

SCHOLASTIC NEWS

Diagnostic Skills Test

Why Use This Diagnostic?

Our diagnostics can help you and your class in these ways:

- **Practice.** Your students may take standardized reading tests. Our diagnostics focus on the skills students are asked to demonstrate on such tests.
- **Diagnostic tool.** Individual student scores will help you detect strengths and weaknesses. Use the chart below to pinpoint areas in which students may need more practice or instruction.
- **Instructional tool.** You may decide to use the diagnostic for oral reading and discussion. Keep in mind that our diagnostics are not standardized and should not be used to determine grade level, to compare one student's performance with that of others, or to evaluate teachers' abilities.

QUESTIONS 1-10: Reading Comprehension

According to recent samples, standardized tests given in California, New York, Ohio, and Texas evaluate reading skills in a fairly uniform manner. This manner has been reproduced in the *Scholastic News* diagnostics. There will always be slight differences between any tests, but the *Scholastic News* diagnostic reading-comprehension section is similar to those in Language Arts sections of tests in California, New York, Ohio, and Texas.

Answer Key for Questions 1-10

1. C	3. A	5. B	7. C	9. C
2. D	4. C	6. B	8. A	10. D

QUESTIONS 11-17: Revising and Editing

Students will be given a mock article. They need to revise and edit it. The sentences in the article are numbered. Students must determine the changes to make to the sentences to correct errors in spelling, capitalization, punctuation, and grammar, and to make the writing stronger. Similar revising and editing sections appear in samples of recent grade 4 standardized tests or practice tests given in Texas and California.

Answer Key for Questions 11-17

11. D	13. B	15. C	17. B
12. A	14. A	16. C	

QUESTIONS 18-21: Short-Answer Essays

These questions will not have answer choices below them. Instead, the student will have to answer the questions in sentences of his or her own creation. To answer each question, a student needs to return to the passage, find the necessary information, and write it down in the space provided. The student also must use the information to form evidence-based conclusions or opinions. These questions provide practice for any test question that requires a short-answer essay response.

Answer Key for Essay Questions

18. Answer could include: Steph screamed, "Wait!" because she saw a huge frog on the side of the road. It was the biggest one she had ever seen. She loves frogs. You could tell she was happy and excited because she was smiling the whole time.
19. Answers could include: The narrator and Stacey were scared of the frog, probably because it was so huge. They may have thought Steph was going to put it in the car with them. Some people may like frogs from a distance but don't really want to touch them.
20. Answers will vary.
- Story Map and Narrative:**
The narrative should include information from each section of the story map.

