



State of Texas Assessments of Academic Readiness

**GRADE 7**  
**Reading Language Arts**

**Practice Assessment**



# READING LANGUAGE ARTS

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.

## from The Inca Chasqui

by Wendi Silvano

- 1 Every boy, when he reached the age of fourteen, was expected to train for service in the Inca empire. To pay his *mita*, or tax requirement, each was assigned a particular service. Some were chosen to be builders or soldiers. Others were servants in the Sapa Inca's<sup>1</sup> household. The fastest and most dependable boys were chosen to be Chasquis.
- 2 Chasquis were stationed in small, one-room huts about every two miles along the rock-paved Inca road system.
- 3 Each boy carried a message or parcel as fast as he could to the next hut and passed it on to a waiting runner. In this manner, messages could traverse the entire Inca kingdom, from north to south, in just a matter of days. Chasquis had to be strong, loyal, and brave. If even one runner failed to make his delivery, the entire chain would be broken, and the message would never reach its destination.
- 4 Natu heard the wail of the conch shell, signaling an approaching runner. He scurried up the hill to where his older brother Mayta stood ready. Mayta was the fastest Chasqui in the southeast quarter. Natu loved to see him run.
- 5 He watched with envy as Muru, the runner, told Mayta the message. Then, like a racing puma, Mayta sped off toward the next hut.
- 6 Muru stood, looking majestic in his white headdress, his club and sling carefully tucked in the pouch at his side. Natu smiled.
- 7 "Can you tell me today?" he asked Muru.
- 8 "Yes, Natu. Today we carry word to the Sapa Inca that the northwest quarter has had an earthquake and needs supplies and men. Tomorrow the governor will send a *quipu*<sup>2</sup> detailing just what he requires.

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<sup>1</sup>The Sapa Inca was the supreme ruler of the Inca Empire.

<sup>2</sup>A *quipu* ('kē-pū) is an Inca device for recording information, usually made of knotted strings of cotton or other fiber.

9 "Then I will see you tomorrow?" said Natu.

10 "I suppose you will," replied Muru.

11 "Good."

12 For three years Natu had watched Mayta and Muru with admiration. For three years he had longed for the day when it would be he who raced along this rugged stretch on the road to the Inca capital of Cuzco.

\* \* \*

13 "Tell me of today's journey," begged Natu the moment Mayta appeared in the doorway that evening.

14 "All right," said Mayta. "Just give me a moment to catch my breath."

15 Natu sat by him on the llama-skin mat that was his bed.

16 "Today was quite exciting. I had only just started up the steep slope when our friend, the puma, decided it liked the smell of the guinea pig Mother had given me for lunch. It glared at me with a look so fierce that I wondered if maybe it wasn't thinking how much more meat there would be on a Chasqui!"

17 Natu laughed. "What did you do?"

18 "For a few moments we both stood frozen, staring at each other like two llamas eyeing the same patch of grass. I carefully reached into my pouch and pulled out my sling and the meat. I slid the meat into the sling and pulled it back as slowly as I could. Then, with a shout that echoed over the mountain and back again, I shot that meat right past our friend's nose and so deep into the brush that I'm sure it took the puma quite some time to find it."

19 "Oh, Mayta!" said Natu, beaming with pride. "You are so cunning and brave. I, too, wish for such adventure!"

20 Natu arose early the next morning. He wanted to take the llamas to pasture at dawn so he wouldn't miss Muru's arrival. He listened to every sound that swept down through the mountain passes, expecting to hear the blow of a conch. What he heard instead made him tighten with fear. It was Mayta's voice yelling for help!

21 Natu ran up the slope, where he found his brother Mayta lying on the ground, writhing and grabbing his ankle.

- 22 "Mayta!" yelled Natu. "Are you all right?"
- 23 "Oh, Natu," grunted Mayta. "I fear I have lost a battle with a lowly stone."
- 24 Mayta winced with pain as Natu helped him up. Slowly they made their way to the hut, where Mayta rested on the mat. They both looked down at his swollen ankle.
- 25 "Just wait until Muru sees this," said Mayta. "The tale will reach Cuzco faster than any message ever sent to the Sapa Inca."
- 26 Natu didn't know whether to laugh or cry. But he knew there was not time for either. In the distance he could hear the sound of the conch. Muru was coming!
- 27 "Natu," cried Mayta. "You must take the quipu. I cannot run."
- 28 "But, Mayta—"
- 29 "No buts. The chain must not be broken. Muru will be too tired to go on. You know the route. You can do it."
- 30 Natu's heart pounded. This was the chance he had always hoped for—the chance to prove he could be a Chasqui.
- 31 "I will do it, my brother. I won't let you down."
- 32 He grabbed Mayta's headdress and pouch.
- 33 "Mayta is hurt!" called Natu as Muru neared. "Pass me the quipu and go help him."
- 34 Muru hesitated just a moment. He looked at Natu, then at the hut. "Here," he said. "Be careful."

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- 1** Which word from paragraph 1 best helps the reader understand that the word requirement refers to something that is an obligation?

Record your answer in the space provided.

- 
- 2** Which characteristic of historical fiction is present in the excerpt?
- (A) The main character is a real person who lived long ago.
  - (B) The conflict is based on actual events from long ago.
  - (C) The dialogue actually occurred between people of the past.
  - (D) The setting includes details about a culture that existed in the past.

- 3** Which sentence from the excerpt best reveals how the conflict will be resolved?
- (A) *Mayta was the fastest Chasqui in the southeast quarter.* (paragraph 4)
  - (B) *Muru stood, looking majestic in his white headdress, his club and sling carefully tucked in the pouch at his side.* (paragraph 6)
  - (C) *For three years he had longed for the day when it would be he who raced along this rugged stretch on the road to the Inca capital of Cuzco.* (paragraph 12)
  - (D) *"For a few moments we both stood frozen, staring at each other like two llamas eyeing the same patch of grass."* (paragraph 18)
- 

- 4** The third-person limited point of view in the excerpt helps the reader understand —
- (A) how Natu feels when he listens to Mayta's story
  - (B) what Mayta thinks about Natu's ambition to be a runner
  - (C) why Muru will spread the story of what happened to Mayta
  - (D) how all the characters feel when Mayta is hurt
- 

- 5** Which detail supports the key idea that Natu must take his brother's place?
- (A) Natu is excited to show Mayta he would be an excellent runner.
  - (B) Muru no longer possesses the strength to make the journey.
  - (C) Natu has watched Mayta and Muru exchange messages for years.
  - (D) The fastest and most reliable boys are chosen to become Chasquis.





- 7 Read these sentences from paragraph 18.

*"I slid the meat into the sling and pulled it back as slowly as I could. Then, with a shout that echoed over the mountain and back again, I shot that meat right past our friend's nose and so deep into the brush that I'm sure it took the puma quite some time to find it."*

What can the reader infer from these sentences?

- (A) Mayta scares the puma with the meat.
  - (B) Mayta enjoys watching the puma search for the meat.
  - (C) Mayta plans to return for the meat after the puma leaves.
  - (D) Mayta uses the meat to distract the puma.
- 

- 8 How does the author's use of language in paragraph 26 affect the mood of the excerpt?

- (A) By expressing a feeling of profound sadness
- (B) By conveying a sense of hope for the future
- (C) By hinting at feelings of regret and confusion
- (D) By creating a sense of suspense and excitement

- 9** What does Mayta's encounter with the puma reveal about him?
- Ⓐ He remains calm under pressure.
  - Ⓑ His recklessness causes his later injury.
  - Ⓒ He chooses not to deliver the messages himself.
  - Ⓓ His vanity means that he does not care about others.

**Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.**

## ***from* Cool Jobs: Sports Science**

*by Helen Fields*

- 1           The gymnast reaches her arms high and then takes off running. She cartwheels to the far end of the beam and springs into the air. She spins, lands squarely on her feet and raises her arms in triumph. The stadium fills with cheers. A great performance followed by a great landing. It was just the thing to win the girl, an American gymnast named Shannon Miller, a gold medal in the 1996 Olympic Games.
  
- 2           Normally, when you send something spinning through the air—such as a ruler or a pen—it doesn't land perfectly on end. But that's what a gymnast must do: land cleanly on her (or his) feet, even after twisting and turning through the air.
  
- 3           Jill McNitt-Gray studies how gymnasts do this. At the University of Southern California, in Los Angeles, she works as a biomechanist. That means she's an expert in how living things move. And to do gymnastics, she explains, even though you don't know it, "you're learning mechanics."
  
- 4           Hers is just one field where science and sports meet. In fact, there are a huge variety of scientists who study sports.

### **Stuck, with Science**

- 5           McNitt-Gray has plenty of experience flying through the air. A gymnast throughout her teens, she's now an expert in helping new generations of these athletes land on their feet.
  
- 6           Using high-speed video taken at two summer Olympics, McNitt-Gray and her coworkers have analyzed how gymnasts sail through the air—and then stick their landings. The point of high-speed videos is to play them back *verrrrry sloooooowly*. That allows the viewer to follow a gymnast's every move.
  
- 7           In this sport, landings are very important. Judges take off fractions of a point if a gymnast wobbles, takes a step or even squats upon landing. And when a gymnast falls or fails to land feet first, well, that can cost a whole point—and likely a spot on the winners' podium. So each gymnast wants to land firmly, balanced and upright—without waving an arm or taking a step.

- 8 The airborne path to that landing depends on two things: the takeoff and gravity. Once the athlete jumps, all a gymnast can alter is how the body is arrayed and oriented. Luckily, even upside down, half a turn from the end of a jump, a gymnast can still adjust a landing. "You still have enough time to move to put yourself in the right position," explains McNitt-Gray.
- 9 To rotate faster, a gymnast will draw in her arms. To slow down a turn, she can raise those arms over her head. An ice skater does the same thing. Bringing in the arms will speed up a spin; extending them slows it down. It's all a matter of physics. How the mass of an object is distributed will affect how fast it rotates.
- 10 When gymnasts make the correct mid-flight adjustments, they can safely slam their weight into the ground. "You just have to be ready to handle it," McNitt-Gray says.
- 11 Coaches use her research to help gymnasts safely stick their landings. Carefully watching a particular athlete's technique can lead to suggestions, such as jumping a moment sooner or shifting the body's weight a tad more in one direction.
- 12 McNitt-Gray works on other sports too. She has helped divers enter the water smoothly and cleanly. Her analyses have aided tennis and golf players so that they can get their best swing at the ball. She has even studied how dental hygienists and professional cellists hold themselves when they work. "It's all about using your muscles," she explains.

Helen Fields, Science News for Students, July 31, 2013. Used with permission.



Altor Carrera PortC, /Westend61/Superstock

## Adventure in the City

His only equipment two hands and two feet  
The city's his court: each structure, each street  
There's no grass and no net—just a sea of concrete

- 5 It's all about motion; all about flow  
His feet do the thinking  
They always say go

The playground's deserted. He flips over swings,  
bounds over buildings like his ankles have springs  
He's quick as a river. You'd swear he has wings

10 It's all about motion; all about flow  
His feet do the thinking  
They always say go

Up drainpipes and stairs till he stands at the summit—  
Horns sound when bystanders think he's reached his limit,  
15 but he bridges the rooftop, climbs safely down from it

It's all about motion; all about flow  
His feet do the thinking  
They always say go

He leaps over planters and jumps the bike rack  
20 Half instinct, half art—he was born with the knack  
for creating a route without trail, without track

Parkour's<sup>1</sup> so demanding, but he's got the chops  
for making all structures his free-running props  
And it's not until he gets home that he stops

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<sup>1</sup>Parkour is a sport that involves running, climbing, and jumping across structures quickly and smoothly.

- 10** What is the most likely reason the author includes the details in paragraph 1 of the excerpt from “Cool Jobs: Sports Science”?
- Ⓐ To convey to the reader the pressure of Olympic gymnastic performances
  - Ⓑ To draw the reader into the topic of sports science using a true story
  - Ⓒ To highlight the way an error can keep a gymnast from victory
  - Ⓓ To show how well world-class athletes must be able to perform
- 

- 11** The problem-and-solution organizational pattern in paragraphs 7 through 11 of the excerpt from “Cool Jobs: Sports Science” supports the topic by —
- Ⓐ highlighting the way gymnasts cannot rely on their coaches for feedback
  - Ⓑ suggesting that no gymnast can land perfectly every time, even with practice
  - Ⓒ revealing how hard gymnasts must work to understand the mechanics of their sport
  - Ⓓ illustrating how science helps gymnasts make adjustments to land successfully



- 12** What is the controlling idea of the excerpt from “Cool Jobs: Sports Science”?
- (A) Gymnasts must change their body position in order to stick landings.
  - (B) Science helps gymnasts and other athletes improve performance.
  - (C) Shannon Miller is an American gymnast who won the Olympic gold medal.
  - (D) Olympic gymnastics requires effort on the part of both athletes and coaches.
- 

- 13** The poet most likely uses a repetitive structure in the poem in order to —
- (A) show the height of the jumps
  - (B) stress a pattern of actions
  - (C) present the athlete as childlike
  - (D) reveal a contrast between ideas
- 

- 14** What does the meter of the poem “Adventure in the City” convey to the reader?
- (A) The brief nature of the performance
  - (B) The many risks that the athlete is taking
  - (C) The quick, seamless movements of the athlete
  - (D) The loud, excited cries of the spectators

- 15** What is the most likely reason the poet includes a photograph with the poem "Adventure in the City"?
- (A) To show what type of movements are used for parkour
  - (B) To emphasize the importance of the setting for parkour
  - (C) To indicate how popular parkour is
  - (D) To stress the need for a proper landing in the sport of parkour
- 

- 16** Read this sentence from line 9 of the poem "Adventure in the City."

*He's quick as a river.*

What is the most likely reason the poet uses a simile in this line?

- (A) To suggest the athlete's strength as he moves
  - (B) To suggest the onlookers' excitement
  - (C) To evoke sudden, choppy movement
  - (D) To evoke rapid, smooth movement
- 
- 17** Which theme about sports is found in **BOTH** the excerpt from "Cool Jobs: Sports Science" and the poem "Adventure in the City"?
- (A) Great skill is required for superb results.
  - (B) Acquired knowledge can improve performance.
  - (C) Winning requires determination.
  - (D) Recognition is the best reward.

**18** Read lines 20 and 21 from the poem "Adventure in the City."

*Half instinct, half art—he was born with the knack  
for creating a route without trail, without track*

What do these lines suggest about a **DIFFERENCE** between gymnastics in the excerpt from "Cool Jobs: Sports Science" and parkour in the poem "Adventure in the City"?

- (A) They imply that parkour requires a greater amount of natural talent than gymnastics does.
- (B) They show that unlike gymnasts, parkour athletes have regular routines for practicing.
- (C) They communicate that unlike gymnastics, parkour requires a dedicated space to train.
- (D) They suggest that parkour athletes do not rely on science the way gymnasts do.

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**19** The author of the article "Cool Jobs: Sports Science" and the poet of "Adventure in the City" **BOTH** suggest that sports —

- (A) require experts behind them
- (B) require planning for safety
- (C) can be done almost anywhere
- (D) can be thrilling to everyone involved

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.**

## **Camels Join the Army!**

*by Carol D. Greathouse*

1 On a stormy day in April 1856, a ship carrying Egyptian cargo sailed along the Gulf Coast of Texas. The ship pitched sharply in the high seas. Days passed before the captain was able to transfer his freight to a small boat that could take it to shore. After three months at sea, 34 camels were about to set foot on U.S. soil!

2 The camels were bound for the newly formed U.S. Camel Corps that belonged to the U.S. War Department. The head of the corps was Secretary of War Jefferson Davis. Davis hoped that the camels could be used to explore the deserts of west Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. He believed the camels could carry supplies to remote army outposts and even carry soldiers to watch over pioneer settlements.

3 But once on land, the camels had to travel to their permanent home at Camp Verde, Texas.

### **Biting, Kicking, Spitting, and Smelling**

4 The journey was not easy and many problems occurred. Army men were familiar with horses and mules but not camels.

5 Packing supplies around the hump in the middle of a camel's saddle frustrated the men. Some of them were convinced that the camels held grudges and waited to get even by biting, kicking, or spitting at them. Above all else, the camels smelled. Their odor was so strong that one whiff of the approaching camels sent horses stampeding. The army ended up sending a horseback rider ahead of the camels, yelling, "Get out of the road; the camels are coming."

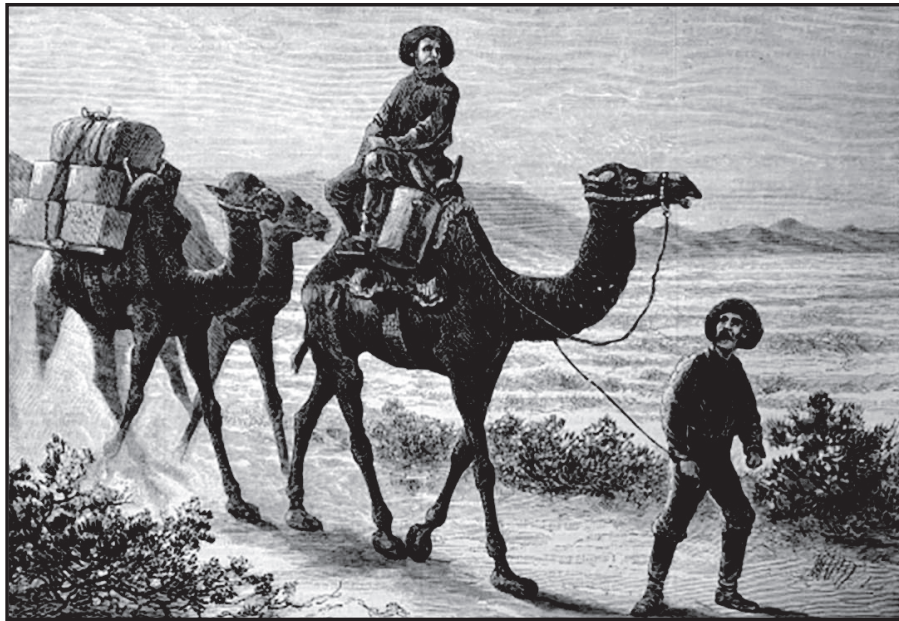
## Camels on the Go

- 6 But when the camels were called to carry supplies for a War Department expedition, the animals proved their worth. Edward Fitzgerald Beale, the expedition leader, praised them. "My admiration for the camels increases daily with my experience of them. They pack water for others four days under a hot sun and never get a drop; they pack heavy burdens of corn and oats for months and never get a grain; and on bitter greasewood and other worthless shrubs not only subsist but keep fat."

## On Active Duty

- 7 Five years after the camels arrived in the United States, the Civil War divided the country. The Southern states decided to secede—or break away—from the Northern states and form the Confederate States of America. As Texas politicians argued whether their state should also secede, General Twiggs saw a way to finally rid his command of the camels. He suggested that he could save the U.S. government more than \$500 each month by ending the Camel Corps. He asked permission to sell the camels or let them loose on the prairie. But before he received an answer, Texas did secede. Camp Verde surrendered to Confederate soldiers, who now found themselves in charge of weapons, supplies, and a total of 80 camels.
- 8 For the next four years, Confederate soldiers used some of the camels to haul cotton to Mexico and salt throughout Texas. They loaned other camels to the postal service to deliver mail around San Antonio, Texas. But for the most part, the camels had little to do.
- 9 The soldiers at Camp Verde paid little attention to them. Some camels wandered off; three traveled to the war-torn countryside of Arkansas. One Confederate general used a camel to carry his company's baggage. Soldiers reported seeing this camel "swinging along, under a little mountain of carpet-sacks, cooking utensils, blankets, etc."

- 10            When the Civil War ended in 1865, the camels at Camp Verde became the property of the U.S. government. A year later, the 66 remaining camels were auctioned off. Edward Beale, who had been so taken with the camels, bought some of them. Beale's camels retired to his California ranch, where they lived in comfort. Others were bought and used to carry supplies over land. When these camels were no longer needed, the owners turned the camels loose. Over the years, settlers and miners claimed to see wild camels roaming the American Southwest.



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**20** Read the dictionary entry.

**retire** \ rə-'tī(-ə)r \ v  
**1.** conclude a working career **2.** remove from danger **3.** retreat from a position **4.** withdraw to bed

Which definition best matches the meaning of retired in paragraph 10?

- (A) Definition 1
  - (B) Definition 2
  - (C) Definition 3
  - (D) Definition 4
- 

**21** Read this sentence from paragraph 9.

*Soldiers reported seeing this camel "swinging along, under a little mountain of carpet-sacks, cooking utensils, blankets, etc."*

The most likely reason the author uses figurative language in this description of the camel is to —

- (A) support the purpose for the camels being sold
- (B) emphasize the hardships the camels endured
- (C) convey the peculiar sight of the camels roaming
- (D) describe the type of terrain traveled by the camels

**22** This question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

**Part A**

The word “politician” has a Greek root that means “affairs of the city.” Based on this information, what does the word politicians mean as it is used in paragraph 7?

- (A) People who supervise transportation systems
- (B) People in charge of buying and selling goods
- (C) People who frequently debate
- (D) People engaged in government

**Part B**

Which phrase from paragraph 7 best supports the answer to Part A?

- (A) *argued whether their state should also secede*
- (B) *rid his command of the camels*
- (C) *before he received an answer*
- (D) *found themselves in charge of weapons, supplies*

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**23** Which sentence from the article shows that some people viewed the camels as useful?

- (A) *Davis hoped that the camels could be used to explore the deserts of west Texas, New Mexico, Arizona, and California. (paragraph 2)*
- (B) *He suggested that he could save the U.S. government more than \$500 each month by ending the Camel Corps. (paragraph 7)*
- (C) *They loaned other camels to the postal service to deliver mail around San Antonio, Texas. (paragraph 8)*
- (D) *When the Civil War ended in 1865, the camels at Camp Verde became the property of the U.S. government. (paragraph 10)*



**24** What is most likely the author's purpose for organizing paragraphs 9 and 10 using cause-and-effect?

- (A) To explain how the camels were able to travel long distances
  - (B) To indicate that the camels were more helpful in certain locations
  - (C) To illustrate why the soldiers ignored the camels
  - (D) To explain how the camels ended up in many places
- 

**25** What is the best summary of paragraphs 6 through 8 of the article?

- (A) Despite the ability of camels to carry large loads and go for long periods of time without water, the use of camels did not receive much support from the soldiers. Eventually the camels were used for delivering mail in Texas.
- (B) Camels began to gain the respect of some of the army leaders. The camels were admired for traveling long distances in severe environmental conditions. However, one general requested that the camels be released from military duty.
- (C) Camels were useful to the army because they could carry food and water without consuming any. However, one general wanted to end the use of camels, suggesting that it would save the government money. While his efforts were not successful, the camels were eventually used for other services.
- (D) Even though the camels were praised by the expedition leader, one general wanted to release them on the prairie in order to save the government money. Then Texas seceded from the Northern states, and the camels were put to work carrying supplies and mail.

**26** Which sentence best expresses the controlling idea of the article?

- Ⓐ *The camels were bound for the newly formed U.S. Camel Corps that belonged to the U.S. War Department.* (paragraph 2)
  - Ⓑ He believed the camels could carry supplies to remote army outposts and even carry soldiers to watch over pioneer settlements. (paragraph 2)
  - Ⓒ *The Southern states decided to secede—or break away—from the Northern states and form the Confederate States of America.* (paragraph 7)
  - Ⓓ *He asked permission to sell the camels or let them loose on the prairie.* (paragraph 7)
- 

**27** Based on information presented in the article, the reader can infer that Edward Fitzgerald Beale —

- Ⓐ believed that the camels had earned some time to relax
- Ⓑ retired from the army after the Civil War
- Ⓒ felt that the camels could survive only in a desert environment
- Ⓓ left Texas after it seceded from the North

**28** Read the article “Camels Join the Army!” Based on the information in the article, write a response to the following:

Based on information in the article, write an essay in which you argue that the U.S. Army should or should not have attempted to rebuild the Camel Corps following the Civil War.

Write a well-organized argumentative essay that uses specific evidence from the article to support your position.

Remember to —

- clearly state your controlling idea
- organize your writing
- develop your ideas in detail
- use evidence from the article in your response
- use correct spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar

Manage your time carefully so that you can —

- review the article
- plan your response
- write your response
- revise and edit your response

Record your answer in the box provided.

A large rectangular box containing 25 horizontal lines, intended for writing an answer.

Lined writing area with 25 horizontal lines.

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.**

*Ainsley learned about a unique house in Wisconsin. After doing some research, she wrote this paper to tell others about the house. Read Ainsley's paper and look for revisions she needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## The House on the Rock



Gina Kelly/Alamy Stock Photo

(1) In the 1940s a Wisconsin man, Alex Jordan, built a house near the small town of Spring Green. (2) Perched on a huge slab of rock, the house offered lovely views. (3) Over the years, however, it became famous for another reason. (4) Jordan, who loved to collect odd things, filled his house with unusual objects. (5) Today the home, which is known as the House on the Rock, has become a popular tourist attraction. (6) A life-sized elephant pyramid, a room with thousands of dolls, and the world's largest carousel are just a few of the wonders that await visitors to the House on the Rock.

(7) Jordan's one-of-a-kind house originally had 14 rooms. (8) The strangest room was probably the Infinity Room. (9) This long, narrow room jutted out from the rest of the house and stuck out. (10) It had thousands of windows that overlooked the forest floor, which was 15 stories below.

(11) People began to hear about Jordan’s unusual house. (12) Some drove by just to catch a glimpse of the odd structure. (13) A few asked if they could get a closer look. (14) In 1960 he formally opened his house to tours. (15) All the while, he kept adding to his collections and to the house itself.

(16) Today the House on the Rock is a sprawling complex that takes hours to explore. (17) Rooms burst with collections that include crowns, cars, suits of armor, dollhouses, and self-playing musical instruments. (18) The Circus Room has everything from tiny models to a full-sized circus wagon. (19) A room called Streets of Yesterday looks like an old-fashioned Main Street and includes a barber shop and sheriff’s office. (20) The Heritage of the Sea room, a particular favorite of visitors, has an enormous model of a giant sea monster that is longer than the Statue of Liberty is tall. (21) The House on the Rock’s indoor carousel is another must-see attraction with its 20,000 lights and 182 chandeliers. (22) But unfortunately, even though there are 269 carved animals on this carousel, no one is allowed to ride it.

(23) The House on the Rock may seem like a museum, but it is different in some important ways. (24) It is not well lit, and few exhibits are labeled. (25) Rooms are not logically connected to one another. (26) And although the items in some exhibits may look old and worthy, most are not. (27) During his lifetime Jordan freely admitted that he and his artist friends had constructed many of the “antiques,” including suits of armor and even cars.

(28) Although the House on the Rock is not an actual museum, it is still an enjoyable attraction. (29) People don’t seem to care whether or not the items are genuine.

- 29** Sentence 9 repeats an idea. In the box provided, rewrite sentence 9 in a clear and effective way.


- 
- 30** Which additional detail could **BEST** follow and support sentence 13?

- (A) Jordan built the house on such a magnificent site.
- (B) One room in the house features 3,064 windows.
- (C) They wanted to come a little closer to the house.
- (D) Jordan charged these early visitors 50 cents each.



**31** The word **worthy** is not the appropriate word to use in sentence 26. Which word should replace **worthy** in this sentence?

- Ⓐ beneficial
  - Ⓑ entertaining
  - Ⓒ valuable
  - Ⓓ effective
- 

**32** Ainsley's paper ends abruptly. Which sentence can be added after sentence 29 to sum up the information in this paper and bring it to a more effective conclusion?

- Ⓐ They visit to be awed and entertained by the seemingly boundless imagination of one man.
- Ⓑ They are intrigued by the views and the massive rock on which the house was built.
- Ⓒ They usually say in exit surveys that they are simply unable to pick their favorite attraction.
- Ⓓ They enjoy distinguishing between the authentic artifacts and the created ones.

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.**

*Ivy wrote the following paper about her first experience with painting. Read Ivy's draft and look for revisions she needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## **My Masterpiece**

(1) I had always wanted to try one of those guided painting classes. (2) So when our library decided to offer such a class, I told my friend Ella, and we both signed up.

(3) On the big day, we entered the library's community room and saw that it had been transformed into a makeshift art studio.

(4) Small easels, each holding a blank canvas, stood on folding tables. (5) A paper plate topped with huge, glistening dabs of red, yellow, white, and blue paint was next to each easel. (6) Our first assignment was to paint a white vase of cheerful yellow sunflowers against a blue background. (7) I wanted to snag seats directly in front of the instructor, thinking I might be able to copy her strokes.

(8) I quickly herded Ella to the front of the room.

(9) We were asked to paint our canvas blue. (10) It was easy to follow the artist's sweeping, back-and-forth motions, and although I had never painted before, I could tell I was a natural. (11) I started thinking about where I would hang my new masterpiece.

(12) Almost immediately after that, however, I began to run into serious issues. (13) The first curved line of my vase looked perfect, but when I went to paint the line that would form the opposite half of the vase, my hand slipped. (14) I tried to cover the jagged white streak with blue paint. (15) To my horror it remained visible beneath the blue.

(16) The instructor continued talking. (17) While I fussed with my chaos, she explained how to paint the sunflower leaves. (18) Things went downhill fast after that. (19) My leaves looked like fat, green caterpillars. (20) My numerous attempts to fix them just made them worse. (21) My stems were crooked, and when I failed to thoroughly clean my paintbrush, my sunflowers took on a greenish tint. (22) Feeling frustrated, I snuck a glance at everyone else's paintings; I was mortified.

(23) Ella must have felt bad for me, because she sweetly complimented my sunflowers. (24) She was wearing a dress that was almost the same shade of yellow. (25) When I said that hers were much better, she looked surprised. (26) “No, they’re not. (27) I messed up in at least five places.” (28) After a few seconds, she asked, “Want to trade paintings?”

(29) Up until that moment, I had felt only disdain for my painting. (30) And yet for some reason, giving it away felt wrong. (31) No, it wasn’t a perfect painting, but it was mine—the first one I had ever created. (32) I knew Ella must have realized that she felt the same way when she suddenly shook her head and said, “Never mind.”

(33) That was two years ago, and since then I’ve taken a few more classes and gotten better at following the instructor’s directions.

(34) But my sunflower painting still hangs in the most prominent place in my room—directly above my bed. (35) I look at it frequently and smile. (36) I really like it now.

**33** Ivy needs to add a sentence to improve the introductory paragraph of her paper. Which sentence can **BEST** be added after sentence 1?

- Ⓐ When I heard about the class, I knew the instructor would let me copy her painting exactly.
  - Ⓑ I'm talking about the kind where an instructor tells you how to make a painting step by step.
  - Ⓒ My friend Ella said we should spend time together over break, and I told her we should paint.
  - Ⓓ When I first tried to paint sunflowers, I was grateful to see I had a bit of natural talent for art.
- 

**34** Ivy needs a better transition between the second paragraph (sentences 3–8) and the third paragraph (sentences 9–11). Which phrase can she add to the beginning of sentence 9 to help with this transition?

- Ⓐ In response
- Ⓑ For this reason
- Ⓒ As the class began
- Ⓓ In the same way

**35** What is the **MOST** effective way to combine sentences 14 and 15?

- (A) The jagged white streak that I tried to cover with blue paint to my horror remained visible beneath the blue.
  - (B) I tried to cover the jagged white streak with blue paint, to my horror it remained visible beneath the blue.
  - (C) Trying to cover the jagged white streak with blue paint, it remained visible to my horror beneath the blue.
  - (D) I tried to cover the jagged white streak with blue paint, but to my horror it remained visible beneath the blue.
- 

**36** Ivy has included a sentence that does not belong in the sixth paragraph (sentences 23–28). Which sentence should she remove from this paragraph?

- (A) Sentence 23
  - (B) Sentence 24
  - (C) Sentence 25
  - (D) Sentence 26
- 

**37** Ivy needs a better closing sentence for the last paragraph (sentences 33–36). Which sentence should replace sentence 36?

- (A) Every time I see it, I think of all the difficulty I experienced while painting it.
- (B) To this day, I love to wear the T-shirt I had on that day in the painting class.
- (C) As imperfect as it is, that painting makes me feel happy now.
- (D) From there people see it as they pass by on the sidewalk below.

**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.**

*Christina is writing a story about a surprise that changed her life. Read the first paragraph from Christina's story and look for corrections she needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## **A Season of Changes**

(1) Last summer was a season of changes for me. (2) Delaney, a friend I've known since kindergarten, moved with her parents to oak park, a suburb of Chicago. (3) My dad changed careers and started working longer hours which meant that everyone had to help more at home. (4) However, the biggest change of all turned out to be the most unexpected one. (5) My brother sauntered in one afternoon with an energetic but very cute surprise. (6) After the initial shock, my parents finally allow us to keep the puppy, but they had a single stipulation. (7) My brother and I would be solely responsible for our new pet. (8) Of course, I agreed immediately, but to be honest, I had no idea how drastically my life was about to change.

- 38** Christina has made an error in sentence 2. Select the **ONE** response that corrects this error.

Delaney, a friend I've known since kindergarten, moved with her

parents to

- |                                   |
|-----------------------------------|
| (A) oak park, a Suburb of Chicago |
| (B) oak Park, a suburb of Chicago |
| (C) Oak Park, a suburb of Chicago |
| (D) oak park, a suburb of chicago |

- 
- 39** What change should be made in sentence 3?

- (A) Change **careers** to **career's**
- (B) Insert a comma after **hours**
- (C) Change **meant** to **mint**
- (D) Change **had** to **has**

- 
- 40** What change should be made in sentence 6?

- (A) Change the comma after **shock** to a semicolon
- (B) Change **allow** to **allowed**
- (C) Delete **but**
- (D) Change **single** to **singel**

**41** What change, if any, should be made in sentence 8?

- Ⓐ Change ***course*** to ***coarse***
- Ⓑ Change the comma after ***honest*** to a period
- Ⓒ Change ***drastically*** to ***drastic***
- Ⓓ No change is needed.



**Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question.**

*Blake is writing a paper arguing for the importance of organizational skills. Read the first paragraph from Blake's paper and look for corrections she needs to make. Then answer the questions that follow.*

## **Get It Together**

(1) A boy darts by with his backpack hanging open to reveal a mass of wadded papers. (2) As a girl opens her locker, three books and two folders tumble out onto the ground. (3) Another student stands by the door of his Spanish classroom he is frantically reviewing notes for an upcoming quiz. (4) These sceens occur daily in school hallways across the country. (5) What do they have in common? (6) They all reflect a lack of organization, this can result in stressful days and lower grades. (7) In fact, a recent study revealed that a lack of organizational skills are the main reason some students struggle in school. (8) That's why Baker Middle School is going to begin offering a class to help kids better organize their time and materials.

**42** What change should be made in sentence 3?

- (A) Change *stands* to **will stand**
  - (B) Change *Spanish* to **spanish**
  - (C) Insert a semicolon after *classroom*
  - (D) Change *reviewing* to **reveiwing**
- 

**43** What change should be made in sentence 4?

- (A) Change *sceens* to **scenes**
  - (B) Change *occur* to **occuring**
  - (C) Change *across* to **cross**
  - (D) Change *country* to **Country**
- 

**44** What is the correct way to write sentence 6?

- (A) They all reflect a lack of organization, and this has a result it is stressful days and lower grades.
- (B) They all reflect a lack of organization. Resulting in stressful days and lower grades.
- (C) They all reflect a lack of organization. While this can result in stressful days and lower grades.
- (D) They all reflect a lack of organization, which can result in stressful days and lower grades.

**45** What change should be made in sentence 7?

- Ⓐ Change **recent** to **resent**
- Ⓑ Change **are** to **is**
- Ⓒ Change **reason** to **reasen**
- Ⓓ Change **struggle** to **struggling**



**STAAR  
GRADE 7  
Reading Language Arts  
PRACTICE**

