

PRACTICE TEST

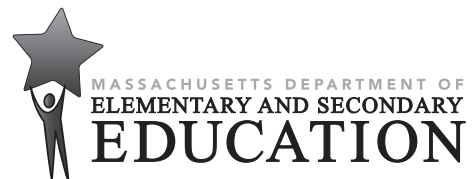
English Language Arts

Grade 7

Student Name

School Name

District Name



Grade 7 English Language Arts

PRACTICE TEST

This practice test contains 8 questions.

Directions

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

For most questions, you will mark your answers by filling in the circles in your Practice Test Answer Document. 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.

Two questions will ask you to write an essay. Write each essay in the space provided in your Practice Test Answer Document. Only essays written within the provided space will be scored.

Today you will read a passage from a novel. As you read, you will gather information to prepare for writing an original story.

Kevin Pugh’s dog, Cromwell, has boundless energy and potential talent. Zach is Kevin’s good friend. Read the passage from *The Fast and the Furriest*. Then answer the questions.

from *The Fast and the Furriest*

by Andy Behrens

- 1 In the days that followed, it became perfectly clear that Cromwell was obsessed with agility. It was not merely a phase, but an addiction. He dropped his leash at Kevin’s feet constantly. He ran phantom courses in the backyard. He lodged himself in the tire swing daily. It was mid-June and oppressively hot, but not even a series of 100-degree days could stop the dog. At times, Kevin would simply sit in a lawn chair, spraying himself with the hose, while Cromwell made run after failed run at the tire swing. Zach accompanied them on what Kevin felt were murderously long walks. At Montrose Beach, Cromwell ran through obstacle courses that Kevin constructed from abandoned tin pails and shovels; in Horner Park, the dog routinely broke free of his leash and tore through picnics and volleyball games; on the lakefront path, he chased bikes and terrorized pigeons. (Or maybe he just amused them. Tough to tell with pigeons.) He was an entirely new—and an unrelentingly active—Cromwell Pugh.
- 2 Kevin knew that they should really commit to Paw Patch. If they were going to keep up the dog agility nonsense, Cromwell needed more direction than Kevin alone could provide. All that remained was to convince his parents, who, Kevin figured, had always wanted him to be sportier anyway.
- 3 But Howie was a skeptic.
- 4 “Okay, just so I’m clear,” he said over breakfast on Sunday morning, “you want me and your mother to pay for a class for Cromwell . . .”
- 5 “And me,” said Kevin. “I’m in the class, too.”
- 6 “Sorry. And you,” acknowledged his dad. “We pay for a class where Cromwell *and you* get trained. But it’s not sit-stay-fetch-roll over training? Or clean-your-room training? It’s jump-through-a-hoop-and-leap-over-tiny-fences training?”
- 7 Howie, chewing, stared at his son across a plate of waffles. Each square on each waffle was filled with an equal volume of syrup.
- 8 “Yup,” Kevin said.

- 9 "Cromwell's not going to start fetching things, though?" Howie continued, a waffle fleck flying from his mouth. "This is like dog show training?"
- 10 "Um, no." Kevin cleared his throat. "No, we won't be competing or anything. But it would make Cromwell happier."
- 11 "He's been depressed?" Howie asked before putting a perfect square bite into his mouth.
- 12 Cromwell was sniffing the floor for breakfast droppings, wagging his tail and occasionally pouncing on a speck of something.
- 13 "Well, no. Not depressed. But he hasn't really moved for the last few years. Now he's like a brand-new dog." Kevin could sense that his argument was getting thinner.
- 14 "And without a single class." Howie spoke and chewed simultaneously. "Why can't you two just keep up the walks? Let the dog keep whackin' himself in the head with the tire in the backyard or whatever."
- 15 Kevin folded his arms across his Cubs jersey. "If Izzy wants to sign up for soccer in Malaysia, it's no problem. We'll get vaccinated against six diseases and book a flight. I want to sign up for dog training in Wrigleyville and you're like, 'No way.'"
- 16 "Listen, I didn't say 'No way.'" Howie paused. "You know I'm happy to pay for anything you're into—but *you*, not the dog." He speared a strawberry, swirled it in whipped cream, and then scooped up a waffle chunk and rammed the fork in his mouth. "And c'mon. You can't compare Cromwell jumping over stuff to Izzy's soccer."
- 17 "Why can't I?" Kevin insisted.
- 18 "Because soccer's a sport—not a particularly American sport, I'll grant you. It doesn't involve much scoring or violence," Kevin's dad continued. "But there is *some* scoring, and there's fake violence. More importantly, it has a ball."
- 19 Kevin's eyes widened. "What?"
- 20 "Soccer is played with a ball, Kevin," Howie explained. "All sports involve balls. They can be kicked or thrown, doesn't matter."
- 21 Kevin stared at his dad for a moment, dumbfounded.
- 22 "So," he said at last, "surfing is not a sport?"
- 23 "Negatory, Kev. It's an exhibition," Howie declared.
- 24 "How about fencing? Or bull-riding? Or ice-skating?"

- 25 “Nope, nope, and heck no. Ice-skating? C’mon, Kev. You’re gonna make me ill over here.” Kevin’s dad made wet smacking sounds as he chewed.
- 26 “What about hockey?” Kevin asked. “That has a puck.”
- 27 “Pucks are like the metric equivalent of balls. So yeah, that’s a sport.”
- 28 “How ‘bout bingo? That involves balls.”
- 29 Howie lifted his head from his plate and spoke deliberately, as though explaining a fine point of law. “While all sports involve balls,” he said, “*not* all things involving balls are sports. Like with juggling and pinball and so forth. That’s an important distinction.”
- 30 Kevin pressed on, unsure why he was prolonging the argument. “What about fishing? That’s on ESPN all the time.”
- 31 “If one of the two sides doesn’t know it’s playing,” said Howie, “then it’s not a sport. And the fishes definitely don’t know what’s up. So no, not a sport.” More chewing.
- 32 Kevin stared at his father’s ruddy face. “So that’s it?” he finally said. “No interest in classes for Cromwell?”
- 33 His dad shrugged. “You’re not makin’ a good case here, Kev.”

The Fast and the Furriest by Andy Behrens. Copyright © 2010 by Alloy Entertainment and Andy Behrens. Reprinted by permission of Alfred A. Knopf, an imprint of Random House Children’s Books, a division of Penguin Random House LLC.

1 Part A

Which sentence describes a central idea of the passage?

- A. Cromwell has become much more energetic than he was before.
- B. Kevin and Howie have different ideas about what activities are worthwhile.
- C. Cromwell enjoys exercising on the beach more than playing at the park.
- D. Howie wants Cromwell to participate in different types of dog competitions.

Part B

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

- A. "At Montrose Beach, Cromwell ran through obstacle courses that Kevin constructed from abandoned tin pails and shovels. . . ." (paragraph 1)
- B. "All that remained was to convince his parents, who, Kevin figured, had always wanted him to be sportier anyway." (paragraph 2)
- C. "'Cromwell's not going to start fetching things, though?'" (paragraph 9)
- D. "'But it would make Cromwell happier.'" (paragraph 10)

2 Part A

Based on the passage, what is the **main** reason the author includes Howie as a character in the story?

- A. to lighten Kevin’s seriousness
- B. to call attention to Izzy’s enthusiasm
- C. to create a conflict that challenges Kevin
- D. to introduce a surprise for Cromwell

Part B

Which **two** details **best** support the answer to Part A?

- A. “Howie continued, a waffle fleck flying from his mouth.” (paragraph 9)
- B. “Cromwell was sniffing the floor for breakfast droppings, wagging his tail. . . .” (paragraph 12)
- C. “Well, no. Not depressed.” (paragraph 13)
- D. “If Izzy wants to sign up for soccer in Malaysia, it’s no problem.” (paragraph 15)
- E. “You know I’m happy to pay for anything you’re into. . . .” (paragraph 16)
- F. “You’re not makin’ a good case here, Kev.” (paragraph 33)

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

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

3 At the end of the passage, Howie tells Kevin that he is not making a good case. Write an original story that describes what Kevin does next to try to change Howie's mind about paying for Cromwell's training.

Read the two passages about famous blizzards that swept through parts of the United States in early 1888. Then answer the questions that follow.

Read the article “Blizzard!”

Blizzard!

by Jeanie Mebane

- 1 No one on the prairie was prepared for the violent blizzard that blew in on January 12, 1888. The morning had dawned 30 to 40 degrees warmer than the day before. After weeks of below zero temperatures, the day seemed almost balmy. Many residents thought a January thaw had arrived.
- 2 But the day changed quickly. As an Arctic cold front collided with warm, moisture-filled air from the Gulf of Mexico, a blizzard formed. It raced southeastward from Canada at 60 to 70 miles per hour. Gale-force winds whipped the falling snow. Temperatures dropped and objects became hidden in a snowy sea of white.
- 3 The storm hit western North Dakota in the morning and then moved through South Dakota and western Nebraska by noon. It reached eastern Nebraska and Iowa in mid-afternoon—school dismissal time. It became known as the Schoolchildren’s Blizzard.
- 4 When the blizzard hit near Huron, South Dakota, around noon, Mae Hunt tried to keep classes going in the country school where she taught. However, the school ran out of fuel in a few hours, and Hunt knew that she and the children would freeze if they stayed. She decided to take her seven students to a farmhouse only about 140 yards (just a little longer than a 120-yard football field) from the schoolhouse.
- 5 Stepping outside, Hunt and her students were blinded by the force of the blizzard and almost immediately felt their eyelashes crust over with ice. After stumbling through the snow, teacher and students were ready to give up when they happened to find a large straw pile. The older boys dug a cave into the straw, and all eight of them piled into it. They were still cold but glad to be out of the wind and snow.
- 6 They spent the night there with Hunt calling her students’ names again and again to keep them awake and make sure that they were alive. When it grew light, they could see the farmhouse they had been trying to reach less than 100 feet away. The oldest student, a boy of 18, staggered to the house on his frozen feet. He and the farmer helped the rest of the group get inside to warmth and safety. Hunt and her students all survived, but one little girl’s feet had frozen overnight when her wet socks and shoes had formed into ice boots. . . .

- 7 In eastern Nebraska, Barney and Anna Barry feared for the lives of their three older children who had walked the mile to school that morning. The Barrys decided it would be safest for their children and their schoolmates to stay at school. While Barney prepared to take supplies to the school, Anna put the stew she was cooking into a covered kettle for Barney to carry. After dressing warmly, Barney tied a bag of blankets onto his back.
- 8 Unable to see in the storm, Barney knew that he could get lost if he tried to walk along the road to the school. He decided to follow fence lines through the fields between his home and the school. As he made his way, Barney couldn't see anything in the blowing snow—not even his left hand guiding him along the fence wire. He trudged through the deep snow as fast as he could to reach the school before dismissal time. If he did not get there in time, the children would start home—and get lost in the storm.
- 9 Near the school, Barney had to leave the fence and blindly cross the long schoolyard before he safely reached the schoolhouse. Inside, the teacher and students were huddled around a heating stove. Leaving the stew and blankets, Barney told the teacher to keep the students there for the night. Then, concerned about his wife and young children left at home, Barney made the return trip, again following the fences.
- 10 Barney, his family, and all the children in their school survived the storm. Two hundred thirty-five other Nebraska schoolchildren did not. About 500 people died in the blizzard. . . .
- 11 The Schoolchildren's Blizzard continued eastward and southward across the country. At the same time, part of the frigid air mass slipped westward. Within days, the entire country experienced record-breaking low temperatures. Snow fell in areas usually too warm for snow.
- 12 Two months later, from March 11 to 14, a second devastating blizzard struck in 1888. This time, the East Coast from Maryland to Maine was covered with up to 50 inches of snow in some places. Wind gusts of up to 70 miles per hour were recorded. Daily life along the heavily populated East Coast ground to a halt in what became known as the Great White Hurricane of 1888. Roads were blocked and railroads were stopped, trapping travelers in trains. The weight of the snow took down telegraph lines. Snowdrifts reached the top of some homes. Buried under huge amounts of snow for days, cities became isolated and about 400 people died. After the snow stopped falling, the melting snow caused flooding.
- 13 But the future would be different: One outcome of the blizzard was that cities more quickly embraced the idea of building underground transportation systems, which are the backbones of major urban centers today. And communication lines were moved underground, too.

"Blizzard!" by Jeanie Mebane, from *Cobblestone: The Perfect Storm: When Weather Made History* (March 2012, Vol. 33, No. 3). Copyright © 2012 by Carus Publishing Company d/b/a Cricket Media. Reprinted by permission of Cricket Media.

Read the poem from *The Blizzard Voices*.

from *The Blizzard Voices*

by Ted Kooser

A Woman's Voice:

In all my years I never saw
another thing like that storm.
When it came it felt as if
an enormous fist had struck
5 the house. Snow fine as flour
sifted in under the eaves
and piled along the walls.
Our youngest, Jim, was at school
on a place two miles above,
10 and we were worried sick
for fear he'd try to get home
and be lost. You couldn't see
your hand at the end of your arm
out in it. My husband led
15 one of the horses up the lane
but had to turn back. The snow
had frozen the horse's eyes.
Halvor¹ was just drying out
by the stove when we heard
20 a knocking out on the porch,
and there stood Jimmy's pony,
covered with ice and snow,
with a bag on her halter,
and in it a note which said
25 "Your boy is safe at the school."

¹Halvor—the speaker's husband

The Blizzard Voices by Ted Kooser. Copyright © 1986 by Theodore J. Kooser. Reprinted by permission of Bieler Press.

- 4 The author's **main** purpose in the article is to
- A. explain winter temperature patterns.
 - B. describe how to survive an emergency.
 - C. present historical data for future research.
 - D. provide information about a specific natural disaster.
- 5 Based on the article, what was one effect of the blizzards that occurred in 1888?
- A. Cities purchased snow removal equipment.
 - B. Urban areas began to build transportation below city streets.
 - C. Principals started to cancel school during bad conditions.
 - D. Laws were created that prevented citizens from traveling during storms.

- 6 What is the **most likely** reason the poet ends the poem with the line, “Your boy is safe at the school”?
- A. to offer a feeling of relief
 - B. to show a new point of view
 - C. to provide a sense of suspense
 - D. to include a quotation from a source

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

No one on the prairie was prepared for the violent blizzard that blew in on January 12, 1888.

Which image from the poem **best** supports the description in the sentence?

- A. “an enormous fist had struck” (line 4)
- B. “Snow fine as flour” (line 5)
- C. “we were worried sick” (line 10)
- D. “Halvor was just drying out” (line 18)

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

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

- 8 Write an essay that explains how the article **and** the poem portray the blizzards of 1888. Be sure to use information from the article and the poem to develop your essay.

MASSACHUSETTS COMPREHENSIVE ASSESSMENT SYSTEM

Grade 7 English Language Arts
Practice Test Answer Document

School Name: _____
District Name: _____
Last Name of Student: _____
First Name of Student: _____

MARKING INSTRUCTIONS

- Use a No. 2 pencil only.
- Do not use ink, ballpoint, or felt-tip pens.
- Make solid marks that fill the circles completely.
- Erase cleanly any marks you wish to change.
- Do not make any stray marks on this form.
- Do not fold, tear, or damage this form.

1. Part A Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ

Part B Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ

2. Part A Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ

Part B Ⓐ Ⓑ Ⓒ Ⓓ Ⓔ Ⓕ

A large rectangular box containing 25 horizontal lines for writing.

4. (A) (B) (C) (D)

5. (A) (B) (C) (D)

6. (A) (B) (C) (D)

7. (A) (B) (C) (D)

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

8. _____
