Name: _____

New York State Testing Program

2016 Common Core English Language Arts Test Book 1

Grade 6

April 5–7, 2016

Released Questions

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Book 1

TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some suggestions to help you do your best:

- Be sure to read all the directions carefully.
- Most questions will make sense only when you **read the whole passage**. You may read the passage more than once to answer a question. When a question includes a quotation from a passage, be sure to keep in mind what you learned from reading the whole passage. You may need to review **both** the quotation and the passage in order to answer the question correctly.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before choosing your response.
- Plan your time.

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 1 through 7.

In Ireland in 1937, Kathleen Murphy represents her dance school at a recital. She scans the audience for her Aunt Polly as she nervously awaits her turn to perform.

Excerpt from *Kathleen: The Celtic Knot*

by Siobhan Parkinson

I put my weight on my left foot and stood with my right foot poised, wondering what on earth I was going to do when the music started, because I couldn't remember even the very first step of the dance. But as soon as I heard the squeezebox[1] leading into my tune, everything that had happened over the past few weeks flew out of my head, and the knowledge of the steps came flooding back.

The split second the bar note sounded, I leaped into action. This was it. Either my legs were going to give way under me and I was going to end up in a heap on the floor with Polly's green curtains all around me, or I was going to dance my heart out. I gave one big, joyful bound and gave myself up to the dance, and the dance did me proud.

I kicked and soared and pranced and whirled, stepped and twirled and spun and flew, tripped and skipped and skimmed and sailed, all over that stage. I hardly knew where I was, and I was completely oblivious to the audience, the strange hall, even the adjudicator,[2] though I knew she must be out there somewhere in the blur of humanity beyond the stage, watching carefully and taking notes. I didn't care about that. I was filled with the joy of the dance, and I didn't give a rattling toss about Tess O'Hara and her sky blue frock and her snooty ways. All I wanted was for the music never to stop, so that I could dance and twinkle and leap in its magic nets forever.

The music did stop, of course, and I did, too; and as soon as I stopped, I knew it was just as well that the music had, because suddenly I was worn out, weak-kneed and panting, fit to collapse.

A terrific noise started up out of nowhere. I thought maybe the roof was coming down or a tremendous thunderstorm had started up, and I stood there, as if nailed to the stage, waiting to be overwhelmed by whatever force it was that had set this thunderous sound in motion. I breathed deeply, blinking and looking around me, still standing center stage, with my toes pointed in front of me and my knee crooked, as I had been taught. Then I realized what the noise was, and I started to smile. It wasn't a natural disaster or a storm.

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[1] **squeezebox:** slang for an accordion

[2] **adjudicator:** a judge

GO ON

It was applause, a thunderous clapping and stamping of feet and rocking of chairs. And it was for me, for me and my dance. I beamed. I beamed and beamed until my face ached. I felt like the sun, up there on the stage, the center of a little universe, all eyes toward me, and me beaming and radiating triumph and pleasure and gratitude and exhaustion all at once.

I made a little curtsy, and then I tripped quickly and lightly offstage.

"She's so light on her feet," I could hear people say, as I flew down the steps at the side of the stage. "It's like watching feathers floating on the breeze," some poetic type said. "She's a champion, that's for sure."

They were talking about me, but I'd lost interest now. I wanted to see if Polly was there. I needed to know that she'd seen me dancing. I wanted her to be able to tell my mam about it. Madge and the others wouldn't have the words to describe it, I knew that, and I couldn't describe it myself, but Polly would be able to tell it all with great panache.

I stood near the top of the hall, by the stage, and I scanned the rows and rows of people. A figure was coming toward me, but I couldn't make it out properly in the semi-dusk of the seething room.

"Polly?" I called uncertainly. It couldn't be Polly, though; it was too big and blustering. I was right. It was Mrs. Maguire.

"*Maith thú, a Chaitlín!*" she was saying delightedly, pumping my hand. "Well done, Kathleen! That was a champion performance if ever I saw one. You're my star pupil, do you know that? I'm proud to be your teacher."

I smiled nervously at her. I wasn't used to having my hand shaken, and I certainly wasn't used to people being proud to be my teacher. I kept on smiling, and at the same time I was trying to look around Mrs. Maguire's bulk to see if I could catch a glimpse of Polly's flying figure and wide smile.

Mrs. Maguire moved away then, after giving my hand one last good yank, to talk to another pupil's mother, and as she did so, I spotted Polly, hanging back, waiting for me to finish my conversation with my teacher.

I was so glad to see her. I waved, and she came running forward and scooped me into a tight, tight hug, whirling me around and around the floor at the side of the rows of seats, till I could hardly breathe.

"Did you see me?" I asked when she finally let me go.

"I only caught the end of it, love," she said, "but you were brilliant, absolutely brilliant. You weren't dancing. You were flying!"

"That's what it feels like," I said. "Flying."

1 Read this sentence from lines 10 and 11 of the story.

> **I kicked and soared and pranced and whirled, stepped and twirled and spun and flew, tripped and skipped and skimmed and sailed, all over that stage.**

The author **most likely** includes this description of Kathleen's dancing to

A emphasize that the dance ends quickly

B demonstrate Kathleen's desire for recognition

C provide an image of a spirited performance

D demonstrate Kathleen's skills as a dancer

2 Read this sentence from lines 11 through 14 of the story.

> **I hardly knew where I was, and I was completely oblivious to the audience, the strange hall, even the adjudicator, though I knew she must be out there somewhere in the blur of humanity beyond the stage, watching carefully and taking notes.**

What is the meaning of the phrase "oblivious to" as it is used in this sentence?

A unaware of

B confused by

C scornful of

D afraid of

3 What do lines 10 through 17 **mostly** show about Kathleen?

A Her confidence in her abilities helps her to remember her routine.

B Her delight in dancing allows her to briefly forget her concerns.

C She tries to ignore the unfamiliar setting and the audience.

D She avoids people who are critical about her appearance.

4 Lines 36 through 42 **mainly** develop a central idea of the story by revealing

A the importance of being able to communicate effectively

B that Kathleen has lost interest in the conversation because of her success

C that Kathleen's success is meaningful only if she can share it with her family

D the significance of the support of family members even when they are absent

5 Which detail from the story **best** shows why Polly is important to Kathleen?

A Polly can best describe Kathleen's dance to her mam.

B Polly allows Kathleen to receive praise from her teacher.

C Polly made Kathleen's dress using her own curtain fabric.

D Polly inspired Kathleen to participate in the dance recital.

6 Read this sentence from lines 49 through 51 of the story.

> **I kept on smiling, and at the same time I was trying to look around Mrs. Maguire's bulk to see if I could catch a glimpse of Polly's flying figure and wide smile.**

This sentence suggests that Kathleen

A is surprised by her teacher's presence

B hopes to avoid chatting after her performance

C is trying to be polite even though she is distracted

D feels uncomfortable due to her teacher's compliments

7 How does the author establish the point of view differently in lines 1 through 32 as compared to lines 33 through 61?

A by portraying the narrator's actions rather than sharing only the narrator's feelings

B by describing the narrator's inner thoughts rather than sharing the inner thoughts of all the characters

C by revealing the narrator's intentions through description instead of using description to share the opinions of all the characters

D by revealing the narrator's thoughts only through description instead of through both description and dialogue

Directions

Read this poem. Then answer questions 22 through 28.

Twilight Calm

by Christina Rossetti

Oh, pleasant eventide!
Clouds on the western side
Grow grey and greyer hiding the warm sun:
The bees and birds, their happy labours done,
5 Seek their close nests and bide.

Screened in the leafy wood
The stock-doves sit and brood:
The very squirrel leaps from bough to bough
But lazily; pauses; and settles now
10 Where once he stored his food.

One by one the flowers close,
Lily and dewy rose
Shutting their tender petals from the moon:
The grasshoppers are still; but not so soon
15 Are still the noisy crows.

The dormouse squats and eats
Choice little dainty bits
Beneath the spreading roots of a broad lime;
Nibbling his fill he stops from time to time
20 And listens where he sits.

From far the lowings come
Of cattle driven home:
From farther still the wind brings fitfully
The vast continual murmur of the sea,
25 Now loud, now almost dumb.

The gnats whirl in the air,
The evening gnats; and there
The owl opes broad his eyes and wings to sail
For prey; the bat wakes; and the shell-less snail
30 Comes forth, clammy and bare.

Hark! that's the nightingale,
Telling the selfsame tale
Her song told when this ancient earth was young:
So echoes answered when her song was sung
35 In the first wooded vale.

We call it love and pain
The passion of her strain;
And yet we little understand or know:
Why should it not be rather joy that so
40 Throbs in each throbbing vein?

In separate herds the deer
Lie; here the bucks, and here
The does, and by its mother sleeps the fawn:
Through all the hours of night until the dawn
45 They sleep, forgetting fear.

The hare sleeps where it lies,
With wary half-closed eyes;
The cock has ceased to crow, the hen to cluck:
Only the fox is out, some heedless duck
50 Or chicken to surprise.

Remote, each single star
Comes out, till there they are
All shining brightly: how the dews fall damp!
While close at hand the glow-worm lights her lamp
55 Or twinkles from afar.

But evening now is done
As much as if the sun
Day-giving had arisen in the East:
For night has come; and the great calm has ceased,
60 The quiet sands have run.

22 What does **most** of the poem describe?

A the sounds of evening

B animals preparing for nightfall

C creatures hunting for food at night

D the way the weather changes at sunset

23 Read lines 1 through 3 of the poem.

> **Oh, pleasant eventide!**
> **Clouds on the western side**
> **Grow grey and greyer hiding the warm sun:**

Which words **best** describe the tone that the poet creates at the beginning of the poem?

A concern for warmth

B surprised alarm at day's end

C enthusiasm for the time of day

D disapproval of the weather pattern

24 Read lines 6 and 7 of the poem. Then read this dictionary entry for "screen."

> **screen** *v.* **1.** to provide with a means to exclude insects **2.** to shelter or conceal from view **3.** to separate or sort **4.** to use a method to determine suitability for a task

Which definition **best** matches the meaning of "screened" as it is used in lines 6 and 7?

A definition 1

B definition 2

C definition 3

D definition 4

GO ON

25 Which lines provide the **best** evidence that events in nature are repeated over many years?

A "The very squirrel leaps from bough to bough
But lazily; pauses; and settles now
Where once he stored his food." (lines 8 through 10)

B "Nibbling his fill he stops from time to time
And listens where he sits." (lines 19 and 20)

C "Hark! that's the nightingale,
Telling the selfsame tale
Her song told when this ancient earth was young:" (lines 31 through 33)

D "Through all the hours of night until the dawn
They sleep, forgetting fear." (lines 44 and 45)

26 Which lines of the poem **best** demonstrate a gradual change that occurs during the evening?

A lines 11 through 13

B lines 16 through 20

C lines 44 and 45

D lines 54 and 55

27 Which word **best** describes most of the evening activity mentioned in the poem?

A busy

B lonely

C strained

D cooperative

28 Which lines **best** show that the night is different from the evening?

A lines 1 through 5

B lines 11 through 15

C lines 26 through 30

D lines 56 through 60

GO ON

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 29 through 35.

Getting Lost in a Good Book Can Help Keep You Healthy

by Hilary Freeman

Reading is good for you. I would say that, of course. I'm a novelist—I've written five books for teenagers—and it's obviously in my interest to encourage people to read.

But there's increasing evidence that reading for pleasure isn't just another leisure pursuit, or merely a way of improving literacy skills and factual knowledge.

It might actually be good for our mental and physical health too.

In an age of Twitter and short attention spans, reading novels—which requires intense concentration over a long period of time—could be the antidote.

Neuroscientist Baroness Susan Greenfield says that reading helps to lengthen attention spans in children and improves their ability to think clearly.

"Stories have a beginning, a middle and an end—a structure that encourages our brains to think in sequence, to link cause, effect and significance," she says.

"It is essential to learn this skill as a small child, while the brain has more plasticity,[1] which is why it's so important for parents to read to their children."

"The more we do it, the better we get at it."

Reading can enrich our relationships by increasing our understanding of other cultures and helping us learn to empathize.

A recent study at the University of Michigan found that there had been a 48 percent decrease in empathy among college students, with the sharpest decline in the past ten—most technology dependent—years, suggesting, although not proving, a correlation. Encouraging reading could counteract this.

"In a computer game, you might have to rescue a princess, but you don't care about her, you just want to win," explains Baroness Greenfield.

"But a princess in a book has a past, present and future, she has connections and motivations. We can relate to her. We see the world through her eyes."

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[1] **plasticity:** flexibility or capability to grow and change

According to John Stein, emeritus professor of neuroscience at Magdalen College, Oxford, reading is far from a passive activity. "Reading exercises the whole brain," he explains.

"When we 'get lost' in a good book, we're doing more than simply following a story. Imagining what's happening is as good at activating the brain as 'doing' it."

New MRI scanning techniques now enable science to prove this. In 2009, an American brain-imaging study showed that when we read and imagine the landscapes, sounds, smells and tastes described on the page, the various areas of the brain that are used to process these experiences in real life are activated, creating new neural pathways.

In other words, our brains simulate real experiences, just as if we were living them ourselves. This doesn't happen when we're watching TV or playing a computer game.

Getting stuck into a good novel appears to be beneficial to our mental health. As the old saying goes: "You're never alone with a book." Reading not only staves off [2] feelings of loneliness, it helps us to wind down, de-stress and forget our own problems for a while.

In 2009, researchers at the University of Sussex found that just six minutes of reading can reduce stress levels by more than two-thirds, more than listening to music or going out for a walk.

It is thought that the concentration required to read distracts the mind, easing muscle tension and slowing the heart rate.

Reading may be good for physical health too, preventing brain aging and disease.

A study, just published in the Archives of Neurology, from the University of California, Berkeley, found that engaging in brain-stimulating pursuits including reading on a daily basis—from a young age—could help prevent Alzheimer's by inhibiting the formation of the amyloid (protein) plaques which are found in the brains of those with the disease.

Scientists scanned the brains of healthy adults aged 60 and over (average age was 76) with no signs of dementia and found those who had been doing daily brain-stimulating activities, such as reading, playing chess, and writing letters since they were six years old showed very low levels of amyloid plaques.

But those who did not enjoy these activities had lots of plaques.

Although the study was small and did not take socio-economic effects into account, it is certainly an indication that reading may be as good for the brain as it is for the mind.

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[2] **staves off:** holds back; stops

29 Lines 6 through 14 are important to the article because they

A show the potential effects of reading over time

B highlight the value of scientific research

C emphasize the challenges beginning readers face

D provide examples of the problems scientists face

30 Why is it important for parents to encourage reading at a young age?

A Children are more likely than adults to follow stories all the way through.

B Children are more likely than adults to use technology for information.

C Children have longer attention spans than college students and older adults.

D Children can more easily grasp new ideas and abilities than adults.

31 What is the meaning of the word "simulate" as it is used in line 34 of the article?

A to expect

B to illustrate

C to remember

D to imitate

32 How do lines 45 through 53 illustrate possible ways to prevent brain disease?

A by including the positive effects of certain activities on the brain

B by describing how harmful substances form in the brain

C by emphasizing the importance of brain scans for older adults

D by proving that brain-based activities should be enjoyed by adults

33 How does the author support John Stein's claim that "Reading exercises the whole brain" (line 26)?

A by describing how other physical functions in the body work

B by explaining which parts of the brain connect to senses

C by explaining how functions of the brain are triggered

D by describing a new method of creating pathways

34 Which statement **best** conveys the central idea of the article?

A "I'm a novelist—I've written five books for teenagers—and it's obviously in my interest to encourage people to read." (lines 1 and 2)

B "But there's increasing evidence that reading for pleasure isn't just another leisure pursuit, or merely a way of improving literacy skills and factual knowledge." (lines 3 and 4)

C "When we 'get lost' in a good book, we're doing more than simply following a story." (line 28)

D "As the old saying goes: 'You're never alone with a book.'" (lines 36 and 37)

35 What is the author's **main** purpose for writing the article?

A to encourage teens to read books that she has written

B to convince people that reading is a worthwhile activity

C to demonstrate why reading is a good form of entertainment

D to show the negative effects of playing games instead of reading

STOP

Grade 6
2016 Common Core
English Language Arts Test
Book 1
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Name: _____

New York State Testing Program

2016 Common Core English Language Arts Test Book 2

Grade 6

April 5–7, 2016

Released Questions

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Book 2

TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some suggestions to help you do your best:

- Be sure to read all the directions carefully.
- Most questions will make sense only when you **read the whole passage**. You may read the passage more than once to answer a question. When a question includes a quotation from a passage, be sure to keep in mind what you learned from reading the whole passage. You may need to review **both** the quotation and the passage in order to answer the question correctly.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before choosing your answer or writing your response.
- For written-response questions, be sure to

  —clearly organize your writing and express what you have learned;

  —accurately and completely answer the questions being asked;

  —support your responses with examples or details from the text; and

  —write in complete sentences using correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.
- For the last question in this test book, you may plan your writing on the Planning Page provided but do NOT write your final answer on this Planning Page. Writing on this Planning Page will not count toward your final score. Write your final answer on the lined response pages provided.
- Plan your time.

Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 36 through 42.

Weed Wars

by Roberta Kwok

Weeds are plants that people don't want. When weeds grow on a farm, they hog light, water and nutrients. Then crops don't grow as well.

Farmers used to get rid of weeds by pulling them or digging them out with a hoe. (In poorer countries, many farmers still do this.) Sometimes farmers would cover the soil to block weeds from getting sunlight or throw salt on the weeds to kill them.

Then scientists found chemicals called herbicides that kill weeds. The best herbicide was glyphosate. But farmers had to be careful because glyphosate could also kill crops. Farmers could spray fields with glyphosate only before planting crops. Otherwise, they had to use special equipment that would ensure glyphosate was applied to weeds only.

In the 1990s, something big happened: Scientists made crops that couldn't be killed by glyphosate. They changed the plants' DNA, the genetic instructions that tell cells which molecules to make. If farmers planted these glyphosate-resistant crops, they could spray the herbicide all over the field anytime and kill weeds without harming crops.

"It became very simple," says Steve Duke, a plant scientist at the U.S. Department of Agriculture in Oxford, Miss. "Just spray once or twice, kill everything [but your crops]."

Farmers loved those glyphosate-resistant crops. They started planting more and more of them and using more and more glyphosate.

Winning the lottery

Some people thought glyphosate would work forever. But the weeds were evolving. That means their DNA was changing.

Once in a while, changes to a weed's DNA would allow that weed to survive the glyphosate. The chances of changes like this were very, very small. But when farmers used glyphosate year after year on millions of hectares[1] of crops, "what seems almost impossibly improbable becomes more probable," Duke says.

Mike Owen, a weed scientist at Iowa State University in Ames, compares the process to a lottery. If one person buys a lottery ticket, his or her chances of winning are tiny. But when millions of people play, chances are good that at least one person will pick the

[1] 1 hectare equals 2.47105 acres

winning combination of numbers. As weeds were sprayed with glyphosate every year, it was like billions of plants were buying lottery tickets over and over, trying to "win" resistance to glyphosate. Eventually, some weeds were going to hit the jackpot. It didn't take long for that to happen. In 1996, Australian scientists found a weed called rigid ryegrass that couldn't be killed with normal levels of glyphosate. In 2001, a researcher in the United States reported another resistant weed, called horseweed. Now at least 21 weed species have evolved glyphosate resistance.

Copy that

One of these weeds is called palmer pigweed. It's a leafy plant that can grow two or three inches per day and reach 10 feet tall. "You can sit there and put it on your desk and you can watch it grow," Culpepper[2] says.

These weeds are especially good at becoming resistant to glyphosate. They pass pieces of DNA to each other through their pollen, tiny particles that fertilize plants. So if one palmer pigweed plant figures out how to fight glyphosate, it can give the information to another palmer pigweed. Each fertilized weed can make about half a million seeds. A lot of those seeds can grow into new resistant weeds.

But how are these weeds changing their DNA to resist glyphosate? Todd Gaines, a weed scientist at the University of Western Australia in Crawley, wanted to find out.

Glyphosate normally kills weeds by attaching to a molecule in plant cells called an enzyme. The enzyme helps the cells make other molecules called amino acids, which the plants need to survive. (Amino acids are the building blocks of proteins, which play a role in everything from building tissues to relaying signals about health and a plant's environment.) But when glyphosate sticks to the enzyme, the enzyme no longer works.

Gaines' team found that resistant palmer pigweed plants contain extra copies of a segment of DNA. Called a gene, this DNA piece contains instructions for making the enzyme targeted by glyphosate. Cells of the resistant plant made a lot more of that enzyme —so many that glyphosate couldn't block all of them. These plants were able to keep growing normally.

Outsmarting the weeds

Getting rid of resistant weeds won't be easy. But farmers have their own tricks.

They can use a mixture of herbicides. If a weed is resistant to one herbicide, maybe a different herbicide will kill it. Some weeds, however, are already resistant to several herbicides. For example, Tranel's[3] team found weeds in Illinois that resist four different types of weed-killing chemicals.

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[2] **Stanley Culpepper:** weed scientist at the University of Georgia in Tifton
[3] **Patrick Tranel:** weed scientist at the University of Illinois at Urbana

So farmers will have to use more than one strategy to fight weeds.

Some might plant crops such as rye and then flatten them. The flattened rye will block sunlight from reaching the soil and keep weed seeds from sprouting. Some weed seeds need to be close to the soil's surface to sprout, so farmers could use a plow to bury the seeds deeper underground.

Scientists at the University of Western Australia are also working on a contraption called a seed destructor. When farmers use machines to harvest their crops, the machines pick up weed seeds and spit them back onto the field. The seed destructor will capture the seeds and grind them up.

But no solution will protect all crops, scientists realize. This means many solutions must be developed to manage the many types of weeds that bully the many types of crops in farms across the world.

36 How do lines 18 through 21 build on the idea introduced in lines 10 through 13?

A by showing a relationship between DNA and plant growth

B by showing how changes in DNA can help weeds as well as crops

C by showing that weeds continue to resist farmers' attempts to kill them

D by showing how glyphosate is a long-term solution to the problem of weeds

37 What is the meaning of the phrase "impossibly improbable" as it is used in lines 21 through 23?

A usually certain

B highly unlikely

C extremely slow

D rarely noteworthy

38 Which conclusion is **best** supported by lines 27 through 32?

A The DNA of weeds evolves rapidly.

B Changes to the DNA of plants can occur by chance.

C Greater quantities of glyphosate are required to kill weeds.

D Plants evolve more quickly in some parts of the world than in others.

39 Which statement **best** describes the main idea of the section titled "Winning the lottery"?

A Farmers used glyphosate for many years on millions of hectares of crops.

B The odds of any one person winning the lottery are tiny.

C Many people expected glyphosate to work forever.

D Several kinds of weeds developed a resistance to glyphosate.

40 The section titled "Copy that" relates to the section titled "Winning the lottery" by

A providing evidence to support an opinion

B introducing new ways to solve a problem

C providing an example to explain a main idea

D describing events in the order that they take place

41 Lines 49 through 53 support which of the following claims?

A The use of glyphosate should be stopped because the herbicide has proven to be a failure.

B The only way to prevent weeds from resisting herbicides is to change the DNA of weeds.

C Blocking sunlight from reaching the soil is the best way to prevent weed seeds from sprouting.

D Fighting weeds is especially difficult because of their ability to evolve to resist threats.

42 What is the **most likely** reason the author describes the seed destructor in lines 64 through 67?

A to support the idea that farmers need to use a variety of methods to fight weeds

B to show how technology is the solution to uncontrollable weed growth

C to explain why mechanical methods to fight weeds are better than herbicides

D to describe how scientists have found the best way to protect desirable crops

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 43 and 44.

Katerina and her family came to America from Europe with a dream of owning a farm. Katerina, or Trina as she is called by her family, is looking back over the past year.

Excerpt from *Katerina's Wish*

by Jeannie Mobley

My Papa's dream brought us to America. Momma said only a fool believed in dreams, but she knew Papa, so she packed our trunks. And whether she believed or not, that dream swept us out of Bohemia[1] and across the ocean. We'd arrived, in the autumn of 1900 in "a new land for the new century," as Papa put it. By May of 1901, neither the dream nor the country felt new. They both felt old and worn out. As I stood behind our house, staring at a dozen bundles of filthy laundry, I couldn't help but think Momma had been right.

Papa had dreamed of a thriving farm where we would live well. He had imagined acres of green fields, not the dry, barren hills of southern Colorado. He had imagined fresh air and sunshine, the bounty of the fertile land filling our larder and our pockets. Instead, he spent long days underground, toiling in the unwholesome air of a coal mine. And even with all this laundry Momma took on, our pockets stayed empty and our larder was never full. Now that my sisters and I were out of school for the summer, Momma had determined to take on as much washing as we could from the bachelors in town. But it still wasn't likely to mean much money.

"This is too much wash to do in the kitchen," Momma observed from the back door.

"It's too much to do at all," I grumbled.

"If you want to be going back to school in the fall, you'll be needing a new dress," she said. "And the money's got to come from somewhere."

The new term would not start until October, when the schoolmaster returned from one of the other coal camps in the area. But saving money wasn't easy. When we left Bohemia, Papa had thought a year in the coal mines would earn us enough for a farm. We had been here nine months already and had saved almost nothing.

"At least Trina will get a new dress," Aneshka said. She was sitting on the back step, kicking at the dust. "I'll just get her old dress cut down to my size, and Holena will get mine that used to be hers."

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[1]**Bohemia:** a district within the Czech Republic

"I don't mind," Holena said quietly from her seat beside Aneshka. She would be starting school for the first time in the fall.

"Mind or not, it can't be helped," Momma said, her mouth setting into a thin, tight line. It was almost the only expression she had worn since coming to America. "And you do have to go to school." School was important. Momma had had few chances to learn English. She relied on my sisters and me to translate for her.

Momma sighed, looking again at the big piles of coal-blackened laundry. "We'll take this load down by the creek. That way we don't have to haul water. Trina, you carry it there, and we'll all join you when chores here are done."

I began hauling tubs and bundles of filthy clothes across camp and down the steep slope to the little creek to the west. It took me four trips back and forth across the shabby town, and each time I returned to the house it seemed Aneshka was working slower and slower at her easy jobs. Holena, who was too little to help carry anyway, was watching Momma knead the week's bread dough. I glared at Aneshka as I gathered the bundles, but she ignored me.

In the creek bottom, I found a wide, grassy spot and built a fire, then arranged stones to balance a tub over the flames. Then I filled the tub with water from the creek. By the time I was done, my sweat-soaked dress clung to my shoulders. My mother and sisters had still not arrived. I wiped the sweat from my forehead with the corner of my apron. Was this all there was to my father's dreams—sweat and coal dust and endless hours of work?

I stretched and looked around. If I was going to spend the day scrubbing filthy clothes, I wasn't going to stay here while I waited for the water to boil. I deserved these few minutes to myself. I wandered along the water's edge, listening to the birds chirp in the low bushes and trying to forget the drudgery of the day ahead.

A short distance downstream, the valley narrowed and turned. The slopes of the valley became steeper, blocking the view of anything around the bend. I had never gone there. For months, I had come only to the creek to draw water. My pace quickened as a flutter of adventure stirred in my heart. I glanced back toward the laundry. My mother and sisters still weren't there. I had time to see what lay beyond the shoulder of land.

Around the bend, I stopped in amazement. The creek spread out into a still pool. At its edge, an ancient cottonwood tree leaned out, its massive branches reaching across until they shaded the creek bottom from slope to slope. For a moment I thought I might be dreaming. I had never seen this tree before.

43 What is a central idea of "Excerpt from *Katerina's Wish*"? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

44 How does Trina's mood change from the beginning to the end of "Excerpt from *Katerina's Wish*"? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

GO ON

Directions

Read this story. Then answer question 45.

On her first venture into the woods of her new home town, Taylor makes an unexpected discovery.

Excerpt from *Summer Hawk*

by Deborah Savage

It rose above everything, a giant white crack against the blue sky. Solitary in the middle of the clearing, dwarfing the forest growth, the white tree was split down the middle. Black, charred wood contrasted with the pale bark so distinctly it looked as though someone had painted it.

The tree had been dead a long time before the lightning struck last night. No leaf clung to the maze of branches. Half of the tree rose into the sky fifty or sixty feet, every twig etched in white against searing blue. The other half lay smashed on the ground, flattening the grass for an area the size of a small house. Whole, the trunk must have been ten feet in diameter. I never knew until that moment how one could stand truly frozen with awe.

And with the awe came also sorrow. I would never see this tree whole. I touched the outer twigs lightly with my fingertips. Perhaps I alone had seen the moment of this tree's fiery division. I pushed deeper in until I was laced around by the branches. There was a sudden piercing shriek so close to me I gasped and stumbled back.

The shrieking came from the impenetrable center of the broken branches. It was impossible to see anything through the latticework of tangled twigs. The screeching increased frantically whenever I moved. Angry . . . and afraid. I worked my way around the outer branches and climbed cautiously up on the broken half of the trunk. My hands turned black from the burned wood, and I felt the warmth. I was touching lightning.

I crawled out as far as I could and stood up, holding tight to a protruding branch. I peered down into the mass below me, and there was the ugliest bird I had ever seen.

It was huge, bigger than a chicken, covered in soot-matted tufts of gray down. Clumps of feathers stuck out unevenly on the wings and tail. Its head was almost bare, comprised of not much more than two great, fierce-browed eyes and a curved beak so sharp and powerful-looking I was sure it could take my finger off. The beak was open so wide I could see the tongue, and the bird lunged awkwardly at me while it screamed. It clung precariously to a branch with oversized, yellow, taloned feet. When I moved closer, the bird lurched at me so violently it toppled, flapping and squawking, into the tangle below. It clawed its way back onto the branch and continued to scream at me.

It might have been the most pathetic thing I'd ever seen. But despite the scrawny neck and naked head, despite the twigs and dirt caught in the ragged down, somehow the bird was magnificent. Beautiful. Brave. The eyes, dark as a dreamless sleep, glared straight into my own. Powerful, unfinished, wild. The bird clung defiantly to its branch and I clung to mine. Sunlight glinted off the knife-sharp beak. To my surprise, when I knelt to straddle the branch, the bird stopped shrieking, and for a long time we were both still.

I don't know how long I sat there. The bird never took its attention from me. If I brushed the hair from my sweaty face or slapped a mosquito, it followed my movement with an alert dart of its eye. Gradually I began to think more carefully. This bird was obviously too young to fly. So it must have been in its nest when the tree was struck by lightning. If it was too young to fly, it would die here. Starve. Or get eaten by something else. But if I tried to rescue it, even if I could get through those jagged twigs which reminded me of barbed wire, I would face a creature who could rip the nose off my face.

It wasn't just that I couldn't do it. I *shouldn't* do it. I had to remain objective. Reporters couldn't get involved in the disasters they came upon. Their job was just to report them. I would simply go home and tell someone about it.

But what if something killed it in the meantime? What if it was already close to starving? I sat up abruptly and the bird hissed at me. Again I looked into those frightened, defiant eyes, and suddenly I remembered the hawk lady. With that thought, I was already scrambling backwards on my stomach down the trunk. I would go home and call her. This bird had to be a hawk or eagle or something like that—what else would be so big? And that's what the hawk lady did: saved hawks. I jumped to the ground and started across the clearing.

And stopped. In every direction, the encircling woods looked exactly the same. I turned slowly around. The bird was silent, but I could feel it watching me from the branches. I was abandoning it. I closed my eyes and took a deep breath. I told myself that this wasn't wilderness. It was Uncle Fred's and Aunt Grace's old farm. I was sure to come upon civilization no matter what direction I chose. I opened my eyes and began to walk, and did not look back at the shattered tree.

The woods no longer felt like a warm nest. Something crashed in the dark undergrowth, and I jumped back with a startled yell, as defiant as the bird had been. My hands were curled as tight as the bird's talons. For a long time I made my way through the sifting, leafy shadows of the woods, slipping down slopes, tripping over roots. I kept going downhill. I twisted my ankle jumping across a stream. Then, all at once, I scrambled down a steep incline choked with thick hemlocks and slid to a stop on a dirt road.

45 How does Taylor feel about exploring the woods at the beginning, middle, and end of the story? What causes her feelings to change? Use details from the story to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- explain how Taylor feels about exploring the woods at the beginning, middle, and end of the story
- explain what causes her feelings to change
- use details from the story to support your response

GO ON

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Grade 6
2016 Common Core English Language Arts Test Book 2
April 5–7, 2016

Name: _____

New York State Testing Program

2016 Common Core English Language Arts Test Book 3

Grade 6

April 5–7, 2016

Released Questions

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Book 3

TIPS FOR TAKING THE TEST

Here are some suggestions to help you do your best:

- Be sure to read all the directions carefully.
- Most questions will make sense only when you **read the whole passage**. You may read the passage more than once to answer a question. When a question includes a quotation from a passage, be sure to keep in mind what you learned from reading the whole passage. You may need to review **both** the quotation and the passage in order to answer the question correctly.
- Read each question carefully and think about the answer before writing your response.
- In writing your responses, be sure to

  —clearly organize your writing and express what you have learned;

  —accurately and completely answer the questions being asked;

  —support your responses with examples or details from the text; and

  —write in complete sentences using correct spelling, grammar, capitalization, and punctuation.

- For the last question in this test book, you may plan your writing on the Planning Page provided but do NOT write your final answer on this Planning Page. Writing on this Planning Page will not count toward your final score. Write your final answer on the lined response pages provided.
- Plan your time.

Directions

Read this story. Then answer questions 46 and 47.

Excerpt from *Flipped*

by Wendelin Van Draanen

I love to watch my father paint. Or really, I love to hear him talk while he paints. The words always come out soft and somehow heavy when he's brushing on the layers of a landscape. Not sad. Weary, maybe, but peaceful.

My father doesn't have a studio or anything, and since the garage is stuffed with things that everyone thinks they need but no one ever uses, he paints outside.

Outside *is* where the best landscapes are, only they're nowhere near our house. So what he does is keep a camera in his truck. His job as a mason takes him to lots of different locations, and he's always on the lookout for a great sunrise or sunset, or even just a nice field with sheep or cows. Then he picks out one of the snapshots, clips it to his easel, and paints.

The paintings come out fine, but I've always felt a little sorry for him, having to paint beautiful scenes in our backyard, which is not exactly picturesque. It never was much of a yard, but after I started raising chickens, things didn't exactly improve.

Dad doesn't seem to see the backyard or the chickens when he's painting, though. It's not just the snapshot or the canvas he sees either. It's something much bigger. He gets this look in his eye like he's transcended the yard, the neighborhood, the world. And as his big, callused hands sweep a tiny brush against the canvas, it's almost like his body has been possessed by some graceful spiritual being.

When I was little, my dad would let me sit beside him on the porch while he painted, as long as I'd be quiet. I don't do quiet easily, but I discovered that after five or ten minutes without a peep, *he'd* start talking.

I've learned a lot about my dad that way. He told me all sorts of stories about what he'd done when he was my age, and other things, too—like how he got his first job delivering hay, and how he wished he'd finished college.

When I got a little older, he still talked about himself and his childhood, but he also started asking questions about me. What were we learning at school? What book was I currently reading? What did I think about this or that?

Then one time he surprised me and asked me about Bryce. Why was I so crazy about Bryce?

I told him about his eyes and his hair and the way his cheeks blush, but I don't think I explained it very well because when I was done Dad shook his head and told me in soft, heavy words that I needed to start looking at the whole landscape.

I didn't really know what he meant by that, but it made me want to argue with him. How could he possibly understand about Bryce? He didn't know him!

But this was not an arguing spot. Those were scattered throughout the house, but not out here.

We were both quiet for a record-breaking amount of time before he kissed me on the forehead and said, "Proper lighting is everything, Julianna."

Proper lighting? What was that supposed to mean? I sat there wondering, but I was afraid that by asking I'd be admitting that I wasn't mature enough to understand, and for some reason it felt obvious. Like I should understand.

After that he didn't talk so much about events as he did about ideas. And the older I got, the more philosophical he seemed to get. I don't know if he really *got* more philosophical or if he just thought I could handle it now that I was in the double digits.

Mostly the things he talked about floated around me, but once in a while something would happen and I would understand exactly what he had meant. "A painting is more than the sum of its parts," he would tell me, and then go on to explain how the cow by itself is just a cow, and the meadow by itself is just grass and flowers, and the sun peeking through the trees is just a beam of light, but put them all together and you've got magic.

46 Why does the relationship between Julianna and her father change? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

47 How does the father's idea that Julianna "needed to start looking at the whole landscape" (line 32) relate to his description of a painting in lines 46 through 49? Use **two** details from the story to support your response.

Directions

Read this article. Then article question 48.

A Universal Language: Futbol 4 Dreams

by Kathleen Wilson Shryock and Marcia Amidon Lusted

It all started around a family dinner table in Mission Viejo, California, in 2004. Nicolette Iribarne, her sister, Gabriela, and their parents were talking about soccer. "We started talking about how soccer is so universal and how everyone should play without inhibitions," Gabriela recalls. "My sister was the one who started it, really, and we got the idea to send soccer balls around the world to people who didn't have them." That conversation led Nicolette to start an organization called Futbol 4 Refugees (recently renamed Futbol 4 Dreams). Her original goal was simple: to collect 1,000 soccer balls and send them to refugee children.

Nicolette and Gabriela have been traveling with their parents since they were young. Soccer players themselves, they had played soccer with local tribes in the Thailand jungle next to elephants; with kids on the sidewalks of Rio de Janeiro, Brazil; on tobacco ranches in Honduras; and of course on their own sports fields in Mission Viejo. They knew that soccer was a universal language, and no matter how many cultural differences there were between kids from different countries, most kids knew how to play the game. Nicolette says, "The game of soccer led to instant friendship and showed me that beneath our cultural shields, our cores are all the same."

When Nicolette first told her parents about her idea for sending soccer balls to kids all over the world, they didn't tell her it was impossible. Instead, they helped her put her plan into motion. Nicolette originally sent out 200 e-mails requesting donations. At first the project was off to a slow start, but it began to pick up steam once Nicolette contacted Oliver Wyss, a soccer coach Nicolette had met through a summer camp program. Wyss runs the organization Soccer for Hope, which provides assistance to children with severe illnesses. He liked Nicolette's idea and allowed Futbol 4 Refugees to be set up within his organization so that donations could be processed more easily and donors would feel comfortable with an established organization. He also donated 25 soccer balls.

Futbol 4 Dreams has now donated almost 3,000 soccer balls to kids all over the world, in places such as Namibia, Azerbaijan, Iraq, Indonesia, Vietnam, and Russia. Most of the balls are sent through church missions, travelers to these countries, and even the U.S. Marines.

GO ON

Nicolette is now a college student at the University of California in Santa Barbara, and her sister, Gabriela, handles most of the work of Futbol 4 Dreams. Gabriela solicits both actual soccer balls and donations to buy them, as well as finding recipients for these balls and arranging to send them. "Mostly we're looking for donations," she says. "We've sent e-mails to orphanages and refugee camps, plus gone to tournaments to explain what the program is." There's no doubt that the balls are appreciated, especially for kids in developing countries who might have only ever played soccer with "balls" made from a clump of plastic and some rubber bands.

Futbol 4 Dreams doesn't just send plain soccer balls to kids around the world. Each one is hand-decorated with colorful pictures and messages of friendship like "Peace" and "Somebody in the U.S. Loves You." Gabriela has also started a club at her high school in Laguna Hills. Club members help decorate the balls and have also raised money for cleats, soccer balls, and uniforms, some of which were sent to an orphanage in Haiti and an island in Indonesia. As Nicolette said about the efforts of Gabriela and their hometown friends, "This project isn't just about collecting soccer balls. It's about helping people. It's not our differences that make us stronger, but working with our similarities."

48 What is a central idea of "A Universal Language: Futbol 4 Dreams"? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

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Directions

Read this article. Then answer questions 49 through 51.

Recycling Electronic Waste

by Harriet Rohmer

When Alex Lin was 11 years old, he read an alarming article in the newspaper about electronic trash, known as e-waste. The article said that people were dumping their e-waste in places it should never go. They were burying old computers in backyards, throwing TVs into streams, and tossing cell phones in the garbage. This was dangerous, the article said, because e-waste contains poisonous chemicals and toxic metals like mercury and lead. These harmful substances can leak into the environment, getting into crops, animals, water supplies—and people.

"I was really worried," Alex remembers. "Just think about it. You know those toys that have been recalled because they contain tiny amounts of lead that could be dangerous to children? Well, consider this: each CRT (cathode ray tube) monitor contains four to eight pounds (nearly two to four kilograms) of lead."

Alex showed the article to a few of his classmates. They were worried too. "What if it's happening here? We could be poisoning the environment and not even know it."

"Maybe we can help," Alex said. "I think we should make this our next project for WIN."

WIN was the Westerly Innovations Network, named for their town of Westerly, Rhode Island. Two years before, Alex, then nine years old, and six of his buddies had formed the organization to help solve community problems. All of them were part of a national program that teaches kids to become community leaders. Alex's father is a coach with WIN. "He makes sure that we plan each project in a practical way," says Alex.

But what could they do about this problem with e-waste? How would they even start?

"The first thing we did," Alex says, "was to learn more about the problem." Alex and his friends spent several weeks gathering information about the chemicals in e-waste and their effects on humans. They learned how to dispose of e-waste properly and how it could be recycled. "Then," he says, "we had to find out what the situation was in our town. So we sent out a survey."

What they found amazed them: Of the people who answered the survey, only one in eight even knew what e-waste was, let alone how to properly dispose of it. One man had dug a huge hole in his backyard and dumped about 50 old Mac computers inside it. "It was a business he had," Alex says. "He bought up old computers, took the valuable parts he could resell, and then dumped everything else. He didn't see anything wrong with that."

Alex and his friends went into action. They advertised in the local newspaper and distributed notices to students, asking residents to bring their unwanted electronics to the school parking lot. The drive lasted two days, and they collected over 21,000 pounds (over 9,500 kilograms) of e-waste, including the school system's obsolete computers, which were being stored in an old school bus.

The next step was to set up a permanent e-waste drop-off center for the town and to find a responsible company to recycle the waste. That was when Alex and his friends learned another scary fact about e-waste—some irresponsible recycling companies don't break down the e-waste and dispose of it safely themselves. Instead, they ship it overseas to countries such as China and Nigeria, where local environmental laws are not enforced and kids their age work at picking apart and burning e-waste (to get at the valuable metals) with no masks or other kinds of protection. After a while, these kids get very sick. "We checked carefully online to make sure the company we chose didn't do this," Alex says.

After setting up the e-waste drop-off center, Alex's team began to think about how to reuse some of the old computers so they wouldn't have to be recycled. "In our research, we'd learned that reusing is the best way to deal with electronic devices that people don't want anymore," Alex says. "That's because you can save energy and resources. Reusing is seven times more efficient than recycling. If we could refurbish computers ourselves and distribute them to students who didn't have their own, we could help students in our area and protect the environment at the same time."

For a lasting solution to e-waste, the drop-off center wasn't enough. Laws would have to be passed. In 2005, Alex and his team met with state representatives who were pushing for an e-waste bill in Rhode Island. Their bill was very complicated—among other things, it required companies that manufactured or sold electronics to take back e-waste. The bill did not pass. Then, in the spring of 2006, Alex testified at the state house in favor of a new e-waste bill that would simply forbid the dumping of e-waste. He and other supporters talked to legislators, made slide presentations, and collected more than 370 signatures. And this time, they won! The bill became law on July 8, 2006, making Rhode Island the fourth state in the nation to create legislation for the safe disposal of e-waste.

Because of the work of people like Alex and his team, more and more people are getting the message about safe disposal of e-waste. As Alex says, "Today's technology should not become tomorrow's toxic trash."

49 In "Recycling Electronic Waste," why are the results of the survey (lines 27 through 31) important? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

50 What is the author's point of view about electronic waste in the article "Recycling Electronic Waste"? Use **two** details from the article to support your response.

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GO ON

51 What personal characteristics do Alex and the Iribarne sisters share? How did these qualities help them reach their goals? Use details from **both** articles to support your response.

In your response, be sure to

- identify the personal characteristics Alex and the Iribarne sisters share
- explain how these qualities helped Alex reach his goal
- explain how these qualities helped the Iribarne sisters reach their goal
- use details from **both** articles to support your response

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