



New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts Test

Book 1

Grade

6

January 16–19, 2007

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 your response.

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Reading

Directions

In this part of the test, you will do some reading and answer questions about what you have read.

Go On

Directions

Read this passage about a dog. Then answer questions 1 through 5.



by Jim Jarvis

In 1950, a cast-off mongrel came to town. Wouldn't anyone be his friend?

My brother, Jack, and I grew up with a great friend named W. C. Price. He lived next door to us and made the best grades in school. We considered it an honor to be his friend.

One day in 1950, the ugliest, mangiest little dog appeared in our neighborhood in Balch Springs, Texas. He tried to follow the three of us and join in our play, but we'd scold him and chase him off. The poor little fellow would tuck his hairless stick of a tail between his legs and look forlornly at us as he'd steal away . . . but he always returned. After a week of this, W.C. knelt down, called the dog, petted him, then gently gathered him up in his arms. I can still see that little bundle of misery with the sad look on his face, rolled up in a quivering ball of scabs and sores. W.C. took the dog home, gave him a bath, and doctored his mange. In almost no time, new hair began to sprout and it looked blue. This was the first blue dog we'd seen, so W.C. named him "Blugee."

Blugee soon became the happiest dog I ever saw. He was in perpetual motion and didn't miss a thing. If anything moved, Blugee saw it and was immediately there to investigate. Blugee

seemed to understand every word W.C. said. When they were together, that little dog was always grinning and his every nerve was attuned to his master.

We played a game in which I'd take off running. W.C. would give me about a 40-foot head start, then holler, "Get Jim, Blugee!" Before I could take another half-dozen steps, Blugee would have me by the pants leg and pull me down. He'd tumble tail end-over-tea kettle with me, happily rolling in the grass. Then he'd get up and do it again just for the pure joy of being alive.

On Tuesday nights in summer, Mama would drive W.C., Jack, and me to our Boy Scout meeting in the nearby town of Rylie. When the meeting ended at 9 p.m., we'd walk three miles home. About a half mile from home, we'd plop down in the middle of the empty rural road and lie there looking up at the stars. Then W.C. would call out as loud as he could, "BLUGEE!" In about two minutes, we'd hear toenails clicking on the pavement as that little blue bullet came running to his master. Blugee acted as if he hadn't seen W.C. in years. He'd be smiling from ear to ear, and without much of a tail, his whole body seemed to wag 90 miles an hour. He'd jump

mangiest =
skin-diseased

from W.C.'s belly to Jack's to mine and back to W.C. We'd grab him and roll over. He'd bark and play-bite, then explode from our grips. It was like trying to hold the wind.

The years passed and we kids grew up. A few years later, I stopped at the gas station that W.C.'s father owned, waiting for W.C. to service my car. As I stood there, I felt something tug at my pants

leg. I looked down, and there was Blugee, still smiling. He hadn't forgotten me.

Over the years, I've often thought about how much I would have missed in life if I hadn't known that happy little fellow . . . and if W.C. hadn't been able to look past the dirt, grime, and mangle to see the love in a little discarded dog named Blugee.

1 Which word **best** describes Blugee after he is cared for by W.C.?

- A** bored
- B** gentle
- C** outgoing
- D** suspicious

2 Read this sentence from the passage.

Blugee seemed to understand every word W.C. said.

The author **most likely** wrote this sentence to suggest that

- A** Blugee is very sly
- B** Blugee is specially trained
- C** W.C. speaks very clearly to Blugee
- D** W.C. has a special relationship with Blugee

Go On

3 What is the **main** reason the narrator’s attitude toward Blugee changes after W.C. takes him home?

- A** He sees how loyal the dog is.
- B** He sees how smart the dog is.
- C** He sees how happy and friendly the dog is.
- D** He sees how healthy and colorful the dog is.

4 “Blugee” is a personal essay that is **most** like a

- A** play
- B** folk tale
- C** short story
- D** news article

5 At the end of the passage, how does the narrator feel when he remembers Blugee?

- A** disappointed
- B** proud
- C** sad
- D** thankful

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 6 through 11.



Songs of the Sea

by Catherine Stier

You have signed on for months of hard work. You're far from home. The pay is bad. The food is worse. You find rare comfort in the simple songs that you and your work mates sing.

This is what a sailor's life was like in the 1800s. The songs sung aboard ships were called *sea shanties* (also spelled *chanteys*). You have probably heard a shanty or two yourself. Many of these songs have lasted through the years. They can often be found in surprising places today.

Sea Shanties Then . . .

Sea shanties were valuable friends to sailors. Some shanties, such as "Blow the Man Down," had lively words and melodies. They broke up the boredom of long trips. Other shanties, including one called "Oh, Shenandoah," had a sadder tone. They helped seafarers express longing and loneliness. Still other shanties, such

as "Leave Her, Johnny," let sailors grumble about their hard lives.

But the first job of the sea shanty was to help the men work as a team. Ships had sails that were controlled by a system of moving ropes. For many jobs, all of the sailors had to tug on the ropes at once.

When faced with such a job, the *shantyman*, or song leader, began a tune. The crew joined in on the chorus, and it might have sounded like a playful sing-along. But when the sailors came to a certain beat, they knew it was the signal to pull together with all their might.

Raising or lowering the anchor called for a rhythm with a slow, steady motion. Then, the shantyman would choose a shanty with a slow, steady beat to match the job. Each duty on the sailing ship had its own rhythm and its own kind of song.

Go On

... and Sea Shanties Now

Sea shanties have been passed down to us in much the same way as folk stories. Long ago, someone came up with a memorable idea and melody. Others repeated the shanty, often adding changes along the way.

Over time, people saw the sea shanty for the treasure it was. Like any treasure, shanties were collected. Many were written down in books.

Where do the old shanties pop up now? Today's musical artists love the fun, beauty, and history of these songs. Many musicians, including Bob Dylan and Harry Belafonte, have their own versions of "Oh, Shenandoah." One group, the Robert Shaw Chorale, recorded a collection of shanties.

In Hollywood, shanties serve as a symbol of the sea. A fisherman sings the shanty "Spanish Ladies" in the film *Jaws*. The cartoon character Woody Woodpecker whistles "Blow the Man Down" when he finds himself aboard a pirate's ship.

Today, shanties tell us about shipboard life more than one hundred years ago. They help us understand what the working sailor sang and perhaps thought about.

So the next time you're doing a boring task, try making up a tune to go along with it. Time may pass more quickly, and your job may seem easier. Also, you may understand why sailors loved those old songs of the sea.

6 The **main** purpose of the sea shanty in the 1800s was

- A** to communicate with passing ships
- B** to help sailors work together as a team
- C** to allow sailors to complain about the food
- D** to give sailors an opportunity to record their music

7 Today, sea shanties are **mainly** used

- A** to provide material for musical artists to record
- B** to provide a source of music for Hollywood films
- C** to help sailors work together aboard modern ships
- D** to help people understand the lives of sailors of the past

- 8** The author uses two subheadings within the article in order to
- A** compare sea shanties to modern sailing songs
 - B** describe how popular sea shanties are with musicians
 - C** compare how sea shanties have been used over the years
 - D** describe how sea shanties have influenced Hollywood films

- 9** Which of these topics would be **best** to include in this article?
- A** the work of sailors today
 - B** the cost of sailing ships in the 1800s
 - C** other sailing duties that were made easier by sea shanties
 - D** some music studios where sea shanties are recorded today

- 10** Read these sentences from the article.

Sea shanties have been passed down to us in much the same way as folk stories. Long ago, someone came up with a memorable idea and melody.

In the second sentence, the word “memorable” means

- A** easy to find
 - B** hard to understand
 - C** worth remembering
 - D** difficult to remember
- 11** According to information in the article, a movie director today would **most likely** use a shanty
- A** to make a scene about sailors more realistic
 - B** to give a musician a chance to record the song
 - C** to make the crew’s daily chores pass more quickly
 - D** to express the loneliness of making a film away from home

Go On

Directions

Read this poem about the moon's lament, or sadness, about its situation. Then answer questions 12 through 15.

A Lunar Lament

by Ann Pedtke



- 1 Am I destined just to orbit
This divine and lovely planet?
Will I never know the oceans
Or the atmospheres that span it?
- 5 Will I never feel the vapors
Of a cloud against *my* cheek?
Will I always be the outcast
In the distance, pale and meek?
- 9 Will the waves upon an ocean
Never lap against *my* face?
Am I doomed to turn forever
In a void of empty space?
- 13 Will I never have a forest
Or a lake to call *my* own?
Why does *Earth* have all the treasures,
Leaving me with only stone?
- 17 Oh, if I only were a planet
And not distant moon tonight,
Condemned to gaze upon the earth
from such a lonely height.

- 12** What is the main theme of “A Lunar Lament”?
- A** The moon longs to become human.
 - B** Earth has too many hidden treasures.
 - C** Earth is too far away from the moon.
 - D** The moon wishes it were a planet like Earth.

- 13** What is the pattern of each stanza of the poem?
- A** All four lines rhyme.
 - B** None of the lines rhyme.
 - C** Each pair of lines rhymes.
 - D** The second and fourth lines rhyme.

- 14** Think about how the moon feels throughout the poem. Now, read lines 7 and 8.

**Will I always be the outcast
In the distance, pale and meek?**

In these lines, the word “outcast” means

- A** one who is sick
- B** one who is left out
- C** a reflection of light
- D** an outline of a shape

- 15** Read lines 15 and 16 from the poem.

**Why does *Earth* have all the
treasures,
Leaving me with only stone?**

According to the poem, what are Earth’s “treasures”?

- A** valuable art and museums
- B** human beings and animals
- C** clouds, oceans, and forests
- D** gold, silver, and diamonds

Directions

Most wild penguins live in the Southern Hemisphere. Many live on the coasts of South Africa, South America, Australia, New Zealand, and the Galápagos Islands. Two types of penguins raise their young on the ice of Antarctica. Read this article. Then answer questions 16 through 22.

Penguins Are Funny Birds

by Janice McLain

Imagine being a crew member, hundreds of years ago, sailing in southern waters. Your captain is searching for food while exploring unfamiliar waters. Your job is to watch the sea off the ship's side for ice, guiding the pilot to avoid a wreck. White, floating ice in a dark-blue ocean stretches as far as you can see. The wind is cold on your face. Alongside the ship, a fish darts past. Another slows to a stop and raises its head above the water to look at you. How could a fish do that?

Did the sailors see fish with feathers or swimming birds? Today, we know that the sailors saw birds that developed the ability to swim. Their wings became flippers, and they could “fly” through the water with amazing agility.

Sometimes, people joke that there are two types of penguins—the black ones walking away from you and the white ones walking toward you! In fact, there are 17 types of penguins. Only two kinds raise their young on the continent of Antarctica. Adelie penguins grow to 29 inches tall and have a white ring around each eye. Emperor penguins have yellow-orange coloring near their necks. Standing about 35 inches tall, they are the tallest penguins living today.

Emperor penguins have portable nests—the tops of their feet. Father Emperor penguins keep the egg on top of their feet for more than two months, until the egg is ready to hatch. The mother penguin goes out for food during this time. Imagine holding an egg on your feet for two months until someone returns with the groceries!

Male and female penguins are both good parents. Once the chicks hatch, both parents travel long distances to find food for them in the sea. When chicks are big enough to be left alone, they huddle together in a group, called a creche (pronounced “kresh”), to keep warm. Sometimes, a creche contains more than 1,000 fluffy chicks.



It may be days before the parents return and the chicks eat again. When they return with food, the fun really begins. Chicks chase their parents, begging for food. Penguin chicks eat huge amounts at one time, storing so much food in their tummies that they look like sagging bags of laundry!

Eventually, the adult penguins stop feeding the chicks. This is nature’s way of forcing the children to grow up. When the penguin chicks are hungry enough, they find their way to the sea. Without any swimming lessons, they make their way into the icy waters, and they swim as only penguins do.

- 16** In the first paragraph, the author takes the reader back in time to show
- A** how far the ice stretched over southern waters
 - B** how difficult it was to find food on sailing expeditions
 - C** how unusual penguins must have seemed to early sailors
 - D** how dangerous it must have been to sail in unfamiliar seas

- 17** According to the article, how do penguins “fly through the water”?
- A** They use their flippers to swim.
 - B** They dive from cliffs into the sea.
 - C** They are moved by the ocean currents.
 - D** They glide across the ice on their bellies.

- 18** Why does the author say the “fun” begins when the parents return with food?
- A** The chicks play games with each other while eating.
 - B** The chicks chase the parents while trying to get the food.
 - C** The chicks have to search for food the parents have hidden.
 - D** The chicks have to find their way to the sea to get more food.

- 19** Read this sentence from the article.
- Sometimes, people joke that there are two types of penguins—the black ones walking away from you and the white ones walking toward you!**

This “joke” is making fun of the fact that

- A** some penguins are 35 inches tall
- B** black penguins are afraid of humans
- C** penguins can walk backwards on the ice
- D** penguins have white chests and black backs

Go On

20 Scientists now know that penguins seen by sailors hundreds of years ago were

- A** fish with the ability to fly
- B** birds that had learned to swim
- C** birds that could fly into the sea
- D** fish with black and white feathers

21 Emperor penguin chicks are forced to “grow up” when

- A** the water warms, and the chicks must be taught how to swim
- B** their parents stop feeding them, and they must find their own food
- C** they are kicked out of the group, and they must find a new place to live
- D** the seasons change, and they no longer need to huddle together to stay warm

22 Read this sentence from the article.

Their wings became flippers, and they could “fly” through the water with amazing agility.

In this sentence, the word “agility” means

- A** ease and speed
- B** patience and calm
- C** joy and relaxation
- D** effort and difficulty

Directions

This story is based on true events that occurred in 1777, during the Revolutionary War. It involves General George Washington, British General William Howe, and a lost dog. Read the story. Then answer questions 23 through 26.

Lost!



A Revolutionary Tale

by Marty Crisp

Too much smoke!

The little dog sniffed the ground. She sniffed the air. There was no sign of her master.

Her ears rang with the *boom* of cannon and the *pop-pop-pop* of rifle fire.

Where did all the running feet go?

The black boots of her master's men had been here just a minute ago. Then they'd disappeared into the smoke, leaving her all alone.

Lost!

The little dog barked. She ran. But she couldn't hear anyone calling her.

She trotted down a cobbled street in town. Brick houses lined both sides, their shutters latched tight. No one came to the doors.

The dog kept going, trudging beyond the street and into the woods. Autumn leaves crackled under her paws.

The smoke was clearing now. The sounds of battle had ended.

Go On

What is that noise?

A wild turkey pecked its way across the trail. The little dog cocked her head. There was another sound up ahead. It was a familiar sound.

People!

She came to a field filled with tents.

Could my master be here?

He usually stayed in a fine house in town, where noisy carriages rolled, *clackety-clack*, down the cobbled streets. But sometimes he stayed in a tent.

The dog's nose poked through a honeysuckle bush. Her whole head followed. She sniffed deeply.

Something smells wonderful!

She sniffed harder. There were sausages in a frying pan on a campfire. She licked the end of her nose. Her empty belly hadn't been filled since morning.

The dog whined softly, then barked.

A man in a ragged blue uniform whirled around at the sound. He raised his musket, then began to laugh. "Come over and see what snuck up on me, boys!"

The men left the campfire and gathered around the dog.

"You're pretty brave, Sarge," one man said. He, too, wore blue. His feet were wrapped in dirty rags. "This dog could be a spy!"

The men laughed. One soldier brought over a sausage. The dog crawled out of the honeysuckle bush and wagged her tail.

The man knelt down. He held out the sausage. The dog gulped it quickly while the man examined her collar.

"Who owns her?" asked the sentry.

The man looked, then jumped up and backed away. The little dog wagged her tail again.

Another sausage, please?

"The collar says . . ." The man paused. He gulped. "She belongs to General William Howe."

"A British dog?" a voice yelled.

"Redcoat mutt!"

So many voices, and they were all shouting at her. The little dog hung her head. She cowered back against the bush.

Then she heard the sound of hoofbeats approaching.

"What's this?" said a new voice.

A tall man got off a white horse. The dog wagged her tail.

Please be a friend.

"It's General Howe's dog, sir." In the presence of his leader, the man spoke with quiet respect. "It's the enemy."

The commander of the Continental Army picked up the frightened dog. "This animal does not look dangerous to me," he said. He ran his fingers through the dog's sooty fur.

An angry man in buckskins stepped forward. "Howe sits well-fed in town while we're sent running through the woods, cold and hungry," he growled. "I say, we captured his dog—now let's send a message!"

General Washington did not look up. He scratched the little dog under her chin. She snuggled against his blue jacket.

"We *will* send a message, Private. We'll send a message that Americans are men of honor. We will return this dog—who is a dog and therefore no enemy of ours." Washington spoke firmly. "Make a flag of truce. I will write a note to General Howe."

23 The author added sentences to the story that show what the dog might be thinking in order to

- A** give the reader a sense of the dog's confusion
- B** show how the dog is the enemy of the soldiers
- C** show that the story is based on an actual event
- D** give the reader an idea of how hungry the dog is

24 Read this sentence from the story.

Her ears rang with the *boom* of cannon and the *pop-pop-pop* of rifle fire.

The author uses the words “boom” and “pop-pop-pop”

- A** to add humor to the description of the battle
- B** to help the reader imagine the sounds of the battle
- C** to prove to the reader that the battle actually occurred
- D** to compare the different noises that dogs and humans hear

25 Why did the soldiers' feelings about the dog change right after they fed her?

- A** The dog whined and barked.
- B** The dog took some food from the men.
- C** They heard General Washington approaching.
- D** They realized the dog belonged to General Howe.

26 Read these sentences from the story.

So many voices, and they were all shouting at her. The little dog hung her head. She cowered back against the bush.

In the third sentence, “cowered” means that the dog

- A** sat quietly
- B** stood alertly
- C** barked loudly
- D** crouched fearfully

STOP

Place Student Label Here



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