

STAR Test Sample Questions

6th Grade English - Language Arts

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Standardized Testing and Reporting - STAR

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

The World's Fastest Human

- 1 In the summer of 1919, Quincy and Jesse Owens rested in the shade of an oak tree near the farmhouse where they lived. The cool shade was one of their favorite places to linger during the hot summer days. In the distance they could see their father, a sharecropper, working in the fields under the Alabama sun.
- 2 Quincy, who was the oldest of the eight Owens children, pulled three marbles from his pocket and tossed them onto the ground. He drew a circle in the dirt and placed the largest marble in the center. Then, while Quincy began practicing, Jesse climbed up to sit on his favorite branch.
- 3 A few minutes later their neighbor Sarah joined them. "Hi, guys!" she said. She took two marbles from her dress pocket and sat next to Quincy.
- 4 "Hi, Sarah," the boys mumbled. A gentle breeze rustled the leaves on the tree. Quincy stopped shooting marbles and leaned against the tree's trunk. He closed his eyes and smiled.
- 5 Sarah said, "We always play marbles. Let's think of something else to do."
- 6 Jesse jumped to the ground. "I know! I'll race you, Sarah," he said. "I'll race you to the willow tree and back."
- 7 "You're only six years old!" said Sarah. "Besides that, I'm as fast as the wind. I can even run faster than my cousins, who are fourteen!"
- 8 "I'll tell you what," Jesse said, continuing as though he hadn't heard her. "If you beat me, I'll give you my kaleidoscope."
- 9 With that, Sarah quickly jumped up and drew a starting line in the dirt a few yards away. "Quincy," she said, "you count to three. Come on, Jesse. I can't wait to play with my new kaleidoscope. Let's start running on three."

Continue



10 Quincy got up and stood next to the starting line. In a fatherly tone he said, "Jesse, just do your best." Then he began counting, "One . . . two . . . THREE!"

11 A cloud of dust rose behind the two children as they took off. Sarah quickly pulled ahead of Jesse. She looked over her shoulder and smiled at him, but he didn't even see her. He looked straight ahead at the willow tree and focused on moving his arms and legs in perfect rhythm. Three minutes later, Sarah tagged the willow tree and spun around to complete the return trip. She was startled to see Jesse right behind her.

12 Jesse tagged the tree and dashed past Sarah. He heard Quincy shout, "C'mon Jesse, you're ahead. Run faster! Run faster!" Seconds later, Jesse crossed the finish line,—ahead of Sarah. He had won the race!

13 Quincy danced with excitement. "He won! He won!" he shouted as Sarah crossed the finish line. "Jesse beat you! My little brother beat you!"

14 Sarah placed her hands on her knees while she caught her breath. "He surely did just that!" she said with a smile. Then she put her arm around Jesse, who was beaming. "You really run like a pro!" she said.

15 Several years later, Sarah became a student at Missouri State University. She continued to run races as a member of the track team, but she always remembered her race with Jesse. One day, as she walked into a building on campus, she noticed a newspaper stand. The headlines on the newspaper caught her attention: *World's Fastest Human: Jesse Owens Wins Four Gold Medals in Berlin Olympics.*

16 "That's my Jesse!" she thought fondly.

Note: It was in the year 1936 that Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany.

The phrase "as fast as the wind" in paragraph 7 is an example of

A metaphor.

B simile.

C personification.

D symbolism.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

The World's Fastest Human

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16 "That's my Jesse!" she thought fondly.

Note: It was in the year 1936 that Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany.

The author makes the events of the passage seem more realistic by

- A describing the Owens home in careful detail.
- B supplying the conversation that might have taken place.
- C naming all seven of Jesse Owens' sisters and brothers.
- D telling the name of the town where the events took place.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

More Than a Niece

1 Harriet Lane stood in the doorway of the State Dining Room. She watched as the florists carried their large flower arrangements. The flowers were all so beautiful that Harriet clapped her hands. "Thank you all for your hard work," she said to the florists. "I'm sure the prince will be very impressed." The florists left, and Harriet and her friend Miss Hetty were alone in the dining room.



2 "This is my favorite part of being Uncle's hostess," Harriet said. Then she thought again. "Well, one of my favorite parts. To be honest, I love all the parts of being Uncle's hostess here at the White House. I love planning the dinners and checking the guest rooms. I love showing visitors the gardens. I love making sure that all the prominent and distinguished people who come to visit the president are comfortable."

3 Miss Hetty smiled. She had taken care of Harriet for a long time. Harriet had been only nine years old when her parents died. She went to live with her uncle, James Buchanan. Uncle James was an important man and was often away from home. He was not married, so he asked Miss Hetty to be his housekeeper and to care for Harriet when he was away. He wanted Harriet to have good manners and study hard in school. He also wanted her to be honest and truthful and always be ready to help others. As Harriet grew up, she and Miss Hetty became friends.

Continue



- 4 When Uncle James became the United States government's representative in England, Harriet and Miss Hetty traveled there as well. Harriet became a friend of Queen Victoria and her family. Now that Uncle James was president, Harriet and Miss Hetty were with him in Washington, D.C. Harriet did many of the jobs that a First Lady, or wife of the president, would do, even though she was the president's niece. This was to be the most important party she had planned. Queen Victoria's son, the Prince of Wales, was visiting the United States. He was coming to dinner at the White House tonight! At the party, the prince and Harriet enjoyed talking about England and the people Harriet had met while she had lived there.
- 5 During the time she lived in Washington, Harriet did more than just plan parties. She worked hard to improve the lives of Native Americans all across the country. She also believed that there should be a national art museum in Washington.
- 6 Harriet's Uncle James was president from 1857 to 1861. When his term of office was over, they both returned to their home in Pennsylvania. Harriet married Henry Elliot Johnson, and they had two sons. She and her husband collected artwork from all over the world. When she grew older, she gave her collection to the people of the United States. This collection was the basis for the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Harriet also started the first children's hospital in the United States.
- 7 Harriet Lane is famous for being the only First Lady who was not married to a president. She did much more for our country than plan parties!

Which part of the passage is most likely fictional?

- A the description of the White House
- B the trip Harriet and Miss Hetty took to England
- C the conversation between Harriet and Miss Hetty
- D the background information about Harriet's childhood



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 04

Water Picture
by May Swenson

- In the pond in the park
all things are doubled:
Long buildings hang and
wriggle gently. Chimneys
5 are bent legs bouncing
on clouds below. A flag
wags like a fishhook
down there in the sky.
The arched stone bridge
10 is an eye, with underlid
in the water. In its lens
dip crinkled heads with hats
that don't fall off. Dogs go by,
barking on their backs.
15 A baby, taken to feed the
ducks, dangles upside-down,
a pink balloon for a buoy.
Treetops deploy a haze of
cherry bloom for roots,
20 where birds coast belly-up
in the glass bowl of a hill;
from its bottom a bunch
of peanut-munching children
is suspended by their
25 sneakers, waveringly.
A swan, with twin necks
forming the figure 3,
steers between two dimpled
towers doubled. Fondly



Continue



30 hissing, she kisses herself,
and all the scene is troubled:
water-windows splinter,
tree-limbs tangle, the bridge
folds like a fan.

"Water Picture" from NATURE: POEMS OLD AND NEW. Copyright © 1994 by the Literary Estate of May Swenson. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

How does the poet achieve her tone?

- ☐ A She sets the poem in a public park.
- ☐ B She describes familiar things in a surprising way.
- ☐ C She uses lines of varying length.
- ☐ D She contrasts the swan with other birds.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 05

Water Picture
by May Swenson

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all things are doubled:
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wriggle gently. Chimneys
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Read this line from the poem.

and all the scene is troubled:

This line refers to the fact that the swan

A is a threat to the other birds.

B has disturbed the still water.

C cannot find the food she seeks.

D distracts from the pond's beauty.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

Bird of Dreams

1 At night in dream I travel from my bed.
2 On wing of light I soar across vast skies
3 Where colors swirl and dance, and mingle and soar,
4 To far beyond the veil, where Phoenix flies.
5 The Phoenix is a wondrous bird of dreams.
6 Each five hundred years she builds a nest,
7 Piling feathers, branches, twigs, and leaves—
8 Now will she lay her eggs and sit to rest?
9 But no! The Phoenix strikes a blazing spark
10 And sets her cozy nesting place afire!
11 She dives in flight into the dancing flames!
12 Why does she go into the flaming pyre?
13 There is no need to weep, for all is well.
14 For her the pyre's fiery heat and flame
15 Burn away the years. She is reborn!
16 Her radiant, shining youth she doth reclaim.
17 The pyre burns down to ash, and all is still.
18 And from the ashen pile, her eyes alight,
19 The Phoenix rises up into the sky,
20 Renewed, with feathers luminous and bright!
21 And so this night, perchance my dreams will go
22 With wondrous Phoenix rising in the sky,
23 To soar among the planets and the stars,
24 Deep in the night to fly and fly and fly!

Continue



In line 24, which technique does the poet use for final impact?

A metaphor

B personification

C repetition

D simile



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

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Continue



Which words from the poem are intended to provide a sense that the poem was written long ago?

A soar, fly

B branches, twigs

C flame, burn

D doth, perchance



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

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The Phoenix could best represent a person who

A makes a promise and then breaks it.

B loses everything and starts over.

C wants only to be carefree and have fun.

D lives a life of habit and routine.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 04

The World's Fastest Human

- 1 In the summer of 1919, Quincy and Jesse Owens rested in the shade of an oak tree near the farmhouse where they lived. The cool shade was one of their favorite places to linger during the hot summer days. In the distance they could see their father, a sharecropper, working in the fields under the Alabama sun.
- 2 Quincy, who was the oldest of the eight Owens children, pulled three marbles from his pocket and tossed them onto the ground. He drew a circle in the dirt and placed the largest marble in the center. Then, while Quincy began practicing, Jesse climbed up to sit on his favorite branch.
- 3 A few minutes later their neighbor Sarah joined them. "Hi, guys!" she said. She took two marbles from her dress pocket and sat next to Quincy.
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16 "That's my Jesse!" she thought fondly.

Note: It was in the year 1936 that Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany.

We can tell that this passage is an example of historical fiction because it

- A relates a folktale about imaginary people.
- B takes place in the United States of America.
- C tells a sequence of events involving a famous person.
- D has a happy ending for all of the characters.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 05

Water Picture
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What is the purpose of the metaphors used throughout the poem?

- A to explain the many uses of water
- B to help the reader visualize certain ideas
- C to avoid the need for characters
- D to show the reader that water is a symbol of life



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

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Continue



Why does the poet use three exclamation marks within lines 9 through 12?

A An alarming event is described.

B The speaker is expressing anger.

C A question is being answered.

D The speaker is having an argument.



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 02

Bird of Dreams

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Continue



In this poem, what is both destructive and creative?

A fire

B ash

C light

D air



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 03

More Than a Niece

1 Harriet Lane stood in the doorway of the State Dining Room. She watched as the florists carried their large flower arrangements. The flowers were all so beautiful that Harriet clapped her hands. "Thank you all for your hard work," she said to the florists. "I'm sure the prince will be very impressed." The florists left, and Harriet and her friend Miss Hetty were alone in the dining room.



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Continue



- 4 When Uncle James became the United States government's representative in England, Harriet and Miss Hetty traveled there as well. Harriet became a friend of Queen Victoria and her family. Now that Uncle James was president, Harriet and Miss Hetty were with him in Washington, D.C. Harriet did many of the jobs that a First Lady, or wife of the president, would do, even though she was the president's niece. This was to be the most important party she had planned. Queen Victoria's son, the Prince of Wales, was visiting the United States. He was coming to dinner at the White House tonight! At the party, the prince and Harriet enjoyed talking about England and the people Harriet had met while she had lived there.
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- 6 Harriet's Uncle James was president from 1857 to 1861. When his term of office was over, they both returned to their home in Pennsylvania. Harriet married Henry Elliot Johnson, and they had two sons. She and her husband collected artwork from all over the world. When she grew older, she gave her collection to the people of the United States. This collection was the basis for the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Harriet also started the first children's hospital in the United States.
- 7 Harriet Lane is famous for being the only First Lady who was not married to a president. She did much more for our country than plan parties!

Information in the passage suggests that Harriet was

- A cautious.
- B pretty.
- C enthusiastic.
- D snobbish.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Literary Response and Analysis (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 04

Water Picture
by May Swenson

- In the pond in the park
all things are doubled:
Long buildings hang and
wriggle gently. Chimneys
5 are bent legs bouncing
on clouds below. A flag
wags like a fishhook
down there in the sky.
The arched stone bridge
10 is an eye, with underlid
in the water. In its lens
dip crinkled heads with hats
that don't fall off. Dogs go by,
barking on their backs.
15 A baby, taken to feed the
ducks, dangles upside-down,
a pink balloon for a buoy.
Treetops deploy a haze of
cherry bloom for roots,
20 where birds coast belly-up
in the glass bowl of a hill;
from its bottom a bunch
of peanut-munching children
is suspended by their
25 sneakers, waveringly.
A swan, with twin necks
forming the figure 3,
steers between two dimpled
towers doubled. Fondly



Continue



30 hissing, she kisses herself,
and all the scene is troubled:
water-windows splinter,
tree-limbs tangle, the bridge
folds like a fan.

"Water Picture" from NATURE: POEMS OLD AND NEW. Copyright © 1994 by the Literary Estate of May Swenson. Reprinted by permission of Houghton Mifflin Company. All rights reserved.

How does the poet create a sense of activity in the poem?

- ☐ A She compares the bridge to an eye.
- ☐ B She avoids introducing too many characters in the poem.
- ☐ C She uses strong, descriptive words.
- ☐ D She keeps the length of each line fairly short.

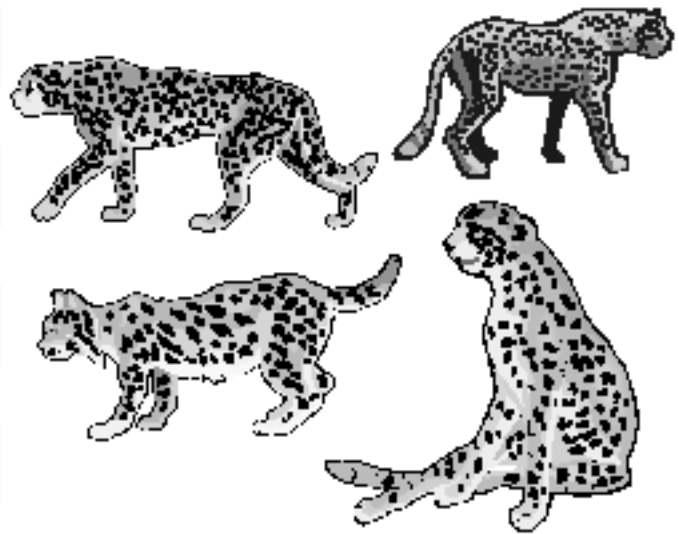


Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials) (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

Spotted Cats

1 Several members of the cat family have spotted fur. Do you know the difference between a leopard, a jaguar, and a cheetah? From a distance they may appear somewhat similar. Examined at closer range, however, they are clearly different cats. They differ in various ways, including where they live, how big they are, how they move and hunt, and how their fur is marked.



2 Of all the big cats in the wild, the true leopard is found across the largest area. Leopards live in much of Asia and Africa. A leopard grows to be from 3 to 6 feet long, with an added 3 feet of tail. Leopards are skilled climbers that can hunt monkeys in trees. They can also lie in wait and pounce on passing prey. When food sources are scarce, they might eat fruit, field mice, and large insects. Leopard spots are not actually solid spots; they are broken circles.

3 The jaguar is native to the Americas. Its natural range is from the southern United States to northern Argentina, with the largest concentration of jaguars being in Brazil and Central America. The beauty and power of the jaguar inspired worship among ancient peoples. It measures between 3 and 6 feet long without the tail, which adds another 1 ½ to 2 ½ feet. Possessing a large head and body, the jaguar has legs that are shorter and thicker than a leopard's. Jaguars are excellent climbers and can also swim well. They dine on a variety of land, tree, and water creatures. Their fur can be a vivid yellow color or a rusty shade; their "spots" are called rosettes. Each rosette is large and black, consisting of a middle spot with a circle of spots around it.

Continue



4 Most cheetahs live in the wilds of Africa. There are also some in Iran and northwestern Afghanistan. The cheetah's head is smaller than the leopard's, and its body is longer. This cat is built for speed. Its legs are much longer than the leopard's, allowing it to run at speeds of up to 70 miles per hour! This incredible ability helps the cheetahs catch their dinner, which is usually an unfortunate antelope. A cheetah's spots are simply black spots, not rosettes or circles.

5 Other spotted cats include the smaller ocelot, mainly of Central and South America, and the lynx or bobcat, mainly of North America. What all of these cats have in common is that they are wild, powerful animals of tremendous grace and beauty.

Which words from the passage are used as persuasion in that they express an attitude of sympathy for animals that are prey to big cats?

A . . . how they move and hunt . . .

B . . . might eat fruit, field mice, and large insects.

C . . . dinner, which is usually an unfortunate antelope.

D . . . that they are wild, powerful animals . . .



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials) (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

Document A

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Just like the animals we shelter, people are very special to us. The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has 300 active volunteers and is always eager to add more. If you have a few hours each week and a love for dogs and cats, we at the shelter welcome your participation.

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The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Children 10 years of age or older are allowed to participate in some of our programs as youth volunteers when accompanied by an adult. The adult can be a sibling, parent, or guardian 18 years of age or older. Volunteering is rewarding for a number of reasons. Youth volunteers learn responsibility as they serve the community. Volunteers are rewarded with the affection of our shelter animals. Volunteers learn about the needs of dogs and cats and how to care for those needs.

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A youth volunteer must:

- care deeply about animals and their welfare
- complete an application form
- be at least 10 years of age and accompanied by an adult
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Youth volunteers may fill the position of dog nuzzler, cat snuggler, or kennel aide, provided there are openings. Please call our volunteer information hotline at 1-800-290-5992 to hear a recording of the positions currently available.

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Kennel Aides

Providing food and water for the animals at the shelter is a demanding job. Kennel aides assist the Animal Shelter staff in feeding the animals in our care. Kennel aides must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.



Continue



Which detail from Document A emphasizes the personal benefits of being a youth volunteer at the Animal Shelter?

- ☐ A The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has volunteer opportunities for people of all ages.
- ☐ B Children 10 years of age or older are allowed to participate in some of our programs as youth volunteers when accompanied by an adult.
- ☐ C Youth volunteers learn responsibility as they serve the community.
- ☐ D Cat snugglers must be knowledgeable about cats and their needs.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials) (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

More Than a Niece

1 Harriet Lane stood in the doorway of the State Dining Room. She watched as the florists carried their large flower arrangements. The flowers were all so beautiful that Harriet clapped her hands. "Thank you all for your hard work," she said to the florists. "I'm sure the prince will be very impressed." The florists left, and Harriet and her friend Miss Hetty were alone in the dining room.



2 "This is my favorite part of being Uncle's hostess," Harriet said. Then she thought again. "Well, one of my favorite parts. To be honest, I love all the parts of being Uncle's hostess here at the White House. I love planning the dinners and checking the guest rooms. I love showing visitors the gardens. I love making sure that all the prominent and distinguished people who come to visit the president are comfortable."

3 Miss Hetty smiled. She had taken care of Harriet for a long time. Harriet had been only nine years old when her parents died. She went to live with her uncle, James Buchanan. Uncle James was an important man and was often away from home. He was not married, so he asked Miss Hetty to be his housekeeper and to care for Harriet when he was away. He wanted Harriet to have good manners and study hard in school. He also wanted her to be honest and truthful and always be ready to help others. As Harriet grew up, she and Miss Hetty became friends.

Continue

4 When Uncle James became the United States government's representative in England, Harriet and Miss Hetty traveled there as well. Harriet became a friend of Queen Victoria and her family. Now that Uncle James was president, Harriet and Miss Hetty were with him in Washington, D.C. Harriet did many of the jobs that a First Lady, or wife of the president, would do, even though she was the president's niece. This was to be the most important party she had planned. Queen Victoria's son, the Prince of Wales, was visiting the United States. He was coming to dinner at the White House tonight! At the party, the prince and Harriet enjoyed talking about England and the people Harriet had met while she had lived there.

5 During the time she lived in Washington, Harriet did more than just plan parties. She worked hard to improve the lives of Native Americans all across the country. She also believed that there should be a national art museum in Washington.

6 Harriet's Uncle James was president from 1857 to 1861. When his term of office was over, they both returned to their home in Pennsylvania. Harriet married Henry Elliot Johnson, and they had two sons. She and her husband collected artwork from all over the world. When she grew older, she gave her collection to the people of the United States. This collection was the basis for the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Harriet also started the first children's hospital in the United States.

7 Harriet Lane is famous for being the only First Lady who was not married to a president. She did much more for our country than plan parties!

Information in the passage supports the idea that Harriet's family was

A wealthy.

B stubborn.

C fun loving.

D selfish.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials) (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

More Than a Niece

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7 Harriet Lane is famous for being the only First Lady who was not married to a president. She did much more for our country than plan parties!

How did Harriet help her uncle?

A She traveled everywhere with him.

B She was his housekeeper.

C She was his hostess.

D She helped him collect artwork.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials) (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

Soft and Loud

1 When you think of a stringed instrument, you probably think of a guitar or violin. The piano is a stringed instrument too. You may not have seen a piano's strings, because they're usually hidden. Unlike a guitarist or violinist, a pianist doesn't actually see or touch the piano strings while playing. How is the piano played, then? If we examine the piano's history, we can gain an understanding of how this instrument works. Many different instruments helped pave the way for the piano.



2 Long ago people used bows and arrows. They noticed that plucking a string on the bow made the string vibrate. The back and forth motion produced a sound. They found that different sounds could be made by changing the string's thickness, length, and tightness.

3 Over time, more strings were added to different kinds of bows. Early stringed instruments resulted from these experiments with sound. In Europe, an upright triangle-shaped harp with many strings was created. The strings of the harp were plucked with the fingers. Another ancient stringed instrument was the psaltery. Its base was a flat, hollow box with four uneven sides. Wire strings stretched across its top were plucked to make music. Made in various parts of Europe and Asia, psalteries differed in such features as shape, size, and number of strings.

4 By 1700, musicians in the Middle East made a stringed instrument called a hammer dulcimer. People hit its strings with a small hammer. If you hit a string softly, it made a quiet sound. A harder blow created a louder sound.

Continue



5 It was a harpsichord-maker named Bartolomeo Cristofori who, around 1700, invented the first bona fide piano. His new instrument combined a keyboard with the hammering, rather than plucking, of strings. By 1783, the standard piano had six octaves. It soon took the place of the harpsichord for many composers. People pressed the keys with their fingers, as they had with the harpsichord. Inside, though, instead of the strings being plucked they were struck with little hammers, as on a hammer dulcimer. If the keys were hit hard, the music was loud. If they were hit gently, the music was soft. Therefore, the instrument was called a piano e forte, Italian words meaning “soft and loud.” The name was later shortened to just piano.

6 Today, the piano is over 300 years old. The number of keys has increased to eighty-eight— fifty-two white keys and thirty-six black ones. You don’t have to be a maestro to enjoy the sound of this instrument. The next time you see one, sit down and pick out a tune!

Why is it appropriate for the author to discuss bows in paragraph 2?

- ☐ A It shows that warlike people were also musical.
- ☐ B It shows how a bow is different from a harp.
- ☐ C It shows that stringed instruments are superior to other types of instruments.
- ☐ D It shows how stringed instruments were invented.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials) (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 04

Soft and Loud

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Which sentence from the passage shows that the piano is like both the harpsichord and the hammer dulcimer?

A Unlike a guitarist or violinist, a pianist doesn’t actually see or touch the piano strings while playing.

B Early stringed instruments resulted from these experiments with sound.

C His new instrument combined a keyboard with the hammering, rather than plucking, of strings.

D Therefore, the instrument was called a piano e forte, Italian words meaning “soft and loud.”



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Focus on Informational Materials) (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 05

Document A

Volunteering

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Youth Volunteers

The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Children 10 years of age or older are allowed to participate in some of our programs as youth volunteers when accompanied by an adult. The adult can be a sibling, parent, or guardian 18 years of age or older. Volunteering is rewarding for a number of reasons. Youth volunteers learn responsibility as they serve the community. Volunteers are rewarded with the affection of our shelter animals. Volunteers learn about the needs of dogs and cats and how to care for those needs.

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The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County!

Check us out!

Continue

Document B**Youth Volunteer Application Form**

Complete all required information and mail these two forms to: Animal Shelter of Sacramento County; 133 Highway 15; Sacramento, CA 94244.

My Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

I would like to work as a [check one]: ☐ dog nuzzler ☐ cat snuggler ☐ kennel aide

Days/Hours of Availability [check day/time(s)]: ☐ Saturday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

☐ Sunday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

My Adult Sponsor's Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

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Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Relationship to Youth Volunteer: _____

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I, _____, the parent or legal guardian of _____, hereby give permission for my child to participate as a youth volunteer with the Animal Shelter of Sacramento County. I authorize Animal Shelter staff to seek immediate medical treatment in case of an accident by using the emergency contact information below. My signature acknowledges that my child has no allergies or other medical conditions that would prohibit participation in this program.

Emergency Contact Information

Contact: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Family Physician: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

**Back****Continue****Back to Table of Contents**Compiled and
Designed
Courtesy of:**Shoob Photography**
Serving California Schools Since 1976

The author implies that large-sized dogs

A are less comfortable around people.

B are more difficult to handle.

C need more human interaction.

D respond better to youth volunteers.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

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The topics within the passage allow for the comparison and contrast of

A pianos.

B instruments.

C sounds.

D inventors.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

Document A

Volunteering

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What is the first action that should be taken by a young person who wants to serve as a dog nuzzler?

- A Write a note stating this preference and attach it to the application form.
- B Call the director of the Animal Shelter before filling out the application form.
- C Call the volunteer information hotline to find out if a dog nuzzler position is available.
- D Complete the authorization and acknowledgment form and mail it to the Animal Shelter.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

Document A

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- complete an application form
- be at least 10 years of age and accompanied by an adult
- attend an orientation session

Youth Volunteer Opportunities

Youth volunteers may fill the position of dog nuzzler, cat snuggler, or kennel aide, provided there are openings. Please call our volunteer information hotline at 1-800-290-5992 to hear a recording of the positions currently available.

Dog Nuzzlers

Dogs need human interaction and exercise to maintain their health and level of comfort around people. Dog nuzzlers walk and groom the dogs staying at the shelter. Dog nuzzlers must be knowledgeable about dogs and able to handle medium-sized to large-sized breeds like collies and Labrador retrievers. Youth volunteer dog nuzzlers must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.

Cat Snugglers

Help our kittens and cats maintain their cuddly qualities by giving them lots of attention. Cat snugglers must be knowledgeable about cats and their needs. Youth volunteer cat snugglers must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.

Kennel Aides

Providing food and water for the animals at the shelter is a demanding job. Kennel aides assist the Animal Shelter staff in feeding the animals in our care. Kennel aides must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.



Continue



Document B

Youth Volunteer Application Form

Complete all required information and mail these two forms to: Animal Shelter of Sacramento County; 133 Highway 15; Sacramento, CA 94244.

My Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

I would like to work as a [check one]: ☐ dog nuzzler ☐ cat snuggler ☐ kennel aide

Days/Hours of Availability [check day/time(s)]: ☐ Saturday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

☐ Sunday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

My Adult Sponsor's Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Relationship to Youth Volunteer: _____

Document C

Authorization and Acknowledgment Form

I, _____, the parent or legal guardian of _____, hereby give permission for my child to participate as a youth volunteer with the Animal Shelter of Sacramento County. I authorize Animal Shelter staff to seek immediate medical treatment in case of an accident by using the emergency contact information below. My signature acknowledges that my child has no allergies or other medical conditions that would prohibit participation in this program.

Emergency Contact Information

Contact: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Family Physician: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____



Back Continue

Which 10-year-old child best meets the qualifications to be a youth volunteer at the Animal Shelter?

A Matt, who is allergic to animal fur

B Katie, who likes dogs but does not have an adult sponsor

C Bryan, who can work with either cats or dogs on weekday afternoons

D Amber, who wants to work with cats on Sunday afternoons



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 04

Read the following letter to the editor taken from a local newspaper.

Letter to the Editor

- 1 A debate is currently raging in our town. Should we allow the Odeon Triplex Cinema to be constructed at the Havenswood Shopping Center? There is just one large lot left to build on, and the theater would use up all of that space. Some people are thrilled at the idea of finally having our own movie theater in Havenswood. Others would rather travel ten miles north to the nearest theater in Gadway in order to keep our quiet town the way it is. They say it is enough to have Marvin's Movie Video Rentals in the shopping center. As a Havenswood citizen and small business owner, I would like to express my opinion on this issue.
- 2 There are certainly benefits to renting videos. For one thing, you can plan your own movie-watching schedule by renting and viewing movies when it is convenient for you. You can relax on your cozy couch, grab snacks from your kitchen, and take a break whenever you need one. You can also talk to friends or family members who are watching the movie with you without bothering any strangers seated nearby. In addition, it is a less expensive way to view a movie compared to going to a theater, especially if more than one person is watching the video.
- 3 On the other hand, seeing a movie in a theater is an experience all its own. For one thing, you can see the movie on a wide screen as the filmmaker intended. To be viewed on a television screen, a film must be changed in some way to make it smaller. One way is known as the "pan-and-scan" method, which involves removing some of the details in the picture. This results in an image that is not complete. The other way, called "letterboxing," keeps the image the way it is on the big screen, with one annoying exception: because the big-screen version is wide, the same picture on a television screen must be long and narrow, with black strips above and below it.

Continue



4 Another issue is sound. The sound from a television, even when it's attached to a home stereo system, cannot compare to the sound system in a movie theater. Your experience of a movie improves when you can clearly hear all of the sounds, loud and soft. Furthermore, at home, viewing companions often talk during a movie, which makes you miss out on what's happening in the film.

5 Besides, having a movie theater will not mean that you can't still go to Marvin's and rent a movie! You will just have a choice that you didn't have before. Isn't it time for Havenswood residents to enjoy a little progress?

A Concerned Citizen

Which of the following sources would provide the best evidence to support the main idea in paragraph 3?

- A an editorial page about popular movies
- B a magazine about the history of moviemaking
- C a story about a famous filmmaker
- D a book about changing movies into videos



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

More Than a Niece

1 Harriet Lane stood in the doorway of the State Dining Room. She watched as the florists carried their large flower arrangements. The flowers were all so beautiful that Harriet clapped her hands. "Thank you all for your hard work," she said to the florists. "I'm sure the prince will be very impressed." The florists left, and Harriet and her friend Miss Hetty were alone in the dining room.



2 "This is my favorite part of being Uncle's hostess," Harriet said. Then she thought again. "Well, one of my favorite parts. To be honest, I love all the parts of being Uncle's hostess here at the White House. I love planning the dinners and checking the guest rooms. I love showing visitors the gardens. I love making sure that all the prominent and distinguished people who come to visit the president are comfortable."

3 Miss Hetty smiled. She had taken care of Harriet for a long time. Harriet had been only nine years old when her parents died. She went to live with her uncle, James Buchanan. Uncle James was an important man and was often away from home. He was not married, so he asked Miss Hetty to be his housekeeper and to care for Harriet when he was away. He wanted Harriet to have good manners and study hard in school. He also wanted her to be honest and truthful and always be ready to help others. As Harriet grew up, she and Miss Hetty became friends.

Continue



- 4 When Uncle James became the United States government's representative in England, Harriet and Miss Hetty traveled there as well. Harriet became a friend of Queen Victoria and her family. Now that Uncle James was president, Harriet and Miss Hetty were with him in Washington, D.C. Harriet did many of the jobs that a First Lady, or wife of the president, would do, even though she was the president's niece. This was to be the most important party she had planned. Queen Victoria's son, the Prince of Wales, was visiting the United States. He was coming to dinner at the White House tonight! At the party, the prince and Harriet enjoyed talking about England and the people Harriet had met while she had lived there.
- 5 During the time she lived in Washington, Harriet did more than just plan parties. She worked hard to improve the lives of Native Americans all across the country. She also believed that there should be a national art museum in Washington.
- 6 Harriet's Uncle James was president from 1857 to 1861. When his term of office was over, they both returned to their home in Pennsylvania. Harriet married Henry Elliot Johnson, and they had two sons. She and her husband collected artwork from all over the world. When she grew older, she gave her collection to the people of the United States. This collection was the basis for the National Gallery of Art in Washington, D.C. Harriet also started the first children's hospital in the United States.
- 7 Harriet Lane is famous for being the only First Lady who was not married to a president. She did much more for our country than plan parties!

Where would this passage most likely be found?

- A in a news magazine
- B in a collection of autobiographies
- C in a newspaper
- D in a collection of biographies



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

The World's Fastest Human

- 1 In the summer of 1919, Quincy and Jesse Owens rested in the shade of an oak tree near the farmhouse where they lived. The cool shade was one of their favorite places to linger during the hot summer days. In the distance they could see their father, a sharecropper, working in the fields under the Alabama sun.
- 2 Quincy, who was the oldest of the eight Owens children, pulled three marbles from his pocket and tossed them onto the ground. He drew a circle in the dirt and placed the largest marble in the center. Then, while Quincy began practicing, Jesse climbed up to sit on his favorite branch.
- 3 A few minutes later their neighbor Sarah joined them. "Hi, guys!" she said. She took two marbles from her dress pocket and sat next to Quincy.
- 4 "Hi, Sarah," the boys mumbled. A gentle breeze rustled the leaves on the tree. Quincy stopped shooting marbles and leaned against the tree's trunk. He closed his eyes and smiled.
- 5 Sarah said, "We always play marbles. Let's think of something else to do."
- 6 Jesse jumped to the ground. "I know! I'll race you, Sarah," he said. "I'll race you to the willow tree and back."
- 7 "You're only six years old!" said Sarah. "Besides that, I'm as fast as the wind. I can even run faster than my cousins, who are fourteen!"
- 8 "I'll tell you what," Jesse said, continuing as though he hadn't heard her. "If you beat me, I'll give you my kaleidoscope."
- 9 With that, Sarah quickly jumped up and drew a starting line in the dirt a few yards away. "Quincy," she said, "you count to three. Come on, Jesse. I can't wait to play with my new kaleidoscope. Let's start running on three."

Continue



10 Quincy got up and stood next to the starting line. In a fatherly tone he said, "Jesse, just do your best." Then he began counting, "One . . . two . . . THREE!"

11 A cloud of dust rose behind the two children as they took off. Sarah quickly pulled ahead of Jesse. She looked over her shoulder and smiled at him, but he didn't even see her. He looked straight ahead at the willow tree and focused on moving his arms and legs in perfect rhythm. Three minutes later, Sarah tagged the willow tree and spun around to complete the return trip. She was startled to see Jesse right behind her.

12 Jesse tagged the tree and dashed past Sarah. He heard Quincy shout, "C'mon Jesse, you're ahead. Run faster! Run faster!" Seconds later, Jesse crossed the finish line,—ahead of Sarah. He had won the race!

13 Quincy danced with excitement. "He won! He won!" he shouted as Sarah crossed the finish line. "Jesse beat you! My little brother beat you!"

14 Sarah placed her hands on her knees while she caught her breath. "He surely did just that!" she said with a smile. Then she put her arm around Jesse, who was beaming. "You really run like a pro!" she said.

15 Several years later, Sarah became a student at Missouri State University. She continued to run races as a member of the track team, but she always remembered her race with Jesse. One day, as she walked into a building on campus, she noticed a newspaper stand. The headlines on the newspaper caught her attention: *World's Fastest Human: Jesse Owens Wins Four Gold Medals in Berlin Olympics.*

16 "That's my Jesse!" she thought fondly.

Note: It was in the year 1936 that Jesse Owens won four gold medals at the Olympic Games in Berlin, Germany.

This passage would most likely be found

- A in a sports magazine for young readers.
- B on the front page of a newspaper.
- C in a magazine about current world events.
- D on the editorial page of a newspaper.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

Read the following letter to the editor taken from a local newspaper.

Letter to the Editor

- 1 A debate is currently raging in our town. Should we allow the Odeon Triplex Cinema to be constructed at the Havenswood Shopping Center? There is just one large lot left to build on, and the theater would use up all of that space. Some people are thrilled at the idea of finally having our own movie theater in Havenswood. Others would rather travel ten miles north to the nearest theater in Gadway in order to keep our quiet town the way it is. They say it is enough to have Marvin's Movie Video Rentals in the shopping center. As a Havenswood citizen and small business owner, I would like to express my opinion on this issue.
- 2 There are certainly benefits to renting videos. For one thing, you can plan your own movie-watching schedule by renting and viewing movies when it is convenient for you. You can relax on your cozy couch, grab snacks from your kitchen, and take a break whenever you need one. You can also talk to friends or family members who are watching the movie with you without bothering any strangers seated nearby. In addition, it is a less expensive way to view a movie compared to going to a theater, especially if more than one person is watching the video.
- 3 On the other hand, seeing a movie in a theater is an experience all its own. For one thing, you can see the movie on a wide screen as the filmmaker intended. To be viewed on a television screen, a film must be changed in some way to make it smaller. One way is known as the "pan-and-scan" method, which involves removing some of the details in the picture. This results in an image that is not complete. The other way, called "letterboxing," keeps the image the way it is on the big screen, with one annoying exception: because the big-screen version is wide, the same picture on a television screen must be long and narrow, with black strips above and below it.

Continue



4 Another issue is sound. The sound from a television, even when it's attached to a home stereo system, cannot compare to the sound system in a movie theater. Your experience of a movie improves when you can clearly hear all of the sounds, loud and soft. Furthermore, at home, viewing companions often talk during a movie, which makes you miss out on what's happening in the film.

5 Besides, having a movie theater will not mean that you can't still go to Marvin's and rent a movie! You will just have a choice that you didn't have before. Isn't it time for Havenswood residents to enjoy a little progress?

A Concerned Citizen

The author's argument in Paragraph 2 that renting videos is "less expensive" than going to the movies would have been stronger if she had included

A a newspaper story on the expense of managing a theater.

B a quotation from a moviegoer regarding the cost of tickets.

C a chart comparing theater ticket prices to movie rental prices.

D a statement from the owner of the video store about his rental fees.

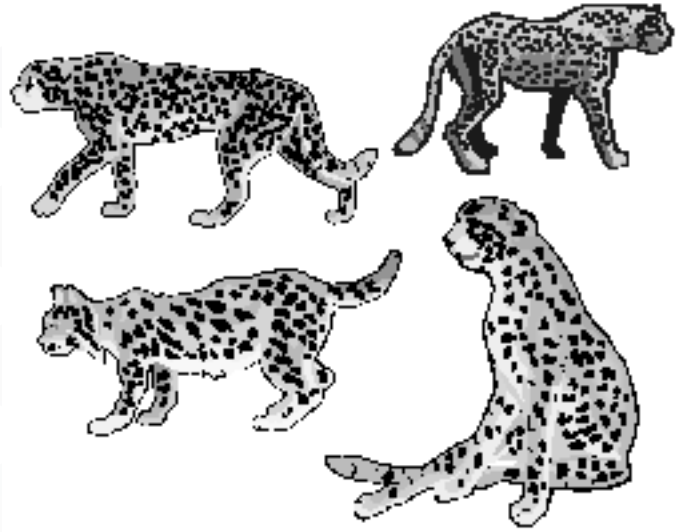


Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

Spotted Cats

1 Several members of the cat family have spotted fur. Do you know the difference between a leopard, a jaguar, and a cheetah? From a distance they may appear somewhat similar. Examined at closer range, however, they are clearly different cats. They differ in various ways, including where they live, how big they are, how they move and hunt, and how their fur is marked.



2 Of all the big cats in the wild, the true leopard is found across the largest area. Leopards live in much of Asia and Africa. A leopard grows to be from 3 to 6 feet long, with an added 3 feet of tail. Leopards are skilled climbers that can hunt monkeys in trees. They can also lie in wait and pounce on passing prey. When food sources are scarce, they might eat fruit, field mice, and large insects. Leopard spots are not actually solid spots; they are broken circles.

3 The jaguar is native to the Americas. Its natural range is from the southern United States to northern Argentina, with the largest concentration of jaguars being in Brazil and Central America. The beauty and power of the jaguar inspired worship among ancient peoples. It measures between 3 and 6 feet long without the tail, which adds another 1 ½ to 2 ½ feet. Possessing a large head and body, the jaguar has legs that are shorter and thicker than a leopard's. Jaguars are excellent climbers and can also swim well. They dine on a variety of land, tree, and water creatures. Their fur can be a vivid yellow color or a rusty shade; their "spots" are called rosettes. Each rosette is large and black, consisting of a middle spot with a circle of spots around it.

Continue



4 Most cheetahs live in the wilds of Africa. There are also some in Iran and northwestern Afghanistan. The cheetah's head is smaller than the leopard's, and its body is longer. This cat is built for speed. Its legs are much longer than the leopard's, allowing it to run at speeds of up to 70 miles per hour! This incredible ability helps the cheetahs catch their dinner, which is usually an unfortunate antelope. A cheetah's spots are simply black spots, not rosettes or circles.

5 Other spotted cats include the smaller ocelot, mainly of Central and South America, and the lynx or bobcat, mainly of North America. What all of these cats have in common is that they are wild, powerful animals of tremendous grace and beauty.

All of these are ways to tell the difference between spotted cats except

A how big they are.

B what their spots look like.

C where they live.

D how beautiful they are.



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Reading Comprehension (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 02

Document A

Volunteering

Just like the animals we shelter, people are very special to us. The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has 300 active volunteers and is always eager to add more. If you have a few hours each week and a love for dogs and cats, we at the shelter welcome your participation.

Youth Volunteers

The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Children 10 years of age or older are allowed to participate in some of our programs as youth volunteers when accompanied by an adult. The adult can be a sibling, parent, or guardian 18 years of age or older. Volunteering is rewarding for a number of reasons. Youth volunteers learn responsibility as they serve the community. Volunteers are rewarded with the affection of our shelter animals. Volunteers learn about the needs of dogs and cats and how to care for those needs.

Youth Volunteer Qualifications

A youth volunteer must:

- care deeply about animals and their welfare
- complete an application form
- be at least 10 years of age and accompanied by an adult
- attend an orientation session

Youth Volunteer Opportunities

Youth volunteers may fill the position of dog nuzzler, cat snuggler, or kennel aide, provided there are openings. Please call our volunteer information hotline at 1-800-290-5992 to hear a recording of the positions currently available.

Dog Nuzzlers

Dogs need human interaction and exercise to maintain their health and level of comfort around people. Dog nuzzlers walk and groom the dogs staying at the shelter. Dog nuzzlers must be knowledgeable about dogs and able to handle medium-sized to large-sized breeds like collies and Labrador retrievers. Youth volunteer dog nuzzlers must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.

Cat Snugglers

Help our kittens and cats maintain their cuddly qualities by giving them lots of attention. Cat snugglers must be knowledgeable about cats and their needs. Youth volunteer cat snugglers must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.

Kennel Aides

Providing food and water for the animals at the shelter is a demanding job. Kennel aides assist the Animal Shelter staff in feeding the animals in our care. Kennel aides must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.



Continue 

Document B**Youth Volunteer Application Form**

Complete all required information and mail these two forms to: Animal Shelter of Sacramento County; 133 Highway 15; Sacramento, CA 94244.

My Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

I would like to work as a [check one]: ☐ dog nuzzler ☐ cat snuggler ☐ kennel aide

Days/Hours of Availability [check day/time(s)]: ☐ Saturday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

☐ Sunday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

My Adult Sponsor's Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Relationship to Youth Volunteer: _____

Document C**Authorization and Acknowledgment Form**

I, _____, the parent or legal guardian of _____, hereby give permission for my child to participate as a youth volunteer with the Animal Shelter of Sacramento County. I authorize Animal Shelter staff to seek immediate medical treatment in case of an accident by using the emergency contact information below. My signature acknowledges that my child has no allergies or other medical conditions that would prohibit participation in this program.

Emergency Contact Information

Contact: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Family Physician: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Back Continue

Which source would provide the most information about grooming dogs?

A a book detailing the care of dogs

B a pamphlet about dog kennels

C a magazine article about the positive effects of owning a dog

D a chart showing the sizes of various breeds of dogs



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

(Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

A conversation can turn into an argument in the same way that a discussion can become

A a privilege.

B an examination.

C a debate.

D a quotation.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

Read this sentence.

At dinnertime Abuelita said, "It's time to put the horses back into the _____."

Which Spanish word meaning "enclosure" can be used to complete the sentence?

A bronco

B corral

C rodeo

D lasso

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

Read this sentence.

After staining the cabinet, the craftsman finished the wood with a wax.

Without changing the meaning of the sentence, which word or words can best be used to replace the underlined word?

A polished

B ended

C destroyed

D used up

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 04

Soft and Loud

1 When you think of a stringed instrument, you probably think of a guitar or violin. The piano is a stringed instrument too. You may not have seen a piano's strings, because they're usually hidden. Unlike a guitarist or violinist, a pianist doesn't actually see or touch the piano strings while playing. How is the piano played, then? If we examine the piano's history, we can gain an understanding of how this instrument works. Many different instruments helped pave the way for the piano.



2 Long ago people used bows and arrows. They noticed that plucking a string on the bow made the string vibrate. The back and forth motion produced a sound. They found that different sounds could be made by changing the string's thickness, length, and tightness.

3 Over time, more strings were added to different kinds of bows. Early stringed instruments resulted from these experiments with sound. In Europe, an upright triangle-shaped harp with many strings was created. The strings of the harp were plucked with the fingers. Another ancient stringed instrument was the psaltery. Its base was a flat, hollow box with four uneven sides. Wire strings stretched across its top were plucked to make music. Made in various parts of Europe and Asia, psalteries differed in such features as shape, size, and number of strings.

4 By 1700, musicians in the Middle East made a stringed instrument called a hammer dulcimer. People hit its strings with a small hammer. If you hit a string softly, it made a quiet sound. A harder blow created a louder sound.

Continue



5 It was a harpsichord-maker named Bartolomeo Cristofori who, around 1700, invented the first bona fide piano. His new instrument combined a keyboard with the hammering, rather than plucking, of strings. By 1783, the standard piano had six octaves. It soon took the place of the harpsichord for many composers. People pressed the keys with their fingers, as they had with the harpsichord. Inside, though, instead of the strings being plucked they were struck with little hammers, as on a hammer dulcimer. If the keys were hit hard, the music was loud. If they were hit gently, the music was soft. Therefore, the instrument was called a piano e forte, Italian words meaning “soft and loud.” The name was later shortened to just piano.

6 Today, the piano is over 300 years old. The number of keys has increased to eighty-eight— fifty-two white keys and thirty-six black ones. You don’t have to be a maestro to enjoy the sound of this instrument. The next time you see one, sit down and pick out a tune!

Read this sentence from paragraph 1 of the passage.

Many different instruments helped pave the way for the piano.

What does the word pave mean in this sentence?

A to slow down

B to cover or hide

C to make possible

D to fill in



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

(Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

Which French expression would be most appropriate to say to someone about to go on a journey?

A A la carte!

B Bon voyage!

C Merci beaucoup!

D Bon appétit!

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

(Performance Level: Basic) – Question 02

Read this sentence.

The merchant checked his stock to find out what he needed to order.

Without changing the meaning of the sentence, which word can best be used to replace the underlined part?

A products

B animals

C soup

D shares

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 03

Read the following letter to the editor taken from a local newspaper.

Letter to the Editor

- 1 A debate is currently raging in our town. Should we allow the Odeon Triplex Cinema to be constructed at the Havenswood Shopping Center? There is just one large lot left to build on, and the theater would use up all of that space. Some people are thrilled at the idea of finally having our own movie theater in Havenswood. Others would rather travel ten miles north to the nearest theater in Gadway in order to keep our quiet town the way it is. They say it is enough to have Marvin's Movie Video Rentals in the shopping center. As a Havenswood citizen and small business owner, I would like to express my opinion on this issue.
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A Concerned Citizen

Read this sentence from the editorial.

There is just one large lot left to build on, and the theater would use up all of that space.

In this sentence, the word lot means

A a great amount.

B a complete group.

C a section of land.

D a result of chance.



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

(Performance Level: Basic) – Question 04

Soft and Loud

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In Italian, the word piano means

A soft.

B key.

C loud.

D string.



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

(Performance Level: Basic) – Question 05

Document A

Volunteering

Just like the animals we shelter, people are very special to us. The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has 300 active volunteers and is always eager to add more. If you have a few hours each week and a love for dogs and cats, we at the shelter welcome your participation.

Youth Volunteers

The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has volunteer opportunities for people of all ages. Children 10 years of age or older are allowed to participate in some of our programs as youth volunteers when accompanied by an adult. The adult can be a sibling, parent, or guardian 18 years of age or older. Volunteering is rewarding for a number of reasons. Youth volunteers learn responsibility as they serve the community. Volunteers are rewarded with the affection of our shelter animals. Volunteers learn about the needs of dogs and cats and how to care for those needs.

Youth Volunteer Qualifications

A youth volunteer must:

- care deeply about animals and their welfare
- complete an application form
- be at least 10 years of age and accompanied by an adult
- attend an orientation session

Youth Volunteer Opportunities

Youth volunteers may fill the position of dog nuzzler, cat snuggler, or kennel aide, provided there are openings. Please call our volunteer information hotline at 1-800-290-5992 to hear a recording of the positions currently available.

Dog Nuzzlers

Dogs need human interaction and exercise to maintain their health and level of comfort around people. Dog nuzzlers walk and groom the dogs staying at the shelter. Dog nuzzlers must be knowledgeable about dogs and able to handle medium-sized to large-sized breeds like collies and Labrador retrievers. Youth volunteer dog nuzzlers must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.

Cat Snugglers

Help our kittens and cats maintain their cuddly qualities by giving them lots of attention. Cat snugglers must be knowledgeable about cats and their needs. Youth volunteer cat snugglers must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.

Kennel Aides

Providing food and water for the animals at the shelter is a demanding job. Kennel aides assist the Animal Shelter staff in feeding the animals in our care. Kennel aides must be able to work at least two hours between 9 A.M. and 5 P.M. on either Saturdays or Sundays.



Continue



Document B**Youth Volunteer Application Form**

Complete all required information and mail these two forms to: Animal Shelter of Sacramento County; 133 Highway 15; Sacramento, CA 94244.

My Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

I would like to work as a [check one]: ☐ dog nuzzler ☐ cat snuggler ☐ kennel aide

Days/Hours of Availability [check day/time(s)]: ☐ Saturday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

☐ Sunday ☐ 9-11 ☐ 11-1 ☐ 1-3 ☐ 3-5

My Adult Sponsor's Information

Name: _____

Street Address: _____

City, State, Zip Code: _____

Date of Birth: ____/____/____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Relationship to Youth Volunteer: _____

Document C**Authorization and Acknowledgment Form**

I, _____, the parent or legal guardian of _____, hereby give permission for my child to participate as a youth volunteer with the Animal Shelter of Sacramento County. I authorize Animal Shelter staff to seek immediate medical treatment in case of an accident by using the emergency contact information below. My signature acknowledges that my child has no allergies or other medical conditions that would prohibit participation in this program.

Emergency Contact Information

Contact: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____

Family Physician: _____

Telephone Number: () ____ - ____



Read this sentence from the section titled “Volunteering” in Document A.

The Animal Shelter of Sacramento County has 300 active volunteers and is always eager to add more.

In which sentence is the word active used as it is used in the sentence above?

- ☐ A They are all active members of a local theatre group.
- ☐ B We just read a story about an active volcano in Hawaii.
- ☐ C We just had an active day sightseeing in Los Angeles.
- ☐ D They took an active interest in the new television program.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

(Performance Level: Basic) – Question 06

Read this sentence.

If this plan fails, we will have to go back to the drawing board.

In this sentence, what is the meaning of the underlined phrase?

A start all over

B support the decision

C work faster

D avoid mistakes

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Word Analysis, Fluency, and Systematic Vocabulary Development

(Performance Level: Below Basic) – Question 01

Read this sentence.

We ate lunch at our favorite _____.

Which French word correctly fits in the sentence?

A coupé

B essay

C café

D entrée

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 01

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
- (5) The tower was constructed about eight hundred years ago in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in Northwestern Italy. (6) The tilting came about because of the land on which the tower was built. (7) This land being an old riverbed. (8) It wasn't good. (9) This caused the tower to lean to one side more and more over the centuries. (10) By 1990, it was leaning so much that it had to be closed to visitors.
- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

Which of the following revisions would make sentence 12 more informative?

- A There was very much soil taken out from beneath one side of the tower.
- B From under one side of the tower the workers took out an enormous quantity of soil.
- C The workers performed much labor to remove soil from its place under the tower.
- D About eight tons of soil were removed from the non-leaning side of the tower.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 02

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
- (5) The tower was constructed about eight hundred years ago in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in Northwestern Italy. (6) The tilting came about because of the land on which the tower was built. (7) This land being an old riverbed. (8) It wasn't good. (9) This caused the tower to lean to one side more and more over the centuries. (10) By 1990, it was leaning so much that it had to be closed to visitors.
- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

Which organizational pattern was used to arrange the details in the second and third paragraphs?

- A spatial sequence
- B comparison and contrast
- C order of importance
- D time sequence

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 03

Here is Miguel's first draft, which may contain errors.

From Boyhood to Knighthood

- 1 In tales of medieval days, we are told that brave knights wore shining armor and rode beautiful horses. They bore sharp, glistening swords. In these stories, fair maidens in distress are rescued by these knights, who seem to appear mysteriously out of the mist. The truth is that the knights of the Middle Ages did not just appear from thin air.
- 2 In times of war, a young man who fought bravely on a battlefield could become a knight on the site where he had demonstrated his courage. A king or knight could tap him on the shoulder with a sword, giving him this title of honor.
- 3 In peacetime, becoming a knight was a more lengthy process. A boy began this training when he was about seven years old. He went to live in the home of a noble family, where he served as a page. He ran errands for the family, served their meals, and learned to ride horses and handle small weapons. He also learned a code of polite behavior that was as important as learning to fight.
- 4 When a page was about fourteen years old, he became a squire. A squire served a knight who was called his lord. He took care of his lord's horse and helped him practice hunting and fighting skills. If battle broke out, a squire rode beside his lord to the end.
- 5 Most squires were knighted by the time they were twenty-one years old. If not knighted on a battlefield, the squire might be knighted in an elaborate ceremony called dubbing. He bathed, cut his hair short, and prayed all night in a chapel. In the morning, he knelt before his lord who tapped him on both shoulders with a sword. He then gave him the spurs and sword of a knight.

Continue



6 Either in battle or in a dubbing ceremony, the squire rose from his knees as a knight. He promised to use his bravery and fighting skills to defend the weak and protect his homeland.

In paragraphs 3 through 5, which organizational pattern did Miguel use?

A time sequence

B spatial sequence

C order of importance

D comparison and contrast



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 04

The following is a rough draft of a student's report. It contains errors.

Are We There Yet?

- 1 Think about a time you went someplace that you had never been before. It was not really far away, but it seemed as if it was taking a really long time to get there. Then you noticed that the return trip did not seem to take nearly as long, even though it was exactly the same distance. Scientists have studied these common observations. They have concluded that our perception of how time passes is sometimes based on the amount of information with which we are dealing. The more information we are getting, the more slowly time seems to pass.
- 2 On the way to the strange place, we are confronted with unfamiliar sights and sounds, and maybe even smells. We may be reading directions, looking for landmarks, or trying to find a particular road sign. There may be others in the car asking, "When will we get there? Are we there yet?" We are constantly processing and evaluating the information we are receiving.
- 3 On the return trip, we are somewhat familiar with the route. Now much of the information is not new to us. Our brain now processes the information more efficiently. We are able to ignore a lot of what we see and hear. We remember that it does not require action on our part.
- 4 In other words, scientists believe that on the way to a new place we see things in great detail. Thus time seems to move slowly. On the return trip we are not paying as much attention to detail. Time seems to pass more quickly.
- 5 The process could be compared to the first and second days of school. On the first day everything is new and different, and time seems to pass slowly. On the second day, you know what to expect, and your brain spends less time processing new information. The second day of school usually seems to proceed at a more rapid pace.

Continue



Which sentence is best added to the end of paragraph 3?

A The driver experiences the same things as the passengers.

B We know what to pay attention to and we screen out the rest.

C I wonder what happens when we do know the route.

D New places do that to all of us.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Advanced) – Question 05

The following is a rough draft of a student's report. It contains errors.

Are We There Yet?

- 1 Think about a time you went someplace that you had never been before. It was not really far away, but it seemed as if it was taking a really long time to get there. Then you noticed that the return trip did not seem to take nearly as long, even though it was exactly the same distance. Scientists have studied these common observations. They have concluded that our perception of how time passes is sometimes based on the amount of information with which we are dealing. The more information we are getting, the more slowly time seems to pass.
- 2 On the way to the strange place, we are confronted with unfamiliar sights and sounds, and maybe even smells. We may be reading directions, looking for landmarks, or trying to find a particular road sign. There may be others in the car asking, "When will we get there? Are we there yet?" We are constantly processing and evaluating the information we are receiving.
- 3 On the return trip, we are somewhat familiar with the route. Now much of the information is not new to us. Our brain now processes the information more efficiently. We are able to ignore a lot of what we see and hear. We remember that it does not require action on our part.
- 4 In other words, scientists believe that on the way to a new place we see things in great detail. Thus time seems to move slowly. On the return trip we are not paying as much attention to detail. Time seems to pass more quickly.
- 5 The process could be compared to the first and second days of school. On the first day everything is new and different, and time seems to pass slowly. On the second day, you know what to expect, and your brain spends less time processing new information. The second day of school usually seems to proceed at a more rapid pace.

Continue



Read the last two sentences of paragraph 5.

On the second day, you know what to expect, and your brain spends less time processing new information. The second day of school usually seems to proceed at a more rapid pace.

Which word should be added to the beginning of the second sentence?

A However,

B Therefore,

C Although,

D Nevertheless,



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 01

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
- (5) The tower was constructed about eight hundred years ago in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in Northwestern Italy. (6) The tilting came about because of the land on which the tower was built. (7) This land being an old riverbed. (8) It wasn't good. (9) This caused the tower to lean to one side more and more over the centuries. (10) By 1990, it was leaning so much that it had to be closed to visitors.
- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

Continue



Which sentence would be best to remove from the first paragraph?

- A Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous.
- B Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities.
- C In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter.
- D How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 02

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
- (5) The tower was constructed about eight hundred years ago in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in Northwestern Italy. (6) The tilting came about because of the land on which the tower was built. (7) This land being an old riverbed. (8) It wasn't good. (9) This caused the tower to lean to one side more and more over the centuries. (10) By 1990, it was leaning so much that it had to be closed to visitors.
- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

How should sentence 8 best be rewritten to give the reader more information?

- A It was a poor location because the soil was sandy and soft.
- B It was the wrong place to build.
- C It was not a good place to choose because it was a poor choice.
- D It was an unfortunate decision.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 03

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
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- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

The best way to provide a better transition between the second and third paragraphs would be to replace the word Then with which of these transitions?

- ☐ A All things being equal,
- ☐ B After it was closed,
- ☐ C To make it do that,
- ☐ D As they thought about it,

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 04

The following is Serena's rough draft. It contains errors.

A Giant at Sea

- (1) For centuries, the giant squid has filled many people with wonder. (2) The Maori people in New Zealand share great legends about the creature. (3) Squids also appear in Norwegian mythology, where they are named Kraken. (4) The word Kraken means "a tree stump with its roots attached." (5) It was a way of describing what the squids looked like. (6) Many other cultures also have myths and legends about the giant squid.
- (7) The reasons for people's interest in the giant squid are fairly obvious. (8) To begin with, although the giant squid looks much like the smaller squid with which people are most familiar, there is one big difference. (9) The giant squid can grow to sixty feet in length! (10) Each of its eyes is about 10 inches in diameter, the size of a volleyball. (11) The squid's large tentacles are covered with small suction cups, each surrounded by teeth. (12) When a hungry giant squid spots a smaller squid or fish, two tentacles shoot out from its body and capture the prey. (13) Then it grips the prey tightly with the suckers on its eight arms. (14) The squid holds the prey. (15) It uses its parrot-like beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.
- (16) No one has ever saw a giant squid in its natural habitat. (17) Many sightings are of squids that have washed ashore. (18) Other reports come from people who find giant squids in their nets. (19) A published list details only two hundred sightings in the last three hundred fifty years.
- (20) Recent giant squid sightings in New Zealand have drawn the attention of many scientists. (21) An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper and a team of experts have visited Kaikoura Canyon, an undersea canyon. (22) They hope to someday film the giant squid in its natural habitat.

Continue



Read the following sentence.

Because of these features, the giant squid can be quite an amazing sight.

For which paragraph in the rough draft would this be the best concluding sentence?

A the first paragraph

B the second paragraph

C the third paragraph

D the fourth paragraph



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 05

The following is Serena's rough draft. It contains errors.

A Giant at Sea

- (1) For centuries, the giant squid has filled many people with wonder. (2) The Maori people in New Zealand share great legends about the creature. (3) Squids also appear in Norwegian mythology, where they are named Kraken. (4) The word Kraken means "a tree stump with its roots attached." (5) It was a way of describing what the squids looked like. (6) Many other cultures also have myths and legends about the giant squid.
- (7) The reasons for people's interest in the giant squid are fairly obvious. (8) To begin with, although the giant squid looks much like the smaller squid with which people are most familiar, there is one big difference. (9) The giant squid can grow to sixty feet in length! (10) Each of its eyes is about 10 inches in diameter, the size of a volleyball. (11) The squid's large tentacles are covered with small suction cups, each surrounded by teeth. (12) When a hungry giant squid spots a smaller squid or fish, two tentacles shoot out from its body and capture the prey. (13) Then it grips the prey tightly with the suckers on its eight arms. (14) The squid holds the prey. (15) It uses its parrot-like beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.
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- (20) Recent giant squid sightings in New Zealand have drawn the attention of many scientists. (21) An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper and a team of experts have visited Kaikoura Canyon, an undersea canyon. (22) They hope to someday film the giant squid in its natural habitat.

Continue



Which of these sentences could best be added at the end of the rough draft?

A Kaikoura Canyon is an undersea canyon located in the country of New Zealand.

B Other scientists around the world are investigating the habitats of other marine creatures.

C Such a discovery would help unlock the mysteries of this fascinating creature.

D There are not very many people in the world who have ever seen giant squids.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 06

The following is Serena's rough draft. It contains errors.

A Giant at Sea

- (1) For centuries, the giant squid has filled many people with wonder. (2) The Maori people in New Zealand share great legends about the creature. (3) Squids also appear in Norwegian mythology, where they are named Kraken. (4) The word Kraken means "a tree stump with its roots attached." (5) It was a way of describing what the squids looked like. (6) Many other cultures also have myths and legends about the giant squid.
- (7) The reasons for people's interest in the giant squid are fairly obvious. (8) To begin with, although the giant squid looks much like the smaller squid with which people are most familiar, there is one big difference. (9) The giant squid can grow to sixty feet in length! (10) Each of its eyes is about 10 inches in diameter, the size of a volleyball. (11) The squid's large tentacles are covered with small suction cups, each surrounded by teeth. (12) When a hungry giant squid spots a smaller squid or fish, two tentacles shoot out from its body and capture the prey. (13) Then it grips the prey tightly with the suckers on its eight arms. (14) The squid holds the prey. (15) It uses its parrot-like beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.
- (16) No one has ever saw a giant squid in its natural habitat. (17) Many sightings are of squids that have washed ashore. (18) Other reports come from people who find giant squids in their nets. (19) A published list details only two hundred sightings in the last three hundred fifty years.
- (20) Recent giant squid sightings in New Zealand have drawn the attention of many scientists. (21) An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper and a team of experts have visited Kaikoura Canyon, an undersea canyon. (22) They hope to someday film the giant squid in its natural habitat.

Continue



In the first sentence of the rough draft, what is a better way to write “filled many people with wonder”?

- A attracted tourists from many lands
- B captured people's imaginations
- C inspired authors to write stories
- D caused people to have nightmares



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 07

Here is Miguel's first draft, which may contain errors.

From Boyhood to Knighthood

- 1 In tales of medieval days, we are told that brave knights wore shining armor and rode beautiful horses. They bore sharp, glistening swords. In these stories, fair maidens in distress are rescued by these knights, who seem to appear mysteriously out of the mist. The truth is that the knights of the Middle Ages did not just appear from thin air.
- 2 In times of war, a young man who fought bravely on a battlefield could become a knight on the site where he had demonstrated his courage. A king or knight could tap him on the shoulder with a sword, giving him this title of honor.
- 3 In peacetime, becoming a knight was a more lengthy process. A boy began this training when he was about seven years old. He went to live in the home of a noble family, where he served as a page. He ran errands for the family, served their meals, and learned to ride horses and handle small weapons. He also learned a code of polite behavior that was as important as learning to fight.
- 4 When a page was about fourteen years old, he became a squire. A squire served a knight who was called his lord. He took care of his lord's horse and helped him practice hunting and fighting skills. If battle broke out, a squire rode beside his lord to the end.
- 5 Most squires were knighted by the time they were twenty-one years old. If not knighted on a battlefield, the squire might be knighted in an elaborate ceremony called dubbing. He bathed, cut his hair short, and prayed all night in a chapel. In the morning, he knelt before his lord who tapped him on both shoulders with a sword. He then gave him the spurs and sword of a knight.

Continue



Which of these sentences could Miguel best add at the end of his report?

- A Knights began as pages, later becoming squires who served knights in daily life and in battle.
- B There were probably some boys who served as pages and squires but never became knights.
- C In the Middle Ages, the lives of many depended on these bold and courageous knights.
- D A man could become a knight either in a dubbing ceremony or by fighting well in battle.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 08

Here is Miguel's first draft, which may contain errors.

From Boyhood to Knighthood

- 1 In tales of medieval days, we are told that brave knights wore shining armor and rode beautiful horses. They bore sharp, glistening swords. In these stories, fair maidens in distress are rescued by these knights, who seem to appear mysteriously out of the mist. The truth is that the knights of the Middle Ages did not just appear from thin air.
- 2 In times of war, a young man who fought bravely on a battlefield could become a knight on the site where he had demonstrated his courage. A king or knight could tap him on the shoulder with a sword, giving him this title of honor.
- 3 In peacetime, becoming a knight was a more lengthy process. A boy began this training when he was about seven years old. He went to live in the home of a noble family, where he served as a page. He ran errands for the family, served their meals, and learned to ride horses and handle small weapons. He also learned a code of polite behavior that was as important as learning to fight.
- 4 When a page was about fourteen years old, he became a squire. A squire served a knight who was called his lord. He took care of his lord's horse and helped him practice hunting and fighting skills. If battle broke out, a squire rode beside his lord to the end.
- 5 Most squires were knighted by the time they were twenty-one years old. If not knighted on a battlefield, the squire might be knighted in an elaborate ceremony called dubbing. He bathed, cut his hair short, and prayed all night in a chapel. In the morning, he knelt before his lord who tapped him on both shoulders with a sword. He then gave him the spurs and sword of a knight.

Continue



Which sentence could Miguel best add at the end of the first paragraph of his report?

A Knights used strong horses to help them fight battles.

B There probably were knights in other historical periods, too.

C A man was not simply born a knight; he had to earn such a title.

D Women could not become knights unless they pretended to be men.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 09

Serena's teacher has asked the students to conduct research about ocean creatures and write about what they learn. Serena wants to write about giant squids.

If Serena wants to obtain information from her state's marine institute, she should write a

A letter to the editor.

B letter of complaint.

C letter of request.

D personal letter.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 10

Miguel's teacher has asked the students to conduct research about what it was like to live in another time and to write about what they learn. Miguel wants to write about boys who became knights in the Middle Ages.

To complete this assignment, Miguel will write a

A book review.

B narrative poem.

C factual report.

D persuasive essay.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 11

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

Origami

- (1) Can you create a whole world out of pieces of paper? (2) You can if you know origami. (3) Origami is the Japanese art of creating shapes and figures by folding pieces of paper. (4) Without scissors or glue, origami artists can make paper animals, flowers, or objects like boats or windmills. (5) The word origami comes from the Japanese words *oru*, meaning "to fold," and *kami*, meaning "paper." (6) Some people think it might have been introduced to Japan in the early seventh century by the Chinese, after they began to make paper.
- (7) Most origami sculptures are made from a few basic shapes, like the bird, fish, kite, and frog. (8) Diagrams that show how to make origami pieces are easily available, not only in books, but also from online sources. (9) They show how to create origami through a series of descriptively named folds: for example, the valley fold, the mountain fold, the petal fold, or the pleat. (10) In addition, events like the Pacific Coast Origami conference offer exhibitions and workshops for beginners as well as for advanced origami artists.
- (11) Origami is a beautiful art that anyone can try. (12) It can be difficult at first but if you stay patient and follow instructions carefully, you can be an origami artist too!

Continue



Read this sentence.

Origami is the Japanese art of creating shapes and figures by folding pieces of paper.

This sentence offers support by

A defining the subject.

B comparing the subject to something else.

C beginning a story about the subject.

D including an example that illustrates the subject.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Proficient) – Question 12

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

Origami

- (1) Can you create a whole world out of pieces of paper? (2) You can if you know origami. (3) Origami is the Japanese art of creating shapes and figures by folding pieces of paper. (4) Without scissors or glue, origami artists can make paper animals, flowers, or objects like boats or windmills. (5) The word origami comes from the Japanese words *oru*, meaning "to fold," and *kami*, meaning "paper." (6) Some people think it might have been introduced to Japan in the early seventh century by the Chinese, after they began to make paper.
- (7) Most origami sculptures are made from a few basic shapes, like the bird, fish, kite, and frog. (8) Diagrams that show how to make origami pieces are easily available, not only in books, but also from online sources. (9) They show how to create origami through a series of descriptively named folds: for example, the valley fold, the mountain fold, the petal fold, or the pleat. (10) In addition, events like the Pacific Coast Origami conference offer exhibitions and workshops for beginners as well as for advanced origami artists.
- (11) Origami is a beautiful art that anyone can try. (12) It can be difficult at first but if you stay patient and follow instructions carefully, you can be an origami artist too!

Continue



Which of the following Internet keywords would best help someone find more information about other basic folds used in origami?

A origami history

B origami animals

C simple origami

D origami paper



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

Serena's teacher has asked the students to conduct research about ocean creatures and write about what they learn. Serena wants to write about giant squids.

To complete this assignment, Serena will write a

A personal letter.

B factual report.

C short story.

D book review.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 02

Miguel's teacher has asked the students to conduct research about what it was like to live in another time and to write about what they learn. Miguel wants to write about boys who became knights in the Middle Ages.

If Miguel wants to write to his cousin in Mexico about what he is learning, he should write a

A letter to the editor.

B personal letter.

C letter of request.

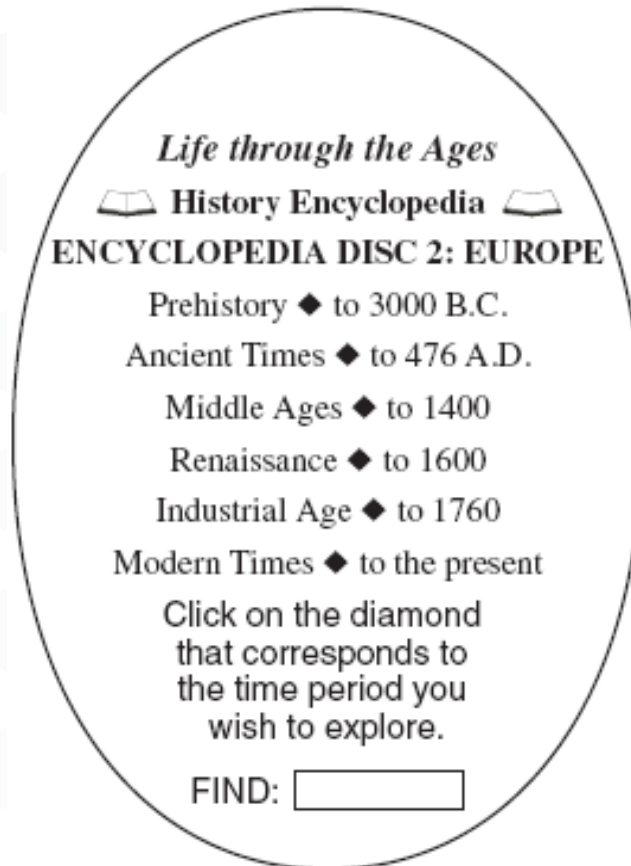
D business letter.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Writing Strategies (Performance Level: Below Basic) – Question 01

Miguel's teacher has asked the students to conduct research about what it was like to live in another time and to write about what they learn. Miguel wants to write about boys who became knights in the Middle Ages.

Miguel used this CD-ROM encyclopedia to help him research his topic.



To find information about his topic, Miguel should use the mouse to click on the diamond next to

A 476 A.D.

B 1400.

C 1600.

D 1760.

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Advanced)

– Question 01

The following is Serena's rough draft. It contains errors.

A Giant at Sea

- (1) For centuries, the giant squid has filled many people with wonder. (2) The Maori people in New Zealand share great legends about the creature. (3) Squids also appear in Norwegian mythology, where they are named Kraken. (4) The word Kraken means "a tree stump with its roots attached." (5) It was a way of describing what the squids looked like. (6) Many other cultures also have myths and legends about the giant squid.
- (7) The reasons for people's interest in the giant squid are fairly obvious. (8) To begin with, although the giant squid looks much like the smaller squid with which people are most familiar, there is one big difference. (9) The giant squid can grow to sixty feet in length! (10) Each of its eyes is about 10 inches in diameter, the size of a volleyball. (11) The squid's large tentacles are covered with small suction cups, each surrounded by teeth. (12) When a hungry giant squid spots a smaller squid or fish, two tentacles shoot out from its body and capture the prey. (13) Then it grips the prey tightly with the suckers on its eight arms. (14) The squid holds the prey. (15) It uses its parrot-like beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.
- (16) No one has ever saw a giant squid in its natural habitat. (17) Many sightings are of squids that have washed ashore. (18) Other reports come from people who find giant squids in their nets. (19) A published list details only two hundred sightings in the last three hundred fifty years.
- (20) Recent giant squid sightings in New Zealand have drawn the attention of many scientists. (21) An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper and a team of experts have visited Kaikoura Canyon, an undersea canyon. (22) They hope to someday film the giant squid in its natural habitat.

Continue



What is the best way to combine sentences 14 and 15?

- A The squid holds the prey and using its parrotlike beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.
- B Holding the prey, the squid uses its parrot-like beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.
- C The squid uses its parrot-like beak while it holds the prey and powerful jaw to tear the food.
- D The squid holds the prey, and therefore, it uses its parrot-like beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Proficient)

– Question 01

The following is a rough draft of a student's report, which may contain errors.

Sequoias

- 1 The sequoia is a redwood tree that was named in honor of a Native American chief called Sequoyah. This tree is one of the largest living things on Earth. It can grow nearly 400 feet high and 30 feet across. The sequoia is also one of the longest-living things on Earth. One tree can live as long as 2,000 years. A close relative, the giant sequoia, may live 3,000 or more years.
- 2 There is evidence that suggests that sequoias were found in many parts of the Northern Hemisphere during ancient times. Today they can be found in groves along the coast of northern California and southern Oregon. They grow only in altitudes below 3,300 feet.
- 3 The sequoia's trunk can rise about 100 feet without a single branch. As the sequoia ages, its lower branches fall away. The dark brown bark of the sequoia can be as thick as 12 inches. It has deep furrows, or rows, in it, and it is very spongy. The sequoia's thick bark helps the tree survive forest fires. The bark also helps the tree resist damage from insects.
- 4 If a sequoia falls over or is cut down, it begins to grow again soon afterward. It does this by producing new sprouts from the remaining stump. However, it takes hundreds of years for the new trees to reach full size. Every year many sequoia trees are cut down to make lumber. Redwood lumber is popular because it has an attractive color and lasts a long time. Redwood lumber is used for fence posts, paneling, shingles, and furniture. There are not as many sequoias as there used to be, but people are working to preserve more of these incredible trees.
- 5 Although these trees are cut for lumber, many sequoias can be found in protected groves within California's national parks. Redwood National Park, in Northwestern California, has among its thousands of acres of redwoods the tallest known sequoia, which rises 367.5 feet into the air.

Continue



Read this sentence from paragraph 4.

There are not as many sequoias as there used to be, but people are working to preserve more of these incredible trees.

What is the correct way to write the underlined words?

A used to be but people

B used to be but, people

C used to be, but, people

D Leave as is.



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Proficient)

– Question 02

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
- (5) The tower was constructed about eight hundred years ago in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in Northwestern Italy. (6) The tilting came about because of the land on which the tower was built. (7) This land being an old riverbed. (8) It wasn't good. (9) This caused the tower to lean to one side more and more over the centuries. (10) By 1990, it was leaning so much that it had to be closed to visitors.
- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

Continue



What is the correct way to write the underlined part of sentence 5?

A in the town of pisa, near the coast in Northwestern Italy

B in the town of Pisa, near the coast in northwestern Italy

C in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in northwestern Italy

D in the town of pisa, near the coast in northwestern Italy



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Proficient)

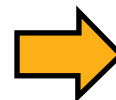
– Question 03

The following is a rough draft of a student's report. It contains errors.

Are We There Yet?

- 1 Think about a time you went someplace that you had never been before. It was not really far away, but it seemed as if it was taking a really long time to get there. Then you noticed that the return trip did not seem to take nearly as long, even though it was exactly the same distance. Scientists have studied these common observations. They have concluded that our perception of how time passes is sometimes based on the amount of information with which we are dealing. The more information we are getting, the more slowly time seems to pass.
- 2 On the way to the strange place, we are confronted with unfamiliar sights and sounds, and maybe even smells. We may be reading directions, looking for landmarks, or trying to find a particular road sign. There may be others in the car asking, "When will we get there? Are we there yet?" We are constantly processing and evaluating the information we are receiving.
- 3 On the return trip, we are somewhat familiar with the route. Now much of the information is not new to us. Our brain now processes the information more efficiently. We are able to ignore a lot of what we see and hear. We remember that it does not require action on our part.
- 4 In other words, scientists believe that on the way to a new place we see things in great detail. Thus time seems to move slowly. On the return trip we are not paying as much attention to detail. Time seems to pass more quickly.
- 5 The process could be compared to the first and second days of school. On the first day everything is new and different, and time seems to pass slowly. On the second day, you know what to expect, and your brain spends less time processing new information. The second day of school usually seems to proceed at a more rapid pace.

Continue



Read these two sentences from paragraph 4.

On the return trip we are not paying as much attention to detail. Time seems to pass more quickly.

Which word could best be used to join these sentences?

A so

B while

C but

D because



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Proficient)

– Question 04

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

Origami

- (1) Can you create a whole world out of pieces of paper? (2) You can if you know origami. (3) Origami is the Japanese art of creating shapes and figures by folding pieces of paper. (4) Without scissors or glue, origami artists can make paper animals, flowers, or objects like boats or windmills. (5) The word origami comes from the Japanese words *oru*, meaning "to fold," and *kami*, meaning "paper." (6) Some people think it might have been introduced to Japan in the early seventh century by the Chinese, after they began to make paper.
- (7) Most origami sculptures are made from a few basic shapes, like the bird, fish, kite, and frog. (8) Diagrams that show how to make origami pieces are easily available, not only in books, but also from online sources. (9) They show how to create origami through a series of descriptively named folds: for example, the valley fold, the mountain fold, the petal fold, or the pleat. (10) In addition, events like the Pacific Coast Origami conference offer exhibitions and workshops for beginners as well as for advanced origami artists.
- (11) Origami is a beautiful art that anyone can try. (12) It can be difficult at first but if you stay patient and follow instructions carefully, you can be an origami artist too!

Continue



Read this sentence.

In addition, events like the Pacific Coast Origami conference offer exhibitions and workshops for beginners as well as for advanced origami artists.

Which underlined word in this sentence should be capitalized?

A events

B conference

C exhibitions

D workshops



Back

Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 01

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
- (5) The tower was constructed about eight hundred years ago in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in Northwestern Italy. (6) The tilting came about because of the land on which the tower was built. (7) This land being an old riverbed. (8) It wasn't good. (9) This caused the tower to lean to one side more and more over the centuries. (10) By 1990, it was leaning so much that it had to be closed to visitors.
- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

Continue



What is the correct way to spell the underlined word in sentence 14?

A dosen't

B doesn't

C dossn't

D dosn't



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 02

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

The Leaning Tower

- (1) Those who built the Tower of Pisa never meant for it to lean, though this is what has made it famous. (2) Other towers, such as the Eiffel Tower and the Tower of London, are known for their own unique qualities. (3) In recent years, workers have had to make the Tower of Pisa lean less to make it safe for visitors to enter. (4) How did the tower come to lean, and how did workers make the Leaning Tower stand straighter?
- (5) The tower was constructed about eight hundred years ago in the town of Pisa, near the Coast in Northwestern Italy. (6) The tilting came about because of the land on which the tower was built. (7) This land being an old riverbed. (8) It wasn't good. (9) This caused the tower to lean to one side more and more over the centuries. (10) By 1990, it was leaning so much that it had to be closed to visitors.
- (11) Then workers began to try to straighten out the tower enough to make it safe. (12) A lot of soil was taken out from under one side. (13) When the land was settled, the tower was leaning seventeen inches less than before. (14) Though this doesn't sound like very much, the tower is considered safe again—for now.

Continue



What is the correct way to write sentence 7?

A This land, an old riverbed.

B This land was old, and was a riverbed.

C An old, riverbed is what the land was.

D This land was an old riverbed.



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 03

The following is Serena's rough draft. It contains errors.

A Giant at Sea

- (1) For centuries, the giant squid has filled many people with wonder. (2) The Maori people in New Zealand share great legends about the creature. (3) Squids also appear in Norwegian mythology, where they are named Kraken. (4) The word Kraken means "a tree stump with its roots attached." (5) It was a way of describing what the squids looked like. (6) Many other cultures also have myths and legends about the giant squid.
- (7) The reasons for people's interest in the giant squid are fairly obvious. (8) To begin with, although the giant squid looks much like the smaller squid with which people are most familiar, there is one big difference. (9) The giant squid can grow to sixty feet in length! (10) Each of its eyes is about 10 inches in diameter, the size of a volleyball. (11) The squid's large tentacles are covered with small suction cups, each surrounded by teeth. (12) When a hungry giant squid spots a smaller squid or fish, two tentacles shoot out from its body and capture the prey. (13) Then it grips the prey tightly with the suckers on its eight arms. (14) The squid holds the prey. (15) It uses its parrot-like beak and powerful jaw to tear the food.
- (16) No one has ever saw a giant squid in its natural habitat. (17) Many sightings are of squids that have washed ashore. (18) Other reports come from people who find giant squids in their nets. (19) A published list details only two hundred sightings in the last three hundred fifty years.
- (20) Recent giant squid sightings in New Zealand have drawn the attention of many scientists. (21) An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper and a team of experts have visited Kaikoura Canyon, an undersea canyon. (22) They hope to someday film the giant squid in its natural habitat.

Continue



What is the correct way to spell the underlined word in sentence 8?

A differense

B diferance

C difference

D differance



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Basic) – Question 04

The following is Serena's rough draft. It contains errors.

A Giant at Sea

- (1) For centuries, the giant squid has filled many people with wonder. (2) The Maori people in New Zealand share great legends about the creature. (3) Squids also appear in Norwegian mythology, where they are named Kraken. (4) The word Kraken means "a tree stump with its roots attached." (5) It was a way of describing what the squids looked like. (6) Many other cultures also have myths and legends about the giant squid.
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- (20) Recent giant squid sightings in New Zealand have drawn the attention of many scientists. (21) An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper and a team of experts have visited Kaikoura Canyon, an undersea canyon. (22) They hope to someday film the giant squid in its natural habitat.

Continue



What is the correct way to write the underlined part of sentence 16?

A No one had ever saw

B No one has ever seen

C No one have ever seen

D No one has ever saw



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Below Basic) – Question 01

The following is Serena's rough draft. It contains errors.

A Giant at Sea

- (1) For centuries, the giant squid has filled many people with wonder. (2) The Maori people in New Zealand share great legends about the creature. (3) Squids also appear in Norwegian mythology, where they are named Kraken. (4) The word Kraken means "a tree stump with its roots attached." (5) It was a way of describing what the squids looked like. (6) Many other cultures also have myths and legends about the giant squid.
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- (20) Recent giant squid sightings in New Zealand have drawn the attention of many scientists. (21) An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper and a team of experts have visited Kaikoura Canyon, an undersea canyon. (22) They hope to someday film the giant squid in its natural habitat.

Continue



What is the correct way to capitalize these words from sentence 21?

A An American scientist named Dr. clyde roper

B An American Scientist named dr. clyde roper

C An American scientist named Dr. Clyde Roper

D An American Scientist named dr. Clyde Roper



Grade 6: English-Language Arts

Written and Oral English Language Conventions (Performance Level: Below Basic) – Question 02

The following is a rough draft of a student's essay. It contains errors.

Origami

- (1) Can you create a whole world out of pieces of paper? (2) You can if you know origami. (3) Origami is the Japanese art of creating shapes and figures by folding pieces of paper. (4) Without scissors or glue, origami artists can make paper animals, flowers, or objects like boats or windmills. (5) The word origami comes from the Japanese words *oru*, meaning "to fold," and *kami*, meaning "paper." (6) Some people think it might have been introduced to Japan in the early seventh century by the Chinese, after they began to make paper.
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- (11) Origami is a beautiful art that anyone can try. (12) It can be difficult at first but if you stay patient and follow instructions carefully, you can be an origami artist too!

Continue



Read this sentence.

It can be difficult at first but if you stay patient and follow instructions carefully, you can be an origami artist too!

What is the correct way to write the underlined part of this sentence?

A first; but

B first: but

C first, but

D Leave as is.



Back