Tennessee Comprehensive Assessment Program

TCAP

English II
Grade HS Item Release

TN Department of Education

TN0059557

Read the passages and answer the questions that follow.

Passage 1

Excerpt from "Over-Practicing Makes Perfect"

by Annie Murphy Paul

1 "Why do I have to keep practicing? I *know* it already!" That's the familiar wail of a child seated at the piano or in front of the multiplication table (or, for that matter, of an adult taking a tennis lesson). Cognitive science has a persuasive retort: We don't just need to learn a task in order to perform it well; we need to *overlearn* it. Decades of research have shown that superior performance requires practicing *beyond* the point of mastery. The perfect execution of a piano sonata or a tennis serve doesn't mark the end of practice; it signals that the crucial part of the session is just getting underway.

2 Evidence of why this is so was provided by a study published recently in the *Journal of Neuroscience*. Assistant professor Alaa Ahmed and two of her colleagues in the integrative physiology department at the University of Colorado-Boulder asked study subjects to move a cursor on a screen by manipulating a robotic arm. As they did so, the researchers measured the participants' energy expenditure by analyzing how much oxygen they inhaled and how much carbon dioxide they breathed out. When the subjects first tackled the exercise, they used up a lot of metabolic power, but this decreased as their skill improved. By the end of the learning process, the amount of effort they expended to carry out the task had declined about 20 percent from when they started.

3 Whenever we learn to make a new movement, Ahmed explains, we form and then update an internal model — a "sensorimotor map" — which our nervous system uses to predict our muscles' motions and the resistance they will encounter. As that internal model is refined over time, we're able to cut down on unnecessary movements and eliminate wasted energy.

4 Over the course of a practice session, the subjects in Ahmed's study were becoming more efficient in their muscle activity. But that wasn't the whole story. Energy expenditures continued to decrease even after the decline in muscle activity had stabilized. In fact, Ahmed and her coauthors report, this is when the greatest reductions in metabolic power were observed — during the very time when it looks to an observer, and to the participant herself, as if "nothing is happening."

5 What's going on here? Ahmed theorizes that even after participants had fine-tuned their muscle movements, the neural processes controlling the movements continued to grow more efficient. The brain uses up energy, too, and through

overlearning it can get by on less. These gains in mental efficiency free up resources for other tasks: infusing the music you're playing with greater emotion and passion, for example, or keeping closer track of your opponent's moves on the other side of the tennis court. Less effort in one domain means more energy available to others.

6 While Ahmed's paper didn't address the application of overlearning to the classroom or the workplace, other studies have demonstrated that for a wide range of academic and professional activities, overlearning reduces the amount of mental effort required, leading to better performance — especially under high-stakes conditions. In fact, research on the "audience effect" shows that once we've overlearned a complex task, we actually perform it *better* when other people are watching. When we haven't achieved the reduction of mental effort that comes with overlearning, however, the additional stress of an audience makes stumbles more likely.

TN0059627

Passage 2

Excerpt from “Practice Doesn’t Make Perfect”

by Maria Konnikova

7 Zach Hambrick has always been fascinated by exceptional performance, or what he calls “the extremes of human capabilities.” Growing up, he’d devour *Guinness World Records*, noting the feats it described and picturing himself proudly posing in its pages. By the time he reached college, though, he’d moved on to a new obsession: becoming a golf pro. “I was very serious about it,” he told me. “I practiced religiously. It was very deliberate practice.” Every day, for hours, he’d be out swinging and putting. He expected to find himself on his way to glory. Except it didn’t quite work out that way.

8 Instead, young Zach was confronted with an uncomfortable truth: “I just wasn’t very good.” He saw other students, even kids around town — many of them, far less devoted and far less driven — and many of them played a better game. When he tried out for the college team, he didn’t even come close to making it. “I thought, what is the deal here?”

9 This was Hambrick’s introduction to an ageold debate: nature versus nurture, genetics versus effort. We’ve been having it long before we knew what DNA was. Right around the same time Gregor Mendel was messing about with his famous peas, Francis Galton was positing that genius tends to run in families. Take almost any enterprise and find its most famous voices, he argued, and you’re led to family trees of great accomplishment, much like his own. . . . And, while that view hasn’t survived in its extreme form, the basic question still guides modern research — not nature versus nurture so much as just how *much* nature, and just how *much* nurture?

10 After finishing college, Hambrick began graduate work in psychology at Georgia Tech, with Timothy Salthouse, looking at aging and expertise in older adults. Despite his failures at golf, Hambrick was still very much of the belief that, given enough effort, you could reach excellence. Maybe golf just hadn’t been the right thing for him. In 1996, when the Olympics came to Atlanta, the students had to leave campus to make way for the athletes and visitors, and Salthouse suggested that Hambrick spend a few months at Florida State University. There, he ended up working with Anders Ericsson, a professor of psychology. A couple of years earlier, Ericsson and Neil Charness had published a provocative paper arguing that training and socalled deliberate practice could describe performance differences that had been previously ascribed to innate talent. “The traditional view of talent, which concludes that successful individuals have special innate abilities and basic capacities, is not consistent with the reviewed evidence,” Ericsson and Charness wrote. “Differences between expert and less accomplished

performers reflect acquired knowledge and skills or physiological adaptations effected by training, with the only confirmed exception being height." In other words, training was everything. Hambrick *could* have become a worldclass golfer with enough practice. Maybe he'd given up too soon. . . .

11 If that's true, it means that the sky is the limit, especially if you're dealing with areas other than athletics, where length of bones can offer no competitive edge. Follow your dreams and, with enough training — an average of ten thousand hours, as the famous formulation goes — you can reach them, whether they involve golf or poetry. (It's important to note here that Malcolm Gladwell, who popularized Ericsson's work in his book *Outliers*, takes a much more nuanced position and has argued that practice isn't sufficient. "I could play chess for 100 years and I'll never be a grandmaster," he has written. "The point is simply that natural ability requires a huge investment of time in order to be made manifest.") . . .

TN0073504_2

00. Why does the author write in paragraph 2 that the “subjects first tackled the exercise”?

A. to show that the task took physical strength

B. to indicate that the task required great effort

C. to imply that the participants were student athletes

D. to suggest that the participants competed with one another

TN0073499_4:4

00. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

How does paragraph 2 help to develop the ideas presented in Passage 1?

A. It introduces the concept of overlearning a skill.

B. It explains what motivated the scientists to study overlearning.

C. It compares the study results with previous research on overlearning.

D. It gives a concrete example from the study of learning and overlearning.

Part B

Which phrase from paragraph 2 provides the best support for the answer to Part A?

A. ". . . move a cursor on a screen by manipulating a robotic arm. . . ."

B. "As they did so, the researchers measured the participants' energy expenditure . . ."

C. ". . . how much oxygen they inhaled and how much carbon dioxide they breathed out. . . ."

D. "By the end of the learning process, the amount of effort they expended to carry out the task had declined . . ."

TN0073501_2

00. Which word is closest in meaning to infusing as it is used in paragraph 5?

A. accomplishing

B. filling

C. sharing

D. producing

TN0073507_3,5

00. Select **two** ways that paragraph 6 contributes to the ideas the author develops in Passage 1.

A. It highlights the shortcomings of Ahmed's research.

B. It provides an analysis of the data that Ahmed gathered in her study.

C. It describes additional research that supports Ahmed's conclusions.

D. It summarizes the kinds of research that are being done in this field.

E. It offers evidence that Ahmed's research has practical applications.

TN0073496_2:2,5

00. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

Which statement **best** expresses a central idea of Passage 2?

A. Failure in one area can motivate people to seek improvement of skills in another area.

B. Training and practice may be the crucial factors in attaining mastery of a skill regardless of the level of natural ability.

C. Modern research on how to dramatically improve performance levels focuses on the influence of both environmental effects and heredity.

D. Sports and athletics are areas where simple dedication to practice will not ensure mastery.

Part B

Select **two** types of evidence that the author mainly uses to support the central idea identified in Part A.

A. performance data from individuals

B. anecdotes from one individual

C. historical data on family lineage

D. newspaper accounts about world-record holders

E. statements from researchers

TN0073505_2:3,5

00. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

What does the author mean in paragraph 11 when she writes that Malcolm Gladwell "takes a much more nuanced position"?

A. Gladwell refuses to take a stance on the talent versus practice debate.

B. Gladwell believes that it is not possible to consider the benefits of practice while excluding the notion of talent.

C. Gladwell would have advised Zach Hambrick to continue to practice until he reached expert proficiency.

D. Gladwell believes that talent alone is enough to achieve success.

Part B

Select **two** excerpts from paragraph 11 that, when considered together, **best** support the answer to Part A.

A. ". . . with enough training — an average of ten thousand hours, . . ."

B. ". . . you can reach them, . . ."

C. ". . . practice isn't sufficient."

D. "'. . . I'll never be a grandmaster, . . .'"

E. "'. . . natural ability requires a huge investment of time in order to be made manifest.'"

TN0073491_4

00. Which is the **best** objective summary of Passage 2?

A. Although a personal experience suggested natural ability was more important than training, Zach Hambrick continued to believe otherwise. Later, a scientific study proved training was the key to success.

B. At the same time that Gregor Mendel studied inherited characteristics, Francis Galton proposed the idea that genius runs in families. This idea has been discredited by modern research.

C. Success in athletic endeavors depends primarily on a person's physical characteristics, so solely possessing the determination to excel is not enough. Practice can improve a person's performance, but a person with talent will always perform better than an untalented person who frequently practices.

D. Research has found that training is the key element in skill difference, regardless of natural talent. However, some researchers still feel strongly that training alone is not enough to reach the highest skill levels.

TN0073514_2,4

00. Select **two** ideas with which **both** authors would **most likely** agree.

A. Outstanding achievement is due to a combination of hard work and innate talent.

B. Performers who do well have probably spent a considerable amount of time practicing.

C. An audience is an essential part of high performance.

D. Practicing a skill even after one has learned it well is the key to excellence.

E. Practice is especially effective for tasks that involve physical movement.

TN0030929

Read the passage and answer the questions that follow.

Excerpt from *Roots: Saga of an American Family*

by Alex Haley

1 It was the planting season, and the first rains were soon to come. On all their farming land, the men of Juffure had tall stacks of dry weeds and set them afire so that the light wind would nourish the soil by scattering the ashes. And the women in their rice fields were already planting green shoots in the mud.

2 Binta's rice plot had been attended by Grandma Yaisa, but now Binta was ready to resume her duties. With Kunta cradled across her back in a cotton sling, she walked with the other women — some of them, including her friend Jankay Touray, carrying their own newborns, along with the bundles they all balanced on their heads — to the dugout canoes on the bank of the village bolong, one of the main tributary canals that came twisting inland from the Gambia River, known as the Kamby Bolongo. The canoes went skimming down the bolong with five or six women in each one, straining against their short, broad paddles. Each time Binta bent forward to dip and pull, she felt Kunta's warm softness pressing against her back.

3 The air was heavy with the deep, musky fragrance of the mangroves, and with the perfumes of the other plants and trees that grew thickly on both sides of the bolong. Alarmed by the passing canoes, huge families of baboons, roused from sleep, began bellowing, springing about and shaking palm-tree fronds. Wild pigs grunted and snorted, running to hide themselves among the weeds and bushes. Covering the muddy banks, thousands of pelicans, cranes, egrets, herons, storks, gulls, terns, and spoonbills interrupted their breakfast feeding to watch nervously as the canoes glided by. Some of the smaller birds took to the air — ringdoves, skimmers, rails, darters, and kingfishers — circling with shrill cries until the intruders had passed.

4 As the canoes arrowed through rippling, busy patches of water, schools of minnows would leap up together, perform a silvery dance, and then splash back. Chasing the minnows, sometimes so hungrily that they flopped right into a moving canoe, were large, fierce fish that the women would club with their paddles and stow away for a succulent evening meal. But this morning the minnows swam around them undisturbed.

5 The twisting bolong took the rowing women around a turn into a wider tributary, and as they came into sight, a great beating of wings filled the air and a vast living carpet of seafowl — hundreds of thousands of them — rose and filled the sky. The surface of the water, darkened by the storm of birds and furrowed by their flapping wings, was flecked with feathers as the women paddled on.

6 As they neared the marshy faros where generations of Juffure women had grown their rice crops, the canoes passed through swarming clouds of mosquitoes and then, one after another, nosed in against a walkway of thickly matted weeds. The weeds bounded and identified each woman's plot, where by now the emerald shoots of young rice stood a hand's height above the water's surface.

7 Since the size of each woman's plot was decided each year by Juffure's Council of Elders, according to how many mouths each woman had to feed with rice, Binta's plot was still a small one. Balancing herself carefully as she stepped from the canoe with her new baby, Binta took a few steps and then stopped short, looking with surprise and delight at a tiny thatched-roofed bamboo hut on stilts. Omoro had come here and built it as a shelter for their son. Typical of men, he had said nothing about it.

8 Little Kunta basked thus every day in his mother's tenderness. Back in her hut each evening, after cooking and serving Omoro's dinner, Binta would soften her baby's skin by greasing him from head to toe with shea tree butter, and then — more often than not — she would carry him proudly across the village to the hut of Grandma Yaisa, who would bestow upon the baby still more cluckings and kissings. And both of them would set little Kunta to whimpering in irritation with their repeated pressings of his little head, nose, ears, lips, to shape them correctly.

9 Sometimes Omoro would take his son away from the women and carry the blanketed bundle to his own hut — husbands always resided separately from their wives — where he would let the child's eyes and fingers explore such attractive objects as the saphie charms at the head of Omoro's bed, placed there to ward off evil spirits. Anything colorful intrigued little Kunta — especially his father's leather huntsman's bag, nearly covered now with cowrie shells, each for an animal that Omoro had personally brought in as food for the village. And Kunta cooed over the long, curved bow and quiver of arrows hanging nearby. Omoro smiled when a tiny hand reached out and grasped the dark, slender spear whose shaft was polished from so much use. He let Kunta touch everything. And alone together in his hut, Omoro would talk to Kunta of the fine and brave deeds his son would do when he grew up.

10 Finally he would return Kunta to Binta's hut for the next nursing. Wherever he was, Kunta was happy most of the time, and he always fell asleep either with Binta rocking him on her lap or bending over him on her bed, singing softly such a lullaby as,

My smiling child,
Named for a noble ancestor.
Great hunter or warrior
You will be one day,

Which will give your papa pride.
But always I will remember you thus.

TN0035156_1:1,4

00. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

In paragraph 3, what does the author's choice of words emphasize about the plants and animals in the area?

A. They are abundant and varied.

B. They are mysterious and strange.

C. They can be harmed and exploited.

D. They can be dangerous and unexpected.

Part B

Which **two** phrases from paragraph 3 **best** support the answer to Part A?

A. "plants and trees that grew thickly on both sides"

B. "Alarmed by the passing canoes"

C. "bellowing, springing about and shaking palm-tree fronds"

D. "thousands of pelicans, cranes, egrets, herons, storks, gulls, terns, and spoonbills"

E. "circling with shrill cries until the intruders had passed"

TN0035161_3

00. What central idea is developed in paragraphs 7 to 10?

A. Binta must bear most of the responsibility for Kunta’s care.

B. Omoro is bound to have less influence than Binta in Kunta’s life.

C. Binta and Omoro show their devotion to Kunta in different ways.

D. Binta and Omoro may burden Kunta with their expectations of him.

TN0035155_1,5

00. Which **two** ideas about Binta does the author introduce in paragraph 2 and connect throughout the passage?

A. She has recently given birth.

B. She is admired by her friends.

C. She feels worried about Kunta.

D. She is reluctant to return to work.

E. She follows her community's customs.

TN0035152_2

00. Which sentence **best** states a theme of the passage?

A. Parents' lives change in dramatic ways when a child is born.

B. Parents experience great joy and delight with the birth of a child.

C. Children cannot understand their parents' hopes and expectations.

D. Children are influenced by their community as well as their parents.

TN0035163_4:4

00. The following item has two parts. Answer Part A and then answer Part B.

Part A

Which statement **best** describes how the narrator presents Binta in the passage?

A. She appreciates the beauty of nature.

B. She is an efficient farmer.

C. She enjoys socializing with neighbors.

D. She is an attentive mother.

Part B

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

A. “Binta’s rice plot had been attended by Grandma Yaisa, but now Binta was ready to resume her duties.” (paragraph 2)

B. “Since the size of each woman’s plot was decided each year by Juffure’s Council of Elders, according to how many mouths each woman had to feed with rice, Binta’s plot was still a small one.” (paragraph 7)

C. “Omoro had come here and built it as a shelter for their son.” (paragraph 7)

D. “Back in her hut each evening, after cooking and serving Omoro’s dinner, Binta would soften her baby’s skin by greasing him from head to toe . . .” (paragraph 8)

TN0035158_2

00. What central idea about Binta, Omoro, and Kunta is developed in the passage?

A. Binta is proud of Kunta, but Omoro fears Kunta will disappoint him.

B. While Binta enjoys Kunta’s infancy, Omoro dreams of Kunta’s future.

C. Binta knows how to care for Kunta, and Omoro learns from Binta how to care for him.

D. Although Binta’s life revolves around Kunta, Omoro thinks more about himself than about Kunta.

Metadata- English

Passage

Passage UIN	Grade	Passage Title	Lexile Level	Word Count
TN0059557	EN II	from “Over-Practicing Makes Perfect”	1240L	557
TN0059627	EN II	from “Practice Doesn’t Make Perfect”	1160L	602

Metadata Definitions:

Passage UIN	Unique letter/number code used to identify the passage(s) that go with this item.
Grade	Grade level or Course.
Passage Title	Title of the passage(s) associated with this item.
Lexile Level	Readability level for passage.
Word Count	Count of words in the passage.

Items

Page Number	UIN	Grade	Item Type	Key	DOK	TN Standards
5	TN0073504	EN II	MC	B	2	9-10.L.VAU.4a
6	TN0073499	EN II	Composite	D; D	2	9-10.RI.KID.3
7	TN0073501	EN II	MC	B	2	9-10.L.VAU.4a
8	TN0073507	EN II	MS	C,E	2	9-10.RI.KID.3
9	TN0073496	EN II	Composite	B; B,E	3	9-10.RI.KID.2
10	TN0073505	EN II	Composite	B; C,E	2	9-10.RI.KID.1
11	TN0073491	EN II	MC	D	2	9-10.RI.KID.2
12	TN0073514	EN II	MS	B,D	3	9-10.RI.KID.1

Metadata Definitions:

UIN	Unique letter/number code used to identify the item.
Grade	Grade level or Course.
Item Type	Indicates the type of item. MC= Multiple Choice; MS= Multiple Select
Key	Correct answer. This may be blank for constructed response items where students write or type their responses.

Metadata- English

Passage

Passage UIN	Grade	Passage Title	Lexile Level	Word Count
TN0030929	EN II	from Roots: Saga of an American Family	1400L	924

Metadata Definitions:

Passage UIN	Unique letter/number code used to identify the passage(s) that go with this item.
Grade	Grade level or Course.
Passage Title	Title of the passage(s) associated with this item.
Lexile Level	Readability level for passage.
Word Count	Count of words in the passage.

Items

Page Number	UIN	Grade	Item Type	Key	DOK	TN Standards
16	TN0035156	EN II	Composite	A; A,D	2	9-10.RL.CS.4
17	TN0035161	EN II	MC	C	2	9-10.RL.KID.2
18	TN0035155	EN II	MS	A,E	2	9-10.RL.KID.3
19	TN0035152	EN II	MC	B	3	9-10.RL.KID.2
20	TN0035163	EN II	Composite	D; D	3	9-10.RL.KID.1
21	TN0035158	EN II	MC	B	2	9-10.RL.KID.2

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Item Type	Indicates the type of item. MC= Multiple Choice; MS= Multiple Select
Key	Correct answer. This may be blank for constructed response items where students write or type their responses.
DOK	Depth of Knowledge (cognitive complexity) is measured on a three-point scale. 1 = Recall or simple reproduction of information; 2 = Skills and concepts: comprehension and processing of text; 3 = Strategic thinking, prediction, elaboration.
TN Standards	Primary educational standard assessed.