

New York State Testing Program

English

Language Arts

Book 1

Grade **4**

Sample Test 2005

TIPS FOR TAKING THE SAMPLE 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

***D*irections**

In this part of the test, you are going to do some reading. Then you will answer questions about what you have read.

Go On

Directions

Read this article about ladybugs. Then answer questions 1 through 5.

Little Flying Helpers



What do you usually do when a flying insect lands on your arm? Most likely you shoo it away. But what if that bug were a ladybug? Then chances are you would let it stay. What is it about ladybugs that we like?

Farmers once thought ladybugs were a good luck sign. A ladybug in the field meant that the crops would be successful and the weather would be good. The farmers may have been exaggerating about what a very small bug can do, but in fact ladybugs do help out with the crops. They eat harmful insects.

Actually, it is not the adult ladybug that eats the other insects. It's the ladybug larvae. Ladybugs lay their eggs on leaves that are infected with aphids or other insects. When the larvae hatch, they are very hungry and will eat mites, aphids, mealybugs, green flies, and other crop-destroyers.

A single ladybug larva can eat over 1,000 aphids in one day. In the 1800s, ladybugs were brought all the way from Australia to California and released among orange trees that were dying from being eaten by insects. The little red and black "eating machines" completely saved all the trees.

Ladybugs go about their daily business without worrying much about anything. Very few birds or insects will eat a ladybug because it gives off a fluid that is dangerous to eat. Ladybugs also protect themselves by playing dead. They fall off leaves and remain very still until their attacker goes away.

So next time you see a ladybug, think about what it may be up to. Maybe it is off to save an orange tree. Maybe its next move will be to roll off a leaf and play dead or stand up to a bird about 100 times its size. Maybe it's letting you know that the weather will be good tomorrow. Who knows? Ladybugs are special that way.



1 According to the article, why were ladybugs brought from Australia to California in the 1800s?

- A** to add more ladybugs to the area
- B** to predict the weather for farmers
- C** to save orange trees by eating insects
- D** to release a special fluid on the trees

2 According to the article, what is one way ladybugs defend themselves?

- F** They curl up and hide.
- G** They remain very still.
- H** They sting their attackers.
- J** They fly faster than their attackers.

3 Read this sentence from the article.

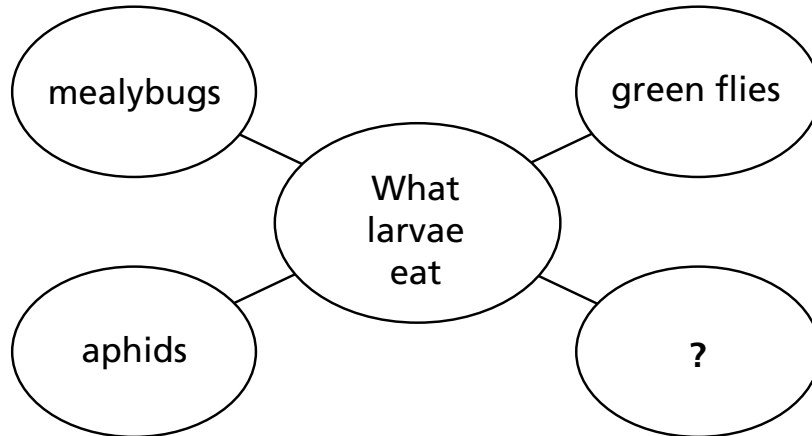
Maybe its next move will be to roll off a leaf and play dead or stand up to a bird about 100 times its size.

The phrase “stand up to” means about the same as

- A** admire
- B** support
- C** challenge
- D** observe

Go On

- 4** Here is a web about ladybug larvae.



Which word **best** completes the web?

- F** oranges
 - G** birds
 - H** leaves
 - J** mites
- 5** Which sentence shows what the author **most likely** thinks about ladybugs?
- A** Ladybugs are interesting insects.
 - B** Ladybugs are annoying insects.
 - C** Ladybugs do harm to nature.
 - D** Ladybugs eat more than they should.

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 6 through 12.

Ryan and Allie

by Monireh Kazemzadeh

Ryan's life was nearly perfect. He had a lot of friends on his block. They walked to school together almost every day, and after school they always had time to play.

Ryan did have one problem. It was his little sister, Allie. Somehow, Allie just didn't understand that Ryan and his friends didn't want her around. Wherever they went, she would toddle up a few minutes later, her little legs working overtime to keep up with the boys. She would look around and announce, "Here I am." Everyone would groan.

Allie wasn't a pest, exactly. She never said much of anything, except "Here I am." She didn't whine. But she couldn't exactly do much, either. She was too small to



play ball. She couldn't climb trees yet. She just watched the boys with her dark, serious eyes, and followed them everywhere they went.

Ryan tried asking his mom to keep Allie at home.

"Why does *my* sister have to come along?" he asked. "Troy's sister doesn't. Jimmy's sister doesn't. Why me?"

Go On

Ryan's mother just laughed. "Troy's sister is only six months old, and Jimmy doesn't have a sister. Guess that makes you the unlucky one, Ryan."

Today, Ryan wanted to play whiffle ball with his friends after school. They used to play with a hard ball, but one of them broke a window at Mr. McWhirter's house. Boy, had Ryan and his friends gotten in trouble for that one! Mr. McWhirter wouldn't even give them their ball back.

Today, as usual, Allie trotted out after the boys and announced, "Here I am." Just as naturally, everyone ignored her—as much as they could. They had to persuade her to stop playing drums on the pitcher's mound (really just an old trash can lid). And they had to chase her out of the "outfield" when she sat down on the curb to make daisy chains.

But finally, the game got started. It was Jimmy's turn at bat. He whacked the ball hard—right into Mr. McWhirter's yard.

The boys ran over to Mr. McWhirter's fence and peered through the railings. The ball lay in the grass, just out of reach.

"I can't fit through the rails," Jimmy said, trying to squeeze in. "I don't think any of us can."

The boys looked glum. Ryan was especially irritated. "It's all Allie's fault. She distracted us. Jimmy hit crooked because of Allie—"

Troy interrupted him. "Ryan, look at Allie. I mean, look at how small she is."

"Yeah," said Jimmy. "She's so small, she can fit through the fence! Hey, Allie. Come over here."

Allie walked over. "Here I am."

"How would you like to get that ball for us?"

Allie looked at Ryan and his friends. Then she slipped through the fence, picked up the ball, and came back out of the yard. She handed the ball to Ryan and waited, looking up at the boys to see if they wanted her to do anything else.

"Whoooo-eee," said Troy. "That was quick. Thanks, Allie."

"Nice job, squirt," said Jimmy, patting her on the head.

"C'mon," said Ryan, suddenly proud of his kid sister. "I'll teach you how to swing the bat."

- 6** In the story, what is Ryan’s **main** problem?
- F** His neighbor refuses to return Ryan’s whiffle ball.
 - G** His sister wants to go everywhere with him.
 - H** His mother thinks he should be nicer to his sister.
 - J** His friend loses Ryan’s only whiffle ball.

- 7** According to the story, why do the boys stop playing whiffle ball?
- A** They lose their whiffle ball in the neighbor’s yard.
 - B** Ryan’s sister keeps getting in the way of the game.
 - C** They break the neighbor’s window with the whiffle ball.
 - D** Jimmy cannot fit through the rails of the neighbor’s fence.

- 8** Read this sentence from the story.

The boys ran over to Mr. McWhirter’s fence and peered through the railings.

The word “peered” **most likely** means

- F** hurried
- G** talked
- H** shoved
- J** looked

- 9** What happens **right after** Jimmy tries to fit through the fence?

- A** The boys realize that Allie is small.
- B** The boys start the game.
- C** Jimmy hits the ball over the fence.
- D** Jimmy pats Allie on the head.

- 10** Read these sentences from the story.

**Ryan was especially irritated.
“It’s all Allie’s fault.”**

The word “irritated” **most likely** means

- F** curious
- G** tired
- H** upset
- J** worried

- 11** Which detail about Allie is **most** important to the story?

- A** She is small.
- B** She is a girl.
- C** She can make daisy chains.
- D** She follows her brother around.

- 12** At the end of the story, Ryan shows he has a new attitude toward Allie when he says

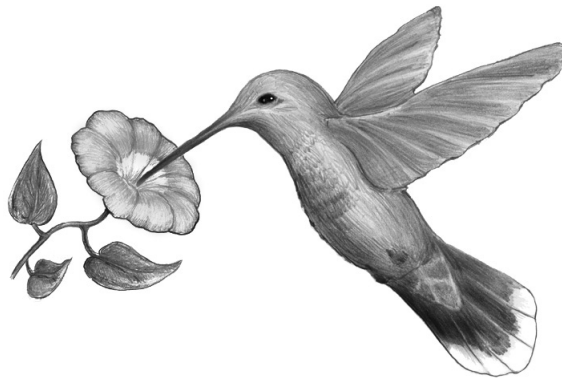
- F** “Why does *my* sister have to come along?”
- G** “It’s all Allie’s fault. She distracted us.”
- H** “How would you like to get that ball for us?”
- J** “I’ll teach you how to swing the bat.”

Go On

Directions

Read this article about hummingbirds. Then answer questions 13 through 17.

A Bird That Hums



by Sydney Donahoe

Many birds are known for their special songs or calls. But one type of bird is famous for its hum—the hummingbird. In fact, hummingbirds get their name from the humming noise they make. You might guess that a hummingbird’s hum comes from its voice. Instead, the hum comes from the whir of this tiny bird’s wings in flight.

Most hummingbirds’ wings make a humming sound. But one type of hummingbird makes a buzzing sound—the bee hummingbird of Cuba. The bee hummingbird gets its name not only from its buzz, but also from its size. This smallest bird in the world is only two inches (5 cm) long, including beak and tail feathers!

When a young hummingbird first hatches from its pea-sized egg, its body and wings are featherless. But as soon as its feathers come in, the tiny bird starts to practice “humming.” Its feet clutching tightly to the nest, the youngster beats its wings as fast as it can. Stretchy spider web woven into the nest helps it withstand all that strain. After about a month of practice, the baby hummingbird can beat its wings fast enough to “whir,” and it’s ready to fly.

When an adult hummingbird really gets going, it can beat its wings up to 200 times per second and fly forward at about 30 miles per hour. With extra-strong chest muscles and shorter “arm” bones in their wings, hummingbirds can beat their wings both forward and backward as well as up and down. This ability gives the hummingbird another claim to fame—it is the only type of bird that can hover, or stay in one place in the air. While it hovers, a hummingbird’s wings beat back and forth up to 70 times per second. The next time you see a hummingbird, watch its whirring wings and listen closely. Can you hear the hummingbird’s hum?

13 What makes a hummingbird hum?

- A** its voice
- B** its feathers
- C** its legs rubbing together
- D** its wings beating very fast

14 Read this sentence from the article.

Its feet clutching tightly to the nest, the youngster beats its wings as fast as it can.

The word “clutching” means the same as

- F** holding
- G** moving
- H** pressing
- J** staying

15 How does a baby hummingbird learn to hum?

- A** It practices the sounds its parents make.
- B** It practices flying in one place in the air.
- C** It beats its wings while clutching the nest tightly.
- D** It flies backward and forward as soon as it has feathers.

16 The article says that hummingbirds have the ability to beat their wings both forward and backward as well as up and down. The word “ability” **most likely** means

- F** size
- G** skill
- H** sight
- J** speed

17 Why did the author **most likely** write this passage?

- A** to tell a story
- B** to make the reader laugh
- C** to give information about hummingbirds
- D** to convince the reader to like hummingbirds

Go On

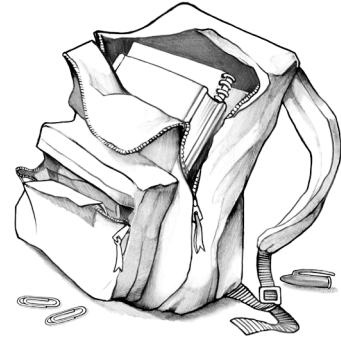
Directions

Read this poem. Then answer questions 18 through 24.

A View from a Backpack

by Elizabeth Massie

My home is at the bottom of a zippered canvas sack
That Bobby MacAdoodle takes to school upon his back.
He put me in here long ago when school began in fall,
And here I stay, since that first day, all wadded in a ball.



I am a piece of paper that Bobby used in class
To write a poem about a cricket hopping through the grass.
But he changed his mind and wrote of baseball games instead.
Into the backpack I went, landing crumpled on my head.

I'm not complaining that I feel alone or lost or mad,
For I have lots of buddies, so I'm never really sad.
We keep each other company, a bunch of odds and ends,
And sometimes Bobby tosses in another couple friends.

There are three paper clips that Bobby dropped in one day,
An ink pen cap, a pencil lead, erasers—white and gray,
A lunch bag with some slimy stuff, some chocolate crumbs and glue,
Some string, some lint, a homework pad, a sandwich turning blue.

Bobby opens up his backpack when he needs to get a book.
But rarely does he dig down deep or try to take a look.

But one spring day, oh say in May or maybe early June,
When flower blossoms scent the air and bluebirds sing their tune,
School will let out and home we'll go for good, my friends and I.
Bobby then will dump us out and at last we'll see the sky.

Pens, pencils, and the glue will find a home upon a shelf.
That blue sandwich and its slimy bag—well, just ask yourself.
Notebooks and those paper clips straight on to the desk they'll go.
Then Bobby's mom will find my poem, and frame me just for show!

18 Who is speaking in this poem?

- F** Bobby
- G** a backpack
- H** Bobby's mother
- J** a piece of paper

19 This poem **mostly** takes place

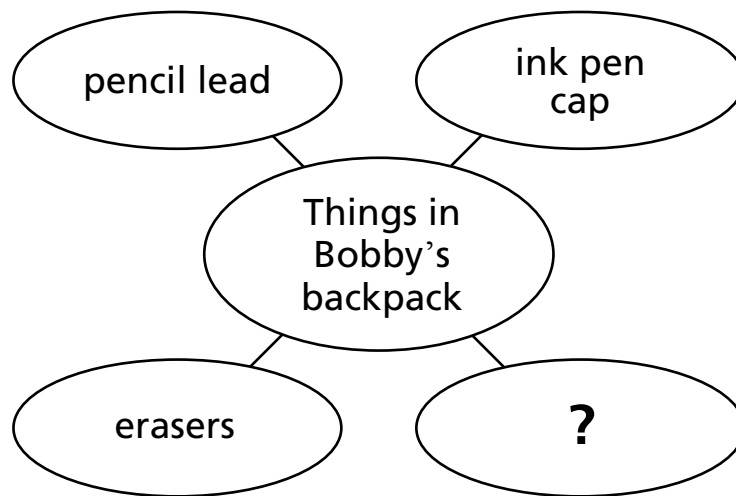
- A** in a field
- B** on a shelf
- C** at a school
- D** in a backpack

Go On

20 What is the **first** topic Bobby writes a poem about?

- F** a baseball game
- G** friends at his school
- H** a cricket in the grass
- J** things in his backpack

21 Here is a web about the poem.



Which phrase **best** completes the web?

- A** library book
- B** homework pad
- C** lower petals
- D** baseball glove

- 22** In the poem, which line shows the piece of paper is like a person?
- F** “But he changed his mind and wrote of baseball games instead.”
 - G** “For I have lots of buddies, so I’m never really sad.”
 - H** “Some string, some lint, a homework pad, a sandwich turning blue.”
 - J** “But rarely does he dig down deep or try to take a look.”

- 23** Read these lines from the poem.

**Pens, pencils, and the glue will find a home upon a shelf.
That blue sandwich and its slimy bag—well, just ask yourself.**

Where will the sandwich **most likely** end up?

- A** in the cabinet
 - B** in the garbage
 - C** in the backpack
 - D** in the refrigerator
- 24** In the poem, the author writes about when “flower blossoms scent the air.” The word “scent” refers to how the flowers
- F** grow
 - G** look
 - H** move
 - J** smell

Directions

Read this article from a school newspaper. Then answer questions 25 through 28.

A Day at Algoe School, 1935

Our 4th-grade class is studying how things have changed over time. For my assignment, I spoke with my great-grandmother to find out what her school was like when she was my age. Here is what she told me.

My school was called Algoe School. It was a pretty, one-story building located at the bottom of two hills between some hickory and oak trees. The school was built in 1875 and was what is known today as a one-room school. There was only one teacher, but the students might be from different grades. Algoe School sometimes had as many as 18 students, but once there were only two.

Every morning, the teacher would ring the large school bell that adorned the peaked roof. A flagpole stood to the left of the door. We held a ceremony every morning and afternoon to raise and lower the flag.

The school was heated by a wood-burning stove. On very cold mornings, we gathered around the stove and the teacher read us stories while we waited for the room to heat up.

We all had jobs to do during the school day. Some of us cleaned the blackboard. Some cleaned the erasers. Every day, two students had the task of walking to a nearby farm to bring back a bucket of water for our drinking water.

Daily Schedule

9:00 A.M.	Salute to the flag Singing Teacher reads stories K-1: Reading Arithmetic
10:30–10:45	RECESS! Reading Civics Spelling
12:00–1:00	Lunch Teacher reads stories Language
2:30–2:45	RECESS! Younger children dismissed Geography Science History
4:00 P.M.	Dismissal

My favorite class was spelling, and I often won the spelling bees even though the older students also participated. The local newspaper gave dictionaries as prizes to the students who won spelling bees. That is why I have three dictionaries on my bookshelf, one for

each year I attended the school. In the summer, if we completed the assigned reading list, the newspaper also awarded us books. I received several books for completing summer reading lists.

During recess, we played on the land in front of the school. The land slanted

toward the road. In the wintertime, we all brought our sleds to school and went sledding during recess. I took several spills down that hill; we all did. It was part of the fun of winter games.

I will always remember Algoe School and the good times I had there.

- 25** The author learns about Algoe School by
- A** taking a field trip there
 - B** watching a movie about it
 - C** talking with a person who went there
 - D** reading a newspaper article about it

- 26** According to the article, a student was given a dictionary for
- F** winning a spelling bee
 - G** cleaning the blackboard
 - H** completing a reading list
 - J** winning a sled race

- 27** According to the daily schedule, which activity happened more than once a day?
- A** Singing
 - B** Reading
 - C** Arithmetic
 - D** Science

- 28** According to the daily schedule, which subject was taught only to the older students?
- F** History
 - G** Spelling
 - H** Civics
 - J** Language

STOP



Grade 4
English Language Arts
Book 1
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