



NEW MEXICO MEASURES
OF STUDENT SUCCESS AND
ACHIEVEMENT

M

S

S

A

NM-MSSA

English Language Arts/Literacy

Grade 3 • Practice Test

Print Student Name



English Language Arts/Literacy Session 1

DIRECTIONS

Today you will take a test in reading. For this test, you will read passages and then answer questions about the passages. Some of the questions may look different from test questions you have seen before, and some may ask about material that is new to you, but it is important to do your best. If you are not sure of the answer to a question, you should still try to answer it.

You will now read two passages and answer the questions that follow. Some of the questions may ask you to compare the two passages.

Passage 1

Domino Sundays

by Vivian Fernandez

- 1 Sunday is domino day for my abuelo and his friends. I watch them play at the corner park. One day, maybe I'll join the game.
- 2 Abuelo knocks on my bedroom door. "Ready, Yolanda?" he asks.
- 3 "Sí!" I say.
- 4 Abuelo hands me the long, wooden box that holds the *fichas*, the domino tiles. "Today is a special day. I have a new partner."
- 5 "Who?" I ask.
- 6 "You'll see."
- 7 I wonder who Abuelo's new partner is as we walk along the shady sidewalk. Abuelo has been teaching me to play. Could it be me?
- 8 Our neighbors are starting their days, too. Salsa music flows from open windows. I smell bread and imagine it pressed flat in a *plancha*¹, like Mami makes for me. From someone's yard, a rooster steps out in front of us. Papi complains about the roosters. He says Miami is a big city. Roosters belong on farms. Abuelo and I don't mind the roosters. We like the jerky way they move.
- 9 Abuelo imitates the rooster, moving his head from side to side. I think about being Abuelo's partner, helping him to win, and I let out a loud cock-a-doodle-do! The rooster turns a beady eye at us and crosses the street with an angry squawk.
- 10 By the time we reach the park, my bangs are wet from sweat. Abuelo peels the pale blue *guayabera*² from his skin. He pulls a handkerchief from his pants pocket and wipes his forehead. "It was never this hot in Cuba. The weather was—"

¹**plancha:** a small appliance used to press flat bread and sandwiches

²**guayabera:** a men's shirt popular in Latin American countries

- 11 “—always perfect in Cuba,” I finish for him.
- 12 Abuelo taps my nose. “Well, not perfect. But close.”
- 13 The square tables are filled with old men playing dominoes. “Where’s your partner?” I ask, looking around.



© Illustration by Laura Jacobsen

- 14 He puts his hands on my shoulders. “She’s right here.”
- 15 I jump up and down. “We’re going to make a great team, Abuelo!”
- 16 He takes my hand and leads me to the table with his friends.
- 17 “You’re late!” Mr. Perera greets us. He always says that, even when he’s the last one to get there.
- 18 “*Buenos días*,³ Yolanda,” Mr. Castillo says.
- 19 “*Buenos días*, Señor Castillo.”
- 20 Mr. Castillo pours Cuban coffee into a small plastic cup. I breathe in the warm, sweet smell as it passes by me on its way to Abuelo. In one gulp, the coffee is gone.
- 21 Mr. Perera checks his watch. “Where’s Juan Carlos?” he asks.
- 22 Abuelo takes the box from me and sits down. “Yolanda is my partner today.”
- 23 Mr. Perera slaps his hand on the table. “What does this señorita know about dominoes?”
- 24 “I know how to play,” I say. “I have a good teacher.” I sit across from Abuelo, in his partner’s chair. My chair.

³**buenos días:** good morning

- 25 "I'm sorry, Yolanda, but this is a game just for us old men. I will only play with Juan Carlos." Mr. Perera stands up and crosses his arms.
- 26 "Then you forfeit," Abuelo says, "and Yolanda and I win." I try not to smile. We all know Mr. Perera will never forfeit.
- 27 Mr. Perera sits back down, grumbling like a summer thunderstorm. "*Está bien*."⁴ What are you waiting for? Let's play."

⁴**está bien:** That's okay

"Domino Sundays" by Vivian Fernandez, from *Spider Magazine*, June 2011. Copyright © 2011 by Carus Publishing Company d/b/a Cricket Media.

Passage 2**Grandpa Drives a Milk Truck***by Adrienne Ehlert Bashista*

1 "Up you go!" Grandpa says. He boosts me into the cab of his truck.

2 I rub the sleep out of my eyes. It's morning, but it's still dark outside. Grandpa leaves
for his milk route at 4 a.m.

3 "Buckled in?" he asks.

4 I nod.

5 "Let's hit the road, kid." Grandpa eases the truck out of the shed. He drives his route
every day. This is the first time he's asked me to come along. I'm sleepy, but also excited.

6 "Want some?" Grandpa asks.

7 I nod. He hands me the cocoa bottle. Its shape reminds me of Grandpa's truck. His
truck is insulated to keep the milk cold. The bottle is insulated to keep the hot chocolate
hot.



© Illustration by D. Brent Burkett

8 The sun has started to peek above the trees when we leave the highway and turn
onto a country road. I roll down my window. The air smells like hay and manure.

9 "Almost there," Grandpa says.

- 10 In a few minutes we pull into a long driveway. Grandpa stops the truck next to a barn, and we climb down. The smell of cow manure is even stronger now, and the air is wet and dewy.
- 11 I wonder if the cows are sleepy or if they like getting up this early.
- 12 "Hey there, Don," Mr. Turner, the farmer, says to my grandpa. "We're ready for you."
- 13 Grandpa goes to the back of his truck and opens a door in the side of the cooling tank. Inside is a hose. He pulls the end loose and carries it into the barn.
- 14 I follow him. "What's in there?" I ask, pointing to a large metal tank.
- 15 "Milk," Grandpa says. "The farmer milks the cows, and it's pumped to this tank. The tanks cool the milk down."
- 16 "Cool it down?" I ask. "I thought milk was always cold."
- 17 Grandpa laughs. "Not when it comes out of the cow, it's not. When it comes out of the cow, it's warm. The farmer cools it down so it doesn't spoil."
- 18 Grandpa attaches the hose to a pipe on the side of the tank and flips a switch. I can hear a noise that sounds like chugga-chugga-chugga. "I turned on the pump," Grandpa explains. "The milk is sucked through the hose to the tank on my truck."
- 19 Before long Grandpa is finished. "See you tomorrow, Stan," Grandpa calls and helps me back up to my seat.
- 20 We go to six more farms. At each farm Grandpa does the same thing: uncoils the hose, hooks it up to the tank, and pumps the fresh milk into his truck. At the seventh farm, the farmer gives us some biscuits she made.
- 21 Snack in hand, we're back on the road, headed for town.

"Grandpa Drives a Milk Truck" by Adrienne Ehlert Bashista, from *Ladybug Magazine*, April 2016. Copyright © 2016 by Carus Publishing Company d/b/a Cricket Media.

1. Based on paragraphs 8 and 9 of Passage 1, with which statement would Yolanda **most likely** agree?
- Ⓐ Neighbors should keep their windows closed when playing loud music.
 - Ⓑ Roosters can be welcome members of the neighborhood.
 - Ⓒ Abuelo enjoys it when neighbors copy his movements.
 - Ⓓ Mami's bread is the freshest in the neighborhood.
2. How does the picture in Passage 1 **most** help the reader better understand the passage?
- Ⓐ It shows the heat of the day.
 - Ⓑ It shows the steps for playing dominoes.
 - Ⓒ It shows the closeness between Yolanda and Abuelo.
 - Ⓓ It shows the thoughts and feelings of Abuelo's friends.
3. Read the sentence from paragraph 27 in Passage 1.

Mr. Perera sits back down, grumbling like a summer thunderstorm.

As used in the sentence, what does the phrase grumbling like a summer thunderstorm show about Mr. Perera?

- Ⓐ He feels sad.
- Ⓑ He feels bothered.
- Ⓒ He is interested in others.
- Ⓓ He is comfortable with change.

4. What important detail about Passage 2 does the picture **most** help the reader understand?
- Ⓐ The country air is fresh and clean.
 - Ⓑ The milk truck is large and speedy.
 - Ⓒ Grandpa and the narrator have fun together.
 - Ⓓ Grandpa enjoys driving more than anything.
5. According to Passage 2, what happens to milk when it goes into the tanks?
- Ⓐ It cools down.
 - Ⓑ It gets thicker.
 - Ⓒ It smells better.
 - Ⓓ It changes color.

This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.

6. Which word **best** describes the narrator in Passage 2?
- Ⓐ curious
 - Ⓑ helpful
 - Ⓒ hungry
 - Ⓓ bored

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the answer to the question above?

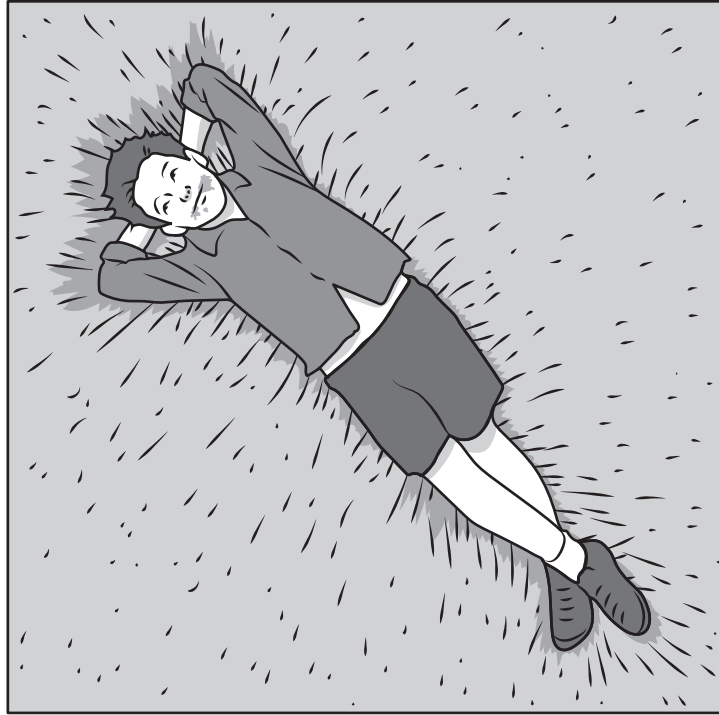
- Ⓐ "I rub the sleep out of my eyes."
- Ⓑ "In a few minutes we pull into a long driveway."
- Ⓒ "I wonder if the cows are sleepy or if they like getting up this early."
- Ⓓ "Snack in hand, we're back on the road, headed for town."

7. How are the settings of Passage 1 and Passage 2 **most** different?
- Ⓐ Passage 1 takes place in winter. Passage 2 takes place in fall.
 - Ⓑ Passage 1 takes place in the city. Passage 2 takes place in the country.
 - Ⓒ Passage 1 takes place in the past. Passage 2 takes place in the future.
 - Ⓓ Passage 1 takes place in Cuba. Passage 2 takes place in the United States.

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

Pie Next Time

- 1 It was a beautiful summer afternoon. The sun shone down on the field of wild blackberry bushes behind Daniel's apartment building. Daniel looked out his bedroom window, gazing down onto the field and itching to join his friends. He could join them just as soon as he finished cleaning his room. He heard his father's voice at the other end of the apartment.
- 2 "Daniel!" he called from the kitchen. "I'm going to the grocery store. What do you want for dinner?"
- 3 "Hot dogs and corn on the cob!" Daniel shouted, as he ran to the kitchen.
- 4 His dad pretended to think it over. "Well, I suppose we can do that," he said, winking.
- 5 "Yesssssss!" Daniel punched his fists in the air.
- 6 "Do you also have a strong opinion about dessert?" his dad asked, laughing.
- 7 Suddenly Daniel had an idea. In all those blackberry bushes, surely there were enough blackberries to make a pie! "I'll make dessert, Dad. It will be a surprise!" Daniel had helped his father make pies earlier in the summer, and he was pretty sure there was still some pie dough in the freezer. He loved the idea of helping his dad, impressing his mom and older brother, and of course, eating the pie.
- 8 While his father went grocery shopping, Daniel went out to join his friends. Together, they set out on a mission to gather blackberries. They slowly filled a big shiny bucket, reaching between branches and dodging the thorns. Pretty soon, the bucket was full, but the day was too nice to go home. The friends climbed trees, hid behind bushes, and played tag. When they found themselves both hungry and thirsty, the blackberries were too sweet and juicy to resist. Daniel and his friends laughed and talked and ate, berry juice staining their fingers and faces.



© Cognia, Inc.

- 9 One by one, his friends were called home. Daniel lay on his back and looked up at the setting sun. What a great day it had been! And now he would get to go home, too, and have hot dogs and corn and . . . Daniel sat up with a start. "Pie!" He looked into the bucket. There was only a handful of blackberries left and no time to gather more. He would not be able to make his family dessert after all.
- 10 Daniel slowly climbed the steps to his apartment. He went into the kitchen, where his brother was setting the table, and put the bucket on the counter. He looked down at his shoes.
- 11 Daniel's father glanced into the bucket. He couldn't help but notice the juice stains all over his son's hands and face. "Daniel," he said, "this is the perfect amount of berries for us to have on our ice cream for dessert!"
- 12 All the shame and disappointment Daniel felt melted away. He stretched as tall as he could to high-five his father. He knew that the most important thing was sharing those delicious berries—berries that he picked—with the people he loved most.

"Pie Next Time" © 2017 by Cognia, inc.

8. Read this sentence from paragraph 1.

Daniel looked out his bedroom window, gazing down onto the field and itching to join his friends.

What does the word itching mean as it is used in the sentence?

- Ⓐ quietly asking
 - Ⓑ really wanting
 - Ⓒ quickly scratching
 - Ⓓ suddenly running
9. Based on the passage, which word **best** describes Daniel's friends?
- Ⓐ lazy
 - Ⓑ funny
 - Ⓒ helpful
 - Ⓓ confused
10. In the passage, why do Daniel and his friends eat the berries? Select **two** answers.
- Ⓐ because they are hungry and thirsty
 - Ⓑ because they want berries with ice cream
 - Ⓒ because the berries are too sweet and juicy to resist
 - Ⓓ because they have filled the bucket and it is overflowing
 - Ⓔ because they think they should make sure the berries are fresh

11. Read this sentence from paragraph 9.

What a great day it had been!

In the sentence, whose point of view is **mainly** shown?

- Ⓐ Dad's
 - Ⓑ Daniel's
 - Ⓒ the reader's
 - Ⓓ the author's
12. How do the berry stains on Daniel become important later in the story?
- Ⓐ They show that Daniel is more forgetful than his brother.
 - Ⓑ They show that Daniel has disappointed his dad.
 - Ⓒ They show Daniel's dad what has happened.
 - Ⓓ They show Daniel's friends why he is tired.

This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.

13. Based on the passage, what is a **main** lesson Dad helps Daniel learn?

- Ⓐ Things may not go as planned, but they can still work out well.
- Ⓑ Eating healthy meals each day will help you grow strong.
- Ⓒ It is important for everyone in a family to help out.
- Ⓓ Finish your work first, and then you can play.

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the answer above?

- Ⓐ "He could join them just as soon as he finished cleaning his room."
- Ⓑ "'Hot dogs and corn on the cob!' Daniel shouted."
- Ⓒ "His father went grocery shopping."
- Ⓓ "'Daniel,' he said, 'this is the perfect amount.'"

You will now read two passages and answer the questions that follow. Some of the questions may ask you to compare the two passages.

Passage 1

Sea and River Otters

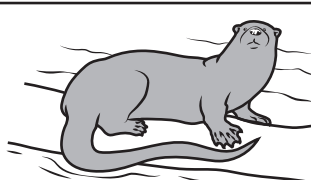
- 1 The sun blazes on your back and shoulders, and sweat drips down your face. You are hot, but the zoo has so much to see. What is everyone watching over there? You gently push your way to the front of the crowd. Zip! Splash! The sleek brown animal glides down a slide into the pond. You laugh and wish that you had a nice cool water slide to play on in this hot weather too.
- 2 The animal's smooth and shiny fur is perfect for slicing through the water. Kicking off with its webbed feet, it quickly reaches shore and scurries up the steep little hill to join its family. "What are these funny animals?" you wonder. Then you notice the sign, "River Otters." Long whiskers that look like mustaches make the river otters look like some grownups you know, but river otters do not act like grownups! The otters play and wrestle and take turns on the water slide. One by one they splash into the cool water and scramble out for another turn.
- 3 You could watch them play forever, but you know there are lots of other creatures to see. You slip out of the crowd, and across from the river otter habitat. You see another sign, "Sea Otters." More otters! You have to see them.
- 4 No otters are playing at this exhibit. Here it is nap time. An adult sea otter lazily floats on its back with a small otter snuggled on its chest. The baby looks so content on its furry floating bed. The adult sea otter paddles along happily. Its feet are not webbed like the feet of the river otters. They are like flippers. The otter's tail is not long and thin like a river otter's either. It looks like a beaver tail and is good for paddling too.
- 5 The sea otter has the same serious face and funny whiskers as a river otter, but the sea otter is not as thin or shiny. The sea otter's body is wider and its fur is rougher, helping the otter to float in the cold sea. Also, the sea otter is much larger than the river otter. Just one sea otter is about the same size as two or three river otters. The habitat of the sea otter is different too. Instead of dirt and tall green grass, the shore is filled with big gray rocks.
- 6 You want to stay longer, but it is time to go. Luckily, you find a booklet about otters in the gift shop on the way out of the zoo. It has many color pictures and tells about other species of otters.
- 7 Later that night, you read the booklet and fall asleep thinking about otters. Somewhere, a family of river otters is snuggled together in their cozy underground den, while far away on a dark sea, a baby otter sleeps on its mother under a starry sky. They float in a bed of kelp, warm in their thick fur coats, just like you sleep snuggled under your covers.

Sea Otters



- 50–100 pounds
- Live in salt water, in the ocean
- Almost never leave water
- Float on their backs
- Very awkward on land with wide, paddled feet
- Eat sea urchins, crabs, clams, octopi while floating on back
- Sleep in kelp beds so they won't float away

River Otters



- 20–25 pounds
- Live near rivers and lakes
- 50% of time on land
- Swim on their bellies
- Have small, webbed feet and can run quickly on land
- Eat fish, frogs, crayfish, bugs, mice, and birds on land, on rocks or logs
- Sleep in underground dens

© Cognia, Inc.

"Sea and River Otters" © 2017 by Cognia, inc.

Passage 2**At Home in the Water****Home Sweet Home**

1 Have you ever seen a furry animal floating on its back in the water, sunning itself and breaking open a shellfish for a tasty meal? Or seen one swimming around and around quickly, playing in the movement of the water? Otters spend much of their time in water. Sea otters almost never leave the ocean, and they even sleep in it! River otters spend about half of each day in water. Both sea and river otters eat animals that live in the water. To otters, water is a sweet place to call home.

2 Otters are small animals, so any pollution in the water is more dangerous to them than to a larger animal. In fact, the first signs of water pollution often appear in otters. Sadly, many otters and their homes are in danger from water pollution.

Threats to Home

3 Oil spills are the worst threat to otters. When oil pipes burst, the spilled oil destroys marshlands and rivers. Oil spills from ships pollute large areas of the sea quickly. When oil spills, the thick and sticky substance covers the land and water and the things that are in it. It pollutes both the earth and the air. Otters cannot swim, drink, or breathe near the polluted water.

4 Sea otters are at great risk of being harmed by oil spills because they spend so much time in the water. Sea otter fur is the thickest of all animal fur, and it is difficult to clean. If oil gets into an otter's coat, it destroys the fur, which is what keeps an otter warm in the cold sea water. If an otter cannot keep itself warm in sea water, the otter will become sick and might die.

5 Another danger to both sea and river otters is blue-green algae because it is poisonous to otters. Blue-green algae forms when fertilizers or raw sewage mix with sunshine in sea or lake water. Blue-green algae grows very quickly, and otters become sick if they eat it.

Help Is on the Way!

6 But, there is good news! Otters have many friends who care about them. Scientists, workers, and volunteers at local aquariums are good friends to the sea otters. When people report seeing sick or hurt otters, workers rescue and take care of the animals. Scientists also study sea otters and where they live. Scientists and other people learn as much as they can about sea otters so that they can better protect otters from danger.

- 7 When scientists learned that blue-green algae was poisoning sea otters, they looked for how the animals were coming into contact with the algae. After long hours of hard work, scientists discovered that blue-green algae was in shellfish, which is a main food for sea otters. If a sea otter eats a clam that contains blue-green algae, then the otter becomes poisoned.

Help Is Here to Stay!

- 8 Scientists also study many other types of pollution that can harm otters. Their work is very important. What they discover helps to create laws to prevent pollution. Otters are helpless against pollution on their own, but many people care about otters. Otters are getting the help they need from scientists, animal workers, and volunteers. And maybe even you!

"At Home in the Water" © 2017 by Cognia, inc.

14. Read this sentence from paragraph 7 in Passage 1.

Somewhere, a family of river otters is snuggled together in their cozy underground den, while far away on a dark sea, a baby otter sleeps on its mother under a starry sky.

As it is used in the sentence, what does cozy **most nearly** mean?

- Ⓐ cool
- Ⓑ watery
- Ⓒ crowded
- Ⓓ comfortable

This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.

15. What is the **main** way the author connects the information about sea otters and river otters in Passage 1?

- Ⓐ The author lists problems the otters have and the solutions to those problems.
- Ⓑ The author describes the causes of pollution and its effects on otters.
- Ⓒ The author tells how the otters are alike and how they are different.
- Ⓓ The author gives the order of the activities in the otters' day.

Which detail from the passage **best** supports the answer above?

- Ⓐ "You could watch them play forever, but you know there are lots of other creatures to see."
- Ⓑ "No otters are playing at this exhibit. Here it is nap time."
- Ⓒ "The baby looks so content on its furry floating bed."
- Ⓓ "Later that night, you read the booklet and fall asleep."

16. With which idea would the author of Passage 1 **most likely** agree?
- Ⓐ Studying otters is interesting.
 - Ⓑ Spending the day at the zoo is boring.
 - Ⓒ Otters and humans are alike in many ways.
 - Ⓓ Other creatures at the zoo are more exciting than otters.
17. According to Passage 2, why do the first signs of water pollution appear in otters?
- Ⓐ because their fur is thick
 - Ⓑ because they are small animals
 - Ⓒ because they are playful animals
 - Ⓓ because their homes are in water
18. Based on Passage 2, how does oil spilled from broken pipes **mainly** cause danger to otters?
- Ⓐ by burning their fur
 - Ⓑ by making the algae sticky
 - Ⓒ by heating up the air they breathe
 - Ⓓ by making the land and water dirty

19. Which part of Passage 2 describes where sea otters sleep?
- Ⓐ Home Sweet Home
 - Ⓑ Threats to Home
 - Ⓒ Help Is on the Way!
 - Ⓓ Help Is Here to Stay!
20. Based on details from **both** passages, why does blue-green algae affect more sea otters than river otters?
- Ⓐ Only sea otters swim in water with this algae.
 - Ⓑ Only sea otters eat clams that may contain this algae.
 - Ⓒ Only sea otters can roam on land where the algae grows.
 - Ⓓ Only sea otters sleep in kelp beds that may contain crabs.

THIS IS THE END OF THIS SESSION.
DO NOT GO ON TO THE NEXT SESSION.



English Language Arts/Literacy Session 2

DIRECTIONS

Today you will take a test in writing and language. For this test, you will read passages and answer questions. Some questions might ask about how to improve the passage. Other questions might ask you to correct errors in the passage. Some of the questions may look different from test questions you have seen before, and some may ask about material that is new to you, but it is important to do your best. If you are not sure of the answer to a question, you should still try to answer it.

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

Bernie Bakes

1. Mornings and afternoons were Bernie's favorite parts of the week. 2. Bernie would often stop and look at the treats in the window. 3. Mr. Costello would proudly display his freshly baked goods there for everyone to see. 4. Bernie wanted to try all of them. 5. As Bernie walked to and from school, he would pass by Mr. Costello's bakery.

6. One day after school, Bernie neared the bakery and noticed many colorful cupcakes. 7. Mr. Costello had used special icing to make rainbow cupcakes.

8. As Bernie came to the bakery's open door, he could smell treats baking in the ovens. 9. This scent reminded him that his favorite teacher, Mrs. Torres, loved sweets. 10. She had helped him with his work after school, and Bernie had been thinking about a good way to thank her. 11. He decided that he would make a beautiful cupcake for her.

12. When Bernie entered the bakery, Mr. Costello was decorating a chocolate cake. 13. He was drawing a group of flowers in pink icing around the base of the cake.

14. "How can I help you?" Mr. Costello asked Bernie.

15. "I want to make my teacher a cupcake for a present Bernie answered eagerly.

16. "Can you show me how?"

17. Mr. Costello smiles at Bernie. 18. "I am always happy to help a young baker!"

19. Mr. Costello showed Bernie how to carefully decorate cupcakes. 20. Bernie watched as Mr. Costello made animal faces on the sweet treats using candies and icing.

21. Then it was Bernie's turn. 22. With Mr. Costello's help, Bernie made a perfect cupcake for Mrs. Torres. 23. He could not wait to give her the yellow cupcake with blue frosting and white jelly bean clouds. 24. He knew she would enjoy this delicious gift.

"Bernie Bakes" © 2017 by Cognia, Inc.

21. Where should the writer move sentence 5 to show the correct order of events in the story?

- Ⓐ before sentence 1
- Ⓑ before sentence 2
- Ⓒ before sentence 3
- Ⓓ before sentence 4

22. Read this sentence.

6. One day after school, Bernie neared the bakery and noticed many colorful cupcakes.

Which set of words in sentence 6 helps to show the order of events in the story?

- Ⓐ One day
- Ⓑ Bernie neared
- Ⓒ the bakery
- Ⓓ noticed many

This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.

23. Read this sentence.

10. She had helped him with his work after school, and Bernie had been thinking about a good way to thank her.

How does sentence 10 help the reader understand the events of the story?

- Ⓐ by explaining why Bernie enjoys sweets
- Ⓑ by explaining why Bernie walks by the bakery
- Ⓒ by explaining why Bernie wants to give his teacher a present
- Ⓓ by explaining why Bernie likes looking at the treats in the window

Which sentence from the story **best** shows that the answer above is correct?

- Ⓐ "Mr. Costello would proudly display his freshly baked goods there for everyone to see."
- Ⓑ "He was drawing a group of flowers in pink icing around the base of the cake."
- Ⓒ "Bernie watched as Mr. Costello made animal faces on the sweet treats using candies and icing."
- Ⓓ "With Mr. Costello's help, Bernie made a perfect cupcake for Mrs. Torres."

24. Read this sentence.

15. "I want to make my teacher a cupcake for a present Bernie answered eagerly."

What is the correct way to write sentence 15?

- Ⓐ "I want to make my teacher a cupcake for a present. Bernie answered eagerly."
- Ⓑ "I want to make my teacher a cupcake for a present, Bernie answered eagerly."
- Ⓒ "I want to make my teacher a cupcake for a present," Bernie answered eagerly.
- Ⓓ "I want to make my teacher a cupcake for a present Bernie answered eagerly."

25. Read this sentence.

17. Mr. Costello smiles at Bernie.

What is the correct way to write the underlined word in sentence 17?

- Ⓐ is smiling
- Ⓑ smile
- Ⓒ smiled
- Ⓓ will smile

26. Read this sentence.

23. He could not wait to give her the yellow cupcake with blue frosting and white jelly bean clouds.

How should the underlined word in sentence 23 be written?

- Ⓐ claudes
- Ⓑ clauds
- Ⓒ cloudes
- Ⓓ clouds

Read the passage. Then answer the questions that follow.

The History of Skateboarding

1. Have you ever ridden a skateboard? **2.** A skateboard has a deck with wheels on the bottom for riding and doing tricks.

3. About 100 years ago, people used skateboards, and so they were very different from the ones people use now. **4.** They were made from wooden boxes and roller skate wheels. **5.** Over the years, skateboards have changed. **6.** They have become safer and easier to ride.

7. In the 1950s, skateboards were made like those made today, with a deck and four wheels. **8.** At that time, the wheels were made of clay. **9.** They were slippery like ice and unsteady. **10.** They did not grip well to sidewalks and other places people skated. **11.** In the 1970s, companies changed the materials they used. **12.** Now the wheels were made of a material that was more like rubber. **13.** More people became interested and took up skateboarding as a hobby. **14.** In the 1990s, skateboarding became very popular. **15.** People thought up new tricks to show off on skateboards.

16. People's love for skateboarding keeps growing today. **17.** Many towns and cities have built special parks for skateboarders. **18.** There is one more important thing that people who are interested in skateboarding should remember. **19.** Skateboards are built better now than before, but people can still fall. **20.** For things to wear, they should always wear helmets, knee pads, and gloves. **21.** Then, they will be ready to learn and have fun.

"The History of Skateboarding" © 2020 by Cognia, inc.

27. At the beginning of the passage, the writer wants to help the reader imagine the topic. Which sentence would be **best** to add after sentence 2?

- Ⓐ You may have seen people skateboarding in parks or in skateboarding contests.
- Ⓑ You know a garage is a place to put skateboards and bicycles.
- Ⓒ People go from place to place during the day.
- Ⓓ There are many kinds of things with wheels.

28. Read this sentence.

3. About 100 years ago, people used skateboards, and so they were very different from the ones people use now.

How should the underlined words in sentence 3 be changed to **best** bring the writer's ideas together?

- Ⓐ but
- Ⓑ if
- Ⓒ later
- Ⓓ unless

29. Read these sentences.

9. They were slippery like ice and unsteady. 10. They did not grip well to sidewalks and other places people skated.

What does the word unsteady mean as it is used in sentence 9?

- Ⓐ bumpy
- Ⓑ heavy
- Ⓒ leaky
- Ⓓ shaky

30. Read this sentence.

People could stop, turn, and move more easily on them.

Where should this sentence be placed in the passage to **best** show how skateboards have changed?

- Ⓐ after sentence 8
- Ⓑ after sentence 9
- Ⓒ after sentence 10
- Ⓓ after sentence 12

31. Read this sentence.

15. People thought up new tricks to show off on skateboards.

How should the underlined part of sentence 15 be changed to **best** explain how skateboarding became popular?

- Ⓐ that made them better at skateboarding.
- Ⓑ that brought more changes to skateboarding.
- Ⓒ that made skateboarding more exciting to watch.
- Ⓓ that proved skateboarding had become simple to do.

This question has two parts. Be sure to answer both parts of the question.

32. Read this sentence.

20. For things to wear, they should always wear helmets, knee pads, and gloves.

How should the underlined part of sentence 20 be changed to **best** join the writer's ideas in the last paragraph?

- Ⓐ For safety
- Ⓑ To follow the rules
- Ⓒ On older skateboards
- Ⓓ For extra power on skateboards

Which words from the passage **best** support the correct answer above?

- Ⓐ "They were made from wooden boxes"
- Ⓑ "More people became interested"
- Ⓒ "towns and cities have built special parks"
- Ⓓ "but people can still fall"

You are now going to read two short passages and respond to a writing task. First, read the following passage about events that are happening at a school and then read a page from that school's newsletter.

Passage 1

Lots to Do!

- 1 As soon as the bell rang, Lupe grabbed her backpack and headed for the front door of the school. It was Friday, and she was excited about the weekend ahead.
- 2 She saw her older brother, Marcos, waiting for her at the front door. He was leaning against the wall reading something. He seemed very interested in it.
- 3 "What are you reading?" Lupe asked as she walked toward him.
- 4 "The school newsletter," Marcos replied.
- 5 "What's that?" Lupe said curiously.
- 6 "It's something the school sends out every month to tell about events that are coming up," Marcos said as he showed her the piece of paper. "There are lots of things to do."
- 7 "Like what?" Lupe asked as they began walking home.
- 8 "Well, Principal Hernandez is having lunch with the third graders this month," he said. "My friend Eloy went last month and he said it was really fun. Principal Hernandez told the students about his black Lab puppy, Angus, and they got to tell him all about their pets."
- 9 "But I'm not in third grade," Lupe said frowning. "Is there anything I can do?"
- 10 "Sure," Marcos said. "There's a soccer match tomorrow afternoon on the field behind the school. You like soccer."
- 11 Lupe nodded her head excitedly. "I love watching soccer. I like to cheer when my team gets a goal. I always bring my umbrella in case it's too hot or it rains. What else is happening?"
- 12 "Next Wednesday after school, Mrs. Carmen is going to read *Adelita: A Mexican Cinderella Story* in the reading corner," Marcos said. "She's going to be in costume dressed as Adelita."
- 13 Lupe smiled. She remembered her mother reading that story to her when she was younger.
- 14 "And look at this!" Marcos said, pointing to the bottom of the page. "Later this month, there will be a field trip to the Museum of Navajo Art and Culture."
- 15 "What's that?" Lupe asked.

- 16 "It's a place where you can learn about the culture and history of the Navajo people," Marcos explained. "They also have Navajo art on display, like woven pictures and rugs. Sometimes the artists come to the museum to teach people how they made their art."
- 17 Lupe could hardly wait for Marcos to tell her about the next event. But suddenly they were standing in front of their house. She had been so eager to listen to Marcos that she hadn't realized how far they'd walked.
- 18 "Is that all?" she asked.
- 19 "There are plenty more events," Marcos said, handing her the newsletter. "But you'll need to read about them yourself. I have to go to soccer practice."
- 20 Lupe skipped quickly down the driveway clutching the newsletter in her hand. She couldn't wait to tell her mom about everything she wanted to do!

"Lots to Do!" © 2020 by Cognia, Inc.

Now read about the events happening at Marcos and Lupe's school.

Passage 2



Upcoming Events This Fall: Fun for Students!

Attention Third Graders!

Come have lunch with Principal Hernandez in the lunchroom this month!



WHEN: Thursdays in October

WHERE: Lunchroom

Come Support Your Teams!

Soccer Match



WHO: Blue Team vs. Green Team

WHEN: Saturday, October 3, 2:00 p.m.

WHERE: Soccer Field

Adelita: A Mexican Cinderella Story

Adelita: A Mexican Cinderella Story
by Tomie dePaola



Come see Mrs. Carmen dressed as Adelita and to hear this wonderful story!

WHEN: Wednesday, October 7, After School

WHERE: Reading Corner

All students welcome!

Field Trip!

Museum of Navajo Art & Culture

WHEN: Monday, October 19,
9:00 a.m.–12:00 p.m.

WHERE: Museum of Navajo Art & Culture

Come experience the culture,
history, and art of the Navajo people!

Free to all students.
Sign up in the main office.

More Events!

- **School Assembly, October 5:** Hot-air balloon from the Albuquerque International Balloon Fiesta lands on the soccer field.
- **Birthday Party, October 8:** Come wish Miss Lombardo a happy birthday after school in room 13.
- **Family Game Night, October 15, 6:00 p.m.–8:00 p.m.:**
All students and family members welcome. Come play games with your classmates and their families!
- **School Assembly, October 22:** A local animal doctor joins us to talk and answer questions about the state bird, the roadrunner.
- **Baby Shower, October 26:** Mr. and Mrs. Alvarez have a new son! Come celebrate after school in room 17.
- **Hat Day, October 30:** Wear your favorite hat to school!

"Farmington Elementary School Newsletter" © 2020 by Cognia, Inc.

- 33.** Now read the writing task and draft a response. As you write, think about what makes your writing the best it can be.

My Best Writing

Stays on topic and pays attention to all parts of the writing task
Includes details and examples to support ideas
Is clearly organized
Makes word choices that are well suited to the task
Uses simple, compound, and complex sentences with correct capitalization, punctuation, and spelling

Writing Task

You have read a story about students reading a school newsletter. You have also read a page from that newsletter. The newsletter lists many exciting school events. Pick one of these events or another event that might happen at a school. Write a story to share with your class. Tell about a real or imaginary time when you or someone else went to a school event. Use ideas from what you have read, along with your own ideas, to write your story.

Today you will be writing a narrative. When you write a narrative, you

- tell about real or imaginary events.
- think about the characters you want to introduce.
- put events in an order that makes sense.
- use details and dialogue to make the events and characters interesting.
- think about how your story can affect the feelings of your reader.

After you have read the passages, and before you begin writing, think about

- who your narrative will be about.
- what events you want your narrative to include.
- when and where the events in your narrative happen.
- why the people in your narrative think and act as they do.

Now write your response in the space provided.

Handwriting practice area with 25 horizontal lines.

A large rectangular area with horizontal red lines for writing.

THIS IS THE END OF THIS SESSION.



NM-MSSA ELA

PRACTICE TEST ANSWER KEY

Grade 3

Item Number	Key	Standards
Session 1 READING		
1	B	RL.3.6 Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.
2	C	RL.3.7 Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
3	B	RL.3.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.
4	C	RL.3.7 Explain how specific aspects of a text's illustrations contribute to what is conveyed by the words in a story (e.g., create mood, emphasize aspects of a character or setting).
5	A	RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for answers.
6	A;C	RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
7	B	RL.3.9 Compare and contrast the themes, settings, and plots of stories written by the same author about the same or similar characters (e.g., in books from a series).
8	B	RL.3.4 Determine the meaning of words and phrases as they are used in a text, distinguishing literal from nonliteral language.
9	C	RL.3.3 Describe characters in a story (e.g., their traits, motivations, or feelings) and explain how their actions contribute to the sequence of events.
10	A,C	RL.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for answers.
11	B	RL.3.6 Distinguish their own point of view from that of the narrator or those of the characters.

Practice Test Answer Key • Grade 3 ELA

Item Number	Key	Standards
12	C	RL.3.5 Refer to parts of stories, dramas, and poems when writing or speaking about a text, using terms such as chapter, scene, and stanza; describe how each successive part builds on earlier sections.
13	A;D	RL.3.2 Recount stories, including fables, folktales, and myths from diverse cultures; determine the central message, lesson, or moral and explain how it is conveyed through key details in the text.
14	D	RI.3.4 Determine the meaning of general academic and domain-specific words and phrases in a text relevant to a <i>grade 3 topic or subject area</i> .
15	C; B	RI.3.8 Describe the logical connection between particular sentences and paragraphs in a text (e.g., comparison, cause/effect, first/second/third in a sequence).
16	A	RI.3.6 Distinguish their own point of view from that of the author of a text.
17	B	RI.3.1 Ask and answer questions to demonstrate understanding of a text, referring explicitly to the text as the basis for the answers.
18	D	RI.3.3 Describe the relationship between a series of historical events, scientific ideas or concepts, or steps in technical procedures in a text, using language that pertains to time, sequence, and cause/effect.
19	A	RI.3.5 Use text features and search tools (e.g., key words, sidebars, hyperlinks) to locate information relevant to a given topic efficiently.
20	B	RI.3.2 Determine the main idea of a text; recount the key details and explain how they support the main idea.
Session 2 WRITING AND LANGUAGE		
21	B	W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. a) Establish a situation and introduce a narrator and/or characters; organize an event sequence that unfolds naturally.
22	A	W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. c) Use temporal words and phrases to signal event order.

Practice Test Answer Key • Grade 3 ELA

Item Number	Key	Standards
23	C; D	<p>W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences. b) Use dialogue and descriptions of actions, thoughts, and feelings to develop experiences and events or show the response of characters to situations.</p>
24	C	<p>L.3.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. c) Use commas and quotation marks in dialogue.</p>
25	C	<p>L.3.1 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English grammar and usage when writing or speaking. e) Form and use the simple (e.g., <i>I walked</i>; <i>I walk</i>; <i>I will walk</i>) verb tenses.</p>
26	D	<p>L.3.2 Demonstrate command of the conventions of standard English capitalization, punctuation, and spelling when writing. f) Use spelling patterns and generalizations (e.g., <i>word families</i>, <i>position-based spellings</i>, <i>syllable patterns</i>, <i>ending rules</i>, <i>meaningful word parts</i>) in writing words.</p>
27	A	<p>W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a) Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.</p>
28	A	<p>W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. c) Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>also</i>, <i>another</i>, <i>and</i>, <i>more</i>, <i>but</i>) to connect ideas within categories of information.</p>
29	D	<p>L.3.4 Determine or clarify the meaning of unknown and multiple-meaning word and phrases based on grade 3 reading and content, choosing flexibly from a range of strategies. a) Use sentence-level context as a clue to the meaning of a word or phrase.</p>
30	D	<p>W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. a) Introduce a topic and group related information together; include illustrations when useful to aiding comprehension.</p>
31	C	<p>W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. b) Develop the topic with facts, definitions, and details.</p>

Practice Test Answer Key • Grade 3 ELA

Item Number	Key	Standards
32	A; D	W.3.2 Write informative/explanatory texts to examine a topic and convey ideas and information clearly. c) Use linking words and phrases (e.g., <i>also</i> , <i>another</i> , <i>and</i> , <i>more</i> , <i>but</i>) to connect ideas within categories of information.
33	NA	W.3.3 Write narratives to develop real or imagined experiences or events using effective technique, descriptive details, and clear event sequences.

Production of Writing: NM-MSSA Narrative Writing Rubric (Grades 3–5)				
	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
	The Writing:			
Development/ Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents a narrative that develops real or imagined experiences or events that consistently address the task. Develops the narrative using consistently descriptive details. Uses consistently effective and varied narrative techniques (dialogue, description, pacing)* to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents a narrative that develops real or imagined experiences or events that generally address the task. Develops the narrative using mostly descriptive details. Uses generally effective and somewhat varied narrative techniques (dialogue, description, pacing)* to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents a narrative that develops real or imagined experiences or events that partially address the task. Develops the narrative using some descriptive details. Uses partially effective and/or limited narrative techniques (dialogue, description, pacing)* to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to present a narrative that develops real or imagined experiences or events but minimally addresses the task. Attempts to develop the narrative but uses few descriptive details, if any. Attempts to use narrative techniques (dialogue, description, pacing)* to develop experiences and events or show the responses of characters to situations, but these are not effective and/or varied.
Organization/ Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Effectively orients the reader by clearly establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters. Consistently organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally. Provides a conclusion that clearly follows from the narrated experiences or events. Consistently demonstrates effective use of a wide variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Adequately orients the reader by generally establishing a situation and introducing a narrator and/or characters. Generally organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally. Provides a conclusion that generally follows from the narrated experiences or events. Generally demonstrates effective use of a variety of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to orient the reader by partially establishing a situation and/or introducing a narrator and/or characters. Partially organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally. Provides a conclusion that partially follows from the narrated experiences or events. Sometimes demonstrates varied and effective use of transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.* 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May attempt to orient the reader by minimally establishing a situation and/or introducing a narrator and/or characters. Minimally organizes an event sequence that unfolds naturally. Provides a conclusion that minimally follows or does not follow from the narrated experiences or events. Rarely demonstrates/does not demonstrate use of varied or effective transitional words and phrases to manage the sequence of events.*
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently uses concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Frequently uses concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes uses concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely uses/does not use concrete words and phrases and sensory details to convey experiences and events.

Use of Conventions: NM-MSSA Conventions Rubric (Grades 3–8)			
	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
	The Writing:		
Grammar/ Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English grammar and usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English grammar and usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little command of standard English grammar and usage.
Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have minor or infrequent errors that do not interfere with meaning or confuse the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have errors or patterns of errors that somewhat interfere with meaning or confuse the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have errors that interfere with meaning or confuse the reader.

*Specific expectations vary by grade.

Production of Writing: NM-MSSA Informative Writing Rubric (Grades 3–5)				
	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
	The Writing:			
Development/ Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents ideas that thoroughly address the task. Substantially develops the topic with consistently pertinent facts, definitions, details, examples, and other information from relevant sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents ideas that generally address the task. Generally develops the topic with mostly pertinent facts, definitions, details, examples, and other information from relevant sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents ideas that partially address the task. Partially develops the topic with some pertinent facts, definitions, details, examples, and other information from relevant sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Presents ideas that minimally address the task. Minimally develops the topic with few pertinent facts, definitions, details, examples, and other information from relevant sources.
Organization/ Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and consistently maintains an organizational plan focused on a controlling or central idea. Introduces the topic clearly and provides a concluding statement or section consistently related to the information presented. Consistently uses linking words and phrases effectively to connect ideas within categories of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and generally maintains an organizational plan focused on a controlling or central idea. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section generally related to the information presented. Generally uses linking words and phrases effectively to connect ideas within categories of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to establish and partially maintains an organizational plan focused on a controlling or central idea. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section partially related to the information presented. Sometimes uses linking words and phrases effectively to connect ideas within categories of information. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May attempt to establish but does not maintain an organizational plan focused on a controlling or central idea. May be missing an introduction and/or a concluding statement or section that is related to the information presented. Rarely uses/does not use linking words and phrases effectively to connect ideas within categories of information.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently uses precise language and varied vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often uses precise language and varied vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes uses precise language and varied vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely uses/does not use precise language or varied vocabulary to inform about or explain the topic.

Use of Conventions: NM-MSSA Conventions Rubric (Grades 3–8)			
	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
	The Writing:		
Grammar/ Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English grammar and usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English grammar and usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little command of standard English grammar and usage.
Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have minor or infrequent errors that do not interfere with meaning or confuse the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have errors or patterns of errors that somewhat interfere with meaning or confuse the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. Has errors or patterns of errors that interfere with meaning or confuse the reader.

Production of Writing: NM-MSSA Opinion Writing Rubric (Grades 3–5)				
	Score Point 4	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
	The Writing:			
Development/ Content	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that fully addresses the topic. Substantially supports the opinion with consistently pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that generally addresses the topic. Generally supports the opinion with mostly pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that partially addresses the topic. Partially supports the opinion with some pertinent facts and details from relevant sources. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Expresses an opinion that only minimally addresses the topic or does not explicitly express an opinion. Minimally supports the opinion with few pertinent facts and details from relevant sources.
Organization/ Focus	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and consistently maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are consistently grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic clearly and provides a concluding statement or section consistently related to the opinion presented. Consistently demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Establishes and generally maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are generally grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section generally related to the opinion presented. Generally demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Attempts to establish and partially maintains an organizational plan in which related ideas are only sometimes grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. Introduces the topic and provides a concluding statement or section partially related to the opinion presented. Sometimes demonstrates effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> May attempt to establish but does not maintain an organizational plan; related ideas are rarely grouped/not grouped logically to support the writer's purpose. May be missing an introduction and/or a concluding statement or section that is related to the opinion presented. Rarely demonstrates/does not demonstrate any effective use of words and phrases to link the opinion and reasons.
Language	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Consistently uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Often uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Sometimes uses precise language and varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Rarely uses/does not use precise language or varied vocabulary when supporting a point of view with reasons.

Use of Conventions: NM-MSSA Conventions Rubric (Grades 3–8)			
	Score Point 3	Score Point 2	Score Point 1
	The Writing:		
Grammar/ Usage	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English grammar and usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English grammar and usage. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little command of standard English grammar and usage.
Mechanics	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates general command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have minor or infrequent errors that do not interfere with meaning or confuse the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates partial command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have errors or patterns of errors that somewhat interfere with meaning or confuse the reader. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Demonstrates little command of standard English conventions relative to the length and complexity of the text. May have errors that interfere with meaning or confuse the reader.