



New York State
EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
Knowledge > Skill > Opportunity

New York State Testing Program
Grade 5
English Language Arts Test
Released Questions

2025

New York State administered the English Language Arts Tests in Spring 2025 and is making approximately 75% of the questions from these tests available for review and use.



New York State Testing Program

Grades 4–8 English Language Arts

Released Questions from 2025 Exams

Background

As in past years, the New York State Education Department (NYSED) is releasing large portions of the 2025 NYS Grades 3–8 English Language Arts and Mathematics test materials for review, discussion, and use.

For 2025, at least 75 percent of the test questions that appeared on the 2025 tests and counted toward students' scores are included in these released materials. This includes all constructed-response questions. Additionally, NYSED is providing information about the released passages; the associated text complexity for each passage; and a map that details what learning standards each released question measures and the correct response to each question. These released materials will help students, families, educators, and the public better understand the tests and NYSED's expectations for students.

Understanding English Language Arts Questions

Multiple-Choice Questions

Multiple-choice questions are designed to assess the New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards in English Language Arts (ELA). These questions ask students to analyze different aspects of a given text, including central idea, style elements, character and plot development, and vocabulary. Almost all questions, including vocabulary questions, will be answered correctly only if the student comprehends and makes use of the whole passage.

For multiple-choice questions, students select the correct response from four answer choices. Multiple-choice questions assess reading standards in a variety of ways. Some ask students to analyze aspects of text or vocabulary. Many questions require students to combine skills. For example, questions may ask students to identify a segment of text that best supports the central idea. To answer these questions correctly, a student must first comprehend the central idea and then show understanding of how that idea is supported. Questions tend to require more than rote recall or identification.

Two-Credit Constructed-Response Questions

Two-credit constructed-response questions are designed to assess New York State P–12 Reading and Language Standards. These are single questions in which a student uses textual evidence to support their answer to an inferential question. These questions ask the student to make an inference (a claim, position, or conclusion) based on their analysis of the passage, and then provide two pieces of text-based evidence to support their answer.

The purpose of the two-credit constructed-response questions is to assess a student's ability to comprehend and analyze text. In responding to these questions, students are expected to write in complete sentences. Responses require no more than three complete sentences. The rubric used for evaluating two-credit constructed-response questions can be found in the grade-level Educator Guides at <https://www.nysed.gov/state-assessment/grades-3-8-ela-math-and-science-test-manuals>.

Four-Credit Constructed-Response Questions

Four-credit constructed-response questions are designed to measure a student’s ability to write from sources. Questions that measure Writing from Sources prompt students to communicate a clear and coherent analysis of one or two texts. The comprehension and analysis required by each four-credit response is directly related to grade-specific reading standards. Student responses are evaluated on the degree to which they meet grade-level writing and language expectations. This evaluation is made by using a rubric that incorporates the demands of grade-specific New York State P–12 Reading and Language Standards.

The integrated nature of the standards for ELA and literacy requires that students are evaluated across the strands (Reading, Writing, and Language) with longer pieces of writing, such as those prompted by the four-credit constructed-response questions. The rubric used for evaluating four-credit constructed-response questions can be found in the grade-level Educator Guides at <https://www.nysed.gov/state-assessment/grades-3-8-ela-math-and-science-test-manuals>.

New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards Alignment

The alignment to the New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards for ELA is intended to identify the analytic skills necessary to successfully answer each question. However, some questions measure proficiencies described in multiple standards, including writing and additional reading and language standards. For example, two-credit and four-credit constructed-response questions require students to first conduct the analyses described in the mapped standard and then produce written responses that are rated based on writing standards. To gain greater insight into the measurement focus for constructed-response questions, please refer to the rubrics.

These Released Questions Do Not Comprise a “Mini Test”

To ensure it is possible to develop future tests, some content must remain secure. This document is **not** intended to be representative of the entire test, to show how operational tests look, or to provide information about how teachers should administer the test; rather, its purpose is to provide an overview of how the test reflects the demands of the New York State P–12 Next Generation Learning Standards.

The released questions do not represent the full spectrum of the standards assessed on the State tests, nor do they represent the full spectrum of how the standards should be taught and assessed in the classroom. It should not be assumed that a particular standard will be measured by an identical question in future assessments.

2025 Grade 5 ELA Test Text Complexity Metrics for Released Questions

Selecting high-quality, grade-appropriate passages requires both objective text complexity metrics and expert judgment. For the Grades 3–8 assessments based on the New York State P-12 Next Generation Learning Standards for English Language Arts, both quantitative and qualitative rubrics are used to determine the complexity of the texts and their appropriate placement within a grade-level ELA exam.

Quantitative measures of text complexity are used to measure aspects of text complexity that are difficult for a human reader to evaluate when examining a text. These aspects include word frequency, word length, sentence length, and text cohesion. These aspects are efficiently measured by computer programs. While quantitative text complexity metrics are a helpful start, they are not definitive.

Qualitative measures are a crucial complement to quantitative measures. Using qualitative measures of text complexity involves making an informed decision about the difficulty of a text in terms of one or more factors discernible to a human reader applying trained judgment to the task. To qualitatively determine the complexity of a text, NYS educators use a rubric composed of five factors; four of these factors are required and one factor is optional. The required criteria are: meaning, text structure, language features, and knowledge demands. The optional factor, graphics, is used only if a graphic appears in the text.

To make the final determination as to whether a text is at grade level and thus appropriate to be included on a Grades 3–8 assessment, New York State uses a two-step review process, which is an industry best practice. First, all prospective passages undergo quantitative text complexity analysis using three text complexity measures. If at least two of the three measures suggest that the passage is grade-appropriate, the passage then moves to the second step, which is the qualitative review using the text-complexity rubrics. Only passages that are determined appropriate by at least two of three quantitative measures of complexity **and** are determined appropriate by the qualitative measure of complexity are deemed appropriate for use on the exam.

Text Complexity Metrics for 2025 Grade 5 Passages

Passage Title	Word Count	Lexile	Flesch-Kincaid	ATOS	Qualitative Review
Excerpt from <i>Yo-Yo Ma</i>	848	750	5.4	5.4	Appropriate
Excerpt from <i>The Sun, Moon, and Stars</i>	756	870	4.8	6.2	Appropriate
Excerpt from <i>On the Back of a Turtle</i>	754	630	5.1	5.8	Appropriate
Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music	373	n/a	n/a	n/a	Appropriate
Excerpt from <i>The Oud Player of Sana'a</i>	488	860	5.3	6.4	Appropriate

New York State 2025 Quantitative Text Complexity Chart for Assessment and Curriculum

To determine if a text's quantitative complexity is at the appropriate grade level, New York State uses the table below. In cases where a text is excerpted from a large work, only the complexity of the excerpt that students see on the test is measured, not the large work. It is therefore possible that the complexity of a book might be above or below grade level, but the text used on the assessment will be at grade level. Because the measurement of text complexity is inexact, quantitative measures of complexity are defined by grade band rather than by individual grade level and then paired with the qualitative review by an educator.

Grade Band	ATOS	Degrees of Reading Power	Flesch-Kincaid	The Lexile Framework	Reading Maturity	SourceRater
2 nd –3 rd	2.75 – 5.14	42 – 54	1.98 – 5.34	420 – 820	3.53 – 6.13	0.05 – 2.48
4 th –5 th	4.97 – 7.03	52 – 60	4.51 – 7.73	740 – 1010	5.42 – 7.92	0.84 – 5.75
6 th –8 th	7.00 – 9.98	57 – 67	6.51 – 10.34	925 – 1185	7.04 – 9.57	4.11 – 10.66
9 th –10 th	9.67 – 12.01	62 – 72	8.32 – 12.12	1050 – 1335	8.41 – 10.81	9.02 – 13.93
11 th –12 th	11.20 – 14.10	67 – 74	10.34 – 14.20	1185 – 1385	9.57 – 12.00	12.30 – 14.50

Source: Student Achievement Partners

Name: _____



New York State Testing Program

English Language Arts Test Session 1

Grade 5

Spring 2025

RELEASED QUESTIONS

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Session 1



TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some ideas to help you do your best:

- Read the whole passage before you answer the questions. Most questions will only make sense after you read the whole passage.
- You might need to read the passage more than once to answer a question.
- Read each question carefully. Take your time.
- A question may include a quote from a passage. You might need to review both the quote and the whole passage to answer the question.

When you write your answers

- make sure to answer the whole question;
- use examples or details from the text;
- write in complete sentences; and
- use correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

Directions Read this article. Then answer questions 8 through 14.

Excerpt from *Yo-Yo Ma*

by Mary Olmstead



- 1 Yo-Yo Ma has been playing the cello since he was a young boy. He gave his first concert at the age of five. Because of his talent, hard work, and creativity, today Yo-Yo Ma is one of the world's finest cello players.
- 2 Yo-Yo Ma rocks his cello from side to side. He draws the bow across its strings. He concentrates completely. He seldom looks to see where to place his fingers. He throws his head back. His eyes close, his glasses reflecting the bright lights of the stage. His face is a mirror of the music he draws out of his instrument. During these moments Yo-Yo Ma feels at one with the music, with the other musicians, and with his audience.
- 3 Listening to Yo-Yo Ma play the cello in concert is magical. He springs onto the stage with youthful energy. He greets the audience and the orchestra with a warm smile. Taking up his cello, he cradles the large instrument in his arms. The audience grows quiet. Soon they are drawn into a story he tells using his cello.
- 4 Yo-Yo Ma loves making connections—to other kinds of music, to history, and to people. That is why his music appeals to so many different kinds of audiences. People like his sunny personality as much as they like his great talent. He travels the world bringing music and joy to people's hearts. . . .

GO ON

Early Childhood

- 5 Yo-Yo Ma was born to Chinese parents in Paris, France, on October 7, 1955. His father Dr. Hiao-Tsiun (hee-ow-shun) Ma was a violinist and music professor. His mother Marina was a singer. Yo-Yo has a sister who is four years older named Yeou-Cheng (yo-chung). The words “Yo” and “Yeou” both mean “friendship” in Chinese. . . .

Surrounded by Music

- 6 Yo-Yo was surrounded by music as an infant. Singing, playing, and listening to music was as natural as breathing for the Ma family. His mother had been trained as an opera singer. She sang in a beautiful, strong voice. His father played the violin. His sister played piano and violin. His parents played records of classical music for their children.
- 7 Yo-Yo’s parents helped their son develop his musical talent. When he was very young, Yo-Yo could sing in tune. Yo-Yo began piano and violin lessons when he was three. His piano teacher was amazed at how quickly he learned. Dr. Ma taught his son to play the violin. He noticed that Yo-Yo did not seem very interested in it. . . .

A Big Instrument

- 8 One day Yo-Yo’s father took him to the Paris Conservatory of Music. In the corner was a large double bass. It is a stringed instrument that is about twice the size of a cello. The double bass is so big that some adults stand up to play it. Yo-Yo stopped and looked at the huge instrument. He pointed to it and said excitedly, “That’s what I want to play!”

Paris Conservatory of Music = public university in Paris, France, for music students

- 9 Yo-Yo told his father he did not like the sound the violin makes. “I want a big instrument,” the three-year-old said. The double bass was way too big for such a little boy, so Dr. Ma got Yo-Yo a small cello instead.
- 10 Years later Yo-Yo offered another reason why the violin did not hold his interest. He said his sister Yeou-Cheng was “a fantastic musician, and I probably thought I could never play as well.”

Note by Note

- 11 Dr. Ma was Yo-Yo’s first cello teacher. He had a special way of teaching. He did not start with easy pieces of music. Instead he taught Yo-Yo how to play music by one of the world’s greatest composers, Johann Sebastian Bach. Bach wrote long, difficult pieces of classical music. . . .

Short Lessons

- 12 The method Dr. Ma used to teach his son was simple. He gave very short lessons. Each day Yo-Yo only had to learn two measures of music. A measure is a few notes of music. Several measures make up a larger piece of music. Dr. Ma insisted that Yo-Yo learn each measure perfectly. That meant Yo-Yo had to memorize the notes. Then he had to practice them over and over.
- 13 Every day Yo-Yo would learn two more measures of a Bach suite, a long piece of music. Soon he learned to recognize patterns in Bach's music. Yo-Yo liked learning longer pieces of music this way, because he did not have to practice very long. After he learned every measure, he put them all together. He played beautiful, complex pieces of music.
- 14 Many young cello players find it difficult to memorize music. Yo-Yo explained why his father's method made it easy. "When a problem is complex, you become tense," he said. "But when you break it down . . . you can approach each element without stress."
- 15 Dr. Ma said Yo-Yo played "like a shining star." He had a good memory, and he concentrated better than most children his age. By the time he was five, Yo-Yo could play three Bach suites by heart. That year, he gave his first public recital at the University of Paris.

recital = concert

GO ON

8

Based on information in the article, what can the reader conclude is the **most likely** reason Yo-Yo was able to play a public recital when he was only five years old?

- A** Yo-Yo realized that he enjoyed performing for an audience's reaction.
- B** Yo-Yo was ready to perform because of his father's teaching.
- C** Yo-Yo had finally found an instrument that he enjoyed playing.
- D** Yo-Yo knew he would perform the music well because of his excellent memory.

9

Which statement **best** describes the relationship between Yo-Yo Ma and his parents?

- A** They support Yo-Yo's early desire to become a cello player.
- B** They all enjoy listening to different types of music.
- C** They hope Yo-Yo's choice of instrument will be the piano.
- D** They are all talented enough to become famous musicians.

10

Which detail from the article **best** shows how Yo-Yo connects with people when he performs?

- A** "Yo-Yo Ma has been playing the cello since he was a young boy. He gave his first concert at the age of five." (paragraph 1)
- B** "Yo-Yo Ma rocks his cello from side to side. He draws the bow across its strings." (paragraph 2)
- C** "He throws his head back. His eyes close, his glasses reflecting the bright lights of the stage." (paragraph 2)
- D** "The audience grows quiet. Soon they are drawn into a story he tells using his cello." (paragraph 3)

11

Which detail from paragraph 6 **best** supports the meaning of the phrase “as natural as breathing” in the same paragraph?

- A** “surrounded by music”
- B** “trained as an opera singer”
- C** “played piano and violin”
- D** “records of classical music”

12

Why are paragraphs 6 and 7 important to the article?

- A** They suggest that Yo-Yo’s musical talents come naturally to him.
- B** They show how Yo-Yo’s parents greatly influence his passion for music.
- C** They explain why Yo-Yo has more interest in the cello than the violin.
- D** They describe how Yo-Yo quickly learns to play because of his teacher.

13

Which central idea is supported by details in paragraphs 12 and 13?

- A** Family members are necessary for success.
- B** Learning something new can prove challenging.
- C** Small problems rarely cause people to feel stress.
- D** Breaking large tasks into smaller parts helps learners.

GO ON

Read this claim from paragraph 15.

Dr. Ma said Yo-Yo played “like a shining star.”

Which phrase from paragraph 15 **best** supports this claim?

- A** “had a good memory”
- B** “concentrated better than most”
- C** “could play three Bach suites by heart”
- D** “gave his first public recital at the University of Paris”

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 22 through 28.

Excerpt from “The Sun, Moon, and Stars”

a traditional Navajo story retold by Donna Henes

- 1 The First People had only four lights to illuminate the world: white light from the eastern mountains, blue light from the southern mountains, yellow light from the western peaks, and darkness from the north. These lights were dim and much too far away to bring heat.
- 2 The people wanted more daylight. “We barely have enough to see,” they complained.
- 3 So First Woman sent Glowworm, Fox Fire, Lightning Beetle, and Firefly to the four corners. They would give more light when it was needed.
- 4 But the First People were still not satisfied. “These lights are too small. They flicker on and off and are of little use to us. We do not have night eyes like Owl or Bat!” First Woman kept trying to please her people. She consulted Fire Man on his glowing mountain. He offered to make the land around Fire Mountain bright, but he warned her that the light would not cover all the lands and there would be smoke.
- 5 The people liked the brightness, but they were still not happy. “We do not like the heat and the smoke that comes from Fire Mountain. The heat scorches the earth and we are choked by the smoke,” they grumbled.
- 6 Eventually, First Woman had an idea for a different way to send light to Earth. She asked for a large, flat piece of the hardest rock available. After a long search, the people brought her a slab of quartz. It took a lot of hard work and a lot of help for First Woman to carve the quartz into two wheels.
- 7 Once the wheels were ready, First Woman and First Man decorated them as faces with symbols of the powers they each had. They decorated the first wheel with a mask of blue turquoise to give light and heat. They attached red coral to the earlobes and around the rim. On each side was a horn to hold male lightning and rain. On the rim, they placed bird feathers—cardinal, lark, and eagle—to fly it through the sky and spread the rays of heat and light in the four directions. This was the Sun wheel.

GO ON

- 8 When it was time to decorate the second wheel, First Woman said, “We do not need more heat and light. This one will carry coolness and moisture.” She and First Man used white shell to create a face, with a band of yellow pollen on its chin and a rim of red coral. This wheel had feathers, too: magpie, nighthawk, turkey, and crane feathers to bear its weight. Its horns held female lightning and soft winds. This was Moon wheel.
- 9 “This Sun wheel and Moon wheel cannot stay here,” declared First Woman. “We must place them in the sky!” First Man suggested they carry the disks to the top of the highest mountain and fasten them to the sky with darts of lightning, which the people did.
- 10 Now the people had light, heat, coolness, and moisture all coming from the sky. But still they found something to complain about. Because the Sun always stayed in the east and never moved, one side of the land had an unending summer, and the other side had a winter that lasted forever. “This is not right,” they whined.
- 11 First Man agreed. “The Sun must move across the sky, but how can it travel when it is only a stone and has no spirit?” At that moment, two ancient, wise men stepped forward and offered to help. “We will give our spirits to the Sun and the Moon so they will have life and power to move across the sky.” One entered the turquoise disk and he was called Jóhonaa’ái, or Sun Bearer; the other entered the white disk and he was called Tl’ehonaa’ái, or Moon Bearer.
- 12 Once the Sun and the Moon were following their paths through the sky, the people returned to where First Woman had carved the wheels. The blanket where she had worked was covered with many small stone chips of every shape and size, plus stone dust from the cutting.
- 13 “These white stones must not be wasted! We will use them to make more lights in the night sky,” exclaimed First Woman. So again, they worked with their flint knives, chisels, and stone hammers to shape the stars.
- 14 To this day, the Sun, the Moon, and the stars created by First Woman, First Man, and all the people remain in the sky where they give light and heat by day and luminous, sparkling patterns at night.

22

Which statement **best** expresses First Woman's relationship with the First People?

- A She hopes her people will not become discouraged.
- B She is focused on bringing new types of light to her people.
- C She believes her people should be happy with the light they have.
- D She is frustrated that her efforts are not appreciated by her people.

23

Which phrase **best** supports the meaning of "illuminate" as used in paragraph 1?

- A "too far away to bring heat" (paragraph 1)
- B "They would give more light" (paragraph 3)
- C "They flicker on and off" (paragraph 4)
- D "the people brought her a slab of quartz" (paragraph 6)

24

How does the narrator **mainly** develop the character of First Woman?

- A by describing her actions
- B by referring to her visit to Fire Mountain
- C by sharing her thoughts
- D by showing her working with First Man

25

Which sentence **best** represents the turning point in the story?

- A “Eventually, First Woman had an idea for a different way to send light to Earth.” (paragraph 6)
- B “On the rim, they placed bird feathers—cardinal, lark, and eagle—to fly it through the sky and spread the rays of heat and light in the four directions.” (paragraph 7)
- C “At that moment, two ancient, wise men stepped forward and offered to help.” (paragraph 11)
- D “Once the Sun and the Moon were following their paths through the sky, the people returned to where First Woman had carved the wheels.” (paragraph 12)

26

Which detail **best** expresses a theme of being determined?

- A “So First Woman sent Glowworm, Fox Fire, Lightning Beetle, and Firefly to the four corners.” (paragraph 3)
- B “She consulted Fire Man on his glowing mountain.” (paragraph 4)
- C “It took a lot of hard work and a lot of help . . .” (paragraph 6)
- D “. . . they worked with their flint knives, chisels, and stone hammers to shape the stars.” (paragraph 13)

GO ON

27

This question is worth 2 credits.

In “The Sun, Moon, and Stars,” how do First Woman and First Man work together? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

GO ON

28

This question is worth 2 credits.

In “The Sun, Moon, and Stars,” how do paragraphs 4 and 5 affect the tone of the story? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

STOP

Grade 5
English Language Arts Test
Session 1
Spring 2025

Name: _____



New York State Testing Program

English Language Arts Test Session 2

Grade 5

Spring 2025

RELEASED QUESTIONS

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Session 2



TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some ideas to help you do your best:

- Read the whole passage before you answer the questions. Most questions will only make sense after you read the whole passage.
- You might need to read the passage more than once to answer a question.
- Read each question carefully. Take your time.
- A question may include a quote from a passage. You might need to review both the quote and the whole passage to answer the question.

When you write your answers

- make sure to answer the whole question;
- use examples or details from the text;
- write in complete sentences; and
- use correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

For the last question in this test book, you may plan your writing on the Planning Page provided. However, do NOT write your final answer on the Planning Page. Write your final answer on the lined pages.

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 29 through 35.

Excerpt from *On the Back of a Turtle*

by Maria Hlohowskyj

1 Sitting on a log in a slow-moving stream, a crowd of turtles bask in the sun. They are not afraid of hungry hawks or coyotes. Their hard shells protect them.

2 So how did turtles get their armored suits?

How the Turtle Got Its Shell

3 Turtles are reptiles, in the same family as snakes and lizards. But unlike snakes, turtles have a hard shell on the outside. A turtle's shell is made of living bone—it's part of the turtle's skeleton. Muscles attach to the shell in the same way your muscles attach to your bones. So turtles can never leave their shells.

4 For the last 200 million years, turtles have looked pretty much the way they look today. But 220 million years ago, a turtle ancestor called *Odontochelys semitestacea* did not quite have a shell yet. It had an extra-wide backbone and flat ribs that grew in a round, open shape. This fossil and other clues suggest that turtle shells evolved from backbones and ribs that expanded and grew together to form a solid bone shell.

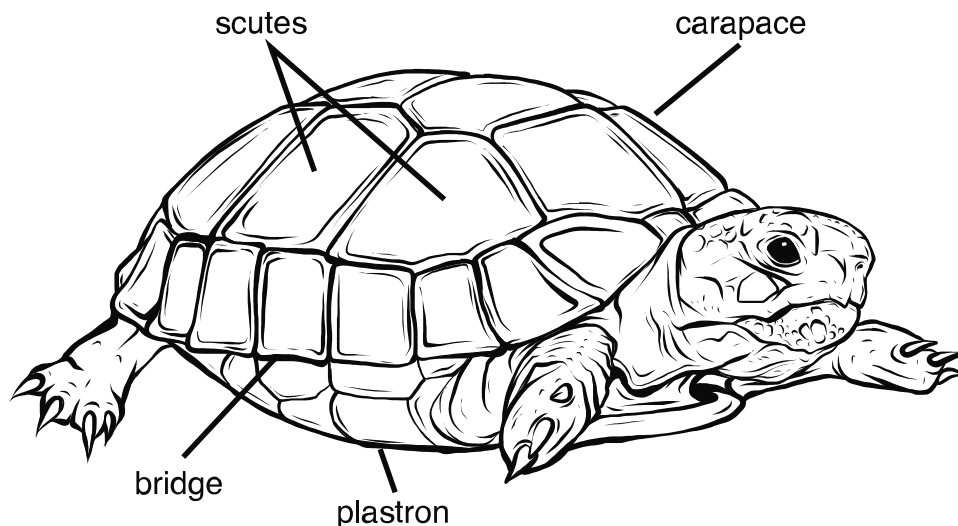
5 Turtle shells have three parts. The top, over the turtle's back, is the *carapace*. The bottom, protecting the turtle's belly, is the *plastron*. The plastron is also bone. Connecting these on the sides are the *bridges*. Together, these parts create an incredibly strong shell that protects the turtle from predators.

6 When you look at a turtle's shell, you don't see the bare bone. Over the bone, turtles grow a thick layer of keratin, the same material your hair and fingernails are made of. This keratin forms plate-like sections called *scutes*. The square or hexagon ridges on a turtle's shell are the scutes! Scutes protect the bone and also give turtle shells their color.

7 Bone is alive, so a turtle's shell grows as the turtle grows. New thin layers of scutes push the old layers up. This makes stepped ridges that give turtles their rough, scaly look. You can see from the ridges how much the turtle has grown.

8 Not every turtle has scutes. Soft-shell turtles, pig-nosed turtles, and leatherback sea turtles grow a thick layer of leathery skin instead.

GO ON



What Shape Is Your Shell?

- 9 Lalainya Goldsberry is a biologist who cares for turtles and other small animals at the Peggy Notebaert Nature Museum in Chicago. Some of the turtles live inside the museum, for kids to look at up close. Wild turtles live in a lagoon in back.
- 10 Lalainya loves to look at turtles. If you do too, you may notice that they are not all the same shape. Some have big, round, dome shells. Others are almost flat. Some are smooth. Some are bumpy. All these different shapes are suited to how the different turtles live. . . .
- 11 Pancake is a spiny softshell turtle, one of the species that does not have scutes. Spiny softshells live most of their life in fresh water. Their flat shape and leathery shell help them swim fast and burrow into the sand at the bottom of the water.
- 12 Box turtles get their name from their best party trick—they can close themselves up like a box. The secret is a hinge on their plastron. When a box turtle sees danger, it pulls its head and legs in close to its body and folds up its plastron at the hinge, shutting the shell up tightly. In winter, box turtles have another trick. They hibernate under the ice. They breathe by absorbing oxygen from the water through the skin in their butts.
- 13 Patsy is an alligator snapping turtle. These big turtles lure fish into their mouths with a tongue that looks like a wiggling worm. To catch a fish, snapping turtles have to stay very still for a long time. Patsy has a rough, craggy shell with thick scutes. This helps her look like a rock as she waits patiently to catch her dinner. In fact, alligator snapping turtles often have moss growing on their shells, just like real rocks!

lure = attract

- 14 Many turtles have a lighter color on their plastron. Bob the Blanding's turtle is a good example. Bob is dark brown on top, and pale yellow on his chin, neck, and plastron. When a Blanding's turtle swims, predators looking down into the water see the turtle's dark top, which blends in with the dark water. But predators swimming below the turtle see the yellow parts, which blend in with the light shining down into the water. This type of camouflage is called countershading.

GO ON

29 What is the meaning of the word “bask” in paragraph 1?

- A** to enjoy
- B** to hide
- C** to ignore
- D** to swim

30 Paragraph 10 is important to the article because it

- A** describes why a biologist “loves to look at turtles”
- B** questions why turtles are rarely “all the same shape”
- C** suggests that some turtles have round “dome shells”
- D** states that various shells are better for “different turtles”

31 According to scientists, turtles have existed on this planet for more than 220 million years. How does the author support this idea in the article?

- A** by explaining that turtles belong to “the same family as snakes and lizards” (paragraph 3)
- B** by referring to a “fossil and other clues” that show how shells have changed (paragraph 4)
- C** by explaining that it is possible to “see from the ridges how much the turtle has grown” (paragraph 7)
- D** by referring to the “flat shape and leathery shell” that help alligator snapping turtles swim quickly (paragraph 11)

32 Which phrase from paragraph 14 **best** supports the meaning of the word “camouflage” in the same paragraph?

- A** “a lighter color on their plastron”
- B** “looking down into the water”
- C** “blends in with the dark water”
- D** “predators swimming below”

33 According to information in the section “What Shape Is Your Shell?”, how do some turtles catch their prey?

- A** by making holes in the sand
- B** by remaining still and using their tongues
- C** by pulling their legs into their shells
- D** by having brown shells and yellow on their bellies

34 The diagram helps the reader better understand the article by showing

- A** the location of different parts of a turtle’s shell
- B** the size of the scutes found on a turtle’s shell
- C** how the bridges connect the shell to the plastron
- D** how the turtle is able to avoid different predators

GO ON

Which detail would be **most** important to include in a summary of the article?

- A** Turtle muscles attach to shells in the same way human muscles attach to bones.
- B** Different parts of the turtle shell work together to form a protective barrier.
- C** Keratin can be found in both turtle shells and human hair and nails.
- D** Scutes protect the turtle's bones and provide color to the shell.

Directions
Read this poem. Then answer questions 36 and 37.

*Millo Castro Zaldarriaga lived in Cuba and later became a world-famous musician.
When she first played in a band in 1932, there were no female drummers in Cuba.*

Drum Dream Girl: How One Girl's Courage Changed Music

by Margarita Engle

On an island of music
in a city of drumbeats
the drum dream girl
dreamed

5 of pounding tall conga drums
tapping small *bongó* drums
and boom boom booming
with long, loud sticks
on big, round, silvery
10 moon-bright *timbales*.

But everyone
on the island of music
in the city of drumbeats
believed that only boys
15 should play drums

GO ON

so the drum dream girl
had to keep dreaming
quiet
secret
20 drumbeat
dreams.

At outdoor cafes that looked like gardens
she heard drums played by men
but when she closed her eyes
25 she could also hear
her own imaginary
music.

When she walked under
wind-wavy palm trees
30 in a flower-bright park
she heard the whirl of parrot wings
the clack of woodpecker beaks
the dancing tap
of her own footsteps
35 and the comforting pat
of her own
heartbeat.

At carnivals, she listened
to the rattling beat
40 of towering
dancers
on stilts

and the dragon clang
of costumed drummers
45 wearing huge masks.

At home, her fingertips
rolled out their own
dreamy drum rhythm
on tables and chairs...

50 and even though everyone
kept reminding her that girls
on the island of music
had never played drums

GO ON

the brave drum dream girl
55 dared to play
tall conga drums
small *bongó* drums
and big, round, silvery
moon-bright *timbales*.

60 Her hands seemed to fly
as they rippled
rapped
and pounded
all the rhythms
65 of her drum dreams.

Her big sisters were so excited
that they invited her to join
their new all-girl dance band

but their father said only boys
70 should play drums.

So the drum dream girl
had to keep dreaming
and drumming
alone

75 until finally
 her father offered
 to find a music teacher
 who could decide if her drums
 deserved
80 to be heard.

 The drum dream girl's
 teacher was amazed.
 The girl knew so much
 but he taught her more
85 and more
 and more

 and she practiced
 and she practiced
 and she practiced
90 until the teacher agreed
 that she was ready
 to play her small *bongó* drums
 outdoors at a starlit café
 that looked like a garden

GO ON

95 where everyone who heard
her dream-bright music
sang
and danced
and decided
100 that girls should always
be allowed to play
drums
and both girls and boys
should feel free
105 to dream.

36

This question is worth 2 credits.

What effect do lines 11 through 21 have on the tone of “Drum Dream Girl”? Use **two** details from the poem to support your response.

GO ON

37

This question is worth 2 credits.

The girl in the poem “Drum Dream Girl” listens to many different sounds. How do these sounds help her to become a better drummer? Use **two** details from the poem to support your response.

GO ON

Directions
Read this story. Then answer questions 38 and 39.

Sana'a is a city in the country of Yemen. During the time of this story, music was forbidden in Sana'a.

Excerpt from “The Oud Player of Sana’a”

by Carolyn Han



- 1 In the city of Sana'a, an old man with an orange-hennaed beard could not stop playing his four-stringed Yemeni oud—no matter how hard he tried. During the day he hid the musical instrument in a wooden chest inside his house. Only late at night, while his neighbors slept, did he dare take the oud out of its hiding place.

orange-hennaed beard = a beard that has been colored using dye made from a plant

GO ON

- 2 Before removing his oud from the chest, the man closed his wooden shutters and stuffed fat pillows in the windows so his music would not escape. Holding the instrument in the crook of his arm, he played and sang. . . .
- 3 The following night the old man waited until it was very late before taking the oud from its hiding place. At first he fingered the strings lightly so that the music stayed inside the house. But he soon became carried away—swept up in song—and his playing and singing grew louder.
- 4 Shutters creaked open. Oil lamps glowed. Faces appeared at the windows. Barefoot men dressed in long nightshirts stormed out of the arched doorways and ran to tell the soldiers that someone was playing music. . . .
- 5 After a breakfast of sweetened tea and a circle of flatbread, the old man was taken to court. “Why did you break the law?” asked a dark-bearded judge who sat behind an enormous wooden desk.
- 6 “Music is a gift,” the oud player replied.
- 7 “What do you mean?” questioned the judge, his eyes narrowing.
- 8 “I’ve been given the gift of being able to play and sing music. I cannot refuse to embrace it,” the old man answered. “I’ll show you.” He took the oud from his sleeve.
- 9 “Stop!” the judge shouted, pounding the desk. “Stop at once!”
- 10 “How can I prove my case if you don’t listen to the evidence?” the old man asked, cradling the oud. . . .
- 11 “On top of a mountain no one could hear the music,” one judge suggested.
- 12 So that afternoon nine sure-footed donkeys traveled up a rocky path carrying eight judges and an oud player. On the mountaintop, the judges gathered in a circle. The oud player sat on a nearby rock. Removing the instrument from his sleeve, he began to tune the oud. It had been a long time since the judges had heard any music—even the harsh unmusical tuning of an oud. . . .
- 13 One by one the judges found themselves swaying to the music. At first faint smiles appeared on their lips . . . and finally, wide grins covered their faces. Relaxed and content, one judge glanced skyward. “Look!” he shouted, pointing.
- 14 The others followed his gaze. They were amazed to see hundreds of oud-shaped clouds floating across the sky. More and more clouds appeared as the oud player continued strumming and singing. . . .
- 15 Today music is no longer forbidden in Yemen. Musicians can play openly, and often oud-shaped clouds can be spotted in the sky above Sana’a.

38

This question is worth 2 credits.

Some people are able to remain calm when they are in difficult situations. How do the details in “The Oud Player of Sana’a” develop this idea? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

GO ON

Planning Page

You may PLAN your writing for question 39 here if you wish, but do NOT write your final answer on this page. Writing on this Planning Page will NOT count toward your final score. Write your final answer on Pages 21 and 22.



GO ON

39

This question is worth 4 credits.

What is a theme shared by “Drum Dream Girl” and “The Oud Player of Sana’a?” How is the development of this theme similar in the poem and the story? Use details from **both** the poem and the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify a theme shared by the poem and the story
- explain how the development of the theme is similar in both the poem and the story
- use details from **both** the poem and the story to support your response

[illegible]

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Grade 5
English Language Arts Test
Session 2
Spring 2025

THE STATE EDUCATION DEPARTMENT
THE UNIVERSITY OF THE STATE OF NEW YORK / ALBANY, NY 12234
2025 English Language Arts Tests Map to the Standards

Grade 5

Question	Type	Key	Points	Standard	Strand	Subscore	Secondary Standard(s)
Session 1							
8	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
9	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
10	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.4	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
11	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.4	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
12	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
13	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.2	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
14	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.8	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
22	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Literature	Reading	
23	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.4	Reading Standards for Literature	Reading	
24	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.6	Reading Standards for Literature	Reading	
25	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.5	Reading Standards for Literature	Reading	
26	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.2	Reading Standards for Literature	Reading	
27	Constructed Response	n/a	2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Literature	Writing from Sources	
28	Constructed Response	n/a	2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.4	Reading Standards for Literature	Writing from Sources	
Session 2							
29	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.L.4	Language Standards	Reading	
30	Multiple Choice	D	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
31	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.9	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
32	Multiple Choice	C	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.4	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
33	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
34	Multiple Choice	A	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.7	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
35	Multiple Choice	B	1	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.2	Reading Standards for Informational Text	Reading	
36	Constructed Response	n/a	2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.4	Reading Standards for Literature	Writing from Sources	
37	Constructed Response	n/a	2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.3	Reading Standards for Literature	Writing from Sources	
38	Constructed Response	n/a	2	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.9	Reading Standards for Literature	Writing from Sources	
39	Constructed Response	n/a	4	NGLS.ELA.Content.NY-5.R.2	Reading Standards for Literature	Writing from Sources	

This item map is intended to identify the primary analytic skills necessary to successfully answer each question on the 2025 operational ELA test. However, each constructed-response question measures proficiencies described in multiple standards, including writing and additional reading and language standards. For example, two-point and four-point constructed-response questions require students to first conduct the analyses described in the mapped standard and then produce written responses that are rated based on writing standards. To gain greater insight into the measurement focus for constructed-response questions, please refer to the rubrics shown in the Educator Guides.