

PRACTICE TEST

English Language Arts

Grade 8

Student Name

School Name

District Name

Grade 8

English Language Arts Practice Test

SESSION 1

This session contains 18 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 response. Write each response in the space provided. Only responses written within the provided space will be scored.

Go On ➡

Read the passages from a novel and a novel in verse. Then answer the questions that follow.

In this passage from the novel *Starfish*, Kiko is visiting her childhood friend Jamie in Los Angeles, California, where she hopes to attend art school. She and Jamie have gone to an art gallery to see the work of a famous painter named Hiroshi Matsumoto.

from *Starfish*

by Akemi Dawn Bowman

- 1 Pacing back and forth like a ghost haunting a museum, Hiroshi never makes eye contact with any of the people here to appreciate his paintings. He simply floats by them with peculiar disinterest.
- 2 It makes me nervous. If he isn't interested in his adoring fans, he isn't going to want a single thing to do with me.
- 3 I don't have to look far for Jamie—he's one step behind me, admiring a large painting of a flock of black swans pulling a carriage through the air. Inside the carriage is a voluptuous woman spilling over the edges with her hands up in the air like she's on a roller coaster.
- 4 "These paintings are hilariously random," Jamie notes.
- 5 "They're amazing," I correct with my head dipped low and my voice quiet. I'm afraid someone will hear me.
- 6 "Did you see the frog one?" Jamie asks with a grin. "It's just a giant green frog—I'm not kidding—wearing a top hat."
- 7 "*But they're so good,*" I gush dizzily.
- 8 "What are you supposed to call this kind of art?" Jamie looks genuinely curious, even if he does think the paintings are silly.
- 9 "Pop surrealism¹ is what the art people keep calling it." His voice is mellow and soft, but it sounds like the only noise in the room. Hiroshi blinks at the painting on the wall like he's not entirely satisfied with it. When he leans toward me, I can smell vanilla and smoke. "I'm not sure it's supposed to be called anything though, really. It's just my own brand of nonsense."
- 10 Oh my God, Hiroshi Matsumoto from the magazine is talking to me.

¹ pop surrealism—a type of art that depicts realistic objects in fantastical situations

- 11 "Oh, hey, you're the artist," Jamie says with blissful innocence. "Really cool gallery. I liked the frog."
- 12 My face is burning—literally burning—and I think I'm going to pass out when I watch Jamie and Hiroshi shake hands.
- 13 "And your name?" Hiroshi watches me with small eyes the color of cocoa powder.
- 14 "Kiko," I manage to whisper. My breath hiccups nervously. . . .
- 15 Jamie nods at me—he's trying to be encouraging, but it's not working. I don't know how to talk to strangers, and especially not ones I admire. He pulls Hiroshi's attention from me to break the silence. ". . . Kiko lives in Nebraska." He pauses thoughtfully. "She's actually here visiting to look at art schools for the fall."
- 16 Panic floods my body. He wasn't supposed to tell him that. Now Hiroshi's going to think I'm an artist. He's going to wonder if I'm any good. He's probably going to assume I'm better than I am. And I'm a complete amateur compared to him.
- 17 This is so embarrassing.
- 18 "Art school, eh? And what's your flavor?" Hiroshi presses his lips together in a tight smile.
- 19 "Acrylics," I say meekly. "But not like this. I mean, I'm not as good. As you, I mean. I'm not as good as you. At all." Oh my God, I can't speak. . . . I look at Jamie, my eyes begging for him to save me, but he doesn't seem to understand that I'm drowning.
- 20 "We all start at the same place, but you're completely in charge of where you finish," Hiroshi says. "You can be as good an artist as you want to be. You just have to practice and work hard. I'm sure your parents have told you this, yes?"
- 21 I'm frozen. My parents don't talk to me about art. Will he know this without me saying it? His serious eyes tell me he does.
- 22 Hiroshi presses his hands together like he's praying and rests his chin on the tips of his fingers. "My parents told me art was what lazy people did when they just wanted to work on the side of the street. They wanted me to be a doctor. So when I had two daughters, I told them they could be anything they wanted, even if it was a painter on the side of the street. And do you know what? One of them is in medical school and the other wants to be a surfer." He laughs. "We all have to dream our

own dreams. We only get one life to live—live it for yourself, not anyone else. Because when you're on your deathbed, you're going to be wishing you had. When everyone else is on theirs, I guarantee they aren't going to be thinking about your life."

- 23 Jamie pulls his phone out. "She's *really* good. She just doesn't realize it. Here, look."
- 24 I don't know what's going on. Hiroshi is leaning in to Jamie, looking down at the brightly lit screen while Jamie swipes again and again and again. Each time, Hiroshi stares thoughtfully, grunting to himself the way a dog does when it's having a dream.
- 25 *What are you doing?* I manage to mouth. Seriously, Jamie, *what are you doing?*
- 26 Jamie shakes his head at me like he doesn't want me to ruin whatever moment they're having. I make the mistake of leaning forward and looking at his phone.
- 27 They're pictures of my paintings. Pictures of my portfolio. *On Jamie's phone.*
- 28 And Hiroshi Matsumoto is looking at them.
- 29 Can I please die now?
- 30 I feel my body shrinking and shrinking. I've shriveled up into a small, frightened child. Why would Jamie show him those photos? Why did he even have them on his phone to begin with? Has he completely lost his mind?
- 31 I hold my breath and try not to vomit while I wait for Hiroshi to look back at me. . . .
- 32 Hiroshi . . . looks at me and Jamie and gives a wrinkled smile. And then, just to me, he says, "You should bring your portfolio to my studio sometime. Those art schools like their recommendations. I'll see what I can do."
- 33 I think my brain might actually blow up. I nod frantically, like a bobble-head strapped to a rock crawler.²
- 34 Hiroshi floats away like a phantom, the hem of his white dress trailing behind him.

² rock crawler—a vehicle designed to travel across uneven ground

- 35 "Oh my God, what just happened?" I hiss in Jamie's direction.
- 36 A smirk appears. "I think he was impressed."
- 37 I blush. "Why did you take photos of my portfolio?"
- 38 "Because I wasn't sure if you'd ever let me see it again. You're so private about your art—you panic if you think anyone is watching you draw in your sketchbook."
- 39 "Well, that was super embarrassing." And a huge violation of my privacy, I want to add, but I don't because my tongue is fighting with my brain and really I'm just hearing Hiroshi's words on a continuous loop. I clear my throat, and then I'm unable to contain my happiness. "And awesome. And seriously the coolest thing that's ever happened to me in my life." Hiroshi Matsumoto wants to see my portfolio. And write me a recommendation. And help me get into art school.

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Read the passage from *The Poet X*, a novel in verse about Xiomara Batista, a high-school student in New York City.

from *The Poet X*

by Elizabeth Acevedo

Monday, September 17

The Flyer

“Calling all poets!”

The poster is printed
on regular white computer paper.
The bare basics:

- 5 **Spoken Word Poetry Club**
 Calling all poets, rappers, and writers.
 Tuesdays. After school.
 See Ms. Galiano in room 302 for details.

- 10 It’s layered behind other more colorful
 and bigger-lettered announcements
 but it still makes me stop
 halfway down the staircase,
 as kids late to class
 try their best to accidentally
15 make me topple down the stairs.
 But I’m rooted to the spot,
 a new awareness buzzing over the noise.

- This poster feels personal,
 like an engraved invitation
20 mailed directly to me.

After the Buzz Dies Down

I crumple the flyer in my backpack.
Balled and zipped up tight.
Tuesdays I have confirmation class.¹

¹ confirmation class—a course of study in the basics of a particular religion

- Not a chance Mami's gonna let me out of that.
25 Not a chance I want anyone hearing my work.

Something in my chest flutters like a bird
whose wings are being gripped still

by the firmest fingers.

* * *

What Twin² Be Knowing

- 30 As I'm getting ready for sleep, I'm surprised
to see the crumpled poetry club flyer
neatly unfolded and on my bed.
It must have fallen out of my bag.

Without looking up from the computer screen,
Twin says in barely a whisper,

- 35 "This world's been waiting
for your genius a long time."

- My brother is no psychic, no prophet,
but it makes me smile,
this secret hope we share,
40 that we are both good enough
for each other and maybe the world, too.

- But when he goes to brush his teeth,
I tear the flyer into pieces before Mami can find it.
Tuesdays, for the foreseeable future,
45 belong to church. And any genius I might have
belongs only to me.

Sharing

- Although Twin and I are super different,
people find it strange how much we share.
We shared the same womb, the same cradle,
50 and our whole lives the same room.

² Twin—Xiomara's nickname for her twin brother, Xavier

Mami wanted to find a bigger apartment,
told Papi we should move to Queens,
or somewhere far from Harlem,
where we could each have our own room.

- 55 But apparently, although Papi had changed
he still stood unmoved.
Said everything we could want was here.
And sharing a room wouldn't kill us.

And it hasn't.

- 60 Except. I once heard a rumor
that goldfish have an evolutionary gene
where they'll only develop as big as the tank they're put into.

They need space to stretch. And I wonder if
Twin and I are keeping each other small.

- 65 Taking up the space that would have let the other grow.

Questions for Ms. Galiano

I'm one of the first students in English class the next day.
And although I promised myself I would keep my lips
stapled together when Ms. Galiano asks me how I'm doing,
the words trip and twist their ankles

- 70 trying to rush out my mouth: "Soyourunthepoetryclubright?"

She doesn't laugh. Cocks her head, and nods.

"Yes, we just started it this year. Spoken Word Poetry Club."

And my face must have been all kinds of screwed-up confused
because she tries to explain how spoken word is performed poetry,
75 but it all sounds the same to me . . . except one is memorized.

"It might be easier if I showed you.
I'll pull a clip up as today's intro to class.
Are you thinking of joining the club?"

- 80 I shake my head no. She gives me that look again,
when someone who doesn't know you is sizing you up
like you're a broken clock and they're trying to translate the ticks.

Spoken Word

When class starts Ms. Galiano projects a video:
a woman onstage, her voice quiet,
then louder and faster like an express train picking up speed.

- 85 The poet talks about being black, about being a woman,
about how beauty standards make it seem she isn't pretty.
I don't breathe for the entire three minutes

while I watch her hands, and face,
feeling like she's talking directly to me.

- 90 She's saying the thoughts I didn't know anyone else had.

We're different, this poet and I. In looks, in body,
in background. But I don't feel so different
when I listen to her. I feel heard.

- 95 When the video finishes, my classmates,
who are rarely excited by anything, clap softly.
And although the poet isn't in the room

it feels right to acknowledge her this way,
even if it's only polite applause;
my own hands move against each other.

- 100 Ms. Galiano asks about the themes and presentation style
but instead of raising my hand I press it against my heart
and will the chills on my arms to smooth out.

It was just a poem, Xiomara, I think.

But it felt more like a gift.

Wait—

- 105 Is this what Ms. Galiano thinks
I'm going to do in her poetry club?
She mentioned competition,
and I know slam is just that,
but she can't think that I,
110 who sits silently in her classroom,
who only speaks to get someone off my back,
will ever get onstage

and say any of the things I've written,
out loud, to anybody else. . . .

Holding a Poem in the Body

115 Tonight after my shower
instead of staring at the parts of myself
I want to puzzle-piece into something else,
I watch my mouth memorize one of my poems.

Even though I don't ever plan on letting anyone hear it,
120 I think about that poetry video from class. . . .

I let the words shape themselves hard on my tongue.
I let my hands pretend to be punctuation marks
that slash, and point, and press in on each other.
I let my body finally take up all the space it wants.

125 I toss my head, and screw up my face,
and grit my teeth, and smile, and make a fist,
and every one of my limbs
is an actor trying to take center stage.

And then Mami knocks on the door,
130 and asks me what I'm in here reciting,
that it better not be more rap lyrics,
and I respond, "Verses. I'm memorizing verses."
I know she thinks I mean Bible ones.

I hide my notebook in my towel before heading to my room
135 and comfort myself with the fact that I didn't actually lie.

The Poet X by Elizabeth Acevedo. Copyright © 2018 by Elizabeth Acevedo. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

- 1 Which contrast between Kiko and Jamie is **mainly** developed in paragraphs 4–16 of *Starfish*?
- Ⓐ Kiko is curious, while Jamie is bored.
 - Ⓑ Kiko is anxious, while Jamie is relaxed.
 - Ⓒ Kiko is irritated, while Jamie is forgiving.
 - Ⓓ Kiko is thoughtful, while Jamie is careless.
- 2 What is the **most likely** reason the author uses a series of short sentences in paragraph 16 of *Starfish*?
- Ⓐ to demonstrate the extent of Kiko’s surprise
 - Ⓑ to emphasize the severity of Kiko’s resentment
 - Ⓒ to illustrate the rush of Kiko’s negative thoughts
 - Ⓓ to suggest the certainty of Kiko’s hopes for her life
- 3 Which quotation from *Starfish* indicates a turning point in the passage?
- Ⓐ ““These paintings are hilariously random,’ Jamie notes.” (paragraph 4)
 - Ⓑ “He pauses thoughtfully. ‘She’s actually here visiting to look at art schools for the fall.’” (paragraph 15)
 - Ⓒ “Hiroshi . . . looks at me and Jamie and gives a wrinkled smile.” (paragraph 32)
 - Ⓓ “I blush. ‘Why did you take photos of my portfolio?’” (paragraph 37)

- 4 In *The Poet X*, what is the **main** contrast developed in the section **The Flyer**?
- Ⓐ Xiomara’s sense of inner calm versus the noise she hears in the staircase
 - Ⓑ Xiomara’s engagement in school activities versus the indifference of her classmates
 - Ⓒ the unremarkable appearance of the poster versus the power of its appeal to Xiomara
 - Ⓓ the feeling of accomplishment Xiomara expresses versus the despair she feels about her surroundings
- 5 Based on *The Poet X*, what does the reference to the goldfish in lines 60–63 **most likely** represent?
- Ⓐ Xiomara’s jealousy of the success of those around her
 - Ⓑ Xiomara’s feeling that she is too eager to please those around her
 - Ⓒ Xiomara’s annoyance about how much of their room Twin occupies
 - Ⓓ Xiomara’s concern that her close relationship with Twin is limiting their potential
- 6 In *The Poet X*, what do lines 121–123 **mainly** reveal?
- Ⓐ Xiomara is practicing her poem with great expression.
 - Ⓑ Xiomara is recalling her day with extreme displeasure.
 - Ⓒ Xiomara is staging a performance with her classmates.
 - Ⓓ Xiomara is preparing for a confrontation with her mother.

7 In *The Poet X*, what do lines 132–135 **mainly** suggest about Xiomara?

- Ⓐ She is sorry for upsetting her mother.
- Ⓑ She is happy to have the trust of her mother.
- Ⓒ She feels uneasy about deceiving her mother.
- Ⓓ She respects the rules established by her mother.

8 Read the quotations from *Starfish* and *The Poet X* in the box.

- I clear my throat, and then I’m unable to contain my happiness.
(paragraph 39 of *Starfish*)
- I let my body finally take up all the space it wants. (line 124 of *The Poet X*)

Which statement **best** describes how the quotations reflect a similar experience for Kiko and Xiomara?

- Ⓐ Both quotations show that Kiko and Xiomara will no longer try to avoid challenging circumstances.
- Ⓑ Both quotations suggest that Kiko and Xiomara are relieved to no longer be withholding a part of themselves.
- Ⓒ Both quotations show that Kiko and Xiomara have a new appreciation for the importance of teachers in their lives.
- Ⓓ Both quotations illustrate that Kiko and Xiomara will become happier by ignoring the advice of those around them.

- 9 Which sentence states a **main** theme of both *Starfish* and *The Poet X*?
- Ⓐ True friends stay loyal during the hardest times in life.
 - Ⓑ Taking advantage of opportunities requires self-control.
 - Ⓒ Religion may be the most significant influence on a person.
 - Ⓓ People must overcome self-doubt before following their dreams.
- 10 Select the quotation from *Starfish* that **best** shows a character being supportive.
- Ⓐ “What are you supposed to call this kind of art?” (paragraph 8)
 - Ⓑ “She’s *really* good. She just doesn’t realize it.” (paragraph 23)
 - Ⓒ “A smirk appears. ‘I think he was impressed.’” (paragraph 36)

Select the quotation from *The Poet X* that **best** shows a character being supportive.

- Ⓐ “I crumple the flyer in my backpack. / Balled and zipped up tight.” (lines 21 and 22)
- Ⓑ “This world’s been waiting / for your genius a long time.” (lines 35 and 36)
- Ⓒ “Although Twin and I are super different, / people find it strange how much we share.” (lines 47 and 48)

- 11 Determine whether **each** description **best** applies to Kiko from *Starfish*, Xiomara from *The Poet X*, or both.

feels limited by her surroundings

- Ⓐ Kiko from *Starfish*
- Ⓑ Xiomara from *The Poet X*
- Ⓒ both

is bursting with unspoken ideas and feelings

- Ⓐ Kiko from *Starfish*
- Ⓑ Xiomara from *The Poet X*
- Ⓒ both

is recognized by an artist as having potential

- Ⓐ Kiko from *Starfish*
- Ⓑ Xiomara from *The Poet X*
- Ⓒ both

- 12 Based on *Starfish* and *The Poet X*, select the phrase that **best** completes each sentence.

In both passages, one character pauses to look more closely at another. In paragraph 32 of *Starfish*, Hiroshi looks at Kiko in a way that suggests that he

- Ⓐ is satisfied by her outlook.
- Ⓑ realizes the extent of her talent.
- Ⓒ recognizes her from another meeting.

In lines 79–81 of *The Poet X*, Ms. Galiano looks at Xiomara in a way that suggests that she

- Ⓐ wants to reassure Xiomara.
- Ⓑ is trying to be patient with Xiomara.
- Ⓒ is attempting to understand Xiomara.

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.

- 13** Based on *Starfish* and *The Poet X*, write an essay that compares the importance of art in Kiko’s and Xiomara’s lives. Use evidence from **both** passages to develop your essay.

Write your answer on the next two pages.

[illegible]

Blank writing area with horizontal lines.



Read the poem about one person’s perspective on life. Then answer the questions that follow.

Life While-You-Wait

by Wisława Szymborska

Life While-You-Wait.
Performance without rehearsal.
Body without alterations.
Head without premeditation.

- 5 I know nothing of the role I play.
I only know it’s mine, I can’t exchange it.

I have to guess on the spot
just what this play’s all about.

- 10 Ill-prepared for the privilege of living,
I can barely keep up with the pace that the action demands.
I improvise, although I loathe improvisation.
I trip at every step over my own ignorance.
I can’t conceal my hayseed¹ manners.
My instincts are for hammy histrionics.²
15 Stage fright makes excuses for me, which humiliate me more.
Extenuating circumstances³ strike me as cruel.

- Words and impulses you can’t take back,
stars you’ll never get counted,
your character like a raincoat you button on the run—
20 the pitiful results of all this unexpectedness.

- If I could just rehearse one Wednesday in advance,
or repeat a single Thursday that has passed!
But here comes Friday with a script I haven’t seen.
Is it fair, I ask
25 (my voice a little hoarse,
since I couldn’t even clear my throat offstage).

¹ hayseed—informal word for a person lacking sophistication or refinement

² hammy histrionics—exaggerated, overly dramatic behavior

³ extenuating circumstances—specific reasons that excuse someone’s actions

- You'd be wrong to think that it's just a slapdash quiz
taken in makeshift accommodations. Oh no.
I'm standing on the set and I see how strong it is.
- 30 The props are surprisingly precise.
The machine rotating the stage has been around even longer.
The farthest galaxies have been turned on.
Oh no, there's no question, this must be the premiere.
And whatever I do
- 35 will become forever what I've done.

"Life While-You-Wait" by Wisława Szymborska, from *Poems New and Collected, 1957–1997*. Translated by Stanisław Barańczak and Clare Cavanagh. Copyright © 1998 by Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. Reprinted by permission of HarperCollins Publishers.

- 14 What situation does the speaker’s point of view in the poem **mainly** suggest?
- Ⓐ an actor struggling in an unfamiliar theater production
 - Ⓑ a celebrity who is finally getting the fame she deserves
 - Ⓒ an executive who is inspiring the members of her organization
 - Ⓓ a spectator sympathizing with the losing team at a sporting event

- 15 Read line 18 in the box.

stars you’ll never get counted,

Based on the poem, what do the “stars” in the line **most likely** symbolize?

- Ⓐ beautiful sights
 - Ⓑ favorite possessions
 - Ⓒ missed opportunities
 - Ⓓ unrecognized achievements
- 16 How is the poem **mainly** structured?
- Ⓐ as a flashback to the speaker’s childhood
 - Ⓑ as a description of the speaker’s occupation
 - Ⓒ as a metaphor describing the speaker’s feelings
 - Ⓓ as a series of observations about the speaker’s talents

- 17 Which sentence **best** states a theme of the poem?
- Ⓐ People often fail to recognize significant moments in their lives.
 - Ⓑ The speed of events in one's life makes it difficult to feel in control.
 - Ⓒ People often find it unfulfilling to wait for exciting events to happen.
 - Ⓓ The frustration of waiting for one's talents to be acknowledged can be lasting.
- 18 Select **two** details from the poem that **best** support the idea that people are powerless to change what has already happened.
- Ⓐ "I have to guess on the spot / just what this play's all about." (lines 7 and 8)
 - Ⓑ "Words and impulses you can't take back," (line 17)
 - Ⓒ "I'm standing on the set and I see how strong it is." (line 29)
 - Ⓓ "The farthest galaxies have been turned on." (line 32)
 - Ⓔ "And whatever I do / will become forever what I've done." (lines 34 and 35)



**This is the end of the session. You may
check your work for this session only.
Do not go on to the next session.**

Grade 8

English Language Arts Practice Test

SESSION 2

This session contains 21 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 response. Write each response in the space provided. Only responses written within the provided space will be scored.

Go On ➡

This article describes the mission and work of the Green Belt Movement. Started by Wangari Maathai, this independent (non-governmental) organization has been planting trees throughout Kenya, a country in eastern Africa, since 1977. Read the article and then answer the questions that follow.

The Green Belt Movement: The Story of Wangari Maathai

by Mia MacDonald

- 1 Wangari Maathai has always had an affinity for trees. As a child, she learned from her grandmother that a large fig tree near her family home in central Kenya was sacred and not to be disturbed. She gathered water for her mother at springs protected by the roots of trees. In the mid-1970s, Maathai, in an effort to meet the basic needs of rural women, began to plant trees with them. Her non-governmental Green Belt Movement has planted 30 million trees across Kenya, many of which still stand. In 2004 her work was internationally recognized with the Nobel Peace Prize.
- 2 “As trees grow, they give you hope and self-confidence,” Maathai said recently. “You feel good, like you have transformed the landscape.” So it should come as no surprise that within an hour of learning she had won the peace prize for her contribution to sustainable development, democracy, and peace, Maathai planted a tree. It was a nandi flame tree native to her home region of Nyeri, Kenya, where Maathai was when she heard the news. Never one to stand on ceremony, she knelt on the earth and dug her hands into the red soil, warm from the sun, and settled the tree into the ground. It was, she told the journalists and onlookers gathered, “the best way to celebrate.”
- 3 I was with Maathai that day. Rubbing the dirt from her hands, she took the occasion to turn her message to the world: “Honor this moment by planting trees,” she said as the media jammed her cell phone. “I’m sure millions of trees would be planted if every friend of the environment, and especially of me, did.”

Putting the pieces together

- 4 It was in the mid-1970s that Maathai became aware of Kenya’s ecological decline: watersheds drying up, streams disappearing, and the desert expanding south from the Sahara. On visits to Nyeri she found streams she had known as a child gone—dried up. Vast forests had been cleared for farms or plantations of fast-growing exotic trees that drained the ecosystem of water and degraded the soil.

- 5 Maathai began making connections others hadn't. "Listening to the women talk about water, about energy, about nutrition, it all boiled down to the environment," she told me recently. "I came to understand the linkage between environmental degradation and the felt needs of the communities."
- 6 She hit on the idea of using trees to replenish the soil, provide fuel wood, protect watersheds and promote better nutrition (through growing fruit trees). "If you understand and you are disturbed, then you are moved to action," she says. "That's exactly what happened to me."
- 7 Maathai set up a tree nursery in Karura Forest on the outskirts of Nairobi, later shifting it to her backyard. But the idea did not catch fire. In her book, *The Green Belt Movement: Sharing the Approach and the Experience*, Maathai recounts bringing seedlings to the annual agricultural show in Nairobi in 1975. A number of people expressed interest in tree planting. Not one, though, followed up.
- 8 Disappointed, but not deterred, the National Council of Women of Kenya urged her to pursue the idea and in 1977, the Green Belt Movement was born. Planting trees seemed "reasonable, doable," she says. But government foresters initially resisted. They didn't believe uneducated rural women could plant and tend trees.
- 9 "People who are very educated find it very hard to be simple-minded," Maathai says, laughing. Women, too, didn't think they could do it. But Maathai showed them how, building on skills they already had. . . .

The trees grow—and branch out

- 10 . . . In 1981, the Green Belt Movement got its first significant funding when the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) provided "seed money" that transformed the effort from a few tree nurseries to a large number with thousands of seedlings. The UNIFEM support also "helped us mobilize thousands of women" whom Maathai calls "foresters without diplomas." In 1986, Maathai took her idea region-wide; with funding from the UN Environment Program, the Green Belt Movement launched the Pan African Green Belt Network. The Network offers training and hands-on experience to grassroots environment and development groups. A number of them, in Ethiopia, Tanzania, Uganda, Rwanda and other African countries, have integrated the Green Belt Movement's approach.
- 11 Over the years, the Green Belt Movement has incorporated other community activities into tree-planting efforts. Among these are cultivation of more nutritious, indigenous foods; low-tech but effective

ways to harvest and store rainwater; training in entrepreneurship; and providing information on reproductive health and HIV/AIDS prevention.

Anything but garden variety

- 12 Maathai, the first African woman and first environmentalist to be honored with the peace prize, has always hewn to a singular path. The third child of a sharecropper father and subsistence farmer mother, Maathai began attending school at age seven. Her eldest brother, Nderitu, in school himself, suggested it. Although it was unusual for rural girls in British-ruled Kenya to study, her parents agreed.
- 13 Maathai excelled and found herself drawn to the sciences. After graduating near the top of her class from . . . high school, she was awarded a U.S. government scholarship designed to enable young Kenyans to be post-independence leaders.
- 14 Maathai studied in Kansas and Pennsylvania, earning bachelor's and master's degrees. In 1963, she watched Kenya gain independence on television, and she returned home in 1966. Then in her early 20s, Maathai joined the University of Nairobi as a researcher and then lecturer in veterinary anatomy. What followed was a series of firsts. In 1971, she became the first woman in east and central Africa to earn a Ph.D.; her doctorate is in biological sciences. A few years later she was appointed the university's first woman department chair. She got married and had three children, now in their 30s. Her daughter, Wanjira, works with the Green Belt Movement.
- 15 In the early 1990s, the Green Belt Movement launched a civic and environmental education program. In her Nobel Prize acceptance speech in December, she said the purpose of the program was to help people "make the connections between their own personal actions and the problems they witness in their environment and society." With this knowledge they wake up—like looking in a new mirror—and can move beyond fear or inertia to action.
- 16 Maathai and the Green Belt Movement led high-profile campaigns to save Kenya's forests and green spaces. In 1991, for instance, the movement saved Nairobi's Uhuru Park from an enormous high-rise to be built by the ruling party. The dictatorship was still strong, and not amused. For their boldness, Maathai and Green Belt colleagues were subjected to stints in jail. . . .
- 17 And yet, she was not put off. "It is as clear as day. You cannot protect the environment if you do not have democratic governance [or] democratic space," she says.

- 18 In 1992, partly as a result of Maathai's activism, Kenya legalized opposition political parties. In subsequent years, the regime, while still corrupt and cantankerous, showed signs of cracking. After a series of violent confrontations with Maathai and the Green Belt Movement over Karura Forest in 1999, the regime abandoned its illegal development plans. The forest stands today, vast and green, on the edge of Nairobi's throbbing streets.

Toward democracy and peace

- 19 Still, Maathai spent International Women's Day in 2001 in jail. President Moi, opening a women's seminar that same month, asserted that women's "little minds" slowed their progress. But Maathai has had the last laugh. She was elected to Parliament in 2002, then appointed deputy minister of environment and natural resources. In many ways, her world, and Kenya's, has turned upside down. The day Maathai and other members of the new government were inaugurated, Maathai recognized her police escorts. They had once been her jailors.
- 20 The night she was leaving for Oslo for the peace prize ceremonies, Maathai hit Nairobi's notorious rush hour traffic jam. The police were called to clear the traffic so she could reach a send-off celebration in time. Lillian Muchungi, a long-time Green Belt Movement staff member who had been arrested with Maathai, was disbelieving: "Now they are clearing the way for her. But how they used to fight us. Oh!"
- 21 Maathai told me she views the peace prize as recognition of a "long, long struggle"—an honor unlike any she had thought to receive. Kenya's press deemed Maathai a model Kenyan who had made the country immensely proud. Ordinary Kenyans, both women and men, cheered. Many say Maathai is Kenya's best hope of ending decades of stagnation, corruption, and environmental decline (calls for her to be made environment minister have not subsided).
- 22 "She's an African iron core lady, a strong lady, brain-wise," said Bernard Mungai, a Nairobi driver, in a typical reaction to the Nobel news. "She's ready for everything. Women [like Maathai] will help Kenya catch up." One self-help columnist urged young Kenyans to plant trees; "You never know," she said, "where it might lead."

"The Green Belt Movement: The Story of Wangari Maathai" by Mia MacDonald, from YES! Media (March 25, 2005). Copyright © 2005 by YES! Media. Reprinted by permission of YES! Media.

- 19 Read the sentences from paragraph 1 in the box.

As a child, she learned from her grandmother that a large fig tree near her family home in central Kenya was sacred and not to be disturbed. She gathered water for her mother at springs protected by the roots of trees.

What do the sentences **most likely** suggest about Maathai?

- Ⓐ She believed that trees could help connect different cultures.
- Ⓑ She expected people who planted trees to be aware of their own origins.
- Ⓒ She understood that honoring trees was a valuable priority in her culture.
- Ⓓ She predicted that institutions that respected trees would become more powerful.

- 20 Read the sentence from paragraph 2 in the box.

Never one to stand on ceremony, she knelt on the earth and dug her hands into the red soil. . . .

Based on the paragraph, what does the phrase “Never one to stand on ceremony” **most likely** suggest about Maathai?

- Ⓐ She moved often to find people who could help her.
- Ⓑ She avoided being recognized and focused on her goals.
- Ⓒ She tolerated opposition instead of complaining about it to those around her.
- Ⓓ She acted in ways that felt comfortable to her instead of following formal practices.

- 21** Select **two** statements that **best** describe what the heading **Putting the pieces together** emphasizes about Maathai's founding of the Green Belt Movement.

- Ⓐ The movement involved collaboration.
- Ⓑ The movement was based on a risky plan of action.
- Ⓒ Leading the movement required thoughtful analysis.
- Ⓓ Starting the movement meant fixing an existing program.
- Ⓔ The movement arose from intense discussions with officials.

- 22** Read the sentence from paragraph 4 in the box.

Vast forests had been cleared for farms or plantations of fast-growing exotic trees that drained the ecosystem of water and degraded the soil.

Based on the sentence, what does the word *degrade* **most likely** mean?

- Ⓐ to give up
- Ⓑ to identify
- Ⓒ to complete
- Ⓓ to break down

- 23** Based on paragraphs 16–18, what is one reason that Maathai’s movement was successful?
- Ⓐ She recognized the frustration of people on both sides of a conflict.
 - Ⓑ She followed established rules despite the impatience of the public.
 - Ⓒ She continued to create awareness despite efforts by others to intimidate her.
 - Ⓓ She addressed the concerns of others through her trust in the democratic process.
- 24** What does paragraph 22 **mainly** suggest about Maathai?
- Ⓐ She pursued new challenges in Kenya.
 - Ⓑ She earned support throughout Kenya.
 - Ⓒ She used ideas from people living throughout Kenya.
 - Ⓓ She enjoyed meeting people from many regions in Kenya.
- 25** Which of the following claims does the author make about the Green Belt Movement?
- Ⓐ It has finished restoring the environment in several countries.
 - Ⓑ It has accomplished goals beyond helping the environment.
 - Ⓒ It needs more recognition from countries around the world.
 - Ⓓ It needs more qualified people to continue to be efficient.

- 26 Which detail from the article **best** supports the idea that the Green Belt Movement enabled people in Kenya to believe they could make an impact in their country?
- Ⓐ "In 1981, the Green Belt Movement got its first significant funding when the United Nations Development Fund for Women (UNIFEM) provided 'seed money' that transformed the effort from a few tree nurseries to a large number with thousands of seedlings." (paragraph 10)
 - Ⓑ "In 1971, she became the first woman in east and central Africa to earn a Ph.D.; her doctorate is in biological sciences." (paragraph 14)
 - Ⓒ "For their boldness, Maathai and Green Belt colleagues were subjected to stints in jail." (paragraph 16)
 - Ⓓ "One self-help columnist urged young Kenyans to plant trees; 'You never know,' she said, 'where it might lead.'" (paragraph 22)
- 27 Wangari Maathai experienced changes in her life considered by many to be extraordinary. Select **two** details from the article that **best** show the change in how officials in Kenya viewed Maathai.
- Ⓐ "'It is as clear as day. You cannot protect the environment if you do not have democratic governance [or] democratic space,' she says." (paragraph 17)
 - Ⓑ "President Moi, opening a women's seminar that same month, asserted that women's 'little minds' slowed their progress." (paragraph 19)
 - Ⓒ "The day Maathai and other members of the new government were inaugurated, Maathai recognized her police escorts. They had once been her jailors." (paragraph 19)
 - Ⓓ "The night she was leaving for Oslo for the peace prize ceremonies, Maathai hit Nairobi's notorious rush hour traffic jam." (paragraph 20)
 - Ⓔ "'Now they are clearing the way for her. But how they used to fight us. Oh!'" (paragraph 20)

Write a response that is about **one to two paragraphs** in length. Be sure to:

- Use evidence from the passage to support your response.
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

- 28** Based on “The Green Belt Movement,” write a response that explains the impact Wangari Maathai’s work has had on the environment in Kenya. Use evidence from the article to support your response.

Write your answer on the next page.

28

Astronauts Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin are famous for having been the first people to land on the moon as part of the *Apollo 11* mission. This excerpt describes the experiences of Michael Collins, the third member of the team, who orbited the moon while the other two astronauts landed on it. Read the excerpt and then answer the questions that follow.

*from The Man Who Went to the Far Side of the Moon:
The Story of Apollo 11 Astronaut Michael Collins*

by Bea Uusma Schyffert

- 1 Astronaut Neil Armstrong’s heart is beating 156 times per minute as he lands the lunar module on the moon with only 45 seconds left of fuel. He opens the hatch. He climbs down the ladder, slowly. One-fifth of the Earth’s population are sitting in front of their TV sets, holding their breath, as Neil Armstrong carefully sets the first footprint in the lunar dust.
- 2 Meanwhile—on the other side of the moon—a small spacecraft orbits in the darkness. Inside the silvery craft sits Michael Collins. He will never walk on the moon. His task is to maneuver the capsule and wait while Neil Armstrong and Buzz Aldrin land the lunar module. He can’t even hear Neil and Buzz over the radio. No one is farther away from Earth than he is. For 14 lonely turns, Michael Collins circles the moon. Each time he reaches the far side of the moon he spends 48 minutes without radio communication. The only thing between him and outer space is some insulation and a thin sheet of metal.
- 3 As he disappears into the shadow of the far side of the moon, Michael Collins thinks to himself that he sees a new color. The darkness outside the windows of the capsule can’t be described by any earthly name. “Black” is not enough. Because there is no light, he can no longer see the surface of the moon, but he knows it’s there because in that part of the sky there are no stars. They are blocked by the moon.
- 4 Circling the moon, turn after turn, he waits for Neil and Buzz to finish up down there. The windows of the capsule have misted over. The walls are squeaking a little. He has brought a camera. He takes pictures of his stubbled face. He talks into a tape recorder. He thinks about his family. He says his children’s names aloud, slowly. Kate. Ann. Michael.

I am alone now, truly alone, and absolutely isolated from any known life. I am it.

If a count were taken, the score would be three billion plus two over on the other side of the moon, and one plus God only knows what on this side. I feel this powerfully—not as fear or loneliness—but as awareness, anticipation, satisfaction, confidence, almost exultation.

I like the feeling.

Michael Collins

- 5 Before Neil and Buzz can take off from the moon and return to the capsule, Michael has to make 850 computer commands. Surrounding him on the walls of the capsule are more than 700 switches, levers, alarm buttons, gauges, warning lights, and computer keys. There are sensors that should never, ever, point to red. There are yellow-and-black-striped buttons with functions so important that they are covered with plastic lids to prevent a tired, lonely astronaut from pushing them by mistake.
- 6 The president calls Neil and Buzz on the moon. No one calls Michael. When he is on the far side of the moon, radio transmission from Earth is not even possible.

The Man Who Went to the Far Side of the Moon: The Story of Apollo 11 Astronaut Michael Collins by Bea Uusma Schyffert. Copyright © 1999 by Bea Uusma Schyffert. Reprinted by permission of Chronicle Books LLC, San Francisco.

- 29 In paragraph 1, what is the **main** effect of the author’s use of the present tense?
- Ⓐ It creates the feeling of the passage of time.
 - Ⓑ It confirms the accuracy of the information.
 - Ⓒ It reflects the suspense of the experience.
 - Ⓓ It suggests the clumsiness of the landing.
- 30 How does paragraph 2 contribute to the main idea of the excerpt?
- Ⓐ by illustrating Collins’s skill as a pilot
 - Ⓑ by emphasizing Collins’s feeling of isolation
 - Ⓒ by suggesting the astonishment that Collins felt
 - Ⓓ by showing the great distance that Collins traveled
- 31 What is the **most likely** reason that Collins’s own words are included in the excerpt?
- Ⓐ to emphasize the seriousness of his concerns
 - Ⓑ to reveal the unrecognized skills of an astronaut
 - Ⓒ to show the spirit of teamwork among astronauts
 - Ⓓ to give insight into the uniqueness of his experience

- 32 Based on the excerpt, determine whether **each** description **best** applies to Michael Collins, Neil Armstrong, or both.

performed actions that were broadcast to a large audience

- Ⓐ Michael Collins
- Ⓑ Neil Armstrong
- Ⓒ both

saw sights that no one had seen before

- Ⓐ Michael Collins
- Ⓑ Neil Armstrong
- Ⓒ both

found comfort in personal memories

- Ⓐ Michael Collins
- Ⓑ Neil Armstrong
- Ⓒ both

- 33** Select **two** details from the excerpt that **best** develop the idea that Collins faced risks.
- Ⓐ "The only thing between him and outer space is some insulation and a thin sheet of metal." (paragraph 2)
 - Ⓑ "Circling the moon, turn after turn, he waits for Neil and Buzz to finish up down there." (paragraph 4)
 - Ⓒ "He has brought a camera. He takes pictures of his stubbled face." (paragraph 4)
 - Ⓓ "There are sensors that should never, ever, point to red." (paragraph 5)
 - Ⓔ "The president calls Neil and Buzz on the moon." (paragraph 6)

The following questions are standalone questions and are not associated with a passage.

- 34** Read the sentence in the box.

The closing of several theaters and museums created a cultural desert in the busy town.

Which word in the sentence is used figuratively?

- Ⓐ closing
- Ⓑ theaters
- Ⓒ desert
- Ⓓ busy

- 35** Which sentence uses correct subject-verb agreement?

- Ⓐ The dogs and cat is awake all night.
- Ⓑ Each of the athletes warms up before practice.
- Ⓒ Neither sibling have brought their permission slips for the field trip.
- Ⓓ All the students in the auditorium was excited for the announcement.

- 36 Read the sentences in the box.

"The purpose of the barrier is to protect the alligators, *not* the people," the guide explained. "Alligators generally try to avoid humans."

What is the **main** purpose of the italics in the first sentence in the box?

- Ⓐ to express doubt about something
 - Ⓑ to indicate a comparison between ideas
 - Ⓒ to show the internal thoughts of the speaker
 - Ⓓ to emphasize a misconception the audience may have
- 37 Select **two** sentences that use a comma correctly.
- Ⓐ It was cold, and wet outside in the yard.
 - Ⓑ The birds lifted their small, soaked wings.
 - Ⓒ Without wet soil it is difficult, to search for a worm.
 - Ⓓ The robins gathered, at the edge of the playground.
 - Ⓔ The robins picked through the grass, hoping to find tasty worms.
- 38 Which sentence is written in the passive voice?
- Ⓐ The fans began chanting the name of the newest team member.
 - Ⓑ A party has been planned for the players, families, and fans after the game.
 - Ⓒ The parents who arrived to pick up their children stayed to enjoy some cake.
 - Ⓓ At yesterday's game, the fans rose to their feet and cheered for their star player.

- 39 Read the dictionary entry in the box.

stress: *n.* **1.** pressure; tension or anxiety
v. **2.** to emphasize, such as for importance

Determine which definition of the word *stress* is used in **each** sentence.

My stress has increased since getting a puppy.

- Ⓐ definition 1
- Ⓑ definition 2

Veterinarians stress the value of consistent puppy training.

- Ⓐ definition 1
- Ⓑ definition 2

The playful puppy was a source of stress for the tired old cat.

- Ⓐ definition 1
- Ⓑ definition 2



**This is the end of the session. You may
check your work for this session only.**