

# **Massachusetts MCAS Grade 6 English Language Arts Practice**

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PRACTICE TEST

English Language Arts

Grade 6

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Student Name

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School Name

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District Name

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# **Grade 6 English Language Arts**

## **PRACTICE TEST**

This practice test contains 14 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.

Science writer Phillip Hoose arrived in Argentina to help scientists capture birds called red knots, an endangered species, in order to track and study them. Red knots have one of the longest migrations of any bird, going back and forth from the Arctic to the southern tip of Argentina. Read the passage from *Moonbird* and answer the questions that follow.

from *Moonbird*

by Phillip Hoose

- 1 Because the early-morning air was unusually warm, workers stripped to their shorts and T-shirts. At ten o'clock the incoming tide pushed a huge group of shorebirds squarely into target range. Dr. Minton fired off his tennis-court-size net, which whizzed through the air and came down upon a mammoth group of shorebirds, mostly red knots. It was a spectacular catch, much bigger than they had anticipated. Team members sprinted through the sand and plunged into the surf to gather up the front edge of the net and save the trapped birds from drowning.
- 2 It took two hours just to untangle all the birds, during which time the temperature steadily dropped. Local teenagers jumped in to help carry birds to cloth-covered cages where they would remain calm until they were measured, weighed, and released. By the third hour the researchers were shivering in wet clothes. A violent storm welled up, pelting everyone with hailstones that soon turned to snowflakes. Freezing workers struggled to move their stiff, numb fingers enough to band the birds, take measurements, and record data.
- 3 The Argentine navy sent two canvas-covered trucks out to the beach so that the scientists could climb in and finish their work. They labored for hours in a crouched position, their backs bent under the low roof. The team captured so many birds that they quickly ran out of colored bands. Improvising, they fired up a camp stove to heat thin strips of black plastic found in one of the trucks until the strips were pliable enough to bend into bands. Repeatedly scorching their fingers on the stove's flame, the researchers carefully wrapped the black strips around each bird's lower right leg and joined the end with a soldering iron. They also applied a yellow band to the lower left leg.



A worker frees a knot from a cannon net.

- 4 The bird we know as B95 was among 850 red knots caught that day. His now-iconic black band was applied to his lower right leg by a shivering worker with stiff fingers and an aching back. Of the hundreds of knots that received black bands in the trucks that day, he is the lone survivor that scientists can identify. Records show that this knot had adult plumage even then, which means he had to have been at least three years old in 1995, and could have been older.

### 2001: AN IDENTITY

- 5 Six years later, on November 17, 2001, one of the black-banded birds from 1995 was snared in a cannon net catch, just miles from where he was originally caught. Both bands were still on his legs. Patricia González added a new flag to his upper left leg, bearing the inscription B95. "On that day we used laser-inscribed flags for the first time," recalls González. "We inscribed one letter and two numbers on each band to give each individual bird a distinct identity. The figures were big and clear and easy to read through a spotting scope. We used up all one hundred of the bands in series A and we still had more birds to band, so we started the B series. This bird got a flag reading B95. The 95 doesn't represent the year he was caught. We just happened to be at that number when we banded him. It's a coincidence that '95 was the year when he was first captured."

### 2003: A SURVIVOR

- 6 Now he was—and always would be—B95. And when he turned up again at Tierra del Fuego in 2003 it was clear he was more than just an extraordinary pilot who could find his way back year after year. He was a

survivor, for the entire *rufa* subspecies of red knots was plunging toward extinction. Researchers in the United States, Chile, Canada, Brazil, and Argentina were all reporting significantly fewer knots. Some estimates indicated that *half* of all adult birds had died in just two years, between 2000 and 2002. Yet in 2003, B95, at least eleven years old, was still completing marathon migratory flights. Something about this bird was exceptional; he seemed to possess some extraordinary combination of physical toughness, navigational skill, judgment, and luck.

### 2007: THE MOONBIRD

- 7 B95 was captured again in Tierra del Fuego six years later, on November 8, 2007. Once the birds were freed from the net, researchers assembled into teams and began to band, weigh, and measure them. Each team worked efficiently in brilliant sunlight and said little beyond the statistics they were reporting.
- 8 That changed when Allan Baker was heard to mutter the words "My God." Everyone looked up. Dr. Baker was holding a knot between his thumb and forefinger at arm's length and staring intently at it.
- 9 "I looked down and there was the black flag of the 1995 catch and the band inscribed B95," he recalls. "I couldn't believe I was holding him." In the twelve years since Dr. Baker had first met this bird, his own hair had whitened. But B95 looked ageless. "He was in fantastic condition," Dr. Baker recalls. "His weight was where it should be. He had wonderful plumage. He was as fit as a three-year-old. I was holding a superbird in my hand."



B95, as he appeared in his gray nonbreeding plumage at Rio Grande, November 8, 2007

- 10 Researchers scrambled to their feet and clustered around. Some went for cameras. Patricia González, an expert on the development of bird feathers, remembers feeling guilty for leaving her post, but she couldn't help it. Here in Dr. Baker's grasp was the Moonbird, as B95 was now called by shorebird enthusiasts, a feathered veteran of thirty or more migratory flights between the bottom of the world and the top.
- 11 But there was more to it than that. "He was *alive*," remembers González, her voice catching in the telling. "Still alive."
- 12 When B95 was born, on an Arctic day long ago, he was one of an estimated 150,000 *rufa* red knots. Now the world population was far less than half that number. Some were predicting *rufa*'s extinction within the next five years unless something could be done quickly.
- 13 After recording B95's measurements, Allan Baker handed him carefully to Patricia González. She examined the condition of B95's plumage, now gray and white instead of the red of his breeding season, and checked the progress of his molt, which had not yet begun at this early date. She inserted a thin needle beneath his wing and drew a small quantity of blood, which would later confirm that B95 is a male.
- 14 The bird remained calm in González's grasp, even though her hands were trembling as she worked. "I kept talking to him," she remembers. "I kept saying, 'Forgive me, please, I won't hurt you. I will release you soon.' The heat of his tiny body was warming my hands and his heart was beating so fast. As I was working, I kept wondering, 'How can such a fragile thing be so powerful?'"
- 15 González noticed that B95 had lost the original yellow band from his lower left leg. She replaced it with an orange band—orange for Argentina. When she finished, the bird had an orange flag with B95 on his upper left leg, an orange band on his lower left leg, and the old black flag on the lower right leg.
- 16 She took a long, final look at him before releasing him. What stories he could tell! How had this small creature made it through so many storms? How had he avoided the falcon's chopping dive every single time? Above all, how had he managed to stay alive when so many others had fallen?
- 17 Patricia González knew she had to let him go. She adjusted the bands and flags on his legs, held him out toward the sea, and opened her hands. He fluttered for a moment to right himself in the air, regained control of his powerful wings, then flew off on a sharp curve to the right and disappeared.

- 18 Now, two years later, here I am crouching in Argentine beach grass with a small group of scientists and volunteers, waiting for the cannon's boom and hoping to meet B95. When it sounds, we run zigzagging through the trash-strewn beach grass and sprint out onto the shore. We scoop the front of the net from the water to free the teeming, writhing, chattering birds. We spend the rest of the day banding them, measuring bills and wings, drawing blood to determine gender, and recording statistics that will later be computerized.
- 19 In the end, we catch 156 knots. Twenty-six are "retraps," meaning they have been captured before and are already banded. About 25 percent of the birds are juveniles, with yellow legs and white crescents beneath gray feathers. They have just completed the first half of their rookie circuit around the western hemisphere. Almost all the flags are Argentine orange, but none says B95. Where is he? Did he manage to wiggle out under the net? Is he foraging just down the beach? Has he decided to stay farther north this season? Or has his time finally come?
- 20 Allan Baker and Patricia González decide that one good catch is enough for the season. They don't want to stress these birds any further or divert them from the important work they have to do each and every day to prepare for their upcoming journey north. With no remaining chance to capture B95, our only hope is that a sharp-eyed observer will spot him through a beach telescope. Given that thousands of knots are spread out over miles and miles of beaches and flats in Tierra del Fuego, the odds seem minuscule.
- 21 I fly back to the United States on Monday, December 14, and immediately begin typing up my notes. As I sit at my computer, I hear the faint bell indicating an e-mail message. Looking up, I see it's from Patricia González, with the subject "Un Viejo amigo," Spanish for "an old friend."
- 22 It begins: "Yesterday morning while scanning for red knots at Malvinas Memorial Monument, we saw B95. As all the birds were moving very fast, at first I did not realize he was there, but then, when I could see the combination of bands, can you not imagine what joy I felt!"
- 23 I push my chair back and let the message wash over me. He is still alive. While so many other *rufa* red knots have disappeared, B95 is in Tierra del Fuego, just as he always is at this time of year, plucking spat off the restinga shelves, preening his new flight feathers into flight-readiness, practicing snap-the-whip formation flying with the others, and getting ready for another flight north that no other knot knows better how to make. He has survived another year of marathon flights and now, nearly eighteen years of age, is getting ready for perhaps his most challenging flight yet. "Superbird" indeed. That's not the half of it: this bird has to be among the toughest four ounces of life in the world.

**B95's Great Circuit**

- ① Rio Grande, Tierra del Fuego, Argentina, to San Antonio Bay, Argentina: 900 miles
- ② San Antonio Bay, Argentina, to Lagoa do Peixe, Brazil: 1,000 miles
- ③ Lagoa do Peixe, Brazil, to Delaware Bay, U.S.: 5,000 miles
- ④ Delaware Bay, U.S., to *rufa* red knot breeding grounds: 2,000 miles
- ⑤ *Rufa* red knot breeding grounds to Mingan Archipelago, Quebec: 1,500 miles
- ⑥ Mingan Archipelago, Quebec, to Maranhão, Brazil: 3,700 miles
- ⑦ Maranhão, Brazil, to Rio Grande, Tierra del Fuego, Argentina: 3,700 miles



*Moonbird: A Year on the Wind with the Great Survivor B95* by Phillip Hoose. Text copyright © 2012 by Phillip Hoose. Reprinted by permission of Farrar, Straus, and Giroux, LLC. Photograph 1 by David C. Twichell. Reprinted by permission of Manomet. Photograph 2 by Patricia González.

- 1 Paragraphs 1 and 2 suggest that Argentina has
- (A) few shorebirds.
  - (B) unusual ocean tides.
  - (C) unpredictable weather.
  - (D) many natural resources.
- 2 Which of the following sentences from the passage **best** shows that the workers were inventive?
- (A) “Team members sprinted through the sand and plunged into the surf to gather up the front edge of the net and save the trapped birds from drowning.” (paragraph 1)
  - (B) “By the third hour the researchers were shivering in wet clothes.” (paragraph 2)
  - (C) “. . . workers struggled to move their stiff, numb fingers enough to band the birds, take measurements, and record data.” (paragraph 2)
  - (D) “. . . they fired up a camp stove to heat thin strips of black plastic found in one of the trucks until the strips were pliable enough to bend into bands.” (paragraph 3)

- 3 What is the **most likely** reason the author included the questions in paragraph 19?
- (A) to suggest B95 had lost his flags
  - (B) to examine the value of the flags
  - (C) to create a sense of suspense about B95
  - (D) to challenge the methods of the scientists
- 4 In paragraph 21, what is the **most likely** reason González referred to B95 as “an old friend”?
- (A) She had examined B95 for many years.
  - (B) She had tracked B95’s route every year.
  - (C) She had known B95 since he hatched.
  - (D) She had saved B95’s life many times.

- 5 The map supports the information in the passage by showing
- (A) when B95 traveled.
  - (B) how far B95 traveled.
  - (C) why B95 chose each stopover site.
  - (D) how long B95 stayed at each stopover site.
- 6 Which words from paragraph 5 best help the reader understand the meaning of the word *distinct*?
- (A) "Both bands"
  - (B) "each individual"
  - (C) "big and clear"
  - (D) "represent the year"

**7****Part A**

Based on the passage, the people working on the red knot tracking project can **best** be described as

- (A) independent.
- (B) frustrated.
- (C) dedicated.
- (D) restless.

**Part B**

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the answer to Part A?

- (A) "They labored for hours in a crouched position, their backs bent under the low roof." (paragraph 3)
- (B) "Researchers scrambled to their feet and clustered around." (paragraph 10)
- (C) "Now the world population was far less than half that number." (paragraph 12)
- (D) "As I sit at my computer, I hear the faint bell indicating an e-mail message." (paragraph 21)

- 8 Read the three quotations from the passage in the boxes and determine whether **each** quotation is a main idea or a supporting detail.

Something about this bird was exceptional; he seemed to possess some extraordinary combination of physical toughness, navigational skill, judgment, and luck. (paragraph 6)

- (A) main idea
- (B) supporting detail

After recording B95's measurements, Allan Baker handed him carefully to Patricia González. (paragraph 13)

- (A) main idea
- (B) supporting detail

About 25 percent of the birds are juveniles, with yellow legs and white crescents beneath gray feathers. (paragraph 19)

- (A) main idea
- (B) supporting detail

**For this question, you will write an essay based on the passage(s). Write your essay in the space provided on the next two pages. Your writing should:**

- **Present and develop a central idea.**
- **Provide evidence and/or details from the passage(s).**
- **Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.**

- 9** Based on *Moonbird*, write an essay explaining why the author describes B95 as “among the toughest four ounces of life in the world.” Be sure to use information from the passage to develop your essay.

**Write your answer on the next two pages.**

*You have a total of two pages on which to write your response.*

9

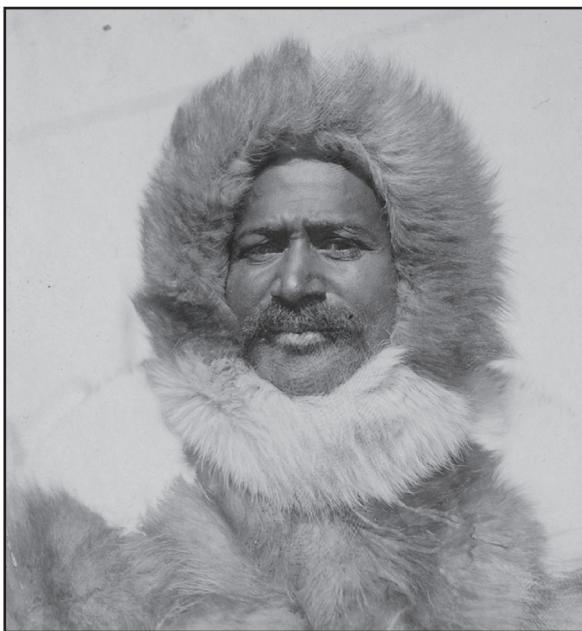


**Matthew Henson was an African American explorer who reached the North Pole in 1909. Read the two passages about Matthew Henson and answer the questions that follow.**

Many believe that in 1909, Matthew Henson became the first man to reach the North Pole, traveling as a member of an expedition organized by the explorer Robert E. Peary. As an African American, Henson had to face the racial prejudice that was common in the United States during that time. Read the informational article about his life.

### Maripaluk

by Ellen Donohue Warwick

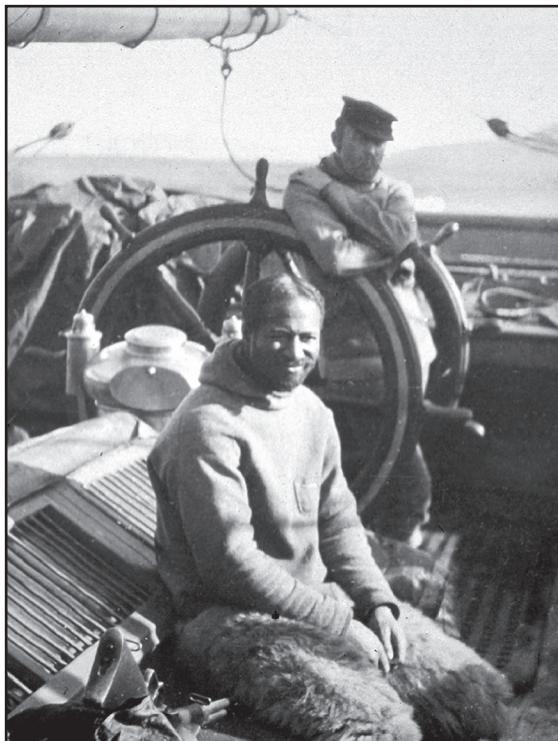


Matthew Henson, dressed for the cold!

- 1 In a hat store in Washington, D.C., history was made in the spring of 1887. The U.S. government wanted to find a way to link the Atlantic and Pacific oceans, and U.S. Navy civil engineer Robert E. Peary was headed to Nicaragua to see whether a canal should be built there. Before he left, Peary went into the Steinmetz and Sons store on G Street to buy a sun helmet. He mentioned to Mr. Steinmetz that he needed not only a hat but also a personal servant to accompany him to the tropics. The store owner suggested one of his African American stockmen, Matthew Henson.
- 2 Henson was 21 years old at the time. His childhood in Charles County, Maryland, had not been easy. Matthew's mother had died when he was an infant, and by the time he was eight years old, he was an orphan. Matthew

supported himself by washing dishes in a restaurant. When he turned 12, he hired on as a cabin boy on a ship. The ship's skipper, Captain Childs, took a special interest in Matthew. He lent him books and helped him learn to read and write. Henson became an able seaman.

- 3 When Childs died, Henson got a job on another ship, but he left because of poor working conditions and racial prejudice. Henson then tried various jobs that were open to African Americans in those days: stevedore,<sup>1</sup> chauffeur, messenger, night watchman, and, finally, stock clerk in Steinmetz's hat store.
- 4 Henson joined Peary on the Nicaragua expedition and he soon became far more than a servant. He was a jack-of-all-trades, helping to construct Peary's headquarters in the jungle and working on the surveying team. His adaptability, strength, and endurance so impressed Peary that he asked Henson to accompany him to a far different part of the world: the Arctic.



Henson found greater equality as a member of Peary's expeditions than was shown to African Americans in the United States at the time.

- 5 Between 1891 and 1909, Peary led several expeditions north. Henson accompanied him on all these trips. Many people of that time were racially

<sup>1</sup>stevedore—someone who loads and unloads ships

prejudiced, and Peary was criticized for taking along a black man and giving him some authority. But Peary's reply was, "I cannot get along without him."

- 6 In describing his Arctic expeditions, Peary wrote that the distinctive feature of his plan was "the adoption of Eskimo methods and costume." The native people knew how to survive in the harsh climate of the north. Peary needed their expertise. Part of his work was to persuade the Inughuit to help him.
- 7 In this task, Henson proved invaluable. He quickly learned the native language and before long spoke it better than anyone else in the expedition. He learned to drive a dog team, hunt and skin a seal, and kill a walrus. Most of all, he won the confidence and friendship of the Inughuit. They called him "Maripaluk," which means "Dear Little Matthew" or "Matthew the Kind One."
- 8 Henson helped in many ways during these expeditions. He once saved Peary's life by shooting an angry musk ox. When Peary's toes were frostbitten in 1901, Henson helped save his feet from gangrene.<sup>2</sup> And frequently he went on ahead to break a trail, risking a fall into one of the treacherous leads that opened in the frozen Arctic Ocean.



Henson (right) and some of the crew relax on a sledge aboard a ship

- 9 After their last polar trip in 1909, Peary and Henson parted ways. Unlike Peary, Henson did not immediately enjoy fame. He wrote a book about his adventure, *A Negro Explorer at the North Pole*, but he found work as a garage attendant. In 1912, Henson became a messenger for the U.S. Customs Department. After 40 years of service, he retired with a small pension.
- 10 Gradually, Henson began to receive some of the credit he was due for his role in polar exploration. Congress awarded him a U.S. Navy medal, the New York Explorers Club made him an honorary member, and the Chicago

<sup>2</sup>gangrene—the death of soft tissue due to infection or disease

Geographic Society also presented him with a medal. In 1954, President Dwight D. Eisenhower received Henson and his wife at the White House. A bronze plaque with his picture was installed in the Maryland State House, and a school in Baltimore was named after him.

- 11 When he died in 1955, Henson was buried in New York City. Then, on April 6, 1988, 79 years after he had stood at the top of the world, Matthew Henson was reinterred<sup>3</sup> with full military honors next to Peary in Arlington National Cemetery. . . . Henson's descendants were present at the reinterment ceremony and still live in Greenland today.
- 12 In 2000, the National Geographic Society posthumously awarded its highest honor, the Hubbard Medal, to Henson for his role in the Arctic expeditions.

<sup>3</sup>reinterred—reburied

"Maripaluk" by Ellen Donohue Warwick, from *Cobblestone: Journey to the North Pole* (April 2009). Text copyright © 2009 by Carus Publishing Company d/b/a Cricket Media. Reprinted by permission of Cricket Media, Inc. Photograph 1 courtesy of the Library of Congress. Photograph 2 courtesy of the National Archives. Photograph 3 courtesy of the Library of Congress.

The following scene from the play *Matthew Henson: Explorer of the Arctic* describes Matthew Henson's first meeting with the explorer Robert E. Peary.

from *Matthew Henson: Explorer of the Arctic*

The story of the African American adventurer who, steps ahead of Robert E. Peary, became the first man to reach the North Pole. . . .

by Scarlett N. Rebman

**Characters**

MATTHEW A. HENSON, *an African American explorer*  
ADAM, *Matthew's friend*  
MR. STEINMETZ, *Matthew's boss*  
ROBERT E. PEARY, *arctic explorer*

**SCENE 1**

**TIME:** Spring, 1887.

**SETTING:** Steinmetz's hat store in Washington, D.C. Cardboard boxes are piled up left, as if in a storage room. A store counter down right has sign in front that reads, STEINMETZ's HATS. Several hats are on display. Cash register, if available, is also on counter.

5

**AT RISE:** MR. STEINMETZ is standing at the counter, examining an account book. MATTHEW and ADAM enter left, carrying boxes. They pause center.

10

**MATTHEW:** We've received the new shipment of hats, sir. Just arrived on the train from New York.

15

**STEINMETZ:** Splendid! I didn't expect it for a few more days. Take the boxes to the store room, please. (MATTHEW and ADAM cross up left. They carefully place their boxes 20 on the others.)

**MATTHEW** (*Sighing*): I tell you, Adam,  
I'm growing weary of stocking hats.

25    **ADAM:** You keep saying that, but  
Mr. Steinmetz pays a fair wage. You'd be  
a fool to give it up.

**MATTHEW:** I know, but I'm restless.  
When I close my eyes at night, I feel the  
salty sea breeze upon my face. I see ports  
in China and North Africa. I remember  
30    the exhilaration of setting sail, of bidding  
farewell to the States, of seeing how other  
people live.

**ADAM:** You were a sailor? But you're only  
twenty-one!

35    **MATTHEW** (*Sitting on a stool*): Didn't I  
tell you? I ran away from my aunt's house  
when I was twelve. I hung around the docks  
until I met a captain who agreed to take me  
on board as a cabin boy. Captain Childs  
40    had a beautiful merchant ship, the *Katie*  
*Hines*. He didn't know what to make of a  
scruffy orphan boy in dirty rags that passed  
for clothes, but for some reason, he took a  
liking to me and taught me to read and  
45    write, as well as sail.

**ADAM:** Then why did you give it up?

**MATTHEW:** Because most captains don't  
bother to look past the color of a man's skin  
to recognize his abilities. When Captain  
50    Childs died, I gave up the sea. Instead, I  
found jobs like this one. I thought it would  
be enough, thought about settling down and  
starting a family. But my imagination is  
overactive. Every night I dream about the  
55    journeys I might take, the stories I might  
write down.

60     **ADAM:** Matthew, don't take this the wrong way, but I think you're plumb crazy. Making a decent wage is all I want out of life. A decent wage and a decent wife. But you're right, not much out of the ordinary happens at Steinmetz's. (*Bell jingles, as if a door opened, and PEARY enters. He looks around the shop.*)

65     **STEINMETZ:** Good afternoon, sir. Can I help you find something?

**PEARY** (*Distracted*): Yes, a hat, please.

70     **STEINMETZ:** Then you've come to the right place. Were you looking for a certain type? Perhaps a bowler for a Sunday walk? Or a top hat for an evening at the opera?

**PEARY:** No, no . . . I need a sun hat.

75     **STEINMETZ:** Hmm. That's an unusual request. Let me call one of my boys. He knows where everything is around here. Matthew! (*MATTHEW crosses up center.*)

**MATTHEW:** Yes, sir?

80     **STEINMETZ:** This gentleman is looking for a sun hat. Could you be more specific about your needs, Mr. . . . ?

85     **PEARY:** Peary—Lieutenant Peary, civil engineer for the United States Navy. I am about to leave for an expedition to Nicaragua,\* and I hear the sun and heat are brutal there. Do you have any appropriate head gear?

**STEINMETZ:** Well, Matthew, do we have something to suit the gentleman's needs?

\*Nicaragua—a country in Central America

90 **MATTHEW:** Yes, I believe we do. Excuse me, I'll be right back. (*MATTHEW goes to storeroom, looks through boxes.*)

**STEINMETZ:** Tell me, Lieutenant, what will you be doing in Nicaragua?

95 **PEARY:** Our expedition is to determine whether a canal could be constructed to connect the Atlantic and Pacific oceans.

**STEINMETZ:** Your work sounds very interesting, Lieutenant. And arduous.

100 **PEARY:** Yes, it is. I traveled to the Arctic last year, so a tropical climate may be a shock to my system. (*Pacing*) There are so many details to keep track of. I really could use an assistant to accompany me.  
(*MATTHEW returns with a hat in his hands.*)

105 **STEINMETZ:** Ah, here we are! Please, try it on. There is a mirror on the wall if you need one. (*MATTHEW hands PEARY the hat.*)

110 **PEARY:** No need for a mirror. This is exactly what I wanted. I'll take it.

**STEINMETZ** (*Glancing from PEARY to MATTHEW*): You know, Lieutenant, if you are looking for an assistant, Matthew here has had some experience with trips abroad.

115 **PEARY:** Oh?

**MATTHEW:** Yes, sir. I was a sailor for several years.

120 **STEINMETZ:** He is my most reliable and competent worker. I certainly recommend him for your position. I would hate to lose him, but I suspect that Matthew would have left me sooner rather than later anyway.

**PEARY:** Well, what do you say? Would you be willing to travel to Nicaragua with me as  
125 my assistant?

**MATTHEW:** Yes, Lieutenant. I would like that very much. There's only one problem.

**PEARY:** What's that?

**MATTHEW:** We had only one sun hat left  
130 in stock, and I suspect now I'll be needing one as well. (*Blackout*)

*Matthew Henson: Explorer of the Arctic* by Scarlett N. Rebman, from *Plays, The Drama Magazine for Young People* (January/February 2011). Copyright © 2010 by Sterling Partners, Inc. Reprinted by permission of Sterling Partners, Inc./*Plays, The Drama Magazine for Young People*.

- 10 Based on paragraph 7 of “Maripaluk,” what can the reader **most likely** conclude about Henson’s relationship with the Inughuit people?
- (A) He became their leader.
  - (B) He helped them survive.
  - (C) He honored their culture.
  - (D) He relied on them for food.
- 11 Based on lines 50–60 of *Matthew Henson: Explorer of the Arctic*, what is the **main** difference between Matthew and Adam?
- (A) Matthew wants equality, while Adam wants privacy.
  - (B) Matthew wants adventure, while Adam wants a predictable life.
  - (C) Matthew wants to make a fortune, while Adam wants a steady income.
  - (D) Matthew wants to be an author, while Adam wants to be a storekeeper.

- 12 One difference between “Maripaluk” and *Matthew Henson: Explorer of the Arctic* is that **only** in the play is Henson’s character revealed by
- (A) what he says.
  - (B) how he behaves.
  - (C) how others treat him.
  - (D) what others say about him.
- 13 Read the sentence from paragraph 8 of “Maripaluk” in the box.

And frequently he went on ahead to break a trail, risking a fall into one of the treacherous leads that opened in the frozen Arctic Ocean.

Which of the following sentences uses the word *leads* in the same way it is used in the sentence?

- (A) After the audition, Tyron and Jessie got the leads in the winter musical.
- (B) Near the snow bank, the dog trainer held the three dogs by their leads.
- (C) During the cold months, Makai leads the students around the forest.
- (D) Looking for food, the seal slid into one of the leads in the ice.

For this question, you will write an essay based on the passage(s). Write your essay in the space provided on the next two pages. Your writing should:

- Present and develop a central idea.
- Provide evidence and/or details from the passage(s).
- Use correct grammar, spelling, and punctuation.

- 14** Matthew Henson's characteristics are revealed in the play *Matthew Henson: Explorer of the Arctic*. Write an essay that explains how the article "Maripaluk" helps the reader to understand Henson's characteristics. Be sure to use information from **both** passages to develop your essay.

Write your answer on the next two pages.

*You have a total of two pages on which to write your response.*

14



## **Grade 6 English Language Arts Paper-Based Practice Test Answer Key**

The following pages include the answer key for all machine-scored items, followed by the rubrics for the hand-scored items.

<b>Item Number</b>	<b>Answer Key</b>	<b>Total Points</b>	<b>Reporting Category</b>	<b>Standard</b>
1	C	1	Reading	1
2	D	1	Reading	3
3	C	1	Reading	5
4	A	1	Reading	4
5	B	1	Reading	7
6	B	1	Language	4
7	Part A: C Part B: A	2*	Reading	1
8	A, B, B	2*	Reading	2
9	<i>See Rubric</i>	8	Writing Language	2,4 1,2,3
10	C	1	Reading	1
11	B	1	Reading	3
12	A	1	Reading	9
13	D	1	Language	4
14	<i>See Rubric</i>	8	Writing Language	2,4 1,2,3

\*For two-point items, partial credit may be given.

## Scoring rubric for Grade 6 Practice Test Items #9 and #14: Essay

Idea Development	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• QUALITY AND DEVELOPMENT OF CENTRAL IDEA *</li> <li>• SELECTION AND EXPLANATION OF EVIDENCE AND/OR DETAILS *</li> <li>• ORGANIZATION</li> <li>• EXPRESSION OF IDEAS</li> <li>• AWARENESS OF TASK AND MODE</li> </ul>	
<b>5</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is insightful and fully developed</li> <li>• Skillful selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Skillful and/or subtle organization</li> <li>• Rich expression of ideas</li> <li>• Full awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>4</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is clear and well-developed</li> <li>• Effective selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Effective organization</li> <li>• Clear expression of ideas</li> <li>• Full awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is general and moderately developed</li> <li>• Appropriate selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Moderate organization</li> <li>• Adequate expression of ideas</li> <li>• Sufficient awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea may be present and is somewhat developed</li> <li>• Limited selection and explanation of evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Limited organization</li> <li>• Basic expression of ideas</li> <li>• Partial awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Central idea is not developed</li> <li>• Insufficient evidence and/or details</li> <li>• Minimal organization</li> <li>• Poor expression of ideas</li> <li>• Minimal awareness of the task and mode</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• The response shows evidence the student has read the text, but does not address the question or incorrectly responds to the question.</li> </ul>

\*For narrative writing (Standard 3), the quality and development of narrative elements will be assessed in place of a central idea. Narrative elements should include, but are not limited to: plot, character, setting, dialogue, action, and/or description. Students should use evidence/details to demonstrate understanding of text.

Standard English Conventions	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• SENTENCE STRUCTURE</li> <li>• GRAMMAR, USAGE, AND MECHANICS</li> </ul>	
<b>3</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Consistent control of a variety of sentence structures relative to length of essay</li> <li>• Consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay</li> </ul>
<b>2</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Mostly consistent control of sentence structures relative to length of essay</li> <li>• Mostly consistent control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or length of essay</li> </ul>
<b>1</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Little control and/or no variety in sentence structure and/or</li> <li>• Little control of grammar, usage, and mechanics relative to complexity and/or insufficient length</li> </ul>
<b>0</b>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>• Sentences are formed incorrectly with no control of grammar, usage, and mechanics and/or insufficient length.</li> </ul>