

## Grade Six Sample Test Item—Reading

### Achievement Level: Standard Exceeded

Read the text and answer the questions.

#### Signs of Change

Jess glanced around the spare room, reminding himself that it wasn't the spare room anymore. From now on, it would be Grandpa Iverson's room. His grandfather had just moved halfway across the state because Mom needed him. She had received a promotion at work, which meant that she had to switch from the day shift to the night shift.

"I feel more comfortable knowing that Grandpa is here to look after you," Mom said. "You know I trust you completely," she added, squeezing Jess's arm, "but I'd worry if you were here alone."

Grandpa Iverson had been reluctant to relocate at first, since the move meant leaving all that was familiar to him, but ultimately he said it was a small inconvenience compared to the privilege of spending more time with his grandson.

The day Grandpa moved in, Mom took Jess aside and whispered with a wink, "You keep an eye on him too."

"Is he watching me or am I watching him?" Jess asked. Mom did not respond directly, but her demeanor sent a clear message: she expected his full cooperation.

The first day of her new job, Mom asked Jess to come directly home from school to keep Grandpa company. "It's a difficult adjustment for him," she said. "I'm sure spending time with you will make it easier. Eventually, you'll both develop new routines."

Jess did as she requested, but he was disappointed because he and his friends had been practicing skateboarding tricks for an upcoming competition. If Jess missed too many practices, he would have to withdraw from the competition. Missing just one practice session could diminish his chances for success.

**Grade Six Sample Test Item—Reading**  
**Achievement Level: Standard Exceeded (continued)**

As Jess poured himself a glass of milk, he heard a big crash from somewhere upstairs. He raced up the steps to find Grandpa kneeling on the floor, gathering up a pile of coins and putting them back into a metal box. “I’ve collected coins since I was a kid,” Grandpa explained. “Although there’s probably nothing of real value here, they are treasures to me.”

Grandpa placed the box in a pile of stuff marked KEEP. There was another pile nearby marked GIVE AWAY. “I am organizing a life’s worth of treasures,” he said with a sigh, “because I can’t keep everything.”

Jess picked up a tattered old magazine entitled Life, dated February 10, 1961. On the cover was a picture of a monkey in a space suit with the headline, “Back from Space: A Confident ‘Ham.’” Jess skimmed the story about America’s first monkey in space, and then he scanned several more issues of Life. “These are fascinating, Grandpa. You can’t give them away.”

“Then I relinquish them to you,” Grandpa said.

“Thanks!” Jess set the magazines aside and pointed to a chess set in the discard pile. “I thought you loved chess.”

“I do,” said Grandpa, “but who will play with me here?”

Jess knew he should offer to learn, but chess had never interested him, so he put the game back and picked up a pair of old binoculars. He adjusted the lenses, and when they worked correctly, he surveyed his neighborhood from the window. He could make out license plate numbers, signs in store windows, and even a word or two on a notice tacked to an old maple tree. The first few letters were blurred, but the last three were “ess,” and he made out the words, “Elmwood Park,” which was where his skateboard friends gathered.

“I think someone left me a message,” Jess said, pointing out the window, “out there on that tree.”

“That’s peculiar. Why wouldn’t your friend leave it in the mailbox?” asked Grandpa.

Jess shrugged and said, “I’m going to check it out.”

**Grade Six Sample Test Item—Reading**  
**Achievement Level: Standard Exceeded (continued)**

"I'm coming too," Grandpa said. "Your mother's instructions were very clear: I'm to 'keep you company,' so I must accompany you." Grandpa emphasized the words, apparently pleased with his play on words.

Clearly, Grandpa was taking his role of caretaker a bit too seriously. Jess did not want to test his grandfather's authority on the very first day, however, so he waited for Grandpa before bounding down the stairs to the ground floor of the building.

Jess had no trouble finding the notice he had spied. It was a small poster, and the first letters were blurry. Up close, however, the letters became clear: "Chess: Elmwood Park 4:30."

"Chess, not Jess," said Grandpa with a laugh. "Let's check it out."

Jess hesitated, saying, "It's probably for kids."

"We won't know unless we go over there," Grandpa declared. "Let's bring the chess set and see what we find."

Jess ran back to the apartment, grabbed Grandpa's chess set and his own skateboard, and dashed back to the street.

In a few minutes they reached the park where they discovered about twenty chess players gathered around tables by the fountain. There were players of all ages, some even about Grandpa's age. Grandpa lingered near one particularly lively game, and when it ended, the winner invited him to play the next round. As soon as Grandpa sat down, his eyes focused on the chessboard.

Between moves, Jess interrupted just long enough to say, "I'll be at the skate park on the other side of the fountain."

Grandpa waved him away and said, "I'll meet you later."

"We may not have to change our routines much after all," Jess thought with a grin, as he skated off to meet his pals.

Grade Six Sample Test Item—Reading  
Achievement Level: Standard Exceeded (continued)

Read the sentences from the text.

If Jess missed too many practices, he would have to withdraw from the competition. Missing just one practice session could diminish his chances for success.

What does the use of the word diminish suggest? Select all that apply.

- A. Jess thinks practice is unimportant.
- B. Jess is less likely to win the competition.
- C. Jess is uninterested in going to practice.
- D. Jess thinks he will miss additional practices.
- E. Jess feels that skateboarding practice is too difficult for him to do well.
- F. Jess feels he should attend practice because it is key to his improvement.

Area	Reading Demonstrating understanding of literary and nonfiction texts
Standard(s)	Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, including figurative and connotative meanings; analyze the impact of a specific word choice on meaning and tone.
Answer	B and F