



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Book 1

Grade

5

April 26–28, 2010

Name _____

TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some suggestions to help you do your best:

- Be sure to read carefully all the directions in the test book.
- Plan your time.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before choosing or writing your response.

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Reading***D***irections

In this part of the test, you will do some reading. Then you will answer questions about what you have read. For the multiple-choice questions, you will mark your answers on the answer sheet. For question 21, you will write your answer directly in the test book.

Go On

Directions

Read this passage. Then answer questions 1 through 5.



Talking Birds

by M.G. Merfeld

“Polly wanna cracker!”

You may have heard a bird on television, in a movie, or in real life say these words. Does the bird really want to eat a cracker? The answer is yes . . . and no. Polly probably will eat a cracker, but what she really wants is some attention.

Certain kinds of birds are excellent talkers. They like to copy the sounds they hear around them. They also like the attention that people give them when they talk.

Best Talking Birds

Many wild birds have the ability to mimic, or copy, sounds. Crows, jays, and starlings all can do it. But these birds rarely make good pets because they need lots of room, and they are not often comfortable around people.

Some pet birds, such as parrots, can be great talkers. Among the large parrots, the best talkers are African greys and Amazons. The most popular smaller parrots are the budgies, otherwise known as parakeets.

One should remember that just because a certain kind of bird *can* talk does not mean it *will* talk. Each bird has a different personality. Some birds never learn to talk. Some may learn only a few words or sounds. Others seem to learn a large vocabulary easily, soaking up new words like some sort of feathered sponge.

Although each bird is different, younger birds are more likely to learn to talk than older birds. Also, male birds are usually better talkers than females. However, if you teach a bird to whistle before it learns to talk, it may never learn to talk. This might be because whistling is easier for the bird.

Teaching Your Bird to Talk

Pet birds often learn to talk just as a child does. They babble first, and then speak more clearly later. The easiest words for a bird to learn are short words with a strong consonant sound, such as “cracker” or “pretty bird.”

It is important to repeat the word or phrase often when you are teaching a bird to talk. One way is to buy a tape that has words and phrases repeated on it and play the tape for your bird when you leave the house. You can also make a tape of your own to play when you are not around.

Some birds learn by “association,” which means they connect a word with something they see or hear. For example, many birds will say “hello” when they hear a telephone ring. Some may say “goodbye” when they hear keys jingle. One bird owner always said “Good morning” when she removed the sheet covering her bird’s cage every morning. Soon the bird began saying “Good morning” as soon as she began to remove the cover—even before the owner had said a word!

Warning: Bird Listening

If you are training your bird to talk, be careful what your bird hears. Birds can copy more than just words. They imitate the sounds they hear, too. Those sounds could be annoying noises like a baby crying, the ringing of a telephone, or the clatter of a computer printer. One bird owner left his bird in front of a television all day. The TV was on a sports channel. After several football games, the pet was squawking “charge,” “defense,” and other football cheers.

Even if you’re a sports fan, squawks of “defense” probably will not be as comforting as hearing your feathered friend say “I love you” as you enter the room.

- 1** According to the passage, a bird is **more likely** to learn a word if
- A** it listens to another bird
 - B** it learns how to whistle first
 - C** it hears the word many times
 - D** it knows what the word means

- 2** According to the passage, which of these birds will **most likely** learn to talk?
- A** an old male bird
 - B** a young male bird
 - C** an old female bird
 - D** a young female bird

Go On

3

What type of information is **mainly** given in the section under the heading “Warning: Bird Listening”?

- A** how birds enjoy attention
- B** how birds tend to copy sounds
- C** how wild birds make good pets
- D** how to choose a bird that will talk

4

Read this sentence from the passage.

Those sounds could be annoying noises like a baby crying, the ringing of a telephone, or the clatter of a computer printer.

In this sentence, “annoying” means that the noises

- A** bother people
- B** confuse people
- C** sound like birds
- D** sound like music

5

If a bird says “hello” as soon as it hears a telephone ring, this is an example of

- A** imitating sounds
- B** repeating short words
- C** soaking up new words
- D** learning by association

Directions

Read “I’ve Got Fire!” Then answer questions 6 through 10.

“I’ve Got Fire!”

by Gary Paulsen

In Gary Paulsen’s book *Hatchet*, a 13-year-old boy named Brian crash-lands a plane in a forest in the Canadian mountains. In this excerpt, Brian tries to make a fire with a hatchet, a rock, and thin shreds of bark.

What makes fire? He thought back to school. To all those science classes. Had he ever learned what made a fire? Did a teacher ever stand up there and say, “This is what makes a fire . . .”

He shook his head, tried to focus his thoughts. What did it take? You have to have fuel, he thought—and he had that. The bark was fuel. Oxygen—there had to be air.

He needed to add air. He had to fan on it, blow on it.

He made the nest ready again, held the hatchet backward, tensed, and struck four quick blows. Sparks came down and he leaned forward as fast as he could and blew.

Too hard. There was a bright, almost intense glow, then it was gone. He had blown it out.

Another set of strikes, more sparks. He leaned and blew, but gently this time, holding back and aiming the stream of air from his mouth to hit the brightest spot. Five or six sparks had fallen in a tight mass of bark hair and Brian centered his efforts there.

The sparks grew with his gentle breath. The red glow moved from the sparks themselves into the bark, moved and grew and became worms, glowing red worms that crawled up the bark hairs and caught other threads of bark and grew until there was a pocket of red as big as a quarter, a glowing red coal of heat.



Go On

And when he ran out of breath and paused to inhale, the red ball suddenly burst into flame.

“Fire!” He yelled. “I’ve got fire! I’ve got it, I’ve got it, I’ve got it . . .”

But the flames were thick and oily and burning fast, consuming the ball of bark as fast as if it were gasoline. He had to feed the flames, keep them going. Working as fast as he could he carefully placed the dried grass and wood pieces he had tried at first on top of the bark and was gratified to see them take.

But they would go fast. He needed more, and more. He could not let the flames go out.

He ran from the shelter to the pines and started breaking off the low, dead small limbs. These he threw in the shelter, went back for more, threw those in, and squatted to break and feed the hungry flames. When the small wood was going well he went out and found larger

wood and did not relax until that was going. Then he leaned back against the wood brace of his door opening and smiled.

I have a friend, he thought—I have a friend now. A hungry friend, but a good one. I have a friend named fire.

“Hello, fire . . .”

The curve of the rock back made an almost perfect drawing flue that carried the smoke up through the cracks of the roof but held the heat. If he kept the fire small it would be perfect and would keep anything like the porcupine from coming through the door again.

flue = passage through which smoke can escape

A friend and a guard, he thought.

So much from a little spark. A friend and a guard from a tiny spark.

- 6** What is the passage **mainly** about?
- A** a boy’s memories of his science class
 - B** a boy’s successful attempt to start a fire
 - C** the things that are needed to build a fire
 - D** the best way to build a shelter in the woods

- 7** Where does this passage take place?
- A** at a park
 - B** at a school
 - C** in the backyard
 - D** in the wilderness

8

“I’ve Got Fire!” is most like

- A a folktale
- B a news article
- C a fictional story
- D an autobiography

9

Brian yells “Fire!” because

- A he is angry that he cannot light a fire
- B he is worried that the fire will go out soon
- C he is excited that the sparks produced flames
- D he is concerned that the flames are too big to control

10

Read this sentence from the passage.

These he threw in the shelter, went back for more, threw those in, and squatted to break and feed the hungry flames.

In this context, to “feed the hungry flames” means

- A to blow onto the fire to make it burn hotter
- B to add more wood to keep the fire burning
- C to prepare some food to roast over the fire
- D to spread the burning wood so the fire cools

Go On

Directions

You have probably seen or even made a black outline of a person's profile like the ones pictured below. Read this article to find out how they became known as "silhouettes." Then answer questions 11 through 15.



The Art of Silhouette

by Jennifer Reed



Elizabeth's heart raced and her palms felt moist. Not only was it her ninth birthday, but her mother had promised her that she could have a silhouette made as her special birthday present. A well-known, silhouette artist named John Miers had recently opened an art studio in London, and Elizabeth was going there for the first time.

Elizabeth's mother made an appointment for 10 o'clock sharp. Elizabeth took great care in choosing a dress with a high, frilly collar. Her mother plaited her hair and tied it up with ribbons.

"I'm so nervous," said Elizabeth. "What if I can't sit still?"

"You must sit still until Mr. Miers is finished," said her mother.

Elizabeth had never had her silhouette painted before. In fact, she never had a painting made of her. They arrived at the studio already bustling with activity. Mr. Miers sat in a chair in the far corner and was finishing a silhouette. Two other men also were painting black profiles. Elizabeth had to wait until Mr. Miers was finished.

"Welcome," said Mr. Miers, "you must be Elizabeth."

"Yes, sir," said Elizabeth.

"Come sit in my chair." Mr. Miers walked over to the corner and showed Elizabeth the chair. She sat down, then turned sideways.

"This won't take too long," said Mr. Miers. He grabbed the brush and put a fresh piece of



paper on his easel. His paint was black as midnight. Elizabeth found it hard to sit still and face one direction. She wanted to look at Mr. Miers and his painting.

Mr. Miers painted Elizabeth’s profile out of the black ink. When he was finished, he held the profile up.

“That’s me!” shouted Elizabeth. She was pleased with the way it looked. She could clearly see her nose, long eyelashes, and the ribbons in her hair.

Elizabeth’s mother was very happy. She paid Mr. Miers promptly. “Now we can hang this in your room, Elizabeth.”

Elizabeth thought this was the best birthday present ever. She was excited to see herself on paper, and it would be a keepsake she would treasure forever.

Mr. John Miers was well known in England for painting silhouettes. People who made silhouettes were called profilists. He opened a studio in London in 1791 and hired two more people to work with him. Rather than making cutouts, John Miers painted profiles which were still less

expensive than portrait paintings. It didn’t take as long or use as many paints as portrait painting required.

portrait = a detailed painting, usually showing the face

The art of silhouette painting started long ago. As a painting technique, it had been used in Stone Age cave art. But it wasn’t until a man named Etienne de Silhouette actually cut out profiles from paper that silhouette art became popular. He was the French finance minister who made paper cutouts as a hobby. The term *a la Silhouette* meant “on the cheap,” and the name was then used for the profiles. His hobby caught on as more and more people liked having them done and found that silhouette painting or cutouts were much cheaper than having their portrait painted.

Silhouette profiles became popular in colonial America in the 18th and early 19th centuries. The camera hadn’t been invented, and portrait painting was reserved for the rich. But silhouette profiles could be made easily and at an affordable cost. Many people—both men and women—toured the countryside making silhouettes for those who wanted them.

11 How is “The Art of Silhouette” organized?

- A** A story is followed by historical facts.
- B** Both sides of an argument are presented.
- C** A question is followed by several explanations.
- D** Events are listed from most important to least important.

12 How were John Miers’ silhouettes **different** from those of Etienne de Silhouette?

- A** Miers used black ink.
- B** Miers used many colors.
- C** Miers used paper cutouts.
- D** Miers used a simple camera.

Go On

13

How did silhouette art get its name?

- A** from silhouette-style paintings found in Stone Age caves
- B** from the popularity of silhouette profiles in colonial America
- C** from the success of John Miers' silhouette art studio in London
- D** from a man named de Silhouette who made cutout profiles in France

14

Which of these statements from the passage expresses an **opinion**?

- A** "Elizabeth had never had her silhouette painted before."
- B** "Two other men also were painting black profiles."
- C** "People who made silhouettes were called profilists."
- D** "Silhouette profiles could be made easily."

15

Read this sentence from the passage.

She was excited to see herself on paper, and it would be a keepsake she would treasure forever.

In this sentence, "keepsake" refers to something that

- A** is difficult to make
- B** is expensive to make
- C** represents a completed goal
- D** represents a special memory

Directions

Read this passage. Then answer questions 16 through 21.

Tell Me Again!

by Else Holmelund Minarik

“Tell me again how you learned to ride a horse,” I would ask my father when I was a little girl in Denmark. I was no more than four years old—too little to learn to ride a horse by myself. But I liked to hear my father tell his story.

And then he would begin.

“When I was a little boy, as little as you are now,” he would say, “I wanted to ride the horses. But I was too small to mount a horse. So I would slip into my father’s stables to be with the horses and admire them. Such big, powerful animals they were!



Father and
Fiery in
Denmark
many years
ago

Go On

“The gentle workhorses stood quietly in their stalls, eating their hay. I would clamber up the side of one of the stalls and slide over onto the horse’s back.

clamber =
climb

“Then I would clutch its mane and fancy us galloping over the meadows, down to the shore, and even into the sea.

fancy =
imagine

“When I grew tall enough to mount a horse,” he said, “my wish came true.”

“You swim with the horses now,” I said. “You even swim with Fiery. And he has spirit!”

Everybody knew about Fiery, the great black stallion with the fiery temper, and how he behaved when he first came to the stables. He reared in his stall. He snorted and kicked. He rolled his eyes. And everyone was afraid of him. Everyone, except my father.

I wanted to hear more. “Now tell how you made Fiery your friend,” I begged. This was my favorite story.

“Well, little Else,” my father went on, “I just talked to him. I talked as a friend. You must talk to a horse like Fiery.

“I’d say, ‘No, little horse. No, my friend. You can’t run free. You must learn to let me ride you.’

“And soon Fiery began to listen. He knew from my voice that I would be his friend.”

So Fiery let my father teach him to carry a rider. Then Fiery would take my father across the soft green meadows or even into the lively waters of the northern sea.

I loved to see Father riding Fiery bareback into the sea. There they swam, Father and Fiery, out in the cold, clear water.

bareback =
without a
saddle

Often I would watch them from the shore, holding tight to my mother’s hand. They swam so bravely. I was so proud of them!

Then Father and Fiery would come splashing out of the water and gallop along the shore toward us. They made a fine stop—just in time!

Fiery towered over us. He tossed his head and shook a spray of sea water from his glistening black coat.

Father was laughing and patting Fiery’s neck.

And I was making a wish.

I wished that someday I could have a horse, too . . . but a smaller one!

16 What is Fiery like when he first comes to the stables?

- A** He is quiet and lazy.
- B** He is wild and full of spirit.
- C** He makes friends with everyone.
- D** He only lets Else’s father ride him.

17 Where does Else **most** like to watch her father ride Fiery?

- A** on the farm
- B** in the stables
- C** at the seashore
- D** in the meadow

18 Read these sentences from the passage.

“When I was a little boy, as little as you are now,” he would say, “I wanted to ride the horses. But I was too small to mount a horse.”

In the second sentence, “mount” means

- A** feed
- B** talk to
- C** exercise
- D** climb on

19 How does Else feel about horses after watching her father ride Fiery?

- A** She wants a horse just like Fiery.
- B** She has no interest in riding horses.
- C** She would like to have a smaller horse.
- D** She thinks horses should not go into the sea.

20 What does Else learn from her father’s story?

- A** how to train a workhorse
- B** how to swim with a horse
- C** how to make friends with a horse
- D** how to ride a horse without a saddle

Go On

21

How does Else feel about her father when he rides Fiery into the sea? Use details from the passage to support your answer.

STOP

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