

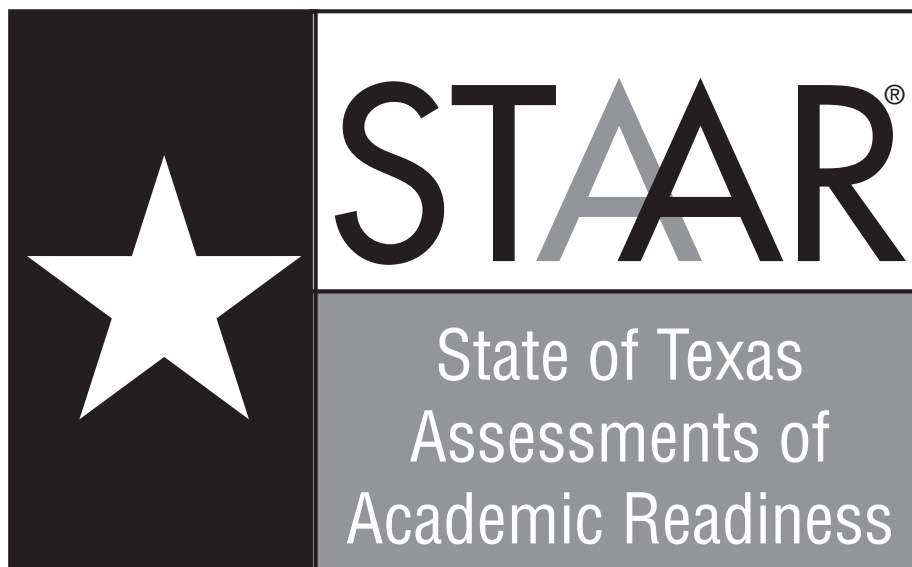
# Texas STAAR 2021 Grade 6 Reading

Exam Materials

Pages 2 - 32

Answer Key Materials

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# **GRADE 6**

## **Reading**

**Administered May 2021**

**RELEASED**

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

## A Surprise Visit

- 1 "Can you keep a secret?" Elena and her older brother, Marcos, chatted on the phone, and his question left her intrigued.
- 2 Elena inquired, "Of course! What is it?"
- 3 "Before I tell you, you must promise me you won't tell Mom and Dad," insisted Marcos.
- 4 "I promise," Elena said nervously. "Is something wrong?"
- 5 "No, I'm coming to visit for Mom and Dad's 25th-wedding-anniversary party next month," Marcos declared, revealing his enthusiasm as much as the news.
- 6 Elena squealed, "That's awesome, Marcos! We haven't seen you since you moved to California. I can't wait to see you."
- 7 "I'll arrive on the 17th, the day before the party. Now promise me once more: don't tell anyone!"
- 8 After they hung up, Elena flopped onto her bed to return to her homework assignment, but concentrating on her work proved futile; she was bursting with the news that her brother had entrusted to her.
- 9 "You're happy," Mom observed later as Elena bounded down the stairs to dinner.
- 10 Elena tried to tame her enthusiasm, murmuring, "Just had a good day, that's all." She felt so elated that she worried she'd spill the news about Marcos's visit, but she managed to contain her secret throughout the entire meal and went to bed restless with excitement.
- 11 The next day Elena's cousin Gemma came over to watch a movie, and as the girls were trying to decide what to watch, Gemma noticed Elena beaming.
- 12 "Excited to watch a movie, huh?" Gemma asked.
- 13 Elena laughed. "No—well, yes—but that's not it."
- 14 "So what's got you walking on clouds?" Gemma prodded. Elena froze thoughtfully. Why couldn't she tell *just* Gemma the news? She craned her neck into the hallway to confirm they were alone, and then she moved closer to Gemma.
- 15 "Can you keep a secret?" Elena asked quietly. "Marcos is coming for Mom and Dad's anniversary party!" Elena exclaimed, the secret pouring out of her like a waterfall.

- 16 "Awesome!" Gemma shouted.
- 17 "Shhh, keep your voice down!" Elena instructed. "It's a surprise, and I'm the only one who knows." She felt a little guilty telling Gemma, but it was fine for her cousin to know—just not Mom and Dad.
- 18 "Your secret's safe with me," Gemma promised.
- 19 Elena felt secure knowing her cousin promised to keep the secret, so Elena was caught off guard when one evening, about a week later, Elena's mom burst into Elena's room with eyes glistening and asked, "Is Marcos really coming for the party?"
- 20 Elena dropped the novel she was reading onto her lap and stared blankly at her mother. Suddenly, Elena's cheeks felt as if they were on fire.
- 21 "I don't—I mean—why would Marcos be coming?" Elena stammered.
- 22 "It's OK, honey—you don't have to pretend," Mom said. "Aunt Laura already told me the news."
- 23 "Aunt Laura? How did she know?"
- 24 "Gemma told her," Elena's mom answered. "I can't wait to see Marcos!"
- 25 "Mom," Elena said, "you and Dad *have* to act surprised. You are *not* supposed to know about this!"
- 26 Mom promised she wouldn't let Marcos know she was aware of his visit, but when Elena woke up on the morning of the 17th, she could smell Marcos's favorite cookies baking in the oven and could hear Mom running the vacuum in Marcos's room. Elena's stomach churned wildly all day long, although not from hunger, and the feeling only intensified further when Marcos walked through the door, a bouquet of flowers in hand, and Mom called out, "Marcos, I thought you'd never get here!"
- 27 As Marcos hugged Mom, he looked accusingly over her shoulder at Elena—the aroma of fresh cookies in the air whispered to him that his visit was no surprise.
- 28 The family ate dinner together and sat around the kitchen table talking, but Elena tentatively picked at her food. The evening was far from what Elena imagined. She barely participated in the conversation. When her parents headed to bed, Elena moved toward her own room, but Marcos held her back by her shoulder—and Elena knew why.
- 29 "Elena," Marcos began while Elena braced herself, "I'm really happy to see you, but I can't believe you didn't keep our secret—I really wanted to surprise Mom and Dad."
- 30 "If Gemma didn't have such a big mouth," Elena began defensively, tears building in her eyes. "Gemma promised me she wouldn't tell! She must have told Aunt Laura, and Aunt Laura told Mom."

- 31 Marcos embraced Elena to comfort her. "You're probably right, but remember, you were the *first* person who promised not to tell," Marcos mildly scolded.
- 32 Elena frowned and then continued, "I was just so excited, Marcos, but I'm sorry. I really messed up."
- 33 "Well," Marcos chuckled, "at least one good thing came out of all this."
- 34 "What's that?" Elena asked, sniffing.
- 35 Marcos reached for the tin container sitting on the kitchen table. "Well, if Mom hadn't known I was coming," he said, "she wouldn't have made all these cookies!" He offered the container to her. "Want one?"
- 36 Elena cautioned, "Mom said to save the rest for the anniversary party."
- 37 Grabbing another cookie, Marcos replied, "I won't tell anyone — I promise."

- 1 How does paragraph 28 contribute to the development of the plot?
- A It shows that Elena feels shy toward Marcos because he has been gone for so long.
  - B It highlights that Elena feels upset about spoiling Marcos's surprise.
  - C It indicates that Elena's family enjoys spending time together.
  - D It reveals that Elena is upset with her mother for forgetting to act surprised.
- 

- 2 Read this sentence from paragraph 27.

*As Marcos hugged Mom, he looked accusingly over her shoulder at Elena—the aroma of fresh cookies in the air whispered to him that his visit was no surprise.*

What does the author's use of personification emphasize?

- F Marcos realizes Mom has prepared in advance for his visit.
  - G Mom understands what Marcos likes to eat.
  - H Elena wishes that Marcos had not noticed the smell of the cookies.
  - J Marcos feels welcomed by the smell of his favorite cookies.
- 

- 3 Because the story is told from the third-person limited point of view, the reader knows —
- A why Marcos has not visited sooner
  - B why Aunt Laura revealed the secret to Mom
  - C how Elena feels about her actions
  - D what Mom thinks about the upcoming anniversary party

4 What does the word futile mean in paragraph 8?

- F Useless
  - G Effortless
  - H Boring
  - J Troubling
- 

5 Read this sentence from paragraph 20.

*Suddenly, Elena's cheeks felt as if they were on fire.*

What does the author's use of figurative language in this sentence suggest?

- A Elena is embarrassed because Mom is not supposed to know about Marcos's visit.
  - B Elena begins to feel ill as she rests in her room.
  - C Elena is angry with her aunt for telling Mom that Marcos is coming to visit.
  - D Elena panics because she was caught pretending.
- 

6 In what way do Mom's actions in paragraph 26 affect the plot?

- F They cause Marcos to change his plans for visiting the family.
- G They lead the family to arrange a different date for the anniversary party.
- H They cause Aunt Laura to realize that she made a mistake by confiding in Mom.
- J They make it difficult for Elena to enjoy her brother's arrival.

**7** What is the best summary of the story?

- A** Elena answers the phone and her brother Marcos tells her he is planning a surprise visit home. He is coming for their parents' anniversary party. Elena tells Gemma who then tells Aunt Laura who then tells Mom. Marcos is upset that Mom knows his surprise.
- B** Marcos plans a surprise visit home and asks his sister Elena to keep his secret. However, Elena tells her cousin, and Mom eventually hears about the plan. Marcos arrives and realizes his visit is not a surprise. Elena feels sorry and apologizes, and she is forgiven.
- C** Elena tries to keep her brother Marcos's surprise visit to herself. When her cousin Gemma visits, Elena tells her the secret. When Mom finds out, she starts to get the house ready for Marcos. She bakes his favorite cookies, and Marcos eats them when he arrives.
- D** Marcos wants to travel home from California and surprise his parents for their anniversary party. He asks Elena to keep his secret, but she tells her cousin Gemma. Marcos is at first upset that Elena told his secret but then shares some cookies with her that Mom baked.



Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

# A Dog's Life

## Characters

**OWNER:** *A sixth-grade boy*

**DOG:** *Owner's pet*

## SCENE 1

- 1 *[In a living room, a lamp and textbooks sit on a table next to a recliner. A dog bed is in the corner. Owner enters with Dog on a leash.]*
- 2 **OWNER:** Sit. *[Dog sits.]* Good boy. *[Removing leash.]* That was a good walk. Short and sweet. Now . . . back to work. *[Dog stares at Owner.]* Fifteen more pages to read in my history book, and I haven't even started my math homework yet.
- 3 *[Owner sits in recliner, reclines, picks up book, and reads. Owner glances over. Dog is still scrutinizing him.]*
- 4 **OWNER:** *[In an exaggerated way.]* What are you looking at? Huh? Want to know what I'm reading? It's history. *[Dog cocks head.]* Oh, what do you care? You have no idea how good you've got it.
- 5 *[Owner tries to read but is distracted by Dog's staring. Owner gets up, whistles, and leads Dog to the dog bed.]*
- 6 **OWNER:** Sit. *[Dog obeys.]* Down. *[Dog lies down.]*
- 7 *[Owner returns to recliner and continues reading. He begins to fall asleep and then jerks up his head. Owner places his hand behind his ear and leans toward Dog's bed. A loud snore is heard.]*
- 8 **OWNER:** That dog has no idea how good he's got it. *[Yawning.]* I'll take a little nap too.
- 9 *[Owner pulls the lamp chain.]*

## SCENE 2

- 10 *[The sound of Dog's collar jingling and nails clicking across the floor is heard. Dog barks.]*
- 11 **OWNER:** Huh? *[Another bark. Owner turns on light. Dog is beside the recliner, nudging Owner's arm.]* What? What do you want?
- 12 **DOG:** I want to know what you mean.
- 13 **OWNER:** *[Rubbing his eyes.]* What in the world—

- 14 **DOG:** What do you mean, I don't know how good I've got it?
- 15 **OWNER:** [*Bolts to his feet.*] You're . . . you're . . . talking!
- 16 **DOG:** Yes, and I asked you a question.
- 17 **OWNER:** [*Pacing back and forth.*] This has got to be a dream. Am I dreaming?
- 18 **DOG:** You're talking to your dog, and he's answering you. You'd better be dreaming.
- 19 **OWNER:** [*Sitting back down.*] Then I'll just go back to sleep. I'll wake back up, and everything will be normal.
- 20 **DOG:** Be my guest.
- 21 [*Owner goes back to sleep. Dog wags his tail. Owner snores, twitches, and then jerks awake. He looks down at Dog. Owner eyes Dog from different angles and then reaches out cautiously to pat Dog's head. Dog licks Owner's hand.*]
- 22 **OWNER:** [*Wiping imaginary sweat from his brow.*] That's my good boy.
- 23 **DOG:** Why, thank you.
- 24 [*Owner screams and leaps from the recliner.*]
- 25 **DOG:** Relax. You talk all the time. Now I want a chance to talk. What's the big deal?
- 26 **OWNER:** Big deal? You said it yourself. You're a dog.
- 27 **DOG:** Please, just hear me out.
- 28 **OWNER:** No. I'm going back to sleep and forgetting that this dream ever happened.
- 29 [*Owner tries to sleep. Dog growls, paws Owner's legs, and nudges Owner's arm.*]
- 30 **DOG:** I know you're still awake. Stop being such a human.
- 31 **OWNER:** I am a human. And you're a dog, so start acting like one.
- 32 **DOG:** Just perfect. Now you're telling me how to be a dog.
- 33 **OWNER:** This conversation's over.
- 34 **DOG:** So you admit we're having a conversation. I just want to know why you think I've got it so good.
- 35 **OWNER:** You lie around all day with no worries—no cares.
- 36 **DOG:** Really? You think I have a carefree life? I've got to protect this house. Did you know a strange man wearing blue tries to break in every day?

- 37 **OWNER:** He's delivering the mail.
- 38 **DOG:** Yeah, well, you're lucky I chase him away. After that what else do I have to look forward to? Nothing. When you finally come home, you just stare at those things.
- 39 **OWNER:** They're my books. I'm reading them.
- 40 **DOG:** Ooh! You just stare at them. Now, if you were sniffing them or chewing them, that would be different.
- 41 **OWNER:** Like you chewed up my copy of *A Wrinkle in Time*?
- 42 **DOG:** Well, you left it out for me. What did you expect me to do with it?
- 43 **OWNER:** Why are you complaining? I'm a good owner.
- 44 **DOG:** [*Tilts his head.*] Hmf.
- 45 **OWNER:** I feed you. I walk you.
- 46 **DOG:** Once a week, if I'm lucky.
- 47 **OWNER:** I just took you for a walk.
- 48 **DOG:** But only around the block.
- 49 **OWNER:** I needed a quick study break.
- 50 **DOG:** What about what *I* need? There's a whole world out there to sniff. It's so frustrating. You used to take me to the park and throw the ball to me. We'd play that game where you'd call my name, and I'd make you catch me. That was awesome.
- 51 **OWNER:** [*Smiling.*] Yeah, those were good times. [*Pauses. Smile disappears.*] But I'm in middle school now. I'm on the basketball team. I'm the editor of the school newspaper. I'm too busy to frolic around in the grass like we used to do.
- 52 **DOG:** I thought I was your best friend.
- 53 **OWNER:** You are my best friend.
- 54 **DOG:** So you're too busy to play with your best friend? Your best friend who met you at the bus stop every day of elementary school? Your best friend who stayed right by your side when you had the chicken pox?
- 55 **OWNER:** [*Pauses. Eyes begin to water.*] Aw, here, boy! [*Dog puts his head on Owner's lap. Owner pets him and scratches behind his ears.*] I'm sorry. You'll always be my best friend. I'll make time to play with you. I promise.
- 56 [*Dog curls up at Owner's feet. Owner sleeps.*]

- 8 Read the dictionary entry for the word bolt.

**bolt** \ˈbōlt\ v  
1. to break away from control 2. to stop participating in an activity  
3. to run off 4. to move suddenly or rapidly

Which definition best matches the way the word bolts is used in line 15?

- F Definition 1
  - G Definition 2
  - H Definition 3
  - J Definition 4
- 

- 9 What is the underlying cause of Owner and Dog's disagreement?

- A Owner wishes Dog would stop interrupting his naps.
  - B Owner is angry about Dog destroying his books.
  - C Dog feels that Owner has stopped meeting his needs.
  - D Dog wants praise for being loyal to Owner.
- 

- 10 How does the playwright indicate that Owner is surprised by Dog's ability to speak?

- F By describing the noises Dog makes in the stage directions in line 10
- G By having Owner ask questions in line 11
- H By including Dog's and Owner's actions in the stage directions in line 11
- J By indicating pauses in Owner's dialogue in line 15

**11** Read these sentences from line 4 and line 8.

**OWNER:** You have no idea how good you've got it. (line 4)

**OWNER:** That dog has no idea how good he's got it. (line 8)

Which idea in the play does this dialogue help develop?

- A** Owner does not realize that he has neglected Dog.
  - B** Dog is able to speak to Owner.
  - C** Owner does not want Dog to act like a human.
  - D** Dog believes that the mail carrier is a danger to the house.
- 

**12** How does the conversation between Owner and Dog lead to the play's resolution?

- F** It shows Owner how protective Dog has been in the past.
  - G** It allows Dog to be honest with Owner.
  - H** It lets Owner explain to Dog how busy he is.
  - J** It shows that Dog does not understand how to treat books.
- 

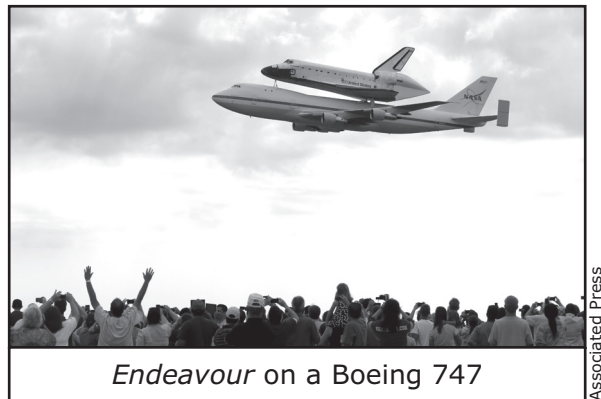
**13** What can the reader conclude about Owner in scene 1?

- A** He is disapproving of Dog's laziness.
- B** He is frustrated that he is too tired to finish reading his book.
- C** He is unaware of the way Dog feels about their relationship.
- D** He is annoyed that he has to walk Dog instead of studying.

Read the next two selections. Then choose the best answer to each question.

## A Massive Mission

- 1 On October 13, 2012, the space shuttle *Endeavour*, one of four retired NASA shuttles, began its last mission. This was not a trip into space, however. The shuttle began a two-day, twelve-mile crawl through the streets of Los Angeles, California, where it was put on display at the California Science Center. Needless to say, moving the shuttle through a major city proved daunting. After all, *Endeavour* measures 122 feet long, 78 feet wide, and 57 feet tall. As one observer said, the move was a “once-in-forever moment in history.”



Associated Press

- 2 *Endeavour* began this final voyage in Cape Canaveral, Florida. Strapped to the back of a specially adapted Boeing 747 airplane, it was flown across the country to Edwards Air Force Base in California. On a celebratory flight around its new home state, *Endeavour* circled over the Capitol in Sacramento. It then flew over NASA's research center in San Jose and the Jet Propulsion Laboratory in Pasadena. After soaring past the famous Hollywood sign, *Endeavour* landed at the Los Angeles International Airport. But that was the easy part of the mission. The real challenge had only just begun.
- 3 In all it took over 100 people to usher the shuttle through the streets of Los Angeles. Many engineers and technicians worked around the clock. Street signs and power lines were taken down to create a path. Huge steel plates were placed atop streets along the route. This was to protect water and sewer pipes below the asphalt from being broken under *Endeavour's* weight. A custom-made, 80-wheel vehicle towed *Endeavour* across freeways and paraded the shuttle through neighborhoods. Several police officers were needed to redirect traffic as the shuttle passed. Dozens of photographers and filmmakers were on hand to capture every minute.



Associated Press

- 4 This historic move, which cost approximately 10 million dollars to complete, also became a huge social event. Over one and a half million people lined the streets as *Endeavour* inched along. People set up tents and sold hot dogs, baked goods, and *Endeavour* T-shirts. The crowds clapped and cheered as the shuttle moved into view. The shuttle's top speed along the trip was just two miles per hour, giving crowds ample time to watch. It also made frequent stops along the way. Finally it reached the California Science Center.
- 5 *Endeavour* is now part of a permanent exhibit. Every day people come to see the shuttle that flew so many daring missions into space. A special part of that exhibit is also dedicated to the amazing journey the retired shuttle made across the country and through Los Angeles to its new home.



*Endeavour* on Display at the California Science Center

Associated Press



# DO Look Down!

- 1 Nature lovers from around the world come to see the Grand Canyon. They marvel at the giant walls of rock bordering a great chasm.<sup>1</sup> In 2007 the world got a new way to experience this attraction—the Grand Canyon Skywalk. It is a horseshoe-shaped glass walkway that protrudes 70 feet beyond the canyon wall. People can look through the floor, straight into the canyon below.
- 2 But this skywalk not only creates a unique attraction for tourists, it also solves a problem faced by its builders, members of the American Indian tribe called the Hualapai. Traditionally the South Rim of the Grand Canyon is the busiest part, attracting visitors and revenue to the area. However, about 2,000 tribe members of the Hualapai live in a rugged area known as Grand Canyon West, five hours away from the South Rim. Before building the Grand Canyon Skywalk, the Hualapai tried to encourage tourists to visit their part of the Grand Canyon, yet few people made the long journey. They needed an extreme attraction to bring new economic life to their home.
- 3 Then one day David Jin, a businessman from Las Vegas, suggested this unique project to the Hualapai tribe members. However, it was not going to be simple. There were many factors to consider when designing the skywalk. How could glass hold the weight of many visitors? Would wind be a problem? What should the walkway look like?
- 4 Though it would take a great amount of work, many tribe members liked this idea; they felt the skywalk would provide job opportunities. After much discussion tribal elders supported the idea to build the skywalk. A team of architects and engineers helped the tribe decide on the proper way to build the bridge, addressing various concerns. They settled on a horseshoe shape and took steps to maximize safety and performance.



Tourists stand on the skywalk to view the Grand Canyon.

Associated Press



Tourists can see through the floor of the skywalk.

Associated Press

- 5 Building the Grand Canyon Skywalk took several years. Eight giant metal posts were embedded deep in the rocky ground, and an entrance building was constructed on top of the posts at the very edge of the canyon. The skywalk

<sup>1</sup>A chasm is a deep split in the earth.



itself is attached to this building. The walkway's walls and floor are made of a special thick glass, and its foundation is made of many tons of steel. It is strong enough to hold the weight of 71 airplanes.

- 6 On March 28, 2007, the Grand Canyon Skywalk opened to the public. Since then the \$30 million attraction has welcomed millions of visitors. Its success has encouraged similar projects in places such as Canada and Malaysia. The Hualapai have future plans to add businesses and a museum. They hope many more people will discover the skywalk and its unique view of the Grand Canyon.

**Use “A Massive Mission” (pp. 15–16) to answer questions 14–18. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

**14** How does the author organize paragraphs 2 through 5 of the selection “A Massive Mission”?

- F** By detailing the order of events that brought *Endeavour* to its final destination
  - G** By listing the steps that had to be taken before *Endeavour* could fly to California
  - H** By describing the features of *Endeavour* that made it useful for NASA missions
  - J** By comparing the differences between *Endeavour* and a Boeing 747 airplane
- 

**15** Based on paragraph 2 of the selection “A Massive Mission,” what is the most likely reason *Endeavour* flew to different places in California before landing at the Los Angeles International Airport?

- A** To allow planners time to prepare the streets for the shuttle
- B** To test whether the shuttle was still working well
- C** To give more people the opportunity to view the shuttle
- D** To remind people how the shuttle was previously used

**16** Read this sentence from paragraph 1 of the selection “A Massive Mission.”

*As one observer said, the move was a “once-in-a-forever moment in history.”*

Which statement from the selection best supports the idea in this sentence?

- F** *Strapped to the back of a specially adapted Boeing 747 airplane, it was flown across the country to Edwards Air Force Base in California. (paragraph 2)*
  - G** *After soaring past the famous Hollywood sign, Endeavour landed at the Los Angeles International Airport. (paragraph 2)*
  - H** *Huge steel plates were placed atop streets along the route. (paragraph 3)*
  - J** *Dozens of photographers and filmmakers were on hand to capture every minute. (paragraph 3)*
- 

**17** What is the most likely reason the author wrote the selection “A Massive Mission”?

- A** To emphasize the importance of *Endeavour’s* space-travel missions
  - B** To highlight the efforts taken to transport *Endeavour* to a museum
  - C** To explain the economic effect of *Endeavour’s* tour through Los Angeles
  - D** To argue that *Endeavour* is the most important space shuttle used to this day
- 

**18** Which sentence from the selection “A Massive Mission” best shows that people were enthusiastic about *Endeavour’s* journey?

- F** *On October 13, 2012, the space shuttle Endeavour, one of four retired NASA shuttles, began its last mission. (paragraph 1)*
- G** *On a celebratory flight around its new home state, Endeavour circled over the Capitol in Sacramento. (paragraph 2)*
- H** *Several police officers were needed to redirect traffic as the shuttle passed. (paragraph 3)*
- J** *This historic move, which cost approximately 10 million dollars to complete, also became a huge social event. (paragraph 4)*

**Use “DO Look Down!” (pp. 17–18) to answer questions 19–23. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

- 19** In the selection “DO Look Down!,” the author includes the photographs and their captions most likely to highlight which idea?
- A** It took several years to construct the Grand Canyon Skywalk.
  - B** The Grand Canyon Skywalk is attached to the entrance building.
  - C** The Grand Canyon Skywalk brings visitors to Grand Canyon West.
  - D** Building the Grand Canyon Skywalk required the agreement of tribal elders.
- 
- 20** Why does the author use questions in paragraph 3 of the selection “DO Look Down!”?
- F** To suggest that Hualapai tribe members lacked engineering experience
  - G** To highlight that the skywalk would allow people to see a more rugged area of the canyon
  - H** To emphasize that creating the skywalk was complicated because nothing like it had ever been built
  - J** To show that Hualapai tribe members hoped the project would bring many tourists
- 
- 21** The word protrudes has a Latin root, *trudere*, meaning “to thrust.” What does protrudes mean in paragraph 1 of the selection “DO Look Down!”?
- A** Works differently than intended
  - B** Appears separate from a main part
  - C** Has a variety of uses
  - D** Sticks out from an area

**22** What can the reader conclude about the tribal elders based on paragraph 4 of the selection "DO Look Down!"?

- F** They carefully considered how the skywalk would impact their community.
  - G** They requested that the skywalk be built at a slow pace.
  - H** They wanted the skywalk to include several interesting features.
  - J** They wondered how the number of visitors on the skywalk would be managed.
- 

**23** Which sentence from the selection "DO Look Down!" best explains why the Hualapai wanted to create the Grand Canyon Skywalk?

- A** *Nature lovers from around the world come to see the Grand Canyon. (paragraph 1)*
- B** *They needed an extreme attraction to bring new economic life to their home. (paragraph 2)*
- C** *Then one day David Jin, a businessman from Las Vegas, suggested this unique project to the Hualapai tribe members. (paragraph 3)*
- D** *After much discussion tribal elders supported the idea to build the skywalk. (paragraph 4)*

**Use “A Massive Mission” and “DO Look Down!” to answer questions 24–27.  
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.**

- 24** How is paragraph 3 of the selection “A Massive Mission” **similar** to paragraph 4 of the selection “DO Look Down!”?
- F** Both paragraphs emphasize that planning ahead was an essential part of the projects.
  - G** Both paragraphs present information about how the projects were approved.
  - H** Both paragraphs explain the hopes and expectations that people had for the projects.
  - J** Both paragraphs reveal the overall costs associated with the projects.
- 
- 25** How is the Grand Canyon Skywalk in the selection “DO Look Down!” **unlike** the space shuttle *Endeavour* in the selection “A Massive Mission”?
- A** The Grand Canyon Skywalk is now an attraction for the public to enjoy.
  - B** The Grand Canyon Skywalk has served as a model for other projects that followed.
  - C** The Grand Canyon Skywalk has been built to withstand extreme conditions.
  - D** The Grand Canyon Skywalk is constructed with heavy materials.
- 
- 26** What is a **difference** between the people who organized *Endeavour’s* move in the selection “A Massive Mission” and the builders of the Grand Canyon Skywalk in the selection “DO Look Down!”?
- F** Only the organizers of *Endeavour’s* move were satisfied with the results of their efforts.
  - G** Only the organizers of *Endeavour’s* move required help from engineers.
  - H** Only the builders of the skywalk made decisions based on concerns about public safety.
  - J** Only the builders of the skywalk were hoping their project would create jobs.

**27** Read this sentence from paragraph 5 of the selection “A Massive Mission.”

*Every day people come to see the shuttle that flew so many daring missions into space.*

Which sentence from the selection “DO Look Down!” includes a **similar** idea?

- A** *Though it would take a great amount of work, many tribe members liked this idea; they felt the skywalk would provide job opportunities.* (paragraph 4)
- B** *It is strong enough to hold the weight of 71 airplanes.* (paragraph 5)
- C** *Since then the \$30 million attraction has welcomed millions of visitors.* (paragraph 6)
- D** *The Hualapai have future plans to add businesses and a museum.* (paragraph 6)

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.



*Ancient Egypt is considered an important historical civilization that played a large part in the advancement of humankind. Its customs and technological contributions have fascinated and inspired many societies that have followed.*

## 2,000-Year-Old Homework!

*by Joli Allen*

- 1 Dr. Todd Hickey opens a rusted tin box filled to the brim with tattered pieces of 2,000-year-old paper from Egypt. Dr. Hickey, a papyrologist (pap-eh-ROL-ah-jist), is excited about this rare treasure. It isn't covered in gold, but it is priceless. That's because those tattered pieces of paper are papyrus. Papyrus tells us much about the secrets of life in ancient Egypt.
- 2 The Egyptians made this paper from papyrus plants that grew near the Nile River. Before papyrus, Egyptians mostly used copper chisels to carve words called hieroglyphs into stone. Papyrus made writing easier.

### Writing to Go

- 3 With papyrus, Egyptians could write signs and symbols using brushes, reed pens, and ink made from soot scraped out of cooking vessels and oil lamps. And they could take their writing wherever they went.
- 4 Dr. Hickey has already studied hundreds of the papyri. Some contain spells that the Egyptians wrote down and carried with them. They believed spells gave them magical protection or power. Other papyri give directions for making powerful medicine. Archaeologists even found 2,000-year-old homework. A schoolboy had copied his lesson over and over with a reed quill.<sup>1</sup>

<sup>1</sup>A reed quill is a pen made from the hollow stem of the reed plant.



## From Trash to Treasure

5 When papyri weren't needed anymore for writing, they were tossed in the trash. The Egyptians reused these unwanted papyri to make *papier-mâché*. They shaped masks for human mummies or used the papyri to wrap animal mummies.

6 "Think of it as the ancient Egyptians' form of recycling," says Dr. Hickey.

7 Dr. Hickey works to uncover valuable writings in the waste paper. And that is no easy task. It can take days to unroll just one wad of paper. First it is dampened to help it soften and relax. Then the paper is unrolled a bit. Dirt and gunk are carefully scraped off. The papyrologists must be careful not to scrape away the ink or paint underneath the dirt. The paper is unrolled a bit more. When the papyrus is completely unrolled, papyrologists look for torn pieces that fit together.

8 After the pieces are joined, is the job finished? No. The secrets from the past are still hidden, because words are missing from the worn bits of papyrus. The handwriting is faded and in ancient languages.

## It's All Greek to Me

9 To decode papyri, Dr. Hickey needs to know other languages besides Egyptian. Ancient Egypt was ruled by the Greeks and Romans at different times, so he has to read and think in Greek and Latin.

10 Once he figures out what a sentence means, he tries to guess what the missing words or letters are in the holes of the papyrus.

11 "It's a challenge, but it is not impossible for papyrologists," Dr. Hickey says. "H---e" would lead me to think 'horse' in some contexts, 'house' in others."

12 History leaps to life from each repaired papyrus. Dr. Hickey and other papyrologists found a police report to a royal scribe about a missing person. It reads: "On the 5th of the present month when patrolling the fields near the village . . . I learn from the villagers that Theodotos son of Dositheos, having set out in that direction, has not yet returned. I make this report."

13 The reporter also says that he found clues, but not the missing person.

14 Some papyri give archaeologists a good idea of what Egyptians read for fun. They enjoyed adventure stories, poetry, plays, and myths.

15 It will take years for Dr. Hickey to study all the papyri in the tin box. He picks up a completed papyrus covered in protective glass. The writing on the papyrus forms a triangle, and the words can be read in several directions. It says the Greek nonsense phrase for a magical spell—similar to *abracadabra*.

- 16 Too bad it can't be used to make all the papyrus bits in the tin box fall together instantly. But we can look forward to learning more about Egyptian life as each piece is connected.

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**28** Which statement best expresses the main idea of the entire selection?

- F** Studying ancient pages of papyrus is a challenging task that can help scientists learn about how people lived in ancient Egypt.
  - G** A box of papyrus scraps from ancient Egypt may have valuable writings mixed in with writings that are considered trash.
  - H** Scientists must understand both Greek and Latin to read the writings on papyrus that come from ancient Egypt.
  - J** People in ancient Egypt often wrote signs and symbols on a type of paper called papyrus using brushes or reed pens.
- 

**29** The word scribe comes from the Latin word *scribere*, which means “to write.” What does scribe mean in paragraph 12?

- A** A person who records messages
  - B** A book of laws to be followed
  - C** A person who lives in a palace
  - D** A book of unsolved mysteries
- 

**30** What is the most likely reason the author wrote this selection?

- F** To tell the reader about the way ancient Egyptians communicated using a variety of signs and symbols
- G** To inform the reader about how the work of papyrologists provides knowledge about an ancient culture
- H** To explain the mystery surrounding ancient Egyptian papyri found in a tin box
- J** To highlight the ways civilization has changed throughout history

**31** Which idea about the ancient Egyptians is supported by information in paragraphs 4 and 14?

- A** They studied a variety of writings while in school.
  - B** They were primarily concerned with maintaining their health and safety.
  - C** They used writing for many different purposes.
  - D** They enjoyed writing for entertainment more than practical reasons.
- 

**32** In paragraph 1, why does the author call the papyri in the box a “rare treasure”?

- F** To show that they are worth a lot of money to Dr. Hickey
  - G** To suggest that they can provide information about a past time that has many mysteries
  - H** To demonstrate that they contain messages that are hard to decode
  - J** To explain that they are delicate and need to be handled with extreme care
- 

**33** How does the organizational pattern of paragraphs 7 through 10 help convey information?

- A** It reveals that some papyri scraps are more valuable than others by way of comparison.
- B** It shows that experts must follow steps in a certain order to read papyri from ancient Egypt.
- C** It lists the various materials needed to unroll and preserve pieces of papyri from ancient Egypt.
- D** It indicates that unrolling papyri is the most difficult task a papyrologist does.

**34** What is the best summary of the selection?

- F** Dr. Todd Hickey is a scientist who studies the writings of the ancient Egyptians. He has studied hundreds of papyri from a tin box. It will take years for him to study them all.
- G** Scientists must be careful when they try to read a wad of papyrus from ancient Egypt. First the papyrus must be unrolled. Then it can be read, but there may be missing words.
- H** The ancient Egyptians wrote on papyrus. Many torn bits of papyrus survive today. Scientists like Dr. Todd Hickey try to put the pieces back together and read them to understand ancient Egyptian society.
- J** Pieces of papyrus contain the writing of people from ancient Egypt. Many papyri contain spells, directions, or stories. One example of papyrus described a police report about a missing person.

Read the selection and choose the best answer to each question. Then fill in the answer on your answer document.

# Persistent

*by Nikki Grimes*

Teacher keeps an eye on me  
all week.  
I give him no reason  
to call me aside,  
5 but he does.  
"Talk to me, Gabby," he says.  
"Tell me what's wrong.  
I can see you're not happy."  
I'd argue but my sigh  
10 gives me away.  
"I miss daydreaming."  
"Then daydream!" says Mr. Spicer,  
confusing me.  
"But you're always telling me  
15 to *stop* daydreaming!  
You and my mom."  
Teacher taps his top lip  
like a door the right words  
are hiding behind.  
20 "Dreams are great things, Gabby,"  
he finally says.  
"The best thinkers,  
writers, inventors in the world  
allow their thoughts  
25 to carry them away,  
now and then.  
Take the Wright brothers.  
We wouldn't have airplanes  
if they hadn't dreamed of them, first.  
30 Still, sometimes you have to  
slide your daydreams  
in a drawer  
and let them wait until later,  
like after I'm done  
35 teaching a lesson  
you need to learn.  
Got it?"  
I nod, wondering if  
the Wright brothers  
40 knew anything about  
bringing daydreams in  
for a landing.

Used with permission.

**35** What is the main message of the poem?

- A** It is good to be honest when sharing your feelings.
  - B** Events from history can be relevant today.
  - C** Wise people listen more than they speak.
  - D** There is a right time and place for imagination.
- 

**36** What do lines 9 and 10 suggest about Gabby?

- F** She cannot hide her frustration from her teacher.
  - G** She is calm while listening to her teacher.
  - H** She has difficulty expressing herself to her teacher.
  - J** She is confident that her teacher will understand her situation.
- 

**37** At the end of the poem, the description “bringing daydreams in for a landing” most likely refers to —

- A** ending daydreaming completely
  - B** making daydreams relate to what is important
  - C** being able to stop daydreaming for a while
  - D** keeping daydreams from being unreachable
- 

**38** In lines 24 and 25, the poet uses personification most likely to emphasize that successful people often —

- F** travel
- G** imagine
- H** create
- J** communicate

**39** Read lines 17 through 19.

Teacher taps his top lip  
like a door the right words  
are hiding behind.

What does the simile in these lines suggest about the teacher?

- A** He feels saddened by Gabby's response.
  - B** He thinks that he might offend Gabby.
  - C** He wants to be sure to communicate his thoughts well.
  - D** He has begun to change his opinion about the subject.
- 

**40** The teacher "keeps an eye on" Gabby because he —

- F** suspects that Gabby is daydreaming again
- G** realizes that Gabby should be allowed to daydream
- H** believes that Gabby has an important idea she wants to share
- J** notices that Gabby has been acting differently





Item Number	Reporting Category	Readiness or Supporting	Content Student Expectation	Correct Answer
1	2	Readiness	6.7(C)	B
2	2	Readiness	6.9(D)	F
3	2	Supporting	6.9(E)	C
4	1	Readiness	6.2(B)	F
5	2	Readiness	6.9(D)	A
6	2	Readiness	6.7(C)	J
7	2	Readiness	6.6(D)	B
8	1	Readiness	6.2(A)	J
9	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	C
10	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	J
11	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	A
12	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	G
13	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	C
14	3	Readiness	6.8(D)(iii)	F
15	3	Readiness	6.5(F)	C
16	3	Readiness	6.6(C)	J
17	3	Supporting	6.9(A)	B
18	3	Readiness	6.6(C)	J
19	3	Readiness	6.5(F)	C
20	3	Supporting	6.9(A)	H
21	1	Readiness	6.2(C)	D
22	3	Readiness	6.5(F)	F
23	3	Readiness	6.6(C)	B
24	1	Readiness	6.5(E)	F
25	1	Readiness	6.5(E)	B
26	1	Readiness	6.5(E)	J
27	1	Readiness	6.5(E)	C
28	3	Readiness	6.8(D)(i)	F
29	1	Readiness	6.2(C)	A
30	3	Supporting	6.9(A)	G
31	3	Readiness	6.5(H)	C
32	3	Readiness	6.5(F)	G
33	3	Readiness	6.8(D)(iii)	B
34	3	Readiness	6.6(D)	H
35	2	Supporting	6.7(A)	D
36	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	F
37	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	C
38	2	Supporting	6.9(D)	G
39	2	Supporting	6.9(D)	C
40	2	Supporting	6.5(F)	J

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
1	Option B is correct	In paragraph 28, the author highlights that Elena feels upset about spoiling Marcos's surprise. Picking at her food and being quiet while everyone else is talking are signs that Elena is upset, and her behavior will lead to the story's climax.
	Option A is incorrect	Quietness can be mistaken for shyness, but there is no reason Elena would feel shy at a family dinner.
	Option C is incorrect	The family eats dinner together, but in paragraph 28, the author focuses on Elena's discomfort, not the family's enjoyment from spending time together.
	Option D is incorrect	Elena is feeling upset because she has realized it is her own fault the surprise was spoiled, not her mother's.
2	Option F is correct	Personification is a type of figurative language where human characteristics are applied to something that is not alive. In this sentence, the author describes the cookies' aroma as "[whispering]" to Marcos, revealing that the surprise is ruined, and Mom is expecting him.
	Option G is incorrect	Mom does know what Marcos likes to eat, but the personification of the cookies' aroma whispering to Marcos tells him that his mother was prepared for his arrival.
	Option H is incorrect	The emphasis of this sentence is on Marcos, so what Elena wishes for is not revealed by the use of personification.
	Option J is incorrect	Marcos may feel welcomed, but the personification of the cookies' aroma is used to indicate that "his visit was no surprise."

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
3	Option C is correct	Point of view is the perspective from which the events in the story are told. In this story, third-person limited point of view is used, meaning the author tells the story from a single character's (Elena's) point of view, so the reader can only know how Elena feels about her actions.
	Option A is incorrect	The author only reveals Elena's thoughts and feelings, so the reader does not know Marcos's reasoning for not visiting sooner.
	Option B is incorrect	Because the author tells the story from Elena's point of view, the reader does not know Aunt Laura's reasoning for anything she doesn't tell Elena.
	Option D is incorrect	The author only tells Elena's thoughts and feelings, so Mom's thoughts about the party are not revealed.
4	Option F is correct	In paragraph 8, the word <u>futile</u> is closest in meaning to the word "useless." Elena is so distracted with the news that her brother is coming that concentrating on her homework is useless, or <u>futile</u> .
	Option G is incorrect	Elena is trying to concentrate on her homework assignment, so she is making an effort.
	Option H is incorrect	Elena cannot concentrate because she is excited by her brother's news, not because the work is boring.
	Option J is incorrect	Elena is unable to concentrate on her assignment, so "concentrating on her work" is not "troubling;" it is useless.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
5	Option A is correct	Figurative language is language that uses words that mean something different than their literal interpretation. In this sentence, Elena's cheeks do not actually feel as hot as if they were on fire. They just feel warm because she is embarrassed, since Mom is not supposed to know about Marcos's visit.
	Option B is incorrect	There is no context to support the idea that Elena is feeling sick. Having hot cheeks means she is feeling embarrassed.
	Option C is incorrect	Elena's face flushes because Mom has discovered the secret Elena was supposed to keep. She is embarrassed, not angry.
	Option D is incorrect	Elena pretends to be unaware of Marcos's visit in paragraph 21, not 20. In paragraph 20, she knows she made a mistake and is embarrassed.
6	Option J is correct	In paragraph 26, "Elena's stomach churned wildly all day long," revealing that Elena cannot enjoy her brother's arrival because Mom is not hiding the fact that she knows Marcos is coming.
	Option F is incorrect	Marcos has not changed his plans for visiting the family. For Mom, it only seems like Marcos will never arrive because she is so excited to see him.
	Option G is incorrect	The date of the anniversary party is not mentioned in this paragraph and does not change.
	Option H is incorrect	There is no mention of Aunt Laura in this paragraph.
7	Option B is correct	The best summary of the story is presented in these sentences. An overview of the events is given, and the main conflict (Elena spoiling Marcos's surprise for their parents) and its resolution (Marcos forgiving Elena) are described.
	Option A is incorrect	The resolution of the conflict (Marcos forgiving Elena) is not included in this summary, making it incomplete.
	Option C is incorrect	The conflict of Elena spoiling Marcos's surprise for their parents is not mentioned in this summary, making it incomplete.
	Option D is incorrect	Minor details are included in this summary, and the conflict and resolution are not clearly defined.

# 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
8	Option J is correct	The word <u>bolts</u> in line 15 is closest in meaning to definition 4, “to move suddenly or rapidly.” Owner is surprised that Dog is talking and rapidly gets up out of the chair into a standing position.
	Option F is incorrect	Owner is suddenly getting out of the chair in surprise, not to break away from something controlling.
	Option G is incorrect	Owner does stop sitting in the chair, but the inclusion of “to his feet,” makes this meaning of <u>bolt</u> incorrect.
	Option H is incorrect	Owner gets up and onto his feet and continues to talk to Dog. He does not run off.
9	Option C is correct	The reader can infer that the underlying cause of Owner and Dog’s disagreement is that Dog feels neglected. In line 46, Dog says that he sometimes gets a walk “once a week,” and in line 50, he describes the things he and Owner used to do but don’t do anymore.
	Option A is incorrect	There is no context to support the idea that Dog has interrupted Owner’s naps before.
	Option B is incorrect	Owner discusses Dog chewing up <i>A Wrinkle in Time</i> in line 41, but the discussion of Dog’s needs begins far before that in line 12.
	Option D is incorrect	Dog wants his needs to be met like they used to be (line 50). He does not express desire for praise anywhere in the play.
10	Option J is correct	In line 15, Owner can barely get a whole sentence out and takes pauses (indicated by the ellipses) between words. His inability to speak clearly at that moment shows his surprise at Dog’s ability to speak.
	Option F is incorrect	These are normal dog sounds and are not used to indicate what Owner is thinking or feeling.
	Option G is incorrect	In line 11, Dog has not spoken yet, so Owner does not yet know Dog can talk.
	Option H is incorrect	Dog’s actions in line 11 are normal for a dog, and Owner’s actions (turns on light) are not used to indicate any emotions.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
11	Option A is correct	In lines 4 and 8, Owner repeats his thoughts that Dog is unaware of how good his life is, emphasizing that Owner does not realize how he's been treating Dog.
	Option B is incorrect	Dog does not speak until line 12, and there is no context in this dialogue used to suggest Dog will be able to speak.
	Option C is incorrect	In lines 4 and 8, Dog has not yet spoken, so the idea that Owner does not want Dog to act like a human is not supported.
	Option D is incorrect	The mail carrier is not mentioned until line 36, so the idea that Dog believes the mail carrier is a threat is not supported by lines 4 and 8.
12	Option G is correct	The conversation between Owner and Dog allows Dog to be honest about his feelings. He tells Owner that he wishes Owner would make more time for him. This leads to a resolution in line 55 when Owner promises to make time to play with Dog.
	Option F is incorrect	In line 36, Dog explains that he protects Owner from the "strange man wearing blue," but Owner does not yet realize Dog's feelings of being neglected, so this does not lead to the resolution.
	Option H is incorrect	Owner explains how busy he is, but this alone does not resolve the conflict because it does not make Dog feel less neglected.
	Option J is incorrect	Dog chewing up a book does not lead to the resolution of the play.
13	Option C is correct	The reader can conclude that in scene 1, Owner does not realize how Dog feels about their relationship. Owner repeatedly says Dog "has no idea how good he's got it," even though Dog continues to seek attention from Owner (lines 3 and 4) and is dismissed by Owner when he tells Dog to lie down (line 6).
	Option A is incorrect	Owner tells Dog to lie down in line 6, so he does not disapprove of Dog's laziness.
	Option B is incorrect	Owner does not express frustration about being tired.
	Option D is incorrect	Owner says, "That was a good walk" (line 2) and does not express any annoyance at walking Dog.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
14	Option F is correct	The order of events that brought <i>Endeavour</i> to its final destination are detailed in these paragraphs. The author explains the route the space shuttle took from Florida to California, the work people did to prepare for the shuttle to pass through the streets of Los Angeles, and where the shuttle resides now.
	Option G is incorrect	The author mentions these steps briefly in paragraph 2 but does not organize paragraphs 2 through 5 around this information.
	Option H is incorrect	In paragraphs 2 through 5, the author describes the space shuttle's journey after its missions, not how the shuttle was useful to NASA.
	Option J is incorrect	The author makes no comparison between <i>Endeavour</i> and the Boeing 747 airplane in these paragraphs.
15	Option C is correct	<i>Endeavour's</i> flight was "celebratory" (paragraph 2), which suggests that the purpose of the flight was to commemorate the shuttle's arrival in California and allow people to see it.
	Option A is incorrect	It likely took a lot longer to prepare the streets of Los Angeles (paragraph 3) than it did for <i>Endeavour</i> to fly to different places in California, so this is not the reason for the shuttle's flight over that state.
	Option B is incorrect	The shuttle itself did not fly. It was strapped to a plane (paragraph 2), so they did not test to see if the shuttle was working.
	Option D is incorrect	The shuttle was strapped to a plane (paragraph 2), so the flight was not used to remind people how <i>Endeavour</i> was previously used in space.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
16	Option J is correct	The idea that the shuttle's move was a "once-in-forever moment in history" is supported by the statement that "[d]ozens of photographers and filmmakers" wanted to capture the shuttle's trip through Los Angeles. The knowledge that this would likely only happen once made the event worthy of being filmed and photographed.
	Option F is incorrect	The sentence from paragraph 1 is related to the shuttle's "crawl through the streets of Los Angeles," but this sentence from paragraph 2 is used to describe its flight.
	Option G is incorrect	The shuttle's "crawl through the streets of Los Angeles" is the focus of the sentence from paragraph 1, but this sentence is used to describe its flight and landing.
	Option H is incorrect	The idea that the shuttle's move was a "once-in-forever moment in history" is not best supported by this sentence regarding the use of steel plates.
17	Option B is correct	The author highlights the efforts taken to transport <i>Endeavour</i> to a museum in this selection. The author describes the steps people took to make the shuttle's journey from Florida to the California Science Center a success.
	Option A is incorrect	The author describes <i>Endeavour's</i> journey by plane and through the streets, not its missions in space.
	Option C is incorrect	The author briefly mentions money in paragraph 4, but this is not the focus of the selection.
	Option D is incorrect	The author does not go into depth on <i>Endeavour's</i> importance or compare it to other space shuttles.
18	Option J is correct	In this sentence, the author describes the move as a "huge social event," meaning that it attracted a large crowd of people who were there to see and support the shuttle's journey. This shows that spectators were enthusiastic about the event.
	Option F is incorrect	There are no people mentioned in this sentence.
	Option G is incorrect	People's reaction to <i>Endeavour's</i> journey are not described in this sentence.
	Option H is incorrect	The need for police officers to direct traffic does not reveal people's enthusiasm about <i>Endeavour's</i> journey.



## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
19	Option C is correct	The idea that the “Grand Canyon Skywalk brings visitors to Grand Canyon West” is highlighted by the photographs and captions. Instead of showing the skywalk empty, the author includes photographs of tourists (described in captions) enjoying it.
	Option A is incorrect	The completed skywalk is shown in the photographs, and no dates are included in the captions, so the length of time it took to construct the skywalk is not revealed.
	Option B is incorrect	The entrance building is not shown in the photographs or described in the captions, so this is not the reason for the photographs’ inclusion.
	Option D is incorrect	There are no tribal elders shown in the photographs or described in the captions.
20	Option H is correct	The use of questions helps the author emphasize that creating the skywalk was a complex process because it was the first of its kind. The builders had to consider many different aspects, such as capacity, style, and safety.
	Option F is incorrect	It is not specified that the Hualapai tribe members were the people who asked these questions, nor is it suggested that they would serve as the project’s engineers.
	Option G is incorrect	These questions are related to the actual skywalk design rather than what that area of the Grand Canyon looks like.
	Option J is incorrect	The mention of a number of visitors in the questions is in regard to safety rather than hope that many tourists will come.
21	Option D is correct	The word <u>protrudes</u> is closest in meaning to “Sticks out from an area.” The walkway sticks out “70 feet beyond the canyon wall.”
	Option A is incorrect	In this sentence, <u>protrudes</u> is used to tell how the walkway looks rather than how it works.
	Option B is incorrect	The walkway sticks out from the canyon, but there is no context to suggest that it appears separate. In fact, it is connected to the entrance building.
	Option C is incorrect	The way in which the walkway will be used is not described in paragraph 1, so this is not the meaning of <u>protrudes</u> .

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
22	Option F is correct	Tribal elders had “much discussion” and met with architects and engineers before moving forward with the skywalk. The reader can conclude that they carefully considered the impact that the skywalk would have on their community.
	Option G is incorrect	Tribe members were being cautious, but they did not specify the pace for building the skywalk.
	Option H is incorrect	Based on paragraph 4, tribal elders were thinking about “safety and performance” of the skywalk, not interesting features.
	Option J is incorrect	There is no information in this paragraph to support the conclusion that tribal elders wondered about managing the number of visitors on the skywalk.
23	Option B is correct	According to paragraph 2, “few people made the long journey” to Grand Canyon West. The Hualapai needed an “extreme attraction” to bring tourists to their area so that they could make money, just as the South Rim attracted “visitors and revenue.”
	Option A is incorrect	The fact that nature lovers visit the Grand Canyon does not explain why the Hualapai wanted to create the skywalk.
	Option C is incorrect	David Jin and his idea to create the skywalk are described in this sentence, but the reason the Hualapai wanted to create it is not revealed.
	Option D is incorrect	The Hualapai tribal elders’ final decision to build the skywalk is described in this sentence, not their reason for wanting to build it.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
24	Option F is correct	In both paragraphs, the authors emphasize that planning ahead was a critical part of the projects. In paragraph 3 of "A Massive Mission," people worked "around the clock" to change the structure of the roads in Los Angeles in preparation for the shuttle. In paragraph 4 of "DO Look Down!," professionals helped the tribe plan the bridge, taking many aspects into concern.
	Option G is incorrect	Only in paragraph 4 of "DO Look Down!" does the author present information about how the project was approved.
	Option H is incorrect	The expectation of creating job opportunities is discussed in paragraph 4 of "DO Look Down!," but no hopes are discussed in paragraph 3 of "A Massive Mission."
	Option J is incorrect	The cost of the projects is not mentioned in either of these paragraphs.
25	Option B is correct	Unlike the space shuttle <i>Endeavour</i> , the Grand Canyon Skywalk "has served as a model for other projects that followed," such as those in Canada and Malaysia (paragraph 6 of "DO Look Down!"). The last voyage of <i>Endeavour</i> was likely a singular historical event that will never be repeated (paragraph 1 of "A Massive Mission").
	Option A is incorrect	<i>Endeavour</i> is also an attraction the public can enjoy because it is in the California Science Center (paragraph 5 of "A Massive Mission"), so this is not a difference.
	Option C is incorrect	<i>Endeavour</i> was designed for space travel and was able to withstand the extreme conditions of space. This feature is a similarity between the shuttle and the skywalk.
	Option D is incorrect	<i>Endeavour</i> is likely also constructed of heavy metals to withstand the extreme conditions of space travel, so this is not a way the two projects are unlike.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
26	Option J is correct	Unlike the people who organized <i>Endeavour's</i> move, the builders of the Grand Canyon Skywalk were hoping their project would "provide job opportunities" (paragraph 4 of "DO Look Down!"). Creating new jobs is not mentioned in "A Massive Mission."
	Option F is incorrect	Builders of the skywalk were also pleased with the results of their efforts because it has brought in \$30 million, and they plan to add to it (paragraph 6 of "DO Look Down!").
	Option G is incorrect	Engineers were also involved in building the skywalk (paragraph 4 of "DO Look Down!"), so this is not a difference.
	Option H is incorrect	This is not a difference because the organizers of <i>Endeavour's</i> move took many safety precautions as well (paragraph 3 of "A Massive Mission").
27	Option C is correct	In this sentence from paragraph 6 of "DO Look Down!," the author includes a similar idea to the sentence from paragraph 5 of "A Massive Mission." The idea that many people come to see the main attraction ( <i>Endeavour</i> and the skywalk) is conveyed in each sentence.
	Option A is incorrect	Work and job opportunities are not mentioned in the sentence from paragraph 5 of "A Massive Mission," so this is not a similar idea.
	Option B is incorrect	The skywalk's strength is highlighted in this sentence from "DO Look Down!," but the strength of the shuttle is not mentioned in the sentence from paragraph 5 of "A Massive Mission."
	Option D is incorrect	The future of the space shuttle's exhibit is not discussed in the sentence from paragraph 5 of "A Massive Mission," so these two sentences do not convey a similar idea.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
28	Option F is correct	Throughout the selection, the author focuses on what scientists can learn from studying Egyptian papyrus and describes the challenges of this task, so this statement best expresses the main idea of the selection.
	Option G is incorrect	A minor detail from the selection is described in this sentence, rather than the main idea.
	Option H is incorrect	Knowledge of languages is important in decoding the papyri, but this is a minor detail from paragraph 9; it is not the main idea of the entire selection.
	Option J is incorrect	The Egyptian's use of brushes and reeds to write on papyrus is mentioned in paragraph 3, but the main idea of the selection is not presented in this sentence.
29	Option A is correct	In paragraph 12, the word <u>scribe</u> is closest in meaning to "a person who records messages." The royal <u>scribe</u> recorded a police officer's report about a missing person.
	Option B is incorrect	The <u>scribe</u> in this sentence is a person who wrote something down, not a book.
	Option C is incorrect	The <u>scribe</u> is described as "royal," but there is no implication that all <u>scribes</u> are royal, and no palaces are mentioned.
	Option D is incorrect	The <u>scribe</u> in this sentence is a person who wrote something down, so this definition is incorrect.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
30	Option G is correct	The author's most likely purpose is to explain how "the work of papyrologists provides knowledge about an ancient culture." Throughout the selection, the author explains that scientists have learned about ancient Egyptians' communication, spells, recipes, homework reports, stories, and other uses for papyrus from decoding papyrus.
	Option F is incorrect	Although written communication in ancient Egypt is discussed in this selection, the author's reason for writing the selection is specifically to share information about the discovery and decoding of papyri and what it can teach people about ancient Egyptians.
	Option H is incorrect	The author's purpose for writing goes beyond explaining the mystery of the papyri in the tin box. The author also tells about the work of Dr. Hickey and other scientists who learn about the culture of ancient Egypt by studying papyri and how they go about that process.
	Option J is incorrect	The author's purpose is specifically related to the work of papyrologists to learn about ancient Egypt. Changes to civilization throughout history are not discussed.
31	Option C is correct	The idea that ancient Egyptians used writing for many different purposes is supported by the information in paragraphs 4 and 14. In paragraph 4, the author says Egyptians wrote down spells, recipes, and homework. In paragraph 14, the author explains they also read different types of stories written on papyrus.
	Option A is incorrect	Homework and stories are mentioned, but the writings Egyptians studied in school are not specified.
	Option B is incorrect	Health and safety were a concern, but the author does not suggest they were a primary concern, and there is a broader range of information in these paragraphs.
	Option D is incorrect	Writing for entertainment is only mentioned in paragraph 14, but a preference is not specified.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
32	Option G is correct	The words “rare treasure” are used to suggest that the papyri can provide information about a past time about which little is known. The author considers them valuable because there are not many other things that can “[tell] us much about the secrets of life in ancient Egypt.”
	Option F is incorrect	The author acknowledges that the treasure “isn’t covered in gold,” meaning that its value is not monetary. The papyri are a “rare treasure” because of the knowledge they contain.
	Option H is incorrect	The fact that the papyri are difficult to decode is not explained until paragraph 8, so this is not why the words “rare treasure” are used.
	Option J is incorrect	The papyrus is “tattered,” but it is a “rare treasure” because of what is written on it, not its fragile condition.
33	Option B is correct	The author organizes these paragraphs to show that experts must “follow steps in a certain order to read papyri.” Scientists dampen the paper, unroll it, scrape off dirt, join torn pieces, and then finally decode the words.
	Option A is incorrect	There is no comparison being made in these paragraphs.
	Option C is incorrect	A process is explained in paragraphs 7 through 10; there is more than just a list of materials presented.
	Option D is incorrect	The task of unrolling the papyri (paragraph 7) is just one of several steps described in these paragraphs.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
34	Option H is correct	The best summary of the selection is presented in these sentences. A brief explanation of papyrus is given, and the main idea of using writing on papyrus from ancient Egypt to learn about their society is conveyed.
	Option F is incorrect	Dr. Todd Hickey is not the focus of the entire selection, so he should not be the focus of the entire summary.
	Option G is incorrect	The overall significance of the information gained from reading the papyrus is not conveyed in this summary.
	Option J is incorrect	This summary includes minor details and omits the overall significance of the information gained from reading the papyrus.
35	Option D is correct	The main message of the poem is that it is acceptable to use your imagination when the circumstances are right. Gabby used to daydream, but her teacher and her mom told her to stop (lines 14 through 16). Her teacher explains that it's good to dream, but her daydreams might have to wait until later when he is done teaching (lines 30 through 36).
	Option A is incorrect	Gabby is honest with her teacher, but the main message comes from Mr. Spicer's advice in lines 30 through 36 about dreaming at an appropriate time.
	Option B is incorrect	Mr. Spicer does use the Wright Brothers as an example, but this is to demonstrate the message that there is an appropriate time for dreaming rather than the relevance of history.
	Option C is incorrect	Mr. Spicer can be considered wise and he does listen to Gabby, but there is no context to support this as the main message of the poem.



## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
36	Option F is correct	Based on lines 9 and 10, "I'd argue but my sigh/gives me away," the reader can infer that Gabby "cannot hide her frustration from her teacher." She wants to argue that she is fine, but sighs out loud, revealing to her teacher that something is wrong.
	Option G is incorrect	Sighing usually shows that someone is sad or that something is wrong, not that someone is necessarily calm.
	Option H is incorrect	Gabby does not find it difficult to express herself to her teacher; she tells him her feelings in lines 11 through 16. She would just rather keep her feelings to herself.
	Option J is incorrect	Mr. Spicer does show understanding, but Gabby does not know in lines 9 and 10 that he will react in this way.
37	Option C is correct	The poet most likely uses this description to refer to the ability to "stop daydreaming for a while." Gabby acknowledges ("I nod") that she should "slide [her] daydreams/in a drawer/and let them wait until later."
	Option A is incorrect	Gabby agrees with what Mr. Spicer said about waiting for the appropriate time to daydream, so the poet does not likely mean to recommend giving up on daydreaming completely.
	Option B is incorrect	The idea of limiting or refocusing one's daydreams on "what is important" is not supported by the poem. Gabby just needs to wait for the appropriate time to daydream.
	Option D is incorrect	Gabby needs to wait for the appropriate time to daydream, not keep her daydreams from being unobtainable. As Mr. Spicer explains "The best thinkers,/writers, inventors in the world/allow their thoughts/to carry them away."

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
38	Option G is correct	Personification is a type of figurative language where human characteristics are applied to something that is not alive. In lines 24 and 25, the poet uses personification to emphasize that successful people (writers and inventors) use their imaginations. The phrase “allow their thoughts/to carry them away,” is another way to say “imagine.”
	Option F is incorrect	In these lines, the people are not literally being carried away to somewhere else; they are just imagining.
	Option H is incorrect	The people described in these lines are not actually writing, inventing, or creating anything; they are daydreaming.
	Option J is incorrect	The personification is used to describe the individual experience of daydreaming. There is no communication taking place.
39	Option C is correct	A simile is a figure of speech in which two objects are compared using the word “like” or “as.” The simile in lines 17 through 19 is used to compare the teacher’s top lip to a door, behind which are the appropriate words. He is taking his time to make sure to clearly communicate his thoughts.
	Option A is incorrect	The teacher is not frowning, so he most likely does not feel sad about Gabby’s response. He is just thinking carefully.
	Option B is incorrect	The message that the teacher conveys to Gabby is helpful to her: “Dreams are great things, Gabby.” The idea that he thinks his words might offend her is not supported.
	Option D is incorrect	The teacher seems confident in the advice he gives Gabby; there is no evidence that he has changed his opinion on the subject.

## 2021 STAAR Grade 6 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
40	Option J is correct	The teacher “keeps an eye on” Gabby because he realizes that Gabby is not acting the way she usually does. In lines 7 and 8, the teacher tells Gabby to tell him what’s wrong because he has noticed that she is not happy.
	Option F is incorrect	Gabby explains, “I give him no reason/to call me aside,” (lines 3 and 4), suggesting that she has not been daydreaming and this is not the reason for Mr. Spicer’s scrutiny.
	Option G is incorrect	The teacher has not come to a sudden realization that Gabby should be permitted to daydream. He encourages Gabby to daydream except during his lessons.
	Option H is incorrect	In line 8, the teacher calls Gabby aside by saying ““Tell me what’s wrong.”” This suggests that he is worried about her, not that he thinks she has an important idea to share.