Dad,” I said, although I thought Dad was trying a little too hard.
- 23 But Derrick didn’t catch his first fish. In fact, none of us felt even a nibble on our lines. This wasn’t a minor setback for Dad. This was a major disaster.
- 24 The silence grew. The still air settled hot and heavy.
- 25 I leaned over the side of the boat. “Fishy,” I sang into the depths of the lake. “Come on, I know you’re down there.” It sure beat sitting around in silence. And we weren’t catching any fish anyway.
- 26 Derrick joined in. “Fishy,” he crooned, looking down into the water. “Here, fish, fish.” When he turned back to me, his eyes were bulged, his mouth was puckered, and he was gulping down air the way a fish gulps water. The perfect fish-face!

²adrift—floating

- 27 I let out a whoop and made a fish-face of my own, my open hands on either side of my head for gills. "Fishy!"
- 28 Derrick and I turned our fish-faces toward Dad. There sat Dad with the goggled eyes and downturned frown of his favorite fish, the largemouth bass. "Fishy, fishy, bite my hook," he chanted in a throaty voice, "so I can take you home to cook."
- 29 Derrick hooted with laughter and fell into the bottom of the boat. Dad's bass frown upturned into a grin.
- 30 Lucky that Dad's mood improved when it did, because it was about then that the boat started sinking.
- 31 "Mr. Adams," Derrick asked, "should there be this much water in your boat?"



- 32 "Holy mackerel!" Dad yelled. He reached for the motor. "You guys, bail!"³
- 33 We barely reached shore, the boat sloshing with water.
- 34 That night, as we sat around the campfire toasting marshmallows, Derrick admitted he'd been worried about coming on the trip. "But it's been incredible," he said. "I'll never forget it. Thanks for inviting me."
- 35 "You're welcome," said Dad. "We're glad you came."
- 36 "I wonder what will happen next?" Derrick asked, putting another marshmallow on his stick.
- 37 "Yeah," I said. "I wonder."

³bail—scoop water out of the boat

38 As for Dad, he smiled a brave smile.



"A Once-in-a-Lifetime Experience" by Sandra Beswetherick, from *Highlights for Children* (March 2006). Copyright © 2006 by Highlights for Children, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Highlights for Children, Inc.

1 Part A

Throughout the first half of the story, Dad can **best** be described as feeling

- Ⓐ brave.
- Ⓑ amused.
- Ⓒ peaceful.
- Ⓓ determined.

Part B

Which sentence from the story **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- Ⓐ "Derrick had never been camping or fishing." (paragraph 1)
- Ⓑ "'Great idea!' Dad said." (paragraph 2)
- Ⓒ "Dad and I didn't realize how true that would turn out to be." (paragraph 3)
- Ⓓ "'Minor setback,' he assured Derrick." (paragraph 13)

2 Part A

Read paragraph 14 from the story.

Maybe the cola was warm, or maybe it had been jostled too much, because when Dad opened it, that bottle erupted like Mount Vesuvius. Cola overflowed like lava. Dad dropped the bottle. It rolled across the tent floor spewing its contents, and we ended up perched on our sleeping bags like castaways adrift in a cola sea.

What does **that bottle erupted like Mount Vesuvius** mean as used in the paragraph?

- (A) The cola bottle was open and floating in the water.
- (B) The cola was bubbling and spilling out.
- (C) The cola bottle was moving around.
- (D) The cola was hot.

Part B

Which detail from paragraph 14 supports the answer to Part A?

- (A) “. . . the cola was warm. . . .”
- (B) “. . . jostled too much”
- (C) “. . . overflowed like lava.”
- (D) “. . . perched on our sleeping bags”

This question is a text-based essay question. Write your essay in the space provided. Your essay should:

- Present and develop a narrative that uses details from the passage.
- Include correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

3 This story tells about Derrick’s first camping trip.

Write Derrick’s journal entry about this camping trip. Include information about how the characters responded to the events in the story as you write the journal entry.

You have a total of two pages on which to write your response.

3 _____



Read the article and poem about penguins. Then answer the questions that follow.

Read the article about penguins.

Penguins

by Melvin and Gilda Berger



- 1 Penguins live on the ice of the Antarctic. They have wings—yet they can't fly! But the penguins are terrific swimmers and divers. They plunge into the icy ocean to catch their meals of fish, squid, and krill. Some can stay underwater for up to six minutes.
- 2 After a long dive, penguins shoot up out of the water. They look like rockets being launched. The birds gulp a quick breath of air. Then they splash back down into the water.
- 3 Sometimes the penguins leap onto the ice. Once there, penguins are slow and clumsy walkers. But they have a way to move quickly. They drop onto their bellies and push themselves forward with feet and flippers. *ZOOM!* Away they go, sliding across the ice!
- 4 The biggest penguins of all are the emperor penguins. They are about as tall and heavy as third graders! Like other penguins, they spend most of their time diving for food. When it is time to nest, they jump out of the water and plop on the ice.

- 5 Each female lays a single egg on the ice. Then she heads back to the water. Her mate rolls the egg onto his feet and covers it with a flap of skin. Then he joins other males in a large circle. They huddle together to keep warm.
- 6 The males keep the eggs on their feet for a couple of months. During that time they do not eat. They lose about half their weight. Finally, the eggs hatch and the chicks are born.
- 7 By now, the females are back. They take over the care of the chicks. The males march off to the ocean. There, they fill their empty stomachs with food.
- 8 In a few weeks, the males return with food. Now both parents feed and protect their chicks. Six months later, the offspring are fully grown. Off they go. They're big enough to care for themselves.

"Penguins" by Melvin and Gilda Berger, from *Brrr! A Book About Polar Animals*. Text copyright © 2000, 2006 by Melvin and Gilda Berger. Reprinted by permission of Scholastic Inc. Photograph copyright © iStockphoto/flammulated.

Read the poem about penguins.

My Father's Feet

by Judy Sierra



To keep myself up off the ice,
I find my father's feet are nice.
I snuggle in his belly fluff,
And that's how I stay warm enough.

5 But when my father takes a walk,
My cozy world begins to rock.
He shuffles left, I hold on tight.

Oh no! He's wobbling to the right.
Not left again! Oops, here he goes.

10 Do you suppose my father knows
I'm hanging on to his warm toes?

"My Father's Feet" by Judy Sierra, from *Antarctic Antics: A Book of Penguin Poems*. Text copyright © 1998 by Judy Sierra. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Photograph copyright © iStockphoto/KeithSzafranski.

- 4 Based on the article, which would be the **best** heading for paragraphs 1–3?
- (A) Big Birds
 - (B) On the Move
 - (C) On Their Own
 - (D) A Meal Fit for a King
- 5 Based on the article and the poem, why do male penguins put their eggs and chicks on their feet?
- (A) The ice is very cold.
 - (B) The sun is very bright.
 - (C) The young penguins are shy.
 - (D) The other penguins are dangerous.

- 6 Read the sentence from paragraph 1 of the article in the box.

They plunge into the icy ocean to catch their meals of fish, squid, and krill.

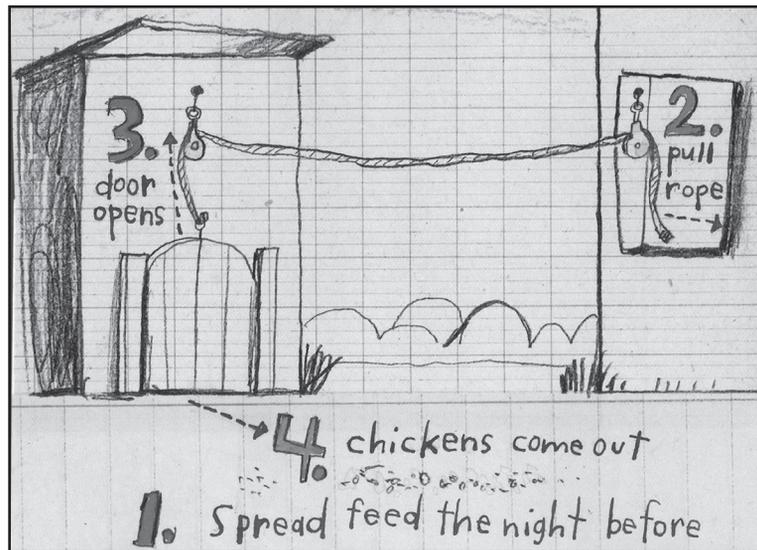
Based on the article, which word could be used instead of **plunge**?

- (A) fly
- (B) turn
- (C) dive
- (D) look

Tony Sarg was a puppet maker who worked with marionettes, small wooden puppets that are moved by strings. Read the passage *Balloons over Broadway* about Tony Sarg, and then answer the questions that follow.

BALLOONS OVER BROADWAY

by Melissa Sweet



- 1 From the time he was a little boy, Tony Sarg loved to figure out how to make things move. He once said he became a marionette man when he was only six years old.
- 2 His father had asked him to feed their chickens at six-thirty in the morning—every day. Tony had an idea—what if he could feed the chickens without leaving his bed?
- 3 He rigged up some pulleys and ran rope from the chicken coop door to his bedroom window. That night, he spread chicken feed outside the chicken coop door.
- 4 The next morning . . . Tony pulled on the rope, and the door to the chicken coop opened! The chickens ate their breakfast, Tony stayed snug in his bed, and his dad, so impressed, never made Tony do another chore.
- 5 When Tony grew up he moved to London, where he discovered that no one was making marionettes for kids anymore. So out of wood, cloth, and strings, Tony began to make puppets. He figured out ways to make his

marionettes' movement so lifelike that they performed as if they were real actors. Word soon spread about Tony's amazing marionettes. When Tony moved to New York City, the Tony Sarg Marionettes began performing on Broadway.

- 6 In the heart of New York City, in Herald Square, was "the biggest store on earth": R. H. Macy's department store. Macy's had heard about Tony's puppets and asked him to design a "puppet parade" for the store's holiday windows. So Tony made new puppets based on storybook characters, then attached them to gears and pulleys to make them move.
- 7 In Macy's "Wondertown" windows, Tony's mechanical marionettes danced across the stage as if by magic. All day long they performed to shoppers jostling for a better look.
- 8 But Macy's had an even bigger job in store for Tony.
- 9 Many of the people working at Macy's were immigrants, and as the holidays approached, they missed their own holiday traditions. . . . Macy's agreed to put on a parade for their employees, and they hired Tony to help.
- 10 Tony too was an immigrant. . . . He loved the idea of creating a parade based on street carnivals from all over the world. He made costumes and built horse-drawn floats, and Macy's even arranged to bring in bears, elephants, and camels from the Central Park Zoo.
- 11 The animals joined hundreds of Macy's employees on Thanksgiving Day, 1924, winding their way from Harlem to Herald Square. It was a dazzling parade!
- 12 In fact, Macy's first parade was such a success that they decided to have one every year on Thanksgiving Day—to celebrate America's own holiday.
- 13 Each year the parade grew. But when Macy's brought in lions and tigers—in addition to the bears, elephants, and camels—the animals roared and growled and frightened the children.
- 14 Macy's asked Tony to replace the animals.
- 15 Tony hoped to replace the animals with some kind of puppets, but his marionettes were less than three feet tall. He would have to make much larger puppets in order for them to be seen in the parade. And how could he make them strong enough to hold up in bad weather yet light enough to move up and down the streets?
- 16 Tony knew of a company in Ohio that made blimps¹ out of rubber—the perfect material for any weather. When he called the company and showed them his sketches, they agreed to make what Tony wanted.

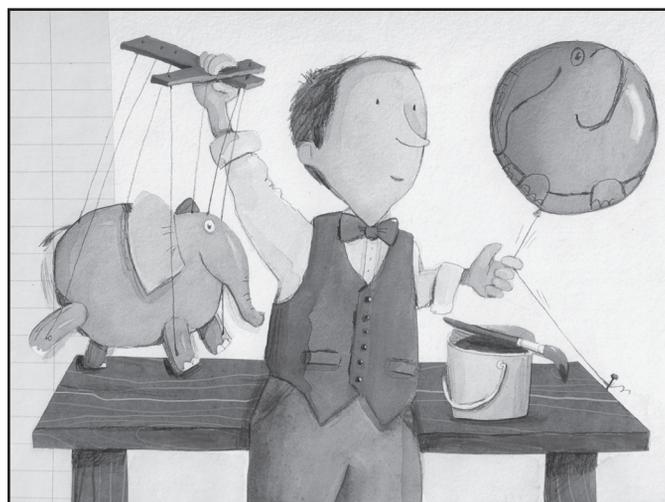
¹blimps—large, balloon-like aircraft

- 17 Still, how would Tony make his big puppets *move*?
- 18 Then Tony had an idea—from an Indonesian rod puppet in his toy collection.



an Indonesian rod puppet

- 19 On Thanksgiving Day, Tony's creatures, some as high as sixteen feet, spilled into the streets, and the crowds cheered wildly.
- 20 Part puppet, part balloon, the air-filled rubber bags wobbled down the avenues, propped up by wooden sticks.
- 21 But now the sidewalks were so packed with people that only those in the first few rows could really see the parade. Tony realized his puppets would have to be even bigger and higher off the ground. And though the sticks helped to steer the puppets, they were stiff and heavy. Tony wanted his balloons to *articulate*—to move and gesture—more like puppets. But how?



- 22 With a marionette, the controls are above and the puppet hangs down . . .
- 23 But what if the controls were below and the puppet could rise up?
- 24 During the next year, Tony set his new idea into motion.
- 25 This time, he asked the company in Ohio to make balloons out of rubberized silk—as strong as rubber but lighter than rubber alone.
- 26 Most important, Tony ordered the balloons to be filled not just with air but with helium too. Since helium is lighter than air, it would make the balloons rise.
- 27 Once the puppets were completed, they were deflated and shipped back to Tony in New York.
- 28 Tony did not know if everything would go as planned . . .
- 29 It was still dark on Thanksgiving morning when Tony filled the balloons with helium, tethering them down with sandbags.
- 30 By one p.m. the sidewalks were packed with people ready for the parade. Then, one by one, Tony cut the lines to the sandbags . . .
- 31 **LET’S have a PARADE!**



Balloons over Broadway by Melissa Sweet. Text and illustrations copyright © 2011 by Melissa Sweet. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company.

- 8 Based on the passage, why was Tony interested in marionettes?
- A He liked to watch big parades.
 - B He wanted to take care of animals.
 - C He was curious about how things moved.
 - D He was interested in writing puppet shows.
- 9 Based on paragraphs 2–4, what does the diagram **mainly** show?
- A how the invention was like a puppet
 - B why feeding chickens was a hard chore
 - C how the invention was supposed to work
 - D why feeding chickens was done in the morning

- 10 Read the sentence from paragraph 5 in the box.

Word soon spread about Tony's amazing marionettes.

What does the sentence suggest about Tony's marionettes?

- Ⓐ They became very popular.
- Ⓑ They became very expensive.
- Ⓒ They were changed over the years.
- Ⓓ They were copied by other people.

This question is a text-based essay question. Write your essay in the space provided on the next page. Your essay should:

- Present and develop a central idea.
- Provide evidence/details from the passage(s).
- Include correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

- 11 Based on the passage, write an essay to explain how the author shows that Tony was a clever person. Be sure to use information from the passage to develop your essay.

