



Grade 3 English Language Arts

Sample Test Items

You will read two passages, “Saving the Sea Turtles” and “Adelita’s Amazing Journey.” Answer the questions about each passage as well as questions about both passages.

Saving the Sea Turtles

by Nicole Lundrigan

- 1 I had come to a different world. There were no electric lights, running water, or telephones. Huts with leafy roofs stood near the ocean’s edge. By the edge of the thick rain forest, a wooden outhouse rested on the sand. Papayas hung from the great trees. Huge watermelons sprouted under swaying hammocks. As our boat pulled up to shore, Audley James, an Arawak native, came out to greet us. With a warm smile and soft voice, he said, “Welcome to Shell Beach.”
- 2 I had just landed on a protected beach in British Guyana. When the sea turtles who were born here come back to lay their eggs, eager poachers try to steal the eggs and sell them for profit. But that is changing.
- 3 James was once a poacher, but now he works to save the sea turtles from extinction.¹ Twice every night, he and others walk the beach and gather all the eggs that they can find. They carry the eggs to the base camp and bury them in sand until they hatch. Little turtles, the size of a hand, climb up through the sand. Then they are carried to the ocean in a bucket. For two weeks, I would join James on these treks, helping him save the turtles.
- 4 Sea turtles lay their eggs at night. I rested in my hammock until James was ready to go. We began the four-mile hike up the beach. A warm wind carried the smell of salt. Soft moonlight showed the way.
- 5 Once there, I waited for a sea turtle to return to her birthplace. Suddenly, I spotted something shimmering on the surface of the water, then dipping below, and slowly moving with the crest of each ocean wave. She looked like a smooth stone skipping toward us.
- 6 She landed gently. Working hard, she used her flippers to push her 2,000-pound body up the sand. This made a trail

that could lead poachers right to her eggs. Slowly, the greenback turtle began to dig a large hole with her hind flippers. When the digging stopped, she laid her fist-size eggs one by one.

- 7 We forgot to bring a bag to gather the eggs, so I used my bright yellow raincoat. Lying on the sand, I caught every egg and carefully placed it on the yellow plastic. . . .

¹**extinction:** to be gone or no longer living



"Saving the Sea Turtles" by Nicole Lundrigan, *AppleSeeds*, April 1, 2001. Copyright © 2001 by Cricket Media. Used with permission of Cricket Media, Inc.

Answer the following questions for “Saving the Sea Turtles.”

1. Why do sea turtles need saving?

- Ⓐ People take them from the beach at night.
- Ⓑ Sea turtles have a hard time digging holes.
- Ⓒ People like to put their eggs in yellow plastic.
- Ⓓ Poachers try to steal eggs and sell them for profit.

2. What is the meaning of rested as it is used in the sentence from paragraph 1?

By the edge of the thick rain forest, a wooden outhouse rested on the sand.

- Ⓐ built
- Ⓑ grown
- Ⓒ settled
- Ⓓ slept

- 3.** The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

What is the meaning of poachers as it is used in paragraph 2?

- Ⓐ people who explore
- Ⓑ people who help
- Ⓒ people who destroy
- Ⓓ people who take

Part B

Which quotation from the passage helps the reader determine the meaning of poachers?

- Ⓐ “. . . steal the eggs and sell them for profit.” (paragraph 2)
- Ⓑ “. . . works to save the sea turtles from extinction.” (paragraph 3)
- Ⓒ “. . . helping him save the turtles.” (paragraph 3)
- Ⓓ “. . . on the sand, I caught every egg. . . .” (paragraph 7)

4. Why is there a footnote included in the passage?

- Ⓐ to help the reader understand the topic of the paragraph
- Ⓑ to help the reader understand the author's point of view
- Ⓒ to help the reader understand the location of a word
- Ⓓ to help the reader understand the meaning of a word

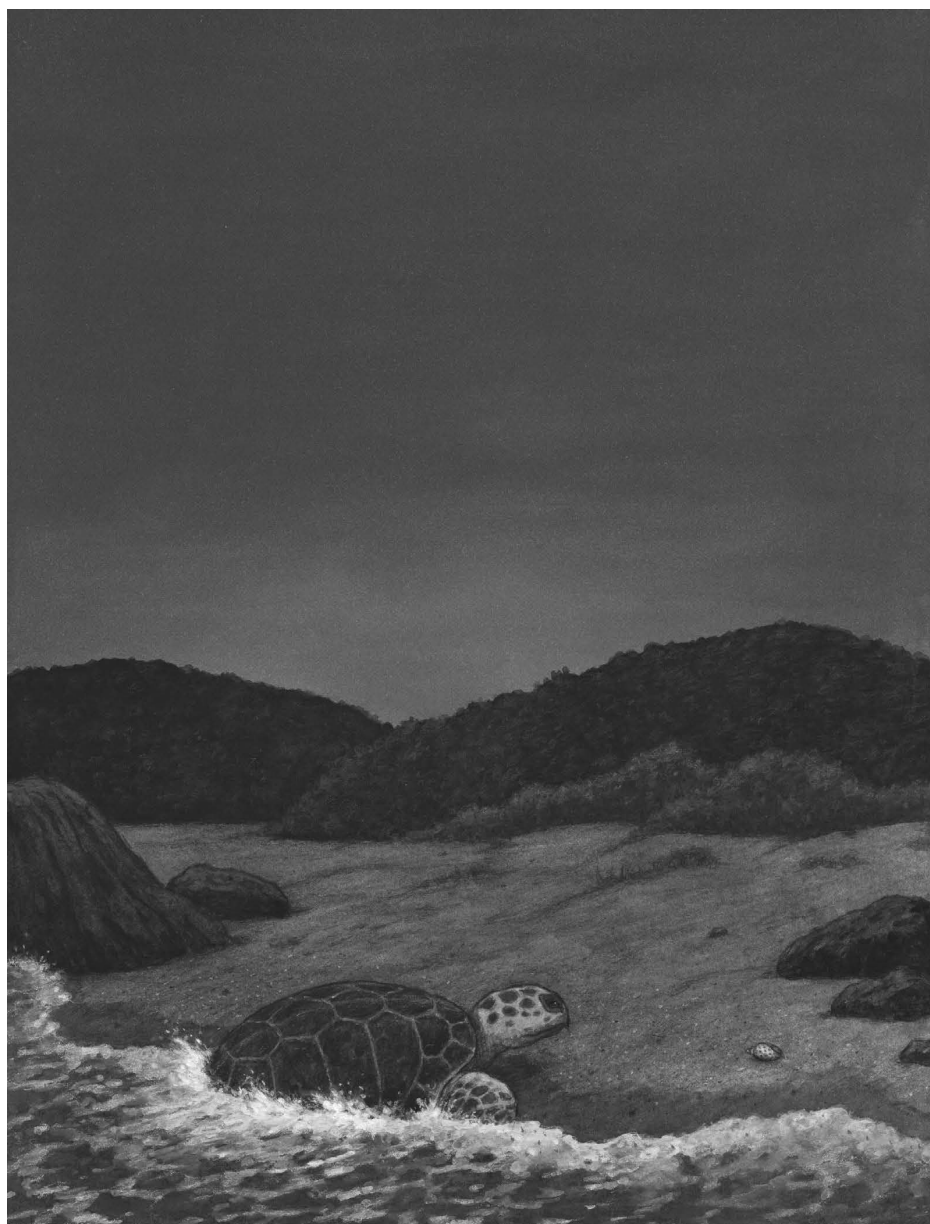
Adelita's Amazing Journey

by Elizabeth Armstrong Hall

- 1 On August 10, 1996, a loggerhead sea turtle named Adelita was about to make navigation history. Ten years earlier, she'd been caught by a fisherman in the Pacific Ocean near Baja, Mexico. Adelita had spent the last ten years in a water tank. Over time, she grew into a 223-pound adult with a wide head and a humungous appetite. She was outgrowing her tank. It was time for her to return to the sea.
- 2 By this time, scientists had taken over the care of Adelita. That morning, they took her out in a boat. A few miles off shore, they lowered her into the water. It took Adelita a moment to realize that she was free. But then she turned west and swam off into the vast Pacific Ocean.
- 3 Wallace Nichols, a graduate student in marine biology, was there when Adelita was released. Nichols had a sea turtle mystery to solve.
- 4 Like all sea turtles, Adelita was "programmed" to return to the beach where she was born and to lay her eggs there. However, the closest loggerhead beach was in Japan, thousands of miles away. Would Adelita remember how to get there?
- 5 So he could follow her route, Nichols had glued a satellite transmitter on the highest point of Adelita's shell. The transmitter had a waterproof casing and an antenna sticking out of the top. Nichols could plot her location from a satellite signal whenever she came up for air. It was the first time anyone tried to track an ocean-going animal with a satellite transmitter.
- 6 Adelita took to the ocean like she'd never left. On New Year's Day, she passed the Hawaiian Islands. Then she turned northwest and swam all the way to Japan. Averaging 20 miles each day, Adelita clocked over 9,000 miles in 368 days.
- 7 How did she find her way? Close to shore, light and wave direction indicated the way to land. But as she crossed the ocean, her internal compass kicked in. Like all sea turtles,

Adelita was born with her compass. In fact, she needed it as soon as she hatched: She had to dig her way out of an underground nest, then scramble across the beach to reach the sea.

- 8 Nichols explains it like this: "A sea turtle can perceive Earth's magnetic fields. Just like we sense gravity and know which way is up or down, a sea turtle senses 'home.'" After living in Baja for most of her life, Adelita never forgot the way back to the spot where she was born.





Text and illustration from “Adelita’s Amazing Journey” by Elizabeth Armstrong Hall, illustrated by Margaret Lindmark, *Appleseeds*, January 1, 2013. Copyright © 2013 by Cricket Media. Used with permission of Carus Publishing Company.

Answer the following questions for “Adelita’s Amazing Journey.”

- 5.** Based on the meaning of the prefix out-, what is the meaning of the word outgrowing in paragraph 1?
- Ⓐ moving quickly
 - Ⓑ leaving slowly
 - Ⓒ becoming bigger
 - Ⓓ eating a great amount
- 6.** What was the effect of Nichols gluing a satellite transmitter to Adelita’s shell?
- Ⓐ Adelita was able to find her way home.
 - Ⓑ Nichols was able to track Adelita on her journey.
 - Ⓒ Nichols was able to explain why Adelita forgot her way home.
 - Ⓓ Adelita was able to swim past the Hawaiian Islands on New Year’s Day.

- 7.** The passage states that “Adelita was about to make navigation history” (paragraph 1). Which quotation from the passage supports this statement?

- Ⓐ “But then she turned west and swam off into the vast Pacific Ocean.” (paragraph 2)
- Ⓑ “It was the first time anyone tried to track an ocean-going animal with a satellite transmitter.” (paragraph 5)
- Ⓒ “But as she crossed the ocean, her internal compass kicked in.” (paragraph 7)
- Ⓓ “After living in Baja for most of her life, Adelita never forgot the way back to the spot where she was born.” (paragraph 8)

- 8.** Select the events in the order they happen in the passage.

	1	2	3	4
“she was free”	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
“she grew into a 223-pound adult”	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
“she’d been caught by a fisherman”	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>
“she turned northwest and swam all the way to Japan”	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>	<input type="radio"/>

9. What is the meaning of the word senses as it is used in the sentence from paragraph 8?

“Just like we sense gravity and know which way is up or down, a sea turtle senses ‘home’.”

- Ⓐ a joyful emotion
- Ⓑ a good decision
- Ⓒ a special feeling
- Ⓓ a strong smell

Answer the following questions for “Saving the Sea Turtles” and “Adelita’s Amazing Journey.”

10. Which idea about turtles is the same in **both** passages?

- Ⓐ People have to help protect sea turtle eggs from poachers.
- Ⓑ Sea turtles return to the beach where they were born to lay their eggs.
- Ⓒ Sea turtles use the earth’s magnetic fields to find their way in the ocean.
- Ⓓ When sea turtles are born, they have to dig their way out of an underground nest.

11. What are two details from **both** passages that describe how the settings are similar?

- Ⓐ "Papayas hung from the great trees." ("Saving the Sea Turtles," paragraph 1)
- Ⓑ "Working hard, she used her flippers to push her 2,000-pound body up the sand." ("Saving the Sea Turtles," paragraph 6)
- Ⓒ "Adelita had spent the last ten years in a water tank." ("Adelita's Amazing Journey," paragraph 1)
- Ⓓ "On New Year's Day, she passed the Hawaiian Islands." ("Adelita's Amazing Journey," paragraph 6)
- Ⓔ "She had to dig her way out of an underground nest, then scramble across the beach to reach the sea." ("Adelita's Amazing Journey," paragraph 7)

Read the passage and then answer the questions that follow.

The Button Lady

by Margaret Ann Aumen

art by Lee White

- 1 "Here comes the Button Lady!" cried Mayor Bowersox, running out of his house in polka-dot pajamas one spring morning.
- 2 The news spread from house to house as the townsfolk of Pin Oak Hollow threw open their doors shouting, "Hello, Button Lady!"
- 3 As they gathered in the town square, Mayor Bowersox lugged the Button Lady's big bag of buttons from a basket on her bicycle.
- 4 Kitty Henry was the first customer of the day. "I need a button for this blouse, please. The dog chewed it off."
- 5 "Pesky puppies will do that," said the Button Lady. She reached into her big bag of buttons and pulled out the perfect match.
- 6 The crowd clapped and cheered.
- 7 Mayor Bowersox's wife, Henrietta, was next in line. "Our goat got loose by my clothesline and ate four buttons off the mayor's shirt. The poor man has been safety-pinned ever since."
- 8 "That will never do," said the Button Lady. She reached into her button bag and pulled out one, two, three, four white buttons!
- 9 The crowd clapped and cheered.
- 10 The Button Lady had just found a button for Mr. Merryson's vest, when a loud commotion drew everyone's attention. Galloping hooves halted in a cloud of dust, right in front of the Button Lady.

- 11 "A royal coach, right here in Pin Oak Hollow!" exclaimed Mayor Bowersox.
- 12 The coach door sprang open, and a skinny man stumbled out, coughing from the dust. "Thank heavens I've finally found you! I've been searching for weeks and the ball is in three days and if I don't have a button by then, the King will fire me!"
- 13 "Slow down, and start at the beginning," the Button Lady said.
- 14 The man took a deep breath. "I'm the royal tailor. The King has been getting . . . how shall I put it . . . well, he's grown quite large in the middle. A month ago, His Royal Highness popped a royal button off his royal robe. The button flew out the window and into the royal moat, which is filled with alligators."
- 15 "I see," said the Button Lady.
- 16 "The button is shaped like a crown and covered with red and blue jewels. Do you have one?" the tailor asked.
- 17 The Button Lady reached into her button bag.
- 18 The townsfolk held their breath, waiting to see the magnificent button.
- 19 Then the Button Lady did something she had never done before. She pulled her hand out of her button bag—empty.
- 20 The crowd gasped.
- 21 The tailor groaned, "I'm finished. I'll be banished from the castle!"
- 22 The Button Lady refused to give up. "I'll look in my button bag again. Maybe I missed it."
- 23 The Button Lady reached down to the very bottom of her button bag, but instead of finding a button, she found a hole.

- 24 “Flubbering fiddlesticks!” shouted Mayor Bowersox.
“There’s a hole in the button bag!”
- 25 “The royal crown button must have fallen out,” said the
tailor.
- 26 The townsfolk began looking for buttons on the ground.
- 27 “Look,” said the Button Lady, pointing to the road. A trail
of buttons stretched as far as they could see, and there was
something else.
- 28 “Gallop galoshes, it’s that button-gobbling goat!”
exclaimed Mayor Bowersox.
- 29 “Get him before he gobbles the royal crown button!”
yelled the tailor.
- 30 Everyone ran toward the goat. When they reached him, it
was clear he had been enjoying a feast of buttons.
- 31 “Oh dear me,” said the Button Lady.
- 32 Then the goat smiled—and something blue and red and
sparkly glittered between his teeth.
- 33 “The royal crown button! Hand it over,” demanded the
tailor, holding out his hand.
- 34 The goat shook his head.
- 35 A small voice said, “Let me try.” The mayor’s son, Paul,
reached into his pocket and pulled out a cherry gumdrop.
“Want some candy?” he asked the goat.
- 36 The goat sniffed the gumdrop, spit out the royal crown
button, and gobbled up the treat.
- 37 “Yippee!” shouted the tailor, grabbing the royal crown
button. “What a clever lad you are, Paul.”
- 38 When they got back to the square, the first thing the
tailor did was mend the hole in the Button Lady’s big bag of

buttons. Then he returned to the castle with the royal crown button.

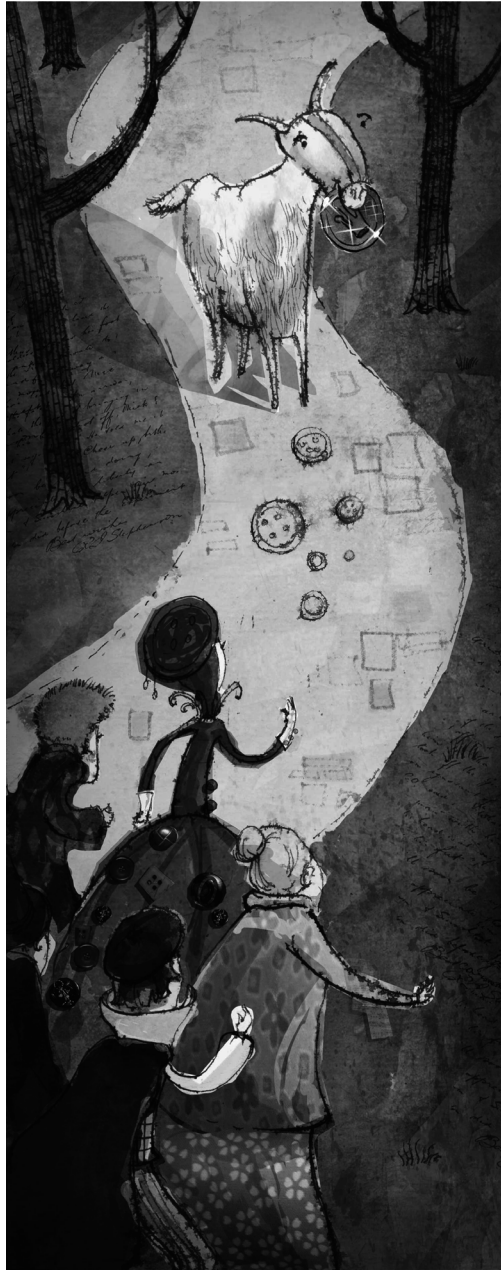
39 The Button Lady gave a special star button to Paul. "This is for rescuing the royal crown button," she said. "Now I must be on my way."

40 The Button Lady climbed on her bicycle and called, "See you next spring!"

41 Then she pedaled out of town as the townsfolk waved and called, "Good-bye, Button Lady!"



Picture 1



Picture 2



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12. Which quotation from the story explains why Kitty Henry asked for a button?

- Ⓐ "Kitty Henry was the first customer of the day."
(paragraph 4)
- Ⓑ "'I need a button for this blouse, please. The dog chewed it off.'" (paragraph 4)
- Ⓒ "'Pesky puppies will do that,' said the Button Lady."
(paragraph 5)
- Ⓓ "'Our goat got loose by my clothesline and ate four buttons off the mayor's shirt.'" (paragraph 7)

13. Read the following sentence from paragraph 5.

"Pesky puppies will do that," said the Button Lady.

What is the meaning of the word pesky as it is used in the sentence?

- Ⓐ adorable
- Ⓑ dangerous
- Ⓒ hungry
- Ⓓ troublesome

14. Read paragraph 7.

Mayor Bowersox's wife, Henrietta, was next in line. "Our goat got loose by my clothesline and ate four buttons off the mayor's shirt. The poor man has been safety-pinned ever since."

According to the phrase next in line, who will be next to get buttons?

- Ⓐ a goat
- Ⓑ Henrietta
- Ⓒ a poor man
- Ⓓ Mayor Bowersox

15. Select two quotations that show the Button Lady wants to make her customers happy.

- Ⓐ “‘That will never do,’ said the Button Lady. She reached into her button bag and pulled out one, two, three, four white buttons!” (paragraph 8)
- Ⓑ “The Button Lady had just found a button for Mr. Merryson’s vest, when a loud commotion drew everyone’s attention.” (paragraph 10)
- Ⓒ “The Button Lady refused to give up. ‘I’ll look in my button bag again. Maybe I missed it.’” (paragraph 22)
- Ⓓ “‘Look,’ said the Button Lady, pointing to the road. A trail of buttons stretched as far as they could see, and there was something else.” (paragraph 27)
- Ⓔ “The Button Lady climbed on her bicycle and called, ‘See you next spring!’” (paragraph 40)

16. The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Read the sentence from paragraph 10.

The Button Lady had just found a button for Mr. Merry song’s vest, when a loud commotion drew everyone’s attention.

Select the meaning of commotion as it is used in the sentence.

- Ⓐ animal
- Ⓑ crash
- Ⓒ horn
- Ⓓ noise

Part B

Select the word from paragraph 10 that provides a clue to the meaning of the word commotion.

The Button Lady had just found a ○ button for Mr. Merry song’s vest, when a ○ loud commotion drew everyone’s attention. Galloping hooves ○ halted in a cloud of ○ dust, right in front of the Button Lady.

- 17.** How do the events in paragraph 26 build on the events in paragraph 23?
- Ⓐ The Button Lady notices the torn bag, so everyone begins looking for missing buttons.
 - Ⓑ The Button Lady refuses to give up, so everyone begins looking for the missing buttons.
 - Ⓒ Everyone runs towards the goat, so the Button Lady is excited to locate her missing buttons.
 - Ⓓ Everyone begins looking for the buttons, so the Button Lady notices the buttons along the path.

18. Read paragraph 38.

When they got back to the square, the first thing the tailor did was mend the hole in the Button Lady's big bag of buttons. Then he returned to the castle with the royal crown button.

Select the point of view of the person speaking in the paragraph.

- Ⓐ Paul
- Ⓑ narrator
- Ⓒ Button Lady
- Ⓓ king's tailor

- 19.** The following question has two parts. First, answer Part A. Then, answer Part B.

Part A

Select the pair of character traits that describe Paul.

- Ⓐ rude and pesky
- Ⓑ mean and greedy
- Ⓒ smart and helpful
- Ⓓ excited and playful

Part B

Read paragraphs 33–38. Then, select the paragraph that supports the answer to Part A.

- ☐ "The royal crown button! Hand it over," demanded the tailor, holding out his hand. . . .
- ☐ A small voice said, "Let me try." The mayor's son, Paul, reached into his pocket and pulled out a cherry gumdrop. "Want some candy?" he asked the goat.
- ☐ The goat sniffed the gumdrop, spit out the royal crown button, and gobbled up the treat. . . .
- ☐ When they got back to the square, the first thing the tailor did was mend the hole in the Button Lady's big bag of buttons. Then he returned to the castle with the royal crown button.

20. How does Picture 2 help the reader understand the events in the story?

- ☐ Ⓐ by showing that the goat wanted the royal crown button
- ☐ Ⓑ by showing that the townsfolk try to get the royal crown button from the goat
- ☐ Ⓒ by showing that the townsfolk threw buttons on the ground for the hungry goat
- ☐ Ⓓ by showing that the townsfolk are scared to get the royal crown button from the goat

Grade 3 ELA Sample Test Items

Paper-Pencil Answer Key Document

Passage	Sequence	Key	Standard	Possible Points
Saving the Sea Turtles	1	D	RI.3.1	1
Saving the Sea Turtles	2	C	L.3.5	1
Saving the Sea Turtles	3	D A	RI.3.4	2
Saving the Sea Turtles	4	D	RI.3.5	1
Adelita's Amazing Journey	5	C	L.3.4	1
Adelita's Amazing Journey	6	B	RI.3.3	1
Adelita's Amazing Journey	7	B	RI.3.1	1
Adelita's Amazing Journey	8	3, 6, 9, 16	RI.3.3	2
Adelita's Amazing Journey	9	C	L.3.5	1
Saving the Sea Turtles Adelita's Amazing Journey	10	B	RI.3.9	1
Saving the Sea Turtles Adelita's Amazing Journey	11	B, E	RI.3.9	2
The Button Lady	12	B	RL.3.1	1
The Button Lady	13	D	RL.3.4	1
The Button Lady	14	B	L.3.6	1
The Button Lady	15	A, C	RL.3.3	2
The Button Lady	16	D B	L.3.4	2
The Button Lady	17	A	RL.3.5	1
The Button Lady	18	B	RL.3.6	1
The Button Lady	19	C B	RL.3.3	2
The Button Lady	20	B	RL.3.7	1