

## Grade Three Sample Test Item—Reading

### Achievement Level: Standard Exceeded

Read the poem and answer the questions.

#### Waiting for Change

The dirt is cool, still dark and damp  
from yesterday's rain. The seed  
in my hand looks like a period at the end  
of a sentence, but unlike the period,  
this seed is the beginning of something grand.

I push the seed into the soil.  
Later I scrub my hands and nails,  
soap bubbling up in the sink  
like the tiny bubbles of water  
at the bottom of a waterfall.

Each morning before school,  
I look at the corner of the garden  
where I planted the seed,  
but to my eye nothing has changed.  
I think of how the television looks  
when it is off—dark and sitting quietly.  
I know there is a whole world inside both  
the TV and the seed waiting to present itself.

Light rain begins to fall as I drift off to sleep,  
reminding myself I must be patient.  
I imagine the rain might awaken  
whatever is inside the seed I planted.  
But in the morning, there is still no sign,  
just little impressions left in the ground by the rain.

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

I wait and watch for one whole week,  
but nothing happens.  
I've decided that maybe the seed was planted  
too deeply in the ground. I begin to think  
the seed has lost its way, just  
like my dad when he took one wrong turn  
and ended up in a place unknown.

And then, on the day I'm ready to give up—  
the seed begins to sprout! The plant rises above the earth,  
and by the afternoon it has stretched its leaves,  
ready to grow throughout the season.

How does the speaker change from stanza 5 to stanza 6?

- A. The speaker is puzzled, and then the speaker feels foolish.
- B. The speaker is watchful, and then the speaker gives up.
- C. The speaker is worried, and then the speaker is pleased.
- D. The speaker is angry, and then the speaker is surprised.

**Area****Reading**Demonstrating  
understanding of literary  
and nonfiction texts**Standard(s)**Describe characters in  
a story (e.g., their traits,  
motivations, or feelings)  
and explain how their  
actions contribute to the  
sequence of events.**Answer**

C