

Scholastic News

Reading Skills Practice Test

About This Test

Our popular Reading Skills Practice Tests reflect the changing content of the high-stakes standardized tests you and your students face each year. We have studied released test items from many states, including: the Michigan Educational Assessment Program, the Texas Assessment of Knowledge and Skills, the New York State Testing Program, the Illinois Standards Achievement Test, the New Jersey Assessment of Skills and Knowledge, the Iowa Test of Basic Skills, the Minnesota Comprehensive Assessments Series II, and many others. Our updated Reading Skills Practice Tests for 2008-09 offer the following:

- Longer reading passages with multiple paragraphs, similar to the ones students tackle on state tests.
- Greater variety in reading-passage genres, including narrative fiction, folk tales, poetry, expository nonfiction (both descriptive and how-to), and more.
- More challenging comprehension questions, including items that test study and organizational skills by asking students to complete idea webs, summaries, diagrams, lists, and charts.
- Open-ended response items, including extended response sections in Tests 1 and 3.

Why Use This Test?

Practice: Your students probably take standardized reading tests. Our practice tests focus on the skills kids will be expected to demonstrate. (See annotated answer guide on the right for a detailed list of skills.)

Individualized instruction: A student's performance on the practice test can help you detect strengths and weaknesses. Use the answer guide to pinpoint the types of questions a student might have missed. Then, provide more practice and instruction in those areas.

Curriculum tool: Even if test preparation is not a pressing concern, our passages and questions can be used for shared reading and discussion. **Keep in mind that our practice tests are not standardized. They should not be used to determine grade level, to compare students' performances, or to evaluate teachers' abilities.**

Annotated Answers

SECTION 1: READING COMPREHENSION

Here is the correct answer for each question, as well as a summary of the core skill tested:

- 1. A Understanding main idea:** To find the main idea of a specific paragraph, guide students to first make sure they have identified the correct paragraph. Then, have them ask themselves what the details in that paragraph are mostly about.
- 2. B Vocabulary/word parts:** If this type of question is new to your students, model how to break a word into its component parts (in this case, the two words that make up the contraction). Have students double-check that the answer they select makes sense in context.
- 3. A Understanding genre:** Point out that options C and D are true of both fiction and nonfiction. Only option A is specific to nonfiction.
- 4. C Making predictions:** To answer, students will need to ask themselves what the passage has already discussed (it will probably not repeat information) and predict what information would logically come next.
- 5. B Organizing information/Details:** Students should understand that an idea web organizes details that relate to a central idea.
- 6. C Understanding main idea:** Point out that the phrase "mostly about" is a way of asking for the main idea of the passage or poem. To find the main idea, have students look for the theme or topic that runs through all the stanzas.
- 7. A Understanding details:** Students can find this detail in stanza 1.
- 8. B Vocabulary in context:** Encourage students to use context clues—the words and sentences that come before and after the unfamiliar word—to find the meaning. In this case, the phrase "piece of bread" suggests the meaning of *morsel*.
- 9. D Problem/solution:** Have students review the first four stanzas to identify the problem that the first ant faces.
- 10. Short answer:** Check that students write in complete sentences. Point out that this question asks students to identify the solution to the problem in question 9.

SECTION 2: SYNONYMS

11. A; 12. D; 13. A; 14. A; 15. A; 16. C.

SECTION 3: ANTONYMS

17. B; 18. A; 19. D; 20. B; 21. D; 22. C.