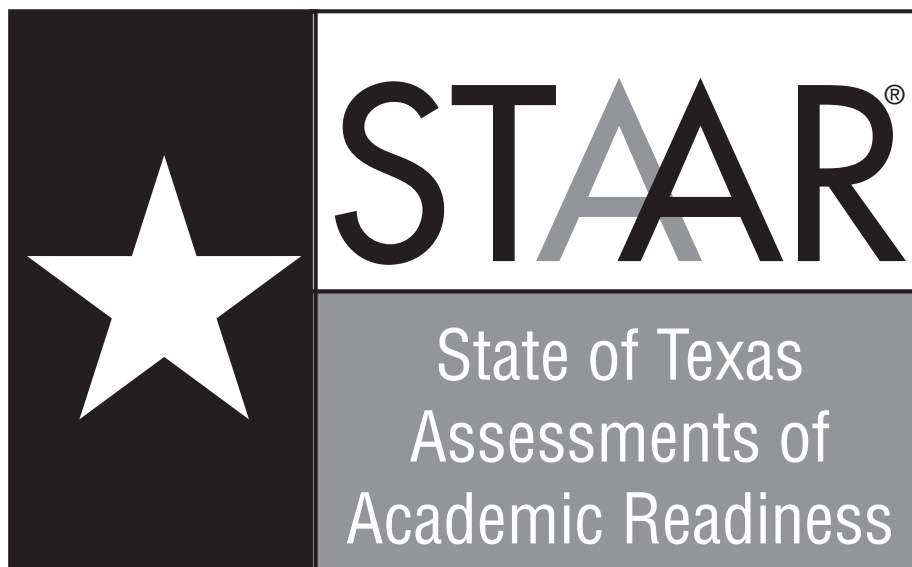


Texas STAAR 2021 Grade 5 Reading

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GRADE 5

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.**

Catalina and her father, who she calls Papá, live near the Cerro Tololo observatory located on the top of two mountains near La Serena, Chile. The observatory is home to a group of very large and powerful telescopes. Because the instruments on the telescopes are so delicate, the telescopes are kept in dome structures for protection.

Lace Round the Sky

by Cecilia Aragon



Adapted from "Lace Round the Sky" by Cecilia Aragon, art by Heidi Younger, Cricket, September 2014.

- 1 Catalina stood on the doorstep of the Cerro Tololo observatory staff housing, drinking in deep lungfuls of the clear night air under the blazing Southern Hemisphere starshine. The Milky Way sprawled across the sky, a swath of pure white lace shadowed by dark blotches.
- 2 Night was her favorite time. During the day the Chilean mountaintop swarmed with tourists, shouting and calling to each other as breezes spun dust into the thin mountain air. While the visitors were there, Papá could not allow her to help.
- 3 But at night, when everything was quiet, Catalina was one of the few who were allowed beyond the roped-off corridors and the "No Admittance" signs. The night staff all knew her.
- 4 She loved helping to service the grand telescopes, the eyes that peered out into the universe—even if it was annoying how she was always told not to disturb the astronomers who directed the telescopes through the night. Catalina wanted more than anything to confess her secret dream to these great and revered scientists.

5 When she said, "Papá, I want to be an astronomer someday," he laughed and tugged at one of her long black braids.

6 But Catalina was curious. The sky did not merely consist of white dots of stars against a black background. The sky she saw every night was knotted with patterns, from fuzzy balls of fluff to filaments.

7 No one believed she would be a scientist one day. But why? She knew she could be a good scientist. She knew it!

8 She danced along the dirt road, bare feet soundless against the gravel, a practiced eye scanning the half-dozen domes at the mountaintop's summit. Then she stopped suddenly. The one-meter telescope's dome slit was open, but its angle was unusual. Cautiously, she wandered nearer. The telescope was pointed down, almost at the ground, lower than she had ever seen it.

9 She bit her lip, shifting from foot to foot. The red light over the entrance door indicated that it was forbidden to enter and disturb the scientists at work.

10 Something was wrong, she was sure of it.

11 So, taking a deep breath, she turned the handle and slipped inside.

12 She took a cautious step forward and saw an irregular shape hunched on the floor.

13 She inhaled sharply. It was a man. Coming closer, she saw that one leg was bent under him at an awkward angle.

14 "Señor?" she whispered. "Are you all right?"

15 The man groaned. "Fell," he gasped in his accented Spanish, gesturing at the platform above. "I think . . . broke leg."

16 Catalina balanced on the balls of her feet. "I'll run and get the night operator," she promised, already backing toward the door.

17 "No!" His voice was sharp. "First, need to . . . fix the telescope."

18 Catalina's eyes lifted to the clock drive lit by a blinking yellow light. She had often helped her father reset this device. Quickly, she walked to the controller and flipped the two switches her father used to stop the telescope.



Adapted from "Lace Round the Sky" by Cecilia Aragon, art by Heidi Younger, Cricket, September 2014.

- 19 The man behind her was gasping out directions.
- 20 "Shh, it's all right," she soothed, coming to his side. "I fixed it. No more problems, OK?"
- 21 "You what . . . ?" he muttered, confused. "Already?" Then his head lolled to one side. Catalina jumped to her feet.
- 22 Her braids thumped her back rhythmically as she ran all the way to the night operator's office.
- 23 "Señor Rojas, there's an emergency," she called out as the big man swiveled his beat-up wooden chair to face her. "The astronomer using the one-meter had an accident. He fell and broke his leg. You need to get help!"
- 24 Later that night, Catalina crouched behind one of the junction boxes as the astronomer was carried out on a stretcher.
- 25 "Wait!" he called as he was about to be loaded into the ambulance. "Wait! Catalina! How did you know?" he asked.
- 26 "Know what?" she whispered, puzzled.
- 27 "That something was wrong."
- 28 She scuffed the dirt with her toe. "Um, I saw the barrel pointing down, and I knew . . . it wasn't normal."
- 29 His eyes sharpened. "That was observant of you."
- 30 Shyly, she nodded.
- 31 His gaze remained on her as they lifted the stretcher and began to slide it into the ambulance. "A good scientist," he continued, "is always observant."
- 32 That night, when she ran out under the stars, she called, "I'll discover all your secrets someday!" Circling above her, the intricate sky no longer seemed quite so remote.

Adapted from "Lace Round the Sky" by Cecilia Aragon, art by Heidi Younger, *Cricket*, September 2014.

- 1** In paragraph 4, why does the author use the figurative phrase “the eyes that peered out into the universe” to describe the telescopes?
- A** To suggest that telescopes are used to locate and watch over distant objects in space
 - B** To indicate that telescopes are used for watching certain people
 - C** To show that telescopes are delicate objects that need a lot of care and attention
 - D** To explain that telescopes should be used only by professional scientists
-

- 2** Which sentence from the story best describes Catalina’s main conflict?
- F** *While the visitors were there, Papá could not allow her to help.* (paragraph 2)
 - G** *No one believed she would be a scientist one day.* (paragraph 7)
 - H** *Catalina balanced on the balls of her feet.* (paragraph 16)
 - J** *Catalina’s eyes lifted to the clock drive lit by a blinking yellow light.* (paragraph 18)
-

- 3** The author includes the imagery in paragraph 1 most likely to highlight Catalina’s —
- A** loneliness in her mountain home
 - B** desire to spend time outside
 - C** appreciation of the nighttime
 - D** questions about the night sky

- 4** The story's third-person point of view helps the reader —
- F** identify what the astronomer in the dome feels
 - G** appreciate why the tourists enjoy visiting the observatory
 - H** understand why Catalina wants to spend time at the observatory
 - J** relate to the relationship between Catalina and her father
-

- 5** How does Catalina's observation of the telescope in paragraph 8 advance the plot of the story?
- A** It allows Catalina to express her feelings about scientific discovery.
 - B** It leads Catalina to identify a problem that she will resolve.
 - C** It hints that Catalina's actions will cause the main conflict.
 - D** It suggests that Catalina is unfamiliar with the observatory.

6 Read these sentences from paragraph 6.

The sky did not merely consist of white dots of stars against a black background. The sky she saw every night was knotted with patterns, from fuzzy balls of fluff to filaments.

What is the most likely reason the author includes figurative language in these sentences?

- F** To show that Catalina needs to use the telescope to see the sky clearly
 - G** To emphasize that Catalina knows the best time to study the stars
 - H** To emphasize that Catalina pays careful attention to the details of the stars
 - J** To show that Catalina does not understand what she sees in the night sky
-

7 Why is Catalina's experience with the injured scientist important to the plot?

- A** The experience helps explain why Catalina is only allowed to help her father at certain times.
- B** The experience shows that Catalina thinks she knows more about telescopes than the scientists.
- C** The experience tells details about how Catalina's father taught her about telescopes.
- D** The experience reveals a trait of Catalina's that will help her become a successful scientist.

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

The Hammock's Swaying History

- 1 Picture this: It's a warm summer day. All your chores are finished. You have the newest book by your favorite author. All you need is the perfect place to start reading. When you walk into the backyard, you see it. The hammock hanging between the two oak trees is exactly what you had in mind.



Relaxing in a hammock is a favorite pastime of many people.

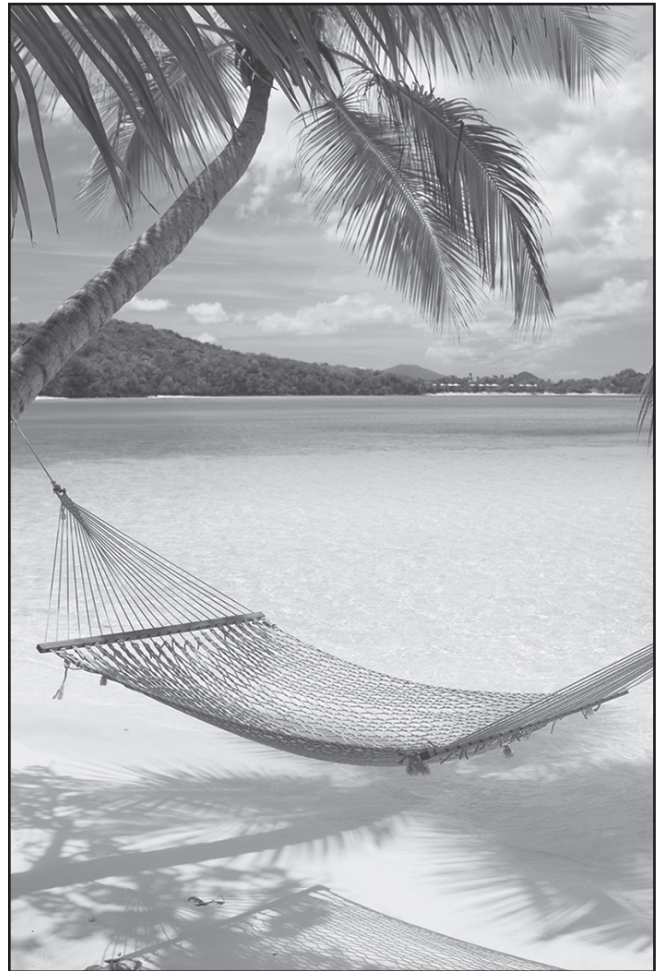
© iStock.com/naumoid.

- 2 People have been using hammocks for many years. The first people to create these swinging cots are the Taino. They are people native to the Caribbean and to Central and South America. The Taino made the hammocks by weaving together cotton, plant fibers, and tree bark. The word "hammock" comes from the Spanish word *hamaca*. Hammocks were likely named after the bark from the hamack tree from which they were first created.
- 3 European explorers came in search of the New World many years after the Taino had begun making hammocks. The explorers were impressed with the unique beds. Christopher Columbus spotted hammocks in the Caribbean in 1492. They made such an impact on him that he wrote about hammocks in his journals. Columbus admired how the hanging beds kept sleepers safe from the soggy ground and pesky forest animals. These portable beds were also easily moved. They were small enough when folded that they could fit in small spaces on ships. Columbus tested a hammock and found it to be comfortable and cool.
- 4 Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés was another explorer who was fascinated by hammocks. He arrived on the island of Hispaniola in 1514. He drew a picture of the knitted cotton rugs that natives hung between trees using twine strings. "Since the weather is warm, they require no covers at all," Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés later wrote about his findings.
- 5 By the middle of the 16th century, more sailors became interested in hammocks. These sailors used them on naval and merchant ships. The sailors made their hammocks out of sturdy canvas. However, this adapted version lacked the airflow of the woven versions and made sleeping in the heat below deck uncomfortable for the sailors.

6 Hammocks were soon exposed to the rest of the world. In 1889 a South Carolina riverboat captain named Joshua John Ward crafted a different type of hammock. He was interested in creating cool beds for his riverboat. He created hammocks out of cotton rope. His company still makes hammocks using the same materials.

7 Today hammocks are not just for relaxing. They are now part of a thrill-seeking sport known as extreme hammocking. In extreme hammocking athletes may string a hammock between large rocks. Some athletes hang the hammocks from the bottom of a bridge. Others might stack their hammocks between two trees. Athletes climb to their destination by using strong straps and special shoes. Wherever the location hammockers enjoy the challenges the climb brings.

Andy Lewis, an extreme-hammocking expert from Utah, said, "The experience speaks for itself. The joy is in the journey, rather than the destination."



Hammock Made with
Cotton Rope

© iStock.com/cdwheatley



Extreme Hammocking at Monte
Piana in Italy

© Aurora Photos/Alamy Stock Photo

8 Which sentence best supports the idea that hammocks have been used to help solve a problem?

- F** *The Taino made the hammocks by weaving together cotton, plant fibers, and tree bark.* (paragraph 2)
 - G** *Columbus admired how the hanging beds kept sleepers safe from the soggy ground and pesky forest animals.* (paragraph 3)
 - H** *Gonzalo Fernández de Oviedo y Valdés was another explorer who was fascinated by hammocks.* (paragraph 4)
 - J** *Today hammocks are not just for relaxing.* (paragraph 7)
-

9 Which sentence from the selection shows that Joshua John Ward was successful in choosing the design he used to create hammocks?

- A** *Hammocks were soon exposed to the rest of the world.* (paragraph 6)
- B** *He was interested in creating cool beds for his riverboat.* (paragraph 6)
- C** *He created hammocks out of cotton rope.* (paragraph 6)
- D** *His company still makes hammocks using the same materials.* (paragraph 6)

10 Read the dictionary entry for the word spot.

spot \ˈspät\ *verb*

- 1.** to locate something correctly
- 2.** to mark with a stain that discolors clothing
- 3.** to place something in a certain position
- 4.** to notice or identify with the eye

Which definition best matches the way the word spotted is used in paragraph 3?

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

11 What is the most likely reason the author includes the information in paragraph 7?

- A** To show the reader how to find creative ways to spend time
- B** To provide the reader with a reason that hammocks need to be strong
- C** To inform the reader of a different way that hammocks are used
- D** To tell the reader about the equipment needed for one sport

- 12** Based on information from paragraph 7, the reader can conclude that Andy Lewis —
- F** likes going on adventures
 - G** does not speak to other athletes on the journey
 - H** has not experienced any challenges on his journeys
 - J** has only been on one adventure
-

- 13** Which sentence suggests that hammocks were helpful to explorers who traveled by sea?
- A** *People have been using hammocks for many years. (paragraph 2)*
 - B** *They were small enough when folded that they could fit in small spaces on ships. (paragraph 3)*
 - C** *He drew a picture of the knitted cotton rugs that natives hung between trees using twine strings. (paragraph 4)*
 - D** *In 1889 a South Carolina riverboat captain named Joshua John Ward crafted a different type of hammock. (paragraph 6)*

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

Peace and Quiet

- 1 I hurried across the grass to the forest's edge. My shoulders relaxed as I followed the pine-needle path to my favorite spot—a grouping of large rocks beneath a giant evergreen tree.
- 2 Heaving a sigh of relief, I sat down on my special rock. In the distance I could see our house, but I knew that no one would know where to look for me. At last I had peace and quiet.
- 3 I lifted my guitar onto my knee and pressed my fingers onto the strings. I strummed and started to sing, "Lean on me, when you're not strong . . ." I moved my fingers to try to find the next chord and strummed again.
- 4 "Ugh, that sounds terrible," I mumbled.
- 5 I played the first chord and sang again, "Lean on me . . ." I grimaced in frustration when I struck the wrong chord. "Why can't I get this song right?" I wondered aloud.
- 6 "How's it going, Desha?"
- 7 Startled, I glanced over my shoulder and saw my brother James standing there.
- 8 "Don't you have a basketball game to watch?" I complained. So much for my perfect hideaway.
- 9 "The game was almost over when I noticed you left. I thought you might like some company."
- 10 "Company is the last thing I want. Can't I have a little peace and quiet? I left the house to escape you guys." I felt my throat tightening up.
- 11 James studied me for a moment. "It's tough having such a big family, isn't it?"
- 12 "Everyone's so nosy and always prying into my business. Yesterday I found Eliza looking through my journal, and now everyone is in the living room watching the game. All I wanted to do was watch a movie, but when I went to my room, Sara was there listening to the radio. I just want to be alone for a change."
- 13 James sighed as he sat on a rock.

- 14 "I felt the same way when I was your age," he said. "But now . . ."
- 15 "Now you have your own room." A trace of bitterness crept into my voice. "Once Daniel went off to college, you didn't have to share anymore."
- 16 James chuckled. "It is great to have my own room, but sometimes I really miss Daniel. We used to talk about everything at night—sports, school, friends, you name it. As crowded as it seemed at times, it was actually kind of comforting to have someone else there."
- 17 "Yeah, 'crowded' is right." I couldn't help but grin. "We are stuffed like feathers in a pillow in that house."
- 18 "I know," James said, laughing. "But there are some good things that come out of it—we share memories and jokes no one else understands, and when things get tough, we can always count on one another for support."
- 19 I sighed, running my hand along my guitar.
- 20 "Didn't Sara stay up half the night with you last week helping you with your homework?" James asked.
- 21 I shrugged and admitted unwillingly, "Yeah, sometimes she can be all right."
- 22 "So this spot here," James said, glancing around, "this can be your 'room.' Anytime you really need a solitary place, just come out here. I won't tell anyone about it."
- 23 "Doesn't matter. It seems anyone can find it," I said.
- 24 "Only if you know where to look," James replied, patting the rock he was sitting on. "I've known about it for a while."
- 25 I looked to the side of James's knee and saw the initials J.D.P. etched into the stone. "James Dawson Pruitt," I said.



26 James smiled. "This is a great spot for getting away. Now, how about that guitar chord you were trying to find?"

27 "You know guitar chords?" I raised my eyebrows.

28 "Sure, I played some guitar before I went for the drums," James said. "I still remember the basics. Here, let me try."

29 I hesitated for a moment, and when I handed my brother the guitar, I thought, "Maybe family isn't so bad after all."

Maple Street

by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer

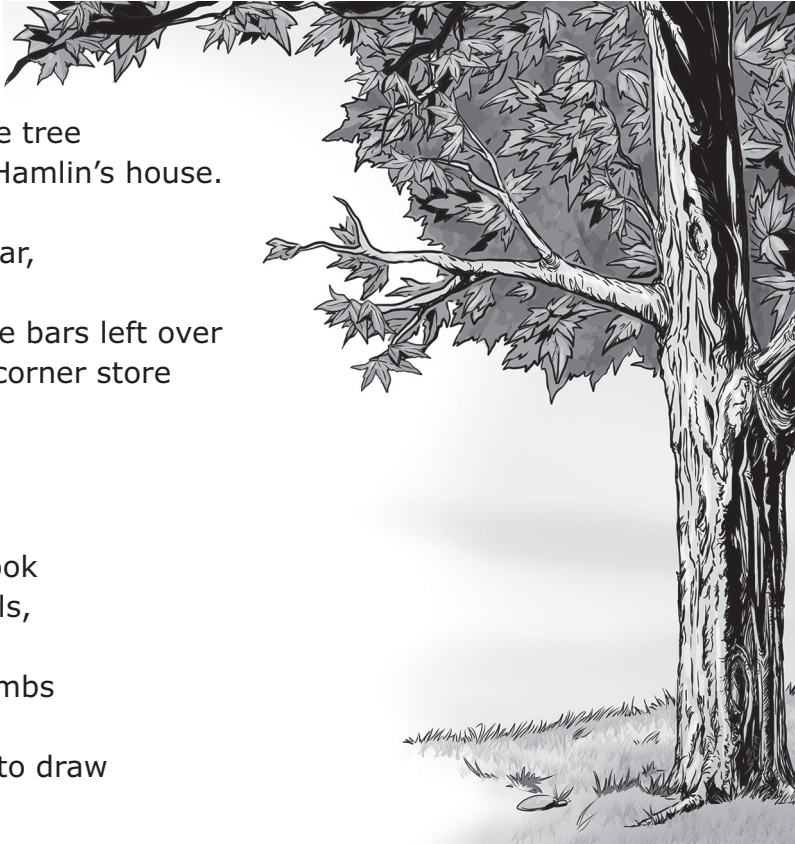
There's no doubt
where our street
found its name:
the gigantic maple tree
5 in front of Jamie Hamlin's house.
His nose may run
green slime all year,
but he shares
the stale chocolate bars left over
10 from his family's corner store
and besides,
like I said,
there's his tree.

With my sketchbook
15 and colored pencils,
I climb
the four largest limbs
into my tower,
the perfect place to draw
20 what I see:

Mary Anne and Emily
swinging higher and higher
their hair like two flags
in the wind.

25 or
Paul and Carrie O'Brien
practicing karate moves
before their four o'clock class.

From my tower
30 I can see
the whole neighborhood.
But no one can see me,
hidden by these
green and paper leaves,
35 creating sketches
from a spy tree.



"Maple Street" from *Sketches from a Spy Tree* by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer, illustrated by Andrew Glass. Poems copyright © 2005 by Tracie Vaughn Zimmer. Reprinted by permission of Clarion Books, an imprint of Houghton Mifflin Harcourt Publishing Company. All rights reserved.

Use “Peace and Quiet” (pp. 15–17) to answer questions 14–19. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 14** In the story “Peace and Quiet,” when does the resolution of Desha’s conflict begin?
- F** When Eliza looks at Desha’s journal
 - G** When James finds Desha sitting on a rock
 - H** When James talks to Desha about how family members support one another
 - J** When Desha learns that James used to play the guitar
-

- 15** Read paragraph 8 from the story “Peace and Quiet.”

“Don’t you have a basketball game to watch?” I complained. So much for my perfect hideaway.

Based on the paragraph, what can the reader infer about Desha?

- A** She is annoyed that James found her.
- B** She is ashamed to admit that she is glad James found her.
- C** She is impressed that James knew where to find her.
- D** She is surprised that anyone was interested in finding her.

16 Which words from paragraph 12 of the story “Peace and Quiet” help the reader understand what prying means?

- F** *looking through my journal*
 - G** *watching the game*
 - H** *went to my room*
 - J** *to be alone for a change*
-

17 What does the author’s use of simile in paragraph 17 of the story “Peace and Quiet” suggest about how Desha feels about her big family?

- A** Desha thinks no one wants to hear her practice the guitar.
 - B** Desha thinks that there are too many people sharing a space.
 - C** Desha feels a close bond with her sisters because they share a room.
 - D** Desha is uncomfortable with others knowing about her personal life.
-

18 In the story “Peace and Quiet,” why is it important to the plot that James knows about the clearing in the forest?

- F** His knowledge reminds him of a place he can go when he needs help from a family member.
- G** His knowledge helps him recognize how quickly his sister is growing up.
- H** His knowledge makes it possible for him to find Desha and talk to her.
- J** His knowledge leads him to a place that reminds him of Daniel.

19 What is the best summary of the story "Peace and Quiet"?

- A** Desha is a member of a large family. There is nowhere for her to be alone in the house, so she goes to her hiding place in the woods. While there she plays her guitar and her brother tells her that he used to play the guitar before he began learning to play the drums.
- B** Desha is upset because her family decides to watch a basketball game instead of the movie she wants to watch. She leaves the house and goes to an area in the woods. Her brother explains that he used to visit the same spot.
- C** Desha goes to a secret spot in the woods. Her brother finds her there and helps her learn to play chords on her guitar. They discuss some of the memories and experiences they share with their brothers and sisters.
- D** Desha, a member of a large family, leaves the house when she cannot find anywhere to have time to herself. She goes to a quiet place in the woods to play her guitar. While there she has a conversation with her brother that changes her attitude toward her family.

Use “Maple Street” (p. 18) to answer questions 20–23. Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

- 20** What is the most likely reason the poet refers to the tree as a “tower” in lines 18 and 29 of the poem “Maple Street”?
- F** To suggest the age of the tree that the speaker climbs
 - G** To highlight what objects the speaker enjoys sketching
 - H** To reveal the location of the tree in the speaker’s neighborhood
 - J** To emphasize the height from which the speaker observes the neighborhood
-
- 21** Based on stanza 1 (lines 1–13) of the poem “Maple Street,” the speaker most likely feels —
- A** uncertain about taking the chocolate Jamie Hamlin shares
 - B** surprised to learn the street is named for Jamie Hamlin’s tree
 - C** thankful to have Jamie Hamlin as a neighbor
 - D** jealous of the store Jamie Hamlin’s family owns

22 Which lines from the poem “Maple Street” support the idea that the speaker does not wish to be seen looking at others?

- F** like I said,
there’s his tree. (lines 12–13)
 - G** With my sketchbook
and colored pencils, (lines 14–15)
 - H** I can see
the whole neighborhood. (lines 30–31)
 - J** hidden by these
green and paper leaves, (lines 33–34)
-

23 Read lines 1 through 3 from the poem “Maple Street.”

There’s no doubt
where our street
found its name:

These lines suggest that the speaker thinks —

- A** the maple tree is the most noticeable object on the street
- B** streets should be named after features found near them
- C** the street originally had a different name
- D** people disagree about the meaning of the street’s name

Use “Peace and Quiet” and “Maple Street” to answer questions 24–27.
Then fill in the answers on your answer document.

24 How are Desha in the story “Peace and Quiet” and the speaker in the poem “Maple Street” **alike**?

- F** Desha and the speaker both find a place to work on something they enjoy.
 - G** Desha and the speaker both are bothered by other people.
 - H** Desha and the speaker both spend time secretly observing others.
 - J** Desha and the speaker both take advice from someone.
-

25 Which topic is addressed by the author of the story “Peace and Quiet” that is **not** addressed by the speaker of the poem “Maple Street”?

- A** The importance of having somewhere to be alone
- B** The impact that sharing something can have on another person
- C** The desire to practice a hobby
- D** The frustration of living with many people

26 In the story "Peace and Quiet," what does Desha value in a **similar** way as the speaker values the tree in the poem "Maple Street"?

- F** A song
 - G** A movie
 - H** A rock
 - J** A guitar
-

27 Which statement describes a **difference** between the story "Peace and Quiet" and the poem "Maple Street"?

- A** In the story, Desha shares thoughts about people who live in her house.
In the poem, the speaker expresses thoughts about people who live in the neighborhood.
- B** In the story, Desha has found a secret location that her brother told her about.
In the poem, the speaker is worried about not having a place to spend time alone.
- C** In the story, Desha visits a place for the first time.
In the poem, the speaker goes to a place that is very familiar.
- D** In the story, Desha is concerned about an event that is planned for the future.
In the poem, the speaker is concerned about an event that happened in the past.

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

The Platypus

- 1 In Australia there is a small, furry, brown animal that lives in lakes, rivers, and streams. It looks a bit like an otter but appears to have a duck's bill and a beaver's tail. When it walks on land, it waddles from side to side like a large lizard. The platypus is so odd looking that the first time English scientists saw it, they thought someone was playing a trick on them.



© iStock.com/JohnCarnemolla

The platypus spends a lot of the day in the water.

The Female Platypus

- 2 Scientists have since learned that in addition to its mixed-up looks, the platypus has some mixed-up behaviors. One of the oddest things about the platypus is that it hatches its young from leathery eggs. This is strange because scientists consider the platypus a mammal.
- 3 Scientists are interested in what a particular kind of animal has in common with other animals. Animals in the mammal group are warm blooded and have hair or fur. Female mammals produce milk for their babies. In addition, they give birth to live young rather than hatching their young from eggs.
- 4 The platypus breaks this rule. It is one of only two mammals that lay eggs. When a female platypus is ready to have babies, she uses her sharp claws to dig a hole in the bank of a river or stream. The hole is called a burrow. The female takes grass and leaves into the burrow and

makes a nest where she lays her eggs. The platypus's eggs are tough like a reptile's, rather than brittle like a bird's. The female platypus keeps the eggs warm for about 10 days until they hatch.

- 5 The newly hatched platypuses are about the size of a lima bean. The mother and her babies live in the burrow until the young are strong enough to leave. When platypuses grow up, they go off on their own. This animal prefers living alone rather than living in a group.

The Male Platypus

- 6 Female platypuses are not the only ones to have an interesting characteristic rarely found in mammals. Male platypuses have a sharp bone on their hind leg called a spur.
- 7 The male platypuses use their spurs to defend themselves from hungry foxes, dogs, and water snakes. They may also use the spurs on each other while fighting over female platypuses. The male platypuses can use their spurs to cause other animals a great deal of pain.



A Special Way to Find Food

- 8 Platypuses do not spend much time walking. When they are not curled up in their burrows, they are usually swimming. They spend nearly half the day in water hunting for food. They can eat an amount equal to 20 percent of their own body weight every day.
- 9 Platypuses eat tiny water creatures, including young insects, worms, and shrimp. They may also eat small frogs or fish. Most of their tiny prey is hidden in the dark sand at the bottom of a lake or river. Platypuses close their eyes and ears when they dive, so they must use special sensitive cells on their bills that tell them where to find a meal.
- 10 Platypuses may have some of the features of animals in other classes, but clearly, this mammal is unique and fascinating.

28 The author uses a compare-and-contrast organizational pattern in the selection to help the reader understand the —

- F** ways in which scientists learn about the platypus
 - G** ways in which the platypus takes care of its young compared to other animals
 - H** ways in which the male and female platypuses defend themselves
 - J** ways in which the platypus is different from other mammals
-

29 In which section would the reader find information about the size of a baby platypus?

- A** The introductory paragraph
 - B** The Female Platypus
 - C** The Male Platypus
 - D** A Special Way to Find Food
-

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

- F** To inform the reader about an animal that has fascinated people since it was discovered
- G** To explain to the reader how to tell mammals from other groups of animals
- H** To encourage the reader to appreciate animals that are unfamiliar
- J** To tell the reader how scientists observe and study a wild animal

31 In paragraph 5, what does the word prefers mean?

- A** Spends time
 - B** Finds comfort
 - C** Likes one thing more than another
 - D** Tries to find a better way
-

32 What is the main reason the author introduces the selection with the information in paragraph 1?

- F** To show that the platypus is related to the otter and the beaver
- G** To explain that the platypus is a recent scientific discovery
- H** To emphasize that the platypus has an unusual appearance
- J** To suggest that the platypus can survive only in Australia

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

These Pumpkins Sure Can Kick!

by Patricia Cuff



The Pumpkins celebrate a victory.

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Columbus, Ohio

- 1 Before January 2005, young girls couldn't play soccer in Katutura, a black township in Namibia, Africa. They had no soccer balls, no playing field, no shoes, and no leader. Each day, girls and boys gathered at the Nordkamp Center, an after-school drop-in center, for soup. Then most of the boys would leave to play soccer in a nearby dirt field while the girls remained at the center to jump rope, braid hair, or read books.
- 2 Center counselor Mary Beth Gallagher loved soccer and knew that the girls would love it, too. So she organized a girls' team with players under the age of 12. She knew it would be the youngest girls' soccer team in the whole country. No one knew then that this team would completely change the lives of girls in Namibia.
- 3 It wasn't long before the girls loved the game, even though their field was filled with stones, thorns, and broken glass. Because they had no other girls' teams to compete with, Mary Beth arranged matches against the boys' teams. The boys were bigger and tougher, but the girls didn't back down. Like the boys, the girls learned to play fast and smart, and they learned ways to outsmart their stronger opponents.

Becoming the Pumpkins

- 4 Soon news spread about the Nordkamp girls' team. An American soccer team from Briarcliff Manor, New York, heard about them from friends and immediately sent all their uniforms and shoes to their "soccer sisters." When the bright orange uniforms arrived, the Nordkamp girls danced with delight.

5 "You look like a bunch of pumpkins," Mary Beth said.

6 A girl's voice called out, "If we are pumpkins, we're beautiful pumpkins."

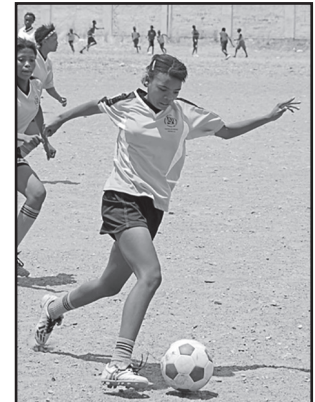
7 With their new name—the Pumpkins—and uniforms, the experienced team was ready to enter tournament play.

8 An invitation arrived.

Tournament Play!

9 On December 1, 2006, the Pumpkins gathered and marched in a big orange line to a field near the Nordkamp Center. It was 8:00 A.M. The girls were excited but scared.

10 Their first opposing team laughed at the young players, but they didn't laugh for long. They quickly found out just how good the Pumpkins were. The Pumpkins beat that first team and then the next. But the strain began to show in the third match. This team was stronger, and the game was tied up until the last minute. Emma, the Pumpkins' kicker, was the Nordkamp girls' only hope.



A Pumpkin on the Attack

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11 Everyone was quiet as Emma lined up to take a direct free kick. She bent and ran at the ball, head down. She pulled back her leg and then—a solid kick. The ball flew past the diving goalie and into the back of the net. Emma had scored the game-winning goal.

12 The Pumpkins felt like the tournament winners, even though they had one more match to play. The only problem? Their final opponents had not yet arrived. Sitting on the grass and eating peanut-butter sandwiches, the Pumpkins waited impatiently for the team to show up. With only 10 minutes left before the deadline, two big buses marked *Botswana* pulled through the gate. They were nine hours late!

13 It was almost dark when the whistle blew for the match to begin at 7:30 P.M. The official looked at the tall women from Botswana and laughed at the little Pumpkins. He told the Pumpkins to forfeit so they could all go home. That made the Pumpkins angry. They took to the field. They didn't come to quit.

The Toughest Match

14 With all their might, the Pumpkins held off the Botswana team that night. The girls were diving left and right, kicking and running after the ball. This was the Pumpkins' toughest match.

15 With only seconds left to play, the game remained scoreless. Then, out of nowhere, out of the dark, the ball shot into the Pumpkins' goal past their stunned goalie. The whistle blew. The game was over. The final score: Botswana 1, Pumpkins 0.

16 The Pumpkins had lost the match, but their courageous story made them famous. They had inspired others. In Namibia, schools began to sponsor girls' teams and offer soccer scholarships to girls who would study and play hard.

17 And it all began with these brave girls who loved the game and their team. They stepped up to meet their biggest challenge—and changed the world.

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Pumpkin Power!

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33 From the information presented in paragraph 3, what can the reader conclude about the Nordkamp girls?

- A** They found soccer difficult to learn when they started playing.
 - B** They lacked the equipment they needed to become successful soccer players.
 - C** They asked their coach if they could include boys on their team.
 - D** They were eager to play soccer no matter what the conditions were.
-

34 Read the dictionary entry for the word arrange.

arrange \ə-'rānj\ *verb*

- 1.** to put in correct order
- 2.** to make plans for something
- 3.** to come to an agreement
- 4.** to change a musical composition for a performance

Which definition best matches the way arranged is used in paragraph 3?

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

35 What is the most likely reason the author wrote this selection?

- A** To describe how an American soccer team helped a soccer team in Katutura become successful
 - B** To explain why playing soccer is not common for girls in Katutura
 - C** To inform the reader of the accomplishments of the first girls' soccer team in Katutura
 - D** To tell about the different teams that competed in a girls' soccer tournament in Katutura
-

36 Which sentence does the author include to suggest that the girls on the new soccer team most likely appreciated the support they received?

- F** *When the bright orange uniforms arrived, the Nordkamp girls danced with delight.* (paragraph 4)
- G** *With their new name—the Pumpkins—and uniforms, the experienced team was ready to enter tournament play.* (paragraph 7)
- H** *On December 1, 2006, the Pumpkins gathered and marched in a big orange line to a field near the Nordkamp Center.* (paragraph 9)
- J** *Sitting on the grass and eating peanut-butter sandwiches, the Pumpkins waited impatiently for the team to show up.* (paragraph 12)

- 37** The author presents events in chronological order in paragraphs 9 through 15 to help the reader understand —
- A** the process the Pumpkins repeated during each of their games
 - B** how the Pumpkins viewed themselves before and after playing in the tournament
 - C** that the Pumpkins experienced success and failure while competing in a tournament
 - D** the reasons the other teams did not believe the Pumpkins would win
-

- 38** Details in paragraphs 2 and 3 support the idea that Mary Beth Gallagher organized a girls' soccer team in Katutura because she —
- F** dreamed of having a successful career as a girls' soccer coach
 - G** wanted playing soccer to be a positive experience for girls
 - H** knew the team of girls would perform better than a team of boys
 - J** believed the girls were too young to participate in any other type of sport



Item Number	Reporting Category	Readiness or Supporting	Content Student Expectation	Correct Answer
1	2	Readiness	5.10(D)	A
2	2	Readiness	5.8(C)	G
3	2	Readiness	5.10(D)	C
4	2	Supporting	5.10(E)	H
5	2	Readiness	5.8(C)	B
6	2	Readiness	5.10(D)	H
7	2	Readiness	5.6(F)	D
8	3	Readiness	5.7(C)	G
9	3	Readiness	5.7(C)	D
10	1	Readiness	5.3(A)	J
11	3	Supporting	5.10(A)	C
12	3	Readiness	5.6(F)	F
13	3	Readiness	5.7(C)	B
14	2	Readiness	5.8(C)	H
15	2	Readiness	5.6(F)	A
16	1	Readiness	5.3(B)	F
17	2	Readiness	5.10(D)	B
18	2	Readiness	5.8(C)	H
19	2	Readiness	5.7(D)	D
20	2	Supporting	5.6(F)	J
21	2	Supporting	5.6(F)	C
22	2	Supporting	5.7(C)	J
23	2	Supporting	5.6(F)	A
24	1	Readiness	5.6(E)	F
25	1	Readiness	5.6(E)	D
26	1	Readiness	5.6(E)	H
27	1	Readiness	5.6(E)	A
28	3	Readiness	5.9(D)(iii)	J
29	3	Readiness	5.9(D)(ii)	B
30	3	Supporting	5.10(A)	F
31	1	Readiness	5.3(B)	C
32	3	Supporting	5.10(A)	H
33	3	Readiness	5.6(F)	D
34	1	Readiness	5.3(A)	G
35	3	Supporting	5.10(A)	C
36	3	Readiness	5.7(C)	F
37	3	Readiness	5.9(D)(iii)	C
38	3	Readiness	5.9(D)(i)	G

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
1	Option A is correct	Figurative language is language that uses words that mean something different than their literal interpretation. By describing the telescopes as “the eyes that peered out into the universe,” the author emphasizes that the telescope is used to locate and view objects at a great distance in space.
	Option B is incorrect	Telescopes are used to view remote objects in space, not people.
	Option C is incorrect	The description of the telescopes as “eyes” is meant to emphasize that the instruments are used to view distant objects in space, not that they are “delicate objects.”
	Option D is incorrect	The figurative phrase in paragraph 4 is used to describe the function of the telescopes, not to explain who should be allowed to use them.
2	Option G is correct	Catalina loves helping her father with the telescopes and tells him, “Papá, I want to be an astronomer someday.” However, in paragraph 7, Catalina feels that “No one believed she would be a scientist one day,” which is her main conflict.
	Option F is incorrect	Although Catalina is not allowed to help with the telescopes during the day, her main conflict is that people doubt her ability to become a scientist.
	Option H is incorrect	In paragraph 16, the author describes an action that Catalina performs while solving a problem. This is not directly related to the main conflict.
	Option J is incorrect	In paragraph 18, Catalina identifies how she is supposed to solve an urgent problem and acts, but this is not her main conflict.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
3	Option C is correct	Imagery is the use of vivid language to represent objects, actions, or ideas. In paragraph 1, Catalina is “drinking in deep lungfuls of the clear night air under the blazing Southern Hemisphere starshine” while observing the “pure white lace” of the Milky Way. The author includes this imagery to highlight Catalina’s appreciation of the nighttime.
	Option A is incorrect	Catalina is standing alone on top of a mountain, but there is no text evidence that she is feeling lonely; rather, she is appreciative of the nighttime beauty.
	Option B is incorrect	Although Catalina does seem to enjoy spending time outside, the author includes the imagery in paragraph 1 to emphasize Catalina’s appreciation of the nighttime.
	Option D is incorrect	Catalina does not have questions about the night sky in paragraph 1, so this is not the purpose of the imagery.
4	Option H is correct	Point of view is the perspective from which the events in the story are told. In this story the author uses third-person point of view to reveal Catalina’s thoughts and feelings: “She loved helping to service the grand telescopes” (paragraph 4). The point of view helps the reader understand why Catalina wants to spend time at the observatory.
	Option F is incorrect	Because the story is told from only Catalina’s point of view, the reader does not know what the astronomer is feeling.
	Option G is incorrect	Because the story is told from only Catalina’s point of view, the tourists’ thoughts or feelings about visiting the observatory are not revealed.
	Option J is incorrect	Although the author explains that Catalina helps her father at the observatory, the relationship between the two characters is not described.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
5	Option B is correct	In paragraph 8, Catalina notices that a “telescope’s dome slit was open, but its angle was unusual.” Upon closer look, Catalina sees that the “telescope was pointed down, almost at the ground.” These two cues prompt her to enter the dome, where she discovers problems with both the telescope and the astronomer—problems that she is able to solve.
	Option A is incorrect	Catalina’s observation leads her to realize that something is wrong, not to “express her feelings about scientific discovery.”
	Option C is incorrect	In paragraph 8, the author develops the main conflict. However, Catalina’s actions resolve the conflict rather than cause it.
	Option D is incorrect	Catalina’s observation of the telescope emphasizes her familiarity with the telescopes at the observatory, not her unfamiliarity.
6	Option H is correct	Figurative language is language that uses words that mean something different than their literal interpretation. In paragraph 6, the author describes the “knotted” patterns of the stars in the night sky, from “fuzzy balls of fluff to filaments.” This description emphasizes that Catalina pays careful attention to details in the night sky.
	Option F is incorrect	Although the telescope would help Catalina see the stars clearly, there is no evidence in paragraph 6 that she needs one of the instruments at that moment.
	Option G is incorrect	Catalina is studying the stars at night, but this is really the only time she can watch the stars, not just the best time.
	Option J is incorrect	The comparison of stars to “fuzzy balls of fluff” and “filaments” is related to the appearance of the stars, not Catalina’s lack of understanding of the objects she observes in the night sky.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
7	Option D is correct	Catalina discovers the injured scientist because she observes a problem with one of the telescopes. The scientist calls Catalina “observant,” a trait that will help her become a successful scientist. This is important to the plot because Catalina realizes she has the ability to become a scientist. This realization helps Catalina resolve her conflict.
	Option A is incorrect	The experience takes place at night, but it does not help explain why Catalina is “only allowed to help her father at certain times.”
	Option B is incorrect	Catalina helps the injured scientist, but there is no evidence that she thinks she knows more than he or the other scientists do.
	Option C is incorrect	The experience reveals Catalina’s knowledge of the telescopes, but there are no specific details related to what her father taught her about the instruments.
8	Option G is correct	The reader can infer from this sentence that by sleeping in “hanging beds,” sleepers were elevated and could avoid the problem caused by “the soggy ground and pesky forest animals.”
	Option F is incorrect	The author is describing the process the Taino used to make hammocks, not how hammocks have been used to help solve a problem.
	Option H is incorrect	The author is explaining that European explorers liked hammocks, not how hammocks have been used to help solve a problem.
	Option J is incorrect	Although the author suggests that hammocks have multiple uses, the idea that hammocks have been used to help solve a problem is not supported by this sentence.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
9	Option D is correct	Joshua John Ward began crafting hammocks using cotton rope in 1889, and his company still employs this method today. This text evidence proves that Ward chose a successful design.
	Option A is incorrect	The author includes this detail to show that Joshua John Ward introduced hammocks to other parts of the world, not to show the success of his design.
	Option B is incorrect	The author includes this detail to show why Joshua John Ward was interested in hammocks, not to show the success of his design.
	Option C is incorrect	The author includes this detail to show what Joshua John Ward's hammocks were made of, not to show the success of his design.
10	Option J is correct	When Christopher Columbus was exploring the Caribbean in 1492, he saw the Taino's hammocks and wrote about them, so "to notice or identify with the eye" best matches the way <u>spotted</u> is used in paragraph 3.
	Option F is incorrect	Columbus was searching for the New World; he was not trying to find hammocks.
	Option G is incorrect	There is no mention in paragraph 3 of Columbus staining the hammocks, so this is not the meaning of <u>spotted</u> .
	Option H is incorrect	When Columbus arrived in the Caribbean, he noticed the hammocks, but he did not move them or place them in a certain position.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
11	Option C is correct	In paragraph 7, the author explains that “hammocks are not just for relaxing” and goes on to describe extreme hammocking, which is another way that hammocks are used.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 7, the author describes a creative way to spend time, but the reader is not told how to find creative ways to spend time.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the sport of extreme hammocking likely requires strong hammocks, the author does not discuss the strength of hammocks in paragraph 7.
	Option D is incorrect	The author describes equipment used in extreme hammocking, but this information is presented to tell the reader a different way some people use hammocks, not about equipment needed for one sport.
12	Option F is correct	In paragraph 7, Andy Lewis is quoted describing the joy he gets from extreme hammocking. Based on this quotation and the author’s description of him as an “expert,” the reader can conclude that Lewis likes going on adventures.
	Option G is incorrect	Andy Lewis does refer to a journey, but it cannot be determined from the details in paragraph 7 whether he speaks to other athletes on his journey.
	Option H is incorrect	In paragraph 7, the author states that hammockers enjoy the “challenges the climb brings.” So, it is likely that Andy Lewis has experienced some challenges on his journeys.
	Option J is incorrect	Based on the author’s description of Andy Lewis as an “expert” in extreme hammocking, it is likely that he has been on more than one adventure.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
13	Option B is correct	Hammocks “were small enough when folded that they could fit in small spaces on ships.” Based on this text evidence, the reader can infer that hammocks were helpful to explorers who traveled by sea.
	Option A is incorrect	Hammocks have been used for many years, but it cannot be inferred from this sentence that they were particularly helpful to seafaring explorers.
	Option C is incorrect	In this sentence, the author describes an explorer drawing a picture of a hammock on land but does not suggest why hammocks were helpful for sea voyages.
	Option D is incorrect	In this sentence, the author does not describe how Joshua John Ward’s type of hammock was helpful to sea travelers.
14	Option H is correct	Desha wants privacy and time away from her large family. In paragraph 10, Desha tells her brother, “Company is the last thing I want,” and asks, “Can’t I have a little peace and quiet?” However, when James talks about missing his brother Daniel and reminds Desha that their sister Sara helped her with her homework, Desha begins to realize that there are benefits to having family members who support one another.
	Option F is incorrect	Eliza looking through Desha’s journal is an example of Desha’s conflict; it is not the beginning of the resolution.
	Option G is incorrect	Desha is annoyed when James finds her, which introduces the conflict of the story. This event is not the beginning of the resolution.
	Option J is incorrect	Desha learns that James used to play guitar, but well after beginning to see that having a large family has some benefits.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
15	Option A is correct	In paragraph 2, Desha is relieved to reach her “special rock” and experience peace and quiet away from her large family. When James shows up, Desha complains that James has invaded her “perfect hideaway,” so the reader can infer that Desha is annoyed.
	Option B is incorrect	Desha eventually feels glad that James is sitting with her, but at this point in the story, the reader can infer she is annoyed that he has intruded on her privacy.
	Option C is incorrect	Desha is surprised and annoyed that James found her, not impressed.
	Option D is incorrect	Desha does not consider whether anyone would be interested in finding her.
16	Option F is correct	In paragraph 12, Desha complains, “Everyone’s so nosy and always <u>prying</u> into my business.” She supports this statement by describing how she found Eliza “looking through [her] journal.”
	Option G is incorrect	Desha is unable to watch a movie because “everyone is in the living room watching the game,” but this situation is not an example of <u>prying</u> .
	Option H is incorrect	Desha going to her room does not help the reader determine the meaning of <u>prying</u> .
	Option J is incorrect	Desha’s desire to be alone does not provide context to help the reader determine the meaning of <u>prying</u> .
17	Option B is correct	A simile is a figure of speech in which two objects are compared using the word “like” or “as.” Desha describes how she and her family are “stuffed like feathers in a pillow” in the house, emphasizing her feelings that she has to share space with too many people.
	Option A is incorrect	The author’s use of simile expresses Desha’s frustration at having limited space and privacy, not her belief that “no one wants to hear her practice the guitar.”
	Option C is incorrect	The author’s use of simile expresses Desha’s frustration at having to share a room with her sisters, not her feelings of closeness to them.
	Option D is incorrect	Desha is upset that Eliza read her journal, but the author’s use of a simile emphasizes how crowded Desha’s house is.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
18	Option H is correct	James found peace and quiet in the same place when he was Desha's age, which enables him to find Desha and resolve the conflict by helping her to realize that there are benefits to having a large family.
	Option F is incorrect	James used to visit the same place where he finds Desha hiding, but he used the spot to get away from family members, not to seek their help.
	Option G is incorrect	James remembers what it was like being Desha's age, but he does not think about how quickly she is growing up.
	Option J is incorrect	James shares memories of Daniel with Desha, but the memories are related to sharing a room with Daniel, not to the hiding place.
19	Option D is correct	The best summary of the story is presented in these sentences. The main conflict in the story—Desha's need to get away from her large family and crowded house—is identified. Desha's solution, which is to go to her special place in the woods, is also described, as is the resolution of her conflict, which is when Desha's brother James helps her realize the positive aspects of her large family.
	Option A is incorrect	Although many important details are included in this summary, the resolution of Desha's conflict is missing.
	Option B is incorrect	Only a partial explanation of why Desha left the house is presented in this summary, and the lesson she learns from her brother James is also omitted.
	Option C is incorrect	Desha's reason for going to the woods is not included in this summary, nor is the lesson she learns from her brother James, so this is not the best summary.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
20	Option J is correct	By climbing up into the “gigantic” maple tree, the speaker can see everything going on in the neighborhood, just as a person in a tower would have an expansive view of the surrounding area.
	Option F is incorrect	By comparing the tree to a tower, the poet is referring to the height of the tree rather than its age.
	Option G is incorrect	By comparing the tree to a tower, the poet suggests that the tree’s height provides a good view, but the poet does not say what the speaker likes to sketch.
	Option H is incorrect	The poet’s comparison of the tree to a tower does not reveal the tree’s exact location.
21	Option C is correct	Despite his unappealing nasal drip, Jamie Hamlin shares his chocolate bars and allows the speaker to climb his “gigantic maple tree,” which the speaker clearly enjoys, so the reader can infer that the speaker is thankful to have Jamie as a neighbor.
	Option A is incorrect	Although the speaker describes the chocolate bars as stale, there is no indication that the speaker feels uncertain about taking them.
	Option B is incorrect	The speaker has “no doubt” about the origins of the street’s name, so the speaker is not surprised.
	Option D is incorrect	The poet provides no evidence that the speaker is jealous of Jamie Hamlin’s family store.
22	Option J is correct	In these lines, the speaker describes being “hidden” by the tree’s leaves, supporting the idea he or she does not wish to be seen looking at others.
	Option F is incorrect	The speaker does hide in the tree, but the desire to remain hidden is not referenced in these lines.
	Option G is incorrect	There is no reference to a wish to be unseen in these lines.
	Option H is incorrect	Although the speaker can view the whole neighborhood from the tree, the desire to remain unseen is not supported by these lines.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
23	Option A is correct	The speaker expresses complete certainty that Maple Street is named after “the gigantic maple tree/in front of Jamie Hamlin’s house.” The conclusion that “the maple tree is the most noticeable object on the street” is supported by this assuredness.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the street is named after a prominent feature on the street, it is not suggested by the speaker’s words in lines 1 through 3 that this should be a common practice.
	Option C is incorrect	The speaker refers to the street finding its name, but there is no evidence in these lines that the street had a different name prior to Maple Street.
	Option D is incorrect	According to the speaker, there’s “no doubt” where Maple Street gets its name, suggesting that there is no disagreement about the meaning of the street’s name.
24	Option F is correct	In “Peace and Quiet,” Desha practices playing her guitar in a quiet place in the woods, and the speaker in the poem “Maple Street” draws while hiding in the branches of a maple tree, so this is a way that Desha and the speaker are alike.
	Option G is incorrect	There is no evidence in the poem that the speaker is looking to get away from other people like Desha wants to in the story.
	Option H is incorrect	Although the speaker secretly observes others from the maple tree, Desha is focused on playing her guitar and does not want to see anyone.
	Option J is incorrect	Desha takes advice from her brother, but the speaker does not interact with other people in the poem.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
25	Option D is correct	In "Peace and Quiet," Desha is frustrated that she never gets time alone or a chance to do what she wants because of her large family and crowded house. The speaker in "Maple Street" refers to various people in the neighborhood but never expresses frustration about being around them.
	Option A is incorrect	Desha has a special place in the woods where she can go to be alone, and the speaker in the poem has the maple tree.
	Option B is incorrect	Both selections have examples of sharing and its impact on others. James shares helpful advice with Desha, and Jamie provides access to his tree, which has become a special place for the speaker in the poem.
	Option C is incorrect	Desha practices guitar in her special place in the woods, and the speaker finds a place to work on creating sketches in the maple tree, so the "desire to practice a hobby" is addressed by both authors.
26	Option H is correct	In "Peace and Quiet," Desha has a "special rock" she sits on when she's in her "favorite spot" in the woods. Desha's fondness for this rock is similar to how the speaker in "Maple Street" feels about the maple tree, which the speaker describes as a "perfect place."
	Option F is incorrect	Although Desha does play a song, what she really values is her "special rock" in her "favorite spot," just as the speaker values the tree.
	Option G is incorrect	Desha is frustrated at not being able to watch a movie, but she does not value the movie in the same way that the speaker values the tree.
	Option J is incorrect	Desha plays her guitar while sitting on her rock, but what Desha really values is the peace and quiet that the rock offers, just as the tree is a place of sanctuary to the speaker in the poem.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
27	Option A is correct	In "Peace and Quiet," Desha shares her thoughts about her crowded house full of annoying siblings with her brother. In "Maple Street," the speaker makes observations about the kids in the neighborhood, such as Paul and Carrie O'Brien "practicing karate moves" and girls swinging high in the air.
	Option B is incorrect	Desha's brother did not tell Desha about the secret location, and the speaker does not express concern about needing a place to spend time alone.
	Option C is incorrect	Much like how the maple tree is familiar to the speaker, Desha goes to her "favorite spot" in the woods, suggesting this is not the first time Desha has visited this place.
	Option D is incorrect	Desha is upset about events in the past, such as her sister Eliza looking through her journal, rather than future events. The speaker describes events in the present.
28	Option J is correct	The author describes common characteristics of mammals in paragraph 3. The author then contrasts the platypus with mammals by describing the animal's unique characteristics, such as the fact that the platypus is "one of only two mammals that lay eggs" and that male platypuses "have a sharp bone on their hind leg called a spur."
	Option F is incorrect	Although the author refers to scientists and what they have learned about platypuses, the author does not compare the ways scientists learn about the animal.
	Option G is incorrect	The author explains how a mother platypus cares for her young but does not compare this characteristic with other animals.
	Option H is incorrect	The author describes how male platypuses defend themselves but does not mention how female platypuses defend themselves.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
29	Option B is correct	Since the reader learns that the female platypus lays eggs, the reader can determine that facts about baby platypuses will be found in the section “The Female Platypus” (paragraphs 2–5). In paragraph 5, the author explains that “newly hatched platypuses are about the size of a lima bean.”
	Option A is incorrect	Information about the baby platypus is not found in the introductory paragraph. It is found in paragraph 5 along with details about the female platypus.
	Option C is incorrect	The section called “The Male Platypus” does not include the size of a baby platypus. Information about baby platypuses is found in paragraph 5 along with details about the female platypus.
	Option D is incorrect	The section named “A Special Way to Find Food” is more likely to include information about how the platypuses find food than information about the size of a baby platypus.
30	Option F is correct	The author provides a variety of information about the platypus, including the animal’s shape, where it lives, what it eats, how it gives birth to and raises its young, and how it is different from most mammals.
	Option G is incorrect	Although the author describes specific characteristics of mammals in paragraph 3, an explanation of how mammals compare to other groups of animals is not the purpose of the selection.
	Option H is incorrect	The author provides information about this particular unfamiliar animal but does not encourage the reader to appreciate unfamiliar animals in general.
	Option J is incorrect	Although the author refers to scientists and what they know about the platypus, there is no information about how scientists “observe and study a wild animal,” so this is not why the author wrote the selection.

2021 STAAR Grade 5 Reading Rationales

Item#	Rationale	
31	Option C is correct	In paragraph 5, the author explains that platypuses “go off on their own” and choose to live alone rather than in a group. Based on this context, the reader can determine that <u>prefers</u> means “likes one thing more than another.”
	Option A is incorrect	Platypuses choose to live alone once they are old enough, which suggests that the animal wants to live alone, not simply that it spends time living alone.
	Option B is incorrect	Although grown platypuses choose to live alone, there is no evidence to support the idea that finding comfort is a factor.
	Option D is incorrect	There is no evidence for the reader to determine that platypuses might want to live any other way than alone.
32	Option H is correct	The author emphasizes throughout the selection that the platypus is a unique animal. This idea is introduced in the introductory paragraph, in which the author describes the “odd looking” animal’s unusual appearance, which is a cross between a duck, a beaver, and an otter.
	Option F is incorrect	The platypus may share certain characteristics with the otter and the beaver, but the author does not state that the animals are related.
	Option G is incorrect	The author describes the moment the platypus was discovered but does not state that this discovery was recent.
	Option J is incorrect	Although the author refers to the platypus as living in Australia, there is no claim that this is the only place that the animal can live.

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33	Option D is correct	In paragraph 3, the author explains that the Nordkamp girls had to play on a field “filled with stones, thorns, and broken glass” against “bigger and tougher” boys’ teams. Despite these challenges, the “girls loved the game,” so the reader can infer that they were eager to play regardless of the conditions.
	Option A is incorrect	The girls faced difficult conditions, but there is no evidence that they found the game itself “difficult to learn.”
	Option B is incorrect	In paragraph 3, the author describes some of the challenges the girls overcame in order to play soccer but does not mention equipment until paragraph 4.
	Option C is incorrect	The girls played against boys’ teams; they did not have, or ask to have, boys on the team.
34	Option G is correct	In paragraph 3, the author explains how Gallagher set up matches against the boys’ soccer teams. Based on this context, the best definition of <u>arranged</u> is “to make plans for something.”
	Option F is incorrect	The matches against the boys’ teams were set up, but there is no evidence to suggest that the matches were set up in a certain order.
	Option H is incorrect	Gallagher planned matches against the boys’ teams, but there is no mention of her having to “come to an agreement.”
	Option J is incorrect	The author describes soccer matches in paragraph 3, not musical performances.

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35	Option C is correct	The author's purpose is to inform the reader about the accomplishments of the first girls' soccer team in Katutura. The Pumpkins played against boys' teams and successfully competed in a tournament against other teams from Africa. The Pumpkins nearly won the tournament, inspired other girls in Namibia to take up the sport, and prompted schools in the country to sponsor teams and offer scholarships.
	Option A is incorrect	In paragraph 4, the author explains how an American soccer team donated their uniforms and shoes to the Pumpkins, but that is only one detail in the selection.
	Option B is incorrect	Although the author states that soccer was not played by girls in Katutura before 2005, the author's main focus is on the accomplishments of the Pumpkins.
	Option D is incorrect	The author refers to the other teams the Pumpkins played in the tournament, but this is only a detail in the selection.
36	Option F is correct	When the Nordkamp girls received the donated shoes and uniforms from the American soccer team, they "danced with delight." Based on this reaction, the reader can infer that the girls appreciated the support they received.
	Option G is incorrect	This sentence is included to show how the girls benefited from the donated uniforms rather than their appreciation for the support they received.
	Option H is incorrect	This sentence is included to illustrate the readiness of the team for competition, not their appreciation for the support they received.
	Option J is incorrect	This sentence is included to illustrate an experience the girls had while playing in the tournament, not their appreciation for the support they received.

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37	Option C is correct	In paragraphs 9 through 15, the author provides details about the soccer tournament, from the Pumpkins' first game in 2006 to their loss to Botswana in the final game. The author's chronological description of events helps the reader understand the successes and failures the girls experienced in the tournament.
	Option A is incorrect	The author describes some of the Pumpkins' games in paragraphs 9 through 15 but does not highlight a repeated process.
	Option B is incorrect	The author describes how the Pumpkins felt before tournament games, but not after.
	Option D is incorrect	The author mentions how the Pumpkins were perceived by others, but the reader's understanding of this is not based on the author's use of chronological order.
38	Option G is correct	Gallagher knew that the girls at Nordkamp Center would enjoy soccer as much as she did, so she organized a soccer team. Playing soccer was a positive experience for the girls, and it "wasn't long before the girls loved the game" (paragraph 3).
	Option F is incorrect	Although Gallagher encouraged girls to play soccer, there is no text evidence that she organized a team to fulfill a dream of "having a successful career as a girls' soccer coach."
	Option H is incorrect	Gallagher did not know in advance that the girls would outperform the boys.
	Option J is incorrect	Although the girls were young, the author does not suggest that Gallagher evaluated the girls' ability to participate in other sports based on their ages.