Name RELEASED FORM

Grade 6

Form Y

Y

North Carolina

End-of-Grade Tests–Grade 6

Reading Comprehension

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The Thing in Adam's Room

by J Louis Messina

"Clean this room now!"

"Aw, Mom!" answered Adam.

Adam sat on his bed and kicked his shoes off. They didn't land with a thud—they couldn't. They landed on a big pile of clothes. The room was covered with junk, and Adam hadn't seen his floor in a month.

His mom poked her head in the door. Scattered toys prevented the door from opening more than a crack.

"Goodness, I can't see how one 12-year-old boy can make such a big mess," she said.

"I need it this way," said Adam, dropping a banana peel on the floor. "It's for my science project—horticulture."

"What in the world?"

"Our teacher comes to our houses to judge our projects, and the first prize is a trophy and Robo the programmable robot. Something's bound to grow in all this dirt." Adam tossed an apple core into the debris. "I'm going to win that robot. I've just got to figure out what to plant first."

"It's just an excuse not to clean your room," said his mom as she shut the door.

In the morning, Adam jumped off the bed, kicking through the litter looking for his school clothes, and found something odd. He peered down at the strange sight, touching it lightly. It felt spongy and soft.

He removed more junk. Underneath, mushrooms were growing in his bedroom.

Eureka! His plan was working!

13 That afternoon, Adam ran all the way home. When he opened the door to his room—which barely budged—mushrooms had sprouted all over. Overjoyed, he decided to add more ingredients.

He emptied the contents of his backpack into the clutter. Out came a half-eaten candy bar and part of the cafeteria's lunch burrito. He added flower seeds and Super Quick-Grow Fertilizer from his mom's garden shed.

After dinner, he took his leftover peas, mashed potatoes and pieces of beef and scraped it onto the floor.

16 "There," he said, preparing for bed. "And I'll raise the thermostat in my room to high. Fungus grows better in the heat."

He placed his pillow over his head to block the strong smell of the fertilizer and went to sleep.

The next morning, Adam woke to a startling sight. A jungle sprouted around and above him, with giant, fantastic trees, green twisting vines and huge colorful leaves. Immense toadstools, black and white, grew as big as coffee tables.

"It worked!" he shouted, wiping his brow from the humidity. "This'll be the best science project ever!"

The vegetation sprouted everywhere, and he batted away the vines hugging his body. As he pushed his way up, his feet disappeared beneath the tall, miraculous grass. The ground made wet squishing sounds as he walked.

21 He looked behind him. The thick foliage hid everything and he couldn't see where he had been. Ahead, he parted the hanging vines with his hands, as if parting curtains. However, only more vines hung in his way. He walked faster, punching his hand in front to find anything solid.

"I have to find the door. I have to get out."

At last he came to a little clearing and stopped to see what he had discovered.

The bed. But now it was almost swallowed in creeping vines.

"Somehow I've circled the bedroom," he said, panicking. "I've got to find the way out!"

Now he moved wildly, flailing his arms and body into the massive jungle. That's when he heard the sound.

Something followed him, parting the vines he had just left. It made sounds like crinkled paper.

"Who's there?"

There was no answer.

Suddenly, a long stem poked out from the vines. Its vast, red bristles moved in and out like claws, and the stem bent toward Adam. It took a big bite out of his pajama bottoms. Adam screamed and fell to the ground. He wormed his way through the bushes, struggling to escape.

What was that? He felt back to his bared behind. Whatever it was, it was hungry.

He had to find the door. But what if he couldn't open it?

He had to think. What had he put in the room? Garbage, of course. Leftovers, fertilizer and seeds. Seeds? That was it! Seeds he had taken from his mom's garden shed. What did she like to grow?

Then he remembered: carnivorous plants that ate bugs. Had he planted a man-eating plant in his room?!

A rustling sound in front of him made him freeze. He popped his head up. Out of the foliage, the enormous plant's stems spread wide, wiggling the red bristles like itchy fingers, and pounced.

The plant snatched and devoured his pajama top as he rolled quickly away. The jungle shook. The plant was closing in.

He wiped the sweat from his forehead. The heat was suffocating. He had to find a way out. Soon he would be plant food!

He crawled through the jungle bedroom and jumped up. He thought his hand had touched a dresser. That meant he couldn't be far from the wall. He ran in slow-motion, the jungle vines gripping his ankles and legs and pulling. He fell and hit something solid. The wall at last, he thought.

It was covered in moss and leaves, and his arms disappeared up to his elbow. The door, he must find the door!

Too late. The plant rose before him, striving to fasten its deadly stems around him. He flattened himself against the wall, and his hand landed on something square and hard. The thermostat! As the plant struck in lightning snaps, he flicked on the air-conditioner to freezing cold. The plant clamped at his shredded pajama bottoms, ripping a pant leg clean away. The plant opened its lethal stems again. Sticky saliva dribbled grotesquely from the red prickles. Adam closed his eyes and waited.

Nothing happened.

He opened his eyes. The plant had stopped and had now shrunk and kept shriveling until it lay harmless at his feet. Adam watched as the jungle rotted in the cold.

Adam's bedroom sparkled. Everything had been scrubbed, polished and disinfected. What remained of the giant plant sat harmlessly in a pot on his shelf.

Adam held his first-prize trophy for his science project: the carnivorous Drosera plant.

For research, Adam had read his mom's instruction book on the plant, which is also known as a sundew. Insects land on its sticky leaves and can't get away. Tentacles wrap around the bug, then the whole leaf curls around it and the insect is digested. Yum!

Little did his teacher know how personal his research had been. But he wasn't telling.

"The Drosera plant is difficult to grow in only a month," his teacher had said. "What was your secret, Adam?"

He smiled. "The right dirt, I guess."

His mom had even marveled that a boy could have such a clean room. Only a month ago he'd been such a pig. What had changed him?

Adam wasn't about to tell her, either.

Across from the bed, a piece of lint lay on the floor. Adam pressed the remote button and maneuvered the robot to pick it up. Robo dropped it in the trash.

He went to his closet to put away his trophy, and opened the door carefully. Inside, the closet bulged with debris. Well, he had to put the junk somewhere, he thought, as he stuffed the trophy in.

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1. What is the general tone of the selection?

   A straightforward and scientific

   B suspenseful and exciting

   C funny and carefree

   D dark and disturbing

2. In paragraph 13, what is ***most likely*** the reason Adam ran all the way home?

   A to turn up the thermostat to make the room hotter

   B to get home before his mother saw how bad his room looked

   C to throw a half-eaten candy bar and part of a burrito onto his floor

   D to see if anything besides mushrooms had grown while he was at school

3. Paragraph 16 states, "And I'll raise the thermostat in my room to high. Fungus grows better in the heat." What is ***most likely*** the reason these sentences are included?

   A to show that this is a horticulture project

   B to provide a clue about future events

   C to make the bedroom seem more like a real jungle

   D to explain how the foliage blocked the door

4. In paragraph 21, what does *foliage* mean?

   A leaves

   B darkness

   C blanket

   D curtains

5. Why did Adam win the first-prize trophy?

   A He created a jungle in his bedroom.

   B He developed a special kind of soil.

   C He grew a plant that is difficult to grow.

   D He showed how cooler air affects plants.

6. What is ironic about Adam's teacher saying that the Drosera plant is difficult to grow in only a month?

   A Adam already knew that from his research.

   B Adam's plant was a sundew, not a Drosera.

   C Adam's mom was an expert on growing it.

   D Adam grew one much bigger in less than a day.

7. What is the ***most likely*** reason Adam cleaned his room?

   A His mom made him clean it.

   B He was getting ready for the next contest.

   C The fungus and fertilizer were making him sick.

   D He was scared the man-eating plant would come back.

This selection was originally published in 2003.

A Different Kind of School

by Marilyn Kratz

Woods in the Jar. Recitation bench. Sweeping compound. Christmas confetti.

Have you heard those words at your school?

You would have, if you'd attended a rural school about fifty years ago, as I did. My school stood in a big square playground surrounded by cornfields and alfalfa meadows in southeastern South Dakota.

One teacher taught all grades, first through eighth. Most grades had only two or three students. I had the same classmate, a girl named Myrna, all eight years in grade school. We were best friends.

Our school day started with the flag pledge, much as yours does. Then the teacher called one grade at a time to the recitation bench beside her desk. She'd check our work, explain the new lesson, and dismiss us to go back to our own desks and do our new assignment, all in less than ten minutes per grade.

We looked forward to recess, even though we had little playground equipment. Mostly, we enjoyed team games such as Woods in the Jar, Lose Your Supper, tag, and baseball.

On cold or rainy days, we played inside. My favorite indoor game was Fruit Basket Upset. We'd all be given the name of a fruit, and when the person who was It called two of those names, we'd have to run and exchange desks before It could sit in one of them. We played this game about once a month, after the teacher spread oily sawdust called sweeping compound on the wooden floor. Before recess was over, we had that oil well rubbed into the floorboards.

At noon we ate lunches we had brought in our dinner pails. Our lunches consisted of sandwiches made with homemade bread, fresh or canned fruit, and if we were lucky, a sweet for dessert. My favorite dessert was a fresh pear, especially if I had a piece of Mom's delicious sour cream chocolate cake to go with it.

Our drinking water came from a rain-fed cistern in the schoolyard. A cistern was a hole dug into the ground and lined with concrete. We took turns pumping water from it to fill the bucket sitting on a bench in the classroom. We filled our cups using a dipper.

A huge coal furnace in the basement heated our school building in the winter. The teacher kept it going by shoveling coal into it each recess. She "banked" it by adding an extra-big amount of coal at the end of the day. It would burn slowly all night, making it easy to get the fire blazing again in the morning. The heat from the furnace rose through a large metal grate set into the floor of the schoolroom. We stood on the grate and warmed our toes on cold days.

The annual Christmas program was the highlight of the year. We hurried through our lessons during December to allow time to rehearse poems, songs, and plays.

A few days before the program would be presented, the school board members borrowed sawhorses and planks from the lumberyard in town and set up a stage across one side of the classroom. We hung bedsheets for curtains. More planks set on empty nail kegs provided seating for the audience.

On the evening of the performance, gasoline lanterns hanging along the walls cast a warm, though not very bright, glow over the gathering crowd. We could hardly contain our excitement as we peeked from behind the curtains to wave at our parents.

After the program, the mothers served "taverns" (which you might now call Sloppy Joes or barbecues), hot dogs, pie with ice cream, coffee, and soft drinks.

Later, we sold small paper bags of Christmas confetti that we'd made by cutting paper into tiny scraps. It was fun to toss handfuls of it at each other. We knew we'd spend the next day cleaning up, but that just added to the enjoyment. The money earned from the sale of the lunch and the confetti bought new school equipment.

A new term started after the holidays, and the rest of the school year passed quickly. On a spring Sunday, just before the last day of the school term, everyone in the neighborhood gathered for a potluck picnic. Our moms set kettles of fried chicken, bowls of salads, and desserts of every kind on the teacher's desk and the library table. After the feast, we played games.

One of the school board members brought big cardboard buckets of ice cream in the afternoon to top off the picnic. How we looked forward to that treat! And how disappointed we were during the years after World War II when ice cream was not available due to rationing of butterfat. We were served tart orange sherbet instead.

When I grew up, I decided to become a teacher. I was just nineteen years old, with one year of college training, when I started my first teaching position in a country school with thirteen students. I felt excited and nervous and happy as I prepared my lunch bucket the first morning of the term. I can't remember what kind of sandwiches I packed, but I do remember I put in a fresh pear and a piece of chocolate cake for dessert!

8. For what purpose does the teacher use the recitation bench?

   A to work with one grade level at a time

   B to seat students who are behaving badly

   C to use as a base for playing classroom games

   D to describe new reading selections to the class

9. What does the description of the potluck picnic ***most likely*** indicate?

   A The teacher performs many jobs.

   B The students like hanging lanterns.

   C The townspeople support the school.

   D Winter is a good time for a performance.

10. Why does the author ***most likely*** mention that she put a pear and a piece of chocolate cake in her lunch bucket on the first day she taught school?

A These are easy items to pack in a lunch bucket.

B Fruits and pastries are always good choices for dessert.

C They bring back fond memories of her days as a student.

D This is the only dessert she eats with her lunch or dinner.

11. How does the description of a typical school day help the reader understand this selection?

A It summarizes the main problem in the selection.

B It provides a setting for the rest of the selection.

C It predicts an unexpected outcome in the selection.

D It shows how the mood changes through the selection.

12. How are ***most*** schools today different from rural schools like the author attended?

A Today's schools have more students.

B Today's schools have more celebrations.

C Today's schools have smaller school boards.

D Today's schools have smaller playgrounds.

13. Which relationship is ***most similar*** to the one below?

Woods in the Jar : Fruit Basket Upset

A rain : water

B pizza : picnic

C playground : student

D baseball : card games

Aluminum

by Brian Knapp

An element is a substance that cannot be broken down into a simpler substance by any known means. Each of the 92 naturally occurring elements is therefore one of the fundamental materials from which everything in the universe is made.

Aluminum

Aluminum, the third most common element on Earth after oxygen and silicon, and by far the most abundant metal on Earth, is now used very widely for everything from soft-drink cans to car bodies to window frames. Compounds containing aluminum are found in materials as different as antacid medicines, the insulation materials in our homes and in the small white flecks (called vermiculite) in garden composts.

Aluminum is one of a number of soft and weak metals (like copper and tin) that scientists call "poor" metals. But aluminum alloys, mixtures of aluminum and other metals, produce materials as tough as steel.

The name aluminum comes from the word *alumen*, which is the Latin name for alum. Alum is in age-old material called a mordant, used for making dyes stick to fabrics.

Although it is so widely used today, aluminum has only recently come into use. This is because aluminum is so strongly attracted to oxygen that it can only be refined using huge amounts of electrical energy, and electricity did not become readily available until the twentieth century. Thus it is sometimes known as the metal of the 20th century, just as iron was the metal of the 19th century.

Although electricity is relatively more plentiful and less expensive than it used to be, refining aluminum from its ore is still a costly process. This is why aluminum is often recycled. This way we do not have to "waste" energy refining more of the metal than we need to.

For centuries aluminum could not easily be refined. This made it more precious than gold or silver! For much of the 19th century some important and wealthy people even used plates of aluminum in preference to fine china or silver.

Aluminum can now be isolated from its ores relatively cheaply and has many everyday applications.

14. Which word ***best*** describes aluminum?

A hard

B strong

C plentiful

D scarce

15. In the third paragraph, why are aluminum alloys compared to steel?

A to show their widespread use

B to show their many jobs

C to show how easy they are to find

D to show how strong they can be

16. In the third paragraph, what is an *aluminum alloy*?

A a soft or weak material

B aluminum combined with another material

C aluminum that has been recycled

D a tough steel material

17. What is the ***best*** example of a material containing a mordant?

A a blank paper

B a red T-shirt

C aluminum foil

D car tires

18. What is the purpose of the side bars in this selection?

A They add additional information and facts about aluminum.

B They tell the reader that aluminum is expensive.

C They confuse the reader by comparing aluminum to gold.

D They provide the most important information in the selection.

19. Which relationship is ***most similar*** to the one below?

aluminum : oxygen

A magnets : metal

B tin : water

C batteries : acid

D elements : natural

Two Views

I.

An old farm-house with meadows wide,
And sweet with clover on each side;
A bright-eyed boy who looks from out
The door with woodbine wreathed about,
And wishes his one thought all day:
"Oh! if I could but fly away
From this dull spot the world to see,
How very happy I should be!"

II.

Amid the city's constant din.
A man who round the world has been.
Who, 'mid the tumult and the throng
Is thinking, thinking all day long;
"Oh could I only tread once more
The field-path to the farm-house door.
The old green-meadow could I see,
How very happy I should be!"

20. What is the mood of the selection?

A confused

B humorous

C suspenseful

D wanting

21. Which phrase ***best*** describes the dream of the boy?

A leaving the farm

B living in the city

C enjoying the countryside

D finding a way to be happy

22. Which phrase ***best*** describes the man's feelings?

A curious about city life

B bored with country life

C eager to travel around the world

D interested in returning to the farm

23. Which wishes do the boy and the man both share?

A seeing the world

B being somewhere else

C finding a peaceful place

D escaping from everyday tasks

24. What is a possible link between stanza 1 and stanza 2?

A The boy in stanza 1 is the grown-up man in stanza 2.

B The boy in stanza 1 wants to know the man in stanza 2.

C In both stanzas, the people are happy where they are living.

D In both stanzas, the people wish to travel the world together.

25. Which experience is ***most similar*** to the one described in this poem?

A forgetting to do something that was important

B staying overnight with a friend

C wanting to go to school in another town

D making a decision at work

Shades of Long Ago

by Kathiann M. Kowalski

In Colonial times, shades, or *silhouettes*,[1] were drawn to preserve people's profiles. Painted portraits provided more detail, of course, but they were expensive. Shades—named for their shadow-like effect—cost much less to have done by an artist. (Later, the term "silhouette" came into use after a French finance minister, Étienne de Silhouette [1709–1767], who was known for being cheap.)

To begin, shade makers sat their subjects between a light source—generally candlelight—and a framed glass plate. The artist attached paper to the glass frame. Then, he or she traced the subject's shadow. The shade maker also might draw in one or two details of the model, such as hair wisps or a collar.

The shade maker could create a full-size silhouette from this outline. But, miniature silhouettes were the most popular in the Colonial era. Electric copiers did not exist yet, so artists used a *pantograph*[2] to reduce the size of the drawing. The pantograph looked like two Xs joined together. Adjustable screws changed the dimensions of the Xs' legs. The artist traced the full-size outline with a pointed tool called a stylus. The stylus was attached to one point where the Xs joined. A pencil fastened to one end made the reduced-size drawing.

Some artists painted their shades black to complete the shadow effect. Others cut the final outline in black paper and mounted it on white paper, or covered a white outline with black paper or fabric. Shades give us a look at people who lived many years ago.

You Need	
transparent tape	access to a copy machine
tracing paper or rice paper (from a craft or art store)	craft scissors with a sharp tip
electric lamp (adjustable goose-neck design works best)	black origami or construction paper
pencil	white paper
	glue stick
	fine-tip black marker

These instructions use modern devices that did not exist in Colonial times. Something that is out of place in time is called an "anachronism." Can you spot some anachronisms here?

Now you can try making a shade. Here is how.

1. In a dimly lit room, tape the tracing paper or rice paper to a door or wall. Position the lamp 5 to 7 feet away. Have a friend sit close to the paper facing sideways. Turn the lamp on and adjust it so the light casts a sharp shadow of your friend's profile onto the paper. Ask your friend to sit very still.
2. Use the pencil to carefully trace the outline of your friend's shadow onto the paper. (Remind your friend to stay still!)
3. For a full-size shade, skip to step 4. To produce a miniature shade, make a reduced-size copy of your drawing on the copier. Use that as your outline.

[1]**silhouettes:** outlines of the human profile
[2]**pantograph:** an instrument for copying a figure to a desired size

4. Cut about 1 inch all around the outside of your outline. (Do not worry about being exact.) Tape the outline to your black origami or construction paper. Both papers should face right side up.
5. Holding the two papers together, carefully cut out the outline. As you cut, it might be easier to rotate the paper toward your scissors. Remember, you will end up with one outline from the tracing paper and one from the black paper.
6. Use the glue stick to mount the cut-out shade (the black one) onto the white paper. If desired, use the marker to draw any stray hairs or cowlicks that you could not cut easily. Label the shade with your friend's name and the date.
7. Sign your name in the lower right-hand corner of the white paper.

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26. What was the ***main*** benefit of silhouettes during the Colonial era?

    A They cost less than portraits.

    B They would last longer than portraits.

    C They provided more detail than portraits.

    D They could be made smaller than portraits.

27. What is the source of the word *silhouette*?

    A a town in rural France

    B a cheap French person

    C the French word for shadow

    D the first Frenchman to draw a shade

28. Which silhouette size was ***most*** popular during the Colonial era?

    A extra-large

    B full-size

    C medium

    D miniature

29. In step 2, how would the silhouette ***most likely*** be affected if the instructions in the parentheses were ignored?

    A It would be more detailed than most silhouettes are.

    B It would look more realistic than most silhouettes do.

    C It would not accurately represent the friend's profile.

    D It would not be as clear because of the dull pencil lead.

30. Why are the instructions ***most likely*** included in this selection?

A to make the silhouettes seem more realistic

B to encourage the reader to try making a silhouette

C to explain why silhouettes are also called shades

D to emphasize the importance of silhouettes today

31. Which activity below is ***most similar*** to the activity in this selection?

A giving a school picture to a friend

B reading the biography of a photographer

C watching a movie set in the Colonial era

D following a recipe to make a batch of cookies

This fable is told in the Cajun dialect.

Why Alligator Hates Dog

retold by J. J. Reneaux

The people who live in the bayous, or swamps, south and west of New Orleans, are descended from the French people of Acadie (now Nova Scotia) in Canada. The Acadians were forced by the British, following their victory in the French and Indian War, to leave their homes and relocate in another part of French North America. Known now as Cajuns, many continue to speak the language of their ancestors.

M'sieur* Cocodril, the alligator, was once king of all the swamp and the bayou. All the critters cut a wide circle 'round ol' Cocodril lest they wind up in his belly. Even Man, with his traps and guns, was wary of M'sieur Cocodril. One snap of those jaws and a fella could lose an arm, a leg, or even his life! M'sieur Cocodril enjoyed the respect and fear of everybody, everybody, that is, except for *les chiens*, the dogs. How those dogs loved to tease and mock him—from a safe distance, of course.

Back in those days, M'sieur Cocodril lived in a deep, dark, muddy hole in the bank of the bayou, not far from the *cabane*, the cabin, of Man and his pesky dogs. In the evening he loved to curl up in his hole and take a little nap before he went hunting for his supper. But just as he was dozing off, those dogs up at the *cabane* would start carryin' on—howlin', whinin', barkin', teasin'—'til he thought he'd go mad.

They'd howl out, "M'sieur Cocodril, M'sieur Cocodril! Come and get us if you dare!" And, ooowheee! Alligator couldn't even do a thing about it, 'cept gnash those big ol' sharp teeth, thump his tail, and wait for one of those dogs to get just a little too close.

"One of these days I'm gonna get them dogs," he'd hiss. "I'll teach them to mock me, the King o' the Swamp."

Now one day, Hound Dog came running down the bank of the bayou. I mean he was hot on the trail of Lapin, the rabbit. Thumpity, thumpity, thump. But that rabbit was too *smart-smart*! He led that dog right up to Alligator's hole. Well, Lapin easily jumped across, but Dog fell straight down that hole and found himself snout to snout with M'sieur Cocodril. Hound Dog knew he was trapped. He better do some fast talkin' if he was gonna get out of there alive.

"Arrhoooo," howled Hound Dog. "*Comment ça va?* How's it goin'?

"Soooo, at last you come to pay me a visit, hmmmm," hissed M'sieur Cocodril. "Every evenin' you dogs call out, 'M'sieur Cocodril, come and get us!' Well, now, that's exactly what I'm gonna do. I'm gonna get you. I'm gonna grind you into mincemeat, you miserable, mangy mutt!"

"Oh, *mais non*, *mon ami*, but no, my friend," whined Dog. "Surely you did not think that my friends and I would insult you, the mighty King o' the Swamp! Oh, *mais non*, *pas du tout*, but no, not at all. We were only calling you to join us for supper. We did not call 'come and get us.' We called 'come and get *it*, come and get *it*!' You see, every evenin' our master brings us a bowl filled with delicious scraps of meat and bones. We call for you to come and get it, to come and

***M'sieur:** dialect representation of Monsieur, French for "Mister"

join us for supper. But you never come, *mon ami*, you never come."

"Hmmmm, is that so?" asked M'sieur Cocodril.

"Oh, *mais oui*! Come this very evenin' and dine with us. For you, we will save the very best!" said *le chien*.

"Hmmmm," said M'sieur Cocodril. "But what of your master, the Man?"

"Oh, do not worry about him, M'sieur. Us dogs will keep watch. If we see our master comin', we'll warn you in plenty of time, and you can escape. Come and join us. We will save the very best scraps for you. After all, *mon ami*, shouldn't the King o' the Swamp eat as good as us poor dogs?"

Now, M'sieur Cocodril was a powerful and fearsome creature, for sure. But he wasn't overly blessed with what you call the smarts. He thought with his stomach and he acted on the advice of his mighty appetite. So he agreed to come for supper and he let that rascal dog escape the crush of his jaws.

That evening, Alligator crawled up the bank of the bayou all the way to the *cabane*. When he got to the steps of the *galerie*, the porch, he stopped and looked around. He feared the master might be somewhere about. But the dogs started whining, "Come up, come up, M'sieur Cocodril. Our master is not here. Do you see our master? Do you hear our master? It is safe, M'sieur Cocodril. You can have your pick o' the scraps. Come up and get it, M'sieur, come up and get it!"

M'sieur Cocodril looked, for sure. He didn't see a thing. He listened, and all was quiet. So he climbed up the steps to the *galerie*, dragging that big, heavy tail behind him. But no sooner had he tasted one bit of those juicy scraps than the dogs started carryin' on—howlin', whinin', barkin', teasin'—and their master came running out to see what all the ruckus was about. When Man saw M'sieur Cocodril on his *galerie*, he took a club and started beating him on the snout, yelling for his wife to fetch his gun. And if that wasn't bad enough, those snarling dogs leapt on M'sieur Cocodril and began to bite him on his tail. That poor alligator was lucky to escape back down his hole with his life!

Well, ever since that time, Alligator hates Dog. He floats in the water like a half-sunk log with only those big eyes peering out. He's waitin' and watchin' for one of those dogs to come just a little too close. This time, Dog won't be able to trick M'sieur Cocodril. These days, ol' Alligator is a whole lot smarter. He's learned his lesson. And if M'sieur Cocodril was here today, why, he'd tell you himself, for true.

"Believe nothin' you hear, *mon ami*, and only half of what you see. Hmmmmm?"

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32. Based on the selection, which phrase ***best*** describes a bayou?

A a type of cabin

B a dark hole in the swamp

C a swampy area near New Orleans

D a place where only alligators can live

33. Based on information in the selection, which word ***best*** describes Hound Dog?

A angry

B calm

C clever

D lazy

34. How are Lapin and Hound Dog alike?

A They are both quick thinkers.

B They are both good swimmers.

C They both enjoy chasing alligators.

D They both like to tease M'sieur Cocodril.

35. How did Alligator change by the end of the selection?

A He learned a valuable lesson.

B He decided to leave the bayou.

C He learned to swim in the bayou.

D He became a good friend to Lapin.

36. Why did the author ***most likely*** write the selection in Cajun dialect?

A to compare different ways of speaking

B to identify the origin of Cajuns

C to teach the reader to speak Cajun

D to make the selection more authentic

37. Based on the selection, which relationship is ***most similar*** to the one below?

porch : galerie

A New Orleans : bayou

B dog : chien

C cabane : Canada

D alligator : swamp

Feelings About Words

by Mary O'Neill

Some words clink
As ice in drink.
Some move with grace
A dance, a lace.
Some sound thin:
Wail, scream and pin.
Some words are squat:
A mug, a pot,
And some are plump,
Fat, round and dump.
Some words are light:
Drift, lift and bright.
A few are small:
A, is and all.
And some are thick,
Glue, paste and brick.
Some words are sad:
"I never had. . . ."
And others gay:
Joy, spin and play.
Some words are sick:
Stab, scratch and nick.
Some words are hot:
Fire, flame and shot.
Some words are sharp,
Sword, point and carp.
And some alert:
Glint, glance and flirt.
Some words are lazy:
Saunter, hazy.
And some words preen:
Pride, pomp and queen.
Some words are quick,
A jerk, a flick.
Some words are slow:
Lag, stop and grow,
While others poke
As ox with yoke.
Some words can fly—
There's wind, there's high;
And some words cry:
"Goodbye . . .
Goodbye. . . ."

38. What is the ***main*** purpose of this poem?

A to help the reader understand feelings

B to show the reader how to spell words

C to teach the reader how to speak a unique language

D to help the reader experience the effect of different words

39. What is the mood of the poem?

A light and playful

B silly and ridiculous

C thoughtful and caring

D exciting and suspenseful

40. Which is used to create tone in this poem?

A short lines that rhyme

B metaphors and similes

C difficult vocabulary words

D lengthy phrases that describe

41. Which is described by the poet as a word that is small?

A and

B is

C the

D tiny

42. How is glue described?

A something that is thick

B something that is heavy

C something that is made of clay

D something that is used for building

43. In line 31, the word *preen* represents which idea?

A making oneself appear funny

B making oneself appear elegant

C making oneself appear careless

D making oneself appear thoughtful

44. Which statement is ***best*** supported by the poem?

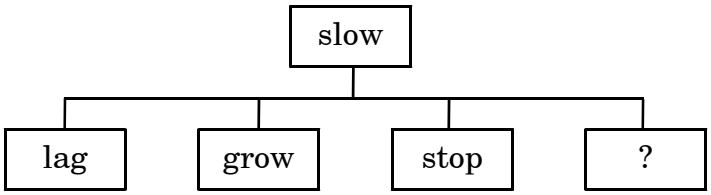
A A word is only one small part of a language.

B Words can affect different people in different ways.

C Words have the power to produce sensations and emotions.

D A word's meaning depends on the context in which it is used.

45. Based on the poem, which word ***best*** completes the graphic organizer?



A creep

B gush

C spout

D spurt

Bacteria Rule
They're Here, There, and Everywhere

by David George Gordon

LOOK OUT, you're surrounded! Bacteria are multiplying in your guts, squiggling in your food, and (gross!) don't even *look* at your hands. Bacteria may sound icky, but could we survive without these microscopic life-forms that hang out everywhere? "Absolutely not," says Dr. Dennis Lang of the National Institutes of Health in Bethesda, Maryland. "Of the thousands of species of bacteria, only a handful can make people ill. Many perform valuable services," he explains. "The ones inside our intestines, for instance, actually help us digest our food." Bacteria have been around for some 3.5 billion years. They live just about everywhere—in air, water, plants, animals, and in our bodies. Take a close-up look at a few bacteria, some good, some bad.

OPEN WIDE!

Warm and moist, your mouth is a breeding ground for bacteria. Some of these bacteria feed on bits of food trapped between the teeth. While breaking down food particles, bacteria also wear down the enamel on teeth (left). You, of course, brush and floss your teeth every day to keep them clean. But guess what? Immediately after brushing, you still have up to 100,000 bacteria living on each tooth! Don't let that discourage you. If you didn't brush, you'd have closer to a *billion* bacteria per tooth.

POLLUTION SOLUTION

Here's a slick trick—sending out a bacteria brigade to clean up after an oil spill. Scientists have discovered that several kinds of bacteria can live on a diet of oil. Now if an oil pipe leaks, spilling its contents on the ground, cleanup crews know how to deal with the mess. They cart in bacteria-rich soil and pile it onto the contaminated site. Then they sit back and let the bacteria suck it up.

SWAMP GAS

Swamps are filled with inspiration for great nighttime ghost stories. Swamp critters' glowing eyes . . . owls hooting eerily . . . complete darkness . . . all contribute to a spooky atmosphere. And then there's that odor. (What's a good ghost story without a nasty smell?) Swampy areas are filled with wet, rotting vegetation. Plants rot as bacteria feed on them. In the process of feeding in these watery areas where there is very little air, bacteria produce a number of gases—including sulfides, which smell like rotten eggs.

46. What is the ***main*** purpose of this selection?

A to convince readers that all bacteria are unhealthy

B to inform readers about some of the benefits of bacteria

C to entertain readers by telling a story about swamp bacteria

D to encourage readers to stop brushing their teeth

47. Based on the selection, which is the ***best*** description of a bacterium?

A a life-form that creates sickness in everything that it contacts

B a life-form present only on living things

C a life-form that exists on many living and nonliving things

D a life-form that should be destroyed whenever possible

48. What is the main idea of the section "Pollution Solution"?

A Oil spills can be prevented by scientists.

B Oil spills are not always natural disasters.

C Bacteria can be helpful to people.

D Bacteria prefer a diet of oil.

49. Why did the author add the additional sections about "Swamp Gas" and "Pollution Solution"?

A to help the reader see bacteria's negative effects on the environment

B to tell the reader why the air around swamps smells like rotten eggs

C to give the reader additional information about bacteria

D to tell the reader how scientists have discovered ways to clean oil spills

50. What do the examples in "Open Wide," "Pollution Solution," and "Swamp Gas" have in common?

A All show how humans use bacteria.

B All show the things bacteria feed on.

C All show positive things about bacteria.

D All show how bacteria harm the environment.

51. What is ***most likely*** the reason that the air around swamps smells so bad?

A because of the lack of water around the plants

B because the water in the swamp is dirty

C because of the lack of air around the water

D because the water is polluted

52. What have scientists discovered about bacteria?

A Bacteria are the main cause of sickness.

B Bacteria cannot be destroyed.

C Bacteria feed on healthy plants.

D Bacteria feed on spilled oil.

53. Based on the information in the selection, which statement is true?

A There are only a few types of bacteria.

B Most illnesses are caused by bacteria.

C Food needs to contain bacteria to be digested.

D Bacteria can live under many different conditions.

End of Reading Comprehension

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North Carolina Test of Reading
Grade 6 Form Y RELEASED Fall 2009
Answer Key

Item Number	Correct Answer	Goal
1	B	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
2	D	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
3	B	4 — Use critical thinking skills to determine author's purpose and draw conclusions based on evidence and reasons
4	A	6 — Demonstrate understanding of correct grammar and language usage
5	C	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
6	D	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
7	D	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
8	A	1 — Explore expressive materials using reading strategies and personal experience
9	C	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
10	C	4 — Use critical thinking skills to determine author's purpose and draw conclusions based on evidence and reasons
11	B	1 — Explore expressive materials using reading strategies and personal experience
12	A	1 — Explore expressive materials using reading strategies and personal experience
13	D	1 — Explore expressive materials using reading strategies and personal experience
14	C	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
15	D	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
16	B	6 — Demonstrate understanding of correct grammar and language usage
17	B	3 — Explore argumentative works using reading strategies
18	A	4 — Use critical thinking skills to determine author's purpose and draw conclusions based on evidence and reasons
19	A	3 — Explore argumentative works using reading strategies
20	D	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics

21	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
22	D	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
23	B	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
24	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
25	C	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
26	A	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
27	B	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
28	D	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
29	C	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
30	B	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
31	D	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
32	C	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
33	C	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
34	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
35	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
36	D	4 — Use critical thinking skills to determine author's purpose and draw conclusions based on evidence and reasons
37	B	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
38	D	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
39	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
40	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
41	B	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
42	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to

		analyze texts and their characteristics
43	B	6 — Demonstrate understanding of correct grammar and language usage
44	C	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
45	A	5 — Use interpretative and evaluative processes to analyze texts and their characteristics
46	B	4 — Use critical thinking skills to determine author's purpose and draw conclusions based on evidence and reasons
47	C	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
48	C	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
49	C	4 — Use critical thinking skills to determine author's purpose and draw conclusions based on evidence and reasons
50	B	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
51	C	3 — Explore argumentative works using reading strategies
52	D	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies
53	D	2 — Explore and analyze informational materials using reading strategies

North Carolina Test of Reading
Grade 6 Form Y RELEASED Fall 2009
Raw to Scale Score Conversion

Raw Score	Scale Score
0	323
1	323
2	324
3	324
4	325
5	326
6	327
7	327
8	328
9	329
10	330
11	331
12	332
13	333
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53	377