

---

## VIII. English Language Arts, Grade 10

A. Composition

B. Reading Comprehension

# Grade 10 English Language Arts Test

## Test Structure

The grade 10 English Language Arts test was presented in the following two parts:

- the ELA Composition test, which used a writing prompt to assess learning standards from the **Writing** strand in the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* (March 2011)
- the ELA Reading Comprehension test, which used multiple-choice and open-response questions (items) to assess learning standards from the **Reading** and **Language** strands in the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy*

## A. Composition

The spring 2015 grade 10 ELA Composition test was based on learning standards in the grades 6–12 **Writing** strand of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* (March 2011). The learning standards for the grades 6–12 **Writing** strand appear on pages 53–59 of the *Framework*, which is available on the Department website at [www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/frameworks/current.html).

Each grade 10 ELA writing prompt requires students to write a literary analysis (coded to standard 1 in the grades 6–12 **Writing** strand in the 2011 *Framework*). All grade 10 writing prompts also assess standards 4 and 5 in the grades 6–12 **Writing** strand.

ELA Composition test results are reported under the reporting categories **Composition: Topic Development** and **Composition: Standard English Conventions**.

## Test Sessions and Content Overview

The ELA Composition test included two separate test sessions, administered on the same day with a short break between sessions. During the first session, each student wrote an initial draft of a composition in response to the appropriate writing prompt on the next page. During the second session, each student revised his or her draft and submitted a final composition, which was scored in the areas of Topic Development and Standard English Conventions. The Scoring Guides for the MCAS English Language Arts Composition are available at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/elacomp\\_scoreguide.html](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/student/elacomp_scoreguide.html).

In spring 2015, in response to extended weather-related closures, the Department allowed districts to choose an alternate, later schedule for the administration of the Composition test. See the following page for the dates of administration for each of the prompts.

## Reference Materials

At least one English-language dictionary per classroom was provided for student use during ELA Composition test sessions. The use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries was allowed for current and former English language learner students only. No other reference materials were allowed during either ELA Composition test session.

## English Language Arts Test

### Grade 10 Writing Prompt

(Administered on April 2)

#### WRITING PROMPT

Often in works of literature, a character learns an important lesson.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a character who learns a lesson about **one** of the ideas listed in the box below.

- compassion
- forgiveness
- perseverance
- truth

In a well-developed composition, identify the character, describe how he or she learns the lesson, and explain how the lesson is important to the work as a whole.

### Grade 10 Writing Prompt

(Administered on March 24 and April 8)

#### WRITING PROMPT

Often in works of literature, a character who is considered odd or different turns out to have great importance.

From a work of literature you have read in or out of school, select a character who is considered odd or different but turns out to have great importance. In a well-developed composition, identify the character, describe how the character is considered odd or different, and explain how the character turns out to be important to the work as a whole.

## B. Reading Comprehension

The spring 2015 grade 10 English Language Arts Reading Comprehension test was based on grades 6–12 learning standards in two content strands of the *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy* (March 2011) listed below. Page numbers for the learning standards appear in parentheses.

■ Reading (*Framework*, pages 47–52)

■ Language (*Framework*, pages 64–67)

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

ELA Reading Comprehension test results are reported under two MCAS reporting categories, **Reading** and **Language**, which are identical to the two framework content strands listed above.

The table at the conclusion of this chapter indicates each item’s reporting category and both the 2011 grades 6–12 *Framework* standard and the 2001 *Framework* general standard it assesses. The correct answers for multiple-choice questions are also displayed in the table.

### Test Sessions and Content Overview

The grade 10 ELA Reading Comprehension test included three separate test sessions. Sessions 1 and 2 were both administered on the same day, and Session 3 was administered on the following day. Each session included reading passages, followed by multiple-choice and open-response questions. Common reading passages and test items are shown on the following pages as they appeared in test booklets. Due to copyright restrictions, certain reading passages cannot be released to the public on the website. For further information, contact Student Assessment Services at 781-338-3625.

### Reference Materials

During all three ELA Reading Comprehension test sessions, the use of bilingual word-to-word dictionaries was allowed for current and former English language learner students only. No other reference materials were allowed during any ELA Reading Comprehension test session.

# Grade 10 English Language Arts

## READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 1

### DIRECTIONS

This session contains three reading selections with sixteen multiple-choice questions and two open-response questions. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

*This excerpt from the biography of Apple Computer founder Steve Jobs describes how he handled major problems with the technology of the iPhone 4. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.*

*from* **Steve Jobs**  
*by* Walter Isaacson

Students read an excerpt from *Steve Jobs* and then answered questions 1 through 8 that follow on pages 110–112 of this document.

Due to copyright restrictions, the selection cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the copyright citation below.

*Steve Jobs* by Walter Isaacson. Copyright © 2011 by Walter Isaacson. Reprinted by permission of Simon & Schuster Publishing Group.

Due to copyright restrictions, the excerpt that appeared on this page cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the citation on the previous page.

Due to copyright restrictions, the excerpt that appeared on this page cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the citation on page 108.

- 1 Based on the excerpt, what is the **most likely** reason Jobs called “a couple of trusted old hands” before he did anything else?
- A. He believed the issue needed to be covered up.
  - B. He wanted an audience that would listen to him.
  - C. He believed they could learn from the situation.
  - D. He wanted the advice of experts he had relied on in the past.

- 2 Read the sentence from paragraph 3 in the box below.

“I’m going to be in meetings 24/7 for probably two days and I want you to be in every single one because you’ll learn more in those two days than you would in two years at business school,” he told him.

Jobs’s comments **mainly** reveal his belief in

- A. the benefit of showing humility.
- B. the value of practical experience.
- C. the importance of connecting with executives.
- D. the need to experience failure as well as success.

- 3 Based on paragraph 7, what is the **most likely** reason that only 1.7% of iPhone 4 users returned their phones?
- A. Users were disappointed with Apple’s offer.
  - B. Users accepted Jobs’s explanation of the issue.
  - C. Users wanted to show their unwavering support for Jobs.
  - D. Users felt that Apple products were more economical than others.

- 4 In paragraph 7, what does the term “media frenzy” imply?
- A. The media was impatient for an answer.
  - B. The media was overly excited about the story.
  - C. The media was unwilling to report certain details.
  - D. The media was looking for background information.

- 5 Read the statement from paragraph 10 in the box below.

“But as soon as the context is changed to ‘all smartphones have problems,’ the humor opportunity is gone. Nothing kills humor like a general and boring truth.”

- What does the statement reveal about how Jobs handled the problem with the iPhone 4?
- A. He used obscure technical terms in his definition of the problem.
  - B. He called upon the good will of the public to help resolve the problem.
  - C. He broadened the focus of the conversation to divert attention from the problem.
  - D. He adopted a passive approach to show that he was unconcerned about the problem.

- 6 How is the information in the excerpt **mainly** organized?
- A. in chronological order
  - B. in order of importance
  - C. as points in an argument
  - D. as comparison and contrast

- 7 What does the word *defuse* mean as it is used in paragraph 6?
- A. to repeat
  - B. to represent
  - C. to make less serious
  - D. to demonstrate privately

**Question 8 is an open-response question.**

- **Read the question carefully.**
- **Explain your answer.**
- **Add supporting details.**
- **Double-check your work.**

**Write your answer to question 8 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.**

- 8 Based on the excerpt, describe Jobs’s character traits. Support your answer with relevant and specific details from the excerpt.

*The novel Sold is written as a series of prose poems. In this excerpt, Lakshmi, a girl from Nepal, describes how people in her village deal with a drought—and then must face the consequences of a downpour. Read the excerpt and answer the questions that follow.*

*from* **Sold**  
*by Patricia McCormick*

*MAYBE TOMORROW*

Today, like yesterday, and the day before, and the day before that, the sky is deadly blue.

Today, like each day before, the water in the rice paddy drops a little farther, and the plants hang their heads a little lower.

5 I watch as Ama<sup>1</sup> makes an offering of marigold petals, red kumkum powder, and a few precious bits of rice to her goddess, praying for rain. But the only water that falls comes from Ama’s eyes.

I go back to mopping the baby’s face with a damp rag. As  
10 Ama goes past, I touch the hem of her skirt.

“Maybe tomorrow, Ama,” I say.

My stepfather rises from his cot. “If the rains don’t come soon,” he says to my mother, “you will have to sell your earrings.”

15 Yesterday, or the day before, or the day before that, Ama would have said, “Never.” She would have said, “Those are for Lakshmi. They are her dowry.”

But today she hangs her head like the paddy plants and says, “Maybe tomorrow.”

. . .

---

<sup>1</sup> *Ama* — Lakshmi’s mother

*WHEN THE RAIN CAME*

I smelled the rain before it fell.

I felt the air grow heavy like roti dough<sup>2</sup> and saw the leaves of the eucalyptus tree turn their silvery undersides up to greet it.

- 5 The first few droplets vanished in the dust. Then bigger drops fell, fat and ripe, exploding the earth.

Ama came out of the house, pulling her shawl over her head. Then, slowly, she lifted the folds of fabric away from her brow and, like the leaves of the eucalyptus tree, raised her  
10 waiting face toward heaven.

I ran across the yard, released Tali<sup>3</sup> from her wooden peg, and led her to the creek bed, her tongue unwilling to trust. Then, little by little, a trickle of muddy water came hopping down the gully.

- 15 Tali lapped and snuffled and snorted and sneezed and drank herself silly, her bony sides billowing with water.

I shut my eyes tight, letting the tears that had been gathering there finally spill down my cheeks, where they could hide inside the rain.

...

<sup>2</sup> *roti dough* — dough for a flat bread

<sup>3</sup> *Tali* — the family's goat

*TRYING TO REMEMBER*

The rain is so fierce, so relentless, so merciless, it finds every crack in our roof.

Ama and I pack the walls with scraps of cloth, but each day they melt a little more.

- 5 When there is a rare moment of sun, the women gather on the slope, shake their heads, and say this is the worst monsoon in years.

After several more days, when there is no sun at all, the village headmen gather in the tea shop and ask the holy  
10 man to say a special prayer to make it stop.

I wait at home, as the damp firewood sizzles and smokes, trying to keep the baby from catching a chill. He wrestles with the blanket, bored and cranky from days on end inside.

While I try to remember the days when the heat was so  
15 fierce, so relentless, so merciless, that we prayed for this rain.

*WHAT DISASTER SOUNDS LIKE*

When the night rain soaks the ground past the soaking point, when the earthen walls around the paddy melt away, when the rice plants are sucked out of the earth one by one and washed down the slope, there should be a sound, a  
5 noise announcing that something is terribly wrong.

Instead there is a ghostly hush that tells us we have lost everything.

*Sold* by Patricia McCormick. Copyright © 2006 by Patricia McCormick. Reprinted by permission of Disney • Hyperion Books, an imprint of Disney Book Group, LLC.

- 9 Which of the following is the **main** conflict in the excerpt?
- A. man versus nature
  - B. man versus society
  - C. man versus himself
  - D. man versus technology
- 10 In lines 11 and 19 of “Maybe Tomorrow,” what is the **main** effect of the repetition of the phrase “Maybe tomorrow”?
- A. It shows that the family members disagree.
  - B. It shows that the family’s hopes are fading.
  - C. It shows that the family’s optimism is contagious.
  - D. It shows that the family members are supporting each other.
- 11 What do lines 18 and 19 of “Maybe Tomorrow” reveal about Ama?
- A. She is hiding her intentions by being evasive.
  - B. She is defeated but trying to postpone a decision.
  - C. She is becoming angry about her husband’s demands.
  - D. She is discouraged about her daughter’s prospects for marriage.
- 12 In “What Disaster Sounds Like,” what is **most** surprising about the “ghostly hush that tells us we have lost / everything”?
- A. Silence predicts a stable future for the village.
  - B. Silence suggests that another storm is coming soon.
  - C. Silence instead of discussion follows the devastation.
  - D. Silence rather than sound accompanies the devastation.
- 13 Which statement **best** describes the central irony of the excerpt?
- A. The villagers want both droughts and rain.
  - B. The soaked earth can hold only so much water.
  - C. Animals and plants suffer as much as the people.
  - D. People pray for rain and then rain destroys everything.

**Question 14 is an open-response question.**

- **Read the question carefully.**
- **Explain your answer.**
- **Add supporting details.**
- **Double-check your work.**

**Write your answer to question 14 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.**

- 14** Describe how Lakshmi’s emotions shift throughout the excerpt. Support your answer with relevant and specific details from the excerpt.

*Hippocrates was a doctor in ancient Greece who first set down a code of ethics for the medical profession. Read The Law of Hippocrates and answer the questions that follow.*

### The Law of Hippocrates

- 1 MEDICINE is of all the arts the most noble; but, owing to the ignorance of those who practice it, and of those who, inconsiderately, form a judgment of them, it is at present far behind all the other arts. Their mistake appears to me to arise principally from this, that in the cities there is no punishment connected with the practice of medicine (and with it alone) except disgrace, and that does not hurt those who are familiar with it. Such persons are like the figures which are introduced in tragedies, for as they have the shape, and dress, and personal appearance of an actor, but are not actors, so also physicians are many in title but very few in reality.
- 2 Whoever is to acquire a competent knowledge of medicine, ought to be possessed of the following advantages: a natural disposition; instruction; a favorable position for the study; early tuition; love of labour; leisure. First of all, a natural talent is required; for, when Nature leads the way to what is most excellent, instruction in the art takes place, which the student must try to appropriate to himself by reflection, becoming an early pupil in a place well adapted for instruction. He must also bring to the task a love of labour and perseverance, so that the instruction taking root may bring forth proper and abundant fruits.
- 3 Instruction in medicine is like the culture of the productions of the earth. For our natural disposition, is, as it were, the soil; the tenets of our teacher are, as it were, the seed; instruction in youth is like the planting of the seed in the ground at the proper season; the place where the instruction is communicated is like the food imparted to vegetables by the atmosphere; diligent study is like the cultivation of the fields; and it is time which imparts strength to all things and brings them to maturity.
- 4 Having brought all these requisites to the study of medicine, and having acquired a true knowledge of it, we shall thus, in travelling through the cities, be esteemed physicians not only in name but in reality. But inexperience is a bad treasure, and a bad fund to those who possess it, whether in opinion or reality, being devoid of self-reliance and contentedness, and the nurse both of timidity and audacity.\* For timidity betrays a want of powers, and audacity a lack of skill. They are, indeed, two things, knowledge and opinion, of which the one makes its possessor really to know, the other to be ignorant.
- 5 Those things which are sacred, are to be imparted only to sacred persons; and it is not lawful to impart them to the profane until they have been initiated in the mysteries of the science.

—Hippocrates

---

\* *audacity* — boldness; willingness to take risks

- 15 Based on paragraph 1, which of the following **best** characterizes bad physicians?
- A. They are greedy.
  - B. They are pretenders.
  - C. They are difficult to contact.
  - D. They are located only in the cities.

- 16 According to paragraph 2, what must accompany the personal traits of a physician?
- A. a good education
  - B. a supportive family
  - C. approval from the gods
  - D. popularity in the community

- 17 If the author of the passage were to use a heading for each paragraph, which heading would fit **best** before paragraph 3?
- A. An Herbal Treatment
  - B. Medicine and Gardening
  - C. The Growth of a Physician
  - D. Understand Agriculture First

- 18 Read paragraph 5 in the box below.

Those things which are sacred, are to be imparted only to sacred persons; and it is not lawful to impart them to the profane until they have been initiated in the mysteries of the science.

- Based on the paragraph, what is the relationship between the words “sacred” and “profane”?
- A. The two words are antonyms.
  - B. The two words are synonyms.
  - C. “Sacred” is the root word of “profane.”
  - D. “Profane” is an outdated word for “sacred.”

# Grade 10 English Language Arts

## READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 2

### DIRECTIONS

This session contains one reading selection with eight multiple-choice questions and one open-response question. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

*Poet Carl Sandburg addressed a joint session of the U.S. Congress on February 12, 1959—the 150th anniversary of the birth of Abraham Lincoln. Lincoln freed the slaves and was president during the U.S. Civil War between the Union (northern) and Confederate (southern) states from 1861 through 1865. In the second passage of this pairing, Walt Whitman, a great American poet of the nineteenth century, is remembered by a friend in a eulogy (a memorial written for someone who has died). Read the speech and the eulogy and answer the questions that follow.*

### Speech Honoring Abraham Lincoln

*by Carl Sandburg*

- 1 Not often in the story of mankind does a man arrive on earth who is both steel and velvet, who is as hard as rock and soft as drifting fog, who holds in his heart and mind the paradox of terrible storm and peace unspeakable and perfect. Here and there across centuries come reports of men alleged to have these contrasts. And the incomparable Abraham Lincoln, born 150 years ago this day, is an approach if not a perfect realization of this character.
- 2 In the time of the April lilacs in the year 1865, on his death, the casket with his body was carried north and west a thousand miles, and the American people wept as never before. Bells sobbed, cities wore crepe,<sup>1</sup> people stood in tears and with hats off as the railroad burial car paused in the leading cities of seven states, ending its journey at Springfield, Illinois, the home town.
- 3 During the four years he was president, he at times, especially in the first three months, took to himself the powers of a dictator. He commanded the most powerful armies till then assembled in modern warfare. He enforced conscription<sup>2</sup> of soldiers for the first time in American history. Under imperative necessity he abolished the right of habeas corpus.<sup>3</sup> He directed politically and spiritually the wild, massive, turbulent forces let loose in civil war.
- 4 He argued and pleaded for compensated emancipation of the slaves. The slaves were property, they were on the tax books along with horses and cattle, the valuation of each slave next to his name on the tax assessor's books. Failing to get action on compensated emancipation, as a chief executive having war powers, he issued the paper by which he declared the slaves to be free under "military necessity." In the end nearly \$4 million worth of property was taken away from those who were legal owners of it, property confiscated, wiped out as by fire and turned to ashes, at his instigation and executive direction. Chattel property<sup>4</sup> recognized and lawful for 300 years was expropriated, seized without payment.

<sup>1</sup> *crepe* — black cloth used to symbolize mourning

<sup>2</sup> *conscription* — military draft

<sup>3</sup> *habeas corpus* — the right of a prisoner to be brought before a court

<sup>4</sup> *chattel property* — an item of personal property

- 5 In the month the war began he told his secretary, John Hay, “My policy is to have no policy.” Three years later in a letter to a Kentucky friend made public, he confessed plainly, “I have been controlled by events.” His words at Gettysburg were sacred; yet strange with a color of the familiar: “We cannot consecrate—we cannot hallow—this ground. The brave men, living and dead, who struggled here, have consecrated it, far beyond our poor power to add or detract.”
- 6 He could have said “the brave Union men.” Did he have a purpose in omitting the word *Union*? Was he keeping himself and his utterance clear of the passion that would not be good to look at when the time came for peace and reconciliation? Did he mean to leave an implication that there were brave Union men, and brave Confederate men, living and dead, who had struggled there? We do not know of a certainty. Was he thinking of the Kentucky father whose two sons died in battle, one in Union blue, the other in Confederate gray, the father inscribing on the stone over their double grave, “God knows which was right”? We do not know. . . .
- 7 While the war winds howled, he insisted that the Mississippi was one river meant to belong to one country, that railroad connection from coast to coast must be pushed through and the Union Pacific Railroad made a reality. While the luck of war wavered and broke and came again, as generals failed and campaigns were lost, he held enough forces of the North together to raise new armies and supply them, until generals were found who made war as victorious war has always been made—with terror, frightfulness, destruction, and on both sides, North and South, valor and sacrifice past words of man to tell.
- 8 In the mixed shame and blame of the immense wrongs of two crashing civilizations, often with nothing to say, he said nothing, slept not at all, and on occasions he was seen to weep in a way that made weeping appropriate, decent, majestic. . . .
- 9 The people of many other countries take Lincoln now for their own. He belongs to them. He stands for decency, honest dealing, plain talk, and funny stories. “Look where he came from. Don’t he know all us strugglers, and wasn’t he a kind of tough struggler all his life right up to the finish?” Something like that you can hear in any nearby neighborhood and across the seas.
- 10 Millions there are who take him as a personal treasure. He had something they would like to see spread everywhere over the world. Democracy? We can’t find words to say exactly what it is, but he had it. In his blood and bones he carried it. In the breath of his speeches and writings it is there. Popular government? Republican institution? Government where the people have the say-so, one way or another telling their elected leaders what they want? He had the idea. It’s there in the lights and shadows of his personality, a mystery that can be lived but never fully spoken in words.
- 11 Our good friend the poet and playwright Mark Van Doren tells us, “To me, Lincoln seems, in some ways, the most interesting man who ever lived. He was gentle, but his gentleness was combined with a terrific toughness, an iron strength.”
- 12 How did Lincoln say he would like to be remembered? His beloved friend, Representative Owen Lovejoy of Illinois, had died in May of 1864 and friends wrote to Lincoln and he replied that the pressure of duties kept him from joining them in efforts for a marble monument to Lovejoy, the last sentence of his letter saying, “Let him have the marble monument along with the well-assured and more enduring one in the hearts of those who love liberty, unselfishly, for all men.”

- 13 So perhaps we may say that the well-assured and most enduring memorial to Lincoln is invisibly there, today, tomorrow, and for a long time yet to come in the hearts of lovers of liberty, men and women who understand that wherever there is freedom there have been those who fought, toiled, and sacrificed for it.

**Eulogy for  
WALT WHITMAN  
(1819–1892)**

by  
ROBERT GREEN INGERSOLL

- 1 Again we in the mystery of life are brought face-to-face with the mystery of death. A great man, a great American, is dead before us, and we have met to pay a tribute to his greatness and to his worth. His fame is secure. He laid the foundation of it deep in the human heart. He was, above all that I have known, the poet of humanity, of sympathy. Great he was—so great that he rose above the greatest that he met without arrogance; and so great that he stooped to the lowest without conscious condescension.<sup>1</sup> He never claimed to be lower or greater than any other of the sons of man. He came into our generation a free, untrammelled spirit, with sympathy for all. His arm was beneath the form of the sick; he sympathized with the imprisoned and the despised; and even on the brow of crime he was great enough to place the kiss of human sympathy. One of the greatest lines in our literature is his. Speaking of an outcast—“Not until the sun excludes the earth will I exclude you.” A charity as wide as the sky! And whenever there was human suffering, human misfortune, the sympathy of Whitman bent above it as the firmament bends above this earth. He was the poet of that divine democracy that gives equal rights to all the sons and daughters of men. He uttered the great American voice, uttered a song worthy of the great Republic.
- 2 He was the poet of life. He loved the clouds. He enjoyed the breath of morning, the twilight, the wind, the winding streams. He loved to look at the sea when the winds and waves burst into the whitecaps of joy. He loved the fields, the hills. He was acquainted with trees, with birds, with all the beautiful objects on the earth; and he understood their meaning and used them that he might exhibit his heart to his fellowmen. He was also the poet of love. He was not ashamed of the divine passion that has built every home in the world; that divine passion that has painted every picture and given us every real work of art—that divine passion that has made the world worth living in and gives value to human life. He was the poet of the human race everywhere. His sympathy went out over the seas to all the nations of the earth. And above genius, above all the snowcapped peaks of intelligence, above his art, rises the man—greater than all.
- 3 He was true absolutely to himself. He was frank, candid, pure, serene, and noble. And for years he was maligned<sup>2</sup> and slandered, simply because he had the candor of nature. He will be understood yet, and that for which he was condemned will add to the glory and the greatness of his name. He wrote a liturgy for humanity—the greatest gospel that can be preached.

<sup>1</sup> *condescension* — the practice of treating people as inferior to oneself

<sup>2</sup> *maligned* — spoken about in an evil way

- 4 He was not afraid to live, not afraid to speak his thoughts. Neither was he afraid to die. Cheerful every moment, the laughing nymphs of day remained that they might clasp the hand of the veiled and silent sisters of the night when they should come. And when they did come, Walt Whitman stretched his hand to both. And so, hand in hand, between smiles and tears, he reached his journey’s end.
- 5 Today we give back to Mother Nature, to her clasp and kiss, one of the bravest, sweetest souls that ever lived in human clay. Since he has lived, death is less fearful than it was before, and thousands and millions will walk down into the dark valley of the shadow, holding Walt Whitman by the hand, long after we are dead.
- 6 And so I lay this poor wreath upon this great man’s tomb. I loved him living and I love him still.

“Speech Honoring Abraham Lincoln” by Carl Sandburg. In the public domain.

“Eulogy for Walt Whitman” by Robert Green Ingersoll. In the public domain.

- 19 Read the sentence from paragraph 6 of the speech in the box below.

He could have said “the brave Union men.”

In the remainder of the paragraph, what does the speaker speculate about Lincoln?

- A. possible reasons underlying Lincoln’s choice of words
- B. possible reasons for Lincoln’s worries about the country
- C. whether Lincoln’s speech could have worsened wartime discord
- D. whether Lincoln’s speech could have been more encouraging to soldiers

- 20 In the eulogy for Whitman, what is the **main** effect of the speaker’s use of the pronouns “we” and “us”?

- A. It reveals his strong feelings for Whitman.
- B. It heightens the formal tone of the speech.
- C. It emphasizes his connection with his audience.
- D. It mimics the language Whitman used in his poetry.

- 21 Based on paragraph 4 of the eulogy, why does the speaker believe Whitman made death “less fearful” for others?
- A. Whitman accepted death as part of life.
  - B. Whitman lived a long and healthy life.
  - C. Whitman focused on death in his writings.
  - D. Whitman publicized his belief in an afterlife.

- 22 Read the descriptions in the box below.

- Not often in the story of mankind does a man arrive on earth who is both steel and velvet, who is as hard as rock and soft as drifting fog, . . . (paragraph 1 of the speech)
- Great he was—so great that he rose above the greatest that he met without arrogance; and so great that he stooped to the lowest without conscious condescension. (paragraph 1 of the eulogy)

Which technique is used for effect in both descriptions?

- A. literary allusions
- B. familiar symbols
- C. understated claims
- D. contrasting images

- 23 What do paragraph 8 of the speech and paragraph 4 of the eulogy suggest about Lincoln and Whitman?
- A. Both had moments of deep anger.
  - B. Both had many human weaknesses.
  - C. Both were known as extremely straightforward.
  - D. Both were capable of experiencing deep emotion.

- 24 Read the sentence from paragraph 9 of the speech in the box below.

The people of many other countries take Lincoln now for their own.

Which description from the eulogy suggests that Whitman’s work had a similar effect on people?

- A. “He came into our generation a free, untrammelled spirit, . . .”
- B. “He loved to look at the sea . . .”
- C. “He was the poet of the human race everywhere.”
- D. “He was true absolutely to himself.”

25 Read the descriptions in the box below.

- He stands for decency, honest dealing, plain talk, and funny stories. (paragraph 9 of the speech)
- He was frank, candid, pure, serene, and noble. (paragraph 3 of the eulogy)

Based on the descriptions, “plain talk” and “candid” **most likely** refer to which characteristic?

- A. respect
- B. humility
- C. sensitivity
- D. truthfulness

26 What do paragraph 13 of the speech and paragraph 5 of the eulogy emphasize?

- A. the lasting legacies of Lincoln and Whitman
- B. the difficulties of accepting the loss of great men
- C. the viewpoints embraced by Lincoln and Whitman
- D. the challenges in finding great men to replace those who have died

Question 27 is an open-response question.

- **Read the question carefully.**
- **Explain your answer.**
- **Add supporting details.**
- **Double-check your work.**

Write your answer to question 27 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

27 Describe how the speech **and** the eulogy emphasize the humanity of men who were considered to be great and powerful. Support your answer with relevant and specific details from both the speech **and** the eulogy.

# Grade 10 English Language Arts

## READING COMPREHENSION: SESSION 3

### DIRECTIONS

This session contains two reading selections with twelve multiple-choice questions and one open-response question. Mark your answers to these questions in the spaces provided in your Student Answer Booklet.

*The book Trapped describes the Chilean mine collapse of August 2010. This introductory chapter from the book begins by explaining how the physical features of the area were formed. Read the chapter and answer the questions that follow.*

*from* **TRAPPED**  
*by Marc Aronson*

Students read an excerpt from *Trapped* and then answered questions 28 through 36 that follow on pages 130–132 of this document.

Due to copyright restrictions, the selection cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the copyright citation below.

*Trapped* by Marc Aronson. Copyright © 2011 by Marc Aronson. Reprinted by permission of Atheneum Books for Young Readers, an imprint of Simon & Schuster Children's Publishing Division.

Due to copyright restrictions, the excerpt that appeared on this page cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the citation on the previous page.

Due to copyright restrictions, the excerpt that appeared on this page cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the citation on page 126.

Due to copyright restrictions, the excerpt that appeared on this page cannot be released to the public over the Internet. For more information, see the citation on page 126.

- 28 According to paragraphs 1 and 2, which of the following triggered the cooling of Earth’s climate?
- A. the absorption of carbon dioxide from the air
  - B. the uneven distribution of animal and plant life
  - C. the increase in snow and ice storms at the poles
  - D. the variability in weather patterns over the years
- 29 Based on paragraph 4 and the diagram, what are the lithosphere and asthenosphere?
- A. layers of the Earth
  - B. the gases found in the Nazca Plate
  - C. volcanoes found in South America
  - D. the deepest waters of the Pacific Ocean
- 30 According to paragraph 5, the Atacama Fault is **mainly** characterized by
- A. geologic activity.
  - B. abnormal dryness.
  - C. unusual organisms.
  - D. frigid temperatures.
- 31 In paragraph 8, what do the descriptions of the “totally different kingdom” highlight?
- A. political disagreements
  - B. current mining processes
  - C. historical transformations
  - D. extreme working conditions
- 32 According to the chapter, what played an essential role in establishing the significance of the Americas in the world?
- A. mineral wealth
  - B. new inventions
  - C. ancient cultures
  - D. population growth

- 33 This chapter was taken from a book that describes a 2010 mine accident in Chile. What is the **most likely** function of the chapter in the book?
- A. to intrigue readers with new questions about the subject
  - B. to provide background information on mining and mines
  - C. to introduce the miners and geologists involved in the event
  - D. to document the difficulties the author had researching the subject

- 34 Based on paragraph 6, the word *splays* **most likely** means
- A. rotates.
  - B. recovers.
  - C. separates.
  - D. surrounds.

- 35 In paragraph 7, what is the **main** function of the words enclosed in brackets?
- A. The words are translations of foreign phrases.
  - B. The words are definitions of jargon used by miners.
  - C. The words show the origins of industrial equipment.
  - D. The words emphasize the safety precautions taken in mines.

**Question 36 is an open-response question.**

- **Read the question carefully.**
- **Explain your answer.**
- **Add supporting details.**
- **Double-check your work.**

**Write your answer to question 36 in the space provided in your Student Answer Booklet.**

- 36** Based on the chapter, describe the challenges and dangers of working in a mine. Support your answer with relevant and specific information from the chapter.

Read the poem and then answer the questions that follow.

**Quilts**

Like a fading piece of cloth  
I am a failure

No longer do I cover tables filled with food and laughter  
My seams are frayed my hems falling my strength no longer able  
5 To hold the hot and cold

I wish for those first days  
When just woven I could keep water  
From seeping through  
Repelled stains with the tightness of my weave  
10 Dazzled the sunlight with my  
Reflection

I grow old though pleased with my memories  
The tasks I can no longer complete  
Are balanced by the love of the tasks gone past  
15 I offer no apology only  
this plea:

When I am frayed and strained and drizzle at the end  
Please someone cut a square and put me in a quilt  
That I might keep some child warm  
20 And some old person with no one else to talk to  
Will hear my whispers

And cuddle  
near

—*Nikki Giovanni*

“Quilts” by Nikki Giovanni, from the Visual Verse Project website. Copyright © 2007 by Nikki Giovanni. Reprinted by permission of the author.

- 37 Which of the following words **best** describes the speaker’s tone in lines 1–5?
- A. angry
  - B. jealous
  - C. puzzled
  - D. defeated
- 38 Based on lines 12–14, what is the speaker’s reward for her present condition?
- A. a life of leisure
  - B. help with her work
  - C. a sense of confidence
  - D. reflecting on her successes
- 39 What is the **most likely** reason the speaker specifically wants an old person to “hear my whispers”?
- A. The speaker feels she can gain wisdom from old people.
  - B. The speaker can empathize with old people who are alone.
  - C. The speaker believes young people do not need her assistance.
  - D. The speaker does not have much in common with young people.
- 40 How has the speaker changed by the end of the poem?
- A. She has learned to respect others.
  - B. She has learned to be more affectionate.
  - C. She has started feeling safe in modern times.
  - D. She has accepted being part of a greater purpose.

**Grade 10 English Language Arts  
Reading Comprehension  
Spring 2015 Released Items:**

**Reporting Categories, Standards, and Correct Answers**

Item No.	Page No.	Reporting Category <sup>1</sup>	Standard <sup>1</sup>	Correct Answer (MC) <sup>2</sup>	2001 Standard <sup>3</sup>
1	110	Reading	1	D	8
2	110	Reading	4	B	13
3	111	Reading	1	B	13
4	111	Reading	4	B	15
5	111	Reading	4	C	13
6	112	Reading	5	A	13
7	112	Language	4	C	4
8	112	Reading	3		12
9	116	Reading	2	A	12
10	116	Reading	4	B	15
11	116	Reading	3	B	8
12	116	Reading	4	D	15
13	116	Reading	2	D	12
14	117	Reading	2		12
15	119	Reading	2	B	8
16	119	Reading	1	A	13
17	119	Reading	5	C	13
18	119	Language	4	A	4
19	123	Reading	1	A	13
20	123	Reading	6	C	15
21	124	Reading	1	A	13
22	124	Reading	4	D	15
23	124	Reading	2	D	13
24	124	Reading	3	C	13
25	125	Reading	4	D	15
26	125	Reading	9	A	13
27	125	Reading	9		9
28	130	Reading	1	A	13
29	130	Reading	7	A	13
30	130	Reading	1	A	13
31	130	Reading	5	D	13
32	130	Reading	1	A	13
33	131	Reading	6	B	13
34	131	Language	4	C	4
35	131	Language	3	B	6
36	132	Reading	2		8
37	134	Reading	4	D	14
38	134	Reading	1	D	14
39	134	Reading	6	B	14
40	134	Reading	3	D	14

<sup>1</sup> The Reporting Category and Standard columns refer to the current (2011) *Massachusetts Curriculum Framework for English Language Arts and Literacy*. More information about reporting categories for ELA is available at [www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/ela.html?section=testdesign](http://www.doe.mass.edu/mcas/tdd/ela.html?section=testdesign).

<sup>2</sup> Answers are provided here for multiple-choice items only. Sample responses and scoring guidelines for open-response items, which are indicated by the shaded cells, will be posted to the Department's website later this year.

<sup>3</sup> The Department is providing the standard from the previous (2001) curriculum framework for ELA for reference purposes.